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MASTER'S THESIS

What makes a man? Exploring historical and cultural concepts of Masculinity

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Outline

1. Introduction

Throughout my English studies at the University of Education Karlsruhe, I have been made aware of the influence of gender, race, and class on our society. In search of an adequate topic for this thesis, I reflected on feminist topics that influence my daily life- this led to the discovery of the influence of male behavior on women's lives. I began observing men's attitude in my environment and noticed certain parallels. Some of these behavioral similarities were the following characteristics: Identifying as a protector of loved ones, being able to provide for one's family, distancing from femininity, display of homophobic behavior, emphasis on the importance of testosterone, inability to express emotional difficulties, and a strong emphasis on self-reliance and masculine autonomy.

Amusingly, what instantly came to my mind as I thought about masculinity performances in my environment was the German Song "Männer" by Herbert Grönemeyer from 1984. Throughout the lyrics, the singer addresses performance pressures men experience and the need to hide their emotional side with the question, "Wann ist ein Mann ein Mann?" (When is a man a man? / What makes a man?) (cf. Volkhardt, n.d.). As this work will explain, these intense extremes of men's daily realities are still very present.

Therefore, while my previous written works have highlighted the issues of intersectional feminism and racism, aspects of masculinity became the central topic of this master's thesis: "What makes a Man? Exploring historical and cultural concepts of Masculinity." Throughout the research process, I have discovered that these resemblances are known as the concept of hegemonic masculinity.

When examining cultural ways to express masculinity, several similarities among men from different continents and cultures were strikingly similar. Therefore, the research question guiding this work is: 'Is there a global hegemonic masculinity?'. Questioning this global hegemonic male rule implies the following evaluations: Do men enact their power structures and patriarchal rule the same worldwide? Is there homophobia among men all around the world? Are there shared ideals of fatherhood, or are the roles of husband and breadwinner the same worldwide? Especially in light of globalization and economic interaction among especially men worldwide, one has to wonder whether these masculinities adapt to each other. Interestingly, the discovery of famous Nigerian writer and speaker Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's quote helped me to understand the gravity of the worldwide male socialization process: "We do a great disservice to boys in how we raise them. We stifle the humanity of boys. We define masculinity in a very narrow way. Masculinity is a hard, small cage, and we put boys inside this cage.". (Adichie, 2014, 5.)

This piece of writing is a literary examination of academic discoveries about masculinity concepts. It intends to present various masculine concepts and societal influences of

masculinity to its readers. It should be understood that all chapters are written emphasizing their relationship with hegemonic masculinity.

After this introduction, the second chapter addresses the general question about what is understood as masculinity itself. Since masculinity studies evolved from feminist and gender studies, this academic subfield is relatively new. The second chapter offers insight into the concept of hegemonic masculinity and the extreme and violent performances of masculinity, which are known as toxic masculinity.

Chapter three presents several different cultural forms of masculinity. As the capacity limit prevents going into more detail, this work concentrates on large geographical areas depicting cultural and behavioral differences. The first subchapter, Muslim masculinities, focuses on masculine expressions in the Middle East and northern African countries. The second subchapter highlights European masculinities while focusing on Eastern Europe. This area is often underrepresented in the academic discourse of European masculinity. Subchapter 3.3 introduces East Asian expressions of masculinity to the readership. Because Asia is such a large continent, this subchapter focuses on the countries of China, South Korea, and Japan. Afterward, in subchapter 3.5, expressions of masculinity on the African continent are thematized. Except for the European continent, all these continents experienced European colonization and imperialism. Therefore, the influences of this violent cultural exchange on masculinities and the effects that are still present nowadays are highlighted in subchapter 3.6.

A focus on American masculinities follows the examination of general cultural masculinities in chapter four. Although technically, American masculinities are also cultural expressions of masculinity, socialization through English studies, a semester abroad in the US, and the strong emphasis of literature on American masculinity led me to formulate American masculinity as its own chapter. Furthermore, the historical division of slavery in the United States between white and black masculinity still impacts current American men and their expression of masculinity heavily. Perspectives on white and black masculinity are expressed in subchapters 4.1 and 4.2.

After these cultural and international considerations of masculinity, this work shifts its focus toward the physical and psychological aspects of the masculine concept. Subchapter 5.1 highlights the relationship between the hormone testosterone and its assumptions about its influence on the expression of masculine behavior. Interestingly, this subchapter also provides different insights than what has been shared by folk wisdom for decades. The following subchapter, 5.2, shares insights into the pressures men experience in their physical representation of masculinity. The concept of body image explains how men use their bodies to enact hegemonic masculinity or differ from it. However, masculine body image also includes the pressures men feel toward beauty ideals of muscularity. Also, hegemonic masculinity influences not only the outward appearance of men but their physical health. Increased

alcoholism and meat consumption are a worldwide way to perform masculinity. These adverse effects on men's physical health are addressed in more detail by examining physical and psychological masculinity. Moving from physical to psychological masculinity, the third subchapter, 5.3, concentrates on men's emotions and mental health. The cult of male emotional inexpressiveness is shared worldwide, as well as its consequences. Mentally distressed men often release their stress through violence against women. Thereby emotionally inexpressive men negatively impact everyone, not only themselves. Unfortunately, the pressure of hegemonic masculinity on male mental health leads to a high suicide rate among men globally.

After highlighting the mental aspects of masculinity, chapter six introduces the reader to the living realities of queer men. Trans and gay men have an interesting relationship with hegemonic masculinity. On the one hand, they belong to a marginalized community that experiences regular discrimination by other men. On the other hand, these queer men are also influenced to perform hegemonic masculinity and devalue the feminine performances of other men. Moreover, nonetheless, queer men still experience the benefit of male privilege.

Chapter 7 introduces alternative ways for men to practice masculinity without enacting hegemonic and toxic masculinity. These hybrid masculinities are known to incorporate femininity into their gender performance and, therefore, actively work against stereotypes about gender roles.

This work will close with a re-examination of the research question on global hegemonic masculinity in chapter eight. Furthermore, the conclusion will also provide information about the research and writing process and mention additional topics that would be interesting for further research.

2. What is masculinity?

As women fought for equality and established the academic group of gender and women's studies during the 1980s, sociologists noticed the need for a deeper understanding of masculinity. Since men's actions shape women's reality and behavior, masculinity studies evolved from feminist and women's studies around 1985. Before this, men's behavior was often naturalized through the argument that biology has the upper hand, especially the testosterone hormone. (cf. Reeser 2015, 14) Scholars like Raewyn Connell, Michael Kimmel, and Eve Sedgwick were among the first sociologists to publish critical examinations of society's concept of masculinity and the need to question this rigid gender concept critically. (cf. ibid.)

Reeser (2015) emphasizes that masculinity and male domination have been so powerful because men have not been considered gendered beings. (cf. ibid., 15) The power of invisibility enabled masculinity to escape valid criticism: "One element of the coming of age of men's studies was the idea that masculinity had to be made visible, to be brought out as an

object of study, and not to be considered an unmarked category." (Reeser 2015, 16) This idea is similar to the concept of invisible whiteness. In the past, whiteness has been treated as an invisible default setting; therefore, it first needed to be made visible for discussions about racism. Constructs like masculinity and whiteness are often kept invisible for a long time to continue their privileges. (cf. ibid., 17)

Gardiner (2005) also accentuates the evolvement of masculinity studies from feminist theory:" Misogyny created feminist theory, and feminist theory has helped create masculinity." (Gardiner 2005, 36). Furthermore, academics who decided to research masculinity have often done this to understand men's general behavior in society, especially their harmful behavior. Masculinity and the pressure to uphold certain stereotypes harm male health. (cf. Gardiner 2005, 40)

The theory of gender as a performance by philosopher Judith Butler also plays a vital role in understanding masculinity. Despite widespread belief, gender categories for men and women are not fixed entities but fluid and shifting ideas. Instead of accusing men of being the instigator of several different problems, it is necessary to involve men and the study of masculinity in the discourse. It is vital to understand men's upbringing, society's influence in adolescence, and their daily pressures to embody a specific performance to change unequal gender structures. (cf. Cornwall 2000, 10)

Although there is a constantly growing body of research on masculinity worldwide, it should be essential to remember that masculinity studies have been founded on the Eurocentric notion of whiteness and sometimes blunt and stereotypical assumptions about other cultures. Nevertheless, the emergence of own research from non-western points of view works on creating a less European-framed conversation. (cf. Reeser 2015, 37)

2.1 Hegemonic masculinity

Over time, masculinity studies developed the concept of hegemonic masculinity. Although it has been mentioned that it is complicated to precisely define hegemonic masculinity, it is generally known as "…a question of how particular groups of men inhabit positions of power and wealth, and how they legitimate and reproduce the social relationships that generate their dominance." (Reeser, 2015, 20-21) Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) described hegemonic masculinity as "the pattern of practice (…) that allowed men's dominance over women to continue." (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, 832)

Hegemonic masculinity, therefore, represents a growing body of values and characteristics that men should inhabit to maintain their dominant societal position. These values and characteristics have been identified by the "Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory," also known as CMNI, to evaluate the behavior of North American men combined with its effect on their health. These items of conformity are known as the following: "Winning, Emotional

Control, Risk-Taking, Violence, Dominance, Playboy, Self-Reliance, Primacy of Work, Power over Women, Disdain for Homosexuals, Pursuit of Status." (cf. Mahalik et al. 2003, 6)

Anzani, Decaro &Prunas (2022) described these elements of conformity as the "dimensions of hegemonic masculinity." According to Anzani, Decaro &Prunas (2022), these behaviors are expected of men in western society to be recognized as a part of the hegemonic community. Beginning with "Winning," men must show their abilities in competition with other men and, ideally, succeed. The second item, "Conformity," addresses the need to exert men's emotional control to refrain from sharing their emotions with other men. The third factor, "Risk-Taking," addresses men's high participation in unsafe behavior and the pressure to participate in these behaviors. "Violence" refers, on the one hand, to men's active part in being violent and their passive role as bystanders in violent acts without intervening. "Dominance" relates to the general need for men to appear dominant, regardless of the situation. The pressure men feel to present themselves as hypersexual and attractive to gain access to many different female sexual encounters is addressed in the category of "Playboy." The 7th item, "Self-reliance," puts men in distress to be able to solve problems on their own and be autonomous beings. "Primacy of Work" concentrates on the importance of the workplace in men's lives, ideally with options to ascend the hierarchy in their workplace to a more powerful position. "Power over Women" is similar to the category of general domination, but it accentuates the need to dominate women in general and institutional settings. As homophobia is a central aspect of hegemonic masculinity, "Disdain for Homosexuals," the 10th category is fundamental to be recognized as a powerful, dominant man. The last item, "Pursuit of Status," addresses the tension men experience in their everyday lives to strive to improve conditions in general, to have a comfortable and preferably luxurious life. (cf. Anzani, Decaro &Prunas 2022, 4)

Like Anzani, Decaro & Prunas (2022), Rotundi (2020) lists several traits that define hegemonic western masculinity. A man has to have a white skin color, therefore, be of European or Caucasian descent. He should belong to the upper middle class or, more ideally, the upper class. He needs to identify as a heterosexual and be successful in his work. Furthermore, he should display a lack of emotions and show a certain amount of violence accompanied by physical strength. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 19)

According to Connell and Messerschmidt (2005), hegemonic masculinity can be understood as the most honored and respected way of being a man in the current time. Interestingly, only a fraction of men in society embodies hegemonic masculinity:

> Also well supported is the original idea that hegemonic masculinity need not be the
> commonest pattern in the everyday lives of boys and men. Rather, hegemony works in part
> through the production of exemplars of masculinity (e.g., professional sports stars), symbols
> that have authority despite the fact that most men and boys do not fully live up to them.
> (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, 846).

Even though only a minority of men can perform all of the hegemonic masculinity ideals, it has become the norm. Most men, who do not fit into hegemonic masculinity's narrow definition, still need to position their place in society in reference to the concept. (cf. Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, 832)

Reasons for not fitting into the narrow understanding are numerous. As the body plays a vital role in this concept, having any disability or not following the current trend of muscularity excludes men from hegemonic masculinity. Race, especially the idealization of whiteness, is also a decisive factor of hegemonic masculinity. Concepts of racism and colonization, an aspect further along in this work, are strongly implied in hegemonic masculinity. Regarding the importance of work, status, and domination in the CMNI mentioned earlier, class inequality, especially poverty, automatically excludes men from hegemonic society. Furthermore, identifying as a heterosexual, cisgender man is existential to be accepted as a man who personifies hegemonic masculinity. (cf. ibid., 848)

These ways of policing other men of whether or not one fits into the hegemonic category are also known as "Internal hegemonic masculinity." Amongst themselves, men have created a hierarchy of ways a man has to be to be valuable, respectable, and worthy enough to become a man who fits the hegemonic description. Nonhegemonic men, therefore, exist in tension with hegemonic men. (cf. ibid., 844) On the other hand, to not be excluded entirely from the community of men, nonhegemonic men depend on hegemonic men to validate their societal position, which is subordinate but not wholly cast aside. This explains nonhegemonic men's role in upholding an oppressive system: "Masculinities constructed in ways that realize the patriarchal divided, without the tensions or risks or being the frontline troops of patriarchy, are complicit in this sense." (Reeser 2015, 22)

Policing other men to fit into rigid gender roles and hegemonic idealizations of masculinity is often done through the way men dress. Men who inhabit a conservative concept of masculinity, therefore a strongly hegemonic idea of what a man should look like, often dress in understated clothes to prevent falling out of the norm. Primarily workplaces like corporate white-collar jobs strongly honor hegemonic masculine values and express this through an emphasis on button-down shirts, dark pants, and dark blazers. This toned-down way to dress is used to transport the idealization of rational and disciplined masculinity. Often, corporate workplaces install a dress code that demands the employees to dress in suits. In the past, the suit has been a symbol of distancing oneself from femininity and emotions and embracing authority. This interpretation of suits and gender roles has also been personified by one of the most popular hegemonic masculine idols, James Bond. (cf. Barry 2018, 648)

Being complicit to gender role policing is not unique to men; women also play a crucial role in defining and shaping hegemonic masculinity

> Perhaps more important, focusing only on the activities of men occludes the practices of

women in the construction of gender among men. As is well shown by life-history research, women are central in many of the processes constructing masculinities- as mothers; as schoolmates; as girlfriends, sexual partners, and wives; as workers in the gender division of labor; and so forth. The concept of emphasized femininity focused on compliance to patriarchy, and this is still highly relevant in contemporary mass culture." (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, 848)

Hegemonic masculinity not only asks men to police themselves with internal hegemonic masculinity but also demands that men control women. This way of controlling others is known as external hegemonic masculinity, the institutionalization of men's dominance over women. (cf. Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, 844)

The definition and understanding of hegemonic masculinity depend on time, culture, class, race, and generation. Therefore, examining masculinity should always be done on three levels. First, locally, within the closest surroundings and community, for example, own family, workplaces, or schools. Examining masculinity regionally refers to concepts of masculinity in one's culture, followed by examining masculinity globally. This global exploration of masculinity is understood as the research on whether or not there are similarities in masculine performances worldwide. (cf. ibid., 849) Because of the different habits and characteristics men embody and perform on these levels, researchers must become aware of multiple hegemonic masculinities that exist simultaneously. Multiple local hegemonic masculinities can overlap and differ from each other to a certain extent. (cf. ibid., 850)

These traits men have to perform and inhabit to be accepted into the highest position of men's hierarchy demand a price. In order to continuously reaffirm their masculinity, men act in dangerous behavior with negative consequences on their physical and mental health. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 5) This is performed by unhealthy eating and drinking habits, a dangerous driving mentality, and a solid tendency to downplay medical issues. (cf. Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, 851) The vital need to overperform their masculinity results in high rates of anxiety and depression in men worldwide. 75% of suicides globally are committed by men, who also have higher mortality rates than women in every country, despite often having more beneficial living conditions. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 40) Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) quote emphasizes the need to investigate the reason for these heavy consequences "Without treating privileged men as objects of pity, we should recognize that hegemonic masculinity does not necessarily translate into a satisfying experience of life." (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, 852)

2.2 Toxic masculinity

In the last few years, knowledge about 'toxic masculinity has become more accessible. The scholarly concept and understanding of a deadly form of masculine behavior have entered pop culture and social media. The German Instagram Influencer and author Tara-Louise Wittwer uses the platform to spread awareness about common toxic male behavior with her

series #TicToxic. Wittwer has received criticism from all sides. However, according to her followers' comments, her characterizations of toxic male behavior have proven to be very helpful for many adolescent girls and also adult women. (cf. Instagram. Wastarasagt. accessed 9.11.22)

Even though shared knowledge of toxic male behavior in everyday society and dating behavior is beneficial for women as a form of protection, clear definitions and understanding of toxic masculinity are often inconclusive. According to Rotundi (2020), the concept of toxic masculinity demonstrates how specific definitions of masculinity cause harm to society.

> Nonetheless, toxic masculinity is a term that finally addresses in an explicit manner a set of subtle men's issues that have been constructed long time ago by patriarchal systems, but that still feature society and provide negative repercussions on male individuals themselves and, at the same time, on the whole humankind. Indeed, the concept's intention is not to argue that masculinity is toxic in itself, but rather that some masculine behaviors appear to be associated with hurtful actions. (Rotundi 2020, 26)

Therefore, toxic masculinity can be understood as an extreme portrayal of hegemonic masculine values, such as dominance, stoicism, aggression, and competitiveness, that will eventually cause harm to others. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 22)

Norris (2019) also explains how to understand toxic masculinity.

> … a constellation of beliefs, practices and standards that both direct and constrain men's behavior and health, including 'anti-femininity, achievement, eschewal of the appearance of weakness, and adventure, risk, and violence' which is linked to homophobia, sexual harassment, and bullying. (Norris 2019, 320)

The cognitive dissonance many men feel when conflicting with their values and the pressure to perform typical hegemonic masculine values is also known as "masculine gender–role stress." Alongside this constant process of deciding which behavior should be demonstrated, men have to constantly reaffirm their masculinity, with negative consequences on their health. Unfortunately, the performance of toxic masculinity, and even overplayed hegemonic masculinity, prevents a man from the whole human experience of emotions and feelings. (cf. ibid., 23)

Planting the seed for rigid gender roles and the importance of hegemonic masculine values starts very early during childhood. Phrases like 'boys will be boys' lead young boys to assume their behavior is acceptable. Meanwhile, the same behavior is often reprimanded in young girls. Therefore, adults typically show a gendered difference in encouraging and disciplining harmful acts, whether a boy or a girl performs them. (cf. ibid., 24)

Additionally, adolescent boys tend to overestimate their abilities, which Rotundi (2020) calls the 'Boy code'. Adolescent girls tend to doubt themselves and their abilities more and downplay their achievements. This often leads to an increase of self-doubt in adult women and the experience of Imposter syndrome. Young boys are also less likely to decide on a career

path associated with femininity, such as working in the health or education sectors. (cf. ibid., 30)

Actor Justin Baldoni has held a Ted talk about the pressure he experiences to embody a particular stereotypical image of masculinity. Titled "Why I'm done trying to be man enough", he uses the metaphor of being locked in a cage. The cage, also called 'Man-Box,' stands for masculine performance, which stops him from being able to express himself freely. Baldoni defined "…the Man Box as the set of beliefs and patterns that men are told and pressured to adopt by their own family, their friends, the media, the educational institutions and the workplace." (Rotundi, 2020, 31) The essentials of the Man Box are physical strength, self-sufficiency, the importance of sex and aggression, and heterosexuality. Baldoni uses his Ted Talk to encourage other men to escape their Man box, leave the lifelong feeling of being trapped behind, and let go of the fear of judgment from others. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 31)

Baldoni mentioned several pressures that are also part of the "Gender Equitable men scale" (GEMS). The GEMS is a list of seven thematic pillars men have reported they experience as daily pressures of their masculinity performance. These pillars are similar to the 'Conformity of Masculine Norms Inventory' mentioned above. Notwithstanding, it is also essential to mention the pillars of the GEMS since they show a successful in-depth description of daily ways to police other men and one's own masculine performance. (cf. ibid., 32)

The first pillar, self-sufficiency, is followed by the second pillar, the concept of toughness. Rotundi (2020) reminds us how these two, combined with hypersexuality and aggressiveness, form the idea of machismo. 'Machismo' is a concept often used in the context of masculinity studies, especially the studies of Latin American masculinity. However, machismo often needs to be more clearly defined. Therefore this definition by Rotundi (2020) is much appreciated: "…machismo is the expression of an inferiority which is hidden through acting superior and undefeatable and by suppressing feminine qualities, while stressing masculine ones." (Rotundi 2020, 33). Per women's compliance with upholding hegemonic masculine ideals, machismo reinforces the belief that women require a protective, strong male partner. Additionally, machismo emphasizes the importance of being an obsessively jealous male partner. (cf. ibid., 33)

Rotundi's (2020) third pillar of the Gender Equitable Men scale lists physical attractiveness. The importance of muscularity will also be mentioned in a chapter further below. People who embody the current beauty ideal have more advantages and opportunities than people who do not. Additionally, having a muscular male body is automatically associated with health, strength, and self-reliance. (cf. ibid., 34)

The importance of rigid gender roles is known as the fourth pillar. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 35) Structuring the world into clear female and male categories is the universal human social practice of ordering society. (cf. Norris 2019, 324) A gender order is typically understood as

"…a historically constructed pattern of power relations between men and women and definitions of femininity and masculinity, sustained through particular vocabularies, symbols and social rules." (Norris 2019, 325) These entrenched ways to enforce gender roles are put into practice by the idealization of heterosexual parenthood and the differences in household and childrearing duties for men and women. The counterapproach of stay-at-home fathers is often met with ridicule and stigma. Stay-at-home fathers also describe the widespread association that men should work with "heavy things." For example, it is acceptable for men to perform household duties like mowing the lawn or repairing the dishwasher. However, it is 'unmanly' to empty the dishwasher or do the laundry. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 35)

The emphasis on heterosexuality and homophobia for masculinity performance has already been noted above; however, the GEMS does not fail to mention how this is embedded in young adolescent boys. The public pressure for men to ensure their heterosexuality by showing homophobic behavior is shown in adolescent boys' behavior of calling themselves homophobic slurs, an almost universal phenomenon. By accusing each other of being gay teasingly, pubertal boys police among themselves. Thereby the accuser puts himself in a dominant position. He perceives himself as the epicenter of heterosexuality. Therefore he gets to raise suspicions about who might not be heterosexual. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 36)

Hypersexuality is known as the sixth pillar of the GEMS. Men describe the pressure to show hypersexual behavior, which goes in hand with the objectification of women and the idea of women being interchangeable bodily objects. A man might face ridicule from other men if he admits that sexual intercourse is not his primary concern in a relationship (cf. ibid., 37)

Rotundi (2020) describes the need to perform aggression and the importance of having control in every area of life. This behavior relates to the depiction of violence and manipulation, which is common in toxic masculinity. (cf. ibid., 38)

The question of what can be done against toxic masculinity remains. Since the studies of the concept are relatively new, there is no legitimate counterapproach offered. Scholars argue the need to reconstruct masculinity and the installment of healthy masculinity. However, these are theoretical ideals that do not prove that 'healthy masculinity is not also having a damaging effect on other groups. The approaches to reconstructing masculinity are illustrated towards the end of this paper. (cf. ibid., 27)

2.2.1 Affecting men

Men do have a complicated relationship with toxic masculinity values. On the one hand, they benefit from them because these values put men in a privileged societal position. On the other hand, these values also inhibit them from free expression and freeing themselves of societal expectations. Rotundi (2020) expressed this ambivalent connection in the following:

> In the light of these negative repercussions on male physical and mental well-being, it may
> occur that the interior conflict in men caused by societal standards leads to perceive them

mainly as victims to the patriarchal system, by obscuring the relation between men and the perpetration of masculine norms. To put it another way, men do not only happen to be victims of those norms, but, simultaneously, they are also the main executors, even though this often comes back against them. (Rotundi 2020, 46)

Although it is evident that men experience more considerable socioeconomic advantages than women regardless of geographic location, men also have a shorter life expectancy than women, regardless of ethnicity. Hence, one must ask about the reason for this conundrum. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 40)

The answer proves to be quite a mix of unhealthy lifestyles, hesitation to seek help, and a tendency to participate in high-risk activities that likely will lead to accidents. Globally, 33% of men are regular smokers, compared to 6% of women. Smoking leads to a higher likelihood of death caused by lung cancer. Furthermore, men are twice as likely to develop drug addictions and alcoholism than women. The relationship between conservative masculine values like risk-taking, aggressiveness, competition, and unhealthy behavior is also responsible for the fact that engaging in these addictions is an effective way for men to demonstrate masculinity. Smoking and alcohol are understood as celebrations for entering the adolescence stage for young men. (cf. ibid. 42-43)

Nonetheless, alcohol and drugs are not only effective in the outward performance of stereotypical masculinity. Both tranquilizers also numb feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression for men worldwide. Although statistics on depression depict that more women have reported suffering from depression than men, the majority of suicide committed worldwide is by men. The leading causes of suicide are generally known to arise from depression and anxiety. (cf. ibid., 43) Therefore, although men do not appear in official statistics about depression, they still suffer from the disease in great numbers. Because depression is often tied with vulnerability, ineffectiveness, and weakness, men are less likely to report their own experiences with the disease. Additionally, because of societal pressures, men are less likely to seek help for general medical needs and especially reluctant to seek psychological help. Not being able to perform stereotypical conservative assumptions about male responsibilities can send men into a downward spiral that leads to depression and, worst cases, suicide. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 44)

Male- on male physical and sexual violence is not reported in most cases. However, toxic masculinity is, on the one hand, one reason for men to demonstrate their domination and power by raping another man. Bizarrely, toxic masculinity is also why this crime will not be addressed publicly. The cult of victim-blaming and the absolute silence on reasons and effects of male-male rape are both a product of toxic masculinity. Male rape survivors are blamed for not fighting back strong enough or being secretly homosexual and, therefore, not taken seriously in their experience of sexual violence. Long-term effects like the development of

PTSD, the likeliness for substance and drug abuse, neurological dysfunctions, and emotional detachments are often consequences of having been sexually assaulted through male-on-male rape for rape survivors. As toxic masculinity has crafted an almost perfect technique for discrediting rape victims, male survivors usually lack resources, support, and understanding when seeking help. (cf. ibid., 47)

2.2.2 Affecting women

Discovering why men came to their superior position in society will never be achieved a hundred percent. That aside, a strong promotion of typical masculine traits like aggression, power, and strength executed for an extended time led to the subordination of femininity. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 49)

One of the most common ways for men to ensure their power position over women is with violence or sexualized forms of violence like sexual harassment. Men use minor forms of sexual harassment like catcalling, sending pictures of their genitalia without being asked to, following women in public, or groping them. Because these 'minor' forms of sexual harassment are difficult to prove and report, men often use these tactics to remind women of their objectification and powerlessness. Gradually, society gets de-sensitized about the severity of these acts, and they become routine, unfortunately. Rotundi (2020) emphasizes that it is not an unusual, alien behavior of men to harass women sexually.

> It is crucial to understand that, except for some individuals who suffer from mental disorders, a large proportion of men who act violently, verbally or physically, are ordinary people who have strongly embodied masculine norms and feel legitimized to act as such, due to a normalization of violence, conveyed by the traditional ideology of hegemonic masculinity. (Rotundi 2020, 49)

Another reason for participating in sexual harassment might be the own inability to perform hegemonic masculine traits. Thereby, men who do not fully embody stereotypical norms like muscularity or a successful career can redirect their insecurity into feeling superior again by asserting dominance over women. (cf. ibid., 49)

The most severe form of sexual violence, rape, is also common for men to dominate women. Typically, abusers influence the victim with tactics of defamation to prevent a complete account of the event. This technique is generally known as 'victim-blaming.' Abusers portray the victim as a highly sexual person who had seduced them, therefore taking the blame for the crime from the abuser onto the victim. Usually, rapists often spread fictive stories about the high rate of false rape accusations that had detrimental effects on the innocent accused man. Combined with other ways of intimidation the victim will experience, this decreases the chance of rape victims reporting the crime. Moreover, even if women decide to report the crime to the police, they often have to face male police officers who doubt the truth of their stories, alongside skeptical jury members during a potential trial. (cf. ibid., 52)

Domestic violence and sexual violence at home committed by the husband onto the wife is the most common form of rape. Because this violence happens behind the veil of marriage, these crimes usually are not reported. Again, rape has to be understood as a violent way to dominate and control others: "…rapist's affirmation of manhood becomes to be automatically bound to a violent disregard towards anything feminine, including females, and, in fact, rapes are often complemented by some form of sexual humiliation." (Rotundi 2020, 52)

2.2.3 Affecting queer people

As previously pointed out during this work, one core aspect of traditional masculinity is to distance oneself from femininity. The most common scholarly theory about men's general contempt for femininity goes back to adolescence. Having been influenced mainly by women during childhood, when boys enter their youth, they become aware of masculine stereotypes and the behavior that society expects from them. Because this contrasts their feminine influence during upbringing, they react vigorously against anything feminine. This negation is also underpinned by fear of being accused of being not manly enough or a" mama's boy." This hyper fixation on masculinity is also portrayed in homophobic behavior since conservatism associates queerness with femininity. With intense fear of being perceived as queer oneself, men feel the pressure to participate actively and passively in homophobic acts to avoid feeling emasculated. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 56)

Interestingly, traditional men feel more strongly triggered by gay men than gay women. Lesbianism suffers from the fetishization of straight men through pornographic materials that have conditioned men to believe that women perform lesbian acts to pleasure other men. Another reason for this tolerance for lesbianism in comparison to gay men might be that the conservative man is not automatically confronted with his femininity like he has been led to believe he is with the depiction of gay male acts. (cf. ibid., 58)

The concept of heteronormativity, of the combination between a female and a male partner to form a successful relationship, is so deeply entrenched in society that queer couples often have to deal with the question of "Who is the man/woman in the relationship." By challenging the concept of binary gender performances with their mere existence, queer people are perceived as triggers for conservative men who embrace rigid and binary gender concepts. (cf. ibid., 59) Sadly, these homophobic ideals have severe consequences for the safety of queer people. Physical attacks by homophobes are, unfortunately, prevalent. The sad epitome of this physical violence against queer people is the fact that female transwomen without genital removal surgery experience the highest murder rate globally. In fear of being ridiculed for feeling attraction towards a trans woman, many men lash out in violent acts to mask their actual feelings for a person whose body challenges the binary understanding of gender. (cf. ibid., 60)

<u>2.2.4 A historic example of toxic masculinity</u>

Norris (2019) sheds light on how the German church used symbols of hegemonic masculinity that created a toxic pressure for masculine overperformance that accompanied the rise of Adolf Hitler's Party. After losing World War One, the German people had low self-esteem and accused their church of delivering effeminate services, which influenced losing the war. (cf. Norris 2019, 326) "…toxic masculinity was an ecclesial response to a cultural crisis pervading Germany in the years preceding the rise of the Reich as churches attempted to regain the cultural and political legitimacy lost after the humiliation of national defeat in WW1." (Norris 2019, 320)

The church was accused of being something only for the weak and women, having 'too sheepish' hymns, and being too feminine. Securing its existence at risk of not being existential anymore, it responded by developing a masculine theology:

> Men too old or too young to be soldiers, homosexuals, and men unwilling or unable to fight
> did not fit the bill. In this way, the masculine gender order not only marginalized women but,
> by policing masculinity, it eliminated homosexual men, men deemed effeminate, or men with
> intimate male affections from being 'masculine'. (Norris 2019, 327)

Following this logic, everyone who did not fit the description of how a man should be was perceived as a "gender invert." Formerly, there was a theory about inverts; men with the soul of a woman trapped in a male body. Following the Nazi logic, all Jewish men were assumed to be inverts. Nazis were painting a picture of a close relationship between Jewishness and femininity that played into the cards of the agenda of Christian antisemitism. (cf. Norris 2019, 327)

Beginning with minor changes, like altering the sermon style and choosing very rhythmic hymns with heavy lyrics about comradery and battle, the church slowly but surely altered its style to fit the Nazi idealism of masculinity. The lost soldiers of World War I were idealized as role models and images of manliness that were usually combined with biblical calls on men to be strong, referring to 1. Corinthians 16:13. All Christians were called to combat, following their 'manly Jesus'- an unprecedented fighter against Judaism. The German Christian Church worked actively on changing its styles, techniques, and rhetoric into a "militaristic, warrior-like act." (cf. Norris 2019, 322) Furthermore, "The German Christians adopted these masculine symbols from the growing Nazi ethos, and identified themselves as a church that was 'not feminine and weak but manly and hard.'" (Norris 2019, 323)

This excerpt about the importance of masculine ideals during the rise of the far right in Germany demonstrates how fatal radical masculine concepts can be.

3. Cultural masculinities

This third chapter examines the dynamic between culture and the concept of masculinity. As Connell (2005) pointed out, the phenomenon of globalization must be considered when

investigating the developing process of masculinities. (cf. Connell 2005, 72) Morrell and Swart (2005) even call globalization the new form of colonialism. Nonetheless, globalization is acting in shaping gender power in the 21st century. (cf. Morrell & Swart 2005, 92) Furthermore, the cultural dynamics of contemporary masculinities are often influenced by the ideology of nationality and power. For some nations located in the global north, this meant achieving a dominant and powerful situation by controlling nations of the global south. This exploitation, known as colonialism, has impacted masculinity worldwide. As explained above, hegemonic masculinity is connected to the pretense of white skin. The idealization of whiteness goes in hand with the domination of European men and creation of a racial hierarchy. (cf. Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, 848) Therefore, thinking globally and closely examining similarities and differences in cultural expressions of masculinity is essential when assessing this phenomenon. (cf. Connell 2005, 72)

The cultural change initiated through industrialization worldwide also multiplied the forms of masculinity. (cf. ibid., 74) Furthermore, the cultural exchange between nations offers new ways of understanding the world, as shown by the re-discovery of indigenous knowledge. In times where western thoughts and ideologies regulate the world, indigenous knowledge introduces valuable counterapproaches to western schools of thought. (cf. Morrell & Swart 2005, 98)

As already mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, the main question for this work is whether global hegemonic masculinity exists. The author group CROME (Critical Research on Men in Europe) (2005) indicates the ongoing development of global business masculinity. Through the process of globalization and the constant interaction of very different cultural masculine expressions, certain kinds of hegemonic masculinities became globalized. (cf. CROME 2005, 147)

As this question about global hegemonic masculinities is very complex, it will be addressed several times throughout this work. Nonetheless, several different cultural expressions of masculinities are listed in this chapter. As much as this chapter would benefit from even more cultural perspectives, the mandatory regulations for a master's thesis's size influenced the decision to concentrate on five regions of the globe.

Underneath this introduction, Muslim men from the Middle East and their cultural expression of masculinity are closely examined. Because the Middle East is a vast region of this world, the focus is on men from Palestine, Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, and Iran. This subchapter is the only one that examines cultural masculinities in connection with a geographic region and the Muslim faith. This decision was led by the fact that religion, politics, and culture are inextricably mixed in the Middle East. (cf. Messerschmidt & Rohde, 2018, 665f.)

The following subchapter centers around European masculinities. Due to the capacity limit of this work, it cannot provide a complete examination of masculinities practiced in each

European country. Instead, this subchapter will focus on masculinities from eastern Europe, which are generally underrepresented in the European conversation. Even though this part of the European continent experienced the most drastic political and cultural shift throughout Europe initiated by the downfall of the Soviet Union, the research on Eastern European masculinities is still limited. (cf. CROME 2005, 143)

A close examination of Latin-American masculinity follows the subchapter about European masculinity. By 'Latin America,' I generally mean the South-American continent. The worldwide pressures men experience to behave 'like a man' are also expressed throughout South America. These hegemonic masculine values are generally shared through homosocial behavior among men and the limit they experience when addressing emotions and issues of sexuality and paternity. (cf. Vigoya 2001, 249) (cf. Gutmann & Vigoya 2005, 117)

The following sub-chapter highlights Asian masculinities. Asia is a vast continent; therefore, the focus is on East-Asian masculinities. This includes men from China, South Korea, and Japan. These three countries are inhibiting a significant aspect of globalization processes. In hindsight to developing global business masculinity, this subchapter also describes globalization's influence on East-Asian masculinities. (cf. CROME 2005, 147)

The last regional masculinity of this chapter addresses masculinities on the African continent. As will be explained throughout this subchapter, Africa is one of the continents that still suffers the most from the impact of colonialism. Therefore, contemporary men from African countries experience the challenge of finding a place in an economically dominated and exploited society. (cf. Ammann& Staudacher 2020, 760) This hardship multiplies with the racial barriers men with dark skin color face. Due to the need for more research on African masculinities, this work attempts to paint a picture that includes many different African nations. Nonetheless, most research is based on South African Masculinities. Even though the subchapter focuses on South African masculinity, other regional African countries are still included. (cf. Morell 1998, 616)

From a personal point of view, the last sub-chapter, "The effects of colonialism," is essential background knowledge necessary to understand the cultural concept of masculinity. Societies worldwide were dominated by European violence that directed 85% of the world for over 500 years. (cf. Morrell & Swart 2005, 92) Therefore, knowledge about the influences of domination and oppression is mandatory to grasp the concept of different cultural masculinities. Besides explaining what can be understood as the global gender order and the aftermaths of colonialism nowadays, this chapter provides insights into the after-effects of colonialism on Native Americans living in the US and Canada nowadays. Furthermore, this sub-chapter mentions the history of Captain Cook's first step in Hawaii, which eventually led to annexing the islands as a US-American state. (cf. Merry 2021, 61)

3.1 Middle Eastern Muslim masculinities

From a western perspective, Muslim masculinities became a global phenomenon after the terrorist attack by Al-Qaida on New York City's World Trade Center on the 11th of September 2001. Since then, Muslim masculinity has been associated with severe stereotypes about radical Islamic terrorists with long beards and heavy guns. Although the field of masculinity studies is conscious of its Eurocentric perspective, it is still essential to be aware that authors write most literature about non-western masculinities with a western background. The connection between masculinity and culture, in this case also religion, concentrates on Muslim and radical Islamic masculinities, which are not identical. The literature used in this chapter focuses on Muslim Middle Eastern and North African masculinities, mainly from Egypt, Iraq, Iran, and Lebanon. (cf. Gerami 2005, 449)

It is central to this work that there is no single Muslim masculinity. Masculinity is always influenced by the local culture of origin, media influence, and several different societal factors mentioned in the chapter above. When addressing Muslim masculinities, which endured stereotyping, oriental racism, and false media reports, awareness of the western point of view is essential. Frequently, radical, extremist, sexist, and patriarchal masculinities are portrayed as the center of Muslim masculinities. However, looking at the source of revolutions from the Arab spring in several different Muslim countries during the early years of 2010, they originated from young men who put the yearning for democracy above their own life. Therefore, Muslim men are not automatically anti-western but recognize the value of a democratic system, which would benefit their everyday lives heavily. (cf. Messerschmidt & Rohde, 2018, 665) Most young men who initiated the uproar that led to the Arab spring were university students. Striving for gender equality, privatizing religious practices, and liberation of access to education were their primary concerns. Similar to western societies and democracies, these men want to have the opportunity to be free of dress mandatories and rules for interaction with the opposite sex in public. (cf. Gerami 2005, 455) "Unlike the Islamists, who blame mostly the outsiders, imperialists, or globalization, this group puts the blame at the door of the national leaders." (Gerami 2005, 455)

Muslim men who live in western countries have also become progressive in their agenda to reform Muslim masculinity. A growing discourse between different Muslims shares the intention to reform their future identity. These modern advances to develop masculinity originate from environmentalist movements, gender studies, and liberalized Muslim practices. While fighting against extremism and fundamentalism, modern men still want to preserve the core ideals of Islam that are beneficial for a peaceful community. (cf. Gerami 2005, 455)

> This is a fine line, especially for Muslim men in the West. While they are striving for acceptance,
> they are being singled out by the public and profiled by the authorities. To the conservative Muslims,
> they lack ethnic authenticity and have sold out their true faith for the price of admission to the West.

To the dominant group of their Western homes, they are suspects deserving to be watched.
(Gerami 2005, 455)

Colonial intervention in the Middle East led Muslim masculinity into assimilation and changes. Men who embodied local concepts of masculinity felt threatened by colonial superiority and therefore began to idolize outer expressions of the Muslim faith, combined with the expression of dominating patriarchy. Women's veil and the protection of their 'honor,' which can be associated with the status as a virgin, became central identity markers for the evolving concept of Muslim masculinity. Not only has the cultural and religious concept of surveilling women been put on a pedestal, but strong national heroes have risen in Muslim countries. These heroes became personifications of a counterapproach to the constantly dominating western concept of masculinity. Men like Reza Shah from Iran or Mustafa Kemal Ataturk from Turkey became attractive for local Muslim men to identify as men who combined nationalist agenda with Muslim values. (cf. Gerami 2005, 450)

Key characteristics from these nationalist stereotypes also were spread and transported through the evolving mass media. Movies in Turkey, Iran, or Egypt depicted male main characters from different backgrounds, such as rural or urban, with strong moral values and physiques. Their main concern was defending a woman's honor or occasionally reminding her to turn away from virile ways of life and show more moral behavior from a Muslim point of view. Interestingly, these characters were never shown as explicitly religious but loyal to Islamic morality. Furthermore, not only local masculine movie figures were idolized, but also famous male figures from American TV, like John Wayne. (cf. Gerami 2005, 451)

Stereotypically nationalized Muslim heroes often derived from ancient popular Muslim characters, like Ali and Hussein. Both were related to the originator of the Muslim faith, the prophet Mohammad. In the Shiite faith, both men symbolize different ideal masculinities which honor cultural and religious concepts of performing manhood. Hussein, prophet Mohammad's grandson, resembles the 'shahid,' the martyr persona. Radical Islamic groups have repeatedly demonstrated and idealized this interpretation of his personality. Ali, prophet Mohammad's son-in-law, stands for the role of warrior and military. Both personalities are essential in performing Shiite Muslim masculinity from Lebanon to Pakistan and are celebrated annually as role models. (cf. ibid)

While western media often sees the reason for radical Islamist terror groups in a racist interpretation of the Muslim faith, political exploitation of resources and people coupled with unstable and corrupt governments are often the actual source. Rising living costs, low employment opportunities, and the pressure to secure one's family's future often lead men to support and help from radical Islamic groups. They advertise future members by supporting their families and giving themselves a voice to fight against injustice. Therefore, it is crucial to

look at why most men join these organizations, which often derive from dangerous living conditions coupled with the hope for a better future. (cf. Gerami 2005, 453)

The leader of the terrorist organization Al-Qaida, Osama Bin Laden, knew precisely how to address the needs of Muslim men in the global south. Analyzing his speeches, the scholars Messerschmidt and Rohde (2018) discovered his way of constructing jihadist hegemonic masculinity, which contrasts with Western hegemonic masculinity. Drawing on values of masculine resistance against colonialism from the 19th century, Bin Laden combined heroism, the warrior image, and the idealization of the Muslim martyr with religious extremism. Nonetheless, jihadist hegemonic masculinity builds on the foundation of a traditional tribal patriarchal masculinity that emphasizes the concept of shame and honor through domination and aggressiveness. (cf. Messerschmidt & Rohde 2018, 665)

By spinning a narrative that symbolizes world politics, Bin Laden used the main characters of villain, hero, and victim to spread his agenda against the US and Israel. The role of the protective hero, which should be taken upon by all Muslim men in becoming Al-Qaida participants, is central to freeing the worldwide Muslim community, the *Umma*, the victim of western oppression. (cf. ibid., 668) Muslim men become heroes when fulfilling their role of protecting the *Umma's* honor. Interestingly, the word *Umma* is female in Arabic and means 'mother'. Therefore, in the discourse of Bin Laden, Muslim men are called to protect the female *Umma* to restore the symbolic female honor. (cf. ibid., 670) Furthermore, Bin Laden used the gendered narrative of the U*mma* as a complicit, vulnerable, weak, and feminized group, with him as a heterosexual, patriarchal protective father who protects land and the umma as a symbolic wife and family. (cf. ibid., 676)

Being reminded about the precarious living conditions for many Muslims in the Middle East, Northern Africa, and Asia, Muslim men were and are still very susceptible to calls to take up guns and fight against the imperial invader. Although terrorism is a false reaction, it has been confirmed that many civilians suffered significant losses simultaneously with the American military intervening. Therefore, promises from extremist religious leaders like Bin Laden about the reward for martyrs fall on very vulnerable and fertile ground. (cf. ibid., 672)

Muslim men who became Al-Qaida members were promised rewards for becoming religious martyrs, like having a 'free pass into heaven after death, followed by their close family members. Furthermore, becoming a religious martyr also includes the promise to access 72 virgins in heaven. (cf. ibid., 672)

By painting the decision to become a religious terrorist as the only proper way for a moral Muslim man, Bin Laden put many Muslim men into an ethical dilemma. Are they still recognized in their community as righteous Muslims if they decline to participate in terrorist organizations? Depending on the level of indoctrination a community experiences, it becomes more difficult to answer this question logically. Following Bin Laden's image, martyrs and Al-Qaida members

redefined hegemonic Islamic masculinity by freeing the *Umma* from her oppressors, the west. Embodying this hegemonic Islamic masculinity, men automatically receive access to power, respect, and prestige. (cf. ibid., 675) "Given that the imperialistic practices of the United States threatened Muslim men's masculine responsibility to rescue and protect the umma, only contextually "appropriate" masculine practices can help overcome the challenge." (Messerschmidt & Rohde 2018, 674)

MacKenzie and Foster (2017) introduced the concept of masculinity nostalgia by combining Muslim masculinity with the situation of active war and martyr masculinities. Analyzing the occupation and armed conflict between Israel and Palestine that has been going on for decades, the authors describe how Palestinians developed a yearning for peace. Peace has been associated with the traditional and secure past, which is often also an idealized memory. During the war, men and women often fall back into very conservative and rigid gender roles- leaning onto stereotypes of the past because they associate these roles with peace. Therefore, this gender nostalgia is expressed by embracing solid gender stereotypes during the war. (cf. Mackenzie & Foster 2017, 207)

> Feminist studies have suggested that in times of armed conflict, gender relations and ideologies
> undergo a process of dramatic disruption and militarization in which expectations of men's roles and
> traits become framed around soldiering and militancy. (Mackenzie & Foster 2017, 209)

Civilians associate the peace they know from their past with the patriarchal rule they also experienced during their peaceful past. This 'masculinity nostalgia' holds men hostage to fulfill unrealistic roles during a war. Similar to the pressure men feel to embody hegemonic masculinity, Palestinian men experience low self-esteem and frustration about the impossibility of fulfilling their community's expectations. (cf. ibid., 208)

Similar to Bin Laden's feminization of the worldwide community of Muslims, protecting one's land is associated with protecting the women of one's own family in the Palestinian context. During massive land seizures in 1947 and 1948, Palestinian men who lost access to their land called this process 'rape': "Much of the poetry and political analysis at this time used rape as a metaphor for the land seizures, implicitly linking men's failure to prevent the loss of territory to their inability to protect 'their' women." (MacKenzie & Foster 2017, 210)

After Palestinian men could not protect large areas of their land against Israeli seizures, they focused on another combination of nationalism, masculinity, and paternity: Fatherhood. However, from 1987 until 1993, Palestinian men experienced difficulty protecting their offspring during the First Intifada. (cf. MacKenzie & Foster 2017, 210) Adolescent men acquired their status of manhood by engaging in violent conflict with Israeli soldiers. Because of the power and resource imbalance, many young Palestinean men died in the conflict. Their loss was mourned and celebrated as a martyr's fight to protect Muslim and Palestinian rights. This

concept of shaping one's masculinity through torture and armed conflict with Israelis led to the inability of Palestinian fathers to protect their offspring. (cf. MacKenzie & Foster 2017, 211)

Furthermore, the paternity crisis of Palestinian fathers is also influenced by another form of oppression from the Israeli military; border checkpoints. Families get stopped, interrogated, and often strip-searched whenever crossing the border between Palestinian and Israeli land. The harassment and violence Palestinian fathers experience in front of their children is deeply humiliating, combined with the inability to protect their children from these situations. Palestinian men also describe these violations as emasculating since they associate powerlessness with femininity. (cf. ibid., 212-213)

Besides the ideals of fatherhood and landownership, Muslim Palestinian masculinity also consists of the role of breadwinner. Traditionally, men have had different kinds of occupation to generate an income for their wife, who stayed at home and was responsible for childrearing and domestic chores. Due to the economic shifts caused by the Israeli land occupation, Palestinian men have great difficulties securing employment. Even though greater powers cause this inability to generate reliable income, men are often held responsible by their community and family members. Being unable to provide for one's own family is a reason to face humility and lose the patriarchal superior status. (cf. ibid., 217)

The three ways for Palestinian men to express their masculinity through fatherhood, land ownership, and securing the family's financial income, have become impossible ideals. Led by the frustration of enacting these roles from the past, men often become violent against their family members, especially women. Similar to the powerlessness men feel described in the toxic masculinity chapter, the feeling of losing authority also leads Palestinian men to become violent. Especially in desperate times of political oppression and economic shortage, masculinity nostalgia is a phenomenon that reminds people of their peaceful past. In an unconscious effort, oppressed people often connect their past with traditional masculinity. Reestablishing this masculinity may also establish the peace they connect with their memories. (cf. MacKenzie & Foster 2017, 218) Interestingly, this powerlessness experienced by Palestinians is shared among the global community of Muslims (cf. Gerami 2005, 454):

> Additionally, for the majority of Muslims, the Palestinians' suffering has turned into a chronic feeling of guilt and shame, regardless of ethnic identity (Kurd, Arab, or Iranian) or religious orientation (Armenians, Druz, etc.). The Middle Eastern / Islamic psyche aches with the pain and humiliation of the Palestinians, sometimes leading to desperate measures. (Gerami 2005, 454)

3.2 European masculinities

Similar to the difficulty in pinpointing Muslim masculinity in the previous chapter, it is impossible to put European masculinity in a neat descriptive box. The vast number of different countries is multiplied by even higher numbers of cultural concepts, regions, languages, religious beliefs, and customs. Consequently, there is no single European masculinity.

Furthermore, it has to be mentioned that although there is a wide variety of studies and literature on European masculinity, the capacity of topics this work includes limits a more detailed examination of regional European masculinities than the one provided. Therefore, this chapter highlights the post-Soviet Union part of Europe since Eastern Europe tends to be overlooked in conversations on European masculinity. (cf. CROME 2005, 143)

Shared patterns across all of Europe's countries are the financial advantages men have over women, the association between men's work and payment, and women's work that is often unpaid. Above all, the sad similarity all European countries share is men's violence against women, which occurs in many different forms. This violence happens either in apparent physical abuse or hidden ways, such as being isolated, having no control over decisions and movements, or having strict financial control. (cf. ibid., 144).

Sadly, men are the primary agents in trafficking women and children across European borders. Once they have reached their destination, the kidnapped are sold into the sex trade. This sexual exploitation of women and children in vulnerable positions is a commercial form of abuse that men enact over their victims daily. Across Europe, there are various laws and rules about sex work. In Germany, prostitution is legal, and even in countries where sex work is illegal, there is often a lack of investigation. Sweden is the only European country with illegal prostitution laws where not the sex worker is criminally charged, but the customer. Therefore, Sweden focuses on the financial enabler, who holds up this circle of violence and exploitation. Behind Sweden's decision was the understanding that sex workers, usually women, are acting out of desperate reasons to secure the survival of themselves and their children. (cf. ibid., 146)

Scandinavia and Northern Europe are said to have more egalitarian gender relations between men and women than in southern and eastern Europe. Lilleaas (2007) studied Norwegian masculinity by analyzing a team of male professional handball players. The athletes reported that even though they are experiencing changes in gender balance, they still feel pressure to appear tough and strong. All team members wish to be more active in raising their children and spending more time as a family. (cf. Lilleaas 2007, 2). Furthermore, the Norwegian athletes expressed that housework should be shared between parents, regardless of job occupation or child-rearing responsibilities. (cf. ibid., 5) The feeling of being trapped between old and new ways of masculinity is connected with a rise in anxiety and self-consciousness. The teammates describe the insistence of their coach and former team members, who are all older than the current players, to enforce their dominant masculinity. Among the younger generation of athletes, a modern concept of masculinity prevails, focused on being vocal about emotions and gender equality. Frequently, younger generations express the intent to lower ideals of toxic masculinity because they witness its effect on men from their society who belong to older generations. Therefore, it is not as easy to proclaim that all men

of Scandinavia are futuristic in their attempt to achieve gender equality. (cf. Lilleaas 2007, 7-8)

The author group CROME (Critical Research on Men in Europe) criticizes the European Union concerning their perspective on masculinity. According to CROME, the EU focuses more on the problems men endure, such as decreasing health and economic hardship than on the problems caused by men's behavior. The consequences of male actions include physical, emotional, and sexual violence, paired with the longing for a dominant status that enables toxic masculinity. (cf. CROME 2005,146). The negative impact of societal pressures on men's health is also reflected in European men's health. Across Europe, men have a lower life expectancy than women, higher participation in accidents, suicides, and a higher rate of being murdered. Across all European countries, studies report detrimental masculine health statuses caused by participation in alcohol and drug abuse. CROME refers to the societal pressures of hegemonic masculinity as health neglect and high engagement in risk-taking. (cf. CROME 2005, 144) As expressed in the chapter above by Rotundi (2020), this is not only a European but also a worldwide phenomenon. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 43)

One historical event that significantly influenced many European countries was the downfall of the Soviet Union. After its dissolution, many small eastern-European countries were left to fend for themselves, which caused a resurge of nationalism that became a central part of European masculinity. Regaining national independence and freedom to act without being part of a broad civilization like the Soviet Union was compared to regaining masculine agency after feeling emasculated in the socialist hierarchy. (cf. CROME 2005, 149) The rise of hegemonic masculinity and nationalism was also heavily present during the Balkan wars of the 1990s. Forms of 'gendercide,' the rape of enemy women or mass murder of young and middle-aged men, affected gender relations, traditions, and societal systems of Eastern Europe heavily. (cf. ibid., 150)

Recovering from the aftereffects of the Soviet Union, countries across eastern Europe still experience economic difficulties. Polish men who became jobless describe the loss of their breadwinner role with the automatic loss of the family leadership role. Employed polish women took over the financial responsibility of securing the family's living conditions. This experience led many polish men into a depressive episode, suppressed by card playing, watching TV, and increased alcohol consumption. Across countries that belonged to the Soviet Union, alcohol consumption increased heavily in the 1990s. Several reasons caused this, but economic hardship was a cause for many. (cf. CROME 2005, 151)

The importance of being their family's breadwinner for men is shared across different cultures, as described previously for Palestinian men, but also as a general characteristic of hegemonic masculinity. Losing this vital role by becoming unemployed heavily affects men's behavior, health, and self-worth. Therefore, CROME supposes that by becoming jobless, a

man loses his voice in civilization by becoming part of the 'non-active' culture. The author group supposes that as a member of a society who receives no income, one automatically loses agency and the ability to affect change since one either has to depend financially on others or focuses on survival techniques to assure viability. (cf. ibid., 152)

As has been described by the Norwegian handball athletes, men across Europe experience a push- and pull effect between conservative and modern models of masculinity. On the one hand, young men from Poland show more involvement in the child-delivering and raising process compared to polish fathers of previous generations. Furthermore, sharing household chores and engagement in cooking for their family has increased. (cf. ibid., 153). On the other hand, although a society's patriarchal structure may have changed over time, old concepts about masculine roles and traditions are still present, as reported from Estonia. Although young generations place gender equality on a high pedestal, men still enjoy institutional benefits, such as having more access to leadership roles. At the same time, women primarily work in caretaking and nurturing work fields. (cf. ibid., 154)

Interestingly, the post-socialist society of eastern Europe has contributed to restoring men as the models for the family bread-winning role. This function as the primary financial provider automatically grants access to financial control over possession and income and makes men vulnerable to excess financial control and exploitation. Although it has become more common for companies to grant men access to parental leave, this is still met with high rates of hesitation. One reason for this is purely economic; in most heterosexual relationships, men receive higher salaries than women. This is due to institutional sexism, the gender pay gap, and the fact that male-dominated jobs usually have higher payments than women-dominated work fields. Another reason men are reluctant to take their parental leave is fear of experiencing negative consequences for taking time off when re-entering their job. Men worry about having less access to promotions after taking parental leaves, with the possibility of facing ridicule from their coworkers. (cf. ibid., 156-157)

European masculinity and Europe itself are also very heavily influenced by widespread racism. Questions about who is more European are closely related to the importance of whiteness. Per hegemonic masculinity characteristics, whiteness enables European men to feel empowered. Different areas of Europe are associated with different living conditions and wealth. Western European men enjoy a luxurious position among European men since they usually live in an elevated economic society with the outward appearance of very light skin. (cf. CROME 2005, 147)

Across Europe, especially Eastern Europe, many men wonder what kind of masculinity they want to embody. From an eastern European perspective, a society usually positions itself along the lines of the Western concept associated with western Europe and the lines of an eastern Russian model. Many post-Soviet Union countries lean towards their neighboring

Western countries in their economic, social, cultural, and political models. This tendency goes in hand with the theory of western-oriented global masculinity. The spread of global business masculinities has influenced other hegemonic masculinities. (cf. CROME 2005, 147) Global masculinity originates from Western European masculinity, as factors for hegemonic masculinity depend heavily on European descent. (cf. Rotundi 2020,19)

3.3 Latin American masculinities

Research on Latin American masculinity started in the 1980s and was initiated by the fields of feminist and gender studies, similar to the studies of other regional masculinities. One main reason for studying Latin American masculinities was to find out more about the origin of violence between men themselves and between violence towards women. Furthermore, the masculinity scholars wanted to raise attention to the social problems of southern America and pave the way to finding solutions. Before diving into subfields of south American masculinity studies, it is essential to note that there are significant class disparities throughout Latin America, which influence the display of masculinity heavily. Furthermore, Latin America is home to people from different ethnic backgrounds, especially Indigenous people, Afro-Latin people, and people of Spanish and Portuguese descent. (cf. Gutmann & Vigoya 2005, 114)

Among literature and studies about Latin American masculinity, machismo is prevalent. Compared to toxic masculinity, "…machismo is the expression of an inferiority which is hidden through acting superior and undefeatable and by suppressing feminine qualities, while stressing masculine ones." (Rotundi 2020, 33). Vigoya (2001) describes the stereotype of machos as similar to the way hegemonic masculinity is defined. Machismo is the belief that men are made from a series of absolutes, meaning that they never cry, never retreat, never get involved in affection, must always engage in competition, and must always be the best. (cf. Vigoya 2001, 240) Furthermore, in collaboration with Gutmann, Vigoya (2005) described machismo as an overused bellwether term for general discussions on Latin American masculinity, using it as a common synonym for general sexism. (cf. Gutmann & Vigoya 2005, 123)

Influenced by well-established concepts on the acceptable display of homosociality among each other, South American men generally have specific places such as sports clubs or bars where they can enjoy their company. These places, where one can learn and reflect about others and one's masculine behavior, are important for men to learn about the standard masculine display. (cf. Vigoya 2001, 249) When talking about private life, men usually use parables or metaphors from sports. Following the hegemonic masculinity principle of being self-reliant and solving problems alone is typical. Furthermore, it is frowned upon in a hegemonic frame to share emotions with other men. Through the appearance of tough sports talks, Latin American men can share emotions and help each other using this coded language.

(cf. Gutmann & Vigoya 2005, 117) However, younger men of different national backgrounds report the approach towards a modern masculine society, where it is acceptable to share emotions and concerns openly. By seeking communities that create a safe space without the sexist charging of emotions, new generations of Latin American men progress towards a more egalitarian gender model and more liberal masculinity that attempts to redeem itself of hegemonic values. (cf. ibid., 119)

Similar to other parts of the world, Latin America's masculinity has been heavily influenced by the rise of the feminist movement during the 1960s. Changes in economic, political, social, and cultural contexts brought changes in gender roles and values. The growing participation of women in the economy as employees led to changes in male attitudes and behavior. Vigoya (2001) even connects the rise of women in working positions with the increase of men performing household duties, leading to an "erosion of machismo". (Vigoya 2001, 241). Similar to the generational difference previously described by Norwegian men, young Chilean men also prefer a more egalitarian gender model in contrast to older Chilean men, who favor a model with superior hegemonic masculinity over women. (cf. Vigoya 2001, 242) Additionally, men across various Latin American countries feel pressure to embody values from a particular 'double system' of masculinity. On the one hand, their concept of masculinity depends on their ability to be economic providers for their families. On the other hand, the ideal of masculinity appears to be free of all kinds of social ties and responsibilities, including relationships with women. Consequently, the roles of bread-winners and free vagabonds are both hegemonic Latin American masculinity ideals, although they are in stark contrast to each other. (cf. ibid)

As a variety of ethnic backgrounds is present in Southern American countries, one has to be aware of the connection between cultural identity and gender identity. Vigoya and Gutmann (2005) point out how Latin American masculinity defines itself in contrast to Black and rich masculinity. Therefore, is not only ethnic masculinity a category of comparison but also class structure. Being influenced by racism and the historical background of slavery, Black masculinity is considered dangerous and animalistic in Latin America. Rich Latin-American men are perceived as effeminate because they usually have higher maintenance in their outward appearance and are, therefore, more concerned with themselves. (cf. Gutmann & Vigoya 2005, 122)

A Brazilian subethnicity, the Gaucho identity, is strongly connected to cultural expressions about myths, magic, enchantments, and representations of death. In the geographic area of Brazil where the Gaucho identity is present, male suicide rates are significantly higher than in other parts of the country. Among Gaucho men, suicide is a common practice and a way for men to demonstrate their masculinity. (cf. Vigoya 2001, 244)

The importance of class differences is responsible for the fact that even though men share the same place of origin, their concepts of masculinity can still vary significantly due to

economic class differences, coupled with differences in generational belonging and educational background. To acknowledge masculinity's plurality, one must understand that masculinity is not a static quality but always a manifestation of social and cultural expressions and values. (cf. ibid., 245).

One aspect that defines men's lives and identities all around the globe is paternity. In Latin America, fatherhood is often identified as masculinity's most elevated form. The new demands the feminist movement of the 1960s brought along also influenced the cultural understanding of fatherhood. In Colombia, a collaboration between women and priests improved the image and benefits of paternity for men. Their goal to get men to become increasingly involved fathers was successfully reached. Previous to this value of idealized fatherhood, men tended to be remarkably absent in their child's lives. (cf. Gutmann & Vigoya 2005, 117) Vigoya (2001) reports that Mexican fatherhood is a concept that has changed historically and implements differences for each financial class. The generational divide between varying paternal involvement in the child-rearing process already mentioned previously is also experienced by Mexican fathers. The image of the traditional patriarch who provides financially for his family but feels inadequate for child care and domestic chores is still very present. However, this trope of fatherhood is challenged by the counterapproach of egalitarian relationships between heterosexual partners and increased involvement in domestic duties. (cf. Vigoya 2001, 246-257)

Since the rate of young parenthood is comparatively high in Latin America compared to other continents, adolescent fathers face additional challenges. It is reported that even when they want to be involved in childrearing, they often face institutional barriers and societal ridicule. Because of their young age, their abilities to be a good, loving father to their children is highly doubted. In Brazil, there is a widespread belief that a child belongs to its mother; therefore, adolescent fathers are not taken seriously by educational institutions for their children like their female counterparts. (cf. ibid., 248)

Being actively involved in children's lives is also often connected to classism. By studying father's engagement, Gutmann & Vigoya (2005) discovered that men with low financial means often were active in the child-raising process, while men who belonged to the upper financial classes usually hired nannies as a substitute for themselves. (cf. Gutmann & Vigoya 2005, 117) Often, parents' intentions on increased involvement are hindered by economic issues. Since women are also active as paid working members of the economy, the workplace and the home have been separated. The familial division between bread-winning fathers and stay-at-home mothers is no longer accurate, which leads to the realization that the idealized nuclear family is no longer a beneficial child-raising model for Latin American families. (cf. ibid., 122)

According to Gutmann & Vigoya (2005), south American men tend to separate their sexuality from reproduction. A man's first sexual intercourse is celebrated as a rite of passage.

The heavy influence of concepts like power and control on sexual behavior and gender identity creates a very complex Latin American masculinity. Power is also critical in constructing Puerto Rican masculinity, topped off by the importance of genital size. (cf. ibid., 120)

The hegemonic trait of homophobia is very present in Latin America. In Colombia, it is typical for young men to call themselves 'marica'. This is a typical Latin surname and a slur to address queer people. Colombian men call each other 'marica' to accuse a lack of loyalty. Therefore, being a traitor is equivalent to being queer- because queer people are disloyal to a heteronormative system (cf. ibid., 118). Furthermore, male homosexuality is automatically connected to concepts of femininity and passivity. Thus, when men engage in sexual acts with each other, there is always a focus on the actively penetrating partner and the one being penetrated, also called the passive part. In the minds of general homophobia, the active penetrating part is not acting in a homosexual manner, only the one sexual partner who is being penetrated anally. (cf. ibid.)

3.4 Asian masculinities

Research about Asian masculinities began to emerge comparatively late in the 1980s to 1990s and was often focused on stereotypical East-West comparisons. This chapter highlights mainly East-Asian masculinities, specifically the countries China, Japan, and South Korea. (cf. Louie 2012, 929). Additionally, as has been the case with other non-western civilizations, there is not much research on Asian masculinities. However, a growing body of research has emerged in the last ten years, indicating that the interest in Asian masculinities will grow steadily. (cf. Taga 2005, 129)

Before addressing recent characteristics of Asian masculinity, this subchapter addresses interesting details about the premodern Asian society regarding masculinity.

Many different religious and cultural traditions have influenced east Asia, most importantly Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. These doctrines have undergone significant changes and have impacted the development of the concept of masculinity. (cf. ibid)

The teachings of the ancient Chinese thinker Confucius (551-479 B.C) became the core curriculum of Chinese education. Defining an 'outer space, the public, which was to be occupied by men, and the 'inner space' of the house, which had to be occupied by women, had major influences on the gender roles of premodern society. This firm hierarchy of the sexes was also put into practice through the custom of women having to follow their male relatives in public visibly. Furthermore, the most central duty of a woman was to bear offspring. If a couple could not receive children, the woman was declared a 'non-person' because she did not fulfill her role. (cf. Taga 2005, 130)

Core principles of East Asian masculinities are constructed from the Confucian ideas of '*wen*' and '*wu.*' '*Wen*' *r*esembles the importance of mental and civic ideals and is most often

personified in the character of an intelligent scholar. *'Wu'* stands for the embodiment of physical and martial ideals and is usually expressed through the role of a warrior or swordsman. The third hero in typical Chinese historical fiction is the prince, who stands for the perfect balance between '*wen'* and *'wu.'* Interestingly, the character of *'wen,'* which values intellectualism, is described to be closer to femininity and womanhood than the concept of *'wu.'* (cf. ibid)

Even though premodern East Asian societies are described as having similar values to premodern European societies, there is one significant difference. Before the 20th century, men were not divided into categories of hetero- or homosexual. Instead, male sexual behavior was defined as casual bisexuality. Sex between men, 'Nanshoku,' began to spread within samurai classes and Buddhist monasteries reported from the 9th to 12th century. It was believed to bring masculinity to men, whereas sexual intercourse with women, 'Joshoku,' was believed to weaken their masculinity. By practicing bisexuality, the importance of continuing the own family lineage was not threatened by the same-sexual behavior of East Asian men. (cf. Taga 2005, 130)

However, the tolerance and widespread practice of nanshoku came to an end with industrialization and increasing western influence following World War 2, which contributed to the spread of Christianity in Eastern Asia. These new ethical ideals began to change sexual behavior drastically. Sex became a tool for reproduction, and sexual intercourse between people of the same sex was perceived as a crime. Therefore, homosexuality became a practice men began to avoid and hide. (cf. ibid., 131) Widespread homophobia in Japan nowadays shares the same ideology that homophobic men from Latin America reported, recalled previously in this work. (cf. Gutmann & Vigoya 2005, 120) Following this logic, sex between men involves a masculine part, which is penetrating, while the feminine part is resembled by the man who is penetrated. Therefore, Japanese men renounce male same-sex, fearing it turns masculine men feminine. (cf. Ma et al. 2021, 2406)

During the economic growth that followed World War 2 in the 1950s, Japanese masculinity began to create the hegemonic figure of the salaryman 'saraiiman'. By lifelong swearing loyalty to his employer, work became the main concern for the Japanese salaryman. (cf. Taga 2005, 132) This character represents the hegemonic provider of his family. A typical marriage constellation up until the 1980s was between a full-time housewife and a salaryman. Similar to the unrealistic ideals of hegemonic masculinity, most men in Japan did not embody the salaryman role but were single and lived in poor-quality housing. Instead of a full-time contract, they were usually hired as manual day laborers. Because work was not ideal for these men, they emphasized the importance of their leisure time with gambling and alcohol usage. (cf. Taga 2005, 133)

The Maoist Chinese regime changed the relationship between the sexes, actively improving women's status around 1960. Promoting Maoist teachings like "Women hold up half the sky," women received work permits, legitimized divorces, and more public visibility for the struggle to achieve gender equality. Nonetheless, the institutional upper hand of political and economic power still belongs to men. (cf. ibid)

The East Asian tradition of employed husbands handing over their salary to their wives establishes women as the financial head of the household. Mothers taking over the leadership in decisions about finances and child-rearing creates the atmosphere for many men to feel like guests in their own homes. This is only emphasized by the little time Japanese, Chinese and Korean men often spend in their homes. The custom of spending long hours at their work often follows the tradition of after-work relaxation. Typically, these relaxation activities consist of (sometimes sexual) attention from attractive hostesses and smoking and alcohol consumption. (cf. ibid., 135)

Nowadays, many men from China, Japan, and South Korea are increasingly aware of their outer appearance. The growing middle class, who often acquired their degrees at American Universities, usually values an internationalized appearance. Speaking English, drinking French wine, and wearing Rolex watches are common ways to perform the role of a modern, international man. The relatively new term 'metrosexual' usually addresses these groups of men called 'White-Collar beautiful man' and 'city beautiful man' in China. In an attempt to abandon the strong salaryman image, many East-Asian men prefer to work for international companies and enjoy regular travels to the West. Interestingly, identifying with the West or the east seems to be a generational question (cf. Louie 2012, 932): "Whereas metrosexuals, particularly those in China, tend to equate modernity with the 'West' – and America in particular, younger groups tend to identify much more strongly with popular cultural icons coming out of Japan and Korea." (Louie 2012, 933)

Intriguingly, all three countries experience an emergence of a 'soft male' ideal. Japanese mangas, specifically the subgenre "BL- boy love," depict love stories that typically happen between two young men. Written by female authors for female readers, women show their preference for a certain kind of character: "By romanticizing the homosocial or homoerotic bonds between men, the women authors have created a fantasy world in which men are feminized and relate to each other in loving rather than competitive ways." (Louie 2012, 934) A contrast to typical hegemonic Western masculinity is also embodied by the main character of the famous Japanese TV show 'Otomen.' The character is a Japanese boy who enjoys stereotypically female hobbies such as cooking and sewing but still incorporates the typical importance of wen and wu characteristics; he can fight and is competitive. (cf. Louie 2012, 934) Japan also experiences the emergence of the ideal of 'herbivorous men,' meaning literally grass-eating men (cf. Louie 2012, 935):

…an herbivore refers to a man who is gentle, quiet, and soft. He typically does not have traditional "manly" characteristics such as aggressiveness and sexual dominance. Instead, he treats women not as sex objects but as friends. He does not care whether he has a girlfriend or not, and he likes the same things women like, such as cooking and eating cake. (Louie 2012, 935)

Members form Korean pop bands often embrace these stereotypes of a young, feminine character. Through their international success, these singers have impacted how Asian women perceive desirable masculinity. (cf. ibid) In October 2022, the internationally well-known South Korean K-pop group 'BTS' shocked their global fan community with their announcement to put their careers on pause, participating in mandatory South Korean military training. (cf. McCurry 2022, n.p.) The law of South Korean military Service requires each member of South Korean Society who wants to participate in the employment market to fulfill mandatory training. Previous to the Equal Employment law of 1988, this was only required for men. With the emergence of women in the economic market, the state made military training mandatory for each young person in its society. The importance of military service as a nationalist ideal followed by the path to becoming a thriving South Korean international manager influences local masculinity heavily. For South Korean men, the pressure to embody this ideal weighs painfully on their well-being since it is valued to work very long hours (cf. Ma et al. 2021, 2407): "…unbearable mental burden since others in the society take their supernumerary labor force for granted. "(Ma et al. 2021, 2407)

From a Western point of view, Asian 'soft' masculinity is often deemed as a lack of testosterone and effeminate, especially in comparison to typical hegemonic western male behavior. However, the construction of local hegemonic masculinity originates from different sources. In East Asia, women's role as authors and consumers is central to crafting an ideal male character. In the global West, hegemonic masculinity is usually defined by men, for men without any influence on what women might value. In contrast, women are active participants combining their thoughts, desires, and consumerist process in painting a picture of an idealized East Asian masculinity. (cf. ibid., 936)

The importance of the mentioned historic wen-wu characteristic is still present in masculinity nowadays. Moreover, it becomes more present or passive concerning the political situation of a country:

It followed socio-economic changes so that, for example, when the Mongols were in power, the more muscular, wu masculinity took precedence. In more stable times, wen officials dominated because of the need to provide manpower for the huge bureaucracy. Nowadays, something else is emerging. Modernity demands new skills such as computer know-how, so the "nerds" (…) can be idealized. (Louie 2012, 939)

This quote supports Connell's and Messerschmidt's (2005) theory that hegemonic masculinity depends on a culture's political situation. (cf. Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, 849) Furthermore, Louie's (2012) quote also demonstrates the flexibility of a hegemonic masculine

ideal. As explained earlier, hegemonic masculinity is fluid and changes over time. (cf. Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, 844)

3.5 African masculinities

Compared to the previously addressed masculinities, African masculinity is highly affected by stereotypes and negative images in the west. This point of view, influenced by colonialism, often shows the African continent and its people negatively. Scholars focus heavily on violence and conflict and tend to neglect African men's positive behaviors and manners. However, as will be explained later by Mfecane (2018), the attempt to understand African masculinity from a Eurocentric perspective will lead to failure. (Mfecane 2018, 295)

Large (2000) 's report about African masculinity provides an excellent example for Mfecane (2018) 's thesis. Large (2000) emphasizes that the increased participation of young men in armed conflicts stems from a lack of educational and economic opportunities. Therefore, men from countries such as Uganda, Somalia, Mozambique, Liberia, and Sierra Leonie see no other opportunity for themselves than to become warlords. This is coupled with the disappearing opportunity to express manhood through cultural expressions of physical abilities; therefore, the paramilitary groups act as substitutes. (cf. Large 2000, 27)

A counterapproach to Large (2000)'s attempt to explain the participation of African men in armed conflict is provided by Orelus (2010). According to the scholar, "…oppressed people tend to internalize and reproduce the oppression of which they have been a victim." (Orelus 2010, 72). Therefore, people from Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Congo, and numerous other African countries are all descendants of African men and women who lived under European colonialism. Over long periods, the colonized and the following generations internalized the violence their white rulers demonstrated. (cf. Orelus 2010, 73). Pinar (2001) supports this argument about the origin of violence in Black men. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 859) The men who participate in armed conflicts in countries like Sudan or Uganda often come from poor and working-class backgrounds and are, therefore, politically and economically powerless. Orelus (2010) explains how the vulnerable position of these men is now exploited by fellow Black men in powerful positions: "…poor men of color who have been the victims of Western colonialism tend to become the tools of wealthier men of color in social systems inherited from the whites who formerly colonized them." (Orelus 2010, 75)

Ammann and Staudacher (2020) address this typical behavior in academia of painting African masculinity in a negative light, if ever mentioned at all. Additionally, the authors mention that it is typical among people from the global north to perceive Africa as one country, even though it is a continent with cultural and ethnic richness shared between 54 different nations. African men are usually characterized as a problem that keeps the African continent in a downward spiral between poverty and armed conflicts. By exclusively reporting behavior of

drunkenness, violence, and abuse of power, African men are described in a very negative way by the worldwide academic field of masculinity studies. (cf. Ammann& Staudacher 2020, 760)

The unequal position of resources is heavily emphasized in academia: "Knowledge production on men and masculinities in Africa is- similar to other topics- marked by inequalities and power imbalances between what has been labelled as the Global North and the Global South." (Amman & Staudacher 2020, 761) Alongside an emerging group of colleagues, the authors call for writing from an African point of view. Furthermore, African masculinity can only be understood under colonialism. Although the exploitation of the African context will be addressed several times throughout this chapter, a revision of colonialism's impact on masculinities worldwide is presented in the following subchapter. (cf. Amman & Staudacher 2020, 761)

Worldwide, the African continent inhabits the youngest population. "Young African men are not, however, generally in crisis. Even though they are 'increasingly unable to buy a ticket to enter the world of manhood' (…), rupture and violence are not the only coping strategies that male youth can turn to when facing challenging life conditions" (Fuh 2017, 251 in: Ammann& Staudacher 2020, 762). A group of young men in Accra, Ghana, called "Shabomen," use their leisure time to teach girls how to play the guitar. Also, the participation of men in household duties and the childrearing process has increased in Zambia. (cf. Ammann & Staudacher 2020, 762). The Gisu people in Uganda show another ideal example of alternative masculinity. For the Gisu men, the question is not if to use violence but when and how to use it. Interestingly, their ideal of masculinity is defined through self-control. A man should be able to control his anger and know when it is helpful to express it—the Gisu people contempt men who let their violence control them. (cf. Morrell & Swart 2005, 105) Studies on masculinity in Tanzania, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Ghana, and Mali all depict the process of constantly re-establishing and rebuilding masculinity concepts. This goes in hand with the increased inner-African migration toward South Africa for employment opportunities. During this journey, several different masculinities merge and constantly reshape themselves. (cf. Ammann & Staudacher 2020, 763).

Therefore, when academia loosens its focus on negative stereotypes about African men, examples like these show that there is more to African male identity. Alongside other colleagues, Ammann and Staudacher (2020) call on future studies to research the intersection between identity aspects such as fatherhood, religion, ethnicity, health, class, education, income, and occupation. Equally significant, generational differences between masculine values have been pointed out in the chapters above; however, there has yet to be any known research about aging for African masculinity. (cf. ibid., 763)

Concerning the impact migration has on masculinity concepts, the Meru people, who belong to the ethnic group of Bantu and live on Mount Kenya, show interesting behavior. Even

though it was impossible to live utterly secluded from colonial influence, the Meru have successfully preserved their ancient way of life. In tradition to prepare boys for possible future military acts, they engage in play-raiding cattle activity. In the past, cattle raiding was actually done from neighboring communities. Nowadays, this has become a game without the intention of harming animals. Alongside mental activities and theoretical battle tasks, young men have to show their increasing masculinity through a high endurance of pain and increasing physical strength. Until adulthood, it is normal for young and adolescent boys to repress their sexual urges until their marriage ceremony. (cf. Ferguson 2021, 117) Even though individuality is not an overall value on the African continent as it is in Western countries (cf. Mfecane 2018, 294), in a submission ritual, young men of the Meru people exchange their sense of individuality with loyalty to their group. (cf. Ferguson 2021, 117)

This traditional and ritualistic preparation for the manhood of the Meru people is very much unlike other contemporary military masculinities on the African continent. Soldiers in Sierra Leone often feel the need to exaggerate their masculinity with displays of violence and sexual violence in the form of rape. Female soldiers usually adopt this hypermasculine behavior not to be perceived as a potential target. Ghanaian soldiers also report this overuse of violence and rape. Sadly, new fighters and witnessing young boys quickly adapt to this atmosphere and follow the idea that masculinity is established through war and violence. In Eritrea, gender relations in the military are different from the two, just briefly addressed. About one-third of the national military are women soldiers. Although nothing is reported about sexual violence and misconduct within the military, women soldiers still suffer from inner patriarchal domination. After engaging in armed conflict, male and female soldiers fall into typical gender patterns; the men rest and the women have to prepare food for the unit, even though all soldiers experience the same exhaustion from combat. Furthermore, when female soldiers are ready to find a romantic partner, they face difficulties because they no longer display the common ideal of submissive femininity. (cf. Ferguson 2021, 120)

Morell (1998) researches the transition from rural masculinities towards urban masculinities in South Africa. It is vital to understand how South African black masculinity was performed before urbanization:

> "The reserves were not isolated havens of independent black life, far from it. But they were
> places of homesteads, chiefs, kinship networks, burial grounds, communal land – a political and
> social system which was continuous with earlier systems and which contained its own gender
> regimes." (Morell 1998, 615)

Before the impact of European colonization, boys in western Africa had to undergo four different stages of becoming a man. These rites of passage demanded boys to seem unaffected by discomfort. Their stoicism and strength when experiencing pain were tested in several different hazing activities. This process included tactical separation from boys and their

mothers. Women were excluded from these rites, and boys had to move from their mother's homes into the shared communal home of the tribal men. These hazing activities were followed by demonstrations of physical power. Adolescent men often presented their physical strength in wrestling matches. These fighting ceremonies were widely popular and celebrated similarly to the early versions of the Olympic games, including music from trumpet-similar instruments. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 862)

The young men were expected to stay celibate during their fighting age from 16 to 20. This emphasis on physical strength led to the popularity of west African men for their excellent swimming and fighting skills. Around the age of 20, young men were ready to enter the new role of husband- and fatherhood. Because sons and fathers shared much time during their fighting practices and co-living tradition, a strong connection evolved between them. Generally, the husband was perceived as the head of the household. In the patriarchal pre-colonial West Africa, women often had to walk behind their husbands to demonstrate their subordinate position. Husbands inhibited the role of family provider, a mixture of authority over decisions and family members, and the responsibility to secure the family's living conditions. (cf.Pinar 2001 (2), 863)

In pre-colonization Southern Africa, masculinity was celebrated with the ritual of circumcision. (cf. Morell 1998, 620) Furthermore, before the influence of the Christian church, homosexuality was not perceived as a crime. In Zimbabwe, located in the African south, same-sex practices were not discussed. Therefore, there was no public condemnation of homosexuality. Similar to the spiritual value of the berdache among the Native Americans (cf. Vinyeta, Whyte, Lynn 2016, 1), according to Pinar (2001), queer individuals inhibited a similar spiritual role in Africa: "…there was a history of homosexuality in Africa, including the prominence of transvested homosexuals in Africa religion." (Pinar 2001 (2), 876). The introduction of Christianity alongside colonialism challenged hegemonic African values heavily: "Colonialism brought Victorian prejudices to bear on dealing with and reporting on matters involving 'deviant' sexual acts." (Morell 1998, 621). Since western Christian principles are incompatible with local south African ethics about morals, sexuality, life, and death, local ideals and values either had to adapt or oppose these new Christian influences. (cf. Morell 1998, 621)

The plurality of masculinities within South Africa became a 'patchwork of patriarchies' of black African masculinity, colonizing British settlers and ancestors from Dutch colonizers, now known as Afrikaners. The British and Dutch men fought over the hegemonic white control over the local South Africans, which led to the establishment of apartheid in 1948. (cf. Morell 1998, 617) The apartheid rule systematically separated Black people from white people and legally prohibited people with dark skin from having the same freedom and opportunities as their white neighbors. With black people increasingly vanishing from the scene, the white settler

masculinity of British men became the hegemonic standard. Additionally, descendants of the first Dutch colonizers elevated themselves into dominant positions in local institutions such as finances, economy, and politics. (cf. ibid. 618) Black African men were reminded of their inferior status several times daily, for example, by being addressed as 'boy' by White people. This was very common throughout all of Africa and the United States. Regardless of age, grown men were addressed as boys to remind them of their racial and economically inferior status as servants. This infantilization vastly altered black African men's masculinity (cf. Morell 1998, 616): "The word captured a condescension, a refusal to acknowledge the possibility of growth and the achievement of manhood amongst African men. Servitude was combined with the denial of adulthood and thus became a feature of masculinity." (Morell 1998, 616)

After the installment of the apartheid law, rural black men migrated into the growing cities to search for employment opportunities. Often experiencing a heavy culture shock, these men used their connections to their rural homes to maintain their concept of masculinity. However, since the housing units for working men in the city often brought various cultural backgrounds together, the cities became a melting pot for different influences and masculinity concepts. The common denominator that united all cultural masculinities was the domination over women and violence as an extreme performance of masculinity. (cf. Morell 1998, 623)

These conglomerates of urban masculinities often formed gangs during the years of the 1950s. By distinguishing themselves from other groups of men through dress, violent behavior, and territorial protection, a counterapproach against old masculinity concepts began— especially by young men who grew up in the cities and lost touch with their father's rural culture. In search of their identity, these young men enjoyed the freedom they experienced in the streets- the state could arrest them for simply being present outside. The urbanization caused a reshaping process of united black masculinity in South Africa united in the fight against white oppression. Instead of gang membership, different approaches were also taken:

> As the apartheid economy grew and most urban African men had jobs, black masculinity found its oppositional expression in politics. While this may have been radical, its leaders and symbols of masculinity were professional men with tertiary education like Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo. (Morell 1998, 626)

The living reality for men in South Africa looks different for each class. As previously mentioned, Afrikaner and British settlers experienced a different reality than rural black men who often worked in manual jobs for little to no money under heavily racialized conditions. (cf. Morell 1998, 628)

Mfecane (2018) emphasizes the importance of cultural understanding when researching aspects of African personhood. He points out that, typically, intervention programs are performed on the African continent to lessen the crime and violence rate and reduce alcohol consumption. However, these programs show little to no effect. According to Mfecane (2018),

the reason for this is the reliance on western and Eurocentric concepts of personhood. He proclaims that ideas about personhood and behavior are not the same worldwide and that the west often naively believes the present Western system holds universal truths for all cultures. (cf. Mfecane 2018, 299)

In the global North, masculinity relies on performance, as Connell (1995) described. By performing certain sets of behavior, one is perceived as a man. Whereas in South Africa, personhood consists of an outer and an inner essence that both are responsible for each individual's behavior. (cf. Mfecane 2018, 292) A person's character is built from both the physical aspect, the body and its organs, and the non-physical aspect, which are hidden forces that use the body as a tool to achieve something. (cf. ibid., 295)

> Masculinity, in the African cosmology that I just described, can be said to have both material and immaterial basis. It can be shaped by the kind of ancestor that lives inside a person and forms part of his inner essence, social interaction, and performance of rituals of incorporation into various stages of personhood. (Mfecane 2018, 298)

Examples of this personhood concept can be witnessed in the Logbara-speaking group of Uganda. Their shared belief is that all people inhabit a spirit called *adro* inside themselves, which is responsible for a human's wishes and aspirations for life. Furthermore, the tallensi group of Ghana believes that *sii*, a spirit all humans share, grants each person their character. The Yoruba people of Nigeria share the concept that an individual is completed by combining their outer self and the inner hidden self. Another example of the importance of unseen aspects of a character is the Beng community from Côte d'Ivoire. In their ideology, all humans have reincarnated from their ancestors. This explains certain moods or character traits, such as tempers or aggressive behaviors, that are shared between the old ancestors and this new incarnation. (cf. ibid., 295)

This spiritual understanding of personhood is put into practice by the importance of rituals. These rituals of incorporation celebrate different stages of life, beginning with the rituals for newborns, followed by rituals to mark the stage of puberty, adolescent manhood, or womanhood, leading into the stage of elder, and then marking death as a welcoming ritual into the ancestral community. Each ritual is believed to have a spiritual transformation power that grants the receiving person ancestral protection. Therefore, when African men or women experience difficulties, they usually rely on this spiritual background to find a solution. (cf. Mfecane 2018, 297)

The most prominent example of this is demonstrated by the successful South African soccer player formerly known as Jabu Pele. Now known as Jabu Mahlangu, the retired soccer player travels across the country to spread awareness about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. Struggling with alcohol and drug addiction, the athlete performed a ritual of changing

his name to achieve calmness and peace. Furthermore, he looked for psychological counseling and recovery techniques for his addiction.

> We will likely never know what finally brought lasting changes to Jabu Mahlangu's life, but surely
> he had always wanted to be a better man, and the change of his surname was one of the significant
> steps that he took to achieve that goal. This implies that masculine transformation programmes in
> South Africa cannot be content with using gender transformation models formulated in the Global North.
> (Mfecane 2018, 299)

The case of Mahlangu demonstrates the importance of working from the angle of African concepts about personhood. Although this perception of an innate, unseen essence that complements our character may be strange from a Western perspective, it is the beginning step of decolonizing the field of studies about African masculinity. Only by honoring local customs and manners can scholars achieve valuable insights. (cf. Mfecane 2018, 300) Following Mfecane (2018), NGOs and governments who work on intervention concepts should also adopt this perspective. These programs will show little success by ignoring the African concept of personhood and working only from a Western perspective. (cf. Mfecane 2018, 299)

3.6 The effects of colonialism

R.W. Connell, one of the scholars who dominated the origin of masculinity studies, emphasizes the importance of considering globalization when researching masculinities. Regardless of which local masculinity is studied, it is always influenced by politics. Therefore, the impact of colonial power on a colonized country, such as Britain's influence on India, affects the oppressed Indian masculinity heavily. Although colonialism has officially ended, postcolonial studies are still essential to understanding contemporary masculinities dynamics worldwide. Connell (2005) presents the concept of a global gender order to initiate the process of considering worldwide links between cultures. (cf. Connell 2005, 72)

> If we recognize that very large scale institutions, such as the state and corporations, are
> gendered (…), and if we recognize that international relations, international trade, and global
> markets are inherently an arena of gender politics (…), then we can recognize the existence
> of a world gender order. (Connell 2005, 71)

This world gender order is directly linked to the aftereffects of imperialism. Colonial rule and economic domination were perpetrated by European countries on nations worldwide from the 16th to the 20th century. (cf. Connell 2005, 72) Throughout these 400 years, Europe dominated over 85% of the world.

> Another meaning of colonialism refers to the political ideologies that legitimated the modern
> occupation and exploitation of already settled lands by external powers. For the indigenous
> populations, it meant the suppression of resistance, the imposition of alien laws, and
> the parasitic consumption of natural resources, including human labor. (Morrell & Swart 2005, 91)

Along with oppression and foreign diseases, Europeans brought the concept of racial domination to nations worldwide. By equating dark skin with an inferior status, race, class, and

gender became the three most central identity markers that predicted one's future. (cf. Morrell & Swart 2005, 92)

Indigenous women worldwide suffered massive sexual exploitation by European settler men. Frontier or settler masculinities refer to the masculinities that European men performed once they ruled over indigenous people on another continent. These masculinities were defined by a high level of violence and egocentric individualism. According to Connell (2005), settler masculinity became more humane once their wives and children arrived in the colonial settlement. As soon as locally born generations followed, the settler masculinity morphed into the settler family pattern. (cf. Connell 2005, 74)

The local understanding of gender was thereby heavily influenced by colonialism. Indigenous people suffered from sexual exploitation, epidemics, and the condemnation of local religions by Christian missionaries. Motivated by the agenda to spread the Christian religion, missionaries were also responsible for changing local sexuality. With intense interventions, they fought against anything that was not the Western binary concept, for example, the third gender berdache among Native Americans in North America. Homosexuality, cross-gender practices, and premarital sexual relationships were also deemed inappropriate and stamped out by Christian missionaries, often with very high force and violence. Furthermore, establishing the slave trade led to migration and resettlement processes for enslaved people. The implications of slavery on African people are addressed in more detail in chapter 4. (cf. ibid., 79)

European exploitation of indigenous people worldwide created new spaces for transnational corporations, international media, and global markets. All of these globalized spaces are heavily masculinized. (cf. Connell 2005, 73) The interaction of many local gender orders worldwide leads to multiple forms of masculinity that are all part of the global gender order. On a global scale, men are enormously privileged compared to women. They receive higher wages than women and have more opportunities for increased participation in the workforce. Furthermore, men benefit from robust ownership laws and more access to institutional power. The counterapproach to this global gender order is the increase of feminist movements worldwide. The targeted effect, changing gender dynamics, leads to a slow redefinition of gendered concepts worldwide. (cf. ibid., 82)

Although many formerly colonized countries are now recognized as independent nations, they still suffer heavily from the oppression experienced for centuries. Either being oppressed through heavy police domination, like the Black people in the US or South Africa or only being able to get subordinate job positions, men who do not look European are discriminated against worldwide. (cf. Connell 2005, 76) Furthermore, Orelus (2010) agrees with his colleagues that colonialism is still in power nowadays:"…postcolonial doesn't mean the end of colonialism; it means revived, renewed, updated, and upgraded colonial politics." (Orelus, 2010, 66)

In recent times, the global capitalist economy often sets the bar for valued and encouraged hegemonic masculinities in the economic sector. Connell (2005) calls for recognizing that capitalism increased gender imbalances. Because neoliberalism is such a very gendered place, women stand out as the exception. Even if women can receive superior positions in global economy businesses, they only achieve this by embracing the male setting. Women are expected to manage like men, practice male values and hide their femininity, an indication of weakness. (cf. ibid)

Admitting that we live in a neoliberal society, traces of colonization are still present worldwide. Mass media transports Western concepts about love, sexuality, and romance to a worldwide audience. These depictions, therefore, influence local gender concepts. (cf. Connell 2005, 79). The western beauty ideal also is spread worldwide with idealizations of straight hair and light skin that have created a global market for beauty products. Non-western beauty has also been used to create a marketing strategy that emphasizes the racist practice of cultural exoticism. This can be witnessed by sexist marketing campaigns of Airlines from Asia or the Middle East- their flight attendants are presented as exotic and submissive women. This characterization enables racialized gender stereotyping in order to increase their sales. (cf. Connell 2005, 80)

The indigenous population of the North American continent was colonized by British and French settlers who arrived in the United States and Canada between the 17th and 18th centuries. Before their arrival, regardless of tribe, gender was significant for defining structure. In most tribes, women cared for the plants and agriculture, while men used to hunt and fish. The relationship between women and men was known to be egalitarian; women were treated with high respect and often had leadership roles. Furthermore, native Americans did not share the Western concept of binary genders. In their culture, people who identified as more than one gender were called 'two-spirits' and were often held in high regard for their spiritual wisdom. (cf. Vinyeta, Whyte, Lynn 2016, 1)

After suffering from bloody colonial practices at the hands of European settlers for over 400 years, native Americans are still experiencing western discrimination nowadays. Despite blatant discrimination while looking for employment (cf. ibid., 5), indigenous people endure the heavy consequences of global warming. Their self-sufficiency is highly impacted by the decline of fish caused by increased water temperatures and overfishing, combined with difficulties while hunting due to thinning ice. (cf. ibid., 2)

The spread of western patriarchy in North America and the inability to perform their duties while caring for their tribe has impacted native American masculinity deeply: "Stress, loss and cultural changes associated with colonization, combined with introduction of alcohol- led to unusually high rates of substance abuse, suicide and violence within indigenous communities." (Vinyeta, Whyte, Lynn 2016, 4) Being confronted with the alternative reality of capitalism

compared to the sustainable and eco-friendly way of native American living leads to automatic interaction with Western forms of patriarchy. Attempting to become part of the western employment system is difficult for native American men. They face racist barriers and difficulty in acceptance of their indigenous education. This leads to an identity crisis and can cause a loss of self-esteem, especially when facing ridicule for preserving one's culture from the outside. (cf. ibid., 4.)

The authors Vinyeta, Whyte, and Lynn (2016) call on indigenous men to disentangle their concept of masculinity from western influences of patriarchy. Instead of taking part in discriminating against women and the LGBTQ community, indigenous men are rediscovering the indigenous knowledge of their ancestors. Often in groups, young indigenous men are socialized into their adult roles following their tribal values. Some tribes even practice the new art of discovering the responsibilities that were secluded to the other gender. In preparation to adapt to the effects of climate change, men are participating in agricultural duties alongside women to balance the decline of work they experience in their fishing duties. (cf. ibid., 6)

Another excellent example to show European colonialism's heavy consequences on indigenous people is the takeover of the Hawaiian Islands. In 1778, ships from the famous British explorer Captain Cook reached Hawaiian shores. Over 50 years, the Hawaiian society transformed entirely and was eventually annexed as a US-American state in 1898. (cf. Merry 2021, 54)

Before European influence disrupted the Hawaiian civilization, it was ordered hierarchically. Masculinity for Hawaiian men looked different according to each rank. Chiefs were described as aggressive in fighting and sports but also showed their caretaking regarding land and people. Below them were the commoners who were responsible for fishing and land. Other than in European societies, ancestry was traced through matrilineal and patrilineal lines. Albeit the fact that Hawaiian society was ordered in a strong hierarchy, the chiefs were honored and adored by the population. Regardless of rank, caring for the elderly and children was an essential value for Hawaiian culture. (cf. ibid., 57) Hawaiian sexuality was practiced very freely (cf. ibid., 59):

> It should be remarked here that in ancient times indiscriminate sexual relations between unmarried persons, fornication, keeping a lover, hired prostitution, bigamy, polyandry, whoredom, sodomy, and masturbation were not considered wrong, nor were foeticide and idol worship regarded as evils. (Merry 2021, 59)

European ships introduced Hawaiian chiefs to guns, alcohol, a consumer-based market, and the religion of Christianity. As was true for all colonized populations worldwide, Hawaiians were also highly affected by the introduction of European diseases. Because these diseases were new to the Hawaiian immune system, they had a deadly effect. Fifty years after the first arrival of Captain Cook's ship, the Hawaiian people lost 80% of their population. Those who

did not die from diseases were often killed in tribal Hawaiian wars. After Hawaiians began to incorporate European weapons such as muskets and cannons, their wars had increasing numbers of casualties. (cf. Merry 2021, 61)

In the early phase of Europeans settling on the islands, it was common for Hawaiian chiefs to welcome several different Europeans as their servants. They taught each other common languages, manners, and fighting techniques. (cf. ibid., 59) Settlers and traders shared overlapping masculinity values with Hawaiian masculinity. Showing aggressiveness, bravery, and executing authority over subordinates were similarities between the two different people. However, the early stages of the relationship between Hawaiians and European settlers were friendly and motivated by likewise interests; both experienced significant cultural differences. As can be expected, European missionaries were shocked to their core after witnessing the sexuality of Hawaiian people, compared to their practice of sexuality in the form of monogamous marriage. Nonetheless, missionaries agreed with Hawaiians in the spiritual belief in a higher power. They disagreed, however, on the multitude of deities and the free practice of sexuality outside a marriage bond. (cf. Merry 2021, 56)

Another cultural difference that led to the hardening of the relationship between settlers and indigenous Hawaiians was establishment of a market-based system involving debt. From a Hawaiian point of view, a person could not have any debt to another individual since Hawaiians had firm beliefs about community and collectivism. This clashed with the individualistic culture of Europeans. Tensions began to rise when Hawaiian chiefs did not repay their debt after several sandalwood trades. For European settlers, market-based masculinity defined itself through the priority to pay off debt, furthermore through successful trade and wealth. Even though Hawaiian and European masculinity shared many similarities, they could not find a common denominator regarding the establishment of a new economy. (cf. ibid., 60)

After the Hawaiian population shrunk to 20 percent of what it had been before the settlers arrived, the European immigrants on the island thrived. By overpowering the now-vulnerable Hawaiians, European and Euro-American settlers established written laws based on Christianity. In 1893 a group of settlers overtook political power, and Hawaii's forceful transformation into a US-American state followed in 1898. (cf. Merry 2021, 61)

4.American masculinity

Masculinity in the United States is strongly influenced by several different waves of migration from cultures all around the world. However, masculine performances and ideals differ considerably depending on race, class, and region. Therefore, the scholarly debate often mentions that contemporary masculinity is in crisis mode. Although it still enables men to have superior positions and living realities compared to women and queer people, multiple historic evolutions have led to the state of anxious American masculinity. Specifically, this crisis mode

primarily affects white American men who fear losing their dominant power position. The original foundation of powerful manhood was weakened by industrialization, which contributed to increasing women's presence in public and the workforce. Furthermore, the emancipation of black people after the end of slavery and the arrival of many immigrants have turned the United States into a very diverse country. This diversity is unrecognizable to the white colony that original British settler masculinities had in mind. (cf. Pinar 2001 (1), 322) Depending on region and situation, new circumstances influence the evolution of masculinity performances. (cf. ibid., 327)

In reference to the United States' rich history of slavery and racial discrimination, Orelus (2010) calls for an academic exploration of the intersection between slavery, colonialism, and black masculinity. These three are often paired with other dimensions, such as white supremacy, racism, sexual orientation, and social class. Factors like these are determinators for social positions in the hierarchy of men. Therefore, regardless of ethnic background, the performance of masculinity is always influenced by racism. (cf. Orelus 2010, 64)

As briefly mentioned, American society is strongly divided along racial lines. Typically, black men are stereotyped as hypersexual violent criminals, whereas white men like to paint themselves as heroes defending patriotic values and white women. Even though most performed crime happens intra-racial, media reports usually focus on interracial crime performed by black men against white people. The disproportionate number of black men serving long sentences for minor crimes compared to white men is just one indicator of the racialized discrimination that brown and black men suffer daily in a white American system. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 857)

Throughout the 1600s until today, Caucasian men experienced a loss of power, epitomized by the end of slavery, the right to vote for black people and white women, and the increased suffrage and feminist movements. A combination of these different influences on white power led white men into crisis mode. Nonetheless, white men did everything to continue their superiority (cf. Hodes 1993, 414): "For southern whites, racial hierarchy could be maintained primarily through the development of a rigid color line: If blacks and whites did not have children together, then racial categories could be preserved." (Hodes, 1993, 415)

American masculinity has also been affected by participation in numerous wars. Soldiers who fought in the Second World War often enjoyed a free practice of homosociality and, sometimes, even homosexuality. A more in-depth approach to the homosexuality of men is provided in chapter 7.1. Nonetheless, for men who experienced sexual and gender role confusion after returning home from the war, there was no atmosphere in post-war American society to address and share these feelings. Consequently, most people fled into conservative gender stereotypes and embraced the nuclear family setting as a cornerstone of American culture. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 896)

The discovery of the suburbs in the late 1800s as the ideal home for white families spread across the US and is still very present today. Over the last centuries, American fathers have become more involved in their roles. Furthermore, compared to the stoic, distant patriarch understood as ideal fatherhood in the 19th century, men became more engaged in their household and child-rearing practices. Without the familial support system present in the previous most common form of living as multigenerational households, parents of nuclear families in the suburbs experienced increasing chores. The move into the suburbs, combined with the small but steady achievements of the suffrage movement fighting for gender equality, inspired this development of involved fatherhood. (cf. ibid., 897)

After this general overview of influences on American masculinity, this chapter is divided into two subchapters. The first subchapter about Black masculinity provides a historical overview of the development of black masculinity. It begins with the kidnapping of black West-African men, addresses black life during and after slavery, and reaches the current situation for black men in American society. This subchapter is then directly followed by a close examination of white American masculinity. Between both subchapters happens a change of perspective. White American men inhabited the most powerful societal position and have had to process the small but steady loss of their power over centuries. (cf. Pinar 2001 (1), 373 & 382) The second subchapter will address the different and sometimes extreme ways these white American men are behaving as a result of this power loss.

4.1 Black American masculinity

To grasp the evolution towards a multifaceted Black American masculinity,

> …it is imperative that we incorporate the notions of slavery, colonialism, social class, and sexual orientation in any analysis of masculinity that involves men of African descent and examine their psychological, political, educational, and socioeconomic implications. (Orelus 2010, 86)

This subchapter mentions these developing aspects of black American masculinity in a linear historical order. Therefore, it will start with depicting the early beginnings of America's 'peculiar institution,' known as slavery.

As countless West-African men were captured and kidnapped by European slave traders, they had to endure 'the long march' leading to the West-African coast. This was followed by 'the middle passage,' transporting the kidnapped Africans by ship to the North American continent, often including stops on the Caribbean islands. Before starting the journey of three to eight months, the captured West Africans were branded with hot irons like cattle to mark their kidnapper's initials. They were often stripped naked and bound or chained by the neck, hands, and feet in long rows. On the ship, the captured usually had to lie beneath the deck, sometimes even on multiple levels. Due to limited space, they could not stand up and stretch their limbs for a moment. (cf. Pinar 2001, (2), 864) According to Pinar (2001, (2)), this physical

and mental torture "…robbed the African male of his virility and began the annihilation of his concept of manhood." (Pinar 2001, (2), 864) While lying as close together as sardines, these captured people often had little opportunity to communicate with each other since they all came from different regions and spoke different languages. The detrimental effects this had on the body and mind, combined with malnutrition and the spreading of diseases due to insufficient hygiene methods, had severe consequences; many did not survive the odyssey. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 864).

Led by desperation, the hostages sometimes succeeded in revolts and took control of the ship. Often, these revolts ended in the mass suicide of all captured. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 864). The most well-known mass suicide is known as 'The Igbo landing.' During the voyage from West Africa to the US in 1803, 75 captured Africans overtook control and boarded the ship on the St. Simons Islands, Georgia. After reaching land, they all collectively walked into the water and committed mass suicide. Their story has been shared by numerous artists, from Toni Morrison to Beyoncé. (cf. Mendenhall 2022, n.p.) The Ghanaian artist and sculptor Kwame Akoto-Bamfo paid tribute to the numerous lives lost on the middle passage, including the Igbo landing in his chilling artwork Nkyinkyim. It consists of statues of enslaved Africans in bondage who are walking and standing in a body of water, some underwater. (cf. Engmann 2021, n.p.) The middle passage was the mournful birth hour of African American culture. The traumas of capture, enslavement, transport, and being sold at a slave market connected people from all over the African continent. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 868)

After arriving on American shores, African people were sold into different plantations and lost the absolute power of their independence, voice, and identity. White enslavers occupied their body and were sometimes perceived as brutal, violent, and bipolar sort of father figures. Every tiny aspect of an enslaved person's life, may it be food, shelter, living condition, or sexual partner- nothing happened without the approval of the white master. If the captives showed any sign of resistance or disagreement, they experienced numerous torture. Random punishments following the absence of misbehavior were very common; white men used this abuse to vent their emotions and aggressions. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 865)

As subjects of slavery, African men experienced the annihilation of their west African masculinity. Their male virility was destroyed by never-ending physical abuse, overworking, torture and rape. The loss of the important identity markers of landowners, husbands, and fathers accompanied this. By being kidnapped, the enslaved lost their role of landownership. Powerless against family separation tactics at slave markets, African men had to separate from their loved ones. This inability to execute control over family members led to the extinction of the role of the father. Many enslaved men vowed never to marry to avoid as much pain as possible. This way, they could escape the misery of witnessing their wives being raped, killed, tortured, or sold away. (cf. ibid.,866)

The loss of these critical identity markers led to the emergence of a new trait for enslaved black men rooted in sexual virility. The focus shifted to the penis as an identity aspect that could not be taken away so suddenly. Even though during a lynching, black men were often genitally mutated, the genitals of enslaved black men still became a central marker replacing the roles of husband and father. As bell hooks (1992) explains

> With the emergence of a fierce phallocentrism (…) a man was no longer a man because he provided care for his family, he was a man simply because he had a penis. Furthermore, his ability to use that penis in the arena of sexual conquest could bring him as much status as being a wage earner and provider. A sexually defined masculinity ideal rooted in physical domination and sexual possession of women could be accessible to all men. Hence, even unemployed (or enslaved) black men could gain status, could be seen as the embodiment of masculinity, within a phallocentric framework. (hooks, 1992, 94)

Enslaved men began to embrace stereotypes about their muscular and well-endowed physique, including terms such as 'bucks and studs.' This focus on the body of Black masculinity eventually led to the stereotype of black male hypersexuality. (cf. ibid., 867)

Countless people tried to flee from slavery, most crossing the northern Mason-Dixon line into non-slavery states or down south towards Mexico. People fleeing were aware of this escape's dangers but preferred it over the alternative of being enslaved. Most black men were also motivated by the ambition to regain their sense of autonomous masculinity. Unfortunately, due to the Fugitive Slave act of 1793, there was no guarantee for a secure existence once one reached free states. The Fugitive Slave act allowed slave catchers to capture escaped enslaved people and transport them back to their former plantation; "…slave hunters divided many black families, destroyed countless marriages, sometimes many years after the couple had escaped bondage." (Pinar 2001 (2), 872) Free northern black people were often 'mistaken' as fugitives and sold into slavery. Besides the danger of slave catchers, black people in the northern states still faced lifelong racial discrimination and poverty, which required constant alertness. Often mobs of white men went into black neighborhoods and committed violent acts against innocent black people. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 871)

As enslaved men were prevented from their masculine ideal of enjoying autonomous fatherhood, they regained this masculine role after escaping the peculiar institution. When a family was torn apart, black men experienced this tragedy as a direct result of their inability to protect them and therefore failing as a father.

> …most black men believed that their obligations as fathers and husbands constituted the foundation of masculinity. For most nineteenth-century black men, the most important gender convention was the exercise of familial responsibilities. White men, especially slaveholders and slave-hunters, seemed intent on disrupting the black family and in so doing wounded the masculinity of black men throughout this period. (Pinar 2001 (2), 873)

The tactical emasculation of black men was also performed by heavy torture. Besides castrating a man before his lynching, white men also raped their captives. By being put into

the same category of sexual vulnerability as women, slavery diminished the previous gendered advantages of men. Although male rape during slavery is not systematically documented, it is mentioned in reports of formerly enslaved people like Frederick Douglass's "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave" and Harriet Jacob's "Incidents in the life of a slave girl." In these narratives, male rape is usually paraphrased as unnameability or 'the unmentionable sin". (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 876)

One possibility for enslaved black men to improve their situation was participating in athletic performances for a white audience. As men from Sub-Saharan Africa were very familiar with competitive athletic fighting, they used sports as a way to entertain their white enslaver and his family to entertain during the Christmas holidays. By being successful in a wrestling match, black athletes could gain the favor of their master and therefore receive minor upgrades such as improved living conditions or additional food and clothing. (cf. Miller et al. 2018, 68)

A way to demonstrate resistant black masculinity during slavery was by participating in the abolitionist cause. Enslaved people like Frederick Douglass and many others taught themselves how to read and became intellectuals. After escaping slavery, formerly enslaved men could define their manhood in new ways of financial autonomy and education. These new qualities were then used in the active attempt to end slavery once and for all. (cf. Miller et al. 2018, 70) Besides theoretical defiance, escaped black men also formed resistance groups and successfully freed many fellow black people from the hands of slave catchers. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 874)

Following the American civil war, the 13th amendment led to the emancipation of all enslaved people in the United States in 1865. (cf. Britannica 2022, n.p.) After experiencing the loss of power over the legal domination of black people, white Americans began to spread many stereotypes about formerly enslaved people that are still widely shared today. The first stereotype, often expressed with the racial slurs of 'sambo' or 'coon', depicts black men as childish, lazy, subservient, and submissive creatures that are very easy to entertain. Another prevalent stereotype called 'the brute' paints black men in a hypersexual and violent way. These images were also shared nationwide in the movie "Birth of a Nation" in 1915. The black character shows traits of being hypersexual, very muscular, and untamed. (cf. Miller at al., 2018, 69).

Interestingly, after the 13th amendment, white men began to spread the ideology that black hypersexual men were obsessed with raping white women. This was the ideal argument for white men to continue their torture and murder of black men post-slavery in the name of chivalry. Following many scholars' theories, white men were not only led by their attempt to regain power. By concentrating on the black, well-endowed muscular body, they lived out their homosexual desires in the obsession over black bodies and sexuality. (cf. Miller Sommerville 1995, 486) "…guilt-ridden white men who sexually exploited slave women and who were

jealous of presumed black male potency in turn projected their own sexual desire onto slave men, in the process creating an irrational fear of black male sexuality." (Miller Sommerville, 1995, 489)

Although the myth of the black brute has often been said to originate during slavery, this image was carefully crafted post-emancipation: "The myth of the oversexed violent Black male is a Reconstruction-eta created mythology. It was then believed that White women had to be protected from the switchblade-wielding Black male rapist." (Patton & Snyder-Yuly 2007, 869) By creating the myth of the hypersexual black male brute, white southern men found a way to hit two birds with one stone. They now had the excuse of acting in chivalry while randomly lynching innocent black men and a legitimate reason to continue the domination of white women. (cf. ibid., 869) "…lynching stories were to keep white women in their place by exacerbating their fear of rape, and functioned to keep black men in their place by depicting them as dangerous, subhuman, and prone to arrest." (Patton & Snyder-Yuly, 2007, 878)

In an attempt to maintain white supremacy and control of politics, white men in the south founded the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in 1865. (cf. Hodes 1993, 404) Operating as an underground organization, the KKK destroyed property, whipped, raped, and tortured black people, and often murdered them in ritualistic processes of lynching. White Americans who supported abolitionism or engaged in friendship and romances with black people were also victims of the Klan's abuse. (cf. ibid., 405) Until the early beginnings in 1871, Klan members faced no legal consequences for the murder of black people. (cf. ibid., 406) While using white women as pawns in the racial discrimination of black men, Klansmen hid the fact that most rape is committed intra-racially instead of interracially. (cf. Patton & Snyder-Yuly 2007, 864) The trope about the dangers of black male hypersexuality towards vulnerable white women is still present today. In the events of the Scottsboro Boys, Emmett Till, and the Central Park Five, this century-old stereotype was re-discovered and improved to be re-applied timelessly. (cf. ibid., 865)

As was true for the living reality after escaping slavery, the black civilization still has to face political, social, and economic marginalization in the current American society. Due to racism and capitalism, black men cannot perform the hegemonic masculine ideal as breadwinners without facing racialized barriers. Influenced by systemic racism and marginalization, black boys and young men face educational differences compared to their white counterparts. Even though the American dream often claims that everyone can fulfill their dreams with hard work, this is not true for most black people. Regardless of the effort, the community of black teenagers and men will never be able to reach the white male standard in society and the economy. By examining the impacts of systematic racism, one has to recognize that each black person nowadays is still heavily experiencing the aftereffects of slavery. (cf. Orelus 2010, 77)

On top of difficulties caused by racial profiling and abysmal education opportunities in finding employment, black men also make up most of North America's prison population. Even though slavery is abolished, this influences the instability of the black family structure again, leaving them fatherless. Compared to their white counterparts, countless young black men experience a tactical exclusion from society by facing disproportionate high charges for minor crimes. Growing up without a father figure and experiencing police brutality often leads to the valuing of "street justice," including crime. Due to increased police control of black people, these criminal activities often result in a prison sentence, even for minor offenses. Once released from jail, an ex-convict cannot vote and often faces difficulties finding employment and housing. This explains the hardship for black men to execute the masculine ideal of the breadwinner role. The vicious cycle designed to keep the black population in their inferior societal position prevents them from living an independent, happy, and fulfilled life. (cf. Orelus 2010, 80)

How does this systemic racial discrimination affect the masculinity of black men? There are countless ways black men combine this reality of oppression with their cultural expression of black masculinity. Underneath, the following three are highlighted: professional athleticism, "cool pose" and compulsive masculinity.

Nowadays, there is a growing recognition of the similar power imbalances between black athletes and white team owners. Similar to their enslaved ancestors (cf. Miller et al. 2018, 68), contemporary black men in the US have been using athleticism to escape racial discrimination. When using athleticism to escape racial discrimination, black sportspeople depend on the approval of their white audience. Bizarrely similar to slave auctions, it is also common for sports teams to sell and buy players. Focusing on these similarities emphasizes that the world of professional sport is in some ways comparable to the powerlessness enslaved men experienced. However, black athletes can use their elevated societal position to fight for their cause, also shown by the NFL Player Colin Kaepernick. (cf. Miller et al. 2018, 66) Kaepernick began to kneel during the national anthem before each game to protest the American police brutality against black people. His sign of protest sparked worldwide debates about racial police brutality and was a successful way to spread awareness worldwide. (cf. Streeter 2020, n.p.)

Additionally, the increased percentage of black members among the national basketball and football team spreads misconceptions about biological predispositions for athleticism among black people. Miller et al. (2018) describe this phenomenon with the social learning theory by Albert Bandura. This theory also explains an increased number of black athletes on basketball and football teams but not on ice hockey or wrestling teams. These sports are not of great interest to black people because there is no shared attention in black communities compared to football or basketball. Witnessing a high proportion and success in these sports

among black athletes inspires young athletic boys. Black youth often have increased motivation to become aspiring athletes since sports scholarships are often the only entryways for black students into pristine schools. (cf. Miller et al. 2018, 72) Signs of wealth among black athletes in material value often inspire young boys to follow in their footsteps to escape poverty and become rich and outstanding. Aside from material wealth, athletic success is also a way to seize the respect of a white audience, which has often been denied until this achievement. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 884)

A different way to construct black masculinity during white racial oppression is with the 'cool pose' performance. Originating from Yoruba masculinity of West Africa, coolness re-emerged as a survival technique among black American men. (cf. ibid., 885) By "playing it cool," black men perform a kind of stoicism that shows they are not affected by the difficulties and racial barriers they face each day. Using cool as a "…mask that provides outer calm in the midst of inner turmoil" (Pinar 2001 (2), 886), black men have found a way to express attitudes and feelings without experiencing negative repercussions from racist white men. In 1903, W.E.B DuBois compared the concept of the cool pose to double consciousness. According to the influential scholar, the black man inhibits two souls; one is American, and the other is black. (cf. ibid., 886) While keeping up the appearance of detachment and being in control, black men use the mask of coolness to experience the freedom of expression within themselves. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 888)

A less stoic way to process daily racial discrimination is compulsive masculinity. "Compulsive masculinity refers to a pattern of toughness, sexual conquest, manipulation, and thrill-seeking, all culturally coded as 'masculine'." (Pinar 2001 (2), 911) Normally, this expression is only a temporary phase during adolescence's transition from boys to men. However, among men who experience increased oppression and class difficulties, compulsive masculinity is also used during adulthood to conceal the loss of symbolic power. (cf. ibid., 912) Compulsive masculinity is expressed in various types of behavior like hypermasculinity, homophobia, violent behavior, competitiveness, toughness, and hypersexuality. Hiding the true fear of appearing vulnerable in an inferior racial position and therefore feminine, compulsive masculinity functions as a deflection from the own insecurities (cf. ibid., 911)

Privileged upper-class and heterosexual black men often associate themselves with the world of successful white Americans instead of feeling fraternal towards other black men, who are marginalized because of poverty and sexuality. As Orelus (2010) shows, "…many of these brown / black men are convinced that the best and fastest way to move up socially, economically, and politically is to find ways to enter the white world." (Orelus 2010, 82). With using privileged black ivy league graduates as an example, this ideology implies that every black man can ascend the discrimination of racialized poverty as long as one works hard

enough: "…the masculinity of privileged blacks has been an ideological veil masking the miserable conditions of poor black men and women." (Orelus 2010, 82)

This behavior, called "Uplift Suasion" by Ibram X. Kendi, influences many elitist black men to leave their community behind. Following Kendi (2016), "This strategy of what can be termed uplift suasion was based on the idea that White people could be persuaded away from their racist ideas if they saw Black people improving their behavior, uplifting themselves from their low station in American society." (Kendi 2016, 124) However, this perspective puts the origin of racism on black people's shoulders. The impossible ideal that black people could end racism with more appropriate behavior was formed in the 18th century (cf. Kendi 2016, 125)

> Free Blacks were unable to always display positive characteristics for the same reason poor
> immigrants and rich planters were unable to do so: free Blacks were human and humanly flawed.
> Uplift suasion assumed, moreover, that racist ideas were sensible and could be undone by
> appealing to sensibilities. But the common political desire to justify racial inequities produced racist
> ideas, not logic. Uplift suasion also failed to account for the widespread belief in the extraordinary
> Negro, which had dominated assimilationist and abolitionist thinking in America for a century.
> (Kendi 2016, 125)

Nowadays' the version of uplift suasion is demonstrated by famous black men who share a white ideology, such as Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas and the 44th American president Barack Obama. The former biracial president experiences social, political, hegemonic, economic, and intellectual power compared to most black US American men. Therefore, it is inaccurate to paint the picture of Obama having the same living reality and ideals as most black men: "… Obama's masculinity symbolically and ideologically reflects the hegemonic interests of these straight, privileged white men who have legislated and enacted the patriarchal rules." (Orelus 2010, 85) Embracing characteristics that are valued in white hegemonic masculinity surely has contributed to the fact that Barack Obama has become the first black American president in over four centuries. (cf. Orelus 2010, 85)

Following bell hooks' (1992) call to reconstruct black masculinity, organized groups of black men support gender equality and feminism. (cf. Pinar 2001(2), 924, These groups redefine masculinity for themselves by dismissing stereotypes about sexist and violent black men. This negative image of black masculinity has been created by white supremacy in order to continue oppression. Therefore, by joining black women in the fight against injustice, black men no longer allow white supremacy to define their black masculinity. (cf. Pinar 2001(2), 925)

Lemons (1998) explained the internalization of the hypersexual and phallocentric stereotype among black men as originating from racist stereotypes. In the process of disentanglement from white oppression, Lemons (1998) calls on black men to neglect white stereotypes about black physicality as well:

> "Progressive black men" reject "sexist, misogynist, and patriarchal practice against women,"
> including "the 'dick thing' mentality, "and in so doing "begin to mediate the painful historical

memory of our own dehumanization." By rejecting the white fantasy of the "super dick" – a fantasy, Lemons acknowledges, "many black men have internalized as a symbol of black male power"- black men can reject "the racist / sexist mythology created to control us," a mythology that would "have us believe that we are no more than one big collective 'walking, brutalizing phallus'." When black men appreciate that this mythology is not the source of black male power but the expression of "oppressive power over us, we start to perceive the interrelated ways racism and male supremacist privilege work together to dehumanize all black men."

(Lemons 1998, 52 in Pinar 2001 (2), 926)

Only by questioning their masculinity feminist black men can overcome barriers of patriarchal masculinity that connect caring, nurturing, and mothering with a decrease of masculinity. (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 927)

4.2 White American masculinity

As previously mentioned, white southern American men experienced high racial anxiety after the emancipation of black people. Influenced by their homoerotic desires and fear of losing control, white men began to spread lies about black men as notorious rapists of white women. These racial and sexual anxieties were instrumented in the lynching mobs that spread throughout the American south. (cf. Miller Sommerville 1995, 486) Interestingly, this new priority of protecting white women only included those who belonged to the middle and upper class. White women who lived in poverty were excluded from the 'protection' and interest of white men. However, over time there was an increasing belief that poor white women also needed protection against black men. (cf. ibid., 515)

As the protection of the white race is essential for white men from the Ku Klux Klan, consensual interracial relationships between white women and black men were a direct sign of protest against southern racial ideology. Often, the Klan punished these couples with harassment, torture, burning of their home, and, in worst cases, lynching or being drowned. (cf. Patton & Snyder-Yuly, 2007, 863) (cf. Hodes 1993, 413)

One black man who embodied the spirit of rebellion against white oppression was the professional boxer, Jack Johnson. In "The fight of the century," Jack Johnson had a boxing match against the white boxing champion Jim Jeffries, also known as 'The great white hope.' This first official match between a black and a white champion was broadcasted nationwide. Five hundred journalists were present at the match in 1910, while over 300.000 people waited in front of the New York Times building to wait for the result. (cf. Pinar 2001 (1), 407) After Johnson won (cf. ibid., 408), white men experienced heavy damage to their egos and rioted throughout the country. In their attacks, 18 black men died, and several hundred were severely injured. Whenever Jack Johnson was present in public, he was accompanied by screams from a white audience calling for his lynching. (cf. ibid., 409) The years between 1890 and 1917 were also the primary period of lynching in the United States. This is interpreted as a sign that

white men could not contain their feeling of losing power caused by economic, gendered, and racial shifts throughout the country. (cf. Pinar 2001 (1), 410)

In general, the years during the 1890s and following introduced many challenges and changes to white American manhood. Therefore, it is beneficial for this work to take a closer look at the events of this specific period. (cf. ibid., 323)

Until the coining of the term and concept of homosexuality by the Hungarian physician Benkert in 1869 (cf. ibid., 332), it was common for men to have romantic friendships. These friendships involved lots of emotions and physicality between the two male friends. The custom of sharing a bed among men was standard behavior throughout all classes for hundreds of years. Even though this seems bizarre from a current point of view, if a person preferred to sleep alone, they usually raised suspicion. (cf. ibid., 335) Sharing beds was also practiced during the revolutionary war, caused by the scarcity of beds and heat. As a means of entertainment, there is proof that confederate soldiers cross-dressed as women and had balls with drummer boys who cross-dressed as well. One unknown confederate soldier wrote to his wife in a letter afterward: "I'll bet you could not tell them from girls if you did not know then. (…) looked almost good enough to lay with and I guess some of them did get layed with. I know I slept with mine." (Pinar 2001 (1), 342) The question if 'layed with' only addresses the habit of co-sleeping or a sexual encounter is open to interpretation. (cf. Pinar 2001 (1), 342)

Proclaiming love for each other in extensive letters was natural for men during the 18th and 19th centuries. Icons of romantic friendships between men derived from ancient Greek and Roman culture, as well as the concept of fraternal Christian love shown by Jonathan and David. (cf. Pinar 2001 (1), 334) Showing physical affection by kissing each other on the mouth was well-practiced among male romantic friends, also the practice of holding hands. From a current perspective, one suspects this has to be a misinterpretation of a gay couple hiding in plain sight. This suspicion is reflected in the scholarly debate about romantic friendships. While many agree that there is a very high likelihood that these friendships also share sexual encounters, there is not enough proof to verify this thesis. However, analyzing letters, co-sleeping, and intimate physical affection is a close indication. (cf. ibid., 340)

Being defeated in the revolutionary war strongly impacted the self-esteem of southern American masculinity. Many former soldiers fixated on patriotism; a quality still very recognizable in the region today. (cf. ibid., 355)

When the official definition of the term homosexuality by Benkert was spread around the world, romantic friendships began to decrease, especially in combination with the aggressive cult of American masculinity during the gilded age. While sodomy was only understood as a temporal phase of sexual encounters between men, the concept of heterosexuality created a new species of men who were now understood as aliens due to lifelong attraction towards each other. By the end of the 19th century, American men stopped showing their affection in

public to other men. Performances of heterosexuality and homophobia became increasing ideals to position oneself as far away as possible from homosexuality. (cf. ibid., 348)

> As "homosexuals," certain men focused upon "desire" often stripped from friendship, while "heterosexual" men struggled to find ways to be close to other men while suppressing their yearning for physical intimacy. As a consequence, the category of "heterosexual" men became an unstable and overdetermined one, homophobia appeared, and the frustration of homosociality slowly turned into the rage of heterosexually identified men. (Pinar 2001 (1), 348)

Besides the rising relevance of displaying homophobic behavior, white American masculinity of the 19th and 20th century was also heavily influenced by the rising middle class, and the importance of the nuclear family construct. Among middle-class white men, there was a trend toward domestication. (cf. ibid., 362) After witnessing an increasing amount of divorces initiated by wives against their alcoholic husbands, sobriety became a new American male virtue. Alcohol consumption disrupted the roles of hegemonic white American masculinity, such as being an involved father and supporting his own family financially. (cf. ibid., 363) Men were advised to exchange the portrayal of the distant patriarch with involved fatherhood and interest in maintaining the suburbian house and garden. (cf. ibid., 369) In small forms of rebellion against the routine and dullness of the urban-industrial life, white American men increased their interests in sports like boxing and football. (cf. ibid., 366). Interestingly, the more domestic American white men became, their enthusiasm for aggressive sports such as football and boxing grew. (cf. ibid., 369)

Women's suffrage had an increasing effect on white American masculinity during the 19th century. Following the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls in 1848, women started to gain political power through their vote slowly and steadily. (cf. ibid., 371) They also began to enter the public sphere in colleges and expressed themselves through literature and art. Many white men began to develop aggressive and tough masculinity to demonstrate their opposition to the new female behavior. (cf. ibid., 373). The southern male virtue of chivalry demonstrated another way to deal with the increasing female power. In fear that women would become more masculine once they gained their right to vote, men began to spread the agenda that women needed protection from the chaotic world of politics. Following the logic of chivalry, the biology of the female body renders women unfit for public life; therefore, men had to protect them against these influences. (cf. ibid., 382) Fortunately for the suffrage movement, some pro-suffrage men supported the cause. These men, often intellectuals, recognized feminism as necessary to liberate men from sexist roles. (cf. ibid., 376)

The last third of the 19th century was also deemed 'The golden age of fraternity'. White men often held sessions of initiation rituals, usually in the context of adding a new member to a group or college fraternity. These ceremonies were foreshadowing forms of the homoerotic ritualistic activities that happen during initiation ceremonies and hazing in contemporary college fraternities. (cf. ibid., 391) Regardless of habitual differences, these initiations unite the

ideology that the individual has to wash away his feminine identity and establish a new masculine identity. (cf. 392) By symbolic rebirth during the ritual, men are cleansing themselves from the feminine influences they have experienced during their upbringing. (cf. 393)

Strikingly influenced by the logic of controlled and rigid sexuality among white American men during the 19th and 20th centuries, the United States experienced a widespread masturbation panic. Led by the assumption that white middle-class men were controlled by their lust (cf. ibid., 397), following their sexual instinct and engaging in masturbation would decrease the man's strength and power. Therefore, the ability to control own sexual urges became a valid masculine ideal. (cf. ibid., 398) Hence, several devices were installed to prevent adolescent boys from masturbation, such as straight jackets, genital cages, and even specific pillows that kept the thighs apart. (cf. ibid., 401) Subsequently, if a boy successfully avoided masturbation, he would be rewarded with increased energy and self-control. The widespread panic over masturbation was also fueled by the assumption that masturbation was a direct cause of homosexuality. (cf. ibid., 406)

Another very sexually charged atmosphere of white American virility has been experienced before, and during the presidency of Donald Trump. (cf. Kelley 2018, 1) The campaign of the 45th American president attracted white male voters by supposedly identifying as victims of cancel culture and identity politics. Financially and socially well-positioned men used this evolution to portray themselves as structurally oppressed. Their oppressors have been identified as feminism, the #MeToo movement, and the rise of power for indigenous, black,

The contempt for marginalized groups from white American men is unilaterally emphasized by the right-wing organization of the 'Proud Boys'. The extremist group, which roughly has between 3000 to 8000 members all around the US, is founded on xenophobic, racist, homophobic, and sexist remarks. As their founder, McInnes describes the discrimination he has to face as a white man in American society: ""…being Proud of Western culture today," was like "being a crippled, black, lesbian communist in 1953." (McInnes 2016 in Kutner 2020, 3)

The Proud Boys became internationally for their violent counterprotest against the removal of a confederate statue in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017. Through initiated violence from Proud Boy members, one woman died, while 19 others were injured. During the campaign and presidency of Donald Trump, the Proud Boys used the political shift towards the right spectrum to spread their white supremacist agenda in several different violent altercations. As the 45th president was asked during the live broadcasted presidential campaign in 2020 to express his view about the violent behavior of the organization, he famously told them to "Stand by." Therefore, the group received no adverse consequence for their violence; Donald Trump's comment was even interpreted as hidden support. (cf. Frenkel & Karni, 2020, n.p.)

The Proud Boys engage in violent altercations with every community that does not fit into their conservative and xenophobic mindset. They are also very active in spreading their agenda online. The algorithms of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and video platforms like YouTube and TikTok function as gateways into the Proud Boy universe. (cf. Kutner 2020, 7) The political climate that has evolved during the Trump campaign of 2016 has been the nurturing ground for the extremist group in recruiting new members. Like the narrative of white male oppression Donald Trump centered his campaign around, the Proud Boys actively encourage privileged white American men to pose in the mantle of victimhood. This happens at the absolute expense of those communities experiencing heavy discrimination by said white men. Thought leaders like Jordan B. Peterson and Ben Shapiro are used as role models for Proud Boys to self-identify as victims. (cf. Kutner 2020, 8)

Even though the group has received little scholarly attention so far, they are believed to be very dangerous. Many of their actions and ideologies show similarities to the "Sturmabteilung" during Adolf Hitler's reign in Nazi Germany. Both groups have protected far-right speakers, intimidated marginalized groups by rallying, and violently disrupted events by opposing parties, like feminist groups or women's marches. (cf. ibid., 13)

In tribute to their southern ancestors of the 19th century, Proud Boys believe in the importance of securing the continuation of white offspring. (cf. ibid., 15) Furthermore, Proud Boys are also avid participants of the 'No Fap' movement. Originally, the organization "NoFap" promoted abstinence from masturbation to fight against the widespread addiction to pornographic material. The initial "NoFap" organization also distances itself from white supremacy and misogyny. However, abstinence from masturbation is often a central ideological element in far-right extremist groups like the Proud Boys. (cf. Burnett 2021, 2)

The trope of improving masculine self-control by avoiding masturbation was already present during the 19th century and is now revived in the NoFap movement. By resisting the social and biological pressure of masturbation, these men demonstrate the hegemonic masculine ideals of self-control and autonomy. (cf. Burnett 2021, 3) Most No-Fap participants are often Christian and of catholic background. They categorize masturbation as a sin and see the challenge of abstention as a form of lent. Famous white male role models who practice abstinence from masturbation are the author Jordan B. Peterson and inspirational scientists of the past like Freud, Tesla, and Newton. (cf. ibid., 11).

Most No-Fap participants identify as 'Meninists' or men's rights activists. They use No-Fap to end their dependence on women who do not fit into their conservative and misogynistic worldview. These "Meninists" often divide white American men into hierarchical categories of Alpha men called "Chads" who are known as embodiments of many hegemonic American masculinity standards. Most No-Fap participants perceive themselves as Beta males, "Nice guys" and "Incels." Incels are "… an online community of men who lament being "involuntarily

celibate" and dream of a social order granting them access to the women of their choice."
(Traub 2018, n.p.) These growing ideologies by white American men are tools to spread hate
against women and other men worldwide. Interestingly, several different attacks and mass
shootings committed by young, white American men in recent years have often been by
attackers who self-identified as Incels. (cf. Traub 2018, n.p.) (cf. Lorenz 2022, n.p.)

The No-Fap movement is also practiced by members who share antisemitic ideologies.
According to this popular No-Fap conspiracy theory, the porn industry was created to keep
white men occupied with admiring women and masturbation. The only 'proof' for this theory is
the idea that many CEOs of porn companies have Jewish-sounding last names. Therefore,
Jewish people use the porn industry to drain white western men of their testosterone and make
them vulnerable to future attacks. Only by accessing their full physical power through
abstention white western men can end the Jewish societal control of American men through
porn addictions. (cf. Burnett 2021, 15)

Instead of embracing the previously mentioned values that Donald Trump spread around
the United States, many artists used their craft to express their disapproval of the former
president. In several different art installations, sketches, and paintings shared worldwide on
social media, Trump has been shown as a queer couple with Putin or as a naked statue with
very small genitalia. Ironically, by efforts to unman Trump, these artists enforced hegemonic
masculinity markers that depict the former president as "the other." (cf. Kelley 2018, 21)

> The artistic campaign to unman Trump is a shallow use of such tactics that mobilizes the very
> homophobic and misogynistic assumptions that underwrite Trump's behavior and politics.
> Imagined as queer, castrated, and womanly, Trump becomes unsuitable for office not because of
> his toxic policies but because he flaunts the conventions of an acceptable but nonetheless
> hegemonic form of white masculinity. (Kelley 2018, 21)

Hegemonic white masculinity focuses on the ideals of fearlessness and rationality. Therefore,
Trump's exaggerated performances are perceived as signs of weakness and deviations from
the cultural concept of white American masculinity. (cf. Kelley 2018, 5) Furthermore, white
masculinity must cultivate skepticism and disapproval towards otherness to standardize itself
as a cultural ideal. Even though coming from a place of protest, by showing Trump as queer,
feminine, and trans, these artists have implied that these characterizations have nothing to do
with the powerful position of the presidency. (cf. ibid., 8)

Throughout this chapter, white American men come across as overly negative. It is essential
to recognize that these extreme performances of white masculinity cannot be applied to the
entire white male American population. However, the noticeable shift in the United States male
community towards extremism, bigotry, and white supremacy is vital to recognize. Even if
many white American men do not participate actively in these structures, privileged white men
enable these philosophies to spread further by not resolutely using their voices against these
ideologies. (cf. Blow 2020, n.p.)

5. Physical and psychological aspects of masculinity

As this work already mentioned, men have a shorter lifespan worldwide than women. Reasons for this are high engagement in dangerous activities, unhealthy eating habits, and drug and substance abuse. This unhealthy behavior is enforced by the strong will to embody masculine hegemonic values. As Anzani, Decaro &Prunas (2022) elaborate, "…the more men conformed to masculine norms, the more likely they were to consider risky behaviors as expected and to engage in these risky behaviors themselves." (Anzani, Decaro &Prunas 2022, 2) The strong impact of these values on men's mental and physical health influenced the reasoning that led to the inclusion of a whole chapter on masculinity's physical and mental aspects. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 40-41)

This chapter consists of three sub-chapters. They begin with 5.1, addressing the relationship between masculine behavior and the testosterone hormone. As societies worldwide believe that testosterone is the main predictor of male behavior, especially aggressiveness, the hormone is a central aspect of the conversation around masculinity. (cf. Gutmann, Nelson & Fuentes 2021, 5) Contrary to popular belief, the literature throughout this chapter provides the aspect that instead of biological aspects, male behavior develops primarily out of learning behavior, starting at a very young age. (cf. Eliot 2021, 75)

Closely tied to the relationship between masculinity and testosterone in subchapter 5.1 is the main topic of 5.2, the physical aspect of masculinity and male body image. Nowadays, the embodiment of hegemonic male values consists of high muscularity. (cf. Coats 2015, 30) However, because of genetic differences, mental difficulties, and the time and resources, it takes to develop a high muscle percentage, this is an unrealistic ideal for most men. (cf. Coats 2015, 5) This sub-chapter provides an insight into the strive for an ideal of outward appearance and its implications on men's health. (cf. ibid., 7) The ideally muscular male body can be used in sexual promiscuity to attain hegemonic masculinity. (cf. Coats 2015, 14) Aside from the male body image and sexuality, men's physical health is compromised by their eating and drinking behavior. High intake of alcohol and meat has severe consequences on men's bodily health. Ironically, these two aspects are culturally valued ways to perform hegemonic masculinity. (cf. Coats 2015, 17) (cf. Jansen 2016, 3)

Additionally, subchapter 5.3 provides insight into the academic debate about masculinity and emotions. Expressing emotions, or lack thereof, creates barriers among men that strongly influence their mental health. (cf. River & Flood 2021, 2) (cf. Delgado & Viejo 2017, 170) Because hegemonic masculinity relies on values such as autonomy and self-reliance, certain human emotions are considered weak and effeminate. (cf. ibid) As men suppress the expression of said emotions, they usually experience symptoms of depression (cf. River & Flood 2021, 2) and or increased violent behavior (cf. Delgado & Viejo 2017, 177). Furthermore,

the high rate of suicide among men worldwide originates from depression initiated by a regulated set of rules concerning emotions and expression thereof. (cf. de Boise & Hearn 2017, 4)

Before delving into these subchapters, Fuentes (2021) provides necessary information about the belief of ancient male roles of human civilization. Concepts about aggressiveness, testosterone, and muscularity often refer to the origins of gendered differences in the past, which, nowadays, society has evolved from. (cf. Gutmann, Nelson & Fuentes 2021, 6) (cf. Fuentes 2021, 22)

Early Pleistocene human bodies were built more robust than the bodies of us homo sapiens. There were also no extreme differences between female and male bodies that would cause different hunting responsibilities according to gender. Furthermore, hunting was not the primary source of food income but gathering. The mentioned division between hunting and gathering roles is much younger than one usually thinks. (cf. Fuentes 2021, 20) Current gender differences began in the last 15 centuries caused by the settlement and rise of agriculture. Men's and women's remains show differences in bone and tooth chemistry, indicating a different diet. (cf. Fuentes 2021, 22)

Furthermore, different muscle scars and bone stress marks hint that both genders had different lifestyles and chores. The human population expanded quickly with the transformation from the hunter-gatherer lifestyle towards agricultural settlements. Women were pregnant more often and were more occupied with raising children. Different burial goods in female and male graves also indicate status differences. (cf. ibid)

> Males and females overlap extensively in most assessments, but the closer in time we come to the present, the more we see material evidence of differences in their roles in the acquisition and processing of food, in the caretaking of young, in the production of technologies, and in the social, political, and economic hierarchies of societies. (Fuentes 2021, 21)

As Fuentes (2021) illustrates, there is little support for the current argument that men always have had a natural predisposition toward dominant and violent behavior. Furthermore, the theory that gender roles have always been this way is also not true; women and men have had the same kind of roles for centuries, as shown by the Pleistocene. (cf. Fuentes 2021, 22)

5.1 Testosterone and aggression

Many cultures worldwide share the assumption about a natural link between masculinity and violence. (cf. Gutmann, Nelson & Fuentes 2021, 5) The basis for all male behavior, especially violent behavior, is often identified as the testosterone hormone. Aspects about the effects of testosterone on male behavior are usually taken for granted without serious examination. (cf. ibid., 6) Misogynists usually use the hormone as an excuse for limited accountability following negative behavior; men are portrayed as powerless against their

testosterone's strong effects. Therefore, when men perpetrate violence on others, they rely on the excuse of being remotely controlled by the hormone itself. Discussions about the impact of testosterone on behavior and vice versa are often compared to the 'chicken and egg' question; Do higher testosterone levels cause certain kinds of behavior? Or is a specific kind of behavior affecting testosterone levels? To be precise, under usual circumstances, the level of testosterone does not automatically correlate with male aggression. According to Gutmann, Nelson, and Fuentes (2021), one cannot automatically associate that an individual will be increasingly violent because he shows higher testosterone levels than others. (cf. ibid., 7)

However, Eisenegger et al. (2010) mention a clear connection between high testosterone levels in female and male inmates and carrying out violent crimes like murder, rape, and armed rivalry. Female and male inmates who committed offenses that involved less violence, like theft or drug abuse, showed lower testosterone levels. (cf. Eisenegger et al. 2010, 356) The group of scholars also tested testosterone's effect on women's bargaining behavior. The folk hypothesis predicts that increased testosterone levels will cause unfair behavior when playing a game. Interestingly, the opposite effect was confirmed. Women who received the placebo made smaller offers and played biased compared to those who received the hormone. (cf. 357) This 'belief effect' demonstrates the center of the testosterone debate: Societal factors have a much higher impact on behavior than biology. (cf. 358)

If it is true that the testosterone hormone only plays a minor role, where did this widespread belief about the hormone as almost the sole reason behind male behavior originate? According to Eliot (2021), the biggest argument for the strong influence of testosterone derives from a study that tested the hormone's effect on rats several decades ago. When male rats were injected with testosterone, they became highly aggressive. As the exact dosage of testosterone was submitted to female rats, no significant behavioral change followed. Without any consideration, this result was then used as an argument to justify the violence men enact worldwide. However, it should have been made transparent that results with rat brains cannot be directly used as forms of knowledge about human brains and hormones. After closer examination, scientists discovered that the sexually dimorphic nucleus (SDN) located in the hypothalamus is five times larger in male rat brains than in female rat brains. The size difference between male and female human SDN is only 1.6 times. Because humans share a much smaller size difference in the SDN than rats, the extreme aggressiveness that rats display on an increased testosterone level is not an accurate assumption for humans. (cf. Eliot 2021, 67) As Eliot (2021) put this vital lesson into words: "What does this mean for the development of sex differences in physical aggression? Put simply, humans are not rats, and our behavior is more sensitive to social context and conscious gender identity." (Eliot 2021, 69)

Since it is not possible and allowed to experiment with humans as it is with rodent animals, one has to look for circumstances where female brains were administered increased testosterone levels in utero to learn more about the effect of raised testosterone on female brains. The most significant examples of these unusual situations are demonstrated in girls with the specific genetic disorder CAH and sets of twins where one fetus developed as male and the other one as female. (cf. Eliot 2021, 68)

Twin girls who share the womb with their twin brothers are exposed to increased testosterone during pregnancy. In comparison with non-twin girls who did not experience increased testosterone, the twin girls did not show any sign of increased aggressiveness or unusual behavior. Another alternative to studying testosterone's prenatal effect on girls' behavior is examining girls who live with the genetic disorder congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH). In this anomaly, a fetus's adrenal glands produce the same amount of testosterone typical for a male fetus. (cf. Eliot 2021, 68) CAH girls, who are nowadays also recognized as a subgroup of the intersex spectrum, are usually identified at birth through visible male sex markers. These babies often had to undergo a surgical transformation to fit into the female gender category visibly. (cf. ibid.)

Compared to girls who shared the womb with their twin brothers, girls who live with CAH show different behavior than girls without this genetic disorder. Studies have shown that they are more likely to show aggressiveness and have less empathy than other girls. Importantly, Eliot (2021) reminds us that these findings are inconclusive and show discrepancies and general ambiguity. The author elaborates that studies on girls with CAH need to be considered problematic because prenatal testosterone is not the only influence on human behavior and character development. Aside from suffering from a genetic disorder, these girls experience lifelong hormone imbalances and frequent doctor visits, a natural predicament towards difficulties in identifying with the female gender completely. (cf. ibid.)

During the developmental processes of fetuses, regardless of gender, all fetuses begin to grow the same anatomy. When a Y chromosome is present, it will cause the testis determining factor to initiate an increased fetal exposure to testosterone. This sculpts the fetus' body and brain development toward a male-typical direction and suppresses the development of a female fetus. Interestingly, the default setting for all fetuses is female until this process intervenes. (cf. Neave & O'Connor 2008, 2) This complex process also varies often and demonstrates that human biological sex has broad developmental differences. Various development alternatives affect Intersex individuals- people with mixed biological gender markers- widespread in every society. (cf. Fuentes 2021, 14)

Instead of focusing exclusively on hormones as an explanation for behavioral differences, Eliot (2021) proposes concentrating on societal circumstances and upbringing. Girls from the Tanzanian Hada people and the Congolese Ba Yaka engage in an equal amount of rough-

and tumble play like boys. Typically, this behavior is discouraged from an early age in girls and encouraged in boys almost everywhere around the globe. Furthermore, in the school institution, boys and girls experience gender group segregation at all times. This leads to the belief that the two groups are supposed to be different from one another. (cf. Eliot 2021, 69)

> Hormones can bias the developmental trajectory, but they do not, in and of themselves, fix brain circuits for life. To become chronically aggressive, one must have fighting partners and an environment that tolerates or even encourages such behavior. Such fighting, in turn, affects brain development in ways that likely facilitate physical aggression later in life. (Eliot 2021, 69)

Eliot (2021) argues for the critical aspect of neuroplasticity, the influence of learning processes and experiences on the nervous system. Other than previously believed, this nervous system is a lot more flexible than thought. "The fact that prepubescent boys across diverse cultures act in nurturing ways toward younger children shows that male's potential for empathy and caregiving is as "innate" as their potential for aggression." (Eliot 2021, 70). Furthermore, despite the lack of a gendered difference in feeling aggressiveness, young boys are five times more likely to express this aggression in violent behavior compared to girls of the same age. (cf. Eliot 2021, 72) The author explains this gendered incongruence with the reaction of parents and close family members to situations when children engage in rough-and-tumble play and show aggressiveness (cf. ibid., 72)

> No child is born preprogrammed for violence but learns to balance pro- and antisocial impulses according to the specific recourse and social demands of their learning environment. Despite the growing flexibility of gender roles in some locales, male violence is still valorized in most societies, whereas female violence rarely is. (Eliot 2021, 75)

As the close examination of testosterone and male behavior demonstrates, there is no strong correlation between them. Furthermore, testosterone is a general hormone alongside many others that are also present in the female anatomy. (cf. Gutmann, Nelson & Fuentes 2021, 7) In attaining knowledge about testosterone, one should always be aware of the ideological influence of the source. Conservative sources often share theories about the relationship between testosterone and violence to maintain strong gendered roles. (cf. ibid., 6) While considerately researching testosterone and male behavior, Eliot's (2021) outlook to concentrate more on societal settings and parental behavior in shaping gender roles was much appreciated. (cf. Eliot 2021, 75)

5.2 Physical health and Body image

As Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) previously mentioned, the body plays a central role in the concept of hegemonic masculinity. Factors like disabilities, skin color, and muscularity define the outcome of privilege and status that a man gets ascribed to merely based on his outward appearance. (cf. Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, 848) Coats (2015) supports this theory regarding the influence of the physique on life's course: "Ultimately, having a specific

body type allows men certain privileges: perception as more healthy by societal standards, more respect and attention, and more significance in a world that highly regards physical appearance." (Coats 2015, 29-30)

In today's culture, not only women experience pressure to appear a certain way and maintain a specific kind of shape. Although there is a variation of beauty standards worldwide, male body image has become increasingly important over the last few decades and is now an impact of male self-esteem. In fact, "… body image encompasses beliefs, feelings, thoughts, and perceptions about one's body." (Coats 2015, 4) A person can develop a negative body image by feeling unhappy with their appearance when it does not meet their own or societal standards. This can lead to a negative image of oneself and, in severe cases, even depression and eating disorders. If an individual is happy and at peace with their body and appearance, this results in increased self-esteem and happiness. (cf. Coats 2015, 4)

In the attempt to embody all kinds of hegemonic masculinity ideals, men can develop shame and anxiety in fear of failing these expectations. The urgency of resembling the male beauty standard is revealed in a study of US-American men from 2008. It reveals that 11% of participants would exchange five years of their lifespan to reach their target weight. Because male body image issues are not very public in the societal discourse, it seems shocking to learn how early this emphasis on appearance began. American boys start to compare their body shapes with others around the early age of eight years. (cf. ibid., 5) The early focus on young boys for athleticism primes them to develop ideals of hegemonic masculinity: "…society demands from an early age that boys participate in sports and should show skill, athleticism, and strength, which ultimately help them succeed in work, sexuality and fatherhood." (Coats 2015, 12)

However, regardless of age, men feel dissatisfied with their physique after comparing themselves to other men. With the wide spread of media, unattainable and unrealistic American male beauty standards of extreme muscularity are shared around the world. (cf. ibid., 5) Even though these current societal standards are unreachable for the majority of people for several reasons, men still want to look muscular and strong. They associate embodying hegemonic male values like power and dominance through increased muscularity. (cf. ibid., 30) In the attempt to expand their muscle mass through heavy physical exercise, many men develop the phenomenon of muscle dysmorphia. This distorted view of oneself "… refers to a preoccupation of one's appearance and an extreme distress or anxiety that accompanies those preoccupations." (Coats 2015, 7) Therefore, the unrealistic chase after the image of enhanced muscularity negatively impacts men's mental and physical health by the risk of injury and false diet by taking dangerous supplements. (cf. Coats 2015, 7)

Besides pressure for outward appearance, men also feel pressure to use their bodies in a particular way to get other men's approval. Sexual promiscuity is an essential way for men to

demonstrate their manhood to other men: "…hooking up has less to do with guys' relationship with women and more to do with the same men talking about the sexual activity with other men." (Coats 2015, 14) This connection between craving other men's seal of approval for their masculinity and sexual behavior often concentrates on the influence of alcohol. Especially among male college students, these three aspects are connected very often. Among college students, the very act of drinking alcohol and the tolerance for alcohol consumption resembles a certain kind of strength. (cf. Coats 2015, 17)

One reason for the fact that men have a shorter life expectancy than women all around the world (cf. Rotundi 2020, 40) is their eating behavior. Countries like the United States, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia report that men have a significantly higher meat intake than women, whereas women eat more fruit and vegetables. (cf. Jansen 2016, 4) These red and processed meats contribute to increased risks for cardiovascular disease and several different kinds of cancer. (cf. ibid., 3) Jansen (2016) answers the question about the origin of this gender difference. According to Jansen (2016), food is gendered, and "…consuming certain kinds of food can help men in both construction and confirmation of masculinity." (Jansen 2016, 4). The widespread cultural belief that eating meat will increase the body's muscle production explains why men prefer meat consummation over a vegetarian diet. Concerning the idea that all men used to be active hunters in the primal past (cf. Fuentes 2021, 20), meat is associated with violence and blood- another symbol of manhood. (cf. Jansen 2016, 5) Interestingly, vegetarian men are perceived as less masculine than meat-eating men. (cf. ibid., 5)

Jansen (2016) also found that when men feel threatened or anxious about their masculinity, they increase their average meat intake. (cf. ibid., 6) The strong bond between men and meat is also exploited from a consumerist point of view; advertisements for Burgers mainly target traditional masculinity. Through culture and advertisements, masculinity and meat consumption connect linguistically to affirm heteronormative masculinity. (cf. ibid., 5) As Jansen (2016) sums up,

> The finding that participants who felt that being a man was important to their sense of self were both attached to meat and less willing to reduce their meat consumption than participants for whom being a man was unimportant to their sense of self makes sense; if meat is associated with masculinity, as ample research has shown, then men for whom being masculine is important will be more strongly attached to meat and less willing to give it up. (Jansen 2016, 23)

5.3 Emotions and mental health

Although human emotions are universal among women and men, men express their feelings differently and even tend to conceal them. From an objective point of view, the question might arise why men feel the need to do this. Being socialized into hegemonic masculine principles worldwide, they begin to learn from early childhood that displaying certain emotions is a danger to their performance of masculinity. (cf. River & Flood 2021, 2) Feelings

and emotions associated with pain, grief, sadness, and fear are hidden and masked not to be perceived as vulnerable. (cf. ibid., 4). While examining the causes of suicide attempts of 18 Australian men, the researchers discovered the following phenomenon

> The 18 participants all reported a process during childhood where they came to understand that expressing emotions such as fear, distress, sadness and grief threatened masculine social standing. On the other hand, expressing emotions such as annoyance, anger and rage, which could be mobilized through acts of aggression and violence, was viewed as socially masculine and a resource for pursuing hegemonic masculinity. (River & Flood 2021, 7)

Therefore, when examining masculinity and emotions, it is vital to understand that not all emotions, in general, are a danger to a masculine performance. Emotions that portray anger and violence are important contributors to crafting a hegemonic male image of oneself. (cf. ibid., 9) By prioritizing the performance of hegemonic male values over personal mental health and relationship with their own emotions, men experience great distress. This distress has to be hidden so as not to threaten the masculine ideal of rationality control over own masculine display. (cf. Delgado & Viejo 2017, 170) (cf. Anzani, Decaro &Prunas. 2022, 4)

Delgado & Viejo (2017) investigated connections between the masking of own emotions and lashing out in domestic violence against female partners. They found that the distress men experience while balancing this mental act of hiding their genuine emotions is often released in violence and brutality. Although it needs to be understood that domestic violence develops out of very complex reasons, violence is central to controlling and being dominant over a weak person, empowering oneself, and raising self-esteem. This vicious cycle of violence gets fed daily by a culture that teaches young boys what kind of emotions are acceptable and prevents them from a whole human experience (cf. Delgado & Viejo 2017, 177): "We teach boys to be afraid of fear, of weakness, of vulnerability. We teach them to mask their true selves, they have to be, in Nigerian-speak, a *hard man*." (Adichie, 2014, 5.)

Delgado & Viejo (2017) found that the emotion that was lacking the most in their study subjects was empathy. Both theorized that there is a collective lack of empathy in men, especially towards women. Contrary to popular belief and folk wisdom, there is no biological or cognitive difference between the male and female ability to experience and show these emotions. (cf. Delgado & Viejo, 178) Generations of men who suppressed their emotions and passed this behavior down to their future male generations have forgotten how to interpret their feelings. (cf. de Boise & Hearn, 2017, 2) Therefore, communicating about own impressions and sharing them with other men can feel harder among men because there is no frame for societal acceptance for it. In fear of being perceived as vulnerable, men cloak themselves in the mantel of emotional distance or aggressiveness with detrimental effects on their health. (cf. ibid., 4)

Interestingly, specific societal frames allow the expression of emotions that usually are considered feminine and weak. Displaying emotions depends on the cultural, situational, and

historical framework. The display of male tears and grief after witnessing one's favorite sports team lose is prevalent worldwide. These tears are not interpreted as a sign of weakness but as commitment and loyalty to the sports team. (cf. de Boise & Hearn, 2017, 8-9) This phenomenon is true not only for men in the audience but also for the athletes themselves. As professional Norwegian handball players describe in Lilleaas (2007), the arena is the only place to display their whole range of emotions and have body contact with other men without their masculinity in question. (cf. Lilleaas 2007, 6) Therefore, sport is also acceptable to build friendships with other men while avoiding talking about emotions. (cf. Coats 2015, 15)

Because there is no acceptable hegemonic masculine way to comfort other men while addressing emotional distress, men often rely heavily on their female counterparts as emotional support. Women play a central part in helping men to express their emotional lives, as they are usually the only sources most men feel safe to share their emotional insights. In heterosexual relationships, female partners often function as nurturers and comforters for their male companions. (cf. River & Flood 2021, 9) However, it should also be mentioned that women can even be the people who teach men the patriarchal importance of emotional inexpressiveness. Mothers often reprimand their sons for showing versatile emotions and guide them toward the hegemonic framework of masculine emotional silence. (cf. ibid., 10)

In the debate about masculinity and emotions, there is also the idea of "thwarted privilege." This concept focuses on the experience white men have when dealing with the disappointment of life that turns out to be different than expected:" …white men can embody 'privilege expectations', feeling entitled to achieve certain status markers (e.g., wives, children and employment) (…). However, when these desires are thwarted, their bodies can afford them another way of taking control, including via violence or suicide." (River & Flood 2021, 14) Delgado & Viejo (2017) support this theory of men who act out in violence after feeling disappointed that life has not offered them everything they are permitted. Abusers usually victimize themselves and feel mistreated if they experience any negative consequences for their behavior. (Delgado & Viejo 2017, 179) Aside from acting out in violence, it is common among men to drown their emotional distress in alcohol to tranquilize themselves. (cf. River & Flood 2021, 8) (cf. ibid., 12)

Men's omnipresent emotional inexpressiveness contributes to the high male suicide rate globally. (cf. de Boise & Hearn 2017, 4) To be precise, 75% of worldwide suicides are committed by men. Many cultures interpret male suicide as a rational response to life's difficulties. By portraying suicide as the logical and rational decision when experiencing difficulties, it gets idealized as a pattern of autonomous hegemonic masculinity. Ending one's life is interpreted as taking action; many perceive it as the 'masculine' counterapproach to depressive wallowing in vulnerability and passivity. (cf. ibid., 7) Only when the true reason for suicide gets recognized as depression, mental health initiatives can tackle this horrendously

high rate among men. (cf. River & Flood 2021, 2) These findings from River & Flood (2021) also demonstrate that men engage in complex emotional work contrary to prior belief. (cf. ibid., 16) Sadly, this specific kind of emotional work was the most intense during the study participant's suicide attempts. (cf. ibid., 13)

Similar to the relationship between learned behavior and violence addressed in chapter 5.1 by Eliot (2021), Delgado & Viejo (2017) agree on the connection between violence and learning instead of the belief in a natural biological origin for violence in men. (Eliot 2021, 75) (cf. Delgado & Viejo 2021, 169) To be specific, fundamental reasons for men's violence against women are male psychological and emotional problems. On the one hand, the increasing questioning of patriarchal structures gives attention to male violence. On the other hand, questioning traditional gender relations sends women and men into a vicious cycle of violence. Moreover, with the rise of gender equality, some men experience a loss of power and engage in violent behavior to establish dominance and increase self-esteem. Therefore, they physically and mentally abuse women. When women address this abuse, men again feel the loss of power and engage in violent behavior toward them. (cf. ibid., 171)

In their study, Delgado & Viejo (2017) interviewed Spanish social workers from Alicante and Valencia who work with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. (cf. ibid., 172) In general, all abusers showed a low capacity to control their behavior. Besides having little to no knowledge about their emotions, the abusers showed very low frustration tolerance unilaterally. Interestingly, the men who enacted violence always found ways to justify their violent behavior. Usually, they blamed women's behavior as a provocation. Then, by relying on old stereotypes that connect male biology and testosterone with aggression, the abusers portrayed the situation as if they had no other chance but to become violent. (cf. ibid., 176)

The media is vital in sharing images of gendered behavior and hegemonic masculine ideals worldwide. Often, men are encouraged by these medial depictions to show possessive, violent, and low-tolerance masculinity in order to affirm their manhood. Delgado & Viejo (2017) express this visual impact of violent behavior as a contributor to its increase in the real world. (cf. Delgado & Viejo 2017, 177) "In other worlds, we can think that, if violence continues to have a central role in masculine gender pattern, in some instances, certain levels of violence may be tolerated or even consciously manifested in order to reaffirm a masculine identity." (Delgado & Viejo 2017, 177)

Despite the negative consequences male emotional inexpressiveness has on others and themselves, recent research shows that younger generations of men reveal an increase in communication of their emotions. On the one hand, this behavior change occurs with the emerging idealization of softening masculinities. Men actively decide to build a counter-hegemonic masculinity and therefore include an emphasis on their expression of emotions. On the other hand, the fight for gender equality worldwide has reduced the stigma about men,

mental health, and emotions. Even though this achievement seems very small and depends on cultural and societal frames, men currently experience more tolerance and openness among other men to share their emotions than in the past. (cf. de Boise & Hearn, 2017, 5) Furthermore, psychological institutions focused on mental health even began to include the aspect of hegemonic masculinity in their practice with other men. The American association of psychology developed special guidelines for the psychological practice with boys and men that include masculinity pressures. (cf. Anzani, Decaro &Prunas 2022, 3)

6. Queer masculinities

Heterosexuality is a central aspect of hegemonic masculinity, as well as a strong display of homophobia. By their physical presence, queer people act as a trigger for conservative men because they do not fit into rigid and narrow gender concepts. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 59) Therefore, queer people experience lifelong discrimination and physical violence due to their differentiation from hegemonic masculine norms. Sadly, this results in the fact that transwomen without genital removal surgery experience the highest murder rate globally. (cf. ibid.,60)

The concept of hegemonic masculinities has, despite it being the origin of discrimination, also influenced queer people. This chapter highlights the relationship between queerness and hegemonic masculinity. Queer men, in this case, gay and trans men, also rely on hegemonic masculinity to access their male privilege. Furthermore, Burke (2016) reports that queer men also engage in misogynist treatment of femininity. (cf. Anzani, Decaro & Prunas 2022, 3) (cf. Burke 2016, 597)

Subchapter 6.1 will provide a perspective on the connection between gay and hegemonic masculinity. First, it will address the phenomenon of "bud sex" among rural, straight men from North America. (cf. Silva 2017, 57) Then, it highlights the position of straight acting among homosexual men. (cf. Sánchez & Vilain 2012, 111) Last, Burke (2016) will provide insight into how an adult gay film company enacts hegemonic masculinity and misogyny. (cf. Burke 2016, 588)

The second subchapter shifts the focus to trans men. As they have fought tenaciously in their societal place to be understood as men, embodying trans masculinity entails a different aspect than cis masculinity. The term 'cis' refers to people identifying with their biological sex markers. (cf. Anzani, Decaro & Prunas 2022,34) (cf. Levin 2019, n.p.) This subchapter highlights different ways of physical performance and routes of medical alteration to verify male appearance. (cf. Aboim& Vasconcelos 2022, 54) However, there are also counter-hegemonic approaches to trans-masculinity. Instead of changing the body to be understood in a typical hegemonic masculine way, some trans men emphasize masculinity's performance and question the connection between biological sex and gender roles. (cf. ibid., 56) Furthermore,

Anzani, Decaro & Prunas (2022) provide insight into how cis and trans men relate to the Masculine Norms Inventory. (cf. Anzani, Decaro & Prunas 2022, 6)

6.1 Gay masculinities

It is often assumed that gay men, who often suffer discrimination from straight men, do not enact hegemonic masculinity the way heterosexual and homophobic men do. Reeser (2015) even proposes the following perspective on gay masculinities: "Gay male masculinity might also be taken as an oscillation between hegemonic and non-hegemonic positions, as dependent on situation, with the closet, passing, and "straight acting" as key elements of such a consideration." (Reeser 2015, 32). Although gay masculinity is far from the powerful position that white, heterosexual, non-disabled men hold on top of the masculinity pyramid, gay men still discriminate against women, feminine gay men, and other marginalized groups. (cf. Burke 2016, 599)

Silva (2017) informs about the paradox of 'bud-sex'- which is understood as sex between men who identify as heterosexual. Their study participants came from rural areas of Washington, Missouri, Oregon, Idaho, and Illinois; all identified as conservative and white. (cf. Silva 2017, 57). Furthermore, the 19 men who provided insight into their sexuality were between twenty to seventy years old (cf. ibid., 58) and usually had relationships with women or were married. (cf. ibid., 52) The identification as heterosexual may seem unrealistic from a distanced point of view, "Because normative masculinity is critical for social acceptance in rural areas, identification with heterosexuality to bolster normative masculinity was especially important." (Silva 2017, 64)

Silva (2017) investigates the importance of identifying as heterosexual when engaging in same-sex practices. On the one hand, these men have internalized heterosexism and wish to be part of the stereotypical conservative family. (cf. Silva 2017, 52) Interestingly, being married to a woman and being a father to several children was key to the participant's straightness. (cf. ibid., 66) By keeping their bud-sex activities a secret, the men maintained access to their straight privilege. (cf. ibid., 52, 65)

Interestingly, same-sex between heterosexual men was common in the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries. This fact is also supported by the implications of sexuality in romantic friendships, as told by Pinar. (2001) (cf. Pinar 2001 (1), 340) With the increase of homophobia, homosexual behavior began to decline. (cf. ibid). Even though close camaraderie among other men as soldiers opened opportunities for American men to experiment with homosexuality (cf. Pinar 2001 (2), 895), the practice of sex between straight-identifying men began to fade out during the 1950s. (cf. Silva 2017, 54) Men who practice bud-sex hide their same-sexual encounters and maintain a very masculine and heterosexual self-image. (cf. ibid., 65)

For Silva's (2017) study participants, having sex with stereotypically masculine sexual partners is one way to reaffirm their straightness. This concept of sex between men to increase masculinity was also practiced among samurai and Buddhist monasteries during the 20th century in eastern Asia. These Asian men also believed that male-male sex was a way to increase their masculinity. (cf. Taga 2005, 130) Their rural American counterparts from the 21st century also convey this perspective: "Masculinity in sexual partners helped construct and validate their own normative masculinity." (Silva 2017, 61)

Rural masculinity was usually defined through physical labor and toughness, heterosexuality, and a conservative set of values. (cf. Silva 2017, 56) Furthermore, they found unique ways to perform their masculinity and heterosexuality through hobbies like shooting, fishing, and hunting. Also, these men were open with the men in their community about valuing the Playboy magazine and dressing in the stereotypical rural American male dress code of Levis jeans, t-shirts, and camouflage. (cf. ibid., 60)

Because straightness and heteronormative masculinity are such important ideals for these men, anything feminine is perceived as a threat. There is no acceptance of feminine gay masculinity or flamboyant behavior: "Many rural gay men even distance themselves from feminine gay men and point out their similarities with (purportedly masculine) straight men." (Silva 2017, 56). The study participants even reported that femininity in other male sexual partners reminds them of their wives. One man even described not needing a sexual partner like this when he has a wife who shows similar behavior at home. This leads to the suspicion that 'bud-sex' is also one way for these men to escape their daily lives. (cf. ibid., 62). Furthermore, the preference for other straight-identifying sex partners increases the likelihood that their sexual relationship will be kept secret. (cf. ibid., 63)

Interestingly, in contrast to men from Colombia (cf. Gutmann & Vigoya 2005, 120), Japan (cf. Ma et al. 2021, 2406), and Mexico, the US-American study participants did not distinguish between the masculinity of the penetrating (also called top position) and penetrated (also called bottom position) sex partner. (cf. Silva 2017, 66) Furthermore, they even reported flexibility in sexual roles and positions if one has medical issues with performing the penetrative part with erectile dysfunction. When experiencing these difficulties, they enjoy the possibility of sex between men instead of performance pressure when having sex with their wives. (cf. Silva 2017, 68)

Concerning their marital status and identification as heterosexuals, the men did not consider their bud-sex practices a threat. Their same-sex was used to confirm masculinity by only engaging with partners who identify similarly to their masculine character as white and straight. (cf. ibid., 61) Furthermore, because the men reported that in bud-sex, there are no feelings or emotions involved, it is not considered infidelity against their female partners. (cf. ibid., 65) "Thus, by framing same-sex extramarital sex as insignificant, the men interpret their

sexual practices in ways that make them compatible with their marriages that are central to their heterosexuality and normative rural masculinity." (Silva 2017, 67)

So-called 'straight-acting gay men' (SAGs) share the same kind of hesitation and negativity as bud-sex men about feminine gay men. Sánchez and Vilain (2012) explain this with the influence of misogyny in gay culture (cf. Sánchez & Vilain 2012, 111). The dating world of gay men is drenched in anti-effeminacy behavior towards other gay men. (cf. ibid., 112)

In an online survey of 751 gay US- American men, Sánchez & Vilain (2012) researched the influences of traditional gender norms and hegemonic masculinity in identity construction. They also included questions about the acceptance of femininity in potential future partners. (cf. ibid., 112 &113) Besides being conditioned by heteronormativity and hegemonic masculine values, gay men also engage in anti-effeminate discrimination toward feminine and outwardly expressive men. Because gay men all faced discrimination and accusations of their femininity by homophobic men, they learned to distance themselves from femininity and another stereotype of male homosexuality, flamboyance. (cf. Sánchez & Vilain 2012, 112) Furthermore, the participants in the study also reported a process of reconnecting their sexual identity with positive associations instead of the feeling of sadness caused by the inability to perform hegemonic masculinity. (cf. Sánchez & Vilain 2012, 112)

Interestingly, all study participants showed an increased occupation of their potential appearance as feminine or having a feminine partner. Unilaterally, all men shared the aspiration to appear as heterosexual and masculine as possible in their looks and behavior. (cf. ibid., 116) "Altogether, it appears that the more preoccupied with their masculinity and the more negative they felt towards effeminate gay, the more our men experienced some degree of negative feelings about being gay." (Sánchez & Vilain 2012, 116)

The influence of hegemonic masculinity and anti-effeminacy is also central in Burke's (2016) work. The scholar spent eleven months investigating an adult gay film company with his hypothesis about a possible correlation between gay environments and hegemonic masculinity. (cf. Burke 2016, 588) Even though gay men still face discrimination from homophobia, they still are superior in the societal hierarchy to women. Nevertheless, gay men also experience internal hegemony; among themselves, some factors contribute to a superior or inferior position, especially race, penis size, and sexual preference. (cf. ibid., 589) Gay men of color face racial discrimination. To be specific, Asian gay men experience de-sexualization and stereotypes of emasculation and usually do not get hired in the adult gay film industry. In the unlikely case when Asian men get hired, they are not allowed roles where they penetrate their co-actor since this image does not fit into stereotypical categories (cf. Burke 2016, 290-291). Black men always experience hyper-sexualization, as previously mentioned in Miller Sommerville (1995). (cf. Miller Sommerville 1995, 486)

This phenomenon is also true among gay black men. Burke's (2016) investigation discovered that Black men are primarily hired in 'top' positions, contrary to the previously mentioned Asian counterparts. As in hegemonic masculinity, the privileging of whiteness is enforced in the adult gay film industry. (cf. Miller Sommerville 1995, 486) Adult film performers also experience the privileging of hegemonic beauty. (cf. Burke 2016, 591) This is supported by Burke's (2016) report that this company mainly hired white gay performers between 18 to 35. (cf. ibid., 592)

Casting agents also set hiring standards that depend on local forms of hegemonic masculinity. These influence the decision of what kind of bodies are considered appropriate and of economic value for the company. (cf. ibid., 593) Besides the racialized nature of the hiring process (cf. ibid., 597), actors were rejected because they did not fit into hegemonic body standards. The company's standards depend on low body fat and high muscularity, large penis size, and stereotypical shape. (cf. ibid., 594) Regardless of the performer's preferences, men with large penises were exclusively offered 'top' positions, whereas men with average penis sizes were only offered 'bottom' positions. (cf. ibid.,596- 597)

Besides the emphasis on maintaining the optical values of hegemonic masculinity, the staff at the film company also used misogynistic language to discipline or complain about male actors. Whenever there was a disagreement, the staff switched from male to female pronouns in statements like "She is so difficult today." (cf. Burke 2016, 597) According to Burke (2016), it was noticeable that female pronouns were not used respectfully. The negative association of characteristics with femininity mirrors a misogynistic culture. Furthermore, performers in the bottom position were also addressed as 'she,' which implies a devaluation of the non-penetrating person and, therefore, manifests a hegemonic order. (cf. ibid. 598)

Burke (2016) shows that gay men, who are not at the top of the masculine hegemonic hierarchy, still employ these ideals to devalue others and increase their self-esteem. (cf. Burke 2016, 600) Furthermore, this local hegemonic system was constructed via a highly selective hiring process and an association of negative interactions with femininity. (cf. ibid., 599)

6.2 Trans masculinities

Trans men have been assigned female at birth, led by female sex markers like genitalia or chromosomes, and therefore were perceived as women for a period of their lives. (cf. Anzani, Decaro & Prunas 2022, 3) By demonstrating the possibility of crossing between the gender binaries, trans men can destabilize definitions of masculinity. (cf. Reeser 2015, 33) Furthermore, trans masculinity reminds us that there is no original form of masculinity, and the concept rests on the performance thereof. (cf. ibid., 34)

The discourse about trans masculinity centers on the body as a performative tool. Even if trans men have a specific choice of which kind of masculinity they want to display, they still

need to overcome biological concepts in definitions of masculinity, as well as transphobic attacks (cf. Aboim & Vasconcelos 2022, 45.) Although trans masculinity embraces alternatives to hegemonic masculine ideals, "…we still need a theory of embodiment that places the body at the center of gendered processes and envisages masculinity as produced through the multiple expressions and practices of the body."(Aboim & Vasconcelos 2022, 45)

In the conversation about trans masculinity, one must understand that embodiment of masculinity resembles agency. By choosing if and how to alter the body, trans people reclaim the capacity of their outward appearance. "In this sense, masculinity (trans and cis) is necessarily biographic and dynamic; it is produced along the biographical journey, which is, first and foremost, a bodily journey." (Aboim & Vasconcelos 2022, 46) Trans men can follow different routes in altering their appearance to fit their identity. This can be done by physically changing the body, especially the primary and secondary sexual markers. However, the influence of hormones also significantly affects the body. A change of hairstyle or clothing, posture, and language can achieve less drastic ways of appearance change. (cf. ibid., 54) Other forms of transformation can be achieved by changing sex classification and name. (cf. ibid., 47) Most importantly, the physical alteration of appearance and identity needs to be accompanied by internal self-conversation that reflects upon own masculine process. (cf. ibid., 52)

Usually, trans people have a more gender-fluid conception than cisgender people. (cf. ibid.) Physical change is one way for trans men to achieve their true selves; for others, it resembles participation in toxic hegemonic masculinity. Following this thought, the need for a physical altercation to feel masculine is an oversimplification of genitalizing gender. "Some trans-masculine individuals express queer self-identifications and hope to transcend the gender binary and reconstruct the meaning of masculinity outside any hegemonic pattern." (cf. Aboim & Vasconcelos 2022, 57) The strong equation with a stereotypical white cis-male body is perceived as a bland understanding of gender. (cf. ibid., 55) These trans men see a positive challenge in creating a masculinity that does not depend on genitalia and outward gender markers like voice or body hair. Although it is challenging to redefine gender, some trans men see this as their calling. According to one unnamed study participant, being misgendered as a woman entails negative experiences but also creates learning opportunities for others. (cf. ibid., 56) These alternatives of non-hegemonic masculinity show that the body functions as a teacher and a site of resistance in the journey toward its own identity. (cf. ibid., 59-60) Aboim & Vasconcelos (2022) imply that

> …redefining gender and masculinity implies transforming the gender order and that can only be achieved by disrupting the apparent stability of the gender binary and its parameters of bodily differentiation between feminine and masculine. (Aboim & Vasconcelos 2022, 61)

Other than building alternative counter-hegemonic masculinities, some trans men overperform hegemonic masculinity in behavior and posture to avoid discrimination. (cf. Anzani, Decaro & Prunas 2022, 3)

Interestingly, trans men experience a shift in social value when being recognized as male instead of female. White trans men reported that they have been taken more seriously at work and perceived as competent workers since their physical transitioning. Furthermore, "…trans men, after transitioning, get more respect, more conversational space even within male spaces, and less public harassment." (Anzani, Decaro & Prunas 2022, 3) This way, trans men can access male privileges they previously had no access to. However, these reports about the societal benefits for trans men are only reported on white trans men and not on trans men of color. (cf. Anzani, Decaro & Prunas 2022, 3)

The scholars Anzani, Decaro & Prunas (2022) studied the differences in conforming to traditional masculinity among 100 cisgender and 100 Italian trans men. The participants were all white and between 18 and 72 years old. 66% of the trans men identified as queer (gay, bisexual, pansexual, fluid, or other), whereas only 4% of the cisgender male participants identified as queer. (cf, ibid., 4)

The study shows that trans men outscore cis men in the categories of "emotional control" and "self-reliance." This indicates that trans men are more open in sharing and expressing their emotions with others. Furthermore, the increased performance of self-reliance refers to the ability to solve problems without help from others. (cf. ibid., 5) Anzani, Decaro & Prunas (2022) interpreted these results as the following: "…it might be that the exposure to minority stress has made this group more cautious in terms of self-disclosure of emotions and in asking for help when they navigate a social environment that in some cases can be hostile." (Anzani, Decaro & Prunas 2022, 6) As the social position for trans men is beneath cis men, trans people often face life-long discrimination for their mere existence. The country where this study was conducted, Italy, shows one of the highest murder rates of trans people throughout all of Europe. (cf. ibid., 6)

Concerning the Masculine Norms Inventory, cis male study participants scored higher on "heterosexual presentation" and "power over women" than their trans counterparts. (cf. ibid., 5) These values perfectly mirror the high-held ideals of heterosexual masculinity. The disdain for homosexual people and the fear of being identified as feminine or queer is combined with the endorsement of male domination over women. (cf. ibid., 6)

"Overall, our results show that trans masculine individuals share the same concept of masculinity as cisgender men, although they do not seem to endorse all its dimensions to the same extent." (Anzani, Decaro & Prunas 2022, 6) Interestingly, compared to cis men, trans men do not embrace hegemonic male values that discriminate against marginalized people,

like homophobia or domination over women. Nonetheless, as this chapter has shown, each trans man defines his individual concept of masculinity. (cf. ibid., 6)

7. Hybrid masculinities

In the last few years, a new kind of masculinity has emerged, especially in western settings, known as Hybrid masculinity. "Hybrid masculinities as men's selective and dynamic incorporation into their gender performances of identity elements associated with subordinated and marginalized masculinities, as well as with femininities." (Barry 2018, 642) By incorporating feminine aspects into their male gender performance, hybrid masculinities blur the distinction between feminine and masculine behavioral rules. Role models for hybrid masculinities throughout the 1990s and 2000s have been the actors Brad Pitt and Leonardo DiCaprio. Both are known as the prototypes for innovative male beauty ideals that value soft facial features, an elegant physical appearance, and the lack of facial hair. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 65)

Current role models for hybrid masculinity are known as the British singer and actor Harry Styles and the actors Timothée Chalamet and Cole Sprouse. All three embrace creativity through colorful and feminine dresses, unique accessories, and nail polish. Furthermore, these men have medium-length to shoulder-long wavy hair and none or minimal facial hair. (cf. ibid., 64-65) Even though this emergence of hybrid masculinity is mainly through dress, singers like Ed Sheeran or Justin Bieber increasingly include lyrics about emotions, love, and grief in their repertoire, thereby making these topics more approachable from a masculine perspective. (cf. ibid., 65) The actor Timothée Chalamet was also labeled as the personification of soft-boy masculinity. (cf. ibid., 66)

However, as beneficial in breaking gender roles as this emergence of hybrid masculinity is, society should be aware that portraying these masculinities is only possible under white heterosexual privilege. (cf. Rotundi 2020, 66) (cf. Barry 2018, 639)

> Another key point emphasizing the risk of a subtle reproduction of a system of inequality is the fact that the incorporation of femininity by rich or middle-class, white, heterosexual men does not lead to the same consequences that low-class, black, homosexual men could experience by acting in like manner. (Rotundi 2020, 66)

This interplay of fashion and masculinities that these famous actors demonstrate is one way to pave the way to include feminine aspects into masculinity. In the study of masculinity and expressing gender roles through dress, Barry (2018) discovered three different behaviors of men toward the inclusion of feminine dress. The first group, the 'disavowing group,' dressed in hegemonic masculinity. Their detailed concept of masculinity and dress was previously mentioned in Chapter 2.1 about hegemonic masculinity. (cf. Barry 2018, 647)

Half of Barry's (2018) remaining participants were part of the 'reining-in' group. These men include feminine styles in their masculine fashion to achieve an exceptional appearance.

However, incorporating feminine elements into their style was not motivated by the aspiration to break down gender barriers. (cf. ibid.) The pressure to walk the line between appropriate feminine and masculine dress is often experienced by men working in creative corporate departments: "… men who do creative work within white-collar organizations downplay feminine dress elements because hegemonic masculine expectations dominate their workplaces and also allow them to dominate within their workplaces." (cf. Barry 2018, 652). Because these institutions often value narrow masculine norms, men who like to dress creatively usually do this in their free time to escape criticism about clothing at their workplace. (cf. Barry 2018, 652) Besides being influenced by peer pressure at work, there is also a geographical difference in freedom to express femininity through clothing. In an urban environment, men feel freer to experiment with bold and colorful patterns than men from a suburban or rural area. In an urban area, there is more diversity and a higher density of people than in these less-populated areas; therefore, men tend to face less judgment for their feminine way of dressing. (cf. Barry 2018, 654)

The third group of men in Barry's (2018) study was called 'Celebrating Feminine Dress.' Many study participants in this category identified as queer; however, there were also heterosexual-identifying men among them. Compared to their counterparts from the 'reining-in' group, these men actively used their feminine way to dress in an attempt to break down gender boundaries of fashion. (cf. Barry 2018, 655).

However, this expressive and flamboyant way to dress was only followed through in social settings where the men felt safe to dress this way. When visiting their conservative family members, many of the men dressed more subtly (cf. ibid., 656) and then looked forward to the freedom to dress however they wanted in the queer nightlife scene. Since there is no protection against facing discrimination in public when dressing feminine, these men had to dress accordingly to the environment they found themselves in. (cf. ibid., 655) Men who celebrated and wore feminine dress faced disapproving glances, negative pejoratives, and violent threats. The public thus regulated hegemonic masculinity by demeaning men who defied gender dress norms. (Barry 2018, 657)

Aside from the outer expression of hybrid masculinities through fashion, Jansen (2016) investigated these masculinities and attachment to meat. Regardless of identifying as conservative or modern man, all study participants were very attached to meat. Interestingly, "…the more strongly men identified with their gender, the more strongly they were attached to meat and the less willing they were to give it up." (Jansen 2016, 21). Jansen (2016) found no research that indicated less meat consumption for modern or hybrid masculinities. However, since there is no clear and widespread definition and understanding of hybrid and modern masculinities, these concepts do not automatically cause stereotypical standards, like the importance of meat for conservative men. (cf. Jansen 2016, 24) In regards to meat intake, the

indicator that regulated high or low meat consumption was the identification with the own gender:

> The finding that participants who felt that being a man was important to their sense of self were both more attached to meat and less willing to reduce their meat consumption than participants for whom being a man was unimportant to their sense of self makes sense; if meat is associated with masculinity, as ample research has shown, then men for whom being masculine is important will be more strongly attached to meat and less willing to give it up. (Jansen 2016, 23)

This discovery shows, that reducing meat intake depends on how important identifying as masculine is for hybrid masculine men. However, since hybrid masculinity is a relatively new and quickly evolving concept, the importance of hegemonic masculine standards still needs to be studied. (cf. ibid., 24) However, a personal assumption about the agenda to reduce hegemonic masculine roles depicted in the group of 'celebrating feminine dress' by Barry (2018) does indicate less identification with hegemonic masculinity than other study participants depicted. Therefore, this study group could potentially show a high likeliness to reduce their meat intake. (cf. Barry 2018, 639) (cf. Jansen 2016, 24)

8 . Conclusion

As previously mentioned, the research question guiding this thesis asked about the existence of global hegemonic masculinity. Throughout this work, masculine performances from men worldwide have been addressed and examined very closely. As previously mentioned, this thesis needed to choose selected cultural masculinities because of capacity limits. However, it is crucial to understand that the evaluation of global hegemonic masculinity is more accurate when it involves more cultures and nations. Although it is impossible to answer a complex research question with a simple confirmation or negation, after preparing this writing, I tend towards confirmation of global hegemonic masculinity. Nonetheless, there may be proof that contradicts this theory that has not been discovered during this research process.

Before acquiring more knowledge about the academic field of masculinity studies, I wondered whether the masculine roles of fatherhood and breadwinner are present globally. To explain this stance, I would like to address the thoughts and questions that were present when starting this work; these are also mentioned in the Introduction chapter. Furthermore, an interest to learn more about the connection between masculinity and economy also influenced this work- how has global economic trade impacted the creation of similarities among men worldwide?

Prior to addressing each aspect separately, I would like to remind about the theory of global gender order introduced by Connell (2005). (cf. Connell 2005, 82) The global gender order implies that men have superior positions and privileges compared to women worldwide. Feminist movements across the globe work towards a decline of this global gender order, with

some degree of success as far as this work has demonstrated. For every continent I have researched, some men showed a development toward an egalitarian gender concept where femininity in men was not considered a weakness. For example, the development of East Asian masculinities with its ideal of 'grass-eating' men, the Ghanaian Shabomen, or men of Tanzania, who support an equal share of household work between men and women.

Especially younger generations of men throughout these continents want a new gender role concept for themselves, shown by Norwegian or Polish men in subchapter 3.2. As explained in chapter 4, for every male resistance that feminist women had to face, there are also supportive men, unfortunately not as many as the resisting ones. The epitome of new masculinities, hybrid masculinities, was described in Chapter 7. This counter-approach towards hegemonic masculinities is relatively new and constantly evolving; therefore, it is impossible to categorize them easily. However, the research I have conducted for this work shows that men are not united in their misogynistic suppression of women and queer people.

As far as this literary examination has granted some insight, it is common among men worldwide to force violence upon women when frustrated. As mentioned throughout several chapters of this thesis, men use violence toward women to express their anger and increase their self-esteem. Marginalized men, who are already oppressed by class and racialized categories, are at higher risk of portraying this behavior.

Another aspect that has been confirmed globally for all continents the literature included is homophobia. Besides worldwide discrimination against gay men, trans people also suffer heavily from the consequences enacted by hegemonic masculinity. Chapter two explains that homophobia is a central value of hegemonic masculinity.

On a global average, men die earlier than women due to dangerous activities, unhealthy eating habits, and a higher likelihood of engaging in alcohol and substance abuse. Furthermore, men's worldwide tendency to show emotional inexpressiveness can lead to depression and, eventually, suicide. This unhealthy way of life is unfortunately also demonstrated among men worldwide.

Interestingly, my research shows that men from different continents and periods valued the same roles for their masculinity. For these men, it was vital for their masculine identity to be the family breadwinner and protect their loved ones. If this was not possible due to job loss or other forms of oppression, men felt emasculated. The importance of fatherhood was also shared among men worldwide, especially the tendency to be a more involved father than in previous generations.

As elaborated in chapters three and four, European men influenced other local and cultural masculinities worldwide. Because of colonial domination, these oppressed men had no other chance of survival but to adapt to European masculinity values over time. Following Morrell & Swart (2005), the rule of colonialism has now been taken over by the rule of globalization. (cf.

Morrell & Swart 2005, 92) Therefore, men from other continents than Europe have already experienced a shaping process of their masculinities by a colonial power. Now, these men are influenced by a masculinity shaping towards globalized economic European masculinities. Through global trade among different continents, western business masculinity is often associated with being the new norm. The merging of east Asian business masculinities and European material influences supports this.

These reasons lead me to confirm shared hegemonic traits among men globally. Nonetheless, even acknowledging these shared characteristics and values, one must be aware of different performances influenced by cultural and historical factors.

Throughout the months of preparation and writing, I have discovered numerous topics, articles, and writings that I would have liked to incorporate into this master's thesis. Although I am overall satisfied with the result of this research process, it was very challenging to accept the fact that I do not have enough time and resources to research every aspect that is known about masculinity to its smallest detail. However, the evaluation of relevant material is an essential academic skill.

Nonetheless, if I had had more time, resources, and extended writing capacity, I would have liked to explore more cultures and their concept of masculinities. For future research, I can recommend Biersack & Macintyre's (2018) work on masculinity of the pacific island population. Another topic I would have liked to include is the interplay between white masculinity and gun ownership, also explained by Daugherty (2020) in "Gun ownership as an expression of whiteness and masculinity." As a theology student, it would have been fascinating to discover more about the interplay between masculinity and religion shown by Werner (2011) in "Christian Masculinity: Men and Religion in Northern Europe in the 10th and 20th Centuries". Although I have tried to include aspects of this topic in chapters two and three, I am confident there is more left to uncover.

Creating this thesis has been an eye-opening experience for me. Aside from countless epiphanies about male behavior, it helped me to understand men's experiences in a meaningful way. I am very grateful for the knowledge and insight I have gained on general topics but also specific aspects like testosterone and male body image. Although I already had some knowledge about the impact of racism on colonialism via my English studies, I never knew how entrenched these power structures were until this day. The consequences that hegemonic masculinity performance implies were not known to be this severe to me previously. However, the counter-approaches to hegemonic masculinity create a hopeful future perspective.

As this work also mentioned, the negative aspects of gender power structures in hegemonic masculinity can only change when they are recognized. Although this process was very time consuming, I am glad for new insights into men's realities. Especially in my future

profession as a teacher, it is essential to know about the struggles and pressures that female and male teenagers experience daily. Furthermore, being aware of hegemonic and toxic masculinity helps me to understand men in my community. If the possibility arises, this knowledge can even be shared with others. Thereby by researching the historical and cultural concept of masculinity, I acquired a vital understanding of global and local power struggles between men.

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