MAPUTO HAS NO MARRIAGE MATERIAL:
SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE POLITICS OF SOCIAL AFFIRMATION AND EMOTIONAL STABILITY AMONGST COSMOPOLITANS IN AN AFRICAN CITY

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DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own work and that they have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. References to other people's work have been indicated throughout.

Signed: 

Date: 9th April 2014

ABSTRACT

This study explores the dynamics of sexuality amongst relatively wealthier urban young adults in the capital of Mozambique, Maputo. How class works in shaping sexuality and gender dynamics constitute some of the questions tackled here. Such questions have not received much attention on studies regarding these topics in the African continent. Based on 15 months of fieldwork, the thesis analyses how young adults use sexuality to give a sense of self and personhood in a context marked by rapid transformations occurring in the country intertwined with the legacy of colonialism, socialism, civil war and liberalisation of the economy. Tactical agency emerges as a critical concept to explain the ways in which both men and women manoeuvre to reach emotional stability and social recognition in the city.

Questions of identity, which are negotiated in regards to diverse *modernities* and African heritage, are at the core of radical contradictions that characterise the everyday dynamics, expectations of young cosmopolitans in the city. Amongst young adults there is a constant (re-)shaping of perceptions and ways of living femininities and masculinities. These are fuelled by internal logics of sexual and intimate relationships as well as the management of emotions within them. However, class and its dispositions permeate these processes. Marriage is the key means to socially recognized adulthood however; the process towards it is perilous as it involves a constant negotiation of expectations. Finally, love emerges as a space of catharsis in which individuals feel at ease and distant from social pressures and the desire to 'fit in'. Paradoxically it is a space of stress it is perceived as a source of profound unhappiness when things go wrong.

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GLOSSARY

barraca:	small outdoor kiosk and bar
capulana:	colourful sarong commonly wore by women as a skirt
chular:	take advantage of someone
lobolo:	bride-wealth
Metical or *Mt*:	Mozambican currency
namorar:	to date
namorada or *namorado*:	steady girlfriend or boyfriend
tchilar:	to enjoy, to relax
xitique:	informal rotated saving and credit arrangement

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CCCS	Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Mozambique Liberation Front)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RENAMO	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (Mozambique National Resistance or MNR)
PRE	Programa de Restruturação Economica (Structural Adjustment Program SAP)

INTRODUCTION

This study examines the interconnection between class and sexuality in a post-colonial, post-socialist and post-civil war city. The research is done among young elite and middle class men and women in Maputo. The analysis explores, more specifically, the reconfiguration of sexuality and gender in the context of social, cultural and economic transformation.

The landscape of Maputo illustrates the changes. In the last five years, the construction explosion in the city has transformed its stylish colonial-era buildings with an urban museum feeling to a modern metropolis with a much taller skyline (Jenkins 2011) and large superstores. There are contemporary bars and restaurants serving a variety of international cocktails, with foods ranging from Italian pastas and pizzas to Japanese sushi. Sleek and minimalist décor define most trendy entertainment places. This lifestyle is a privilege of the locals who are well off economically [or those who use diverse social and cultural strategies and tactics (de Certeau 1984) to get access to such lifestyle]; the large community of expatriates working at international NGOs, embassies and multilateral agencies as well as tourists. Associated with this lifestyle are a number of other social (and, perhaps more significantly, sexual) practices, which are characterised by a sense of freedom, access to pleasure, experimentation and fun.

The transformations[1] in the capital of Mozambique are prompting processes of subjectivisation[2], which, in the field of sexuality are reflected in the (re)shaping of sexual morality and constructions of gender. Borrowing from Mbembe's theorisation, what one observes is the fact that the *commandment*[3] in the postcolonial

[1] It is worth noting that my use of the term 'transformation' also discusses continuity in everyday practices and experiences of young adults in Maputo.
[2] Subjectivity refers here to actions and discourses that produce individuals with unique experiences and consciousness.
[3] Mbembe defines the commandement as to "denote colonial authority – that is in so far as it embraces the images and structures of power and coercion, the instruments and agents of their enactment and a degree of

environment has its focus on the "mouth, the belly and the phallus" (Mbembe 1992: 6-7). For this specific analysis, the phallus takes centre stage and, as argued by Tshikala Biaya, in the postcolonial, masculinity is essentially defined by a luxurious sexuality, creating an environment that privileges the "*fixation des élites africaines sur la 'consummation des femmes'"* (Biaya 2001: 77), in other words, the fixation of the African elites on the 'consumption of the feminine'. However, in contemporary Maputo, such a dynamic is paired with increased notions of gender equity and women's empowerment, which dislodges the objectification of women. As noted by Adkins (2002), young women in particular are engaged in a process of aesthetisation that is constitutive of the de-traditionalisation of conventional gender constructions. Hence, it creates femininities that in sexual terms are translated into a valorisation of female sexual desire and pleasure, and thus a celebration of the vulvic.

In this process, emotions (related to love, passion, jealousy and sexual desire for example) are inescapable features of social life. Choices and decisions with regard to sexual engagements are mediated by emotions as well as by social values and by the manner in which individuals want to be perceived, received and/or accepted in their specific social networks and by society in general. The analytic inclusion of emotions in the scholarship of sexuality in Africa is part of a challenging wave of research in the social sciences (Abu-Lughod 1986; Cole and Thomas 2009; Hunter 2010; Smith 2007), which questions the social and historical scholarship that has reduced African intimacy to sex.

My argument in this thesis emerges from my observations of the (re-)shaping of sexual morality and constructions of gender. I argue that this group of young middle class and the elite men and women from the in Maputo are reconfiguring pleasure and intimacy. As I will discuss in detail on Part II of this thesis, one thus encounters women's own quest for pleasure, attempts to the reshaping of gender roles and the novel positioning of men and women in employment, in cultural production and the public sphere in Maputo. However, such changes are paired with continuity in

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rapport between those who give orders and those who are supposed to obey (without, of course, discussing) them. Hence the notion of commandement is used here for the authoritarian modality par excellence"(2001: 134)

gendered morality: gendered constraints related to the public and private spheres (Benhabib 1992; Fraser 1990; Yuval-Davis 1997) that are crystallised in the contradiction between the search for equality in relationships (and other spheres of life) and liberation on the one hand, and mutual dependencies on the other.

0.1 The anthropological location of the study

Within the broader umbrella of sexuality studies, my discussion responds to three main anthropological dimensions: the connections between gender and sexuality, the specific regional analysis of sexualities in Africa, and a more recent analysis (specifically on the African continent) of the sexuality of the upper classes.

In the field of anthropology, and specifically in the analyses of non-Western societies during the 1920s and 1930s, the emphasis was on the cultural variability of sexuality; classic examples of the approach used are the monographs by Malinowski (1932) and Mead (1935), written within a structural functionalist platform. These studies were framed in a 'sexological' period, as reviewed by Parker and Gagnon (Parker and Gagnon 1995), who had an essentialist reading of sexuality: It was regarded as a natural phenomenon, originating outside the boundaries of society and culture. This perspective, which was influenced both by Christianity and medicine, viewed sex as a basic drive that needed to be directed through self-control and environmental purity. Its correct manifestations was limited to sex between men and women within marriage and for the purpose of reproduction (Parker and Gagnon 1995: 4), thus giving rise to the hegemonic normative model of sex (Richardson 1998). This approach created the view that "sexuality is the most natural thing about us, [that] our drives [are] fixed and inherited, our identities dictated by the nature of those drives, and a history of sexuality therefore no more than an account of reactions to those basic biological givens" (Weeks 1995: 33). This view is still very much present in people's everyday lives and sexual practices as shown in in the perceptions of sexuality as 'natural' and the sexual drive as uncontrollable in the studies by Holland et al (1998), Manuel (2005) and Moore and Rosenthal (1993).

However, feminist scholarship, activists' rethinking of gender, as well as lesbian and gay studies, and the theoretical challenges of Michel Foucault have all had a revolutionary impact on notions of what is natural (Caplan 1987; Foucault 1990). Due to the influence of these studies, social constructionist models have emerged. These models reject trans-historical and trans-cultural definitions of sexuality and discuss the phenomenon as a socially, culturally, historically constructed one (Vance 1999: 43).Sexuality, then, is not taken as a universal given but as a construct that results from, and is produced by, the conceptions and lives of each particular social group.

The effect of a constructionist approach in the field of sexuality has highlighted and generalised the perspective that the production of knowledge on sexuality is frequently influenced by social norms and values. The sex and gender debate is a typical example of the influence of constructionism in the social sciences.

The differentiation between sex and gender was born in the 1970s when feminists outside anthropology drew on the cross-cultural data provided by anthropological research to establish variability in gender and gender roles, and thus provide substantive content for the feminist position that gender was socially constructed and not biologically determined (Moore 1994).

Judith Butler, a prominent theorist on the topic, goes back to the original distinction of sex and gender, which argues that, whatever biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed. She challenges this proposition by positing that the sex and gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders. However, in her view, even if sexes appear to be un-problematically binary in their morphology and constitution, there is no reason to assume that genders also ought to remain as two (Butler 1990) .

In her discussion, Butler returns to the social construction of sex, questioning whether the "ostensibly natural facts of sex are discursively produced by various scientific discourses in the service of political and social interests" (Butler 1990: 7). After looking at a set of questions that challenge the natural status of sex, Butler

concludes that "it would make sense to define gender as the cultural interpretation of sex, if sex itself is a gendered category" (Butler 1990: 7).

Therefore, gender ought not to be conceived merely as the cultural inscription of meanings on a pre-given sex, but rather gender becomes the discursive/cultural means by which a "sexed nature" or "natural sex" is produced and established as "pre-discursive", prior to culture, viz. a politically neutral surface on which culture acts (Butler 1990: 7). Gender, then, was to be understood as the cultural elaboration of the meaning and significance of the natural facts of biological differences between women and men (Moore 1999).

Further, in Foucault's argument, even sex does not exist prior to its determination within the discourse in which its constellations of meanings are specified, and therefore bodies have no sex outside discourses in which they are designated as sexed (Foucault in Moore 1994). Following Foucault's perspective, Butler argues that gender is a discursive tool. However, sex would be pre-discursive, constituting the apparatus in which the gender discourse could be constructed. Both gender and sex – and therefore sexuality – are *performed*, in Butler's view. Gender performativity will signify the "tacit collective agreement to perform, produce, and sustain discrete and polar genders as cultural fictions" (Butler 1990: 140). Such performances are repetitive and social and culturally constructed – which means that "there is a limited span in which individuals can perform gender within their social environment" (Butler 1993: 2).

The discussion regarding the distinction between sex and gender takes a different route with the field of poststructuralist critical theory known as 'queer theory'. The analysis of sexuality in queer theory uses the homosexual and heterosexual divide to read socio-sexual dynamics. Following the claim that identities are not fixed (in other words, that they cannot be categorized and labelled), queer theory is interested in understanding desire and pleasure without a fixed and immutable characterization of the person who follows a specific or a combination of social and sexual practices (Jagose 1997).

Again, under the influence of Foucault, discourse and language are central points to queer theory. The fact that identities are named and allocated to certain behaviours defines who the person is. Queer theory is against the fixity of such categories and indeed, under the use of queer arguments, one is able to read a variety of relationships. Moreover, queer theory suggests that there is no need for a concept of gender at all. It's theorists draw on the re-conceptualization of gender as a *process* rather than a category, with the focus on the 'doing' of gender rather than the 'being' of it, as developed in the performance theory (Butler 1990 and 1993) and elsewhere (Moore 1999). In queer theory, sex is always already gender or is sexuality.

A few examples from the literature that I have engaged with show how the dynamics of identity, gender and sexuality are manipulated. The study by Moodie and Ndatshe on mine workers in South Africa reveals a manipulation of identities by migrants in the mines, who live in only-male compounds. 'Wife of the mine' is the name given to younger migrants in the mine compound who would 'accept' being sexually involved with an older mine worker in exchange for money (Moodie and Ndatshe 1994).

The older man would ask the younger one to become his 'mine wife' and would share the same bed with him at night, sometimes rubbing his penis between the young man's thighs. The boys at would also perform roles conceptualised, in that context, as female ones. Such roles included cooking meals and serving them to the 'mine husband', not sitting at the table with the other 'men' while they were talking, amongst others. This is what Butler (1990 and 1993) calls 'the performance of gender'.

If less emphasis is given to social identity in this example, the behaviour and the meanings of such practices become relevant for the analysis. Understanding why, when, with whom, and with what objective the men would accept being either 'mine wives' or 'mine husbands' means that a focus is put on behaviour and its meanings. The approach that I am interested in following in my own research embraces this view as the central perspective: describing the practices people perform. However, categorising the diverse kinds of people based on their practices does not constitute

my aim. As queer theorists would argue, identities are fluid and dynamic, therefore why try to circumscribe people to bounded sexual groups?

Joane Nagel discusses how the process of constructing ethnic and sexual boundaries differentiates people. Such differentiation can be benign, but can sometimes be the basis for discrimination, conflict and violence (Nagel 2003). Homophobia is an example of discrimination, for instance, that inhibits people from openly and freely talking about their sexual preferences. In 'The Epistemology of the Closet', Sedgwick shows how modern thought and knowledge is structured by the crisis of the homo/heterosexual definition (Sedgwick 1991). She argues that "there is need for a critical analysis that can only begin from the adoption of a modern gay and anti-homophobic theory" (Sedgwick 1991: I). This perspective asks modern knowledge to come out of the closet in order to become able to critically assess the homo/heterosexual crux.

In this study gender is defined as "an institutionalized system of social practices for constituting people as two significantly different categories, men and women, and organizing social relations of inequality on the basis of that difference" (Ridgeway and Correll 2004: 510).

However, my understanding of inequality is different, in that the term 'inequality' does not automatically assume that men always exert power over women, but that it can sometimes be the other way around. I analyse the power dynamic as a dialectical process that is not fixed and that depends on age, social/economic status and context, cultural environment, and patterns of behaviour, among other factors.

Both sex and gender are perceived as social constructions, thus following the anthropological work on sexuality, I distinguish between sex and gender. Gender has already been discussed above; with regard to sex, I distinguish between sex and sexuality. Sex can be used to refer to an act (i.e. erotic or reproductive practices) or to a category (female and male). However, the term 'sexuality', inspired by the theories of Weeks (2003) and Tuzin (1995), is used as a relational concept to interpret how sexual behaviour relates to the social context.

The concept becomes relevant when seeking to comprehend the subjectivities of the young adults in Maputo because, as explained by Spronk 8(2006), a person's sexuality develops in interaction with social axes such as age, religion, gender or class, all of which imprint particular notions of sexuality.

Another distinction worth pointing out is the one between the concepts of sex/sexuality and gender. My point of departure is that "sexuality and gender are two analytically distinct phenomena, which require separate explanatory frames even though they are interrelated in specific historical circumstances" (Rubin inVance 1999: 41). Thus, contrary to previous Mozambican studies that have gender - particularly that of women – as the primary analytical category (Cruz e Silva, et al. 2007; Loforte 2000; Osório 1998; Santos and Arthur 1991), in this case the primary analytical category is sexuality, based on the suggestion that "we are only likely to find a view of sexuality as a 'thing in itself', when there is a severance of sex from reproduction or when referring to one's sexual orientation") (Caplan 1987: 2). Following Caplan's perspective, sexuality, in this study, is analysed as a category, although, it includes here the form of 'plastic sexuality' [4] (Giddens 1992) and although its meanings are perceived in terms of different sexual orientations. Sexuality is therefore perceived as the sexual act as well as the verbalized and tacit rules that guide intimate sexual relationships.

The theoretical framework I use for exploring the sexuality of the cosmopolitan young adults in Maputo is a constructionist approach, which problematises sexuality as mediated by historical and cultural factors. Also, in my analysis, I de-naturalise heterosexuality as the expected model of sexuality. Agreeing with Butler that sex is "one of the norms by which the 'one' becomes viable at all, that which qualifies a body for life within the domain of cultural intelligibility" (Butler 1993), I am interested in exploring the diverse and varied manifestations of sexuality that the context of urban Maputo will expose.

[4] 'Plastic sexuality' refers to sexual expression with no intention of reproduction.

Of note is the fact that my informants self-defined as heterosexuals; nonetheless, their sexual practices included non-heteronormative manifestations, which highlights Butler's point. At this confluence, 'heterosexual queer' can be a useful concept, as it envisions a platform from which to read alternative heterosexual subjectivities as the critique of sexual normativity. Straight queer theory is both bound to the history of specific identities and committed to the destabilization of sexual identities – including those that have become hegemonic (Schilchter 2004).

Social constructionism constitutes an advantage, as it opens up a space for the acknowledgment of local and particular meanings of sexual acts that may be performed in different contexts. An example would be the case of women who have engaged in sexual acts with other women but do not consider themselves lesbians or bisexuals. This perspective minimises – in my view – the negative impact of ethnocentric perceptions (such as the ones from Caldwell et al 1989 and Rushton 1997).

Historically, as highlighted by Vance (1999), "studies of sexuality in anthropology have been guided by 'cultural influence models' that emphasize the role of culture and learning in shaping sexual behaviour and attitudes, thus rejecting obvious forms of essentialism and universalizing theories" (Vance 1999: 44).

It is in this vein that I approach sexuality as well as love and emotions – the various dimensions of intimacy that I investigate in this research. Although culture is thought to shape sexual expression and customs, the bedrock of sexuality is assumed to be universal and biologically determined (ibid), and anthropologists working within this framework accept without question the existence of seemingly universal categories, such as heterosexual and homosexual, male and female, sexuality and sex drive (Vance 1999). The contradiction expressed in Vance's discussion highlights a problem since it opens up a space for biological essences that constitute an obstacle to readings of sexuality as a socio-cultural construct. As it happens when lesbians are portrayed as masculine and feminine types who complement each other or even the assumption, that in Richardson analysis has not altogether disappear, that male

homosexuals had reduced levels of testosterone compared to heterosexual men (Richardson 1998).

Despite the criticism to social constructionism (for an expanded critique view Hacking 1999), the expressions of sexuality and emotions are embedded in historically situated moments, socio-cultural practices, material conditions and discourses that express such conditions. Consequently, constructionism constitutes the platform that enables me to unpack and make sense of the individuals of this study. As happened in the studies by Herdt and Keesing (1998), studying male initiation rites in Sambia, and Godelier (2003), analysing the meanings of sexual intercourse for the Baruya in New Guinea. The authors arrive at the conclusion that boys practicing fellatio on older men (Herdt 1984) or young men having intercourse with one another before marriage (Godelier 2003) has nothing to do with the emotional and intimate homosexual relationship found in the contemporary Western world, but rather with perceptions about the formation of maleness. Thus, although the practices are similar, the meanings are local, making it difficult to universalize the category of the homosexual. The examples of the *fafafines* – men who perform female roles – of the Samoa Islands**,** the *hijras* of India (Nanda 1999) or gender blending among transsexuals (King 1996) disrupt any possible universalising category of what constitutes masculine sexual norms.

In my fieldwork amongst young people in Maputo in 2004 same sexual practice within a different category of partnership is given a completely different meaning by the individuals involved. Informants differentiated '*sexo verdadeiro*' (real sex) from 'sex'. They defined 'real sex' as intercourse practiced with a steady and loved partner, while 'sex' referred to intercourse with an occasional partner (Manuel 2008). In the context of HIV and AIDS, though, there is an essential difference between these two categories: the use of condoms. While in 'real sex', condoms are disliked, in occasional 'sex' they are the preferred and accepted method of protection (Karlyn 2005).

In Mozambique and on the African continent in general, AIDS has dominated research in the field of sexuality. In my personal experience, when I introduced the

topic of my research both to academic and lay audiences, I was commonly asked if I was investigating sexual attitudes with regard to HIV and AIDS. Even in my presentations at academic conferences, the reactions of fellow presenters and other participants commonly emerged as a reaction in favour of or against my tackling of AIDS in my discussion of the papers.

While research on the topic is indeed essential, the approaches of the research being developed has generally followed linear approaches to analysis, which, in my view, present limitations in terms of methodology (a focus on quantitative and epidemiological research or knowledge, attitudes, practices and behaviour studies) and perspectives (tackling only some aspects of sexual relationships and emphasising an instrumental analysis of the topic). Consequently, one witnesses the absence of or only very few studies on female pleasure, same-sex relationships, the roles of emotions and affection in sex, female agency and alternative sexual practices. This approach shapes the field of sexuality studies in Africa in unidirectional ways, which is very different, for example, from the literature on sexuality in Western societies.

0.2 African sexualities

Historically, research on sexuality in Africa has highly been influenced by Eurocentric colonial views, based on a tri-dimensional set of stereotypical analyses that still informs a large body of research on sexuality in Africa, which materialised in a notion of a single 'African sexuality'. Firstly, Africa tends to be perceived as a single unit, which makes it difficult to highlight specificities within the diverse regions, countries, ethno-linguist groups, social classes and other diverse subjectivities that constitute the African continent. Secondly, 'African men' are perceived as having an inordinately high sex drive (Rushton 1997), which tends to make them promiscuous and involved in wide sexual networks. This argument has gained strength in the AIDS discourse, and is thus seen as one explanation for the high rates of infection in, for example, Southern Africa; at the same time, it is used to explain the heterosexual character of AIDS on the continent.

Associated with this perception, Rushton (1997) implies a correlation between Africans' penis size and sexual behaviour, which he claims can account for the high rates of HIV and AIDS amongst women in Africa and in the African diaspora.

The above described view fuels the third stereotype, which constructs African women as disempowered to the extent that they often have sex in exchange for material compensation. This perception is associated with the notion that African women lack the capacity for sexual pleasure, as argued in the intensely debated 'African sexuality thesis' by Caldwell and Quiggin (1989). Caldwell's thesis indeed stands as a prototype of such tri-dimensional stereotypes, as it constitutes a generalisation of the African continent based on only a few case studies from one particular African country, Nigeria. While the authors avoided writing in a racist manner, they nonetheless ended up writing about sexuality on the African continent as a self-evident concept and developed a 'promiscuity thesis' of sexuality in Africa, a phrase coined by Epprecht (2008). Also, as remarked by Spronk, "by writing about 'African' sexuality in relation to 'Caucasian' sexuality, they (Caldwell et al) emphasise differences rather than possible similarities, such as the relationships between poverty or class and sexuality" (2006: 9).

Such stereotypical readings of sexuality in Africa are still prevalent, and one can easily identify them, as they tend to use morally loaded terms, such as 'multiple and concurrent partnerships' (MCP) – a technical term for what used to be called 'promiscuity' (Mishra et al in Thornton 2009: 2). Indeed, such characterisation is recurrent, as Africa continues to be depicted as a 'paradigm of difference' (Mudimbe 1994). Plus, much of the analysis on black sexuality continues to be done within a patronising, colonial mind-set, entrenched in the psychological need for projection of 'Otherness' (Vaughan 1991: 19).

My research thus sheds light on the topic by providing an alternative analysis, which is embedded in perspectives that avoid homogenising and an essentialist view of people's sexualities (Lewis 2011; Tamale 2011). It is impossible to understand sex or intimacy without understanding emotional attachments (Ahlberg 1994; Cole and Thomas 2009; Hunter 2010; Hunter 2002; Smith 2001). These authors highlight

diversity in their analysis; emphasise meanings and emotions; demystify African sexualities and set parallels between lived experiences in various areas of the continent and in other parts of the globe.

In my case, the fact that I am Mozambican and a middle class woman, and that I was thus doing ethnography at home, armed me with skills and granted me insights that I perceive as vital in avoiding the dialectic of 'Otherness' that is often so prevalent in the research of sexuality in Africa.

Indeed, my own subjectivities raise interesting challenges too, as I will later discuss in with regard to the subjectivities of the ethnographer. I consider my approach to the study of sexuality as part of a small but developing field of research on sexuality that seeks to re-construct the hegemonic trend of simplifying sex in Africa and consequently de-erotising it to an act devoid of meaning (Arnfred 2004b). Sexual engagements in Maputo (which include dyadic faithful relationships, multiple and complex scenarios of sexual encounters and relationships throughout one's life trajectory, celibacy, etc.) are embedded in socio-cultural and emotional meanings that constitute only one part of how people perceive a sense of self.

0.3 Relating class to gender and sexuality

This section gives a background of the analysis of sexuality and gender in order to, subsequently; show how the addition of class impacts the discussion. In the analyses of contemporary sexuality in Africa, gender inequalities have been at the forefront of explanations. This emerged in response to constructions of a hyper-sexualised African masculinity that has worked to recuperate racist and colonial versions of African male lust and desire in the context of HIV infection, linked to heterosexual transmission (Bhana, et al. 2007). However, simultaneously there was a return to an emphasis on the construction of African women as disempowered. Most literature on HIV and AIDS has portrayed young women as being particularly vulnerable to infection due to their lack of power to determine who to have sex with or when to have sex; their inability to refuse to have sex with non-monogamous partners and

their incapacity to insist on or negotiate condom use. Paradoxically, such views only reinforce degrading images of African sexuality.

Mama (1996), Iman (2001) and Adomako Ampofo (2004) critique the prominence of the gender inequalities discourse as it silenced the conjugation of various other dimensions that contribute to a broader understanding of African women's sexuality. Therefore, Mama asks:

> *"[I]n view of the constraining effects of [female genital cutting] on female sexuality, one is left to ask, where is the research on traditions, which empower women, which give them more, rather than less, control of their sexual and reproductive lives? Given the frequent claims to this effect, why is there not more research on aspects of indigenous cultures, which empower women's sexuality (1996, 47)."*

Clearly more research on women's sexual practices that grant them more control over their sexuality would add nuance to the widespread stance of gender inequality. And, Mama is not alone Diallo (2004) in her theorisation of practices of *Magnomaka* and *Bolokoli-kêla* in Mali questioned the Western mainstream feminist model that in the past has been used to explain female genital operation practices in Africa while maintaining a silence on other aspects of women's sexuality. She described the Malian practice of *Magnomaka* as one of enhancing sexual pleasure, while another, *Bolokoli-kêla*, served to hinder women's sexuality, as mentioned by Ampofo et al (2004). In Mozambique, Bagnol and Mariano (2008b), through the exploration of vaginal practices, described a number of techniques and sexual pleasure enhancers used by rural women to increase their sexual pleasure in heterosexual encounters.

The examples cited bring to light dynamics that start to rationalise women's agency in sexual relationships in Africa. Even if it is accepted that gender inequalities are indeed a fact in the context of sexual negotiation in Africa, the analyses seem to transmit an image that solidifies such inequality to the entire universe of African women. Authors like Hunter (2002) and Arnfred (2007) have challenged such views, questioning assumptions of passivity by describing how women mobilise their

sexuality and exercise agency in sexual relations, even in scenarios that are pre-conceived as being characterised by inequality.

Hunter (2002) shows how, in Mandeni, South Africa, women who invest heavily in heterosexual versions of femininity, while placing themselves at risk by using sex as a means of addressing material needs via transactional sex, simultaneously conquer material and emotional aspirations. Arnfred (2007) shows how rural women in the matrilineal north of Mozambique play an active role in the control of their sexuality by employing seduction techniques and dominating the food preparation sphere, as women are the ones controlling the granaries and deciding what to take out, when and for what purpose. These two roles grant them agency powers in the relationship with their partners. Nevertheless, there is still an aspect poorly explored in the explanations on the rapport between men and women in the field of sexuality in Africa, namely, how is sex experienced amongst the affluent socio-economic classes on the African continent?

In England, for example, Maxwell and Aggleton (2010) explored young women's agency in private schools. In their analysis, they have highlighted how the meaning and enactment of agency is distanced from pre-conceived notions that link 'agency' to resistance. They found that, on the contrary, agency is exercised in a context of power sharing in sexual relationships, mediated by emotions. Having been inspired by these kinds of analyses, I thus emphasise the need for alternative readings on the dynamics between men and women in sexual and romantic contexts in Africa, as class diversity is, indeed, a reality!

In my research, I spoke with wealthier urbanities belonging to both the middle class and elite groups. What role does class play in the gender inequality debate in the context of sexuality? Gender studies scholars have increasingly drawn our attention to the impact of globalization on women's status on the African continent (Darkwah 2002; Magubane 2001; Pereira 2002). Most of these scholars agree that globalization and the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) imposed by the International Monetary Fund have led to the growing feminisation of the labour market in low-level positions, an expansion in sex work, an increase in women's workloads, and

further feminisation of poverty. However, this overlooks the minority of African women who have managed to become successful in the professional sphere and who have accumulated financial wealth, as described by Iheduru (2003), in the case of elite black businesswomen in post-Apartheid South Africa.

I argue, based on my analysis in Maputo, that gender inequalities take a less acute role in the experience of sexuality and sexual relationships amongst elite and middle class young adults in Maputo. In this group, I contend, class mediates sexual relationships. Class (and economic comfort), to a great extent, levels men and women in their social contexts, reducing gendered inequalities, and it gives them the prerogative of choice, although other social constraints (like social pressure to get married and start a family, for example) limit individual options. This reality creates the opportunity to explore interesting dynamics on the continent, as choice of sexual and romantic partners is not constrained, greatly by gendered positioning but rather by class dispositions.

If one adopts an approach to class as social spaces (Bourdieu 1984), it becomes a "structuring force in terms of how people experience and enact their personal relationships" (Johnson and Lawler 2005). The exercise of class done by an individual's *habitus* – viz. a set of durable and transposable dispositions of which one is not necessarily conscious, and which express social difference – is fundamental for young adults in Maputo since, while the choice of romantic and sexual partners is assumed to be on the basis of apparently subjective dispositions (desires, preferences and tastes that are felt as individual and unique), these are in fact socially ordered (Johnson and Lawler 2005).

The place of gender in the socio-sexual scenario of the cosmopolitan young adults in Maputo has to do with an analysis of its malleability, in other words, by looking at how gender identities are fluctuating. Such variability of gender identities results from the manner in which individuals exercise class together with status and the internal politics of sexual, romantic and/or love relationships. In the following chapter, I will tackle these points.

0.4 Urban, hip with a swagger

The title of this subsection evokes the characterisation of the young cosmopolitan subjects of this study. They are young men and women aged between 25 and 36 years, living in the bustling city of Maputo. Most are originally from Maputo, while some come from various provinces of the country; all have had stayed abroad, whether long-term or short-term. Maputo, as the capital city of Mozambique, offers a number of professional opportunities, as it congregates the headquarters of private, public, bilateral and multilateral organizations. Moreover, with its high concentration of people from all walks of life, it emerges as a paradise for urban entrepreneurs due to the lack of diversity in services offered.

The group of 13 young men and women that I followed intensively were mostly members of the middle class, while a few were part of the political and economic elite of the country and the city. In this context, class is thus a marker, as the aesthetics of these young adults are associated with conspicuous consumption and displays of lifestyles that are distinctive in Bourdieu's (1984), sense of the word. While they may not be all at the same level economically, they do all earn an income that allows them to fulfil their basic needs and still have sufficient money left over for regular entertainment activities. Moreover, through a combination of tactics and strategies (professional choices and opportunities, belonging to the elite and to well-off families and close networks, as well as venturing into 'good' marriages that permit social mobility), they manage to embody the lifestyle of being cosmopolitans: "urban citizens who seek out the global world in their local context" (Spronk 2006: 23).

With the exception of two of the participants, who are still full-time students, all the informants drive their own cars. When driving in the jacaranda-lined streets of Maputo during rush hour on a rainy day, they would most probably drench the large number of people waiting for the limited public and private transport. Indeed, social inequalities in the city are acute: at red traffic lights, one is likely to find, on the one side, the latest single-occupant Range Rover Evoque with all its windows closed, enjoying air-conditioned comfort and, on the other side, an overloaded pick-up truck,

full of people squeezed close together, as they are transported from their residences at the periphery of the city to their jobs in the inner city.

In contrast to other African studies (Smith 2007; Spronk 2006), the young adults in this analysis are second-generation urban citizens, even if their parents resided on the periphery of the city in colonial Mozambique (until 1975, when Mozambique became independent). All participants reside at the heart of the inner city of Maputo, and are frequent users of the services, entertainment and cultural activities happening in the city. Most have their Bachelor degrees and a smaller number have a Masters degree in disciplines that range from the social sciences, performance and arts to the natural sciences. A proportion of them have lived abroad (Australia, Belgium, Brazil, France, Portugal, South Africa, Switzerland, United States, Zimbabwe, amongst other countries), mostly to pursue their undergraduate and postgraduate studies via a number of scholarships available in the country. All of them travel regularly in the region and internationally, which emphasises their cosmopolitanism. They work mostly in the private sector and in international NGOs or UN agencies operating in the country. They are all sexually active and involved in some kind of relationship(s).

Three participants got married during my fieldwork and all of them have, for the 15 months of my fieldwork, been involved in (at least) one steady relationship with a partner in Maputo; a considerable number of participants were also involved in other kinds of non-steady relationships. Some others are involved in steady long-distance relationships with partners studying or working abroad (viz. in a province other than Maputo or even in a different county).

Most of my informants belonged to the Catholic Church and most only rarely attended church, if ever, although many did define themselves as Catholic. This "lack of religious fervor has historical roots, as the Portuguese Catholic Church has long been known for valuing the number of its converts" (Macamo 2005: 89). Protestant churches are widespread in Maputo. However, only a young woman was a follower, as a result of her interaction with that church when she was doing an internship in the UK. In general, Maputo is a plural religious space with the

predominant religions being Catholicism, Islamism and Animism.

All participants self-identified as heterosexuals. However, a number of women informants have narrated experiences of sex with other women either in group sex (multiple women and one or more men) or in a couple's context (two women).

I am aware of the growing impact of the 'out of the closet' homosexual community in the city and of the fact that recent studies on the continent have highlighted the need to understand homosexuality in order to address sexual diversity in Africa (Epprecht 2008; Maticka-Tyndale, et al. 2007), where mainstream studies have thus far centred on heterosexuality (Epprecht 2008). Homosexuality is indeed a relevant research topic, however, irrespective of the sexual identities implicated, it is my contention that little is still known about the actual practices of sexual intercourse on the continent (Amadiume 2006), and specifically in Mozambique, even among those labelled heterosexuals.

The participants belong to diverse networks in Maputo that have specific points of origin. Many of them grew up together in the same neighbourhood and, for the most part, they all went to the same primary and secondary schools when they were toddlers and teenagers. As youngsters, they would practice sports in the same club, go to the same music or dance school, or the same church or mosque, amongst others. Back then; Mozambique was still living under the Socialist regime, in which an effort was made not to highlight class differences.

After the liberalization of the economy (in 1987), class distinctions started to become more visible. Amongst the youth, new kinds of groups emerged, based on the following: attendance of the same private secondary school; membership of the same gyms; race and nationality (this was especially true for the white Portuguese community that stayed in the country after independence); taking the same university courses, amongst others.

Today, such identities still play a role in the formation and maintenance of networks of friends. However, a range of other aspects seems to have emerged with age. Job

interactions, entertainment styles as well as individual personalities seem to have become important too. Also, some stereotypes related to ethnicity, political affiliation, race, religion, descent, and etiquette are seen as key not only in the selection of sexual or marital partners but also in the selection of friends.

Some examples of the networks I found include those who are friends because they share similar tastes in entertainment. This specific group of young men really enjoys going out and drinking alcohol. At weekends and even on weekdays, specifically on Thursday evenings (a night of Mozambican music at the popular 'Africa Bar'), they party and drink throughout the night. The group of 'alternative' and independent women prefers to spend time together chatting, partying, amongst other activities. I call them 'alternative' because their styles, activities, and actions differ from the mainstream. For example, most of them wear dreadlocks[5], Afro-styles and natural braids (as opposed to the mainstream hairstyles for black woman, viz. hair treated with chemicals or extensions that are straight or curly but never kinky). Most of them are single mothers and financially independent women, and did not follow the typical pattern of most teenagers by staying with the same boyfriend for a very long period of time (various years).

Of course, there are other examples of networks too. It is important to note, however, that people tend to navigate among these diverse networks. My point in highlighting these specific networks is based on the observation that these particular friendships seem to be long lasting. Moreover, scepticism, avoidance or stereotyping of unknown networks discourages groups of people or individuals to mix and to come to know each other in depth. Plus, in general, expectations and models of coupling are complex and are not necessarily the same for different individuals, as I have highlighted in my earlier discussion of radical contradictions. Consequently, it is very common to hear sentences like this: "Maputo has no marriage material" – the inspiration for the title of my dissertation, which embodies the contradictions and dilemmas experienced in everyday practices of young cosmopolitans.

[5] Dreadlocks are still generally regarded as very radical in this society. In practical terms, it is still difficult, for example, for someone wearing dreadlocks to obtain an ID photo.

0.5 Methods

This research constitutes an inductive analysis, as it aims to examine sexuality in an open-ended way. The experience of sexuality is being re-designed by the impact of the HIV and AIDS pandemic and awareness campaigns, the influence of condoms, and the actual patterns of popular and youth culture (which are disseminated through the global media and other technological devices). Therefore, through the exploration of performative identities (Butler 1993), tactics and strategies (de Certeau 1984) and power dynamics (Foucault 1990), I identify the logics present in a variety of relations (either sexual or not), which determine the role of sexuality, its impact, its problems, its importance, its diversity in Maputo city at the present time. At this juncture, it thus becomes pertinent to investigate the constructions of femininity and masculinity in the urban context of Maputo, whilst exploring their ambiguities and nuances in relation to sexuality.

As this study aims to characterise, understand and interpret the dynamics of sexuality in Mozambique, it is qualitative research. This is the most useful tool for understanding "how individuals perceive, organise, give meaning to and express their understandings of themselves, their experiences and their worlds" (Mishler inMacun and Posel 1998: 118). The research is further based on an interpretivist perspective, as it explores the manner in which people construct meaning, give sense and relate to the realities where they live.

The data generating process of this research combined a variety of methods: focus group discussions, one-on-one semi-structured interviews, informal conversations and observation. I located potential participants by means of snowballing. In the field, I took notes in my field diary and transcribed the recorded focus group discussions due to the difficulty of taking live notes on the various opinions being shared. The interviews and informal conversations were summarised in my notebook. I kept all records in Portuguese but translated them into English so that I would be able to quote the participants' words in the final analysis and discussion of this thesis.

Each of these methods served a specific purpose, and the methods were designed to complement each other. Thus, through the focus group discussions, I gained "insight into the personal experience, beliefs, attitudes and feelings that underlie behaviour" (Frith 2000: 276); at the same time, the group discussions "afford a less hierarchical, more enabling and supportive forum for discussions than in the case of individual interviews"(Macun and Posel 1998: 116). The focus group discussions revolved around specific topics, which included: the meanings and practices of sex and sexual partners; expectations in diverse kinds of relationships; the definition of and the various expressions used to describe sex; reproduction; peer pressure; media socialisation; the different kinds of sexual and non-sexual partners; friendships, kinship relations and perceptions about older generations; marriage and children; multiple sexual and affective partners; extended family and relationships; love, lust and desire; monogamy and cheating; entertainment, leisure and sexuality, understandings and meanings of the erotic and the sensual. Such themes were relevant for understanding the social constructions of sex, body, masculinity and femininity, as well as for exploring constructions of self and personhood, and the status and negotiation of the sexual and intimate relationships of these young adults, as well as continuity and change in these processes. Each group discussion tackled a number of specific topics, with the various group comprising men only or women only or being a mixed group.

Focus group discussions create a space in which the discussion among the members can flow more freely with less direction and prompting from the researcher; they allow participants to use the language and vocabulary that they would commonly use; and they invite participants to introduce their own themes and concerns, as these arise (Macun and Posel 1998). However, the focus group discussions can limit the ability to learn about people's individual beliefs, as the various participants in the discussion influence each other in their responses. In order to overcome this limitation, I also used one-on-one semi-structured interviews and informal conversations.

The interview creates a space in which participants can talk confidentially and discuss matters they may not want to disclose in a group interview. I implemented

semi-structured interviews with very open-ended questions in order to allow the respondents to expand upon the topic and give their own views and interpretations. The group discussions were helpful in allowing me to identify potential case studies that could be further explored in the individual interviews. Informal conversations were ubiquitous during my fieldwork, as I socialised with the participants and 'hung out' with them daily. My experience demonstrated how valuable informal conversations were in strengthening rapport with informants. Such conversations opened up a space to establish friendships and be introduced to a young adult's circle of friends.

However, I found it very challenging to gain access to members of the older generation, in other words, the informants' parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts as well as other people from an equivalent generation that were not necessarily related to my informants. Most informants were not comfortable in introducing me and allowing me to discuss the topics of my research with their older relatives. Also, I encountered barriers with people from the older generation when I spoke with them about these topics. Thus, I was unable to conduct any generation comparisons due to the absence of information, other than some of the ethnographic literature available in Mozambique on the topic.

To be able to draw consistent conclusions, I used the triangulation method for all the qualitative methods discussed above – focus group discussions, interviews, informal conversations and observation. This process helped me to improve the level of reliability of this study, as all the methods were able to complement each other. As Mishler (quoted in Macun and Posel 1998: 129) pointed out, "it is appropriate to accept that each research method will produce data, which has been shaped, in non-replicable ways, by the particular relationship it inaugurates between the researcher and the researched". Triangulation allowed me to address the lacunae left by each of the methods by using the other methods as complementary techniques.

Obtaining access to young adults from the middle class and elite groupings was slightly more challenging than I had envisioned. While doing fieldwork at home presents a large number of advantages, it simultaneously poses significant

challenges. Maputo is home to me, as I was born and raised there. I am familiar with the language and colloquial speech. I am able to understand most of the un-spoken and non-verbal codes as well as the general patterns of relationships. Indeed all those aspects worked to my benefit. However, as I myself was part of the middle class group, for the first three months of my research, I had difficulties finding young adults (who were not from my immediate circle of friends and acquaintances) who were interested in participating in my research.

The people I approached would feel slightly intimidated, as they feared I might spread the information about their intimate life and personal experiences. The city is quite small, which means that the middle class and the elite groups are even smaller. There is thus a sense that everyone knows each other. Trust was, then, the first constraint.

I have managed to develop trust by contacting informants thru my network of friends and acquaintances. I used the snowball strategy to expand beyond the boundaries of such close network, and thus to gain access to individuals outside it. That strategy proved successful.

I started to invite participants to have lunch or tea at my house on the weekends, and I joined them during their nights out. To complement this, I became a habitué at the most popular bars and restaurants where young adults go after work for a drink. I started to follow a regular routine of informal conversations, interviews, observations and focus group discussions. I was invited to a number of informal meetings (barbeques, a 'girl's night out', 'chill out' meetings, a dinner, a birthday party, a bachelorette party, a house warming party, a baby shower) as well as to more formal ceremonies (an engagement party, *lobolo*, a wedding, a religious ceremony). Also, I participated in a number of public events and/or places where my informants went for entertainment (music shows, discos, public parties, karaoke evenings, restaurants, bars, discos, lounges, striptease houses, the red light district, etc.).

0.6 Ethics

Ethics are a crucial consideration in any research study. Anthropological ethics describes a set of considerations of which a researcher should be aware and which s/he should implement in the construction of his/her proposal, during fieldwork, and when writing and publishing. I paid close attention to these ethical considerations, making sure that I did not overuse nor abuse the power imbalances that might have emerged during the research encounters and during the interviews, as proposed by Scheurich (1995). Also, I was careful not to override the social and cultural values of the participants, and to be on guard against undue intrusion (Anthropology Southern Africa 2005; Association 2012).

From the beginning, the participants who agreed to join the study were treated as actively engaged subjects, especially if they had been selected from amongst the participants in of my own previous studies. Those who agreed to be part of the study were asked to give their informed consent: only after I had explained the research objectives and methodologies did the study proceed (ASA 1999).

Concerning the researcher, the challenge of researching 'at home' (Mkhwanazi 2005; Spiegel 2005) required me to unpack and question my assumptions of 'normality'. There was also the need to consider that "…while a strict adherence to the code of ethics might protect one's research participants, who or what protects the anthropologist in the field?" (Becker, et al. 2005: 126). I felt that, since I was doing 'ethnography at home', the need for protection was not a major issue, as I felt comfortable and I knew the relevant support networks. Inspired by Spiegel (2005: 135), however, I was cautious that in the event of an unexpected occurrence raising serious ethical issues for me as a researcher, I could guide myself through an ethic of care that would include contacting my supervisors or other lecturers from the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the School of Oriental and African Studies to request guidance, advice and support.

However, my previous experience in researching sexuality in urban Maputo and working with the anthropological codes of ethics has highlighted an ethical dilemma.

By complying with the anthropological codes of ethics as I pursued my research, I would be using a code of ethics produced and informed by a cultural order that was different from the one practiced in the social and cultural context in which the study would be developed. By proceeding in such a manner, I was mindful that I might be ignoring the fact that "Anthropologists do not study villages (tribes, towns, neighbourhoods…), but they study *in* villages" (Geertz 1973: 22). Specifically, by using the anthropological code of ethics, I would be bound to override the participants' own ethics when these differed from the approved professional research (Gune and Manuel 2007). So how to proceed ethically?

An option to overcome this dilemma was the application of the *ethics of care*, as suggested by Spiegel (2005). In his view, it is important to "protect participants, the researcher and protect anthropology". However, such a perspective again raises complex challenges: How is the researcher supposed to interact with participants? Is s/he to follow the approved ethical considerations, or to learn and adopt the codes of ethics produced and reproduced in Maputo city, including the ones informing the researcher? Which of the ethics should inform the setting up of questions in order to make sure that they are ethically appropriate?

Consequently, the main challenge becomes how to reconcile the various ethical codes of the discipline, of the participants and of the researcher, without sacrificing any of them, since participants should not be treated as objects but as subjects. What kinds of subjects are subordinate and conform to the approved ethical considerations? And since the aim of the research is to produce a thesis, how could this exercise not be exploitative and to be seen as making use of participants in order to achieve a particular end?

As my discussion shows, I have more questions than answers regarding ethical perspectives on my study of sexuality in Maputo city. However, this study was not impeded because of such questions. On the contrary, it evoked a constant negotiation of ethics in the field that allowed me to learn about the diverse dimensions of sexuality in a dialectical process. Afterwards, when writing up a dissertation, the researcher faces ethical challenges trying to avoid the 'writing of partial truths',

following Clifford (1986). I am aware that the description of specific sexual practices might be part of how people talk about sexuality and sexual identity.

The dilemmas mentioned and discussed above constitute, in my view, a set of challenges for the discipline of anthropology. That is the case because "the discipline of anthropology is about expanding the comprehension of diverse ways of being human, rather than forcing diversity to comply with a particular way of thinking about human beings" (Gune and Manuel 2007: 31). Some questions however are left unanswered. As I reflect on my own ethnographic experience and read a recent publication on the relationships between the anthropologists' ethnographic investigations and the lived social worlds (James, et al. 2010), I question myself about my role in generating responses from my informants due to my subjectivities, which will be described below.

0.7 Subjectivities of the ethnographer

I am an anthropologist doing research at home, as I have been born and raised in urban Maputo. I have lived in the city for most of my youth, and lived here for the two years before beginning my PhD studies. I have been exploring this and similar topics in Maputo for the last four years. I further had the advantage of being fluent in Portuguese, which eased my communication with informants, as well as being *au fait* with the local taxonomies, slang, body language codes and the meanings attached to diverse groups, places and ways of being in the city. My knowledge of the meanings of dress codes, body language, manners of interaction and other subjective rules that guide the social interaction between people, proved to be of quintessential value to my research. Also, I am considered young in the local patterns, and I embody the characteristics of young cosmopolitans; this meant that I was easily accepted among the groups of young adults who participated in my study. By playing within such rules, I was able to access the specific groups that were relevant to my research; I also managed to establish a rapport with them that granted me the information required to answer my research question.

Being a female researcher on the topic of sexuality allowed me access to a vast array of information, both individual and shared amongst young women. I was also able to gather information from young men, mostly from individual interviews and mixed sex group discussions. However, I did face some constraints during conversations with some men, as they would not reply to my questions: they argued that the topic I was asking about was a 'male issue' and that it should not be shared with a woman. I was thus conscious of the research limitations resulting from the interaction between myself a female researcher and my male informants. Interestingly enough, though, I did experience events in which men would open up and discuss issues in detail in much earlier stages of the research than was the case among the women.

However, as the research unfolded, being an 'insider' researcher created some difficulties in gathering particular kinds of information due to my proximity to the social universe of the informants. Some participants were sceptical about disclosing their network of romantic and/or sexual relationships, as they feared I would perceive them as promiscuous, or that I could easily make links and discover with whom they did have or had been having relationships. Also, generational differences between participants from an older generation and I proved to be quite a problem when collecting information regarding sexual practices, meanings and narratives.

0.8 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into two parts. Part I historically situates class and sexuality and gender dynamics in Mozambique. It also provides a theoretical base for understanding the concept of youth. Part II has a more ethnographic feel. It unpacks the meanings and practices of sexuality and gender as well as sexuality and love.

Part I comprises three chapters. In Chapter 1 I lay out the historical social stratification that led to the current social scenario of contemporary Maputo. In the last section of this chapter, I discuss the concepts of the elite and middle class, with reference to the young adults analysed herein. In Chapter 2, I proceed with locating perspectives of everyday living and the state's management of sexuality in the country. I divide the history of Mozambique into three historical periods, due to the

country's social and political subjectivities: colonialism; liberation struggle and Socialist Mozambique after independence; and finally, the contemporary period, which I would describe as Neo-liberal and donor-dominated. In Chapter 3, I engage in a literature review to discuss the concept of youth with a particular focus on how this concept is analysed in the African context. These general discussions give space to more specific ones that tackle Mozambican realities and, at deeper level, cosmopolitan youths in the capital.

Part II is made up of four ethnographic chapters. Chapter 4 is titled *What is sex? Sexual relationships and social networks*. Here, I develop a concept based on my analysis of the socio-sexual dynamics in the city: the so-called normalisation of sexual appetite. In this chapter, I give the background to the dynamics of intimacy in romantic and/or sexual relationships through naming and indicating the diverse kinds and meanings of such connections. I explore the dilemmas experienced by cosmopolitan men and women within the city and advance how sex is used in the process of finding a partner and how such activity is equated to contemporariness.

Chapter 5 explores how class underlines gendered aesthetics. The chapter includes a description of diversity in masculinities and femininities, and looks at how these affect gender relations, both in relationships and in society in general. The discussion allows one to understand how status granting in Maputo amongst this group of young adults is flexible.

A more ethnographic and descriptive rather than analytic feel characterizes the next two remaining chapters. Chapter 6 discusses marriage, which comes across as a significant step for my interlocutors. I ethnographically compare the manners in which people relate to each other in diverse kinds of relationships to highlight the meanings of marriage for the people in this group. Also, a link between marriage and class describes how the young embrace the marriage ceremony as an opportunity for ostentatious displays of wealth. Chapter 7 discusses love as a category that highlighted confusion and fear, while simultaneously expressing an extreme desire to feel love. I rationalise the verbalisations of informants regarding love, and analyse

the manner in which individuals relate to society, and what happens to their sense of personhood and dignity when love (and relationships) go sour.

I conclude the thesis by presenting the theoretical and practical implications of my research. I highlight my study's contribution to the anthropology of youth in Africa by reflecting on tactical agency. Also, I emphasise my position with regard to sexuality studies on the continent, suggesting a need for more diversity in the analysis and target groups in order to bring to light the extreme diversity of Africa.

PART I:

SETTING THE SCENE FOR UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPORARY URBAN SEXUALITY IN MAPUTO

The thesis examines the interconnection between sexuality and wealthy contemporary urban young men and women, in Maputo, the capital city of Mozambique. Part I combines historical and theoretical analysis. I begin by setting the historical ground (Chapter 1) for understanding the processes of social stratification, while presenting the relevant theories and literature with regard to concepts such as the elite, class and cosmopolitan life, as well as unpacking the diverse meanings and practices of sexuality from colonial times to today in Mozambique (Chapter 2). Part I ends with an in-depth discussion on the concept of youth in the literature with a specific focus on the African continent (Chapter 3). These chapters are grouped together, as they locate class, youth and sexuality on a platform that allows for a more focused discussion of the contemporary practices of young adults in Part II.

CHAPTER 1:

AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN MAPUTO

In order to understand the dynamics of stratification in contemporary Maputo, it is crucial to excavate the social organisation (together with the history of the city), as it evolved since the Delagoa Bay. The recent history of post-independence and liberalization has had a direct and powerful impact on defining the present-day social and spatial structure of the city.

1.1 Colonial Lourenço Marques

From the mid 16th century Maputo was designated Lourenço Marques, in honour of the Portuguese merchant trader that explorered the bay. The town developed around its harbour, which facilitated the flow of commodities to and from, mainly, South Africa. By the mid-19th century, Lourenço Marques served as a base for the Portuguese military occupation of the southern region of Mozambique. The town gradually expanded as a result, and, in 1887, became large enough to be termed a city. In 1907, was proclaimed the capital of the colony of Mozambique via a reform denominated Administrative Reorganization of the Province of Mozambique (Lobato 1970). Previously, Ilha de Moçambique had been the capital of the country, but the strategic economic and political interests of the Portuguese were focusing on the southern region of Mozambique, and thus Lourenço Marques was found to be more suitable as a capital.

The modernisation and urbanization of Lourenço Marques since the beginning of the 20th century, was mainly due to the development of British capitalism in Southern

Africa, rather than to the growth of the Portuguese province itself (Cahen 1994) – a very different model of development, when compared to richer colonial powers, such as Britain or France. Such modernisation meant the expansion of the so-called cement city – to refer to the brick city in opposition to the peripheral reed city – with an architecture that mirrored that of Portugal. The growing industry, linked to gold and diamond mines in South Africa, provided profits to the Portuguese Administration in Lourenço Marques, because the labour force from its jurisdiction was contracted to work in those mines. Additionally, the need to ensure access to the ocean for the export and import of supplies led to the accelerated urbanization of Lourenço Marques and contributed to the increasing acreage of Mozambique in the southern African economy (Cahen 1994). This dependency of Maputo (as well as Mozambique) on South Africa is still relevant today.

Most of the inhabitants of Lourenço Marques at the time were Europeans. "It was not until 1920 that the number of Europeans, Indians and Asians began to adjust and the African population only became the majority in 1930" (Lachatre in Bornschein 2009: 45). Indeed, the imbalance between the number of Whites and the number of non-Whites is perfectly expressed in the designation of Lourenço Marques as *Xilunguíne* – the place of the whites.

The Portuguese colonial regime imposed a very elaborate policy of segregation. This was visible in all spheres of life. Lourenço Marques was, then, a racially segregated landscape.

While the white elite was concentrated in the southwest axis of the city (Polana and Sommershield), a group of "mulattos" and black Africans assimilated to urban habits and values gradually settled in the peripheral cement city (Malhangalene and Mafalala). They shared this urban space with the so-called "second-class Portuguese", a term used by the colonial system to name the Portuguese born outside the Metropolis. Indians usually lived in the *Baixa*, the commercial central city district. This district was a sort of social border between the best areas in terms of social status (Polana, Sommershield) and the areas inhabited by the blacks and the mulattos (Lachatre in Bornschein 2009: 45-46).

The category of *assimilados* is crucial for understanding the future social stratification of the city. The *assimilados* were Black Mozambicans who were recognized as Portuguese citizens; though they had limited rights, they had the right to live in the city of cement as opposed to the reed city. The path to assimilation was difficult and only few Mozambicans had the resources or the opportunity to attempt it. Once an individual had been granted the *assimilado* status, a Portuguese official would visit the home to verify that Portuguese was spoken, that meals were "Portuguese" and eaten with fork and knife, and that appropriately Western clothes were worn (Morton 2013). The *assimilados* had access to education and worked as office clerks, printing press typesetters, truck drivers, schoolteachers and nurses. In 1960, there were only 5,000 *assimilados* in a colony of 6 million (Newitt 1995). This was clear evidence of the differentiation among Mozambicans, which created stratification even among the natives. After independence, the *assimilados* emerged as an African petit-bourgeoisie.

In addition, native Mozambicans were forbidden to possess land within the urban areas. Such ban helped the establishment of most poor Portuguese settlers who were needed for the place to prosper. Their eagerness to find a fixed residence in Maputo led to an increase in the Portuguese population of the city: between 1960 and 1972, the European population expanded to 53.3% (158,000 persons), as indicated by Bornschein (2009: 47). Bornschein describes how, during the last years of colonialism, the increase in Portuguese settlers led to the accelerated construction of houses in Maputo, which implied the expulsion of residents from precarious residential areas [*caniço* (reed) constructions] to ensure the expansion of the cement city.

In 1975, the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) proclaimed the country's independence from the Portuguese regime. Lourenço Marques kept its status as the capital of the newly sovereign country, albeit with a number of transformations, starting with a change in its name, as I will describe below.

1.2 Independent Maputo city

In 1976, in a popular rally, the first President of Mozambique, Samora Machel, announced the death of Lourenço Marques and the birth of Maputo city. With independence, racial segregation vanished and the city became mixed. Militants returning from the battlefields and those coming home from the camps, mixed race and black *assimilados* living in the periphery of the city, as well as people from rural areas began to occupy the cement city.

This movement of natives to the cement city, to which they had previously been denied access, accelerated the ownership process promulgated by FRELIMO. In fact, cities were, in FRELIMO's eyes, the epitome of inequality and social discrimination in colonial Mozambique. Their goal was to transform that image of urban areas. One of the measures to destroy social inequalities in Maputo was FRELIMO's attempt to limit the range of wage differentiation by defining wage bounds. Top wage levels applied at ministerial level, for example, were only about ten times higher than the minimum urban wage (except for ministers' additional housing, travel and entertainment allowances). Furthermore, there was an opening up of jobs held by settlers and a general expansion of public sector employment (O'Laughlin 1996). Indeed these measures were part of the explicit socialist strategy of development adopted by FRELIMO. Other actions of this socialist policy included the "integration of workers into state enterprises, the establishment of cooperatives, and the management of farms and shops abandoned by the Portuguese settlers, as well as the government nationalization of schools, hospitals, flats and rental houses" (O'Laughlin 1996: 207).

However, in independent and socialist Mozambique, social differentiation remained. High-level politicians and qualified civil servants together with government personnel, foreign diplomats, and foreigners, as well as FRELIMO sympathizers who arrived in Maputo to volunteer their skills to the socialist cause (Morton 2013) – the so-called *coperantes* – occupied Polana, Sommershield and other trendy neighbourhoods within the inner belt of Maputo. Areas outside the inner belt, especially the neighbourhood of Alto Maé, were nearly completely abandoned due to

the withdrawal of the colonial administrative personnel. This part of the city as well as the suburbs of reed, zinc and wood houses, "where the colonial civilians and military personnel used to live, was re-occupied by African families, mostly from rural backgrounds, in an rather chaotic manner" (Bornschein 2009: 48 – 49).

Iraê Lundin cites a FRELIMO report indicating that, in 1983, more than 150,000 residents in Maputo had benefited from the privileges of nationalization (2007). Citizens were able to rent property, as rent was pegged to income. Families earning less were charged less than families with higher income, no matter where in the cement city they were living (Jenkins 1990).

As the social and racial landscape of Maputo transformed, its infrastructure changed too. Most new tenants were experiencing urban life for the first time, and thus were not equipped to use and care appropriately for the properties in which they were living. In addition, the embryonic state institutions were incapable of managing Maputo's buildings. This led to the gradual decay and damage of buildings in the cement city, at the same time that the disposal of solid waste became a problem (which it still remains) (Jenkins 1990; and 2011; Lundin 2007).

To add to the city's problems, in the early 1980s, the country was affected by a series of floods and draughts, and an economic boycott by South Africa for political reasons (which led to the suspension of recruitment of a Mozambican labour force for the mines); this caused widespread poverty and food shortages. Interestingly, though, there were no social inequalities at the time, as differences in levels of consumption were not visible.

The 1980s also featured an increased occupation of Maputo by the war refugees. As the war intensified in the rural areas, people, mainly from the provinces of Inhambane, Gaza and Maputo, fled to the city, where, despite all the existing problems, people would at least not die of hunger and where the physical consequences of the armed conflict between FRELIMO and RENAMO were less noticeable.

In 1992, after 16 years, the bloody civil war ended. However, many of the refugees continued to stay in Maputo city. The number of inhabitants thus increased, although housing and the provision of essential amenities and services did not. The migrants tended to remain on the periphery of the city, and as their social and economic conditions did not improve much, and thus most of the war refugees remained poor.

1.3 Post-socialist Maputo city

The liberalization of the economy by means of a structural adjustment program (called Programa de Restruturação Economica – PRE in Mozambique), which was implemented in 1987, after the country joined the Breton Woods institutions in 1984 (for more on PRE see Abrahamsson and Nilsson 1995; Castel-Branco 1994; Hanlon 1991; Hanlon 1996) caused a sharp increase in the quantity and diversity of food and consumer goods available, especially in urban areas, but the prices had increased together with the supply. However, the liberalization of the economy was accompanied by a dramatic cut of the operating budget, the reduction of the state bureaucracy and the reduction of the labor forces of state enterprises. "While the Health and Education Budget made up 17% and 7% of the total expenditures of the state in 1986, these figures decreased to 10% and 4% respectively in 1988" (Roesch in Bornschein 2009: 55). This in turn increased levels of poverty and the incapability of the poor to pay for basic services, such as health and education.

"After 1987, the rent structure was adjusted to reflect more closely perceived market demands" (Carrilho in Morton 2013: 254). Over the following five years, rents in the cement city doubled in cost, and most of those who could no longer afford to live there had to move to the periphery of the city. These citizens swelled the number of migrants who were still moving to Maputo in search of better living conditions, and leaving various areas of the country, due to increased poverty. However, most of these migrants only found low paying jobs or they entered the growing informal market, which included street vendors, street car cleaners, and women selling cooked food at informal markets or from the boot of a car.

Those who did manage to secure their rents in the cement city during the transition phase were able to profit considerably, as, in the 1990s, the governments started to sell the flats and houses to their occupants (Jenkins 2011). Most new owners either sold or rented their apartments. The timing of such transactions was right, as the UN peace mission to Mozambique had just arrived and needed housing. Renting and selling prices skyrocketed, allowing new owners to profit greatly, while transforming Maputo into one of the most expensive cities on the continent.

All these changes were a consequence of the PRE. Indeed, this program played a significant role in the diversification of status in Maputo. As described by Bornschein(2009), the PRE also enabled the private commercial sector to push out the state from both retail and wholesale commerce, with wholesale activities becoming concentrated in the hands of a relatively small number of large (mostly Asian) trading houses. With cutbacks in the public and industrial sectors, a large number of urban workers turned to agriculture, construction and transport, communication and trade. This process offered an opportunity for enrichment, especially for the political leadership. High-ranking FRELIMO members and their families and associates tended to be among the major beneficiaries of privatization, and they used their political base to build economic power (Sumich 2006).

In addition, Morton argues that, with the increased value of apartments in the city, a relatively privileged group of city dwellers became even more privileged and the social gap between them and those living on other parts of the city widened. This was the middle class, which fully came into being through these processes (Morton 2013: 254).

Predictably, the privileged groups that remained in the cement city were the political elite associated with FRELIMO, its family and business associates, as well as the *petite bourgeoisie* composed by the previous *assimilados* who had invested in education and who were thus able to secure good jobs and good incomes.

It should, however, be noted that the periphery of the city has changed much too. It is no longer the reed city, as most houses are now made out of cement blocks and as the

residents come from all walks of life. Also, the city is expanding and many young inhabitants of the cement city have been investing in or dreaming of building bigger houses in areas such as the Marracuene, Zimpeto, Costa do Sol, Mahotas or in the city of Matola and Boane through processes of gentrification.

1.4 The lieu of the young adults of this study in the social stratification debates

The exercise of locating the young adults of this research within the class structure was challenging. They combine diverse family backgrounds and origins; they have been socialized with different aesthetic dispositions and varied generational subjectivities. The biographical narratives of Idalina and Ismael, two of the participants in this study, constitute perfect examples of such diversity.

Idalina comes from an *assimilado* family. From her father's side, the grandfather was a clerk at the administration, while her grandmother was a nurse. On her mother's side, the grandfather was a carpenter at a well-reputed woodhouse, while the grandmother was a primary school teacher. Both Idalina's parents were born and grew up at Bairro do Chamanculo, at the border of Lourenço Marques, a neighbourhood reserved for this category of *assimilados*. Indeed, this area was important in the history of colonialism, and the fight against the colonial regime, as this area was the location of the *Centro Associativo dos Negros de Moçambique* (Black's Association Centre). After independence, Idalina's parents moved to Polana neighbourhood and rented a 4-bedroom flat with a sea view. Her father worked as a manager in a number of public industries, while her mother worked at the National Insurance Company. Idalina and her two siblings completed their primary education at public schools, but moved to the best-ranked private school, Colégio Kitabu, for the secondary school level. In fact, public education emerged in the early 1990s after a reform of the educational system and, due to concerns of quality and episodes of corruption, parents with resources and dedicated to invest in their descendants' education, opted to send them to private schools instead.

As *assimilados*, Idalina's parents placed great emphasis on education, perceiving this as a passport to the world. Education was thus a way of reproducing and transmitting the class position from the parent's generation to Idalina's one. However, her parents transmitted other aspects of social life too. In a conversation, Idalina recounted how she started going to restaurants at a very young age: *"My parents had the habit of having Sunday lunches at restaurants so, every second Sunday, we would eat out in a different restaurant"*. She mentioned that this distinguished her from other young adults who had only recently adopted the culture of eating out at restaurants. She further mentioned how her auntie, who was studying in France would, when she visited Idalina's family in Maputo, take her and her siblings for tea and scones at the majestic Hotel Polana (for a long time, this was the only five-star hotel in Maputo).

Most of Idalina's friends shared a similar background. Indeed, her parents knew most of her friends' parents from their time in Chamanculo; they remembered the 1960s and 1970s parties and the live music shows at the *Centro Associativo dos Negros de Moçambique*, the beach excursions and the parties they used to have at each other's houses during the early years of their marriages. Moreover, most of her friends studied with her at the private secondary school. Idalina's close network of friends socialised with each other in exclusive bars, restaurants and nightclubs in the inner belt of Maputo. Their popular hang-out spaces included Soul Gourmet Café, Zambi restaurant and News Café nightclub. These venues are very expensive and exclusive, which is why this group purposely selected them. They highly valued the sense of exclusivity, and did not wish to mix with individuals who might display behaviours that they considered inappropriate, such as talking very loudly, shouting, arguing in public, being drunk and becoming disrespectful towards others.

Idalina and her friends would sit down for dinner at Zambi restaurant to enjoy gourmet food and exclusive wines, but they would never cross the street to Calçadão. Calçadão is the long pavement just in front of the sea. The pavement has palm trees and in some areas, there are benches for people to enjoy the sea breeze. On weekend evenings, informal vendors sit on the pavement and sell beers from their small coolers to groups that park their cars at the pavement. The occupants of such cars,

mostly young men and women, use the Calçadão as an entertainment spot. They open all the doors and boots of their cars so that everyone can hear the loud dance music. While dancing, chatting, and singing, the people at Calçadão buy and drink beers and other alcoholic beverages from the informal vendors. The pavement becomes increasingly crowded with cars, each of which is playing a different song. As the city has no public toilets, people relieve themselves by the trees or at the sea. It is a very different environment to that of Zambi restaurant.

Idalina is connected to other informants of this study: she studied at Kitabu College with Marbella and she is a friend of Melissa's younger sisters. Idalina's parents retired in the mid-2000s and were no longer in such comfortable financial situation as they had been in the past. They thus decided to rent out their apartment in Polana and moved to a smaller flat in a new development about 10km away from the centre of Maputo. However, Melissa's parents, who also grew up in Chamanculo, played a prominent role in FRELIMO, mostly linked to the business arm of the party. They can be described as wealthy. They own and live in a new luxury development in Sommerschield II, a condominium of double storey houses with extensive individual gardens and a swimming pool. Melissa's father has managed the governmental coordinating body for emerging business, which allowed him to create a network for Melissa's brother, who now manages a number of profitable enterprises that liaise directly with government institutions.

Marbella's father, an ex-Minister of the FRELIMO government, also lives in Sommerschield and owns properties in other well-reputed neighbourhoods in the inner belt of Maputo. Marbella's father holds shares in one of the biggest national banks in the country.

Based on their backgrounds, these three informants belong to the elite. "Elites are groups that hold and exercise power" (Scott 2008: 32). This definition corrects other misleading uses of the term 'elite', which define it, for example, based on education, income and residence. Idalina, Melissa and Marbella all come from well-known families that played an important intellectual role in the struggle for independence. Indeed, Idalina mentioned a number of times that her grandfather was a writer at the

Brado Africano, like the ones described by Penvenne, in writing about the role played by educated Africans who were writing against the colonial system in newspapers and in the general literature. At the time, Idalina's grandfather was part of the educated elite that, as described by Michel West (2002), in Zimbabwe was distinguished from the masses in the fight for equal rights. In colonial times, this group of intellectual Africans had the power to convince the masses, to disseminate ideas about liberation and to encourage people to act on them. In that sense, they constituted elites, as, going back to Scott, they held power and were able to make use of that power over people, by making the people act in response to the ideas and ideals of a minority.

The elite status of Idalina's grandfather was reproduced down the generations thanks to the family's emphasis on the value of education and their maintenance of a distinct lifestyle, associated with the *assimilados habitus* (Bourdieu 1984). In that sense, it can be argued that Idalina has inherited an elite status, which had been conferred on her by her grandfather's historical prestige, which is recognised in the city through her surname. Similarly, Melissa and Marbella come from families who were directly involved in the FRELIMO party, thus holding political power, historical prestige and, in neo-liberal Mozambique, economic power. More than merely holding such powers, however, they are able to exercise it. For example, Melissa mentioned that, when she wanted to apply for her scholarship abroad, the deadline for the scholarship she wanted had already expired. However, when she informed her father about it, he made a phone call to the person responsible for the scholarships. On the next day, she was able to apply for the scholarship. This is an example of the elite being able to exercise power as an "inducing elite" as groups based in allocative control over resources (Scott 2008: 33).

From these examples, it seems that the family name has a dynastic impulse; both in private and public circles. As Marcus terms – dynastic uncanny – "the capacity of an elite family to create leaders, not only in its own family succession, but also (and more important to my discussion), as the result of the investment in human capital (concerns with descendants education, attitutes, tastes, personal habits)" (Marcus 2000: 12).

In the above examples, moreover, this elite status has effectively resulted in the family's continued investment in human capital: All three women were able to attend the best schools in Maputo and to pursue their higher education studies at well-reputed universities in South Africa, Brazil and Europe. There has also been an investment in the transmission of tastes and personal habits (as narrated in the description of Idalina). The conjunction of such investments by the families of these young women embodies what Marcus terms dynastic uncanny (2000: 12).

The diversity of the background of the parents of these young adults, who share similar social class backgrounds, attests to the diversity within the group of young adults that were part of this study.

Ismael has a very different background to that of Idalina. His parents were born and bred in a rural area in central Mozambique. His father, an orphan, entered a Christian missionary boarding school in his early teen years. His mother, the daughter of a domestic farmer and a working class man, met Ismael's father at the same missionary school. After completing their education, both of Ismael's parents moved to the provincial capital city, and were employed at state Ministries. Ismael and his siblings were born in the provincial capital city, but moved south to Maputo city when their parents were relocated here for work.

As school children, during the school holidays, they would travel to the rural village of their parents to visit their grandparents. However, as the civil war intensified, they had to stop such visits due to safety concerns. In Maputo, Ismael's family lived in a house at Bairro da Sommerschield; the Ministry had allocated the house to them where the parents worked. Ismael and all of his siblings obtained their universities degrees in Maputo and in Europe through scholarships or through their parents' investment in education. Ismael works at an international non-governmental association (NGO) in Maputo and, as part of his work, he regularly travels around the Southern African region and the United States.

I located Ismael, and indeed his family, within the middle class; according to

(Giddens 1991; Giddens, et al. 1973), the income of the middle class is higher and more stable than that of the working class, and there are often possibilities of promotion and chances to increase one's income. Even when workers and members of the middle class work together, there is a hierarchy in prestige; moreover, members of the middle class tend to live in different neighbourhoods than workers. Also, the number of family members differs between these two classes, and they have different attitudes towards the education of their children. Moreover, "the middle class hold jobs, which demand more than the use of simple manpower" (Halbwachs in Bornschein 2009: 36).

The majority of the participants in this research belong to the middle class. Idalina, Mellissa and Marbella are slightly different, mainly because all three belong to families that are able to exercise power over others in society (viz. they belong to the elite). Melissa and Marbella also stand out as being much wealthier than the rest of the group. Their families, and they as individuals, own a vast array of assets (from real estate and businesses to consumption goods), which distinguishes them from the rest of the group.

Ismael has strong affinities with other young adults coming from the central region of the country; most of them come from working class backgrounds. They enjoy the live music shows at the Africa Bar and Café Gil Vicente, but also like having a drink at informal bars. These are bars installed at containers in some *barrios*, like Malhangalene and Alto Maé. The clients sit on benches on the pavement, while consuming drinks and food and chatting loudly. They also enjoy going to Calçadão to have a drink.

Idalina and Ismael are both informants of this study. They share similar education degrees, they both live in the inner-belt well-reputed areas of Maputo, but their social behaviours are different and there are other diverse nuances of differences between their profiles. How, then, can they be classified as belonging to the same group? As tempted as it may be to single out the economic factor as the underlying denominator for merging informants into the same group, their social dynamics – and the

reminder from Anthony Giddens that several criteria are relevant when defining social class – tell a different story. Indeed, modern sociological theory has for a long time rejected economic differentiation as the exclusive criterion in class definition. While Max Weber provided a distinction between class (position in the economic order) and status (groups that share a common 'lifestyle'), stressing that both class and status could interact in complex ways, Pierre Bourdieu's theory is that social actors manipulate different types of capital (Rodrigues 2007).

Bourdieu's approach of unpacking families' ideas of taste and aesthetics was useful in describing the brief biographical profile of Idalina. Additionally, the lived experiences and imaginings of class in Maputo correspond to the type of judgment embedded in Bourdieu's logic of class and distinction (1984). Indeed, as Bourdieu writes, "Social classes do not exist [...]. What exists is a social space, a space of differences, in which classes exist in some sense in a state of virtuality, not as something given but as something to be done" (1998: 12). Bourdieu's construction of social space as a 'market' of symbolic goods, which are attached to, and deployed from, specific subject positions conjoins the situated practice of social actors to the objective relations in which they are situated without reducing class relations to *class in itself* relations (Johnson and Lawler 2005). The reasoning is that different class fractions teach aesthetic preferences to their children, and such preferences are located in that class's combination of economic, social, and cultural capital. In Bourdieu's view, social capital, which is performed within the family from the earliest days of life (1984: 66), plays a central role in shaping one's aesthetic disposition. Concomitantly, the aesthetic disposition of those at the top end of the social hierarchy tends to be the central category of distinction from the lower levels of such hierarchy. The centrality of the role of the family lies, in Bourdieu's argument, in the fact that the development of an aesthetic disposition is very largely determined by social origin, rather than accumulated capital and experience over time. Thus, early subconscious influences from one's family dictate tastes in food, culture, manners and presentation, all of which are indicators of class, since trends in their consumption seemingly correlate with an individual's position in society (Bourdieu 1984: 184).

In Maputo, the aesthetics, which symbolise such distinctions are associated with the Western values of the upper class that incorporate a classic etiquette; the consumption of varied foods from the world served in smaller portions, emphasising presentation and health value; an appreciation of diverse genres of global music, cinema and the arts in general; the wearing of Western inspired (fusion) clothing in a fashionable manner; house decorations inspired by diverse art movements, to mention just a few. These notions are embedded in the status of the *assimilado* – the highest social status that black Africans could reach in the Portuguese colonial stratum. In today's Maputo, young adults (and their families) with such backgrounds are referred to as possessing *boas maneiras* (good manners) or as being *chique* or *fino* (chic, stylist)[6].

By applying the theories of Bourdieu, it was possible to identify and rationalize nuances of taste and behaviour among my informants, and thus to explain differences among them. But they also share similarities: they are all cosmopolitans; their education and the fact that they are in well-paid jobs, allows them to travel. As explained in Introduction, these are well-travelled young people, citizens of the world in the sense that they have travelled around various countries, and thus share a transnational and transcultural youth culture, at the same time that they are able to access commodities and engage in conspicuous consumption – they are thus clearly *world citizens*, as conceived by Appiah (2007).

In classical terms, the concept of cosmopolitanism is associated with the elites and upper classes. With the challenges of modernity, a number of authors have investigated how non-Western hegemonic groups make sense of the concept. When theorizing how rural populations assess cosmopolitanism, Homi Bhabha uses the term "vernacular cosmopolitanism" as the merger of overlapping experiences, images and perspectives brought by global migrants, guest workers and other postcolonial subaltern to India (Bhabha 2000). Kwame Appiah defines "rooted cosmopolitanism" as a scenario in which cosmopolitans have strong attachments to their home but also enjoy the presence and influences of different people from other

[6] Being chic is constantly being highlighted in the Brazilian soap operas, which emphasise class distinctions and their attributes.

places (2010). Examples from African urban scenarios describe how urban youth from barbershops in Arusha (northern Tanzania) identify with Hip Hop's messages of pain and suffering, and through such identification come to see themselves as members of a global community (Weiss 2002). (Scheld 2007) examines how clothing use and exchange shape young cosmopolitan identities in urban Dakar (Senegal) and how these youth negotiate overlapping cultural, national and economic borders. Still with regard to clothing Gondola (1999) and Friedman (2005) investigate the category of *Le Sapeur* (urban Congolese youth) and how these distinguish themselves from others by embarking on an adventure from a third world city to Paris and Brussels in search of clothing that will transform social and cultural identities.

The young adults of this study share a sophisticated fashion sense similar to that of the *Sapeur,* by wearing attires bought in Western metropolises, Asian cities, in South Africa or Brazil. They buy these clothes themselves when travelling abroad, buy online or acquire them from sophisticated *mukeristas*[7] who travel abroad to buy clothing and fashion accessories 'on request'. The young adults in this study are, in most cases, a second generation of urban dwellers, and are thus different from the groups described by Appiah and Bhaba. Although they are emerging from diverse social backgrounds, as highlighted in the descriptions of Idalina and Ismael, and as the ethnographic descriptions in the following chapters will show, they share this cosmopolitan façade.

Urbanity, education and the shared aesthetic ideal embedded in the global youth culture acts as a leveller among these young adults. They are different: from those who are elite members, from those with rural origins and strong connections to their rural backgrounds; from those who embedded the aesthetic disposition that allows them to be classified as *distict* (Bourdieu 1984), to those who engage in entertainment practices with people from the periphery and in the outskirts of the city or who go to *barracas* and *Calçadão*, like the new elite in South Africa that goes

[7] *Mukeristas* are, generally, women who travel abroad to buy diverse commodities to make available to the Maputo market. They tend to supply the shops in the market, but they also sell directly to their individual clients who request specific pieces.

back to the *shebeens* (Dlamini 2009). However, they all share a sense of belonging to a world youth culture involving the conspicuous consumerism of goods associated with the upper class. To engage in the practices of such world youth culture implies access to a stable and above-average income. All the young adults in the group analysed in this study do indeed earn such an income (they all earn at least 10 times more than the minimum wage). Another important similarity is that, generally, their (and their parents') investment in education, has granted them access to professional positions that allows for the levels of income earned. Thus, using a more Weberian side of Bourdieu, I would argue that the young adults in this study share a lifestyle, and that such lifestyle can be translated by using the term cosmopolitanism.

The cosmopolitanism of the young adults in Maputo is not as structured as that of *La Sape* of Congo, which emerges as an organized clan, a youth club that, through elegant dressing and rites of passage, builds a reputation and a clientele in the larger arena of the urban night spots (Friedman 2005: 128). Also, the cosmopolitanism of this group is not bounded to the same profession as that of the barber shoppers of Arusha, described by Weiss (2002). They comprise members of elite groups as well as members of the middle class. They recognise each other based on their lifestyle similarities, though within the group one also finds a number of differences, as I have started to highlight.

These young adults live in a city where, in general, the salaries hardly compete with the rising costs of living, especially in a country that produces little and imports most basic and luxury commodities. However, they were exempt from this general reality. Some were employed by international organisations, which pay some of the highest salaries in Mozambique. Some others worked in the private sector, which also provides competitive salaries, based on one's experiences and academic degree. A few others were successful entrepreneurs who were managing their own business, sometimes in conjunction with a formal (public or private) job. Yet others were still students or did not enjoy such fine salaries, but nonetheless managed to have an income, which came from their parents' contribution, together with gains from their entrepreneurial activities.

They mainly displayed their adherence to this urban cosmopolitan lifestyle in public spaces. The car one drives, the clothing brands one wears (their varieties and styles), the drinks one orders in a bar or the restaurants at which one chooses to eat out, constitute some examples of items and lifestyles that can be analysed in this regard. Owning a car is in itself an achievement (in a country where the banks have the highest interest rate in the region). However, in a city flooded with second hand cars coming from Japan and Dubai, distinction is expressed by the particular brand of car selected. Those who want to affirm their status prefer car brands that are more expensive, bigger or more exclusive, as these mark social distinction, similarly to the description of Dlamini (2009) in the South African context. Thus, a Toyota Corolla (which is locally referred to as *carapau* [horse mackerel] due to its popularity in the city, and as a reference to the post-independence crisis in which the most readily available foods were *carapau* and cabbage) will be disregarded, while a Volvo or a Range Rover will be higher on the list of preferences.

Interestingly, however, the youth creatively manipulates these notions that might, in a linear manner, ascribe class hierarchy to economic, social and cultural capital. As certain attributes of excellence (Bourdieu 1984) are widespread, individuals manipulate their own social and economic conditions to fit in and receive approval from the groups to which they aim to belong. For example, I came across a description of a group of youths, students coming mostly from working class families, who had organised themselves into a rotating credit club, in which each of the members was contributing fixed sums of money to a central fund on a weekly or monthly basis. At the end of each week or month, a different member received the money of the fund. That money was then used by the recipient to buy a *txune* (a glamorous outfit in colloquial Portuguese) or to go to a nightclub, restaurant or other entertainment venue in the city and to spend money freely there. The club was called *Xitique do tchilling* (*Xitique* is the name of a widespread informal saving and credit arrangement practiced in Mozambique based on mutual trust; *tchilling* is a neologism in Portuguese spoken in Maputo, which derives from the English verb to chill; its local meaning is to enjoy a good, pleasurable, relaxed and/or fun moment). This represents an example of the creative tactics (de Certeau 1984) that young people use to achieve social acceptability in the city. De Certeau defines strategy as the

calculation or manipulation of power relationships, which require a defined physical or social space. The idea of strategy implies that the actor has the autonomy to generate relations with an exterior distinct from it. In contrast, a tactic is a calculated action determined by the absence of autonomy – the space of the tactic is the space of the other (De Certeau 1984). *Xitique do tchilling* in Maputo resembles the *La Sape* youth club – a group of unemployed urban Congolese young men who engage in status competition around elegant, brand-name clothes (Friedman 2005) – and attests to the creative ways in which urban youth in Africa manipulate their world to access cosmopolitan lifestyles and consequently transform social and cultural identities, while simultaneously being part of the global community.

Young people thus tactically deploy their agency by becoming involved with specific groups of friends and colleagues and through sexual and romantic relationships. A well-connected network of friends may open up possibilities for the future, including access to good professional opportunities and to desirable marriage partners that may bring social mobility and economic gain. In relationships, the balance between wellbeing and other types of gain is also considered – for example, whether it will be more beneficial to have multiple partners or to choose one partner who offers possibilities of material, financial or opportunity gains.

In an earlier presentation of my fieldwork data, I was asked if a group like the *Xitique do tchilling*, which tactically seeks to gain access to the defined cosmopolitan status being analysed in this study, might not confuse and camouflage my definition of young adults. Following Bourdieu's view, such tactics would fit within the category of individuals who have accumulated capital and experience over time, in contrast to the social, economic and cultural capital nurtured by their families or the actual class position (elite and middle class). Indeed, young men and women would give me examples of people who were *ricos mas grunhos* (rich but rude), pretenders, *nouveau riche* or *endinheirados* (synonymous *with nouveau riche*) to differentiate those who had the status from those who only had the money. Thus, there is a clear distinction between such groups and those that I am conceptualizing as young urban cosmopolitans in this study.

The post-independence Marxist system followed in Mozambique also granted positions of power to members of government and the ruling party. In the urban environment, for example, the position of *chefe-de-quarteirão* (chief of the block) was a powerful one, as the individual had to manage and solve quarrels in the block. Therefore, during the 1980s crisis, holding the position of *chefe-de-quarteirão* allowed these individuals and their households to have access to a large array of goods that were not readily available to the vast majority of the population. Thus, in the Marxist sense of class, those individuals had a higher status. However, with liberalisation, the power attached to such positions disappeared, as they became obsolete. As in many other African cities, increasing informality informs the living dynamics in the city (Simone 2001), allowing for creative ways to play with class (as mentioned in the example of *xitique do tchilling*), but also reflecting the dynamics of morality and class.

This section has showed how social stratification occurred throughout the diverse historical phases of Maputo city. Through that stratification, I engaged in an exercise of describing and locating the middle class and elite young adults that comprise the target group of my analysis. The next section will continue to explore an historical dimension however; its focus will be on sexuality. Such analysis will highlight the continuities and changes in the perceptions of sex, sexuality and gender from the colonial epoch to the present day in Mozambique.

CHAPTER 2:

THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY IN MOZAMBIQUE

In addition to the history of social stratification in Maputo, a second dimension of the history of Mozambique emerges as important in order to understand the present youth's sexuality holistically: an historical analysis of the dynamics of sexuality in the country. Portuguese colonialism has worked with a series of dichotomies regarding sexuality and gender in Mozambique – dichotomies that were either absorbed or refused and thus taken as *foci* of contestation by diverse groups in different Mozambican historical periods. I have chosen to distinguish among three historical periods in Mozambique: colonialism, post-independence and socialist Mozambique, and finally the present neo-liberal era. These different periods are characterized by specific ideologies and policies that have had a significant impact on ways of living in general and sexuality in particular. What follows is a characterisation and discussion of each of the three periods and how these relate specifically to sexuality and gender. Of note is the fact that pre-colonial imaginaries permeate the interactions individuals establish with the philosophies of the diverse historical periods.

Literature about sexuality and gender dynamics in Mozambique has thus far focused mostly on women, whereas this study looks at both men and women equally. However, in this chapter on the history of sexuality in the country, due to the literature limitations, I will mainly discuss the changes in the lives of women (there is not much literature available on men). In view of this tendency of gender studies to focus on women, in my fieldwork I took care to explore the representations of and changes that had occurred in the lives of men.

2.1 The dichotomies of the colonial legacy

Pre-colonial Mozambique had different social formations. The Northern region, composed of the provinces of Niassa, Cabo Delgado and Nampula, was mostly matrilineal, with the exception of the coastal Swahili settlements. The central region, Manica Sofala, Tete and Zambezia provinces, constituted a mixture of both matrilineal and patrilineal groups. Finally, the southern region, which is comprised by the provinces of Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane, included mainly patrilineal groups.

The Portuguese have had a long presence on the African continent and specifically in Mozambique. In the 17th century, the Portuguese settled the *prazos* – large landed estates granted to Portuguese settlers by the king of Portugal – in the interior of Mozambique (Newitt 1995). After the Berlin Conference in 1884-5, the Portuguese had to prove that they were in fact the legitimate rulers of Mozambique.

Since the Portuguese first arrived in the country, and throughout the period of colonialism, they were critical of the pre-colonial structure, dismissing it as 'savage' and thus investing in its 'civilisation'. This civilising process occurred by teaching the natives the Portuguese language, customs and religion (Arcebispo Lourenço Marques, cited in Arnfred 2002). Understood from a perspective that was very much influenced by Christian values, the local dynamics of sexuality and gender were perceived as obnoxious. The half-naked body of the African woman, for example, was considered immoral and there were pressures for natives to cover their bodies with Western style clothing (Gengenbach 2003; Sheldon 2002). Female initiation rites, from the matrilineal North, with their focus on the development and education of female sexuality, were read as immoral and offensive to human nature (Medeiros in Arnfred 2002; Junod 1927). The preferred model looked at female sexuality as a tool for procreation within a Christian model of family – monogamous, stable (divorce was not tolerated), with the man and father as head of the family (Arnfred 2002). This model could already be found in patrilineal systems in the country. A series of local specificities and dynamics imposed by the Portuguese colonial

structure influenced the categorisation of sexuality and gender, as I will elaborate further in this section.

Portugal was economically weak, and therefore its need to prove its right to occupy its territories contributed to a particularly harsh form of colonialism (Sheldon 2002). The harshness of Portuguese colonialism was translated into the imposition of high taxes and the compulsory cultivation of cotton and other cash crops as part of the system of forced labour, designated *xibalo* (Sheldon 2002), which became particularly widespread and efficient after 1895/6, when the Portuguese militarily defeated the Ngungunhane and conquered Gaza (Zamparoni 2000). This system paid very low salaries; workers were barely fed and submitted to long hours of work in which physical punishments were widespread (Harries 1994). Such dynamics imposed by the colonial power enforced changes in the dynamics of rural and urban life. I will focus my analysis on the Southern region and specifically on Maputo, which constitutes my main site of analysis.

Most men in the Southern region of Mozambique left the country, whether legally or illegally, to work in the gold and diamond mines of South Africa in response to Portuguese colonial exploitation (Harries 1994). However, not all men migrated to the mines. A number of them, with some professional specialisations, migrated to the urban areas to work as porters, sailors, stevedores, craftsman, waiters, and servants, amongst other service professions. Urban salaries, though still low, were double those paid in the agricultural sector. Also, violence in the urban space was lower, and was more likely to be denounced (Zamparoni 2000: 147). Men's migrations implied reconfigurations of the family unit's intimacy. Studies on this topic have highlighted how the migration of men across Europe, due to war or industrialization, for example, forced the wives left behind to adjust to the absence of their husbands (Holmes 2004).

In rural areas, for instance, women would work in agriculture, cultivating food for their families, as there were few opportunities for them to find waged work in the colonial economy. Women were also forced into *xibalo*, however, and they resisted the demands of colonialism. Such changes in labour in the rural areas compelled women to migrate into urban areas to search for opportunities to support themselves

and their families. Other reasons motivating women to migrate to the city included: greater financial difficulties in rural areas, the desire to repay *lobolo* (bridewealth) and thus to free themselves from burdensome marriages, and the possibility of finding waged work in Lourenço Marques (now Maputo) (Sheldon 2002: 58). In the urban areas, they were involved in agriculture, waged work and informal work, which included, amongst others, brewing of traditional beverages and prostitution (Sheldon 2002). According to the *indigenato*[8] (racial system of governance), native subjects needed an identity card to access the city, and women needed to have male approval in order to travel (Penvenne 1979; Penvenne 1986).

Lourenço Marques, like other colonial cities in Mozambique, was mostly a service provider city, rather than an industrial park. In this regard, it differed greatly from the Zambian Copperbelt, an area that was intensively studied by the anthropologists at the Rhodes Livingstone Institute (Epstein 1992; Mitchell 1954). The Zambian Copperbelt was characterized, from the 1940s onwards, by rapid industrial expansion and urban development. The industrial towns – complete with heavy machinery and belching chimneys – arose in an area where there had been no pre-colonial towns (Ferguson 1999). The scholars of the Rhodes Livingstone Institute were interested in exploring the process of migration from rural to urban areas. Invariably, they suggested that the first period — often seen to correspond with the colonial era — was one in which Africans, who were still rurally orientated, practiced a circular migration between town and country (Ferguson 1999). In contrast, even after World War II when the number of Portuguese settlers in Mozambique increased, and private investment and development of local industries expanded, industry was still small and not technologically well developed.

[8] *Indigenato* was the racial system of governance by the Portuguese colonialists. The system divided settlers and native subjects in Mozambique along racial and class lines. Therefore, one would find the native African at the bottom of the system and the European settler at the top. In the middle lay the category of *assimilado* (assimilated), consisting of educated Africans, with a lifestyle conforming to the Portuguese standards in terms of occupation, eating habits, social manners and housing. This category was attained via certain tests, which had to be passed before an assimilation certificate would be granted. Such status allowed for better job and wage opportunities, minimised harassment and enhanced opportunities for one's children. However, the number of *assimilados* was less than one percent of the African population in the 1960s (Penvenne 1979, Penvenne 1995, Sheldon 2002).

The migration from rural to urban areas in Mozambique necessarily had repercussions for sexuality and gender dynamics. Interestingly, throughout the various decades of colonialism, men outnumbered women in Lourenço Marques. Most women who migrated to Lourenço Marques had limited skills. A number of them turned to prostitution and, with the increased number of Portuguese soldiers in the city by the 1920s, there was also an increase in sexual activity between European men and African women (Sheldon 2002: 60). Luise White, in her analysis of prostitution in Nairobi (Kenya), agrees with historians who have observed that a large military presence tends to expand the demand for prostitution and the development of a wide range of temporary relationships with prostitutes, who provide companionship for these men and who offer them some form of a social life that does not remove them from their working units (White 1990). This seemed to be the case in Lourenço Marques at that specific time. In addition, increased tourism from South Africa and Rhodesia, as well as the presence of sailors at the port of Lourenço Marques, contributed to women turning to prostitution in order to earn an income (Sheldon 2002).

However, an interesting point to bear in mind here concerns the gendered discrimination regarding sexual relationships between Africans and Europeans. A fear that the sexuality of native women in the city and specifically in the household of Portuguese settlers might be more powerful than the sexuality of the native men was common. This observation is supported by the fact that domestic servants in the urban households of the Portuguese settlers were often men (Zamparoni 2000). Such preference creates curiosity, as both in the context of Southern Mozambique and in the European one, domestic work was usually regarded as a female task.

In her research, Penvenne (1995) arrived at the conclusion that European women feared that their husbands and other male members of the household would sexually desire and engage in sexual intercourse with native female servants. This jealousy (Penvenne 1995) and the fear of the so-called “yellow peril – miscegenation as a result of sexual relations between European men and African women” (Schmidt 1992: 224) contributed to the racial and class division observed in the domestic wage labour sector. Hansen (1992) and Schmidt (1992) share Penvenne’s view in their

research in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) and Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), respectively.

Clearly, in the colonial society, race represented a divide between perceptions of womanhood and manhood. Such perceptions were greatly affected by Victorian sexual mores, which portrayed the "'virginal' middle class European woman as glued firmly on her pedestal, while the supposedly 'animal-like' and 'wild' African woman was the secret object of white men's sexual desires" (Schmidt 1992: 224). Van Onselen notes that, in South Africa, during periods of stress or acute tension within the political economy, there were public complaints of white women claiming to have been sexually assaulted by black men (Van Onselen 1982). The black peril, based on the European belief that white women were objects of desire of black men's uncontrollable sexual desire (Schimdt 1992), did not seem to constitute a barrier for the employment of black men in domestic labour in urban Mozambique. Apparently, the fear of sexual involvement between African women and European men was greater than the fear of the sexual involvement of African men with European women.

In Southern Mozambique, families and communities would share such double standards for men and women. Women's migration to the cities constituted a loss of the family's control and authority over them. Also, there was the fear that women in the city would enter informal relationships with one or various partners, greatly reducing the family's chances of receiving *lobolo* for her. However, for men, life in the city was seen as an opportunity to earn money and to prepare for the future. Therefore, men's migration from rural to urban areas was stimulated, whereas that of women was frowned upon.

2.2 The liberation struggle and post-independence Socialism

Exploitation and the degrading living conditions under the Fascist Portuguese colonialist regime, along with the independence movements happening throughout the African continent since the 1960s: all of these contributed to the background for

the birth of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique – FRELIMO – in 1962. As a congregation of small liberation movements, FRELIMO aimed to fight against the Portuguese colonial regime and bring independence to Mozambique.

From its inception, FRELIMO was concerned with the social positioning of Mozambican men and women in the colonial structure. The movement highlighted racism, discrimination and exploitation as key themes to be tackled. The emancipation of women thus gained central importance for the movement. In the earlier stages of the liberation struggle, emancipation meant participation in the struggle. After independence, emancipation meant women's participation in the construction of the material and ideological base for the building of a socialist society through production and the class struggle against social inequality (Arnfred 2002; Urdang 1989).

The emancipation of women as well as the other processes regarding how to organise, lead and govern Mozambique after independence were characterised by contradictory positions within the movement (Casimiro 1983; Isaacman and Isaacman 1983; Urdang 1989). While some factions preferred to retain the traditional roles of women as producers and reproducers, others favoured a scenario in which men and women would share similar activities and responsibilities. In 1966, FRELIMO opened up the possibility for a more active participation of women in the liberation struggle with the creation of the *Destacamento Feminino* (female detachment) in the *Forças Populares de Libertação de Moçambique* (Popular Forces for the Liberation of Mozambique). This was created mainly in response to pressure from women within the movement (Casimiro 1983). Among other things, this group participated in combat and politically mobilised the communities.

However, during the struggle, women fighters from the female detachment were not allowed to marry or become involved with soldiers, as it was feared that both men and women would become distracted from the war because they had formed intimate relationships. When marriages began to be accepted amongst soldiers in the 1970s, couples were not allowed to stay at the same military base. Also, women soldiers were not allowed to have relationships with civilians, as there was a fear that they

might reveal secrets of the struggle, or that they might abandon the armed forces to get married (Arthur 1992).

These data reveal the survival of a double standard for men and women. Even though both genders of individuals were perceived as being able to participate in the struggle, femininity was still constructed as fragile, vulnerable and easily manipulated. Differently, masculinity was perceived as strong, conscious and under control. Consequently, women were under much socio-sexual control in the military.

Of note is the fact that the female detachment, its actions and the kinds of relations established among men and women in the struggle were felt by women as a materialisation of the gender equity advocated in the discourse of FRELIMO (Arthur 1992; West 2000). The double gendered standard for men and women seemed to be obfuscated in the context of the struggle, thus contributing to women's self-awareness of their participation in the fight for independence. As West argues, "when DFs themselves spoke of the war, then and when I met with them decades later, they most often told of purposive acts and of epic events *to which they contributed* in defining ways" (2000:185). However, the absence of a perception that there was a double standard by gender was attributed to women being "considered" and "treated" as men – implying a desexualisation of guerrillas, particularly the female guerrillas (Arthur, et al. 1992; West 2000).

After independence, FRELIMO adopted socialism as the ideology according to which they would run the country. With regard to social structure, one of the central aspects of FRELIMO's political line was the fight against traditional society and the whole range of customs that constituted the life of Mozambicans (Arnfred 2002, Isaacman and Isaacman 1983, Sheldon 2002). The performance of traditional ceremonies and practices, such as polygamy, rites of initiation or *lobolo*, was not directly criminalised but there were strong political campaigns against such practices throughout the country. In terms of legislation, such practices were not penalised. However, legal rights and duties were not based on rites and ceremonies associated with the traditional institution (Sachs and Welch 1990). Practically, this judicial

positioning meant that divergences occurring with regard to transactions done under the traditional institution could not be resolved in court (Sachs and Welch 1990).

FRELIMO engaged in the *abaixo politics* ('down with politics') ideology (Arnfred 2002: 5). Adopting a political line that ruled against traditional society, which it read as a feudal society characterised by exploitation and oppression, FRELIMO defined the customary beliefs and practices as obscurantist and as an impediment to progress and modernity (OMM 1977). The traditional society, in the understanding of FRELIMO, constructed women as an object of pleasure, a producer of children and a worker without a salary (OMM 1977). In this sense, the socialist FRELIMO had a similar understanding of traditional society as that of fascist Portuguese colonialism. However, FRELIMO's perceptions of independent women differed from those of the Portuguese.

The ideal of independence, in FRELIMO's view, was rooted in the *abandonment* of customary and traditional beliefs and practices. However, for the vast majority of the population, independence meant a *return* to their customary practices, which constituted "essential elements in building relations between people, in educating the youth as well as being a source of identity within their local ethnic group" (Sheldon 2002: 117). It is in this Various authors identify in this clash of ideals between FRELIMO and the population the source of popular participation and help for RENAMO (the Mozambique National Resistance) that fought FRELIMO in a civil war from the early 1980s until 1992 (de Brito 1995; Geffray 1991).

After independence, the strategy of FRELIMO returned to a scenario of a double standards regarding sexuality and gender. The women who had fought in the female detachment, often side by side with men, lamented that the equity achieved during the struggle between men and women had suddenly disappeared. As informants in West's research stated: "after independence, men, even former guerrillas, did not want equal partners in their marriages. Men remained sexist and patriarchal and complained that former female detachment women were too feisty and independent to ever be married" (2000: 191).

Samora's speeches also exhibited double standards regarding gender. In 1984, in his speech in Gaza province, Samora attacked prostitutes as "women who transform their bodies into shops. (…) A prostitute is a rotten person with a foul stench" (Machel 1982: 32). Interestingly, however, the first President of Mozambique did not condemn the clients of prostitutes, instead describing the prostitutes as "girls of twelve to sixteen years who hunt down adult men in political power" (Machel in Arnfred 2002: 7). The condemnation of women's sexuality continued when he pointed his finger at single mothers: "It is a shame to be a single mother" (Machel in Arnfred 2002). Ironically, men were never mentioned in this discourse of blame towards women. It becomes clear, that it was solely *women's* sexuality that posed a problem. Again, the weight of Christianity is noticeable. As Sheldon argues, "most Mozambican leaders have been educated in the mission systems… their experience undoubtedly had an impact on the development of their ideas about modernity" (2002: 117) and, more importantly for this thesis, the accepted role of women post-independence.

The continuation of an androcentric and patriarchal ideology from the colonial period to socialist Mozambique, as well as the negation of the traditional societies' customs and practices effectively pushed Mozambicans to continue living with two systems: the traditional system and the socialist one. However, the new positioning of women, brought about by the ideologies of FRELIMO, was noteworthy. As Sheldon remarks, " (A)s in other countries, socialism and feminism did not always make a neat package, but in articulating a politics that posited an end to oppression, it did bring about improvements for women" (Sheldon 2002: 118). Such improvements for women were seen in the encouragement of equity in terms of education, employment, and participation in political life, amongst other social spheres.

2.3 Neo-liberal and donor-dominated Mozambique

The 1980s and early 1990s in Mozambique were characterized by the failure of the economic projects undertaken by FRELIMO, a failure that created great economic

and social difficulties for the population. FRELIMO's choice of non-alignment[9] had a negative impact on the country's economy. Simultaneously, a civil war erupted between RENAMO, with support from the Apartheid regime of South Africa, and FRELIMO; this civil war destroyed most of the industries and the mass production of agricultural crops for export, resulting in an increased vulnerability of the population (Geffray 1991; Hanlon 1991; Vines 1991). Mozambicans – mostly in rural areas – became exposed to hunger, hardship and lack of security.

As a way to end the country's increasingly difficult economic and social situation, in the late 1980s, Mozambique became integrated within the development programs of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. This was followed by the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Program called Programa de Restruturação Económica (PRE), which appealed for the privatisation of industries and a less powerful role of the state in the economy (Bowen 1992; Hanlon 1991). The implementation of such programs represented the end of the socialist regime and the rise of class divisions.

As in other African countries, the development program established in Mozambique brought international development agencies and NGOs into prominence. A number of such organizations followed gender policies that were introduced through lobbying and the advocacy of women's groups (Arnfred 2002: 9). Most of these gender policies and programs, however, reached Mozambique pre-designed and ready to be implemented, without much research having been done on the local practices, understandings and perceptions. For most of the relevant organisations, the gender policy focus was on women. Such a focus created increased opportunities for women, plus access to education and employment, and therefore greater access to the public spaces and public positions of power, but this is mostly true only in urban areas.

Increasing levels of HIV and AIDS prompted discussions in the public sphere of issues of sexuality. Sex started to be viewed as not simply a reproductive activity but

[9] In 1976 Mozambique became a member state of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) a group of states, which are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc.

as an activity oriented to pleasure, as indicated by of the early HIV and AIDS awareness posters from the Ministry of Health: “Be faithful to your partner, use condoms in occasional sexual encounters”. More recent awareness campaigns are including young people, as they constitute one of the categories most affected by the pandemic. HIV and AIDS has forced the acknowledgement of young people as being sexually active, something that was unacceptable in previous periods, since sex was perceived to happen only within the monogamous arena of marriage (Arnfred 2002; Manuel 2005).

Rites of initiation and other so-called obscurantist practices (such as worship the ancestors, *lobolo*, levirate, amongst others), which once constituted a central theme in colonial and socialist Mozambique, became a non-issue (Arnfred 2002). Such was the reversal from the socialist regime’s policies that, in today’s Mozambique, the practices once considered obscurantist now seem to be closely linked to political power. For example, West describes how, in northern Mozambique, the power to govern presupposed an ability to operate in the invisible realm, and that therefore those in power were assumed to be associated with sorcery (West 2005). This approach towards so-called obscurantist practices simply illustrates the (re)appropriation of beliefs that people hold as crucial to the functioning of their lives.

However, new ‘prohibited’ categories emerged. High-risk groups, high-risk behaviour and the link between sex and danger became relevant issues in this new context of sexuality. Due to HIV and AIDS, the sexual practices of both men and women were regarded as vulnerable if people were not taking the prescribed precautions.

In urban spaces, new dynamics of gender roles began to emerge, thus reconfiguring previously held perceptions. Rising unemployment and the increasing informalisation of the economy, resulting from both demographic changes and structural adjustment reforms, have undermined men's economic advantages by pushing them into lower-income and lower-prestige ‘women's’ occupations, such as street commerce (Agadjanian 2002). At the same time, increased promotion of

women and incentives favouring women under gender development strategies have given a number of women (mostly educated ones) opportunities to obtain well-paid jobs that redefine their status in the family, in society and in intimate and sexual relationships.

Concomitantly, such an increase in opportunities for women meant that they became more exposed to the world. Thus, they were able to advance their studies and strengthen their professional careers abroad. And a significant number of young women did spend considerable periods studying and/or working abroad. This movement abroad had thus far been quite common amongst men who migrated to work (for example to work at the mines in South Africa or to fight the wars).

Being abroad implies being geographically separated from family and partners. Long-distance relationships challenge common assumptions and conventional gender practices, based on the notion that intimacy necessarily involves physical proximity and that 'close' is a synonym for intimate (Holmes 2004: 6). As I will explain later in this thesis, the young adults of this study found themselves involved in long-distance relationships, as their partners embarked on short- or long-term study courses or work abroad. The literature on the topic highlights that individualization processes have changed intimate relationships, without necessarily bringing women freedom from the obligation or desire to care (Holmes 2004: 197), as there is a continued expectation that women will prioritize their relationships and caring for their partners over their jobs (Duncan, et al. 2003). These nuances between opportunities and expectations and the manner in which individuals respond lie at the core of the discussions in this thesis.

Moreover, the HIV and AIDS pandemic has greatly influenced (public) discourses about sexuality and gender dynamics, as well as the internal logistics, narratives and negotiations that occur in diverse kinds of sexual relationships. Youth publications on HIV and AIDS awareness, such as the multimedia material published by Nweti[10],

[10] Nweti is a health communication organization that produces local multi-media health materials with the aim of achieving social change, particularly with regard to the main factors that are contributing to the spread of HIV infection.

have been contributing to the redesign of hegemonic gender norms. Also, recent HIV and AIDS awareness campaigns have been sensitizing both younger and older generations about the risks of infidelity, as this links people to long chains of relationships and puts them at greater risk of contracting the virus. These sexual networks have been designated as multiple and concurrent partnerships.

In this chapter, I have looked at the history of sexuality in Mozambique. Such history has been divided in three main periods that framed by political and socio-economic transformations that occurred in the country. The discussion explored the dynamic perceptions of gender roles and sexual morality. In Chapter 3 below, I shall be looking more closely at the concept of youth. I will start by a theoretical conceptualisation of youth, followed by an analysis of the use of the category in Africa and finalising with a particular look at the young adults in this study.

CHAPTER 3:

THE CONCEPT OF YOUTH

3.1 A paradoxical reading of youth

The emergence of youth as a category of analysis is linked to the concept of the male bourgeois in Europe during the 18th century, with its increased demand for education during the industrialisation process (Helgesson 2006). Such reading of the category has been reproduced across the literature, with the concept of youth referring to young men (rather than women) and, moreover, generally understood as a "noun that has all too often indexed a faceless mass of persons who were underclass, unruly, male, challengingly out of place" (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006).

Two main theoretical perspectives of this concept of the youth in relation to societal change and reproduction can be identified. The first one is *the youth as a phase in life*, in terms of which youth is regarded as a temporary phase, which everyone goes through as they grow older and mature. According to this view, in this phase, there is little space for navigation due to rigid class, gender and race relations, and the structure of a society is therefore largely reproduced (Westberg in Helgesson 2006). The second view is *the generational perspective*, which argues that each generation is formed within particular societal circumstances, which have a permanent and profound influence on such generation, as they go through the phase of 'youth'. These two understandings have shaped the diverse kinds of approaches to the category of youth that exist in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

The conceptualisation of *youth as a phase in life* gained a great deal of weight in informing studies on the topic, with the general acceptance of youth as a transitional category between childhood and adulthood. The transitional characteristic of this

perspective described youth as people in the process of becoming rather than being; therefore, young people were seen as incomplete beings (in other words, still needing to mature and develop in order to achieve completeness, i.e. adulthood).

Following Western psychological theories of youth, researchers have proposed general processes, which are supposedly shared by individuals during this life stage, regardless of their particular culture, although they may be affected by specific cultural circumstances (Bucholtz 2002). Robinson, for example, looking at the context of the Tiwi Islands in northern Australia describes "adolescence in general as a period of individuation and crisis, but one that – due to cultural shifts – presents special difficulties for Tiwi youth (indigenous Australians)" (Robinson in Bucholtz 2002: 528).

In the field of anthropology, foundational ethnographies (Malinowski 1932; Mead 1935) established early on that adolescence was a crucial topic of anthropological investigation. As a result, issues closely associated with this life stage – initiation ceremonies, sexual practices, courtship and marital customs, intergenerational relations – have long been a focus of anthropological inquiry. However, such research has usually approached adolescence from the perspective of adulthood, consequently downplaying youth-centred interaction and cultural production in favour of an emphasis on the transition to adulthood. Thus, anthropology concerned itself not primarily with youth as a cultural category in itself, but with adolescence as a biological and psychological stage of human development (Bucholtz 2002: 525).

This understanding of the category of youth as a transitional phase not only influenced academic analysis, but has also become the predominant view of international law with regard to children's rights (Honwana and De Boeck 2005). In international legal discourse, this category was regarded as inherently fragile, and therefore in need of global standards of child and youth protection (Ennewin in De Boeck and Honwana 2005). The universalisation of the concept of the child as being anyone below the age of eighteen (as ratified by a number of international agreements) standardises the image of children and youth as dependent, immature and incapable of assuming responsibility, and thus properly confined to the

protection of home and school. This concept, which developed among the middle class in Europe and North America, has been universalised in such way that youngsters who do not follow this path are considered either to be at risk themselves or to pose a risk to society (De Boeck and Honwana 2005: 3). As a consequence of such a passive portrayal of youth, their relationship with adults is often read as one of dependency, because "at once physically powerful and morally immature [youth is] always liable to seize the initiative from their elders and betters" (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006: 273).

The portrayal of youth as immature and dependent on adults has influenced studies, which have analysed youth as victims and vulnerable. However, this perspective has been challenged by ethnographic examples, which have suggested that young people were not necessarily victims of society or wholly vulnerable in specific scenarios (Gibbs 1994; Honwana 2002; West 2000). Acknowledging that such constructs of the category of youth resulted from a perspective that read youth as a transitional phase, these case studies presented examples of youth as a complete and whole identity, able to take part in the (re)construction of society.

The volume of research on children and youth in postcolonial Africa is an example of such perspectives, arguing that children and youth, far from being passive victims of society, are in fact makers and breakers of society, while they are simultaneously made and broken by that society (De Boeck and Honwana 2005: 2). These perspectives illuminate the kind of analysis I pursue in this thesis, as they open a space for the revelation of agency (i.e. a capacity to make choices and impose those choices on the world) of young people, as well as for the specific nuances of power dynamics in the complexity of interactions between young people, the family, the society and the world.

When theorised from a generational perspective, youth is associated with societal change. This perspective is very much associated with late-modernity and post-modern theoretical approaches focusing on the role of individuality, modernity and reflexivity (Beck 1992; Giddens 1990), in the (re)definition of identities. The work of Ziehe (in Hegelsson 2006), for example, discusses how, at the present time (in the

West), all aspects of life are changing due to new technologies, new forms of media and new types of working situations; all of these are, furthermore, resulting in more possibilities, as well as placing increased pressure on the individual to seize these opportunities. This process implies a need for individuals to reformulate identities to respond to these new realities.

The emphasis on individuation, opportunism, and consumerism presents interesting points to be considered in the analysis of urban youth in Mozambique. However, the role of new technologies in this country may not have the same weight as it does in the West, as this element of globalisation is not vastly accessible and thus not used in Mozambique in the same manner as it is throughout Europe and North America.

In the field of anthropology, analyses of youth with a specific focus on sexuality have tended to follow two perspectives. One is in the tradition of Mead, focusing on culturally specific sexual practices, centring on the extent to which adolescent and premarital sexual activity is culturally discouraged, tolerated, or encouraged (Bucholtz 2002: 534). The second standpoint derives from a medical perspective that examines how young people themselves view sexual activity and sexually transmitted diseases, especially AIDS (Leclerc-Madlala 1997; Obbo 1995; Paiva 1995). Both of these anthropological approaches have great advantages over many traditional sociological frameworks, which have tended to view certain youth practices as pathological or deviant, especially those that threaten hegemonic systems of authority and economy. By contrast, perspectives from anthropology offer cultural and structural arguments to account for the same practices (Bucholtz 2002: 534).

3.2 Understanding youth in Africa

The category of youth has been the focus of much research on the African continent. The concept of youth has been used in earlier studies of African youth, not as a bourgeois category but as an age category. Youth has been mentioned and described in connection with specific topics in classic anthropological studies and

ethnographies about specific African groups (for example in Evans-Pritchard 1969; Fortes 1945; Junod 1927). “After World War II, social research in Africa was focused on the state, on rural populations and on processes of authoritarian and/or democratic constructions of political systems” (Diouf 2003: 2). In all of these cases, youth featured as an important category.

Today’s youth in Africa has been a central focus of research due to their often extreme poverty and the fact that their average life expectancy is the lowest in the world. Remaining enrolled in school, finding decent and productive work, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle all present very real challenges to a large proportion of youth. Not surprisingly, young people have increasingly been recognised as a significant pillar for development and social transformation. The United Nations Programme on Youth in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, for example, issues a bi-annual *World Youth Report*. In 2007, the World Bank’s World Development Report, *Development and the Next Generation*, was dedicated to the youth. The World Bank’s report analyses the development of young people in terms of five key transitions – learning, working, growing up healthy, forming families and exercising citizenship. However, these transitions appear as a progressive and unchallenged evolution in an individual’s life, a view that seems to be problematic. An analysis of this report shows that it does not go beyond the problems of youth and that it is, to some extent, unable to understand the agency of youth, including the ways in which young people manage their lives and make a living for themselves in the midst of adversity, and the ways in which they interact as local, national and global agents. Such reports often present youth as residing outside their historical and social contexts.

Young Africans are by no means a homogenous group; they come from varied socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Despite the challenges associated with youth development and inadequate access to education, the young people of today are, on average, better educated than their parents were. Many have qualifications that compare favourably with those of their colleagues in the North, while many more fall far below global education averages. They are better connected to the rest of the world than are earlier generations. Young Africans are adopting new techniques of

learning, navigating the communications highway and gradually overcoming the social and cultural factors that previously limited their access to information and the outside world. They are thus more determined to find options to close the gap between their limited opportunities and their perceived possibilities in the global arena. Young people thus tend to exercise their agency to create better and more meaningful lives for themselves, and find a place in the world in which they live.

The context of decolonisation created an interesting role for the youth, in that African youth were perceived as the hope of the continent. Significant numbers of youth across the continent were engaged in the protests, strikes and demonstrations against the colonial regime. They played an important part in the militarised decolonisation processes, and they were regarded as the builders of the new independent nations. The kinds of actions taken by the young during decolonisation reveal a determined, engaged and independent population, in direct contradiction of the prevalent understanding of youth as merely a transitional phase.

Across Africa, the failure of nationalistic economic, cultural and political models had a devastating impact on the youth due to the physical and intellectual collapse of the institutions of supervision and education, the absence of health coverage, and the consequent massive and aggressive presence of young people on the streets, at public garbage dumps, and in urban and rural undergrounds (Diouf 2003). The new landscape no longer inspired long-term vision in the youth, who came to prefer risk and immediate profit. Some of the new activities and patterns they developed in response (viz. participation in armed conflicts, trafficking of illegal goods, participation in illegal and black markets, prostitution, amongst others) escape from the constraints of public and administrative control, communication prescription and state surveillance. In these circumstances, the youth, who were once the hope of the nation and in fact the continent, have become a problem, a threat, a danger – or as stated by Cruise O'Brien (1996) the lost generation.

The new dynamics of the youth on the African continent have greatly influenced social research in this field, and have resulted in emerging analyses of the 'problematic youth'. Studies range from those of youth engaged in sex in exchange

for money (Bagnol and Chamo 2003; Hunter 2002), to youth involved in armed conflicts and participating in the killing of entire communities (Caputo 1995; Hirschfeld 1999), as well as youth involved in high levels of criminality, problems related to drinking, unwanted and teenage pregnancies and lack of education (Sommers 2003). Lately, and just as problematically, the role of the youth in the realm of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is being rediscovered (Levine and Ross 2001; McGrath, et al. 1993; Varga 1996). Foucault suggests that, "as youth becomes concretely defined as a social category, it turns increasingly to a socially problematic category and its studies are often of deviance or of problems needing programmatic intervention" (Foucault in Durham 2000: 116).

Recent studies, especially in Europe, have focused on the production of youth subcultures (Amit-Talai and Wulff 1995; Pilkington 1994; Ross and Rose 1994; Skelton and Valentine 1997), emphasising their capacity for rebellion, opposition, resistance, and counter hegemony. These were often seen as liminal, caught between childhood and adulthood in a category of natural opposition and anti-structure (Turner 1986). Since the 1970s, British scholarship has been at the forefront of youth studies. Understanding 'youth' as a social category flows from the influence of studies on working class youth subcultures, which originated at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham. This theoretically and methodologically innovative approach was strongly influenced by a Marxist or Gramscian perspective (Gilroy 1987; Hall and Jefferson 1976; Hebdige 1979; McRobbie 2006; Skelton and Valentine 1997). The CCCS brand of research marked a new era, and represented a paradigm shift in British youth studies. However, recent social developments, combined with the wearing down of a strong class theory, have contributed to the resurgence of the study of generations in relation to cultural change and politics. Moving beyond Karl Mannheim's classical contribution, some scholars tried to advance innovative ways of examining the role of generational consciousness in social, cultural and political change through a range of empirical illustrations (Edmunds and Turner 2002).

While I find the manner in which young people respond to the challenges imposed upon them fascinating to research, I am puzzled with discourses that read them as

'problems'. Categorising youth as a problem or a lost generation implies the existence of a desired pattern that youth should follow. It thus appears that the models young people are using (and thus showing their agency) to live in the new social, economic and political contexts has become a problem. Such a manner of reading this new scenario, I believe, follows a gerontocratic concept of youth as a dependent, immature and incapable category – a perspective very much influenced by European and North American middle class conceptions. Such reading ignores local cosmologies as well as the social contexts.

3.3 Youth in Mozambique and the cosmopolitan youths of this study

The youth constitute the greater part of the Mozambican population. Socially, the category of youth is conceived as a crucial one, as young people constitute a source of hope for their relatives in ensuring the reproduction of the family line; moreover, young people are looked upon as providers for their parents when they are not able to do so any longer themselves. The state discourse further identifies young people as the developers of new approaches, technologies and ways of doing business, for instance, and as the future of the country.

In exploring the influence of social change in the dynamics of sexuality in Mozambique, the young become a central category of analysis, as they are the ones being brought up by and living with a diversity of social, economic and cultural models. Consequently, I would argue, it is vital to understand their sexual relationship patterns within the social networks in which they socialise, as well as within the logistics that illuminate their modes of integration or exclusion from society, including the definition of youth cultural practices and forms of interaction with local and global pressures.

As has been explained before, this study is located within post-independence and post-civil war Mozambique. Therefore, one of the central aspects in the definition of youth in this context is that young men and women in the study would have been

born after Mozambique achieved independence in 1975. Consequently, the ages of the participants range from Zé, who was 25 at the time of the fieldwork, to Victor who was 36 years old.

In general, understandings of youth in Mozambique have moved from regarding it as a solely masculine category. However, perceptions of youth as a fragile and immature population remain. In terms of this vision, youths who do not behave according to the prescribed models inspired by Western values are deemed as being problematic. Such views have been, in part, an inheritance of the socialist discourse that was opposed to local cultural practices, such as the speaking of local languages, the payment of *lobolo* (bridewealth), and the use of initiation rites, amongst others. At present, problematic youth are mostly identified as such by development discourses (including those from governmental institutions as well as from national and international NGOs). Problematic youth include those who are involved in high-risk behaviour concerning HIV and AIDS infection (sex in exchange for money, for goods or for favours, multiple and concurrent partners, unprotected sex, and sex work), drug users, youths who excessively consume alcohol, those involved in criminal activities, amongst others. These readings of youth tend, in some instances, to be bounded and closed, summarising most attitudes that describe youth as a 'problem' and thus not allowing for the revelation of specificities of various cases. Also, in directing research to the previously discussed concept of 'problematic youth', attention is drawn away from exploration of the norms formed by the young themselves.

By borrowing characteristics from both the generational and phase-in-life perspectives, I define youth as a *relational* concept in opposition to adulthood and childhood. The category is thus defined by particular societal circumstances. Some of the societal circumstances may create events of dependability or independence (taking care of others, for example). However, I regard the category not as fixed, but as being in a continuum mediated by social interaction and agency. This definition incorporates both men and women, breaking with previous definitions of youth that generally referred solely to men. Throughout this thesis, then, I refer to the participants of the study as young adults. My aim by using such designation is to

highlight that these individuals are in transition from childhood to adulthood, and that they are starting to develop the social, economic and cultural identities, responsibilities associated with adulthood. However, as this is an intermediary stage, they still embrace the characteristics of a younger generation (for example, with regard to entertainment practices and choices, and the degree of certain responsibilities amongst others). In sum, young adults constitute a generation in itself.

The diverse shades of urbanity reflect the heterogeneity of youth that one finds in Maputo. Urban Maputo is characterised by an inner belt – the heart of the city, characterized by a conjunction of the colonial cement city and the numerous modern buildings that have emerged (Jenkins 2011), with a mixture of old and new houses and tall buildings, paved roads, offices, restaurants and hotels. Life in this part of the city is very fast-paced, with heavy traffic on the roads, many people walking, tourists enjoying the city and large numbers of mainly men, referred to as *vendedores informais* (informal vendors), walking around the city, selling a variety of commodities (such as CDs and DVDs, food, home paraphernalia, underwear, etc.). These sellers usually live on the periphery of the city or in the outlying districts of Maputo province, but converge on the city centre to sell commodities. Similarly to Lagos in Nigeria (Aina 2003), in Maputo too various social groups are attempting to survive, to make a living and to express themselves within certain structural definitions, as determined by economy and politics, or influenced by historical and geographical forces. The inner belt of Maputo is the cosmopolitan centre of the city, and as such, it is characterised by an amalgamation of diverse nationalities, races and ethnic groups; this is where the networks of the young adults of this study are located.

On a Wednesday, for example, typically at lunchtime, I met with a group of participants who had lunch together at the Portuguese restaurant '*O Escorpião*' in downtown Maputo, the centre of the capital's business district. On Wednesdays, the special dish of the day is *feijoada* – traditionally a Portuguese bean stew that has been incorporated into the Mozambican culinary routine, albeit with a dash of local flavour. Most of the young men and women of this study work downtown or in other

sites of the city, not far from this business district. However, there are many choices of restaurants serving lunch, from the Brazilian oriented buffet at *Ti Pallino*, the toasted meaty sandwiches at *Estoril* or *Nautilus* to a fancy dish at the seaview *Zambi* or prawns at the *Waterfront* restaurant.

The outskirts of central Maputo, though still classified as urban, combine paved and dirt roads. Such areas are mostly residential, with business and entertainment venues confined to *barracas*[11] and other rather unrefined settings compared to those found in the city centre. Thus, the middle class and the elites live in a metropolis of contrasts. On the one hand, they have access to the latest technological gadgets and can enjoy *Moet & Chandon* champagne in an eclectic restaurant, while on the other hand, their neighbours earn less than a quarter of what they do; they are constantly asked for change at traffic lights by old women, street children or disabled people. Indeed, one may live next door to a neighbour with an enormously different income level and thus belonging to an entirely different social class. This is because, after independence, FRELIMO confiscated Portuguese owned property and instituted a policy of nationalisation (Isaacman and Isaacman 1983; Young 1988), which allowed Mozambicans from all walks of life to own the houses that had previously belonged to the colonialists. As a result, one finds a different system to the one in South Africa, for example, where even after the end of Apartheid, there are still clear racial and economic divisions in residential areas.

In Maputo, however, families from diverse social strata and with varied incomes live in the same buildings. However, it is worth noting that, as the cost of life increases, a considerable number of families in the lower economic strata are opting to rent out or sell their houses and apartments and to move to the periphery of the city or into the districts of Maputo province to build or rent houses there.

[11] *Barracas* are small outside kiosks around the city that serve both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks; they also cook food that clients eat while having their drinks. These kiosks are often very colourful – being painted with advertisements for food and brands of beverages, such as Coca-Cola, 2M (a local beer) or Maggi stock. The *barracas* are very popular, as the drinks and snacks served invite groups of people to sit and chat, while listening and dancing to the loud music played by the owner of the *barraca*.

The young adults who participated in this study live in central Maputo and most of them perform their professional activities in the same area or in the industrial Matola city, about 12km away from the centre of Maputo. The young men with whom I had lunch at *Escorpião* Restaurant, for example, work for banks, mobile phone companies, cable and satellite TV companies, and other institutions of the private sector that provide services. The majority of them occupy positions that require a Bachelor university degree or considerable experience in the field. Their salaries range from USD 800 to 2000 per month (in Mozambique the minimum wage is only USD 100 per month).

There is a common tendency to classify the youth as belonging either (and exclusively) to the middle and upper classes, or to the lower social classes, with a strict dichotomy and separation between the two. Education, specifically private and higher education, functions as a marker of class. Men and women who grew up and attended primary school in Marxist Mozambique were all offered a single educational system, regardless of their class. Thus, most of the men and women in this study actually remembered each other, as well as various other youths from lower social classes, with whom they had attended primary school. Since the implementation of liberalisation policies, however, the educational system has opened up, and allowed the creation of private schools and diverse curricula. Most young people in the middle and upper classes, and those with enough money to be able to afford private education, were sent by their parents to private secondary schools in the country or abroad (mostly in South Africa, Swaziland and Portugal), as there was a general perception that the quality of public education in Mozambique was decreasing.

Clearly, schooling for the cosmopolitan youth (i.e. those belonging to the middle and higher social classes) is and has always been perceived as compulsory and as the expected route to follow; the higher classes tend to be driven to pursue good quality education. For the lower classes, in contrast, education is affected by the limited availability of economic resources, exacerbated by intense competition for a small number of places that is offered to students wishing to attend public schools. Private schools are usually not an option for the lower social classes, as families simply

cannot afford to pay the high fees. These two descriptions do make sense in the context of urban Mozambique. However, specific situations disrupt this dichotomist dynamic. For instance, young people may make calculated decisions to fulfil their economic, professional, class and emotional aspirations in other ways, which may exclude receiving an education. Such attitudes of the youth in Maputo reinforce the usefulness of the generation-based theoretical perspective on the youth rather than the life-stage theory, as the generation perspective highlights their autonomy and capacity for making choices.

Portuguese is the first language of most of the young cosmopolitans who participated in this study, as they were born after independence, when the Socialist regime, led by Samora Machel, chose Portuguese as the official language – *a língua da unidade nacional* (the language of national unity). The post-independence socialist regime invested heavily in education. It made sure that, throughout the country, schools would provide education in Portuguese and guarantee high turnout levels of Portuguese-speaking graduates. There were sanctions for those caught speaking local languages in public spaces (data collected in informal conversations both in 2002, 2004 and 2008-9). Obviously, though, people would subvert this rule. However, there was also determination from the families, mainly in the urban areas, to have their children learn Portuguese, as this was seen as a language that would give them better chances and opportunities in their future lives.

Migrant families that moved from the northern and central provinces of Mozambique to urban Maputo also adopted Portuguese, in order to communicate in the public sphere, as most of them do not have a command of the local languages spoken in the southern region. The case of Levi exemplifies this situation. Levi moved from Lichinga (the capital city of Niassa province in the north) after completing his primary school education. In Maputo, he lived with an uncle who held a prominent government position and lived in the elite neighbourhood of Sommerschield. He went to the same secondary school as his cousins and when he started working, he moved into an apartment that he rented with his brother, who had also moved to Maputo for work. Levi was a central person in the group with whom I had a meal at *Escorpião*; indeed, he is the person who reminds the rest of the young men of our

Wednesday lunch arrangements. He is a black, very well-dressed and charming young man. He insists on using a formal form of the Portuguese language, which is not common amongst the youth.

Colloquial Portuguese is spoken the most commonly in Maputo, and Brazilian Portuguese, English and the local languages spoken in the region influence it. The influence of Brazilian Portuguese comes from Brazilian soap operas, which are screened on both public and private television channels. Also, the widespread presence of the Pentecostal Brazilian churches (*Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* – Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, *Igreja Maná* – the Maná church, *Deus é Amor* – God is Love, amongst others) contributes to the acquisition of different Brazilian terms, and the use of Portuguese that is spoken with a Brazilian accent. The English influence comes from the presence of a growing number of English-speaking tourists, as well as the close relationship of the country (the southern region in particular) with its neighbouring English-speaking countries (South Africa and Swaziland). Also playing a role are the American video-clips of Hip-Hop, Soul, R & B and Rap music, which are played on the radio and television, and at discos and parties; Hollywood movies and sitcoms are readily available both on the public TV as well as on cable and satellite channels. Finally, the local languages also influence the Portuguese spoken in Maputo; some specific words, expressions and interjections are borrowed from *Tsonga* and its dialects spoken in Southern Mozambique – *Ronga,* for example, as well as *Zulu* and *Xhosa* from the very popular dance music styles produced in South Africa (like *Kwaito, Mapantsula* and Afro-jazz).

A number of informants did learn other local languages, from their grandparents, parents, and other relatives or in their neighbourhoods, when playing with neighbours and *macaiaias*[12] (baby sitters). These influences from other languages brought to the country through the modern media reflect the power of the mediascapes (Appadurai 1990) of the global era, much as the migration of Brazilian churches fits the idea of 'modern missionaries' (again facilitated by the easiness of

[12] In urban contexts, *macaiaias* (baby sitters), both then and now, usually move in and live with the family from the early months of the child's life. They take care of the child while both parents go to work. Most of the *macaiaias* come from rural areas and tend to have little education, thus communicating with the child in their local language.

communication in today's global world). Both are characteristic of the contemporary dynamics of social transformation.

Young people tend to adapt easily to these transformations; they construct and re-construct their identities, taking into consideration various aspects in the constant shaping of their identities and social worlds. By doing so, young people fit into the generational model described above, as they put their individuality and agency into action in order to live within the new social dynamics. Levi, for example, plays around with his ceremonial Portuguese, and says that such skilful use of words makes him a more attractive man. His friends tend to joke about his refined Portuguese, as, a number of times, he will even use formal words that make no sense in the context.

In addition to the use of language, individuality is expressed in a variety of ways. Fashion among the young cosmopolitan is, for example, a way in which young adults action their agency. In the group of friends comprised by Linda, Ilundi, Thandi and Céu (all in their mid-thirties), the fashion style stands out from the generalised sense of aesthetics that in Maputo is very much associated with classic Western fashion and its transformations. For example, chemically treated hairstyles or hair extensions of Caucasian and/or Asian women are very popular amongst women. However, the women of the group being described combine African and other non-Eurocentric items and styles together with the general fashion. They do this in ways that highlight their connection with Africa. For example, Linda, Thandi and Céu wear dreadlocks and Ilundi wears naturally kinky short hair. Wooded jewellery, *capulana*[13]-made clothes and accessories, and beaded bracelets are some of the other items in these women's wardrobes. African-ness is also present in their discourses. Linda and Céu are more active in their discourses about the need to give value to Africa and Africans than are the rest of the group. Linda, for example, has sent me a

[13] *Capulana* is a sarong usually made of cotton that is traditionally used by women in the country and worn wrapped around the waist. It is usually colourful with fantasy motifs that represent nature, and social and cultural life. It is used throughout the rural areas and, to a lesser extent, in urban peripheral areas. There is an emergence of the use of *capulanas* in the form of crafted, hand-made bags and hair accessories in the flea markets in Maputo. Lately, political parties and companies have stamped pictures of their leaders, their symbols and slogans onto *capulanas* as a form of publicity.

Facebook message inviting me to participate in an event she was helping to coordinate: '*Semana da identidade Africana*' (African Identity Week).

In contrast, Levi's group prefers to wear styles, which are associated with formal Western attire. Men in this group spend most of the week in their suits and formal shirts, wearing black or brown polished shoes. Levi, for example, has a large collection of average priced and expensive suits that he wears to work and other occasions. He pays much attention to detail in the way he dresses. His ties always match either his shoes or his shirt; his cufflinks are eye-catching, and the colours and the textiles of his suits are diverse and quite exclusive, as they are not very common in the fashion trends of the city. He works in a bank as an account manager. He has a secondary degree and more than five years of experience in the banking system in Maputo. He has had a number of banking and management training positions in the country and in Portugal. He is currently pursuing his Bachelor's degree by taking evening classes.

These two groups constitute networks in which the nodes (individuals) are connected through friendship (Mitchell 1969). However, professional and family networks also exist, which are locally defined as *grupos, malta* or *turma* (literally meaning groups); these encompass diverse sources of origin or various aspects that bring people together. Another source of origin includes the fact that people grew up together in the same neighbourhood and often went to the same primary and secondary schools as toddlers and teenagers. As youngsters, they would practice sports in the same club, go to the same music or dance school, or the same church or mosque, amongst other activities. Thus, historical ties play a significant role in the formation of a public network.

If young adults follow fashion, however, this implies the availability of economic resources that will define modes of consumption. "This form of transient consumption – oriented towards the person and the body, and especially associated with the young – defines not only politics of identity, but also of inequality", as Osella and Osella noted in their work in South India (1999: 991-992). Amongst the youth in Maputo, class distinctions and income levels emerge when analysing

consumption. However, it is worth noting that looking good and being in "shape" (in the case of women, this means being curvy and elegant, whereas for men, it means having well-defined muscles) as well as dressing fashionably are all crucial markers of belonging to the wider definition of 'being young'.

The variety of ways in which different groups in Maputo embody their youthfulness and employ particular discourses and practices that define who and/or what is 'cool' can be seen in the classification of the youth sub-cultures of Maputo. The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies of Birmingham (CCCS) has popularised this concept, which been extensively applied to the youth studied in post-colonial Britain. CCCS's understanding of youth sub-cultures was based on class and defined as sub-sets, or the smaller, more localised and differentiated structures within one or other of the larger cultural networks (Hall and Jefferson 1976).

Influenced by Marxist cultural theory and focusing on the working class, the CCCS had a very functionalistic approach to youth sub-culture, arguing that the final aim of such groups was to contest or protest against the values, rules and operation of the dominant culture. Therefore, Hall and Jefferson would argue that, by acting in their specific manner, members of the youth culture may project a cultural response or solution to the problems posed to them by their material and social class position and experience, which differed significantly from the one projected by their parents (1976).

Even though the studies and perspective of the CCCS had a significant impact on the work that is often identified as the foundation of youth culture studies, it has also been highly criticised. Among the criticisms was the observation that most of the youth studies produced by the CCCS did not consider females, and when they did, they were described as 'lads'. There was an absence of examples of skinhead girls in active roles. British black youth were absent from these studies too, as was the influence and impact of the gay culture on post-war Britain, which represented the desire of academics for an idealised 'utopia of the innocent' (Huq 2006). Also, the CCCS analyzed sub-culture in an essentialists and non-contradictory manner (Bucholtz 2002; Huq 2006).

Against these fixed perspectives of the CCCS and following more recent anthropological perspectives that appeal for the "re-theorising of the youth culture, in which the static and inflexible cultural boundaries are replaced with the much more fluid and indeterminate collections of practices and ideologies that constitute culture in anthropology" (Bucholtz 2002: 539), I use cultural practices of youth to describe the specificities of the diverse youths in Maputo. Such a perspective, I believe, allows for a more dynamic analysis of youth. Such a recasting of youth research also corrects some of the politically and ethically problematic elements of earlier approaches (Bucholtz 2002: 539).

Also, the reading of sub-culture from the CCCS studies constituted a reflection upon the historical moment of Britain at the time, with a well-established working class and few spaces available for contestation. This context differs significantly from the actual reality of Mozambique. Cultural practices of the youth in Maputo can generally be read as markers of styles, norms and discourses that define specific modes of being young and being accepted by a group (the youth communities) rather than as indicators of associations of young people contesting the dominant culture. As Clarke points out: "the Birmingham school is best understood as a strictly partisan political project, as a last 1960s idealistic flourish in its core construction of youth as a metaphor for social change" (Clarke in Huq 2006: 16).

Thus, a brief characterisation of one of the groups of cosmopolitan young adults in Maputo will help to give some background to some of this study's participants. Linda, Ilundi, Thandi, Liana and Céu are a group of close friends. As stated by Linda during one of our Sunday afternoon tea meetings, these friends became exceptionally close because they share a historical pattern of relationships that does not fit into those of mainstream young women in Maputo. Usually, in their teens, girls start a *namoro* relationship with a boy from the same age group (or just slightly older). This relationship is usually a long-term one (amongst the informants, long-term was defined, variously, as ranging from two to 12 years). In some cases, these secondary-school sweethearts even got married. However, none of the women from this group followed this pattern of long-term teenage relationships. Both Ilundi and Linda spent

most of their teenage years single, though they did eventually have short-term sexual and romantic encounters with boys. Thandi and Liana had a number of very short-lived relationships with boys when they were teens.

The model of relationships followed by the women in this group was perceived as too liberal. They all have examples of comments they received that they were excessively free and too much in control of themselves, too sexually free and too independent. Today, they still do not fit in completely with the mainstream model for women. For example, Ilundi, Thandi and Liana are single mothers of one child each. All three live in their own apartments with their children. Linda is pregnant and engaged to the father of her future child, although they live in separate apartments.

These women are very independent. They have created a lifestyle for themselves that represents a model of life still in its embryonic stages in Maputo. They are all professionals employed by NGOs and/or United Nations departments in the country. They earn salaries that allow them to live independent lives: they rent and/or buy their own apartments and cover their own expenses; they buy and drive cars; they have access to the diverse sites of entertainment (restaurants, theatre, music shows, art exhibitions, poetry), and they are able to take holidays within the country or abroad.

Until not so long ago, the lifestyle described above was almost exclusively available to (single) men, who were usually the ones with higher education, professional experience and business breaks, and with the expertise that allowed them to access higher levels of income. Also, men and women within a relationship could usually only afford such lifestyles by combining incomes and sharing expenses.

Thus, this group of women poses a slight conundrum. On the one hand, they are admired due to their educational, professional and lifestyle achievements, but on the other hand, they are paradoxically also ostracised, as they no longer meet the expectations of the typical female gendered role and all the commitments (submissiveness, obedience, dependence) prescribed locally to this role. Their difference from these norms thus brings them closer together.

They met each other through common friends and discovered that they had much in common; this brought them together and fortified their relationships. In some cases, this group's friendship became much stronger than the friendship each of them had shared with the common friend who had originally introduced them to each other. Ilundi and Linda worked at the same institution, which had regular interactions with the foundation where Liana worked and the organization at which Céu was employed. Therefore, these women also share professional links. Indeed, it is worth noting that they all work in organizations and institutions concerned with gender issues in the various dimensions of society.

It became evident that the women from this group share feminist views. From the conversations, it emerged that they believe firmly in women's self-sufficiency and the power of women to make a life for themselves. Also, they oppose the gendered double standard that defines two different sexual profiles for men and women. However, all the women identified difficulties in applying their beliefs holistically in their daily routines, as they were faced with socio-cultural views, family pressures and professional constraints that all challenged the easy implementation of their vision.

Throughout Mozambique, "Pentecostal churches have witnessed an increase from an estimated 10 percent of poor peri-urban populations to perhaps over 50 percent, with a possible reason for such an increase being [an] emphasis on the healing of social ruptures" (Pfeiffer 2004: 87). Most of the cosmopolitan youth participating in this study maintain a distant relationship with religion. Most informants mentioned being baptised in Christian churches when they were babies or in their early teens; however, most said they were non-practitioners. Nília is an exception. She is a very active member of her Pentecostal congregation; she confessed to me that, after breaking up with her long-term boyfriend a few years ago, she became celibate. She emphasised that she found strength in her faith in God. Indeed, she is a very proactive woman, always finding ways to increase her income and improve her social condition. She lives with her mother. A few years ago, she had finalised her Masters in Law in Cape Town in South Africa and returned to Maputo to work at an

international shipping company, which then helped her to secure an internship in London. She claims this move was not due to luck, but rather thanks to her dedication and her belief in God. In her view, the fact that she is a religious person should not stop her from enjoying life. She considers herself a fashion and party *aficionado*. Her style of dress is very revealing and sexy, and she often goes clubbing (at least twice every weekend).

Music is a key part of these young adults' lives. They have access to a wide variety of musical styles from a diversity of regions. However, the most popular are the rhythms from Portuguese-speaking African countries, commercial music and dance music from the United States of America, Brazil, South Africa and increasingly, the new youth sounds of Mozambican commercial music and dance music. Jazz and Afro-Jazz are associated with elegance and maturity.

The cultural practices of the youth also influence their decision-making, choices and justifications regarding sexuality. It soon emerged during the fieldwork that sex is part of the lives of the young people being investigated in this research. Studies about sexuality in Maputo show that most youth engage in relationships either regularly or occasionally (or a combination of both) (Karlyn 2005; Manuel 2008). On the one hand, the double standard of sexuality transmitted through socialisation in a patriarchal society incites men to be sexually freer and to have different sexual partners without being stigmatised by society, whereas women are expected to be more conservative and sexually reserved (Osório 1998). On the other hand, some youth cultural practices tend to encourage pleasure, experimentation and fulfilment of desire without much differentiation between the expected roles and behaviours of men and women (Karlyn 2003, Manuel 2008).

Sources of information for young people regarding sexuality include counselling clinics, networks of friends and, to a smaller degree, school. These sources are relatively new, as they are part of the latest HIV and AIDS prevention policies in the country. However, a number of informants work in areas or organisations that deal directly with HIV and AIDS, and therefore have plenty of access to resources and information on the prevention and treatment of sexual diseases. In general, though,

the youth accumulates information about STIs over many years, often via informal conversations, but also by means of experiences with doctors and nurses in consultations regarding pregnancy, abortions, and family planning. The internet, TV programs and radio programs on the topic constitute further sources.

The spread of HIV and AIDS is indeed a concern for young people in Maputo. The national HIV prevalence rate for the country amongst the adult population (15 to 49 years old) is 16% (INE, et al. 2008). That condom use is central to HIV/AIDS prevention is well known. However, different kinds of sexual relationships have different meanings and are consequently associated with different patterns of condom use. Generally, in steady relationships based on trust and love, unprotected sex is seen a bonding mechanism for the couple and therefore condoms are not used (Manuel 2008). In occasional relationships, however, condoms are preferred, because of the fear of infection due to distrust and ignorance about the partner's sexual past (Karlyn 2005; Manuel 2005).

Sexual activity aside, the end of youth and the beginning of adulthood, in the context of Mozambique, happens in a variety of scenarios. Taking part in rites of initiation (which are mostly practiced in rural areas but where urban youth do participate), getting married, having children, acquiring financial independence and leaving parents' (or other relatives') homes would all be considered rites of passage to adulthood. However, in the current neo-liberal economic environment of modern Maputo, a complicated set of intersecting obstacles creates difficulties in clearly defining this transition to adulthood.

The lives of young urban Mozambicans have incorporated trends that define a more 'universal youth culture'. The new *modus vivendi* incorporates ideas related to a life of independence away from their parents, while at the same time not having a family of his/her own, the importance of having a job and being able to cover one's own expenses, while at the same time spending a great deal of time on entertainment activities (e.g., clubbing, sports, occasional relationships).

It is true that only a small portion of the youth successful adopt such aspects of the 'youth culture'. However, this is increasingly becoming an ideal for large sections of urban youth in Maputo. Amongst my informants, a considerable number of young men and women have already adopted the discourse (and sometimes the actual act) of delaying marriage or starting a family, in the name of enjoying their youth, furthering their studies and remaining independent (Manuel 2008). Usually, they live with friends or alone, and in some cases, they cohabit with a partner (however, without any kind of official ceremony establishing ties between their respective families).

This description of the dynamics of class and the lifestyle of young people in Maputo city highlights the manner in which they re-structure and reinvent their own living conditions. In this sense, I would deem them *innovators*. The concept of youth as innovative has a place in the current debates about youth who imaginatively create new concepts to define current tendencies. One such concept is that of the so-called "new ethnicities" (Morley and Chen 1996). This refers to identities that are not grounded in static and essentialist ethnic categories, but that are, rather, emergent, hybrid, and local. The concept of new ethnicities can reveal nuanced social processes that the blunter tool of ethnicity could not expose. Hall's insight with regard to this concept was that the strategic invocation of essentialised concepts of identity by black political activists in Britain was being supplanted by complex cultural blending, both in representation and in practice (Bucholtz 2002).

Another concept with which innovators could be associated is the concept of youth as social shifters, as applied by Durham (2000: 116). In her discussion, Durham proposes applying the linguistic concept of a *shifter* to the category of youth. A shifter is a word that is tied directly to the context of speaking and hence takes much of its meaning from situated use, such as the deictics, *here* and *now*. Likewise, the referential function of *youth* cannot be determined in advance of its use in a particular cultural context, and its use indexes the nature of the context in which it is invoked. As a shifter, then, youth is a context-renewing and context-creating sign, whereby social relations are both (and often simultaneously) reproduced and contested.

My choice of the concept ‘innovators’ lies in the fact that I am interested in the dynamics of youth that are not simply based in the a-historic present, but which also incorporate interplays of repetitiveness and creativity (de Certeau 1984). This perspective constantly links the youth of today with past influences.

This chapter has given the ground to locate the concept of youth. It has discussed the theoretical place of youth as well as its specific conceptualization in social sciences in the African context. The chapter ends Part I of the thesis, which aimed at placing this study on the history of Mozambique and discuss key concepts that illuminate the discussion. Next, I will introduce Part II that focus on more ethnographic discussions based on the results of the fieldwork undertaken in Maputo city.

PART II:
A SNAPSHOT ANALYSIS OF CONTEMPORARY URBAN YOUTH COSMOPOLITANS

The Part II of this thsis engages in an analysis of the ethnographic material collected during fieldwork. As the title suggests, it pictures the lives of the young elite and middle class men and women in urban Maputo. Chapter 4 begins by exploring the privacy of sexuality and leads the discussion to the notion of normalised sexual appetite. A term that I conceptualize to make sense of the diverse sexual connections that young adults engage in. Chapter 5 explores the interconnection between status and the aesthetics of gendered practice in the making and re-making of male and female gendered identities and subjectivities. The last part of this chapter engages in a discussion of the feminist debate of the public and private to show how young men and women in the group studed face deal with the quest to liberation and mutual dependencies.

In chapter 6 and 7, the reader will feel and engage in a more ethnographic description. Chapter 6 narrates marriage choices as well as its meanings. Marriage emerged as fundamental to the young adults' present stage in life due to its equation to stability, family formation and social demonstration of adulthood. Chapter 7 explores the role of love in the sexual and/or romantic relationships the young people engage in. This chapter leads to the conclusion, which presents a summary of the thesis, the implications of the discussion the field of Anthropology and a glimpse of the informants after fieldwork.

CHAPTER 4:

WHAT IS SEX? SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

4.1 Private sex and its public texture

Sex is perceived as a relational craft. The sexual act incorporates the choreography of bodies that are most of the time desired in their naked state. The rubbing, stroking, holding, licking and sucking of body parts are perceived as teasers or preliminaries for the sexual act. The body is the central element in such interaction. A number of techniques, practices, movements and ways of adorning the body, as well as language used during the sexual act, contribute to the definition of a good sexual act and the classification of an individual as *bom* or *boa de cama* (good in the bed/good in the sack). Sexual performance is therefore rated and valued.

These analyses of young cosmopolitan perceptions of sex corroborate Jancovich's statement that sex, "for the petty bourgeoisie at least, is viewed as 'fun', and that it has a corresponding concern with aesthetics" (in Attwood 2006: 85). Both men and women of in this study in Maputo perceive their experiences of sex as associated with style, romance and diverse sexual practices, including positions and adornments, all of which emphasises a sense of being contemporary and belonging to today's global urban youth culture.

The itinerary of sex (good sex) tends to include foreplay and caressing, a comfortable or unique place for its performance, penetration and reaching orgasm. In order to fulfil such itinerary, the use of lubricants and other sexual teasers and enhancers was mentioned by a number of informants. Linda explained how she enjoyed buying gel and creams that would make the vagina dry, as she enjoyed the sense of a dried

vagina when having sex. The products used for such sexual experience were informally available through the *mukeristas*, at hair salons or nail salons. Most products were of Brazilian origin, and included creams, vibrators, games, powders and lingerie. Linda was the only informant who mentioned enjoying dry sex, as most of the others mentioned buying creams and gels to lubricate the vagina, as they preferred such kind of sex. Indeed, tightening, drying or lubricating the vagina are all widespread practices on the African continent. Brown, Ayowa and Brown (1993), Civic and Wilson (1996) and Scorgie et al (2009)reflect on the practice of dry sex in Zaire, Zimbabwe and South Africa respectively. In such contexts, the practice consists of inserting different herbs and minerals in the vagina prior to sex in order to dry or tighten it; these practices tend to be practiced mainly in rural contexts. Their studies look specifically at the risks of dry sex in increasing the spread of HIV and AIDS.

Similarly, in Mozambique, Bagnol and Mariano have explored this topic in the central region of the country (2008a; 2008b). Their work questions the appropriateness of considering such practices – which they consider expressions of female strategic power – as a form of female genital mutilation (2008b). Indeed, none of my informants mentioned using herbs (as in the descriptions of the studies mentioned). They all used manufactured products that led to the same result. They might have made such choice because the use of these herbs is mainly associated with the rural areas and with unsafe behaviour, whereas the use of manufactured products, in contrast, is associated with urban, safe, globally acceptable behaviour. Using James Ferguson's (1999) words, these urban young adults would prefer to use manufactured products, as these represented a move away from rural references, and an integration of cosmopolitan urban references, thus opposing local styles. Tamale (2006) mentions the use of sex herbs as a technique to lubricate the vagina and keep it warm, when discussing the role of *Ssenga* (parental aunt, or surrogate versions thereof, whose role is to tutor young women in a range of sexual matters thus, an initiation institution) in transmitting notions of eroticism and sexual etiquette to Baganda married women in Uganda.

The regular use of a variety of products with different effects in the sexual act emphasises the important role of sexual pleasure among the urban cosmopolitans who participated in my study. The relational characteristic of sex, mentioned earlier, implies the expectation of *mutual* pleasure and satisfaction among these young adults. Marlene explained to me how she wanted to have regular intercourse with her partner and how she expected such sexual encounters to fulfil her too: *"...I want to have pleasure, I want to reach orgasm*." This quote from Marlene, a married woman, could be read as moralistic, as it implied that openness in talking about sex and expecting orgasm was appropriate only for married women, as noted by Shefer and Foster (2001) in a study of women's sexuality in South Africa. However, the single women in this study expressed similar desires of sexual fulfilment, as explained by Solange and her group of friends in a conversation we had at her apartment:

> *"(...) intercourse is about both of us. I want to receive as much pleasure as I give. He also has to caress me, touch me, kiss me, lick me and, of course, make me reach the climax." (Solange, single woman, 33 years old, employed at an international organization)*

As the above discussion illustrates, among the young adults from this group, notions of sexuality as a primarily male domain, or as a domain limited to married women, tended to be fluid; women's sexual urges were accepted. And, consequently, young men do engage in sexually satisfying their partners, as stated by Zé:

> *"I treat my girlfriend in a special way and when it comes to sex I give her different positions, different spots, I lick all her body, I try to satisfy all her fantasies with no reservations, so that she desires me exclusively!" (Zé, 27 years old, university student)*

A few conversations with individuals from an older generation in Maputo tend to indicate that women's pleasure was valued too among the generation of these young adults' parents. In a conversation with Xiluva's aunt, for instance, she expressed how, even during her younger years, men needed to learn how to touch a woman and make her sexually happy. This conversation happened in a pre-marriage ritual in which I participated, during which the aunt was giving advice to the bride-to-be. During this conversation, she emphasized the need for the bride to teach her husband

how to touch her and how to give her pleasure in order for the couple to have a healthy sexual life.

Men's acceptance of women's sexual longings, even if widespread in this particular group, is not ubiquitous. Cláudio, in a conversation with me, expressed some discomfort in having a steady partner who was very sexually demanding and much more sexually experienced than he was. Such positioning demonstrates the fluidity with regard to sexual preferences that exists among this group of young adults. However, it is worth noting that the kind of masculinity that consents to and accepts female sexual urges, in Maputo city at least, is mainly characteristic of wealthier urbanities.

Among poorer and unemployed youth in Maputo, however, the predominant pattern of masculinity, with regard to sexuality, is one that asserts sexuality as a primarily male domain, as described by Groes-Green (2009). This echoes the dominant trends in feminist literature, which construct heterosexuality as equivalent to male power, inherently lacking negotiation and equality between the sexes, and always potentially coercive (Shefer and Foster 2001: 386). Thus, the sexual practices of the wealthier young adults in Maputo seem to be pointing towards "'difference' and 'equality' in heterosexuality" as well as towards enjoyable sex that resists hegemonic masculinity, femininity and heterosexuality" (Shefer and Foster 2001: 387).

Women's sexual pleasure is indeed a main topic of discussion among gatherings of women. In a number of bridal showers and gatherings of women friends to which I was invited, some of the main topics included how to negotiate with a partner and seduce him in order to achieve orgasm, techniques to avoid man's rapid ejaculation, and teaching a man how to touch and caress a woman in pleasurable manner, among others. Interestingly, such meetings involved women from different generations and diverse kinship ties, implying that women's sexual pleasure seems to be a cross-generational topic. However, sexuality and its demonstration also seem to be allocated to the private sphere, as illustrated by Marbella's auntie, when she had tea with us one Saturday afternoon:

"It is nauseating to see a young couple kissing and caressing intensely and for such a long time in a public place as I saw on the other day at the coffee shop. Shouldn't they get a room? We are not supposed to be watching that!"

Even if her individual comment cannot be generalised for a whole generation as it may simply imply that she is more comfortable with a more 'old-fashioned' morality of keeping sex in the bedroom. However, after that comment, a third friend of Marbella who was having tea with us also commented on how rare it was to see parents and people from their generation holding hands, hugging or kissing in public. She recounted that the only time she remembered seeing her parents quickly kissing each other on the lips was at the airport, when one of them was departing for an overseas trip.

These examples seem to point to a different generational conception of public demonstrations of affection. The parents' generation tended to refrain from publically demonstrating affection for each other, while the relatively wealthier young adults were being bolder in doing so, though still constricted by the wider social texture of where they live.

Most of my discussion, so far, has focused on the idea that sex in not just performed for procreation, inspired by the plastic sense of sex by Giddens (1992). However, such pasticity of sex also includes sex that is done for generating children. Both young men and women, in this study, value having biological children. In a number of relationships, the couple deals with fertility diagrams, stopping taking contraceptives, having the HIV test, calculating the ovulation day, or planning when best to have a child in regards to professional careers.

As society expects people in the 30s to already have children, sex for procreation is highly valued. In pre-marriage ceremonies older women give advice on the best times to get pregnant based on the consistency of the vaginal mucus. There is also advising on strategies on keeping a slim and beautiful body during and after pregnancy and what to feed one's partner to guarantee good quality sperm. Most women from this group do aim at fulfilling the social pressures for procreation. Thus,

they tend to time their pregnancies in a calculus that involves their age and their academic and professional careers. Most women prefer to start having children in their late 20s and before 35 years old. As in Levin's (2000) life course approach to analyse childbearing decision in Guinea, the women in this study also set a biological clock to plan pregnancy.

A 90-year-old elite matriarch has emphasised how young women today wait too long to get pregnant for the first time. While agreeing that women should indeed invest in their studies and professional carrer, the old women asked for a balance in order for young woman to raise a family, at the expense of not finding a suitable partner after so many academic degrees. Indeed, there is a general discourse in Maputo city stating that overqualified women threathen potential partners as they challenge their masculinity (being the head of the household, the provider, the one with the higher salary). Thus, such women run the risk of being single.

The matriarch, carried on her talk comparing today's youth to the times when she was younger:

> *"We (women) would have less of a hard time, as young men in Lourenço Marques were well groomed and polite. They respected us and would courtship us. Today, things are different: Young men do not show respect and women demand a lot. Back then, we would set a goal to our family and pursue it but would not make a fuss about our partner's escapes as that would not challenge the family's well being".*

Young women tend to verbalize against the matriac discourse of ignoring the partner's infidelity. They equate such approach to a scenario in which future husbands and wives were pre-selected by parents and elders [as happened in Nigeria in the beginning of the 19th century (Smith 2001)]. Young women in Maputo also locate the matriarch discourse at the times when conjugal relationships were detached of emotional intimacy and romance [as was the case in Northeast Brazil before rapid urbanization and the expansion of a cash economy Rebhun 2002)].
Procreation, for the young women also symbolises a transition to adulthood as in Maputo discourses emphasise the bith pain a liminal stage of a rite of passage.

4.2 The process of normalisation of the sexual appetite

The normalisation of the sexual appetite that I will unpack here can only be understood by comprehending the conceptualisation of the body and sexuality in Southern Africa. As was found by Taylor (1990) in Rwanda and Thornton (2008) in South Africa, in the context of Mozambique, too, the concept of 'person' is permeable, in other words, open to the physical and spiritual substances of other persons. In terms of such conceptualisations, the flow of bodily substances and gifts amongst individuals pays a crucial role in the definition of an individual's well-being. The general belief is that bodily fluids resulting from sexual arousal and orgasm originate from blood.

Blood plays a quintessential role in the Southern African cosmology. It is the substance that bonds generations. The role of blood in such bonding is meant literally. Since sperm and vaginal fluids are perceived as deriving from blood, the conception of a child allows the blood to flow directly across generations, which means that "the ancestors are physically connected to the living through the flow of sexual substances" (Thornton 2008: 205). Even more importantly, in terms of this cosmology, the ancestors have a pivotal role and influence on the lives of the living. Thus, the exchange of sexual fluids allows for constant contact with the ancestors, which enables people not only to survive "but also to understand their survival as part of an on-going exchange across time that links generations in a permanent and enduring way" (Thornton 2008: 206).

In the social dimension, then, individuals exchange sexual fluids in relations that involve the flow of other kinds of currency too, in the form of gifts, needs, access to privileged professional positions, to mention a few. Therefore, sex is part of a reciprocal exchange of gifts, in which things of value are shared. The flow of values involved includes intangible ones (like as a sense of closeness and intimacy, affection or a good time) as well as physical or economic ones [*lobolo* (bridewealth)]. The link created through sexual action is thus "an enduring social

relation that connects people who have sex (or who have had sex) with one another in an enduring network of relations" (Thornton 2008: 207). The sexual character of such exchanges infers all of its implications: trust, mistrust, jealousy, mutual power and vulnerabilities, as well as love (or hate).

Under such a cosmology, people establish sexual networks that are not necessarily exclusive to one partner per person. As the description of Henry Junod on the Tsonga (in the South of Mozambique) demonstrates, there was limited acceptance among the tribe when women engaged in pre-marital sex, provided that the hymen was not broken and that pregnancy did not ensue; yet for men, pre-marital sex was accepted and widespread (1927). Thus, I argue that the gift exchange represented by the flow of sexual fluids in such a cosmology allows for openness in the expression of sexual desire – a freed sexual expression of emotions and the attainment of desire within a conceptual framework of rules that gives such sexual multiplicity an order, which I conceptualise as the normalisation of sexual appetite.

Indeed, this has been part of the logic in explaining much researched transactional sex on the African continent. The acclaimed work by Hunter (2002) has set the stage for differentiating transactional sex from prostitution by showing how, in transactional sex, a relationship of boyfriend and girlfriend is constructed, and not one of client and prostitute; and how "the exchange of gifts for sex is part of a broader set of obligations that might not involve a predetermined payment" (Hunter 2002: 100-101). Moreover, Hunter's argument that "women approach transactional relations not as passive victims, but in order to access power and resources in ways that can both challenge and reproduce patriarchal structures" (2002: 101), corroborates Cole's analysis in Tamatave (Madagascar). Jennifer Cole found that transactional sex in that region of Madagascar is becoming the primary way for women to achieve status and value. In the process, moreover, young women become exposed to the global economy and through intricate methods of redistribution invert hegemonic gendered roles by supporting men (Cole 2004).

In my own study, however, transactional sex is not the object of analysis. The prevalence of multiple sexual partners emerged, albeit with interesting façades. Sex

was frequently described by using terms more commonly associated with food and eating. Rita, in describing a sexual encounter that amused her, recurrently used food metaphors to describe and characterise different moments and actions of the act. Some of her sentences included: "...then he whispered in my ear that he wanted to eat me slowly to savour all of sweetness..." or "I started kissing and licking his body as if licking something spicy to excite him". As in the example of Rita, the employment of food metaphors is widespread in the discourses of sexual activity (perhaps because it implies an appetite for sex) because, as with eating, having sex is perceived as a normal impulse. In this way, sex is naturalised and perceived as an embodied component of growing into adulthood for both women and men.

This sense that sexual appetite, like the appetite for food, is normal and 'natural' is paralleled with the idea that a regular sexual life is essential in the maintenance of good health, as the exchange of sexual fluids and warmth is perceived to be important in holding couples together and is thought to enhance health by, for example, preventing pimples in the face, stress and bad moods (Manuel 2008). In addition, amongst the youth, emphasis is put on the role of sex in keeping couples connected, as sexual pleasure is stressed as being vital in satisfying the partner. Mutual orgasm, subsequently, is perceived as a norm for the majority of young couples. As mentioned earlier, such a perception shapes a fresh definition of female sexuality, which is no longer, in the urban popular discourse, verbalised in terms of procreation and pleasing the male partner, but associated primarily with women's (and men's) pleasure and intimacy. Indeed, in my own reflections, I arrived at the conclusion that even traditional ideas of female sexuality as being only associated with procreation and giving pleasure to men may not be entirely accurate.

My short period of fieldwork in rural areas in the south of Mozambique have highlighted that, in subtle ways, songs and story-telling in Ronga and Tsonga describe moments of female sexual pleasure. Also, the ethnographical work by Martinez among the Makua shows how boys are taught to please women sexually. As he states: "in the rites of passage both boys and girls learn the techniques and the art of the sexual intimate life that now (at marriage) should be put in practice" (Martinez 1989: 170). In a similar manner, in an interview with the African Regional

Sexuality Research Center's Naana Otoo-Oyortey, a Ghanaian activist recounts how, throughout the African continent, issues of sexual pleasure and fantasy can be identified in proverbs and songs (Otoo-Oyortey 2008). In urban spaces, Spronk's research amongst young cosmopolitans in Nairobi (Kenya) presents similar findings, demonstrating that, as a result of the notion of mutual orgasm, male sexuality becomes partly redefined in relation to female sexuality (Spronk 2006).

This interdependency of the sexual act brings to light the relational traits of sex. Sex is a relational gift in steady relationships where, for example, following Mauss's logic (Mauss 1969), it is seen as a return gift for the present of being asked to be a steady partner in a context in which there are increasingly few single men available for *namoro (steady dating relationship)* and marriage relationships as a result of extensive male migration to study or work (Manuel 2008) and the existence of higher standards on the side of women to qualify men as potential steady partners thus, if men are available, potential steady partners are few.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter people as sexually rated as being *bom* or *boa de cama*. Associated with such rating is the expectation of and demand for novelty, surprise and attention from the partner. A combination of the various perceptions of good sexual positions, practices and dispositions contributes to the formation of a discourse of good sex and, therefore, of individuals who are *bons de cama* (good in bed). It is true that, in general, good sex is a matter of personal taste. However, there is an underlying discourse about what is desired and desirable in bed. Masculine discourses about such preferences include women's willingness and openness to varied sexual practices and movements. It is highly undesirable when women remain still and unmoving during a sexual act. In my previous study (Manuel 2008), which looked at a slightly younger generation, a sexually experienced woman and extreme movement in a sexual act (by the woman) were both undesirable for a stable partner (under the double standard classification of women). However, amongst most men in the group of young adults studied here, this particular trait in women was particularly desirable, since men, at this social age, expect to have a regular partner with whom they can explore their sexual fantasies.

Openness and the desire to have multiple rounds in the same sexual encounter, and to engage in fellatio, anal sex (penile penetration of the woman's anus) and creativeness in the sexual act, are part of the repertoire of men's desires. On the one hand, creativeness during the sexual act is influenced by the viewing of hardcore pornographic movies[14] – leading to the incorporation of practices such as spanking the buttocks of the woman during the sexual act, spitting on and using accumulated saliva on the tongue to lubricate the sexual organs, the use of sex toys, lubricants and sexy lingerie. On the other hand, influenced by fantasies based in discourses of sexuality on other parts of the continent, there is curiosity about the use of beads and adornments by women in the sexual act. Or, influenced by experiences of Chinese massage parlours[15] and imaginings of the *kamasutra* (both the original book and softcore spin-offs in film and sexual self-education books, internet sites and magazines), there is a desire to include oils, massage techniques and diverse sexual positions in sexual encounters.

Interestingly, and widely mentioned, there was a preference for women who 'move like an African' or who 'have sex like an African', which implied being able to move the body in circular movements, using the waist, when on top of the man. Young men's perceptions seem to agree with Akiteng's position, which contrasts African women's sexuality to "women from cultures in which sex is performed with the linear or up and down movement. with the man simply thrusting the same spot over and over" (Akiteng 2006). Akiteng alluded to movements that include:

> *"gyrating, undulating and wiggling either in the same direction or opposite direction as movements in the way Africans perform sex. (...) that is why learning how to twist the buttocks and pelvis in rapid circular movements is almost mandatory in African cultures. The flexibility, rhythm and*

[14] Pornographic movies are widely available mainly via Internet sites. Most young adults own a laptop and/or a desktop and are connected to the different Internet providers in the city, either at their residences or at their offices. Also, in the pirate DVD market, street vendors sell pornographic movies in diverse corners of the city. Most vendors would only approach men to display such adult content movies. Amongst the young men who participated in this study, some mentioned exchanging porn movies with their peers and friends.

[15] In Maputo, I was able to identify a few Chinese medicine shops that had massage parlours. Most of the massages advertised were designed for weight loss, healing effects and relaxation. However, a few of the male informants mentioned having had 'happy end massages' in some of these parlours at an extra cost. The 'happy end massage' was described to me as including a penis massage and stimulation until the man ejaculates.

> *coordination, body articulations (moving different parts of the body in isolation and then together), the passion and force (a.k.a. lock and grind) and the abandon with which an African man or woman dances says a lot about his or her erotic abilities"* (Atikeng 2006: ¶8).

These essentialist readings of African sexuality are thus embodied in the imaginations and desires of youth in Maputo. This was so much so that many women confessed to me their desire to participate in the initiation rites for women done in the Makua society in Northern Mozambique, which, amongst other aspects, give instructions on the sexual life. In these, as described by Martinez, special attention is paid to the practice of elongating the vaginal labia and other techniques, and to the art of the intimate life (Martinez 1989). Women's interest in Makua initiation rites is associated with gaining sexual skills that would allow them to fascinate men. This has interesting repercussions for matters of identity, as it shows how such women do not perceive themselves as 'sexually African' and how they, instead, wish to be 'initiated' in order to acquire such an identity trait.

Women's discourses of good sex call attention to the importance of detailed preliminaries. They abhorred mechanical movements, as expressed in the voices of these two informants:

> *"I do not know who convinced men that the quickest way to get a woman aroused is to play with her nipples… oh, that is disgusting and painful. They play with it incessantly, and as a consequence, the nipples really become painful. Are they synchronising a radio station or what?" (Rita, a mother of two living with her partner in a de-facto union)*

> *"The worst thing is to find men who want to gym on you… sex is not about strength. The worst are the young ones; they think they had satisfied you if at the end of the sexual act they are sweating… Oh no, run away from them!" (Angela, who spoke to me during a lunch to which I had been invited, where women were sharing relationship experiences)*

As can be seen from these statements, individuals develop an idea of the sexual practices, environment and progression (i.e. the forms of touch, caresses, and penetration) that please them. For example, Zé was surprised at how a married woman, with whom he had an affair, did not know that for the *apanha moeda* position (literally, to catch the coin that fell onto the floor, indicating the doggy-style sexual position), she was supposed to lift up her buttocks and lower her waist for a more profound penetration, which, in turn, would allow the penis to caress the upper side of the vagina, thus giving greater pleasure to the couple.

As the mentioned examples demonstrate, there is pressure for the partners to be innovative, and to surprise the other in the sexual act. The following statement by Nília clearly demonstrates that predictable sexual routines are not desired:

> *"Sex with my partner is starting to piss me off! He is very predictable. Every time we have sex, he follows the same routine of movements. He starts by stroking my breasts, and then moves to kissing me on the neck and lips, while moving down his fingers to my panties. Then, he lies me down in bed and gets into me…uhrrrr! It is too obvious! I need surprise and adventure. That kind of sex does not give me pleasure…. pleasure is not just about penetration, it is about the all scenario and the preliminaries till you get to the penetration stage."*

Simultaneously, there is the belief that one cannot expect too much from one's partner, as creativity and the capacity to bring novelty to the sexual act are limited. This realisation, together with the desire for variety and novelty in sex, reveals a discourse (and the materialisation) of the need to have more than one partner, as Nília expressed when we continued our conversation:

> *"With Moses, sex was WOW! He would surprise me all the time. Once I rang the doorbell at his place and he opened the door already naked and horny. I could not even manage to close the door… I got naked in a second and jumped on him. The other time we were arguing and in the middle of it, he came from behind and got me naked. That was one of the best sex ever! (...) I have to confess that actually I am now seeing him again… I simply can't*

resist him! He can surprise me sexually and I love it. My partner does not know that I am seeing him."

Interestingly, this pattern of needing more than one sexual partner is normalised in everyday discourse – in conversations and gossip – although emphasis is put on secrecy and discretion, as partners are not supposed to know about extra-dyadic sex. In a way, this subtle normalisation of multiple partners (based on the logic that I have exposed) helps individuals to deal with issues of exclusivity and cheating. Nonetheless, as I will discuss in my last chapter, cheating is a topic that raises a range of complex responses in the lives of young adults.

I argue that a circular combination of all the aspects described above concur to what I theorise as the normalisation of sexual appetite in Maputo: individuals perceive sex as a normal and 'natural' desire that should be attained with partners to promote satisfaction. Conversely, satisfaction is associated with novelty and diversity, which is acknowledged as unattainable with a single partner, thus opening the possibility of involvement with more than one partner, but always through discretion and concealment. The following diagram presents the logic in place:

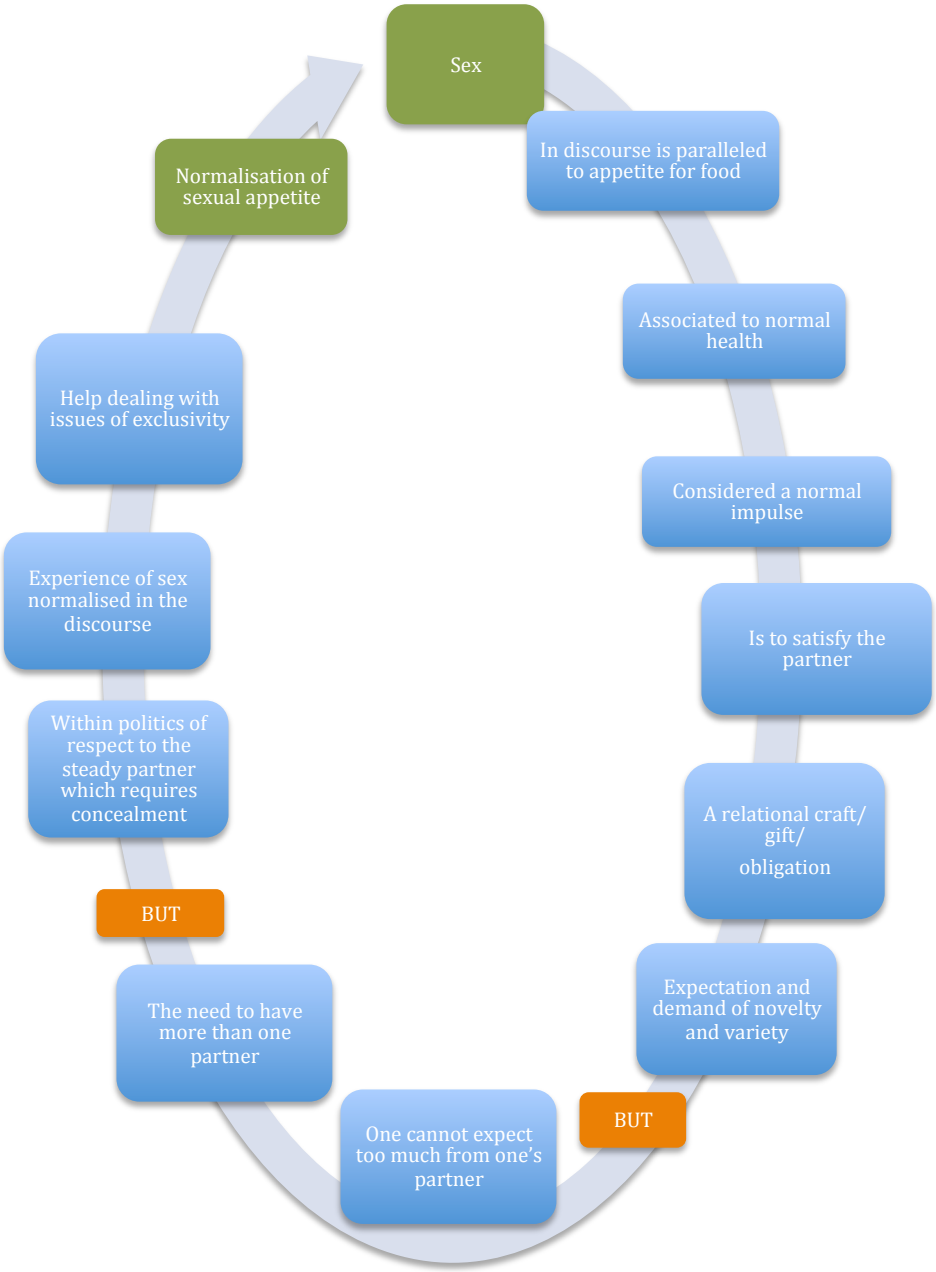

Diagram 1: The social process of normalising the sexual appetite

This scenario allows people to negotiate their sexual relations with more flexibility than it does in environments in which monogamy is perceived as the norm in intimate relationships. Nonetheless, they are constantly faced with the fact that, even within the monogamist system, cheating is recurrent, as is evident from studies in England and the United States of America (Anderson 2010; Emens 2004).

It is within this scenario of normalising their sexual appetite that young adults express and live their sexuality. Like their counterparts around the world, young men and women in Maputo stated that sex is related to sensual pleasure and physical delight. Like youths in Nairobi, the young adults in the Mozambican capital perceived being sexually active as being sexually attractive or wanted, "which contributes positively to women's and men's sense of self-worth" (Spronk 2006: 4). Young men and women have sex for leisure, to relax, to alleviate stress, for pleasure, to seek revenge, to hurt, to humiliate, to feel happy, and to feel alive, amongst other reasons. These represent some of the diverse meanings of sex at an individual level.

Nonetheless, mostly when other emotions are involved, sex reveals a relational side that parallels the individual one (as mentioned earlier). In this, there is connectivity between two people. Such connectivity relates to the desire to achieve intimacy, highlighting feelings attached to *amor* (love), *paixão* (passion), affection or romance. Still relationally, participants have sex to instigate jealousy in the partner (or in someone else), for procreation, and for the development of family ties.

My study demonstrates that, corroborating Spronk's analysis, "despite the popular connotations of the term, 'intimacy' does not always imply feelings of monogamous romantic love" (2006: 6). In Maputo, sexual intimacy is also used to access favours; to gain access to strategic social, economic, or political relationships; to enter a determined social network and to obtain social status, as well as to access professional positions. The example of Ben, 32 year-old, clearly demonstrates this non-romantic sense of sexual intimacy. Ben became involved with a judge who had been allocated to the case of his driving offense; Ben had been unable to find his car insurance documents, and wanted to avoid problems in court. Thus, he embarked on an intimate involvement with the female judge on the case, with the expectation that the judge would not rule against him.

My understanding of the young adult's expressions and experiences of sex does not mean to simplify these, as done by studies about the health implications about such behaviour. This widespread epidemiological literature focusing on African analyses of sexuality has been precipitated by the weight of the HIV pandemic on the

continent. In these texts, sexuality is broadly analysed within the epidemiological paradigm, which reads sexuality as disease and focuses on the need for sexual behaviour to change. However, such an analysis neglects to conduct a holistic examination that takes into consideration the role of (historically dynamic) socio-cultural factors in organising sex and sexuality and the subjectivities in sexual behaviour in contemporary Africa. Such readings tend to look at the African continent as a single unit, and they do so in an essentialist manner, which excludes the identification of diversity and pluralism not only on the continent but also within African countries, communities, groups and classes.

My understanding of the value of sex problematises the essentialised views of African sexuality by exploring the meanings of sex as related, for instance, to affection, eroticism, desire, intimacy, pleasure and sensuality. Far from essentialising sexuality in urban Maputo, I show the contradictions and diversity of the various manners in which sex is lived and expressed. Such dynamics happen over time and within the various relationships and networks in which people become involved. My study, therefore, distances itself from constructions of Africans and African sexualities that depict them as something exotic. As Arnfred points out, African sexuality is often constructed as different from European/Western sexuality and is thus portrayed as deviant (Arnfred 2004: 7). Thus, the analyses of sexuality here refuse pre-conceived ideas of Africans as promiscuous or as oppressors of women. This study engages in a critical perspective that embarks on the re-construction and re-thinking of African sexualities (Arnfred 2004a; Arnfred 2004b), taking into consideration historical and fluid socio-cultural dynamics. Simultaneously, this study reports on "contemporary everyday practices through which Africans manage to recognize and maintain with the world an unprecedented familiarity" (Mbembe 2002: 258).

4.3 Relationships in the landscape of the normalised sexual appetite

I have mentioned previously that, in Maputo, people often have sex to fulfil a wide range of emotional longings and desires, as well as to attain social status and professional advancement. However, this experience of sex is not particular to urban Maputo or even to the African continent; on the contrary, it is just an example of its similarity to the rest of the world. As Attwood states, in the West,

> *"[S]ex today serves a multiplicity of purposes, including pleasure, the establishment and defining of relationships, the communication of messages concerning attitudes and lifestyles, and the provision of a major mechanism for subjection, abuse, and violence" (Attwood 2006: 78).*

If I argued earlier that in Maputo one experiences the normalisation of the sexual appetite, I now emphasise that the widespread manifestations of sex contribute to such normalisation. Attwood uses the term 'sexualised culture' and describes it as:

> *"The contemporary preoccupation with sexual values, practices, and identities; the public shift to more permissive sexual attitudes; the proliferation of sexual texts; the emergence of new forms of sexual experience; the breakdown of rules categories and regulations designed to keep the obscene at bay; our fondness for scandals, controversies and panics around sex" (Attwood 2006: 78-79).*

While a number of the descriptions made by Attwood are relevant, I view sexualized culture as only a part of the normalisation of the sexual appetite. It is worth discussing here my understanding of the normalisation of the sexual appetite. My use of the term does not imply promiscuity. In reality, I distance myself from stereotypical visions of African sexuality (such as expressed, for example, by Caldwell et al 1989). What I aim to demonstrate is that such stereotypes result, indeed, from ethnocentric perspectives highly influenced by Judeo-Christian and Islamic morals that conceptualise sex within marriage with the aim of procreation, and show disdain for other forms of sexual expression. Accordingly, in my view, the normalisation of the sexual appetite means the freed sexual expression of emotions

and the attainment of desire within a conceptual framework of rules that give such sexual multiplicity an order. Reading the normalisation of the sexual appetite as problematic or promiscuous can only happen if one chooses to look at the context in which the process happens from an ethnocentric viewpoint.

It is crucial to understand the historical context that allowed for the negative judgement of sex to become entrenched. Pre-colonial trade with the Arab world and, later, the Portuguese colonial period were crucial in the creation of a sanitised control of sexual desire and expression in Mozambique. As Gune describes:

> *"Arab commerce and Portuguese colonialism introduced chastity*[16] *as a central value that regulates male dominated societies. Although both religious values became widely available, colonial states adopted, promoted and enforced Christian values as state norms. According to Christian values, sex was filthy, a sin that was only tolerated attached to marriage and for procreative purposes" (Gune 2009: 1).*

These impositions were lived together with an original ethos that was accepting of premarital sex or sexual expressions with diverse individuals, for both men and women. Christian and Islamic regulations, then, contradicted previous values. Colonialism, in line with Catholicism (which at that time was the official religion of the Portuguese State), introduced a moral value that made sex the privilege of heterosexual, procreative, monogamous marriages. Sexual experiences beyond such boundaries gained new labels such as 'fornication' and 'sexual excessiveness', in other words, sins to be controlled, prevented, denounced and punished (Junod 1927; Zamparoni 2000). Terms such as 'promiscuity' result from such a context.

I suggest that anthropologists in particular should understand the normalisation of the sexual appetite contextually and within the framework of diversity. The case study of Nancy Scheper-Hughes on "indifference to child death in northeast Brazil due to the fact that children routinely died, and the creation of an average expectable

[16] "Chastity derives from chaste (the Latin word *castus* meaning "pure"), and is associated with abstinence, especially before marriage, or by only having sex with one's marital partner, or remaining chaste, or not expressing sexual feelings" (Waters 2007: 122).

environment of child death accompanied by the normalisation of this state of affairs both at the public and private life" (Scheper-Hughes 1992: 272) is a paradigmatic example of the need to understand and make sense of practices contextually that may otherwise create uneasiness for those who live with different social norms.

Attwood's 'sexualised culture' is a recent phenomenon that has been reflected in Maputo city, through the powers of international and global popular culture and media. Without a doubt, this sexualised culture is personified in the form of the 'striptease culture' (the latest stage in the commodification of sex), including the extension of sexual consumerism, a preoccupation with self-revelation, exposure and public intimacy (McNair in Attwood 2006: 82), all of which have influenced the ways in which young adults perform their socio-sexual and gender roles in Maputo (Butler 1990; Butler 1993).

Contrary to popular belief, the fulfilment of the sexual appetite with persons other than one's steady partner is, however, orderly. The practices that allow for the ordering of such multiple sexual relationships within the context of the normalised sexual appetite include the previously mentioned importance of secrecy and discretion, as well as the careful selection of potential partners, the timing of the sexual relationships, and complicity from selected close friends and relatives. Thus, as with other sexual and/or romantic systems (monogamy, swinging, polyamory[17]), there are rules for regulating its functioning.

The example of Levi is instructive in demonstrating the strategies being used to manage a sexual network in a milieu where the sexual appetite is normalised. Levi is affianced. He has been going out with Carla for about three years and they became engaged in 2008, when Carla was eight months pregnant. They now have a baby boy and Carla is living with her mother while the baby is still little. Carla and Levi are not living together, because Levi lives on the 11th floor of a building, in which the lift has been out of order since he started living there. Both Levi and Carla agreed that it

[17] Polyamory translates into loving many. It is a lifestyle, often abbreviated as 'poly'. It can be used to mean multiple commited live-in relationships, forms of group marriage or as an umbrella word to cover all forms of sex and love and domesticity outside conventional monogamy (Easton and Hardy 2009).

would be very difficult to have the little baby living in the apartment under such conditions, and that is why Carla is living with her mother. The boy is Levi's second child. He has a 4 year-old daughter with another woman. Levi and the mother of the girl have never lived together. They had a very unstable relationship that ended soon after the baby was born.

With Carla, Levi wished to have more children and, differently from the mother of his daughter, to settle down. Sex in his relationship with Carla has thus been oriented towards procreation, while also representing a commemoration of their relationship and their plans. With Carla, Levi has a steady relationship. She is the official partner who is known to his family. She is the one he takes to family ceremonies, friends or family weddings and formal parties, and to any other social event that requires the presence of the (official) partner. They have moved a step ahead by officialising the relationship for both their families with the *lobolo* (engagement) ceremony. Thus, they have moved from a *namoro* relationship (steady relationship) and become *noivos* (fiancé and fiancée). In this kind of relationship, there is some sense of ownership and control, not only of each other's bodies but also of each other's belongings.

For example, Levi would use Carla's car after having an accident with his own. He would be 'the one in charge' of her car – picking her up and dropping her off whenever she needed. Also, Carla would decide when and how events should be organised at Levi's apartment. On a Sunday afternoon, after a football game at the beach, a group of friends planned to buy grilled chicken, fries and beer to take to Levi's house. Carla called Levi to say that the plan should be cancelled because she wanted to go to his apartment to finish some decorating she had started. However, Levi and Carla did not agree on that occasion, and the lunch happened at his place nonetheless. Levi describes Carla as the partner with the perfect profile to have a child with, as "…she is stable, she has a sense of family, which is important for a child" (Levi).

Sex also plays a role as a control mechanism in this (kind of) relationship. It is the expectation of both the man and woman in a stable relationship that their partner will

remain monogamous. However, because there is awareness of the normalisation of the sexual appetite through discourse, such an expectation may not be easily achieved. Therefore, both men and women invest in sexually satisfying their steady partners, hoping that they will feel sexually fulfilled and not physically wanting to engage in other sexual ventures. Discourses like the following are commonly used to solidify such a strategy:

> *"I haven't given 'the one'[18] of the day yet…I have to go, otherwise he will get it somewhere else!" (Rita, 32 years old.)*

> *"I believe people function as in Physics: there are magnetic fields! Within those fields, there is circulation of attraction and retraction of energies. Husbands and boyfriends should suck all of the existing energies so that the magnetic field of the wife or girlfriend would revolve exclusively to him, without breaches. Many husbands and boyfriends do not do this, giving chances to their partners to feel attracted to other men and act on that attraction. I treat my girlfriend in a special way and when it comes to sex, I give her different positions, different spots, I lick all her body, I try to satisfy all her fantasies with no reservations, so that she desires me exclusively." (Zé, 27 years old, university student)*

Moreover, regular tests are performed on the partners to verify whether they have been sexually involved with other people. For example:

> *"I expect my partner to have very thick sperm (yogurt consistency) at his first ejaculation of the day." (Nília, 30 years old)*

Other kinds of control include an inspection of the body in search of marks that may be the result of caresses, kisses or sucking.

However, Levi *does* have other sexual relationships. Even though he is affianced to Carla, Levi has been going out and maintaining a sexual relationship with Zélia for the last 6 months. He says he is in love with her. They publicly display affection and

[18] "The one" in this sentence refers to the sexual act, the giving of the body to concretise sexual intercourse.

romance (hugging and kissing), and Levi takes her to his friends' events, although he does not publicly acknowledge his relationship with her. He introduces Zélia as a friend and never takes her to events and places where Carla and/or her friends might be present. Levi thus takes Zélia to events organized by his friends, as they seem to share a code that allows 'non-official' partners to join their entertainment events. At Ben's birthday barbeque party, for example, Zélia was busy seasoning and grilling the meat. The other women doing that job were relatives of Ben or *namoradas* (steady girlfriends) of Ben's other friends. Ben is a close friend of Levi's. It is thus evident that Levi's close friends are aware of his extra-dyadic relationship with Zélia.

There is an implicit and unspoken rule in Levi's circle of close male friends. It states that friends should not communicate the existence of other partners to the main partner of the friend. This rule applies to all friends in the network. Thus, these young men all participate in events with their main partners but they also have events to which they take their other partners. This code of complicity allows for the management of multiple and simultaneous sexual relationships, as friends can be called upon to nullify the partner's suspicions (i.e. to lie). Again, as in other parts of the globe, this is a recurrent code in friendship groups (Anderson 2010). Nevertheless, the dynamics of the functioning of this complicity are not so clear-cut. I have witnessed situations in which there were arguments amongst friends because most of the group brought their main partners to the event, whilst a few others brought a second or a third partner. The argument was sparked by one of the friends publicly exchanging caresses and intimate gestures with his second partner in front of the other friends' main partners, who knew the official partner of the man in this case. Other friends were concerned that their main partners would start to distrust them and that they too would live under suspicion of their behaviour, since they were in the social presence of someone who was publicly admitting that he had two partners.

What is noteworthy here is the fact that rules of complicity tend to work along gendered networks of friends. However, I heard a few stories of similar logistics of complicity happening in social networks composed of both men and women. Also,

amongst women, I perceived that there is a tendency to hide second or third relationships from their friends, as issues of trust, respect and preserving desired models of femininity are put at stake, as is the concern for a woman's reputation (as associated with the gendered aesthetics of chastity). Thus, discretion in the management of outside relationships is worth mentioning, since these networks of friends are not universal in Maputo, nor is the presence of extra-dyadic sexual relations by both men and women.

The kind of relationship Levi has with Zélia is complex. On the one hand, their connection has many characteristics of a *pitos* relationship. A *pito* is the male designation of a lover (*pita* being the female one). The lover seems to be in a (somehow) continuous relationship in which one or both members in the connection already has/have a steady partner. Other local designations include: *casa dois* (house two), which is a translation from the polygyny term *munti wa umbiri* (meaning second house in Tsonga), and which is used to refer to a woman who is a lover of a married man who, most of the times, financially maintains such a house; *a outra*[19]/*o* (the other, for a female or male), *alfa*, *amiga/o* (friend), *amigo/a colorida* (colourful friend). However, Levi's relationship with Zélia also shows some signs of a steady relationship. They appear in some public venues together and easily show affection by exchanging caresses and kissing. A considerable number of people know about their relationship, which now works as a public secret. However, he has never taken her as a *namorada* (girlfriend). Levi says that he is fascinated by her manners and the seduction game in which they are involved. Sex between Levi and Zélia seems to combine the somatic desire of body, seduction and playing.

At any rate, Levi's sexual network has more elements still. Just a few weeks before I left Maputo to come to London, I invited a group of male informants to have a drink at one of the venues where they regularly meet up after work – Mundo's.[20] Levi

[19] The designation "*a outra*" (the other) became very popular in 2008 with the song "*A outra*" by Angolan kizomba artist Matias Damásio. In the song, the artist describes a fragile portrait of the lover, who is usually condemned.

[20] Mundo's is a South African managed bar and restaurant. It is a very popular venue. When the venue first opened about 15 years ago, Mundo's was extremely 'white', catering specifically to the expatriate community in Maputo and to tourists. The menu was written in English, which was also the spoken language. The prices were considered slightly expensive. In the last few years, however, the bar has been a

arrived a bit late and apologised, explaining that he had to deliver nappies to the house of Carla's mother for his baby boy. At the bar, Levi arrived with Jô. Levi and Jô met in Lisbon (Portugal), where he spent three months, doing a course in a branch of the bank where he works. There, they *curtiram* (had a sexual affair). He had previously described their affair as very hot: *"...sex with her is very spicy* [he said that, squeezing his cheeks as if he was sucking a sweet – which is a naughty way to imitate the pompoir[21] movement]… *She likes sex toys and it was my first interaction with such kind of toys"*. Jô was in Maputo on holidays. Levi introduced Jô to the group as a friend but made sure to stress that she was already 'busy' in order to make it clear to the other men not to try to seduce her. The men in the group exchanged glances and smiled, as they could understand what was going on between Levi and Jô.

Then, with Jô, Levi had a '*curtição'* or '*sacou uma cena'*. The direct translations would be 'to enjoy' and to 'take a scene' respectively. The scene refers to a particular event or to a general social situation. Both terms are equivalent to the term 'one night stand'. Penile-vaginal intercourse may or may not be part of such practices. The term *curtição* is used in other circumstances that refer to enjoyment and having a good time. "*Saca cena* refers to casual sex or kissing with an unknown partner whom one has met at a public venue, with whom there was little other interaction" (Karlyn 2005: 282). Both terms refer to occasional sex or kissing without any emotional commitment.

The designation of *saca-cena* as a one-night stand differs from its use by younger groups. The data from my previous work on sexuality amongst teenagers and youngsters (15-21 years old) in Maputo concurred with Karlyn's conclusions (which focused on youth aged between 16 and 24 years old) that states that a *saca-cena* represents a sporadic encounter, which most of the time would not be repeated with

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popular place for after-work drinks among the black middle class, as well as among other Mozambicans and foreigners. The sports bar appeals to young adults on the days when the main soccer games of the Portuguese league and European league are screened. The pizzas served are well known, and the large tables and benches mean that the venue is popular for children's birthday parties. It is also a spot, where people aspiring to a higher social status want to be seen. Moreover, it has become a venue of choice for both young men and women who are trying to find a well-off partner.

[21] *Pompoir* is the practice of stimulating the man's penis solely through use of the woman's vaginal muscles.

the same partner, as he or she would generally not be from the person's immediate network.

Thus, amongst young adults (25-36 years old) *saca-cena* incorporates a new meaning. On the one hand, it is still regarded as a one-night stand. On the other hand, it takes the form of repeated occasional encounters with varying lengths of time between each encounter, and differing lengths of time in terms of the duration of the relationship, as well. Nília told me about a partner she calls for sex every time she is in need and when there is no other reliable partner available.[22] Ben introduced me, in a bar, to the girl with whom he is finally having sex, after enduring nearly a year of her refusals. He wanted to have a one-night stand with her at a party where they met, but she *gingar* (made herself 'hard to get'). Consequently, he started to 'invest' in her just to '*matar o nhongo*'[23] (kill the envy) of her being so difficult. He finally managed to have sex with her and since then he calls her occasionally, because he claims, "I enjoy reminding myself that I managed to conquer her". She is a much-desired woman amongst different groups of young men due to her curvy body and imposing attitude. Thus, Ben also enjoys the feeling of knowing, and letting some smug young men who desire her know, that he has been having sex with her. This scenario shows a context of steadiness with regard to occasional sexual encounters.

In the case of Levi and Jô, the *curtição* that happened in Lisbon was repeated in Maputo. Their sex was thus about the concretisation of desire, entertainment with sex toys and experimentation with different ways of engaging sexually.

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[22] 'Reliable partner' in this context refers to a steady partner or a discrete young man with whom she can have sex, without him spreading the word. Nília is worried about her social reputation and believes that if she sleeps around with men who will share that information, her reputation will be damaged. Therefore, she would rather go back to this occasional sexual partner, as she enjoys having sex with him, and, because he is married, he too is not interested in admitting to others that they have sexual encounters, as this would also negatively affect his marriage.

[23] The expression *matar nhongo* is a classic example of linguistic hybridism in Maputo, combining the Portuguese verb *matar* (to kill) and the Tsonga noun *nhongo* (envy). Hybrid combinations also happen with a mixture of terms in English, Brazilian Portuguese, Tsonga and Portuguese. Such combinations may follow the logic highlighted or the creation of new word, as with the neologism *Chilar* from the English verb to *Chill*, although the word uses a Portuguese verb termination (ar); *chilar* means to enjoy, to relax, to do a pleasant and relaxing activity.

As I mentioned before, the materialisation of the sexual appetite with partners other than the steady one happens in an ordered manner, even though it does not seem like it on the surface. The various partners of Levi do not socialise simultaneously with him. Both Zélia and Jô know about the existence of Carla and the status she occupies in Levi's social and family life. Even though there is always potential for conflict within this kind of network, Levi has so far managed to control it in a way that does not affect the functioning of his sexual network.

The discourses of young men also show that the strategies used follow an organised pattern, with regard to the selection of lovers, *saca-cenas* (one-night stands) and other occasional and steady partners:

> *"When I say that I want to 'curtir uma cena' (to have a one-night stand or occasional partner), I mean that I want to have a good moment. Our thing (the encounter between him and the non-steady partner) has to be stress-free. I don't do it with immature girls, girls that want a boyfriend or those who I know that cannot keep their mouths shut ... I tell them that I have a girlfriend but after the 'thing', they start pressuring me and creating problems in my main relationship: they want to see me all the time, even in moments reserved for my girlfriend. No, no, no…. these kinds of girls mean trouble and I am not interested in them, I avoid them…." (Levi, 32 years old)*

> *"I am very clear with girls. I always inform them that I have a girlfriend and then I ask if they would still be willing to enjoy a cool moment with me. But I set clear rules: no cell phone messages after hours or contacts with my namorada. That is why cheating for me is not a problem. I know how to manage it. However, some girls are complicated and want to make my life hell… single women in general, but specifically those who are single and over 30 years old, under pressure to find a husband (...), or women who you know to be in love with you (...) I simply don't get involved with them." (Daniel, 27 years old)*

Clearly, from these examples, it becomes evident that single, uncompromised women wanting to pursue a serious relationship are not desired as occasional sexual

partners. Also, friends and acquaintances of the steady partner or young women who have a reputation for spreading the word about who they are sexually involved with are not desired. Thus, desire does not only relate to the physical features or sexual abilities of an individual, nor does it relate only to the intelligence, wealth and property, social class and status of the woman. Instead, desire is highly controlled and rule-bound, even when the primary features that led to attraction are irresistible.

I used the story of Levi to illustrate what takes place in Maputo. From the description of his three sexual relationships happening simultaneously, it can be deduced that the patterns, meanings and duration of these three sexual and/or affective relationships vary. However, on a number of occasions, these relationships take non- normative paths that may imply temporary or definite transformations from one kind of relationship into a different one. Also, the complexities of sexual relationships may mean that a particular connection, during a defined period of time and location, accumulates particular characteristics of many diverse relationships. As Levi's example demonstrates, sexuality has a multiplicity of meanings, with the sexual act carrying diverse meanings for different sexual partners.

Moreover, such meanings are not fixed to a specific partner. They are very fluid and depend on the relationship being developed with the partner, the ways in which a partner is conceptualised throughout the relationship, the social pressures around such relationships, the feelings involved at specific moments of the relationship, and the duration of the relationship, amongst other factors. Because the diverse meanings are not personified or contained in a single individual, it creates a scenario where one individual may be practicing sexual acts with several partners (albeit one at the time) within the same time span, with or without the awareness and acknowledgement of all the other individuals involved in the sexual network.

Indeed, the socio-sexual geography of the city and its infrastructures cater to the satisfaction of one's sexual appetite, with a large number of establishments that charge for the use of rooms by the hour. These venues are hotels and motels; however, they are generally referred to as '*escodidinhos*', which literally mean small hidden places. Such venues are widespread in the city and in its surroundings. Joel,

27 years old, a university student who lives with his female cousin, is a frequent user of *escondidinhos* for sex. “I cannot take different girls home; it is disrespectful to my cousin… that is why I pay for rooms at these places”.

One might ask why, if I am arguing that the normalisation of the sexual appetite is not promiscuity, these places are called ‘*escondidinhos*’. In my reading, the name emerges from the politics of respect (for the steady partner and the social reputation of the couple), which are materialised through concealment. Thus, the diverse members of the network only have access to limited or no information about the functioning of the sexual network. Therefore, *escondidinhos* function as collaborators for secrecy, which is a fundamental agent in the normalisation of the sexual appetite. If a man or a woman meets a sexual partner in a hidden place far from his/her social, professional or family networks, then he/she stands fewer chances of being caught by the partner who is not supposed to know about the existence of such a relationship.

On a deeper layer, these dynamics bring to the fore issues around secrecy, trust and fear. Men and women who carefully hide their affairs with a degree of complicity from their friends highlight the role of secrecy in the management of romantic and sexual relationships: this is a possible way of maintaining sexual networks. Simultaneously, secrecy gives meaning to trust. Steady partners tend to believe in an imagined fidelity from partners. Such imagined fidelity can only be materialized and confirmed by the practice of concealment about extra-dyadic relationships and sexual encounters which in actual terms means that fidelity is then revealed to be a lie, based on ignorance of the truth. Moreover, as the morality in force with regard to steady relationships emphasises monogamy, thus people perform monogamy by being silent and secretive about non-monogamous practices.

However, it is also clear that fear permeates all these scenarios. Steady partners fear discovering their partners’ unfaithfulness; men fear getting second or third partners who are ‘problematic’ (interested in becoming steady partners). Women fear losing their men, thus they feel vulnerable and preoccupied, as they worry about keeping their men faithful to them. Men are also vulnerable, as they fear having to confront

the unfaithfulness of their women, which will publicly question their masculinity and socially question their maturity and management of life in the social strata, where my informants are, based on their age span, expected to create families and to be nurturing. Consequently, both men and women are ready to make considerable compromises in order to maintain their relationships. The management of such vulnerability is expressed in the title of this thesis, viz. Maputo has no marriage material: Sexual relationships in the politics of social affirmation and social stability amongst cosmopolitans in an African city, in the sense that both men and women make compromises in order to be socially accepted and to fit in the hegemonic discourse of Maputo, which states that adult emotional stability can only be achieved within a relationship.

4.4 Caught up in a dilemma: 'Traditional' men – 'Modern' women

As stated earlier, the normalisation of the sexual appetite competes with the values of monogamy, as established in family law (which has been inherited from the colonial order). It has been adopted by post-colonial Mozambique in the process of building a modern and independent state. Thus, the contradiction between the acknowledgement of Maputo as a space in which the sexual appetite is normalised, and the expectation of sexual faithfulness in steady relationships, constitutes an example of the complex and confusing dilemmas experienced by youth. This contradiction is located in the fact that the normalisation of sexual appetite involves lack of faithfulness. However, that does not mean that young adults cannot be sexually faithful in steady relationships.

As previously stated, the sexual appetite is normalised due to a combination of meanings given to sex, intertwined with expectations that an individual should only have a single partner at any one time. However, other factors contribute to the scenario of normalised sexual appetite described. Both men and women have evoked African identities to explain the normalisation of the sexual appetite, which in my reading constituted an interesting twist made by young adults who positively valued

the stereotypical readings of African sexuality. The narratives of both men and women locate men's multiple partners in 'tradition' (polygyny within African-ness). In an opposing manner, women's multiple partners are placed within modernity (women's financial independence and open/public display of their sexuality).

Generally, when I asked why people were involved sexually with various sexual partners at the same time, I received an answer related to identity and tradition – 'we are Africans'.

> *"You know, Sandra, this desire for women runs in our blood… it is difficult to resist a beautiful and charming woman… the downstairs head demands me to consume her". (Ben, 33 years old)*

> *"… even our grandfathers had various wives. This is an African thing." (Daniel, 27 years old)*

'Being African' is thus used to explain, on the one hand, the uncontrollability of sexual urges, mostly from the man's side, when encountering expressions of physical, mental or other categories of desire. On the other hand, this turn to an African identity is used to normalise the practice of men having multiple and simultaneous sexual and/or romantic partners and/or lust partners, based on the history of polygyny in southern Mozambique. In this complex way, then, identity and tradition are intertwined. Young people use a fixed notion of 'being African', which in sexual terms reads men as phallocentric, in constant need to concretise their sexual urges, and therefore in need of multiple female partners.

While the African-ness evoked by these young men may be perceived as a stereotype, a different course is being followed in practice. I argue that young men in Maputo have been part of a process that has transformed negative stereotypes about blackness and African-ness into positive ones. Slavery and colonialism have constructed an image of the African black man as childish, with a lower capacity for reason, fit only for hard work and the possessor of uncontrollable sexual desires. Young men today are using, for instance, the notion of the uncontrollable sexual desire of the black man as an asset and a virtue. Masculinity is very much associated

with virility, therefore the discourse of the uncontrollability of sexual desire by the black African man is perceived as proof of masculinity.

Young adults also make comparisons with non-black males. For instance, some of their discourses verbalise Caucasian men as less sexually potent, with smaller penis sizes and as therefore less sexually appealing. Such kinds of perceptions follow Senghor's line that "Emotion is as black as reason is Hellenic," and slogans such as that taken from the 1992 movie "*White men can't jump"*. These negative stereotypes against the 'other' (white men) help to reinforce positive stereotypes about black African (Mozambican) men. The use of the stereotype about the uncontrollability of sexual desire by the group of young men in Maputo thus helps to legitimise existing social arrangements, which, in Maputo, are associated with a generalised acceptance of such behaviour by diverse social groups, including men's multiple partners. In psychology, this process is called 'system justification' (Jost and Banaji 1994).

However, the pattern of having several partners is perceived by organisations and public health institutions working in the Southern Africa as being the leading cause of HIV transmission in the region. This assumption is based on the theory that the "accumulation of partners throughout time makes Multiple and Concurrent Partnerships one more factor contributing to the rapid spread of the HI virus" (Morris and Kretzschmar 1997: 641), specifically when associated with inconsistent and incorrect use of condoms and low levels of circumcision (SADC 2006). Due to such a perception, most HIV and AIDS activities tackle behavioural changes, promoting faithfulness and reducing the number of sexual partners.

Maintaining one's masculinity in everyday life for a number of my male interlocutors in the context of HIV and AIDS is undertaken by using condoms and HIV tests. The protection of the body against HIV and AIDS and other STIs thus occurs by technical means (viz. the use of condoms and HIV tests). Vulnerability is thus offset by technology and its disciplinary practices, rather than by a reduction of their network of sexual partners. A similar logic is applied to women, as they too become involved with various partners simultaneously.

There is a clear distinction between sex (unemotional and protected with casual partners) and real sex (emotional and unprotected) (Manuel 2005). However, the distinctions between categories of partners often become blurred. The example of Ben who fathered two children in the same year with two different women attests to the level of vulnerability to STIs and HIV and AIDS to which these young adults may be exposed. Interestingly, however, widespread discourses found around negative reactions to condom use, viz. the fact that men claim to dislike it, as it hinders sexual performance and reduces sexual pleasure (Karlyn 2005; Manuel 2005; Simpson 2005), are absent from the discourses of these young adults. On the one hand, this could be, as stated by Groes-Green, because middle class groups favour safe sex in response to better social conditions, career opportunities and 'modern' masculinities (2009) and femininities. On the other hand, the fact that a significant number of young adults work on NGOs that have as their core business HIV and AIDS awareness may have put them in direct contact with the disease, thus leading to safer sexual choices.

Moreover, in those cases where sexual involvement with more than one partner happens without the use of condoms, there is a tendency to request and submit (prior to sex) an HIV test as a kind of guarantee of safety. That was the case with Levi, when, after months of involvement with Zélia, she requested an HIV test from him , before starting to have sex without protection. Linda, in contrast, has firmly maintained a parallel protected sexual relationship with her lover, as she puts it: : "condom use is part of the sexual ritual, and it is as ordinary as wearing a bra".

Indeed, young women engage in sexual activity with more than one partner for many reasons: to express their desire for the irresistibility of some men's physical traits, to state their interest in having a 'taste' of a certain man, due to the wish and/or need to be involved with a particular man to make his girlfriend jealous, or as a form of revenge to her partner, due to a wish to enjoy a man's company, charm, sexual abilities, his goods or the professional doors that he could open. However, the discursive argument that is used to justify women's exploration of their sexual appetite differs from the one used for men: women do it because they are 'modern', whereas men do it because they are 'traditional African men'.

The ideals of the global village, where information from all over the world circulates rapidly and simultaneously, as well as the ideals of women conquering their aims, desires and expressing them publicly are used to explain the fact that women are having multiple and simultaneous partners. Such justifications come from both women and men:

> *"I take at least one year between serious and steady relationships. In that interval, I have non-serious relationships and occasional encounters. In such circumstances, I often have more than one partner at the same time and they are sometimes involved seriously with someone else. I just want to enjoy their company, their charming character, their funny side or the great sex… Since it is difficult to find all of it in the same person and since these are not serious relationships, I allow myself to enjoy… I am independent, I can! I do not care about what people say… this is my life." (Solange, 31 years old. She is a jurist working for an international NGO and pays a mortgage for the apartment where she lives in central Maputo)*

> *"Today there are women who even have boyfriends and still flirt and get into saca-cena relationships… These are the modern times, they are the independent and self-sufficient women. They do whatever they feel like… you can even get to a bar and find a group of women drinking pints of beer… these are the new times!" (Daniel, 27 years old)*

> *"I don't hold myself [back] when I desire a man and he responds positively. When I was going out with my ex, I had this neighbour that moved to my building … oh, he had the most amazing legs! Once he invited me to watch a movie at his place and we had sex. The sexual encounters lasted for a little while but I got tired of him. […] I am now having a sexual relationship with a guy with whom I had a thing in the past … I simply can't resist him! He can surprise me sexually and I love it. My partner does not know about it." (Nília, 30 years old, engaged.)*

Everyday dynamics show that young women in the city are exposed to great opportunities for work, since gender policies in the workplace encourage and prioritise the employment of young women. Statistics from the years 2004-5 focusing on employment showed that, in Maputo city, the level of employment amongst women with a secondary degree or more was 53.8%, while for men in the same group, it was only 43.8% (INE 2005). A considerable number of the positions in international NGOs, national and international companies and institutions, as well as some state and/or public positions, require at least a Bachelor degree. Increasing numbers of women are attending and graduating from universities and other institutions of higher education in the country and abroad. Internally, in 2003, the number of graduates from university was 532 women and 877 men. In 2007, the statistics for higher education institutions in both the public and private sector show 1732 female and 2805 male graduates (MEC 2009) .

A growing number of women are starting their own self-run businesses, either in the formal or informal sector. Such activities are usually small businesses and are the main source of income or a parallel activity to the main job. Activities include running a shop in a mall, having a clothing fashion brand, running a catering and/or decorations company, having a hair dressing salon, amongst others.

These entrepreneurial activities also improve women's social status in the urban milieu. They challenge prevalent gender roles that tend to associate women with domesticity, economic dependence and submissiveness. In contrast, these women have an independent social and economic identity that locally leads to their classification as '*mulheres modernas'* (modern women). These modern women encapsulate financial independence, social freedom (which is noticeable in the public space) and sexual liberty – following a similar life pattern sas that of the characters in the US TV series, *Sex and the City* or *Lipstick Jungle* (available through satellite and cable TV, both of which are common with the middle classes).

However, I argue that what happens is only an apparent change, as it is not a new phenomenon for women to have multiple and simultaneous partners. Even within

women's traditional gender and sexual roles, they would have multiple partners, as suggested by the description by this informant:

> *"It was the night before my cousin's wedding and a group of older women gathered in the room to give her advice. I was there doing my cousin's manicure. One of my aunties said that she should get a 'friend' (referring to a lover), as married life would get boring and the 'friend' would help spice things up. She said that women from her generation did it. However, she had to be discrete, secretive and should not allow the husband or anyone else to know about it. My auntie advised that, in case she was caught with the 'friend', her family would not back her up." (Xiluva, 26 years old)*

What seems to be different for today's modern woman is that they are able to display their various sexual partners more overtly, and that such affairs are more frequent than they used to be. Nonetheless, there is still prejudice about women who engage sexually and romantically with various partners. However, this prejudice is somewhat diminished by the fact that most women in the middle and upper classes who do have several partners have managed to make a life for themselves independently (economically). In a way, these women have managed to become 'like men' and therefore their behaviour is, to some extent, tolerated, even though it is perceived as masculine rather than typically feminine.

This scenario, in which men and women express their sexual appetite through their involvement with several partners, co-exists with values related to monogamy, and is reinforced by contemporary meanings of intimacy, relationship and self-respect. Also, FRELIMO's post-independence Christian-oriented (Arnfred 2002) conceptualisation of the nuclear family has influenced the meanings of relationships for the young adults of Maputo. The juxtaposition of these opposing value-systems creates a complex scenario in which sexual-romantic-intimate relationships are being constantly (re-)negotiated via control, silence, pressure, public demonstrations of love, violence, humiliation, tests, and even blackmail and witchcraft, amongst others.

4.5 Revolutionary monogamy

The young adults in my study constitute the first post-independence generation in the country. After independence, the ideal was to construct a country for Mozambicans, therefore there was the need to create an identity for the New Mozambican – in other words, not the colonised (discriminated and humiliated one) or the traditional one (polygamous, backward, users of sorcery). The *Homem Novo* ('New Man') was the model designed by the liberation movement and the government in power, FRELIMO (Mozambique Liberation Front). This 'New Man' should be guided by science, rationality and collective work (Vieira 1977). The 'New Man' philosophy focused on the Mozambican citizen – both men and women – and dictated that women should be emancipated and able to participate in all activities, while receiving the same benefits as men. The 'New Man' should be free from obscurantist beliefs and engaged in the creation of the nuclear family, which should be constituted via legal monogamous marriage.

In general, members of the FRELIMO Party and relatives belonged to the elite. In urban areas, especially in Maputo, the capital city, where the main social, economic and cultural structures were (and still are) located, the effectiveness of the implementation of the 'New Man' was heavily felt. The youths with whom I worked had been socialised in this environment. School texts and certain children's songs and games reinforced the characteristics of the 'New Man'.

Participants of this research, then, grew up in a context where marriage was encouraged and perceived as the ideal model of partnership and family. Not surprisingly, in general terms, they wished to be married. However, there is a radical contradiction between their expectations and their lived experiences in the social setting. While marriage is idealised as a sacred and monogamous relationship, with the normalisation of the sexual appetite, the practice of having simultaneously two or more similar or different types of affective and/or sexual relationships is widespread. Young adults face moral and emotional difficulties living with this contradiction.

For example, Ismael and Cláudia, both in their 30s, had been a couple since their early 20s. They were affianced and thinking about setting a date for their wedding. However, Cláudia heard rumours that Ismael was going out with a woman she knew to be a friend of a distant friend. She confronted Ismael, by saying that his car had been constantly seen at the parking lot of that woman's building, and that she heard that they were having an affair. Ismael denied the allegations, even though they were true. Again, concealment and even denial of extra-dyadic relations is used as a means of safeguarding the steady relationship. A few months later, Ismael heard from a friend of Cláudia's that she had been to the witchdoctor to resolve their relationship and to separate him from the woman with whom he was having an affair. Ismael confronted Cláudia with this, and she denied it (although it was true). However, they decided to end their relationship, as neither of them trusted the other anymore. Clearly, the incident that forced the end of the relationship was triggered by the fact that Ismael was having an extra-dyadic relationship and that Cláudia was not comfortable with this, as she was hoping for a monogamous relationship.

4.6 Good sex, contemporariness, cosmopolitanism and the search for a steady partner

This section of the chapter presents descriptions of two case studies with the intention of leading to a conclusion, based on the contradictions discussed above. How people live and perceive sex, what it means to them and how they cope with related dilemmas, constitute some of the points that this conclusion will tackle, while simultaneously opening the path for the remaining chapters.

Victor was born into a stable middle-class family in Maputo. Both of his parents and his brothers and sisters were prominent in sports in Maputo and even had places on national teams. He describes his childhood as happy, with regular family trips and gatherings that had, as he puts it, influenced his family-oriented identity. He describes himself as always being a *namoradeiro* (someone who enjoys having girlfriends, however, in his specific use of the term, someone who could have various girlfriends simultaneously). He told me about dating, in his late teens, two girlfriends

at the same time; the two girls played basketball for two rival teams. They both knew he was dating them, and every time their teams played against each other, it would feel like a personal confrontation.

In his twenties, he started going out with a woman he thought he would marry, as their *namoro* (steady girlfriend and boyfriend relationship) lasted for almost a decade. However, the relationship eroded due to constant disagreements. While he was in this long-term relationship, he had an affair with another woman, which lasted, on and off, for a year. He considers this woman a mark in his romantic life, because she clearly made an impact on him; he describes the relationship with her as being constantly enriched with the desire to see each other all the time and feeling constantly happy. After he finished the relationship with his steady *namorada*, they kept seeing each other for almost ten years as lovers, as both were always engaged in steady relationships simultaneously. Throughout his adult life, Victor kept having short-term relationships with women, and from one such relationship, he had a baby girl. He is not with the mother of his child, however, as he has neither feelings for her, nor the desire to settle with her. After my fieldwork, Victor called me to let me know that he had started a relationship with a woman he fancied and that he was ready to propose to her. Recently he sent me the pictures of their wedding.

In Victor's analysis, his romantic and sexual life had equipped him with sexual techniques that he finds vital in today's times, as "a man has to make the woman happy in bed". Being in different relationships has thus allowed him to gain experience and insight into women's likes and dislikes with regard to sex, as he recalls:

> *"When I started having sex, it was all about my urges, my fantasies and my desires. I wanted to ejaculate and be happy. However, as I was growing, I started to realise that some women were not happy, some others even demanded what they wanted in bed. Then, I started to learn".*

To emphasise his points, he tells me how the woman who made such a great impression on him, had taught him about oral sex:

"I always regarded performing oral sex to a woman as filthy thing to do. However, once she sat with and started explaining how much she enjoyed it and how it was not fair for me not to do it on her while she would do me a broche (fellatio)."

He carries on by describing how his feelings for her (which he verbalised as love) had made him consider the position, and how, as a result, he started practising it:

"She would tell me where to lick and how to do it (...) After some practice I was amazed at how much she enjoyed it and how she would really want more sex sessions because of oral sex."

He continues by explaining how, inspired by this woman's reaction, he started to practice *minete* (cunnilingus) with other women with whom he was involved. His description of good sex (that would please most women) included prolonged preliminary sessions that would involve much touching, stroking, licking, kissing and cunnilingus. He stated: "I love seeing the woman swaying out of pleasure even before penetration".

As the description of Victor highlights, for a man, being good in bed is directly linked to the ability to please women sexually. In fact, this approach is shared by most of my informants. Dominant constructions of masculinity encompass a man being good in bed with a man's capacity to obtain and maintain an erection, and the ability to perform various rounds in a single sexual encounter, thus highlighting a sense of hyper-masculinity (Grace, et al. 2006; Osório 1997). This emerging (more) relational perception of being a good male sexual performer adds to these notions the dimension of giving pleasure to the partner as fundamental, and such pleasure is not solely a somatic experience. Again, as highlighted by Victor, there is a need to please the woman emotionally. This emotional pleasing includes the *papo* (literally meaning 'to talk' which refers to the capacity to make the woman feel beautiful and desired – as well as comforted – through the use of flattering words and a caring discourse); seduction (in which eye contact and body language are perceived as important by a number of young men); and intimacy (verbalised as transmitting trust and being close).

Sometimes, admittedly, these actions constitute a mere performance to conquer the woman (mainly if the man is not interested in a steady relationship, but does not want the women to think so). This logic is used many times when flirting with women with whom the man does not have an interest in maintaining a steady relationship. Quite rightly, though, women tend to be suspicious and to respond to this behaviour with distrust and confusion, until they have had an opportunity to evaluate the man's real intentions.

As with other dimensions of social life, for women, sex seems to require a re-evaluation of the self through a re-assessment of morality in today's Maputo. I chose the story of Rita to reflect on women, sex and cosmopolitanism. Rita combines an outspoken and amusing attitude with a kind of beauty that is highly appreciated in the circles in which I interacted during fieldwork. She has a very curvy body and a chocolate- coloured skin that glows with a brilliant suntan. Some men have described her wide, white smile as 'enticing'. She dresses in a seductive manner that highlights her shape in delicate ways. For example, she would wear a pair of jeans with a black one-shoulder top, revealing a shiny beaded orange bra-strap. This sexy subtleness left many men *com água-na-boca* (mouth-watering or salivating) for her. She is clearly a much-desired woman. She is also a mother of two and has been engaged, through the payment of *lobolo*, to the father of her children.[24] She still expects to get married, but her partner has been working in a different province for the last 4 years [so though they are still in a relationship, they have been living apart.. She comes from a working class family. Her mother was a domestic worker and her father a primary school teacher. She has climbed into the middle class through her education and her career as an actress, which allows her to have acting contracts in other Portuguese-speaking countries.

[24] *Lobolo* is the bridewealth, which signifies an actual marriage. However, amongst the middle class and elites in Maputo, individuals refer to it as a step in the process of getting married, thus it is an equivalent to an engagement or is verbalised as a 'traditional marriage'. However, women who have been *lobolada* (which means that the partner and his family have performed the *lobolo* ceremony) still expect to get married in a civil and/or religious ceremony. I will discuss *lobolo* further in the chapter on marriage (see Chapter 6).

Sexually, as she puts it laughingly, she has always been aware of her seductive power and, from her early relationships, she has always emphasised the need to be sexually satisfied: "... my older sister was very open and always talked to me about sex and the need for my sexual satisfaction". She stresses how she always liked to explore new things in sex:

> *"With my second boyfriend, I decided to try anal sex, it was quite painful but later on, I learned about lubricants and other techniques to make an easy penetration and an enjoyable experience... I really like it!"*

However, her emphasis on being pleased, from an early stage in her sexual life, is not widespread in the life-stories of the women I encountered in my fieldwork. In most cases, women would be ambiguous when describing their earlier sexual relationships, in which the shame of feeling pleasure was combined with a need to satisfy the partner. However, these stories seem to accentuate that, as women grow from adolescence to youth and into adulthood, they become more in tune with their sexual self, and are more confident about their sexual performance, which intertwines with receiving and giving pleasure.

Sexual pleasure is verbalised in multiple ways: a somatic experience, which finds its peak with orgasm (which is described as a feeling that *leva-te para o céu* [transports you to the sky], *ficas nas nuvens* [makes you navigate in the clouds] or *chegas a lua* [makes you reach the moon]); it is also associated with love in the sense of engaging sexually with the one you love; and it involves a romantic kind of sex, which happens after a candlelit dinner or a rose petal bubble bath, for instance. Sexual encounters may happen in unexpected places or circumstances, sex may be pre-empted by long and exciting preliminaries, and there may be so-called rude sex, or caring sex with a partner one trusts.

This diversity of sexual pleasure that focus on bodily experiences as well as on psychological and relational experiences, highlights the fact that sex for women is not exclusively a means to conceive a child and or for social reproduction. Sex and feeling (as well as giving) sexual pleasure, in the views of women, is perceived as part of their independent, modern and cosmopolitan identities. To feel sexy and to

make love are valued as being as important as having a career, a family, and a comfortable and vibrant lifestyle.

It is thus clear that, for both men and women in Maputo, being sexually active and enjoying, receiving and giving sexual pleasure is constitutive of their cosmopolitan identities. Even if the sexual pleasure takes on different meanings, there are points of convergence and agreement that are shared across the city. More importantly, the act of giving pleasure is rated highly. Both men and women, I argue, capitalise on these understandings of good sex, and they use their sexual skills and tricks in different sexual encounters and sexual relationships as a way of showing off and convincing potential partners that they are good in bed. This is then used as part of the strategy of pursuing a steady relationship. This quote encapsulates this view:

> *"As long as one does not find Mr. Right, one keeps on fucking Mr. Wrong." (Linda 32, group discussion)*

Young adults in Maputo feel pressure from diverse social sectors to settle down. The generalised social expectation is for people in their mid-twenties and early thirties to get married have children and raise a family. Within the middle and upper classes, such expectations may be delayed into the mid-thirties, keeping in mind the long years one spends in higher education in order to obtain a stable and comfortable professional and waged position in the working environment. Moreover, expectations are gendered, although, in general, both men and women in this age group are expected to settle down.

Thus, the steady partner is perceived as the one with whom the young adult wishes to settle down. Young adults do engage in relationships in the hope of finding such a partner, in a variety of scenarios. Some young adults have been going out with the same partner for months or even a few years, while others are still searching for 'the one'.

Nília has been back from her internship in London for about 10 months. While abroad, she was reunited with her long-term boyfriend that she had during her time at university. However, while still abroad, she heard stories that he was having a

relationship with someone else in Maputo. When she returned to Maputo, she discovered that he had made that other woman pregnant. Still willing to pursue the relationship, she confronted him, and he stated that he still wanted to be with her. However, in one of our conversations, she complained about how he was always making excuses to see the pregnant woman and how he could not just leave her in such a state. Frustrated with such a scenario, Nília finished the *namoro*. In the meantime, she started to have sex with an ex-lover she had, who had just been married. This was a secret affair, although some of their close friends knew about it. Still, Nília was not happy, and she confessed:

> *"You know… I do not want this life! I really want to be in a serious relationship. I am not the lover type, even though sex with Moses is irresistible."*

A few weeks passed. One Saturday, I was having lunch in a restaurant when I bumped into Nília, accompanied by a young man whom she introduced as her boyfriend. In the following year, Nília and that man became engaged and then married.

As Nília's story demonstrates, in many instances, sexual relationships are pursued in the hope of finding a stable relationship and settling down to start a family. In such cases, sex is associated with feelings that are verbalised as *estar apaixonada*/o or *amar* (to be in love). Both the man and the woman thus become involved in a searching process in order to stabilise their lives. Such a process is often sexual. Contrary to teenagers who might become engaged in relationships without necessarily being sexually involved, amongst young adults (and adults) sex in relationships is the norm.

Elsewhere, I argued (Manuel 2005) that, in Maputo, sex in adolescence creates a space that allows one to become separated from kin supervision and control. Thus, sexual activity becomes a token of independence. In adulthood, sex is normalised and integrated as being a trait of adulthood – in the sense of exercising self-control of the body. In addition, sexual activity becomes the *sine qua non* of intimate relationships (which includes both steady and occasional ones). For men, even

though sexuality has not necessarily been a site of moral conflict, it increasingly emerges as such amongst the young adults. Being good in bed is intrinsically liked to satisfying a partner physically but also emotionally. Such features are perceived as necessary in the city dwellers' discourses. There is indeed bewilderment when it comes to interpreting the meanings of such performances in the diverse kinds of relationships. However, the ideal that a cosmopolitan young man in Maputo should please a woman is widespread within my interlocutors.

Moral dilemmas with regard to sexual pleasure that are present among women during adolescence seem to give way to greater confidence in receiving and giving pleasure, which translates into being an adult. Therefore, sex is experienced as something good, fun, bonding, sad, desirable and cosmopolitan for these urban women. It is not confined to procreation. In general, these traits give young adults a sense of belonging to the worldwide definition of being young in the 21st century, which is widely mediated by global mainstream popular (youth) culture.

Thus, if a pleasurable sexual life means being contemporary, being good in bed is emphasised in the search for a stable partner in a context of the competition between normalised sexual appetite and monogamy. Showing off one's sexual expertise, along with other qualities (to be loving or having a profession and life stability, for example) emerges as central in this process.

In this chapter, then, I have looked at the ways in which sex is constructed and lived in Maputo, particluary among the interlocutors of this study. The normalisation of sexual appetite emerges as a defining platform in which young adults build their sexual lives. In the process the opposing notions of traditional men and modern women that, foments the contradictions lived in regards to relationship expectations. Further, amongst the group studied, good sex emerges as one more marker of cosmopolitanism while simultaneously is viewed as a strategy to conquer steady partners. In the next chapter, we will turn our attention to the ways in which status is granted to young adults with a specific focus on the discussion about gendered aesthetics in the definition of diverse masculinities and femininities in order to locate contemporary gendered norms in Maputo.

CHAPTER 5:

STATUS, RELATIONSHIPS AND THE AESTHETICS OF GENDERED PRACTICE

"Gender has become one of the most important analytical categories of the academic enterprise of describing the world and the political business of prescribing solutions" (Oyewumi 2002: 1). The centrality of the concept has guaranteed its universal employment, especially as (American and European) feminist researchers (Beauvoir and Parshley 1988; Chodorow 1978; Ortner 1974) have used gender as the explanatory model to account for women's subordination and oppression worldwide. However, such an approach has ignored the fact that gender is primarily a localized socio-cultural construct (Oyewumi 2002). American and European feminists have shown how, in their contexts, women's personal troubles in the private sphere are in fact public issues constituted by the gender inequality of the social structure.

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed a movement of black feminists (both in the North and South) challenging essentialist readings of womanhood. These feminists investigated how the social location of women was determined by race, ethnicity, class, status and access to privilege (Steady 2005) and how such constructions of social inequality conferred power on some at the expense of others (Essed 1990; Imam, et al. 1997; Mohanty, et al. 1991). Mohanty, following others, also questioned the production of 'Third World Women' as a homogeneous category in Western feminist texts and as subaltern subjects. (Mohanty, 1985 in Steady 2005), and African feminists highlighted fundamental assumptions in their investigations of gender that did not fit the African reality. With regard to the universal subordination of women, Amadiume, in her book *Male daughters and Female husbands* (1987), demonstrates how misleading biological categories can be in studying sex and

gender, since either sex can assume socially viable roles as male or female. Oyewumi (1997) shows how, in Yoruba society, seniority takes precedence over gender; moreover, many Yoruba nouns, such as *oba* or *alafin*, are gender-free. In the view of Oyewumi colonialism imposed the *Western* concept / understanding of the concept of 'woman'.

Moreover, the concept of gender has been rethought with, for example, Herdt's invitation to investigate the 'third sex and third gender'(1994); Butler's refusal of gender as a static description of what one is while re-conceptualising gender as a process rather than a category, with the focus on the 'doing' of gender rather than the 'being' of gender developed as part of performative theory (1993); to the suggestion that gender as a concept should be abandoned and a venture into the homo–hetero partition to understand socio-sexual dynamics (Sedgwick 1991).

The merger of these perspectives on gender has led me to reflect on the analysis of the young adult participants of this study within their specific social context. In the process, gender emerged as just one more category informing social organisation in Maputo. As in the example of Oyewumi, however, gender was not the central category: it shared the stage with social status, for example. However, even recent academic productions in Mozambique have tended to focus on somewhat narrow views of femininity and masculinity as well as gender relations, (re)producing ideas that portray men's hegemony within the patriarchal male domination model (Cruz e Silva, et al. 2007; Osório 1997). In my experience as a local consultant in gender topics in the country, it has become apparent that orthodox patriarchal views (where patriarchy is understood as a social system in which males are the primary authority figures central to social organization, and in which fathers hold authority over women and children) tend to inform national policies and development projects, thus negating diversity and transformation in the relations established between men and women. My fieldwork in Maputo has highlighted a more diverse scenario in the interaction between men and women that would not fit into the tendency of the fixed model, in which there is one a box, into which women would fit, and another box, into which men would fit. It is thus my contention that men and women in Maputo travel within these boxes and, in the process, create new frames that allow for greater

flexibility in the ways in which people define themselves. Thus, focusing on the example of the middle class and cosmopolitan young adults in the capital city, I aim to describe a more nuanced pattern, truly influenced by postcolonial notions of personhood – manhood and womanhood – mediated by discourses of 'modernity' and 'African-ness', similar to the examples of young professionals in Nairobi (Spronk 2006) and young Igbo men and women in Southern Nigeria (Smith 2001).

I aim to describe and explore the ways in which gender identities circulate in fluid ways. As my general interest focuses on the individual's sense of being, I will begin with a discussion of the gendered meaning of social status and how, in Maputo, men and women negotiate their status and therefore their positioning in the family and in society by manipulating a number of subjectivities at their disposal in the landscape of the city. In this discussion, hoping to highlight Oyewùmí's (1997) point that gender is not necessarily the main family and social organising system throughout Africa, I will use the example of Maputo to show how the city combines a system that rests in the nuclear family (colonial inheritance) to give status to women and men, with the more traditional kinship and seniority system.

I will then follow this by presenting examples of diverse masculinities and femininities, arguing that, even though such structuring aesthetics in the city remain valid, amongst the middle class youth, they are in a process of reformulation that is not yet complete. My point is clarified by the nuances showing the integration of perceived male characteristics into femininities and vice-versa, although with specificities that highlight the masculine. The deviations from these categories seem to be socially accepted, at least to a certain degree, among young adults in the middle class, though there is some discomfort, as the scripts are not yet fully finished. Next, I will focus on the internal politics of intimate sexual relationships to highlight the manner in which feelings, desires, negotiations and sexual practices shape masculinities and femininities in the privacy of relationships but also, how then, such private logistics influence one's sense of self and social interaction in the city. In this section, I will also discuss the gendered features desired in the ideal relationship, keeping in consideration the aesthetics of masculinity and femininity. The endeavour of this thesis, subsequently, is to disentangle (neo-)colonial thinking around gender

relations, intimacy and sexuality in Africa (Oinas and Arnfred 2009) and to shed light on non-normative heterosexuality in order to contribute to the telling of the plural stories of the African continent.

5.1 Gender identities and the definition of one's social status

Marlene is one of the married women I interviewed. She has recently married, and she refers to her status as the ideal one for an individual to be in. Later in this chapter, I will give a thorough characterisation of Marlene, when I use her case to exemplify a model of femininity. Marlene's femininity is embedded in a mould in which a male partner is needed in order to grant her social status, as being married or in a steady relationship, having children and exercising motherhood (preferably with a partner who will be exercising fatherhood as well) are central to her sense of being a woman. However, there are other examples in the city that tempt me to advance the theory that, in some cases, a man's social status depends on a woman too. The case of Victor is instructive in this regard. One Thursday evening, Victor invited me to his one-bedroom apartment in central Maputo. While drinking gin and tonic, he started to complain that he, as the eldest (36 years old) of five brothers and sisters, was under pressure to get married. He described how his relatives never included him in discussions regarding family matters, because he had no experience on the subject, as, even though he was the eldest, he had not been married. Victor was thus being excluded from some topics of his relatives' conversations, discussions and decision-making processes, as he is still regarded as a 'boy' – irrespective of his age. He is not yet considered a man, as he has not performed the perceived rite of passage to adulthood – marriage.

Both Marlene and Victor's examples highlight the need for formally recognised romantic and/or sexual heterosexual relationships to placate one's family and gain social status. Nonetheless, still in Maputo, many other links and relations do grant both women and men socially recognised status. Indeed, this model of granting social status through marriage or union is an inheritance of early feminism that, although globalised, is grounded within the Western nuclear family, which consists

of the subordinate wife, the patriarchal husband and their children (Chodorow 1978). There is no place for other adults in this model. Consequently, "it is not surprising that the notion of womanhood that emerges from Euro-American feminism, rooted in the nuclear family, is the concept of wife" (Oyewùmí 2002: 4). Thus, the man – the husband – is the one giving social status to the woman. However, in other contexts, as in the case of many African countries, different family organisations are established. In Yorubaland, for example, seniority and kinship relations (Oyewùmí 2002) play a crucial role in determining gender hierarchy. In urban Maputo, while aspects of the nuclear family have been assimilated, they are socialised simultaneously with the logics of the extended family in which, similarly to the Yoruban case, seniority, one's position in the family tree (for example being the first born), and one's role in the family (having descents or godsons/goddaughters) immediately confer a social status.

Also, the ability to take care of one's parents once one becomes a professional is highly regarded in Maputo and in Mozambique in general. The idea of descendants caring for their parents is the driving force of such high regard. Thus, a man or a woman who becomes a professional, and who starts to earn a salary, is expected to help their parents or other close relatives somehow. Daniel, for instance, covered the medical bills in South Africa when his mother had a sudden stroke. However, the term 'help' does not necessarily cover the full meaning of what is expected from the young adults. There are instances in which the parents may not necessarily need any kind of (financial or material) help. Nonetheless, a surprise gift, as happened when Nília and her brother threw a surprise party when their mother turned 50 years old, is highly regarded. These kinds of actions grant individuals a social status that is equated to adulthood, maturity and responsibility.

Participation in family rituals and taking leading/guiding roles also prompt admiration and respect. For example, Solange prepared and read a speech at a large event commemorating her grandmother's 80th birthday. Ismael called a family meeting to discuss the situation created in his family when his father and his uncle (his father's brother) were not on talking terms. Thus, "kin relationships have some significance in the way people organize and run their everyday lives" (Allan 1979:

1), and practices from young adults that demonstrate their participation and interest in the kinship relations are highly regarded.

Such actions are perceived by family members and by society in general as expressions of maturity. Plus, maturity is associated locally with age and experience – thus a continuation of the gerontocratic model of status in society. When young adults display actions such as the ones described above, irrespective of their gender, they are appreciated and highly valued by the receivers and the spectators of such actions. In conversations, parents, uncles and other relatives from older generations comment positively about the young man or woman's actions. Younger siblings, cousins and other relatives are persuaded by elders to follow the example of the young adult's action in order to show that he/she respects, considers and cares for the family. Also, after such highly perceived actions, the young adult may, for example, be allowed to express an opinion on Sunday – extended family – lunch. These facts highlight the reproduction of the gerontocratic model in Maputo in ways that are not simply associated with age, but incorporate the notions and practices representing responsibility, caring and maturity. Thus, young adults are granted status, not exclusively based on the patriarchal model (Chodorow 1978) but also (in combination with or disregard of it) through the performance of actions expected by those at the top of the gerontocratic structure. The patriarchal system in Maputo is further complicated by the diversity in expressions of femininity and masculinity, which highlight the subjectivities of the gendered aesthetics in place, thus overstepping essentialist readings of gender roles, as I will discuss next.

5.2 An overview of diversity in femininities and masculinities

Based on my research experience in Maputo, I begin from the premise that contemporary theorisations of gender dynamics in urban Maputo must start from the basic hypothesis that, as stated by Aboim, "in the city one witnesses a complex locus of 'mixed' forms of reconstructing oneself as a 'man' and a 'woman' in the light of the rapid changes that have been taking place broadly (…) toward a new gender

order" (2009: 218). Such changes influence individuals in particular ways that differ, based on one's personal trajectories and specific social and economic conditions.

I argue that individuals construct their notions of femininity and masculinity, and that they develop their gendered relationships, in an intertwined embodiment of the concepts, philosophies and experiences that result from the rapid changes occurring in the country as well as the legacy of colonialism and local cosmologies. Thus, postcolonial masculinities and femininities are plural, hybrid and dynamic. As stated by Morrell and Ouzgane (2005), Africa presents different men and diverse masculinities resulting from multiple origins, racial backgrounds, language, power and control.

Still, as part of my argument, I demonstrate that young adults are working on their notions of femininity and masculinity in ways that they better feels represent their own selves. However, in the dialectic interaction with society, both men and women often struggle to view their perspectives recognised in a fashion that grants them social acceptability with regard to the groups with which they aim to engage. In response, young adults recreate or reinforce their identities to restart and/or recuperate and/or conquer the desired social spaces. In this creative cycle, young adults mould existing and new (gender) identities, constructing creative/innovative ways of being (de Certeau 1984) and thus re-configuring the social landscape, in this case, with regard to gender dynamics, femininity and masculinity. Borrowing from the conceptualisation of Honwana and De Boeck (2005), I could argue that the young adults are indeed 'makers and breakers'. However, this concept misses a crucial dynamic that I identified in the interaction of the youth in Maputo's scenario: the power of continuity. While the concept of 'makers and breakers' conveys an idea of bringing up the new and also destroying it (and the old), in my analysis it became evident that young adults in Maputo tend to *incorporate* existing social expectations and rules within their ways of being and socialising, rather than destroying the old. Therefore, their new and creative interactions with a continuity of practices, meanings and logics in complex ways, foments the dilemma that the young adults face in the search for stable relationships in the city.

An interesting aspect that I identified during my research was the manner in which the (re-)construction of both masculinities and femininities emerges from processes, such as contestation, affirmation and/or side-lining from mainstream notions at given times. For example, the reification of 'African-ness' in the (re-)definition of a certain kind of masculinity emerged for some young men as a response and resistance against the 'independent' woman and her correspondent partner – the 'new man' (Messner 1993). At a broader level, I am interested in the politics employed by young adults in Maputo grasp their sense of self and to interact in society. I thus aim to focus on gender dynamics to demonstrate how such processes happen under this particular category.

I will describe and discuss four case studies: two looking at different definitions of masculinity, and another two looking at diverse constructions of femininity. In developing the analysis on postcolonial identities in Africa and elsewhere, many authors scrutinise their ethnographic data under the linear polarization of 'traditional' and 'modern'. Even though it may be tempting to follow this line of argument as, indeed, young adults do refer to what they in their imagination and discourse call 'traditional' and 'modern' to give sense to their own positioning and practices, I do not follow such arguments. Young adults in Maputo understand modernity and tradition in a similar manner as described by Utas with regard to Liberians:

> *"(...) modernity is what comes from overseas and predominantly takes the form of commodities, technology and clothes. Modernity comes in the guise of consumption... Tradition, on the other hand, is what is locally produced, whether it comes in the form of commodities or of ideas. Traditions also occupy a space largely dominated by elders, thus youth, contesting the powers of elders, are prone to seek status in the modernities." (Utas in Sommers 2010: 7-8)*

Thus, the terms 'modernity' and 'tradition' represent emic categories present in daily discourses and common sense (Passador 2009) in Mozambique. However, I refuse to develop an argument based on the binary opposition of tradition and modernity. My refusal is twofold: On the one hand, the concepts embody a fixed and essentialised content that discredits the multiplicity and ever-changing dynamics that reality

presents. On the other hand, analytically, the dichotomies of traditional and modern become useless tools for socio-historic periodisation, as different historical periods and gender orders seem to be entwined in the present, consequently producing mixed identities and practices (Aboim 2009).

In order to elaborate on the nuances presented by the diverse periodic influences in the identities of the young adults, I will now present the profiles of two young men who perform their masculinities in quite diverse manners. The title of each description summarises my analysis of the model of masculinity that each individual displays in society.

5.3 Affectionate husband with lovers

Benjamin is 33 years old. His construction of masculinity merges ideas of polygyny, which characterised the patrilineal south (Arnaldo 2004; Johnston 1983; Junod 1927), with ideas of affection and companionship. Benjamim grew up in a family in which the father had two wives. His father was married in a civil marriage with the first wife and later joined his mother in a union, then formalised by *lobolo* – bridewealth in Southern Mozambique (Authors discussion the topic in Mozambique include: Arnfred 1994; Bagnol 2006; Granjo 2006). The wives lived in separate houses in Maputo city with their own children. Benjamim recalls having a very close relationship with all his brothers and sisters, from the two mothers, as well as with his 'other' mother (his father's first wife).

In his conception of being a man, having more than one partner is central: "Having many women allows a man to feel fulfilled", he declared. The legitimisation of masculinity for Benjamin thus seems to be conceived through the acquisition of diverse sexual partners. This differs from the conceptualisation of polygyny in which a man would marry various wives and cover the expenses of running these families. Indeed, Benjamin is married to Kátia. They married in a civil ceremony three years ago and they have a two-year-old daughter. While we were discussing being

involved in a relationship with someone whom he might consider taking as a second wife, he stated that this was not his objective:

> *"Times have changed! I would not get a second house, a second family. I guess in today's time being a man does not need to be about covering the expenses of the second house, as women work too. Being a man is about being able to perform and conquer diverse women".*

In reality, Benjamin is involved in a relationship with two other women – in addition to his wife. One he calls a lover, as they see each other regularly. This woman has been in on-and-off various relationships with other men, while she was seeing Benjamin. With the third women, Benjamin developed a more sporadic relationship, as they do not see each other very often. He keeps these two unofficial relationships a secret, as he aims to protect his marriage. When I asked him if he thought his wife might be aware of his affairs, he told me categorically 'no', as "I am very careful for not letting her know and I treat her with all consideration!"

He believes that, as a husband, his role is to share a pleasant and happy life with his wife and to be a partner who comforts her by showing affection and sharing marital duties and household chores with his wife. He seems less concerned with imposing authority and appears to be a caring father. Thus, affection and companionship in the relationship come across as primary elements of his notion of masculinity. Romance is also a central definition of his masculinity. I have witnessed events in which he would publicly show affection in the form of hugs and kisses, caressing the face and the hair of his wife as well as reading poetry to her or asking the disc jockey (DJ) in a nightclub to dedicate a specific song to his wife. Such kind of behaviour, associated with the 'new man' (Messner 1993), is not widespread among men in Maputo. Entertainment is also a key part of Benjamin's life and he is very proud to mention: "I take my beautiful wife most of the times when I go out partying, I don't hide her at home like the others!"

5.4 Free spirited and uncompromised

Ben could be described as a '*bon vivant*'. He travels between on and off relationships. While he is in a relationship, he may have many other partners who acquire different categories: they may be one-night stands, lovers or second or third girlfriends. He has two daughters. They are both four years old, though one is three months older than the other, and they are from different mothers. Indeed, he was married to the mother of the first daughter but the marriage only lasted a few months because, as he aid, "the mother of my ex-wife pushed us to get married". Ben and his group of friends have a very active social (night) life. I would mostly meet him during the week at *Mundo's* bar after 5pm, where he would join his friends for drinks. From Thursday on, the weekend would be inaugurated with a night at the *Africa Bar* or *Bar Gil Vicente* where there are live music performances. *Africa Bar* advertises itself as a place for *música e copos* (music and drinks). The rest of the weekend would follow a similar pattern, with the group of men driving from one bar to the next, and going to nightclubs and parties around the city.

An interesting parallel can be established between this kind of masculinity and some models of masculinity found in Britain, in which, as suggested by Attwood (2005), the migration of soft porn out of sex shops and into readily available magazines is symbolic of a form of modern sexuality that emerged in the 1990s: the so-called 'new laddism'. Such representations suggest that it is normal for men to go for nights out with 'the boys', in which excessive consumption of alcohol, forms of competitive homo-sociality and sexual predation go hand in hand. The *malta*[25] of Ben and many other young men from diverse social classes in Maputo city follow a very similar pattern of lifestyle, which is epitomised by Fridays, which are considered to be '*dia dos homens*' (men's day), in the sense that men are free to enjoy themselves by drinking and going out with friends. In many ways, these images of male sexual prowess inform the rituals of consumption and leisure played out in city centres

[25] *Malta* is a collective noun used to designate a group. In this case, others can refer to this group of friends as a *malta,* as they share similar behaviours and tend to socialise together in specific public and private venues. Other terms to designate a group of friends include *gang, grupo,* and *turma*.

every weekend, with an alcohol-fuelled and testosterone pumped male performance (Hubbard 2008).

What is also evident is that the new lad has found his counterpart in the 'ladette' [*mulher moderna/independente* (modern/independent woman) in Maputo], a label connoting women who are 'boisterously assertive', 'sexually aggressive' and drink 'like a man' (Hubbard 2008; Jackson 2006; Skeggs 2005). The ladette here refers to the practices associated to the girls described by Hubbard. The young women in this study are older than this category. The aim of using the term is to extract the fact that, similarly to the young women from the elite and the middle class, the ladette existence is suggestive of shifts in expectations of feminine sexual comportment (Hubbard 2008). The example of Solange (featured below) is one of that in many ways constitutes a challenging femininity for most residents of Maputo.

The masculinities presented here, do not necessarily fall into the four categories offered by Connell (1994) (dominant, complicit, submissive and oppositional or protest) to make sense of the relationships between groups of men. These masculinities do present some characteristics of the different groups of Connell, though I argue, relate to groups of women, as well.

The description of femininities explores, again, two distinctive expressions of identity. I categorise them as house femininity and home femininity. Such categories emerge from the discussions I had with young adults, who would refer to home and house as two diverse environments. In many ways, such a distinction reflected the characteristics highlighted by Solange and Marlene.

5.5 House femininity

In Portuguese, there is a distinction between the words *casa* (house) and *lar* (home). While the first refers to the physical structure of a building used for residential purposes, the latter designates the environment where a family lives, associated with domestic affections. When it comes to femininity, I argue that these terms refer to two poignant ways of exercising femininity (not always clear cut and not always

necessarily a choice). House femininity refers to women who buy houses themselves or with the help of their relatives, who obtain the houses through the professional positions they occupy (which grants them a house as a privilege), who live in such house or apartment alone or with one close relative (in most cases a sibling), or who rent a room in the house. It is worth noting that women in this group are a minority. During my research, it was coincidental that such women had distinctive characteristics: they were either single or in on-and-off (mostly) short-term relationships. In some cases, they were involved in relationships with married men. This pattern in their intimate life is viewed and verbalised by many as resulting from their lack of humility and in their submissiveness in their relationships and/or the prioritisation of their careers and/or studies to the detriment of their affective life and/or the creation of a family. Also, the sexual openness that characterises some of these women (which is regularly linked to their involvement with multiple partners) is perceived as a reason for uncertainty and instability in their sexual and romantic relationships.

The popular discourse in Maputo categorises this group of women as independent and modern. In general, they are women in their late twenties and mid-thirties who have established their professional careers and/or furthered their education to Masters and/or PhD degrees, most of the times, internationally. Some of the women remarked that living alone and not committing to a relationship and/or an institution like marriage was actually their choice, as they would like to delay it, or not have their sexuality and freedom controlled through such institution. Another reason mentioned was the feeling of being unprepared to deal with the hardship and expectations of domestic life, even though, in Maputo, it was generally expected for both men and women in their late 20s and early 30s to be engaged in a long lasting relationship, get married, produce off-spring and raise a family [*lar* (home)]. This data corroborates two other studies undertaken in Mozambique, although those were referring to lower social groups (Aboim 2009; Archambault 2010).

For other women, life circumstances seemed to push them into the ‘house’ category. Professional, highly educated women in their late 20s and 30s, who are well established in their professional careers, and often highly remunerated, have reported

challenges in being involved in long-lasting relationships. Their discourses and the discourses of others (both women and men) revolve around the difficulties most men have in accepting successful and independent women who do not necessarily need a stable partner as a breadwinner[26], as these women are able to fulfil such a role themselves. Indeed, popular discourses frequently mention the inability of independent women to be docile and to allow the man to be the head of the household or, as it is put locally, 'to wear the pants'. The following sentence from Levi summarises the aesthetic model of femininity for a balanced relationship:

> *"I do not mind if she earns well or even more than I do, however, she has to respect me, I need to still feel that I am the man in the house."*

Being the man in the house was verbalised as respecting the man's (as well as couple's) decisions; not having the woman constantly overpowering the man and thus making the man feel small and unimportant; and not having the man subsidised financially or materially by the woman.

In popular discourse, it is often articulated that independent and well-off women go against the above mentioned model of femininity, as they may embody a superiority complex towards men that may make it difficult to establish a long-lasting relationship. Such superiority, I argue, would be characterised by self-possession and self-indulgence, which is read, in Maputo, as not being good characteristics for a partner with whom to establish a relationship, because such a person (whether a woman or a man) is not ready to subordinate his/her desires to the desires of the other.

In most cases, women living alone have a particular routine that is totally controlled by the women themselves, as the locus of the management of the house; in such a case, the house is solely managed by the women (not by the father or other relatives, or in conjunction with a husband/partner). This is what I refer to as 'house' femininity. During fieldwork, the women I met who embodied this kind of

[26] Independent women seem to be refusing to meet the expectations that men in a position of being breadwinners demand (viz. related to the performance of household chores, control over their social life, and sometimes control over their fertility). In the same manner, some men expressed their refusal to engage with such women exactly because they would be reluctant to perform the roles indicated above.

femininity frequently invited me to their homes and gatherings. There we would chat, and be spontaneous by, for example, prolonging a Friday afternoon conversation until late in the night, sometimes until dawn after buying beers or distilled drinks for cocktails and finger foods at one of Maputo's many take-away restaurants. The example of Solange is a typical one.

Solange is a young Mozambican who lives alone in an apartment in central Maputo. She is currently single, and she has taken out a mortgage with the bank, to buy the apartment where she lives[27]. She rents out one of the rooms in her apartment, to a second expatriate woman. At the dinner party, to which she invited me at her apartment, most of her friends and acquaintances that showed up, were single too. Two of the friends were married with children, and two others were in relationships. We all sat on the balcony having fried chicken and fries with wine and beers. Most of the women in the room were smoking, and there was a joint of marijuana passing through the room for those interested.

The popular discourse about independent women (specifically from the middle class) includes smoking, drinking and other practices (such as the sexual freedom to engage with various partners and to be sexually adventurous and innovative, but also alternative dress codes and socialising patterns, power to argue their point and intelligence), thus embodying Hubbard's description of the 'ladette' (2008). Such discourses also imply that independent women can only end up in relationships with white partners. A white partner is perceived in this context as a foreigner (i.e. a non-black African), who is attuned with the philosophies of life of the independent woman – in other words 'the new man' (Messner 1993). Some patriarchal local discourses, which emphasise that a woman's social status can only be given by a man, consider such women *encalhadas* (stuck – in the sense that they did not manage to find a man to engage in a union) and, in a similar vein, refer to them as women

[27] It is worth noting that the practice of single women at her age (33) buying a house in Maputo is still rare: (1) houses are very expensive and are not within the budget or salary of most young adults, even those from the middle class and some elites in Maputo; (2) most of the women buying and/or building houses do so with their partners (in most cases, their husbands – either in civil, religious, traditional unions or in de-facto unions), as it is only the joint finances that allow both parties to cover the expenses of such investment; (3) some young women owning apartments had them paid for partially or totally by their parents and/or lovers, husbands or ex-husbands.

who are going to stay with their aunties (*ficar pra titia*[28]). Such local discourses further associate the future of such women with homosexuality. The rationale is that, because of her failure to conquer a man due to the woman's profile and attitude, she would resort to sexual and romantic relationships with other women. Coincidentally, I did hear rumours that Solange was having an affair with the expatriate woman who was renting a room in her apartment. Solange has also mentioned, in our conversations, that she has had sexual experiences with other women. Her sexual experiences thus underscore Epprecht's argument with regard to the false dichotomy of homosexuality/heterosexuality in Africa (2008), and they emphasise Butler's notion of identities as performative rather than stable and fixed. Solange's femininity and sexual desire indeed appear to be fluid, as she challenges herself to be guided by her desires and not by heteronormative, conventional gender roles or other socio-cultural restrictions.

During the gathering, some of the women's complaints included the manner in which society in general responded to their lifestyle and to the fact that they were single. Nheleti complained that her friends, relatives and others would always comment negatively about her smoking, which made her uncomfortable. From other feedback, too, it seems that independent women face a dilemma: they want to be involved in relationships, but at the same time experience discontentment, as their partners make demands that they do not perceive as fair. Also, sometimes partners have the perception that they, as men, have to dominate, and to change women's views and lifestyles in order to have them as their partners.

It is interesting that a similarly independent way of living exists amongst men. Ismael, for instance, described his friend's use of the apartment where he used to live alone, as a place where one can *chutar a porta* (kick the door) to express the level of freedom his friends had at his house. The fact that his friends could pop in at any time, to bring along other friends and partners without even informing him in

[28] *Ficar pra titia* (literally 'to stay with the auntie', corresponding to the expression 'to be on the shelf') is an expression borrowed from Brazilian Portuguese that is widely used in Maputo, and Mozambique in general, through the Brazilian soap operas that began to be screened on public television in Mozambique in the mid-1980s.

advance, and to make use of the apartment to party, eat or sleep was all encapsulated in the expression *chutar a porta*.

5.6 Home femininity

Marlene married Valdo during my fieldwork. They had been living together and already had a two-year-old daughter. I selected Marlene's story to illustrate a pattern of femininity that I would categorise as 'home-based femininity'. I will start by giving the background of Marlene's relationships to demonstrate how the notion of being in a stable relationship and raising a family takes centre stage in her life.

In her late teens and early twenties, Marlene was in a long-term relationship with Ivo. They grew up together in the centre of Maputo and their families were acquaintances. They frequented the same primary and secondary school, where they started going out together. For the last years of secondary school, Ivo went to live in Manchester with his parents and siblings, as his father got a job position in England. Marlene always regarded Ivo as her partner for life. Distance, in her view, was not an obstacle to their relationship, as they kept in constant contact through the phone and she sometimes visited him, as she had a close uncle living in London. When Ivo returned to Maputo, Marlene was about to depart to New York, as the uncle from London had been relocated to the United States of America (USA), and he invited her to go with them in order to further her studies. She and her parents saw this as a great opportunity. She left for the USA and, as she says, "the plan was that Ivo and I would get married upon my return". She always mentioned how madly in love she was with Ivo. However, on her return, Ivo had become a 'different man', as she explained it. He was no longer so serious with Marlene. She insisted consistently that they were in a relationship, but heard rumours about Ivo being involved with other women. She was heartbroken, and quickly accepted an offer to work in the northern Mozambique province of Nampula for an international NGO: "I just wanted to escape the pain!" she stated.

Shortly after her arrival in Nampula, she met Valdo, a colleague working for the same NGO. They became close friends and, after a few months in Nampula, they started going out together, and she fell pregnant. Valdo belongs to a lower social class than Marlene, which was an issue for most for her friends. Actually, the combination of him being from a different province (Gaza province[29]) and being quite authoritarian (and very much expressing the mentality that the man is the head of the household and that thus all decisions regarding the household should pass through him), has not endeared him to Marlene's circle of friends. Ana, a close friend of Marlene's, during in a barbecue around the pool at her house, referred to Valdo as *grunho* (rude). Most of Marlene's friends could not understand how Marlene could have ended up in a relationship with Valdo. However, Marlene explained that she was ready to engage in a stable relationship and have a family. She continued:

> *"Valdo came at the right time, he was respectful and wanted a serious relationship, (...) that was enough for me! I am tired of these boys that grew up with us but only want to party…. Men from our circles (middle class) are yet very childish; they do not want serious commitment."*

After the birth of Marlene's child, she moved to Maputo, as she had been offered a better job there. She is now working for the US Development Agency, which pays some of the highest salaries in the country and, indeed, she now earns more than her partner does. However, because she believes in the maintenance of the *lar* (home) and the grooming of her family, she takes care of her partner and tries not to overpower him. Indeed, on one occasion before going to group dinner at a restaurant I went to Marlene and Valdo's flat and I saw her giving him money so that later, at dinner, he would be the one opening his wallet to take the money out to pay the restaurant bill. Valdo expressed happiness as though Marlene earns more than him; she respects him and publicly shows that he is the head of the household.

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[29] Many informants regard Gaza province as the epitome of the power of men over women, because all their examples and references to polygyny come from that province. Also, Gaza is the land of the Shangana people – Mashangana – that in the eyes of many informants from Maputo are seen as rude people, prone to conflict, with bad manners, and a lack of urban and cosmopolitan style (with this being associated with the *assimilados* – the natives who have acquired the Portuguese manners). ThusEthnic prejudice is highlighted in instances like this.

Close to the end of my fieldwork, I attended Marlene and Valdo's wedding. It happened at the beginning of Marlene's second pregnancy. Marlene's notion of being a woman at her age (32 years old) is, in her words, associated with "being in a stable relationship – preferably marriage, having children, exercising motherhood and being a professional who contributes to the running of the nuclear family".

These examples of masculinities and femininities reveal considerable diversity in the ways of performing gender identities. As different individuals do not perform gender in the same way, it is problematic to use such categories to ascribe social status to individuals. To add to such discussions, the next section will focus on the internal aspects of sexual relationships that call into question gendered expectations for men and women and the concept of heteronormativity. However, in the future I am interested in exploring how single women can or can't make a home out of a house and vice-versa. The snapshot approach of this study was a limitation to theorize temporal dynamics on femininities and masculinities.

5.7 Gender differences highlighted through internal politics of relationships

In the last month of my fieldwork, one participant, approached me and expressed that he enjoys when his girlfriend caresses and insert her finger in his anus. He was apprehensive about chatting about the topic as he admitted that this sexual practice did give him much pleasure but that he simultaneously felt a sense of disgust, as he felt it made him less of a man, and a sense of losing his dignity and manhood (Middelthon 2002)[30]; therefore, he would not want it to be public. In his words:

> *"I like when she (the girlfriend) inserts her finger in my anus, I feel pleasure, but that disgusts me, as I fear liking a man penetrating me. Also, I do not want anyone to know about it, as people may think that I am less of a man."*

[30] Middelthon (2002) discusses similar anxieties, albeit among young gay men in Norway, with regard to being penetrated anally.

The practice of anal fingering during sex thus creates anxiety, as he sees himself as a man within a heteronormative system, which not only perceives heterosexuality as the norm but also indicates "several intermeshing ideological state apparatuses, which try to ensure that everyone is heterosexual in particular ways" (O'Rourke 2005: 111). Anal fingering does not fit into the cultural heteronormative pattern, which leads to a sense of confusion in the young man's experience of a practice that paradoxically gives him pleasure. Moreover, I would argue that being perceived as 'less of a man' lies at the centre of the informant angst. Masculinity in this context is, in a widespread manner, intersected with the act of penetration. Thus, the penetration of the girlfriend's finger in informant's anus represents, in his view, his feminisation. Such feminisation becomes even more problematic to the informant, as it is accompanied by pleasure. He is concerned that this practice may lower his and other's sense of his masculinity, as he puts it:

> *"I feel confused; I think that my girlfriend may feel that because she does that (inserting her finger in his anus) when we have sex, she may start thinking that she can begin commanding other aspects of the relationship that I usually grasp."*

The internal dynamics of this relationship thus highlight gender differences. By inserting her finger in partner's anus, the girlfriend is perceived by him as masculinised (at that moment) and as effectively possessing characteristics of manhood. Such a realisation, on the one hand, highlights the manner in which the informant perceives his manhood in the relationship in general. On the other hand, the realisation reflects the fluidity of his and his girlfriend's categorisations in terms of gender. Such fluidity is something that does not necessarily make my informant comfortable, as it may threaten other aspects of the relationship, which, by means of his manhood status, he has conquered: space and decision-making capital.

Vanusa, who also engages in a similar practice with her fiancée, explained how being able to perform such a sexual practice has helped her to introduce her notion of femininity to her fiancée.

> *"My fiancée always believed that there are two kinds of women: women to play with and women to be serious with, but I completely disagree. I started doing things that he would not expect me to do – as he perceives me to be a woman to be serious with, the future mother of his children. I believe that as a couple we should explore all our desires and fantasies with each other and as a woman I am complete: a professional in the workplace, a lady in the living room, a chef in the kitchen and a bitch in the bedroom."*

Vanusa recounted how being adventurous in bed and trying new sexual practices has helped her to transmit the message to her fiancée about her notion of womanhood and how a sexual affective relationship could and perhaps should be lived. The double standard for women, as held by Vanusa's fiancée, is indeed widespread. Vanusa's notion of femininity binds the various models of the double standard together, as she states in the last sentence of her discourse.

Again, as in the previous example, the woman performing the act is masculinised. Thus, the examples highlighted above show how the partners believe that masculinised sexual practices of women may be transported to other spheres of the relationship, and that women may adopt attitudes, which are perceived by the partners as masculine. Consequently, who penetrates whom in the context of heterosexual relations highlights gender differences, with shifts and anxieties emerging as a result of such dynamics.

As the cases discussed emphasise, I perceive gender as identification: someone being gendered as female or as male, irrespective of the biological sex, and looking at such identity as a fluid one that is susceptible to change in the diverse interactions that people have with each other and with society as a whole. Thus, I have presented case studies that highlight femininities and masculinities, showing diverse instances and ways in which individuals perform their specific roles. I locate such performativity of gendered identities (Butler 1993; Butler 1999) in the complex processes that lead individuals to negotiate social affirmation and emotional stability in their everyday life.

Here, what can be termed 'queer heterosexual theory' allows us to make sense of these identities, as this broadens the definition of 'queer', so that it is no longer simply a synonym for gay or lesbian. As described below:

> *"Queer" is now considered to be an umbrella term for all non-normative gender expressions and sexualities. While gays, lesbians and the transgendered are still included under the umbrella, queer can also refer, for example, to feminine men, masculine women, people in non-monogamous relationships, and those who perform a wide variety of sexual practices that are considered to be "kinky". Many heterosexuals fit these descriptions, and also feel isolated from the dominant gender and sexuality frameworks in society" (http://feed.belowthebelt.org/2009/12/queer-heterosexuality.html).*

Thus, the concept of 'queer heterosexuality' helps me to understand my male informant's feminine role/side/self-perception, Vanusa's masculine role/side/self-perception, and the unorthodox practice of inserting the finger in a man's anus that I have described above.

Another dynamic emerging from the conceptualisation of this specific sexual practice has to do with territoriality and its role in the 'de-naturalisation' of gendered roles and notions of masculinities and femininities that have been reified and mainstreamed by neo-colonial discourses of gender and sexuality in Africa. The male informant was very clear in his statements that he would only accept being caressed and 'penetrated' by the finger of his girlfriend, as presumably there was a strong bond of trust between them. Based on the words of these informants, it was rare for such kind of practice to occur in the early stages of relationships or with occasional partners.

An interesting similarity is apparent in the discourses of young women who, when discussing sexual practices, would mention that they had engaged or would engage in anal sex only with a stable boyfriend or with their future husband. There is in that kind of discourse a resurgence of the notion of virginity. Defloration of the anus is compared to the rupture of the hymen, and wished to be experienced with someone with whom one shares a profound emotional/sexual connection. One could read this

description of the young women as a return to the double standard between men and women, in which women's virginity is glorified. However, the interesting point is, in my opinion, the fact that young men are using an analogous logic with regard to the 'concession' they make when allowing their anus to be penetrated by the fingers of women. The men are very strict with regard to what kind of women can practice such an act with them. As can be observed in the male informant case, only the steady partner or a woman with whom the man has established a close and intimate connection – verbalised as love, passion, a special connection/relation – is the one with whom men also 'lose' the 'virginity of their anuses'.

Additionally, the politics and management of emotions within the relationship also bring to light gender differences. In the colloquial Portuguese that is spoken in Mozambique, the term *'ser moleza de'*, which in literal translation means 'to be the weakness of', implies that the person being called *moleza of X* cannot resist *X*. The condition of becoming *moleza* highlights how the internal politics of the relationship, amongst other things, reflect gender differences. In the local context, one is perceived to be *moleza* of someone when that person has strong emotional feelings towards another. Love and passion are the two most used words to describe the emotional characteristics that make one a *moleza* of someone else. However, increasingly, the term *moleza* is employed to describe other kinds of dependency. It is common for people to mention physical and sexual attraction as a form of being a *moleza* of someone. Also, a difference in social status may 'imprison' the one in the lower status (who is interested in maintaining the relationship and thus to rise in the social ladder) as being considered a *moleza* of his/her partner. However, in this analysis, I will focus on the use of the term *moleza* in relation to emotional 'dependency', as I am interested in understanding the role of emotions in the discussion of gender and sexuality in the theorisation of African realities.

In general, being in love is regarded as a positive characteristic. However, there is the generalised belief that, in most relationships, one loves more than the other, and that one desires/wants more than the other does. Therefore, one is more willing to invest in the relationship, to be more generous and understanding towards the other. I have heard many times women affirming that, while it is wonderful to be in love,

that position is desired for a *namoro* relationship and not for a marriage or a union relationship, in which partners live together and raise a family. The logic behind such statement is that, once in love, one becomes unable to think and act beyond the intense feelings: the good things are extremely good, and the bad ones are simply destructive. Thus, the extreme love that one devotes to the partner is not necessarily perceived as positive, since the partner may start taking advantage of it and disrespecting the one loving more. In general, such a state of emotions is feminised and therefore attached to feminine characteristics.

Nevertheless, both men and women do find themselves as *moleza* of someone else. Ismael had recently started a relationship with Vera. He dropped his previous partner to stay with Vera, as he said: "I could not let this opportunity go, I have always been in love with her, and she did not even know it". However, a few months into the relationship, Ismael's friends broke the news that there was a rumour that Vera had travelled to meet her ex-boyfriend. Ismael replied that he knew about the incident but had forgiven Vera, as he really was in love with her and she had promised that similar episodes would not be repeated. The friends were flabbergasted at his response, as they could not believe that he would accept such behaviour from his partner. However, Ismael replied that he really saw in Vera the woman with whom he could spend the rest of his life. As he described to me:

> *"She is an equal partner (...) you know in my previous relationships, my decisions were always the last and final ones. Differently, with Vera, we build a decision together and I really like her points. She will be a great mother for my children (...) and she has created an impact in my life. I am a disciplined man now that I am with her, she helps me organize and build things for the future… I really needed a woman like her."*

And when I asked him about her involvement with her ex-boyfriend, he replied,

> *"That is part of life… she is only human! How many times have I cheated? I guess I'll have to live with it and really hope that it does not happen again!"*

Nevertheless, Ismael's friends were not happy about his continued relationship with Vera. They complained that Vera was forcing Ismael to change by preventing him

from spending time with them. In the eyes of the friends, Vera was manipulating Ismael. The friends stated that, "she knows that he desperately loves her; that is the reason why she abuses him". In the friends' eyes, this constitutes a typical case of *moleza*: Ismael being a *moleza* of Vera. Thus, who loves more within a relationship highlights gender identities that may not necessarily fit within the expected 'naturalised' conceptions of gender roles and the functioning of gender dynamics.

Moleza is also an undesirable partner in a relationship, as it is perceived as someone who has lost all capacity for self-governance in his/her eagerness to please the other person. Thus, an ideal relationship appears to rest in a balance between self-possession and *moleza.*

5.8 The reproduction of gendered class positions in the public-private debate

Some examples in this chapter have highlighted the pressures that young women experience due to men's double standard when classifying women, for instance, the fact that women who fall into the category of "house femininity" are expected to be silent in public regarding their sexual choices (having multiple partners; having alternative sexual practices or marriage arrangements that I describe later). These constrains faced by young women may relate to and echo the concerns of Euro-American feminists about the role of women in the public sphere and the making of gendered ideas of citizenship.

The feminist challenge to the public-private dichotomy was rooted, on the one hand, in the conceptualization of issues that normally affect women, viz. reproduction, nurture and care for the young, the sick, and the elderly as a-political and as thus belonging to the private sphere (Benhabib 1992). On the other hand, the aim was to provide an alternative to the dichotomous public-private split with the purpose of rectifying the perpetuation of the devaluation of activity in the private realm (Prokhovnik 1998) and to guarantee that the public sphere was open to any discussion that might affect the population, thus voiding "what can" and "what

cannot" be discussed (Benhabib 1992). Nancy Fraser (1990) was influential in this regard, as by employing Habbermas' concept of the public sphere, she was able to demonstrate how it represented hegemonic dominance and exclusion, since it was male dominated and pushed aside women and the lower social strata. Thus, the public sphere was not the arena in which interlocutors would set aside such characteristics as difference in birth and fortune and speak to one another *as if* they were social and economic peers. Finally, Fraser states that the problematic definition of common concern to emphasize the inexistence of naturally given, *a priori* boundaries between matters that are generally conceived as private, and ones we typically label as public For example, she refers to the historic shift in the general conception of domestic violence, from previously being a matter of primarily private concern, to now being accepted as a common one (Fraser 1990).

These authors discuss how the liberalization of the private realm does not equate with an equal liberation in the public. In their analysis, for instance, they problematize how women's silence and subordination in the public realm goes beyond women's empowerment and economic independence at home. Indeed, this positioning of women resonates with Marlene's example, when she, at home, hands money to her partner, so that he will be able to pay for the bill at the restaurant (public sphere).

Solange's liberal sexual life is also something that she does not mention in public. People do see that she has an intensive nightlife and that she tends to have a large array of male friends that, through gossip, are perceived as men with whom she sleeps. She is aware that men regard her as someone who is not 'right' for a steady relationship. In this way, she embodies the profile of the single town's woman that, in colonial Africa, was equated with a prostitute (Akyeampong 2000; Allman 1996).

But should I interpret that kind of behaviour within the logic of the public and private sphere, which pushes women into roles of subordination? My question emerges as the moral social judgment of Solange does not seem to be necessarily anchored in the fact that she is a woman, but rather in the fact that, in Maputo, displaying multiple sexual partners and having an intensive party life and consuming

alcohol are rated negatively in the moral sphere. Ben as a *bon-vivant* also engages sexually with many partners and has an intense nightlife. His behaviour is equally judged as negative and, indeed, his family has held a number of meetings with him in an attempt to make him change such pattern of life.

The noticeable difference is that, while Solange and Ben share similar sexual and entertainment lifestyles, a number of girls have expressed interest in having a serious and steady relationship with Ben, but few local men have approached Solange to engage in a steady relationship: only foreign (white) men have done so. This distinction informs the double standard that is in place with regard to the sexuality of women versus men. The different reactions to Solange and Ben's behaviour seem to indicate a gendered sexual (and relationship) morality.

The example of Ismael as a *moleza* also invites one to think about the private and public divide and its consequences. Ismael would rather not publically admit that he was cheated by his girlfriend, and thus carried on with the relationship. Nonetheless, that information moved from the private realm to the public realm.

These examples emphasize how structural transformations in the country are pushing for a change in the social and sexual morality in the country as a whole, but in this specific case, in Maputo city. The emergence of the Offices against Domestic Violence in the early 2000s has been making couple rethink the use of violence in their relationships, as they might end up going to jail. The TV program *Homem que é Homem* that emerged under the HIV and AIDS prevention strategy, with the aim of changing men's behaviour, has been introducing and valuing men's domestic roles, fidelity, compassion, respect and forgiveness, thus having an impact on hegemonic notions of masculinity (Groes-Green 2009). These are some examples that highlight the definition and re-definition of notions of being men, women, having pleasure, and showing love, amongst others. Men can adopt traces perceived as feminine – keep their anus' virginity, or lose their anus' virginity to a very special lover. Women can acquire masculine profiles – for instance, by penetrating the man's anus with their fingers.

Thus, as the ethnographic examples above highlight, the concepts of masculine and feminine are being redefined. The scripts of such new roles have not yet been finalized, though, which causes anxiety and unclear principles to deal with them, as there are no road maps explaining how to behave. Individuals can thus move between the masculine and the feminine according to diverse interpretations. Some of such movement happens without them, to some extent, being shunned. However, other specific circumstances may lead to discrimination and stigmatization, as described in this chapter. The concepts of masculine and feminine as powerful aesthetic principles inform people's performance of themselves as gendered. And, as elsewhere, for example in Indonesia, as described by Oetomo (2000), though people find both processes somewhat troubling, the masculinisation of women is more readily accepted than is the feminisation of men (Holland, et al. 1998).

The masculine ideal presents an abiding power, which remains a strong organising figure, even in this changing terrain. As the examples above demonstrate, women can be too masculine (e.g. Solange), while men may be not masculine enough or too masculine (too authoritarian, too irresponsible – as in Ben's case), with both extremes reflecting the idea of the man as sovereign, ruled by none but himself. When it comes to relationships, this authoritarian and simultaneously irresponsible model is not desired, as it presents a person who is too self-possessed and self-indulgent and consequently, is not a good partner, because s/he will not subordinate his/her desires and needs to the desires and needs of the partner.

The sought-after model of relationships seems to be a balanced self-possession, which means that what one gives to the other, is actually a gift – freely given by an autonomous partner as an act of love. This model follows a gendered script, however, in which there is the expectation that women will not overpower men. Thus, as Marlene did, for instance, by giving her husband the money to allow him to be 'the man' in public fits into the desirable aesthetic of femininity. Moreover, Marlene's attitude constitutes the desirable model of a partner in a relationship, as it demonstrates generosity of spirit. The other extreme of the undesirable partner is the *moleza* because the person is seen as not being able to say 'no'.

The gender and status dynamics discussed in this chapter indeed will inform many other dimensions of social life. In the next chapter, I will discuss − in a more ethnographic manner − the diverse kinds of social relations that young adults establish with a focus on marriage as it emerged as a goal that most interlocutors in this study aimed at concretising.

CHAPTER 6:

MARRIAGE

6.1 The web of intimate relations

In the social landscape of Maputo city, as we have seen in the previous chapters, young adults establish diverse kinds of relationships. An overview of the diversity of such relations is essential to determine the broad scope of interactions that are established among individuals and groups. Simultaneously, the exposure of the different kinds of relations will help one to differentiate among the ties binding people together, as well as to differentiate among the emotions and affections that arise in sexual and non-sexual relationships.

In this chapter, I give a long ethnographic description of the different kinds of relationships encountered in my fieldwork, in order to guide the reader through the social landscape of Maputo city and simultaneously to highlight emotions and affectivity in sexual and non-sexual relationships. Similarities and disconnections can be traced from this in-depth thick description. Hence, here, the ethnographic description of intimacy focuses on kin relationships and marriage.

In family relations, and as descendants, the young adults mostly establish relations with their parents based on respect. In most cases, both young men and women use the third person (*voce*[31]) when speaking with their fathers, thus employing a formal discourse. With their mothers, they would be more informal, using the second person form (*tu*). This differentiation may be a result of the manner in which most young

[31] *'Voce'* refers to the third grammatical person in Portuguese and indicates a formal and less intimate form of discourse. While, in English, 'you' would be used for both formal and informal discourse, in Portuguese, there is the distinction between *tu* – which represents the informal mode of treatment and *voce* – the formal mode of address.

people from this generation were brought up. The quasi-Victorian model of raising children, in which children, as both toddlers and adolescents, are traditionally closer to the mother and more distant from their father, was reported by a significant number of both the men and women who participated in this study. However, it is worth noting that, when the young acquire professional status and/or get married, and/or conceive children (which are some of the markers of adulthood), their relationship with the parents tends to change. It seems as if the youth then establish a more equal status to their parents that, in a number of cases, is reflected by a change in how they speak to their fathers: the second grammatical person is then used in conversations between sons/daughters and their fathers.

Young adults still living with their parents or other close relatives from the parent's generation or older do participate in the household routines by being present at mealtimes (whenever possible, as work schedules and entertainment routines may not allow them to do so), not arriving home after agreed evening hours during the week, and not bringing (different) partners home for sexual and intimate activities. In effect, the older generation is conducting a sometimes subtle, sometimes overt form of surveillance, which is perceived by young adults as indicative of them not being fully adults yet. These practices are referred to as 'maintaining respect' for their parents and families. However, this is only an ideal, and it is not necessarily so in practice, as the young may challenge these parental restrictions. For example, Nília complained about how she was constantly arguing with her mother, with whom she lived. The reason for the arguments was the fact that she was frequently arriving home after midnight on weekdays, as she usually stayed at her partner's apartment to *namorar*. However, because both of them were professionals, they could only see each other from 6pm onwards. Thus, she would stay with him until around midnight, during which time they would cook, watch a movie or a TV program, make love and sleep together for a while, before she woke up to go home. Her mother was not happy with Nília's routine, but simultaneously did not approve of the couple living together before getting married either. Nília, in contrast, did not want to consider renting an apartment to live alone, as she felt this would be a 'waste of money', which could be invested more productively in the couple's married life. Thus, in

order to avoid the unpleasantness of her current lifestyle and reduce her arguments with her mother, Nília tried to convince her partner to marry her as soon as possible.

The young adults who live on their own or with partners, or who are married, also tend to retain a relationship with their parents. They would visit their parents, sometimes regularly, and from time to time, their parents would visit them too. For example, Xiluva, who lives on her own, visits her parents at least three times a week and shares one main meal with them. In other cases, the visits are less regular, though they happen on specific occasions, for instance: Sunday lunch; when the young adults and the parents have issues to discuss and resolve; family gatherings in the house of a family member to which other siblings and their spouses/partners and uncles, and/or other relatives and friends are invited. Other celebrations, such as baptisms, weddings and graduation ceremonies; birthday and anniversary parties; funerals and masses in celebration of a deceased relative, also require the whole family's presence.

The parents of Levi and Ismael live in Nampula and Sofala provinces, respectively. Thus, they do not have such a close contact with them. Once or twice a year, they travel to visit their parents and other relatives in their provinces of origin, and they try to make this trip coincide with the festive season to join the relatives for the celebration of 'Dia da Família[32]'. In Ismael's case, the parents visit Maputo regularly due to their job demands and, when they do so, they stay at his apartment.

Women greet both men and women, whether family relations or friends, by giving each other a kiss on each cheek, while men shake hands (and may hug) other men, but kiss the women on both cheeks. In the professional environment, the greetings tend to follow the handshake rule for both men and women, although, depending on the level of familiarity and socio-cultural logic[33], the greetings could include kisses on the cheek for women.

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[32] December 25th is '*Dia da Família'* (Family Day); after independence, when FRELIMO changed Mozambique into a non-secular state the Christian holiday of Christmas Day became simply Family Day.

[33] In Maputo, one finds a variety of nationalities in the professional sphere. Thus, cultural manners of greeting vary and, in general, one finds that shaking hands is the most commonly accepted form of greeting.

The parents refer to their young adult sons and daughters by their names and/or nicknames. The nicknames tend to be diminutives of the names, such as Lindinha for Linda or Zé/Zezinho for José. In some instances, the nicknames may indicate the fact that the person has inherited the name of a grandmother or the father, as in the case of Vovozinha (short for '*avó*' which means grandmother in Portuguese) or Paizinho (short for '*pai*' which means father). Sometimes, it is a transformation of the name, as in the case of Isabel whose nickname was Belinha; when she was a toddler, her younger sister could not pronounce the name Belinha, and instead would call her Yaya. Everyone in her family and still today adopted this last transformation; she is called 'Yaya' by relatives, primary school mates and neighbours from her childhood.

In return, young adults call their parents *mãe* (mother) and *pai* (father). However, shorter versions, such as *mamã*, *mãezinha*, or *mom* (for mother) and *papá*, *paizinho*, *paizão* or *papi* (for father) are also widespread. In other cases, the youth use shorter versions of the parents' names. Less common is the use of the actual name to refer to the parents, as this would be classified as being distant. Touch is not as prevalent in the relationships between the young adults and their parents, as it is in the relationships between these young adults and their offspring. Young adults kiss the cheeks of their mothers, shake hands with their fathers, and hug them on sad occasions as in funerals, or on happy ones, such as the birth of a grandchild. Mothers may touch and hold the hands, hug and caress the face and shoulders of both daughters and sons when comforting them. Chiefly, fathers would console by articulating 'wise' words, rather than using touch. As this description highlights, one can find a gendered division of acts of affection between generations.

Amongst young adults, sibling-touch is something that varies. I observed two tendencies. Siblings who are close to each other often hug, kiss cheeks and comfort each other with some kind of touching. Solange, for example, would lie down in the lap of her sister while watching a movie on the TV, and the sister would play with her dread-locks. These sisters once entered one of the discos in Maputo hugging each other, while chatting and laughing. The second tendency relates to siblings who are not very close to each other physically. They would shake hands and kiss each

other's cheeks in greeting, but not necessarily display physical affection on everyday occasions. Combinations of these tendencies are applicable too. Again, intimacy is gendered here, and highly influenced by a hybrid ethos that mixes notions of hyper-masculinity, the new (caring) man (Messner 1993) and the metrosexual man (Anderson 2008).

It is common to see siblings being very close physically (hugging, kissing each other's cheeks or forehead, holding each other, resting on each other's shoulder, etc.); however, these are mostly poses for pictures. Nowadays the power of mediascapes (Appadurai 1990) with, for example, the widespread use of internet social networks, has created a space in which individuals display and share their life – thoughts, images, ideas, professional affiliations, – with their online friends and ultimately with the world. While *Hi5*, *the middle classes in Mozambique use MySpace and Twitter*, *Facebook* seems to have conquered a mainstream position, as the conversations amongst the youth, somehow, rotate around this social network site. In people's profiles and photo albums, extensive use is made of pictures of relatives and friends. There, the poses reveal – amongst other things – closeness, fun, happiness, leisure and entertainment. In the cases of siblings that I investigated, closeness and touch were very much present in the pictures, but not necessarily in the live interaction that I witnessed. However, looking good in the pictures and creating the impression of having a good time is vital, as the aesthetics of social life in Maputo are more and more associated with *looking* good, which translates into living well.

Appearance is linked to how the bodies are kept (clean, in shape and elegant[34]); what the individual has (a job, a house, a car, a family) and what the mood of the individual is (happy, smiling and stylish). These discourses and lifestyles continue to be informed by the Portuguese colonial ethos (Archambault 2010) of frivolous consumption, as well as contemporary popular culture rooted in capitalist consumerism (Frank 1998) and the idea of the '15 minutes of fame' now available to

[34] Being fat has also been associated with living well, in the sense that it meant an individual had access to plenty of food. During the post-independence crisis, which lasted until the mid-1990s, food scarcity was common. However, in some groups, being fat has a negative connotation, as it implies that the person is *nouveau riche*, and not able to manage and adjust to abundance.

the middle class via social network sites like *Facebook*. Therefore, posing for pictures (that later will be uploaded onto social network sites and available for the all world to see) is a conscious act made to show that one is living well, *curtindo a vida*, which is a sentence that encapsulates the youth's lifestyle. Similarly to Archambault's informants, participants in this study highlighted *curtir a vida* as meaning 'to enjoy' in the sense of experiencing something or someone, as the case may be, to the fullest (Archambault, 2010: 216).

In their role as parents, most of the young adults interact physically with their children to a large degree. All informants who were already parents had toddlers. Thus, the closeness that parents develop in their interactions with their children was evident particularly as their offspring were still small. Both young fathers and mothers hug and kiss their children constantly. For example, a prize for a game between a parent and a child can be a kiss, demonstrating the levels of intimacy amongst them. Most offspring children develop a very intimate relation with their baby sitters as most live permanently with the families.

6.2 Namoro's intimacy: Rules and stepping stones to marriage

In conversations with both young adults and the older generation, *namoro* came across as a preparation stage of marriage where the couple develop closeness. The discourses of *namoro,* which are similar to the descriptions of (Rebhun 2002) in Northeast Brazil, consider *namoro* the period of "preparation for marriage in which the partners deepen their mutual knowledge" (Calado, et al. 1986: 16). This was also the case in Mead's description of the life of a girl in Samoa: when she reaches adolescence, she engages in different kinds of sexual relationships. One of these forms is a courtship that is very similar to *namoro*. In such a relationship, the acceptance of a suitor's gift by a girl's family is recognised as acceptance of the relationship (Mead 1973: 81).

Indeed, amongst young adults, there is the expectation that long-term *namoro* relationships will end in marriage. *Namoro* is a kind of steady relationship, in which

the couple develops a public close romantic and sexual relationship and it is usually long lasting. The couple also develops a relationship with each other's families. Young women, for instance, enter the houses of the *namorados* and meet their family; less frequently (especially if it is still at the beginning of the relationship), the young men visit the close relatives (parents) of their *namoradas*. This aspect might be linked to the fact that, in southern Mozambique, marriage is virilocal, and therefore the introduction to and closeness of the young woman with the young man's family is a symbol of the seriousness of their relationship. This is further underscored by the fact that the young man's family has the right to reprimand him, if they see him with another young woman. However, there were anecdotal stories of women who were so desperate to find a husband that they would introduce their partners to their families, immediately after the beginning of the relationship.

The relationships between the *namorada* and the *namorado's* family vary greatly, depending on several subjective issues that construct such relationships. For example: the character of the individuals; whether the parents are still close to the previous *namorada*; what the *namorado* allows the *namorada* to do in his house or whether the *namorada* lives with her parents or on her own (or shares a flat with friends) – all of these constitute central factors that shape these affairs. For example, Nília started going to out with her partner and, about six months later, he invited her to have dinner with his parents and siblings to introduce her as his *namorada* to the family. Even with such introduction, Nília expressed some discomfort in her relationship with his mother, as she felt that his mother still preferred the previous *namorada* of his son with whom he had a baby boy.

Depending on the duration or intensity of the relationship, as well as the personalities of the parties involved, the young woman might establish a very close bond with her boyfriend's family. In some cases, such bonds may endure even after the relationship has ended. However, the bond between the girl and her ex-boyfriend's parents does not necessarily last long after the break-up, primarily because she no longer pays frequent visits to the *namorado's* home and secondly because the new *namorada* usually does not accept the presence of the ex-partner. However, it is worth noting that, in some cases, the couple, even after ending their *namoro* relationship, do keep

seeing each other secretly. These cases were pointed out to me as being '*histórias mal acabadas*' (unfinished stories), in which both man and woman still feel attracted to each other.

The characteristics of *namoro* fit perfectly into the definition of a close relationship, as offered by Kelly et al:

> *"A high degree of interdependence between two people is revealed in four properties of their interconnected activities: (1) the individuals have frequent impact on each other; (2) the degree of occurrence per each impact is strong; (3) the impact involves diverse kinds of activities for each person; and (4) all of these characteristics characterize the interconnected activity series for a relatively long duration of time". (Kelly et al inMcKinney and Sprecher 1991: 2)*

Hence, in *namoro*, as the passage suggests, individuals frequently have an impact on each other by means of their values and opinions, thereby influencing the other's behaviour in the relationship. Generally, in *namoro,* there is a strong sense of sharing resources. However, such sharing depends on a number of factors: the gendered expectations of courtship, the personalities of the individuals and the class/financial situation. In the local aesthetics of gender, there is the expectation that men will cover most courtship expenses. However, in recent years, there have been changes in such expectations, as most women are also wage earners (and sometimes even earn higher salaries than men do). Interestingly, this may trigger an unexpected response among women, who may take precautions against being *chuladas* (being taken advantage of). Thus, both men and women in stable social and financial positions will strive to select partners that would fit their class and financial status. Paradoxically, coupling with socially and financially well-positioned men and women is the primary form of social mobility.

Popular discourses place sex in *namoro* relationships as intertwined with several other aspects of the relationship, such as love and emotions. This, associated with the seriousness of the *namoro,* means that the relationship is positively valued in a moral sense. Many mentioned that this fact allowed them to differentiate *namoro* from

other kinds of relationships, such as the occasional partner or *pita/o*, lovers or one-night stands. However, the situation is complex, as individuals seem to be assuming the existence of clear-cut emotions in each kind of relationship. What my data suggests, and what I discussed in Chapter 4 on the normalisation of the sexual appetite, is the existence of a complex platform of emotions, desires and relations that create very fluid meanings in relationships.

For the moment, it is important to mention that, unlike kin relations, intimacy in *namoro* relationships takes a sexual form. It incorporates a public display of affection that includes hugs, cradling, and caresses of the intimate parts of the body (such as the legs, breasts, chest, and mouth). Public kisses amongst *namorados* are on the mouth, ears, neck and other intimate parts, differing from the two kisses on the cheeks, as seen in kin and friendship environments. The logic of *namoro* relationships is similar to that of marriage.

Usually, marriage tends to be a natural progression of a *namoro* relationship that has been *oficializada* (made official) to relatives of both partners. *Namoro* becomes official by its own development: both partners participate in each other's family gatherings and celebrations throughout the duration of the relationship. This tends to be the case for long-lasting *namoros,* where the couple started going out with each other in their teens. In *namoro* relationships that started, for example, slightly before or during my fieldwork, and where the couple intended to make it 'serious', the *oficialização* was done by inviting the partners to a dinner or lunch at the family's house and introducing him/her as a *namorado/a*. *Noivado*, (engagement) is usually the following step, when the intention is marriage. This takes the form of a dinner at which uncles of the future groom accompany him to declare his intention to marry the woman. It is on this occasion that the couple set a date for the wedding. Some couples resume the *noivado* in the *lobolo* (bridewealth) ceremony, while others have two rituals. In what follows, I will discuss the different meanings of marriage and describe the various steps of the practice.

6.3 Marriage: A quest for adulthood and emotional stability

As the title of the thesis emphasises, marriage takes a central stage in the lives of the young adults. Theoretically, in the discipline of anthropology (and elsewhere), marriage in Africa has been discussed under the binary of 'tradition' and 'modernity', departing from the modernisation theory that Africans would adopt the Euro-Christian values of monogamy, fidelity and the nuclear family (Bernard 1968; Bledsoe and Pison 1994; Lewinson 2006; Little 1973; Mann 1985; Smith 2001; Smith 2007) and thus become more like Western industrialised nations. Love has also featured in such theorisation as the transition from the traditional model – based on larger kinship decisions with the aim of creating alliances across communities – to a more individualist approach, based on the individual's choice of a partner as being anchored in romantic love (Mann 1985; Smith 2001; Van der Vliet 1991). Urban Africa, with its rapid movement towards city life and hasty social change, has been at the centre of this analysis, as it has been seen as epitomising the acquisition of modernity.

However, I find this modernisation approach discomforting me. On the one hand, it assumes the existence of a hegemonic modernity (Western), with which I disagree, as it, in my view, constitutes only one among many narratives around the world. Thus, I am more supportive of an analysis that identifies a myriad of modernities (Eisenstadt 2000; Gaonkar 1999; Hodgson 2001), which are constantly being created in diverse social contexts as a result of the interaction of the local with foreign and competing ways of being and socialising. I concur with authors such as Fabian (Fabian 1983) who regard the theory of modernisation as implicitly locating the subjects of anthropological study in a prior period of time, a tendency, which resonates with the evolutionary thinking prevalent in the 19th century. Values from the diverse universal cosmologies are embodied by the residents of Maputo city in diverse and conflicting ways that contribute to (re-)shaping views of personhood, well-being, and happiness, amongst others.

I prefer to assume that societies, and consequently, their social and cultural processes, are under constant transformation. As a consequence, the term hybrid[35] (Canclini 2005; Escobar 1995; Piot 1999) seems to be more useful in my analysis. As stated by Lesthaeghe, "African populations are currently producing their own versions of new systems that are still far from crystallised" (Lesthaeghe in Smith 2001: 132).

Obviously, the hybrid dimensions created have an impact on the institution of marriage. For example, in a women's group discussion, an informant drew attention to the fact that 'Eastern' arranged marriages probably had greater chances of lasting longer, as the couple would start getting to know each other and cultivating care and love from within the marriage. Such an approach would differ from marriages that have materialised after long-term relationships based on love, which could already be weakened by the time that the couple enter marriage. This view echoed a discussion in one of the episodes of the Brazilian *telenovela* (soap opera) *Caminho das Índias* (international title: 'India, a love story') that was being broadcasted during my fieldwork by the main private Mozambican TV channel, Soico Television (STV) in 2009. The soap opera described everyday life in India, centred on a tale of forbidden love between a woman from a higher caste and a man from a lower one.

As the example illustrates, it is not the Western ethos of marriage being considered in this case. This highlights my previous point that Western modernity is not hegemonic in Maputo (nor in Africa, I would venture), as desired by theorists of modernisation. In this example, then, the woman is considering what has been transmitted as an Eastern ethos to make sense of marriage, its durability and enduring love. In whatever way, to marry or not to marry is a life statement for the young adults from the middle class within the age groups of my interlocutors.

Marriage (civil and/or religious, and most times accompanied by the *lobolo* ceremony), I argue, is central to socially recognised adulthood in the city (both with regard to adult status in the family and professional advancement to a responsible

[35] I am not saying that hybridization only happens in today's globalized times. On the contrary, societies have never been isolated or static, they have always exchanged ideas and as a result become transformed.

position). The long process toward marriage is perilous because there is the constant negotiation of expectations from both sides. On the one hand, people want to be in a relationship, but not trapped by it. On the other hand, unless there is concordance between the pair, it is likely that one of the partners will want to move things ahead more quickly than the other does, so there may always be a feeling of dissatisfaction. I will describe these points and the nuances of marriage in the city with the aid of ethnographic descriptions of the experiences of the young adults.

Being married gives people a desired social status and, indeed, constitutes one of the characteristics of young adults in the middle class, together with: owning or renting a house or apartment in the city or in the emerging new neighbourhoods on the perimeter of Maputo; being a professional (both the men and the women) either at state institutions, in the private sector or self-employed; owning a car/cars; participating in entertainment activities (restaurants, bars, discos), socialising, travel (nationally, regionally and/or internationally), in sum: to *viver bem* (live well), as put by those who see themselves as middle class and elite in Maputo.

Being a wife or a husband is highly perceived socially among people of their age. On the one hand, this is true within the aesthetics of gender in place in the city (as discussed in Chapter 5) and the mainstream discourses that associate adult masculinity and femininity with family life within marriage, where fertility is privileged. Thus, in the process of searching for wider social acceptability, both men and women do aspire to marriage. Sometimes, though, there are clashes within partnerships as, in most cases I have witnessed, men are ready to wait and delay the marriage until a later stage, while women are under more pressure to marry immediately.

Social pressure for women to marry is twofold. On the hand, there is the expectation for women to get married in order to start having children while they are still relatively young. On the other hand, the pressure to marry has to do with securing the man one already has, within the line of the popular discourse that there is a scarcity of men in Maputo. As making a family is seen as the key outcome of marriage (Junod 1927; Radcliffe-Brown and Forde 1950; Smith 2001; Van der Vliet 1991),

pressure for women to marry increases for those about to reach, or who are in, their 30s. The evocation of biology and biomedical discourses, stating that, once a woman is 30 years old, her chances of falling pregnant and having a healthy baby start to reduce, are at the centre of this social pressure. Many women in their 30s, who in most cases have finished their academic degrees (mostly BA or MA degrees), and who are already established in the professional field, do start to consider marriage. The negotiations with their partners can be easy and straightforward, with the couple agreeing on a time to inform their families and to start preparing for the ceremony and the reception. However, in other cases, the expectations of the partners may not coincide.

I have witnessed various examples of mismatched expectations with regard to the timing of the marriage and, sometimes, the intention to marry itself. Idalina is 30 years old. She has been in a relationship with her partner for the last 12 years. In the last two, due to her professional duties, she has been living about 200km outside of Maputo, but has been maintaining the relationship by visiting her partner regularly. Her partner also visits her in the district, where she has been working. In the last few months of my fieldwork, she had been relocated to Maputo but she was not willing to go back to live with her parents. Her partner and she had agreed that they would both share the costs of renting an apartment. She was happy with them moving in together, but had also expressed her desire to marry him and start a family. However, after her return to Maputo, the partner had changed his mind, as he had felt pressured to move in with her. He feared that both her and his families would push for marriage (since they had been dating for a long time and both families have expressed the desire for them to marry), which he was not yet ready to do. He emphasised that he was still independent and wanted to keep life that way, and thus suggested a break-up, as he did not want to waste more of her time. Idalina was devastated by the news.

In cases like this, it is common for a general reaction of anger, as people were likely to feel that the man had wasted the women's time by engaging her in a *namoro* relationship for so long and then refusing to marry. Pity for the woman tends to be the popular response, as it is perceived that she was now left in the difficult position

of starting the dating process again, this time at a much older age and in a city with lower potential single partners (as most men within her age group would be married or in stable relationships and would most probably only be interested in an occasional relationship with such a woman). Toward the man, in contrast, the general feel would most likely be anger, as it is perceived that it will be relatively easy for him to find a suitable partner, as there are so many women available in the city, and as men are not necessarily judged negatively for marrying much younger women (while women who marry much younger men are not well-perceived).

Marbella is also in a difficult situation. She has been in a relationship with her partner for about 3 years now. He lives in South Africa, where he works, but they visit each other regularly. She is 32 years old and, since she was 30, she has been talking to him about marriage He has always been evasive with regard to the subject. To make matters worse, she was diagnosed with uterine fibroids, which limit her capacity to have children. The doctors have performed a surgery and suggested she try to fall pregnant within a year after the procedure in order to guarantee a healthy pregnancy. That fact had put her under pressure and, consequently, she is insisting on marriage with her partner, and she has stopped taking preventative measures against pregnancy. However, her partner does not seem to be very interested in pursuing marriage. Two days before their *noivado* (engagement party), he phoned her to cancel it because he would not be able to go to Maputo due to professional commitments. Even though Marbella and her family were extremely disappointed, the couple is still in a relationship, and Marbella is still insisting on marriage.

The examples of Idalina and Marbella show a common feature of middle class relationships in Maputo: people are often separated for long periods of time and by significant distances in pursuit of their professional and personal development interests. The normal expectation is that romantic ties are to be subordinated to this. However, such expectation is not always guaranteed.

Indeed, unmarried women tend to be highly stigmatised. For example, in wedding parties, when the time approaches to throw the bouquet, many women over 30 years old tend not to join the younger ones, as they do not want to be associated with being

single. Indeed, in the wedding parties, the DJs, when calling the women to the stage to catch the bouquet, would refer to them as *encalhadas* (literally – those who are stuck), which further emphasises the stigma attached to being a single adult woman.

Pregnancy is part of the group of strategies used by women to make the relationship move to the marriage stage. In Maputo, the expression used is *golpe da barriga* (belly trick). The use of this expression implies that the woman has control of all the processes that would culminate in pregnancy, and hence uses it to her advantage as a way to fall pregnant and *agarrar o homem* (catch the man). This expression is biased and misogynist, however, as it withdraws all of the man's responsibility in implementing contraception against pregnancy.

Dar o golpe da barriga (to apply the belly trick) has a definite negative connotation. Stories from the previous generation have many examples of men who married women because they fell pregnant[36] and because their families forced them to marry.[37]. However, in contemporary Maputo (and Mozambique in general), there are endless stories of women who become pregnant, but remain unmarried, as the young men refuse to get married, and in some cases, even refuse to admit paternity, as was also seen in some examples by Sølbeck (2010) in Mali. In some of these cases, the families of the women did ask and/or forced the young men to wed the woman, but the men often escaped by refusing, running away or simply not admitting paternity, as shown by Archambault in her study amongst youths in Inhambane city in Mozambique (2010). Yet, in a specific fraction of the middle class, an interesting phenomenon is happening. Amongst middle class women with surnames and family links connected to political and economic elites in the city and/or the country, and amongst those who have their own careers and are considered the 'marriageable type', the last resource strategy of falling pregnant and marrying the man seems to be working. These are women who are desired, but who may be very selective in their choices of marriage or sexual partners. Sometimes they become engaged with men in whom they are interested as lovers and not as *namoradas*.

[36] Contraception was not widely available and not easily accessed by unmarried women at that time.
[37] At least three of my informants were the children of parents who married because the woman fell pregnant, while the couple was going out with no official engagement in these cases, the woman's family intervened and forced the couple to marry.

One of my informants told me the story of her cousin, which illuminates this point. The cousin of my informant started dating a man whom she thought to be the right one for her. The affair started while the young man was still involved in a *namoro* relationship with another woman. When he finished that *namoro* relationship, he kept the cousin of my informant as a lover and moved on to a new *namorada*. After a few months, the cousin of my informant decided to fall pregnant to hasten the process of formalising their relationship, as my informant puts it. And indeed, at 7 months pregnant, the woman married her partner. In my informant's analysis, the man was willing to marry her because she was a *bom partido* (good choice). Even though he was not in love with her, other factors counted in his decision: the fact that she was cultivated, intelligent and earned her own salary, which would mean that she would not be dependent on him, the fact that the parents were from the same elite circle in Maputo, and the fact that he preferred to marry her rather than have his family speak ill of him in their social circles. Indeed, I subscribe to my informants' analysis. Marbella too, for example, is counting on falling pregnant as her last resort to convince her partner to marry her; as he has a similar profile as my informant's cousin, he will most probably be willing to marry her, if she manages to conceive.

As these stories reflect, competition over partners, especially over men, is quite fierce in Maputo, particularly among the middle and upper classes, which represents a second factor of social pressure for women to marry (the first factor being that women need to get married and have children by the time they reach their thirties). It is commonly believed that the city has statistically fewer men than women. This belief is corroborated by national statistics, which show that, in Mozambique in general, and in Maputo in particular, there are indeed more women than men (INE 2008). One of the factors that might contribute to such disparity in the case of Maputo city is the traditional legacy of male migration to the south of Mozambique. Men thus move south in order to study or work; they also do so in neighbouring countries (like South Africa and Swaziland) and even overseas in Europe, the Americas and Asia. As Gagnon and Parker state: "[T]he very way in which the sexual partnering is organised in the society and the investments that are made in such partners shape the opportunity to acquire or change sexual partners" (Parker and

Gagnon 1995: 15). In the context of the United States, these authors show, three quarters of persons between eighteen and fifty-nine years of age are already in affectionate and sexual relationships. As a consequence, there is a very limited market for easily available partners (Parker and Gagnon 1995). This has been corroborated by my own findings in Maputo city. However, more than a quantitative issue, the quality of the people and their willingness to become future partners and then husbands, and their suitability for such roles, is vital. Thus, women feel under pressure to keep their existing relationships at all costs – even, as in the case of Marbella, if some disrespectful acts[38] happen. Men also face challenges findinding the desired profile of women. Thus, both women and men may be in detrimental positions as horizons shrink in response to the limitations of possible partners.

Moreover, Western values of independence, and thus the independent women, clash with more reserved traditional views that may hinder young women from conquering what they idealise in relationships. With that being stated, it is central to highlight that some independent women, at least from the group that I have categorised in the section describing 'house femininity' in Chapter 5, oppose social pressures for marriage. Some view reproduction as a choice and something that should not be imposed, as it does not represent the sole way of valuing womanhood and femininity. These women pride themselves on their professional achievements, their friends, their travels, their experiences and social life. Thus, professional efficacy and success, and an individual and autonomous spirit are all highly valued within this class of young women. These achievements may be difficult to attain in conjunction with reproduction and marriage, for example.

Women are not the only ones being pressured to marry and have children by a certain age. There is also social pressure for men to marry. On the one hand, this pressure is also associated with age, as discourses are against both men and women having children later in life, as they may then be mistaken for their children's

[38] Her family saw the partner of Marbella's last minute cancelation of their engagement party as a serious sign of disrespect, as all the preparations (cooking, the arrival of relatives from other sites of the province who were already in Maputo, waiting for the celebration) were already underway. Also, there are rumours in town that her partner does not want to come back to Mozambique because he has a relationship with a woman in South Africa where he currently lives.

grandparents. On the other hand, a number of informants applying for high-ranking positions in professional and political life have expressed how such structures associate responsibility with marriage and with family life, and how their employers' decision to hire them for such desirable posts could ultimately depend on their (the workers') marital status.

The social pressure to marriage is paired with pressure for procreation. Thus, social pressure for married couple with no children is intense. Couples in such situation tend to opt for the method of astificial insemination, which is not available in Mozambique. Most go to South Africa, however, the prices for the insemination are high. Marbela was considering insemination as a strategy to keep her partner and, she informed that it would cost her the equivalent to 2000 GBP.

As the descriptions in this section indicate, people need to progress toward being *namorada* or *namorado*, and they may not reach that goal – so this is a site for negotiation in a context where competition over partners, especially over men, is quite fierce. In the midst of all this – if one is *namorada* or *namorado* – sex, sharing and even children can happen, but not necessarily marriage. Thus, marriage is clearly something beyond all these things, which you can enjoy without getting married. Marriage is thus primarily about having a family and being seen to be willing and able to fulfil the responsibilities of having a family. This ability and willingness to take on, and to be confined by a role (mother or father) is the reason why marriage constitutes a proof of one's readiness to be an adult and one's capacity to have a responsible job.

6.4 Agency and control in the context of marriage

One of my inferences from the research is that, in Maputo, marriage is about control of the other partner's general way of being. Such control is materialized, for example, by a meticulous supervision of the other's sexuality. I argue that, among middle class young adults today, both men and women control their partner's sexuality by questioning or confronting the partner about supposed affairs and extra-

marital sex, based on rumours and suspicions. In some cases, one partner may follow the other, in an investigative exercise, in order to confirm whether the suspicions are correct. When the suspicions are confirmed, a number of outcomes can be expected. I will discuss in-depth the consequences of cheating in Chapter 7, on 'Love'. For the moment, I will focus on the cases, in which punishments are used as strategies to demonstrate discontentment over confirmed and/or non-proved but non-clarified suspicions of cheating.

One of the manners in which such punishment is expressed involves the cheated partner not following the expected roles of wife or husband, according to each case. For example, Melissa, whose husband expected her to cook the meals for the family, even though the couple had a maid who had attended cooking classes, stopped cooking, as she repeatedly heard rumours that the husband was having an affair. This punishment was introduced to "make him feel the pain", as she put it. She also refused to have sex with him and started to go out with her friends much more frequently than the husband would normally accept. Melissa's behaviour immensely upset her husband. However, she was careful not to make him too upset, as he could simply start spending more time with the woman with whom she suspected he was having an affair. Therefore, even when punishments are put into practice, individuals automatically activate a 'thermometer' to measure the partner's level of commitment to their relationship.

Thus, as an institution of social control (Ross 1991), marriage establishes a set of rules that contain and manage behaviours in order to maintain the stability of the union. This stability is in most cases achieved in marriage through limitation of autonomy (Ross 1991). In Maputo, both husband and wife activate strategies to limit each other's autonomy in order to maintain a harmonious married life: restrictions, advices and impositions with regard to the other's network of friends and entertainment activities, as well as explicit intentions to manage the partner's time and routines. Even if such intents of control are not necessarily (and/or easily) materialised, the actual desire and the act of trying to manage the partner is in itself pertinent, as it demonstrates the weight of 'control' in marriage. The restriction and imposition do not necessarily always take the enjoining form. In many cases, such

restrictive intentions are expressed in intimate and romantic moments (using soft words and caring expressions), and justified as necessary for the well-being of the relationship as well as for the family environment. Both men and women use such a strategy to convince the other partner, as there is a general perception that enforced aspirations of a restrictive nature are harder to accept.

This control of the other gives individuals a sense of ownership. By controlling the other, the partner feels as if he or she owns the relationship and therefore has responsibility over the other, as well as accountability for the maintenance of the relationship. This sense of ownership reinforces a sense of self-stability too, as participants have frequently mentioned: having each other as partners, and being happy because of it. Marriage differs from other kinds of relationships, then, as people are united through a civil and/or religious law, and through the consent given by both partners' families. The weight of such institutions tends to give some young adults a (false[39]) sense of stability and long-term harmony. Also, having offspring, especially within marriage, gives partners a sense of strengthening their bonds. Plus, control is then expanded, as the couple now have responsibility over their children, who augment their sense of responsibility, thus reinforcing the sense that they are mature adults.

Assurance is also a key concept in marriage. It is revealed when one of the partners feels that the other is seriously engaged in the relationship, and that he/she values and loves him/her. Also, marriage is perceived as the only social acceptable institution for procreation, and it is a sign of continuity in the hybrid system under construction, where *namoro* [courtship], for example, "privileges the nature of a couple's personal relationship and is negotiated through interpersonal intimacy and expressions of love" (Smith, 2001: 132), thus demonstrating change in the emerging

[39] I consider this a false expectation, as the rates of separation and divorce are high amongst young adults. My deduction is not necessarily based on official statistics but rather on observation, conversation and rumours in the city. In earlier times, the weight of the kin's intervention in the couple's life seemed, to some extent, to soften and regulate conflict in the couple's life. Today, levels of autonomy amongst the youth are proving that the family's voice may have less power in the couple's life than it used to have. Hence, it is common to witness individuals deciding to leave the marriage, even sometimes without following or bothering to follow proper separation procedures (for instance, communicating and negotiating with the parents and godparents).

hybrid. By asking another person to marry him/herself, and by accepting this offer, the person is declaring that he/she considers the other an ideal father/mother for conceiving and raising his/her children. It is worth highlighting that, in a number of cases, individuals do not necessarily end up marrying the partner they desire most; the partner who does become the husband/wife may be the second best option, but is nonetheless the chosen partner under the circumstances.

By entering into marriage, the person is indirectly affirming that he/she agrees generally with the other's values and philosophies and that he/she likes the physical features of the other, as he/she is prepared to conceive children with her/him. Physical traits were, interestingly, highly valued amongst some of the informants (mostly among the young women), who would express the desire to have beautiful children and therefore chose handsome partners to help ensure that their future children would be beautiful or handsome. Nília, for example, after announcing to me that her boyfriend had asked her to marry him, affirmed, "Our children will be really beautiful; I can already see my cute daughter with the father's amazing eyes and abundant hair!"

As described by Mann in the context of colonial Lagos (Nigeria), "Christian marriage played a crucial role in the development of a distinctive style of life that defined the educated elite, [and] set it off from the rest of the population" (1985: 92). Similarly, in Maputo, civil and religious (Christian and Islamic) marriages with ostentatious wedding parties mark a divide between middle class and elite groups and the rest of the population, which, in most cases due to a lack of financial resources, or the prevalence of family conflicts, may be unable to get married and thus end up living in *de facto* unions (Granjo 2006). Many of the examples that I was given related to the demands by the bride's family to receive an expensive *lobolo* that the future husband and his family were unable to met, or the family's refusal to accept a woman because she has children from other relationships, or the family's belief that the child was not their own, etc.).

6.5 Class and marriage

In the patrilineal south of Mozambique, marriages are lineage exogamous and thus, as described by Junod, marriages in the region constituted a community affair that establishes a contract between two groups: the husband's family and the wife's family (1927: 121). While previously both parties' families played a central role in marriage negotiations, today most young couples organise their own marriages.

In most cases, young adults become romantically involved with school or university mates, colleagues or those met on travels related to either studies or work. Maputo, as the capital of Mozambique, brings together people from all areas of the country that have migrated to the city in previous generations or more recently. Simultaneously, the city has a considerable and well-established expatriate community, which is working in the different international NGOs, at United Nations' offices or at branches of international companies. In these environments, young people tend to socialise and to become romantically involved. After developing such a relationship, whether long- or short-term, the couple negotiates and arranges a wedding. It is rare for the man to propose to his partner 'out of the blue' by giving her a wedding ring. Usually, the couple agree on marriage. When this happens, the young woman would inform her parents about the couple's agreement. In the next step, the man would approach the woman's family with his family, to proceed with the *lobolo* ceremony (which in the middle class sometimes equates to engagement, although it is in general perceived as the actual 'traditional' marriage ceremony). It is in this ceremony that one of the female relatives of the future husband (usually a sister, cousin or young auntie) puts the ring in the ring-finger of the bride-to-be. In the next section of the chapter, I will describe in detail all the stages of marriage.

While this ceremony is usually calm when both families agree with each other's future in-laws-to-be, it is very difficult for a person to marry someone whom the family opposes. The criteria for approval include, amongst others, class and ethnic dimensions. Similar to the description of Smith for the Igbos in Nigeria, the groups in the south of Mozambique have historically observed specific rules of lineage or village exogamy, although they have married partners from close-by neighbouring

communities, with whom they had long-lasting ties (2001:135). These marriages also established strategic social, political and economic alliances. Other factors were important too, though: it was not only relevant to which ethnic group the partner belonged, but it was also relevant whether s/he was educated, had a profession, and was *assimilado* – all of these were class markers in marriage strategies (Penvenne 1995). Today, these relationships remain important for ensuring access to resources of the state and the national economy (Smith 2001: 135).

Hence, an undesirable partner for a son or daughter would be someone who, as described to me by a 90-year-old elite matriarch in Maputo, does not share a similar set of values. She explained:

> *"My daughter, can you imagine marrying someone who believes that witchcraft is the way to solve problems and you simply discard the existence of witchcraft. How are you going to solve problems? Instead of conversing, the person will bring roots and ask you to drink and shower with them. Can you imagine?"*

This informant also mentioned the need to avoid marrying people from different class, education and ethnic groups, social classes and ethnic groups to avoid domestic violence, divergent approaches in raising offspring and the levels of participation of both families in the life of the married couple. Thus, as stated, concerns with marrying people from strange or distant communities originate from the difficulty of adequately cultivating reciprocal relationships with such families (Smith 2001).

Further, ethnic prejudice is highlighted as a way to discourage marriage. I have been present at young men and women's conversations, in which ethnic stereotypes were made, for example: *Chuabos* are not trustworthy; *Xingondos* (which is a pejorative word to refer to those from the north of the Save river, which divides the south and the north of the country) are confusing; *Shangana* are violent men; *Macua* women are lazy and just want to *chular* (to live under the expenses of) men, amongst others; *Ronga* are stylish but lazy and lack vision, etc. While the aversion for mixed ethnic marriages can be disregarded, other characteristics emerge as important too, such as:

financial stability, professional competence, political or business prominence, and cultural prominence. One still may hear comments like: “but she does not have good manners”; “he is just a *nouveau riche”*; “she does not have *berço*” (to be from a good family); “he does not have the same *assimilado* values as we do”. As a result, coming from an *assimilado* family, being cultivated, and having finesse are perceived as inherited acquisitions of class. Even if one can learn to behave according to such criteria, it is still perceived as below standard. In my view, these class differentiations, which are based on good manners and refinement, are fuelled by Brazilian soap operas that heavily, and with no exclusion (in the sense that, whatever the topic, all the soaps being broadcasted in Mozambique since 1986 have class distinction at the heart of their stories) reinforce class divisions based on these criteria.

6.6 Marriage ceremonies

The material side of the wedding ceremonies has gained competition status in Maputo, and contributes to boosting the social status of the couple and their families. Consumption and imagined spaces of capitalism, Appadurai’s mediascapes, technoscapes and ideoscapes (Appadurai 1990), that include the display of wealth have become prevalent in Maputo..

In religious ceremonies, all the guests look specifically at the decor of the church, with its flowers, white fabric and candles. The reception,, which may happen at the *Palácio dos Casamentos* (Wedding Palace) – a white colonial building in the heart of the city – or at the venue where the reception will take place, may feature covered seats with flowers and a red carpet. The ‘wow factor’ of the celebration is the reception. The tables and chairs are all coordinated with a decor that in most celebrations includes chairs with white covers and white tables, with a detail of a different coloured fabric on the backs of the chairs and at the centre of the tables. Flowers, fruit, colourful stones, mirrors and vases tend to be the centrepieces of the tables. The self-service buffet is usually vast and combines Mozambican vegetable and seafood dishes, meat curries, Portuguese dishes, such as *Bacalhau a Gomes de*

Sá (cod fish made a *Gomes de Sá*), flans and foods from the rest of the world like Italian meat lasagne and Chinese chow-mein noodles. Alcohol is also imperative. Usually the variety includes dark and light beer, a white and a red wine (usually South African wines available in the Maputo market) and some distilled drinks.

The quality and price of the alcohol indicates how refined the party is, for instance, if the wines are exclusive or if the sparkling wine on (each of) the tables (which is opened when the bride and groom cut the cake) is the most common J.C. Le Roux (a South African brand) or whether it really comes from Champagne (Moët & Chandon being the most popular in town). Other items of distinction include the car, in which the couple arrive – usually a Mercedes, BMW, or Audi or Limousines are the most desired brands of cars, as they are linked to higher social status. Therefore, similar to the findings of Salo and Davis with regard to the institution of the Matric Ball in Cape Town, South Africa, the concern with dresses, car brands and glamour amongst the youth seems to be redefining young adulthood, which is increasingly being rewritten as an identity associated with conspicuous consumption and grooming (Salo and Davids 2009: 47).

Also, the couple is increasingly expected to invest in surprising each other, either by having a power-point video display of themselves, or the bride or groom singing a song to the other, or even inviting a cultural group that would perform a dance or a theatrical piece in which the bride and groom participate. The bride's wedding dress is also ostentatious. Most brides would prefer to buy ready-made dresses and Maputo now offers a variety of gowns, mostly imported from Europe. Some brides travel abroad (to South Africa, European countries or the USA) to buy their wedding dresses. The wedding cakes tend to be non-traditional, following the wedding theme: the sea, a specific country, a religion, a province of Mozambique, travelling, etc. Thus, one may find cakes that have the shape of a tree (to represent the cashew tree in a wedding, which is dedicated to Nampula, the province of the cashew nut); the shape of suitcases, piled one on top of the other to represent packing one's things, and departing from the parents' house on the journey to the new home, to mention just a few.

The movement of the 'reification of Africa' is also present in the wedding celebrations. For instance, I attended a wedding where the bride had her dress made by a famous South African designer – Stoned Cherrie. The dress had embellishments made out of ostrich feathers and turtle shell-like adornments, and these were also in her dreadlocks and inserted at the cleavage of her dress. In that wedding, the centrepieces of the tables were goat's skin and, on top, dried wild fruits. In another wedding, the bride had her dress adorned with beads, imitating Swahili or Zulu beads.

However, the marriage itself starts with the *lobolo* ceremony. Prior to the civil and/or religious ceremony, which occurs during the week before the wedding, one witnesses the *lobolo.* I have witnessed the *lobolo* ceremony of a few of my informants. In Marlene's *lobolo*, two uncles, three aunties and two cousins of the groom sung as a way of asking for permission to enter Marlene's uncle house; during the *xhungulisar* (greetings in Tsonga), the relatives of the groom start singing from outside, as a way of knocking on the door. Marlene's aunt opened the door and offered them a place to sit in the living room. In a joking manner, as if she did not know why they were there, she asked why they had come. The relatives told her that their relative, the potential groom, was interested in a daughter of that house and they asked her to be called.

In order to call her, Marlene's aunt, who was presiding over the ceremony (in this case, she was the eldest sister of her father), asked the family to pay. She asked for 50 MT (which is about 1 GBP). The groom's family placed a 50 MT note on the floor, where there was a mat covered with *capulana* (a colourful kanga style fabric that women wear around the waist or to hold babies on their backs). After the money had been given, a friend of Marlene's was taken into the room with her head covered with a scarf. As the cousin of the groom removed the head-scarf, she realised that the girl was not Marlene and complained. The auntie then asked for 100 MT, and when this was put down on the mat, another friend of Marlene's appeared. Finally, at 150 MT, Marlene entered the room. When it was confirmed that she was there, the groom's family began to display on the mat the amount asked for by the *lobolo*, 5000 MT, and all the items on the list of demands from the bride's family that had

previously been handed to them. Other than the money, there was a suit and a walking stick for the father of the bride, a dress and necklace for the mother, a *mucumi* (an extra-large *capulana* with the respective scarf) for the grandmother, a five litre cask of wine, a watch, necklace, earrings, watch, a dress and shoes for the bride.

While distributing the respective gifts, the family of the groom and the bride were singing songs in Tsonga, showing how happy they were to become members of the same family. One of the cousins of the groom then started to give the bride her gifts. For instance, when she put the watch on the bride's wrist, she said: "Here is a watch, so that you are never late preparing the food for my brother." When she gave her a ring, she said, "Here is a ring that demonstrates your faithfulness and commitment to my brother."

As Marlene and Valdo (the groom) already had a daughter, the family of the groom had to pay a fine, because he had impregnated her before the *lobolo* and the marriage ceremony. The fine was 3000 MT. After all the presents had been given, and after both families had spoken words of wisdom, all the participants were invited to have food and drinks. Marlene's family served the older members of the groom's entourage, and the others helped themselves at the buffet. After about an hour after the end of the ceremony, the relatives of the groom said goodbye to all and left.

On the day after the wedding, the *lobolo* ceremony continued with *Xiguiana*. This is the ceremony to give the bride to the husband. It happens in a location chosen by the groom or his relatives. Relatives of the bride carry a large hooded trunk with all the belongings of the bride. While that is the 'traditional' way of the ceremony, in all the events that I took part in during my fieldwork, this has become part of the celebration, with the parents of the bride also present. The occasion is also one in which the closer relatives give their presents to the couple. The gift-giving ritual is accompanied by singing. Usually, groups give the presents: the church group, the friends of the groom, the friends of the bride, the uncles, the aunts, etc. While for the civil and religious celebrations guests wear world fashions, in the *Xiguiana*, the tendency among the women is to wear African inspired outfits, in most cases made

out of *capulana*. Usually one pattern is selected, and the women from both the groom's and the bride's side would make their own models out of the same patterned *capulana.*

The *lobolo* ceremony still follows a similar outline, as described by Bagnol:

> *"The structure of the lovolo process has remained unchanged with its fundamental three phases: the engagement (hikombela mati), the symbolic union (lovolo), the separation of the bride from her family and integration into her husband's family (xigiyane). This structure, similar to the process described by Junod (1996: V1, 108-24) in the Maputo city area at the end of the nineteenth century, confirms the maintenance of a reference to a basic set of practices that characterise the process of formalisation of a union between a man and a woman in southern Mozambique." (Bagnol 2009)*

In conclusion, I would like to highlight the fact that, despite the emphasis upon romantic ties and individual choice, marriage remains a family affair – in which both partners' extended families (not just their parents) also play a part. Concomitantly, though, marriage is also an individual stance, though it is pursued as a means to build a family, which grants a status of adulthood. I found it interesting that romantic love was not necessarily the main feature when choosing a marriage partner, but the sharing of class dispositions and a level of empathy and fondness amongst the pair were the most important aspects. I am tempted to advance that marriage seems to be less about love and more about fear – a fear of social stigmatisation and a lack of recognition that could contribute to emotional anxiety in both partners.

After this last sentence the next chapter will interrogate about the place of love in the experiences of the young adults. Such exploration indeed represents an aspect that I would want to further reseach as it opened a series of interesting aspects in relation to how individuals make choices related to family, sexual and emotional engagements.

CHAPTER 7:

WHAT´S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT

7.1 Love as a space for catharsis

From the early stages of my fieldwork, I could not avoid noticing that a level of complexity recurrently used the word 'love' to explain a number of situations that, amongst others, were characterised. For example, Zé's masculinity was constantly in question when his *namorada*, whom he said that he 'loved', would ask him in front of his peers to stay at home and look after her child (Ze's partner was a single mother, and she had a toddler from her previous relationship), and to do domestic chores while she would go out with her friends. In Zé's notion of masculinity, however, the man occupies the public sphere and does not follow women's demands. When I confronted him about his contradictory behaviour, he just said: "When you love, you do these things, you accept it!" Rita, in our conversations and in-group discussions, was always vocally against violence and stressed that she would immediately call the police if she were a victim of violence. On two occasions, however, when I met her, she was bruised because her partner had hit her. When I asked her about this, she explained that she preferred not to get the police involved as she loved him and did not want to spoil such love. The use of the word 'love' in these ways intrigued me. It seemed that, whenever participants were unable to explain contradictory situations between their ideals and the praxis in their relationships, they would resort to using the word 'love' as an explanation. Thus, in this chapter, I question what love means for young cosmopolitans and how they express and live it in everyday practices.

For most, the concept of love was associated with romantic relationships. Thus, the sole use of the term *amor* (love) was attached to such relationships. Individuals also

referred, for example, to *amor de mãe* (mother's love), or they would say, "I really love you, my friend", explicitly highlighting the object of such love. Accordingly, love seems to be intrinsically associated with romantic and sexual relationships. In an interesting twist, for most men and women the experience of love – 'real love' – is associated with the past. Most expressed having felt love in their late adolescence or early youth. Only a few stated that they were presently in a relationship with the one they loved. Zé's relationship, which was described above, had finished soon after the beginning of my fieldwork and, in our last conversations, he described that relationship as the one and only one in which he had really felt love. Rita clearly states that her current partner is the love of her life.

The experiences people have together; the time dedicated to one another; the dreams shared; the sense of helping one another, together with the physical attraction felt towards each other, were all articulated as the components of romantic love. As a result, many informants were able to pinpoint the one partner they 'really' loved. When such a love relationship ended, in many examples, the feeling of love from both or at least one of the partners remained. Thus, people would refer to these individuals as *amores mal acabados* (love finished badly). However, most informants still resort to the verbalisation of 'love' as the reason that makes them act in specific ways in their current relationships. There, love does not seem to be felt towards the partner (the current partner) but instead revolves around an ideal relationship, as generally, in the imaginations of these young cosmopolitans, love is the ideal to be attained in relationships, the epitome of infinite happiness and well-being.

These young cosmopolitans thus have an idealised notion of love, and that love works as a space for catharsis. They live under considerable stress due to the radical contradictions in their expectations about intimate sexual relationships versus the actual experience of such relationships, their attempts to respond to social expectations and to deal with social constraints, amongst others. Consequently, they refer to love for their partners as the space where they do not have to worry about the outside (social) world. Being in love is synonymous with relaxation, pleasure and the creation of a stress-free space. In this intimate space, individuals can relax and enjoy

physical contact, sexual pleasure, smiles, laughs, caring, and companionship, all of which are encapsulated by the one feeling that is enunciated as love. Hence, it allows a withdrawal from the everyday pressures of a social life that cosmopolitan young adults deal with routinely.

Under the rationale highlighted, some radical contradictions do indeed start to make sense. The justifications used by young cosmopolitans to articulate contradictions between their life philosophies and their practices in relationships constitute the manners by which individuals are able to communicate their actions to friends, relatives, researchers and society in general. By emphasising love as the impetus for their actions – love is, after all, a socially accepted and desired feature in romantic relationships – cosmopolitan young adults manage to fit into the expected ideals of life. This exercise, I argue, is not only done as a response to society, but also as a way to achieve such love in their relationships. Moreover, it allows individuals to bring their intimacy into the public sphere in the one relationship, where public demonstrations of affection and emotions are socially accepted. In Maputo, it is still uncommon for individuals in other relationships to express such closeness (no kin, friends, or colleagues share such levels of intimacy in public).

Simultaneously, however, love is feared. Many informants explained how individuals behave irrationally when in love, especially when there are divergences and conflicts within the couple. This other side of love is perceived as difficult to master and make sense of. It was common to hear, for example, that it is not advisable to marry the person you love, which seems counter-intuitive. Young adults felt that marrying the person with whom you are crazily in love would create problems for the practical management of married life. In terms of this logic, as described by Linda, when people are in love, they are guided by emotions and do not have the capacity to mollify mismatches of emotional expectations with the everyday structural running of the marriage and family (chores, descendants, household sustainability, investments, plans for the future, etc.). Hence, the capacity to be able to make such distinctions seems to denote maturity. Here, some widespread discourses that I heard recurrently during my fieldwork may begin to make sense: "Live your life, let your loved one live his/her life and just watch him/her from afar";

"find someone who loves you but just like[40] him, marry him and be happy"; "the best thing is to be a lover of the love of your life, not the wife/husband". Such sayings reinforce the need for one partner to preserve her/himself from love in long-term commitments such as marriage, but simultaneously not abandon completely the person the individual loves. Thus, it feels as if, with maturity, love is not lived as intensely and closely, however, it is still enjoyed.

7.2 Love and philosophies of love

In the city, most couples have a philosophy of love that gives the relationship order, allowing it to run smoothly. In most cases, when individuals start a relationship, they assume that they will be monogamous, with emphasis being put on fidelity. Yet, as we have seen, individuals, in a concealed manner, do tend to engage in extra-dyadic relationships (as detailed in Diagram 1), and the secrecy of these cannot be guaranteed. When partners become aware of such extra-dyadic relationships, problems arise, which make the relationship unstable.

Melissa met her partner through a common friend. As she stated to me, the new couple never sat down to discuss the rules of the relationships because she assumed that the only rule possible was monogamy. In her words: "I never imagined that a couple in a serious and steady relationship needed to discuss those issues. Isn't it clear that fidelity is the rule for such kind of partnerships?" Melissa uses a cosmology of monogamy for steady relationships and, as our extended conversations demonstrated, she only acknowledges negotiations in relationships when one 'is stealing' (i.e. when at least one of the partners is engaged in a stable and steady relationship like *namoro*, marriage or *de facto* union). The involvement of Melissa's partner with other women was a shocking experience for her, as she "honestly did not expect that to happen, specially so soon after the beginning of their *namoro*". Thus, she had not expected that she and her partner would need to discuss each

[40] 'Like' and 'love' have different degrees of emotional attachment in the discourse of the city. Love constitutes a higher level of such attachment.

other's differing expectations of a steady relationship. Clearly, though, different views exist.

Confronted with the realities of relationships in Maputo, Ismael and Vera have decided to follow a different path. In their words, with the aim of living a stress-free kind of relationship, Ismael and Vera, who had been in a *namoro* relationship for two years during the early stages of my fieldwork, had decided to adopt an open relationship model. Although their philosophy of love was open, it was nonetheless organised by rules. These rules stated that they could both become sexually involved with other individuals; however, preference was given to foreigners, as local *Maputenses* (in this case referring to both Mozambicans and foreigners residing in Maputo) were perceived as a danger because they might comment on the relationship to others and spread information and details about having an affair with either Ismael or Vera.

The fact that Maputo was a small city, where most people are acquaintances (especially within the middle class and elite groups), exacerbated the couple's concerns. In addition, local gendered aesthetics tend to be condescending towards men who are 'cheated' on (and if such fact is widely known) and who remain in the relationship with the women who cheated on them. The hyper-masculine construct (which, in the local cosmology, is highly valued) of such men is questioned and they may thus be mocked and taken less seriously by both men and women. However, the same standards are not applied to a man who cheats on his partner. Thus, both Ismael and Vera feared Vera's sexual involvement with men from Maputo, as this might lead to a negative labelling of Ismael and, more broadly, of the couple. Consequently, preferred partners included people visiting Maputo, individuals in other cities of Mozambique, and individuals in countries that Vera and Ismael would visit due to their work routines. Equity for the selection of partners was established, in the couple's view, as both Ismael and Vera were mobile individuals travelling frequently, both within the country and to other destinations in Africa, Europe and South America. However, the open relationship model incorporated some additional rules: neither of them was allowed to have sex with an individual with whom they had previously had sex; sex should be unattached and non-emotional; the sexual

affair should not last more than a few encounters; and the partners should be told of the sexual encounter before it occurs, as a way of seeking permission.

During the earlier stages of my interaction with the couple, Vera told me about the fact that Ismael had had a sexual affair with a Belgian woman who was paying a work visit to Maputo. She expressed how liberated she felt because she knew about the encounter and did not felt betrayed, as had happened in previous relationships, where her partners would cheat on her and she would discover the affairs on her own. As a result, she would feel depressed and would reduce the levels of trust and commitment towards such partners. Ismael was also very positive about their agreement, as he explained:

> *"In this relationship, we accept that as humans, we have our desires and we become interested in and seduced by other people. We allow ourselves to pursue such interests with respect, trust and a lot of communication."*

However, challenges for their agreement emerged. Later in my fieldwork, I sat down with Vera, who at this stage was married to Ismael. However, at our meeting she was visibly depressed. She told me that she was considering divorce, as after about nine months of marriage, she discovered that Ismael was having an affair and had not told her; as she put it, "He simply ignored the rules of our open relationship agreement". Vera recounted how she was becoming intrigued with Ismael's behaviour after a trip she had taken for a few weeks to a different province: "When I came back from the trip, I could not find a pack of condoms that I had left in my drawer. I asked him if he knew where the pack was and he told me that he had given it to one of his friends." She explained how that story did not make sense for her and later that day decided to check the message folder of his mobile phone. She discovered a number of intimate messages from a woman and confronted Ismael. After an initial denial, he admitted having an affair with the woman.

Vera was in shock and could not believe what was happening. While recounting the story to me, she emphasised how Ismael had justified that his affair was revenge for an affair Vera had had with her ex-boyfriend during the earlier stages of their

relationship, which she had not told him about, but which he discovered through his network of friends.

The events in Vera and Ismael's story, as well as the ones in Melissa's case, highlight how different agreements for the functioning of relationships (open or closed, liberal or orthodox) are guided by rules, and that there is always room and potential for such rules to be broken and to create discord within the couple. Simultaneously, it demonstrates the weight of ambiguities, feelings and the subjectivity of feelings, desires and expectations. For example, Vera was visibly shocked at the fact that Ismael had cheated on her; however, she simply ignored the fact that he was disturbed by her affair with her ex-*namorado* at the beginning of their relationship. Vera would look to her affair as highlighting doubts at the time, as she had recently dropped the ex-*namorado*, and was not sure whether Ismael was 'Mr. Right' for her. However, she also clarified that such doubts had vanished months later, as she became certain, that she wanted to marry Ismael. Her judgment seemed to have ignored the bitterness that the affair created for Ismael and the need for revenge that he felt. Thus, even if the couple do converse and agree on acceptable modes of functioning of the relationship, the sense of irrationality associated with intimate relationships, as well as the competition and eagerness to be fair, as demonstrated in the example, tend to be highlighted, creating and/or fomenting instances of crisis. Also, the timing of the betrayal, the feelings associated with the different stages of the relationship, the type of public relationship in place (*pitos*, *namoro*, engaged, married) do carry diverse meanings and expectations, which in turn contribute to diverse interpretations of what constitutes betrayal.

Indeed, I frequently heard both men and women commenting that cheating during the early stages of a relationship could be accepted, as people were still getting to know each other, and negotiating and tailoring their 'rules of engagement'. Also, there is a general acknowledgement that individuals, in this generation, enter into relationships with previous 'baggage' and that new partner have to work harder to convince them that they are worthy partners and can give more than prior partners. These beliefs are widespread, but they are not universal, as many of the participants also believed that relationships should be taken seriously from the beginning.

The manner in which individuals react to and deal with things when they go wrong, as well as the way in which the immediate network of individuals as well as society judges such behaviour in general, will be the focus of the next section.

7.3 Personhood and social judgement in times of emotional crisis

Vera's sense of self is deeply embedded in the notion of family and the relationship she constructed with her nuclear family. Thus, when she had a crisis in her relationship, she turned to her parents. She told me that she went to inform her parents about the dilemma she was having, and that she was thinking of getting a divorce. She emphasised how she felt betrayed and, indeed, in our conversations on the topic, she would start crying and expressing how sad she was about all of it. She also asked herself why she decided to get married, and ruin her youth and freedom by marrying someone who was not able to honour her: "Men are all the same! I really wanted something different and I now know that in Mozambique that is simply impossible."

A common reaction amongst women facing emotional dilemmas in their relationships with Mozambicans was a constant insistence on the incapacity of Mozambican men to commit to fair relationships. The solution, for a considerable number of women, was to venture into relationships with foreign partners (non-Mozambicans, preferably whites). This apparent racial divide is embedded in the socio-cultural construct that associates Westerners (here represented as white people) with the system of monogamy. This belief, based on discourses and representations of the West in Maputo rather than on practical evidence, claims that whites come from environments, where monogamy is greatly valued, in comparison to the local context of Maputo. Indeed, Solange confessed to me that she had given up trying to have relationships with Mozambicans, as these men were not ready to be in equitable relationships. Solange's equitability in relationships refers to a negation of the sexual division of labour and of a sexual double standard for men and women. In her third

namoro relationship with a European man, she highlights how she is able to negotiate more easily her positioning with such partners.

Self-blame was also a common feature in moments of emotional crisis. Vera, for example, started by assuming that her partner's affair was probably her fault, as she was the one proposing an open-relationship model for the couple and that perhaps such a scenario had allowed Ismael to feel free to have other relationships. Indeed, this line of argument was very popular amongst Vera's friends who had been constantly advising her against an open-relationship model.

Another attitude adopted by both women and men when confronted with problems in their relationships, especially cheating, was secrecy and behaving as if nothing had happened. For example, when I once spoke with Melissa, whom I had known since the first stages of my fieldwork, I shared that my partner had had an affair; she unexpectedly started to tell me story after story of her husband's affairs with other women. Until that day, she had never shared a single negative aspect about her husband. However, after my conversation about problems in my relationship, she opened up about the problems she had been having in her own relationship. It seems to be common for women to resort to secrecy when things go wrong in relationships, as there is a fear of being negatively judged; there is also a fear that other people (especially other women) might take that opportunity to get closer to her partner and 'steal' him from her. In addition, there is also a sense of embarrassment and a constant comparison with other women, which may lead women to feel less beautiful, less intelligent, less worthy of being with the man to whom she is engaged or with whom she is in a relationship. That said, some women (and others in later stages of the problem) tackle cheating and other general pitfalls in the relationship initiated by their partners as an opportunity to boost their own confidence and to highlight those areas at which they are good at. Solange, for example, explained to me how her previous partner cheated on her with a woman who had achieved less professionally than she had because he was frightened about her potential and her strength in their *namoro.* However, this kind of reply might be a type of self-justification, rather than based on how her partner was really feeling and what was his real reason for cheating.

Men also remain secretive about being cheated on, or they cheat when they are really interested and/or in love with a woman. Most men said that they would not tolerate their partners cheating, nor would they tolerate being confronted about their cheating by women with whom they did not have long-term relationships and/or for whom they did not have deep feelings. Zé, for example, complained that he lost the woman whom he still believes to be 'Mrs Right', because he admitted to a group of friends that she had cheated on him and they all pressured him to leave her. Peer pressure thus pushed him to end the relationship; however, a few months later, he decided that he still wanted her and asked her back. However, she refused. In his words, that incident taught him a lesson about keeping some things private and thinking first about his feelings, and not necessarily sharing them with others.

Extreme reactions to being cheated on may include the use of violence. Vera, for example, told me that she was planning to hire some *nindjas*[41] to rape the woman with whom Ismael was having an affair. While that is an extreme situation, it is not that uncommon. I have heard rumours of a few women from the middle class who have hired *nindjas* to beat up and/or rape the lovers of their partners. Violence is also common in arguments amongst the couple during times of crisis. A number of participants in this research engaged in and/or were victims of violence in their intimate relationships. Levi, for example, avoided taking his t-shirt off at a swimming pool barbecue because he had marks on his back from the scissors with which Carla had injured him after an argument. Vera once cancelled a meeting because she did not want to leave the house, because she had bruises on her face after a fight with Ismael. Ben took an ex-lover to court, as she broke the windscreen of his car, because he refused to open his apartment door to her.

In the discourse about violence, contradictory perspectives emerge. In general, violence is condemned due to the unforeseen consequences that such acts may lead to; and yet, it is viewed as being associated with intimacy. The argument is that, only

[41] *Nindja* is a term used to refer to a criminal. It is borrowed from martial arts movies, like the 1980s American Ninja. In Maputo, it is generally known that one can hire *nindjas* at some of the informal markets of the city like Barracas do Estrela or Barracas Mandela for criminal activities.

when intimacy is present, do individuals display their innermost characteristics, which would not be displayed in public. Physical intimacy, exchange of fluids, and sharing of life projects are all perceived as specificities that only intimate and bounded couples share. However, as discussed previously, control is also an entrenched aspect of intimate relationships. When such control feels lost, some individuals use violence towards the other as a way to re-exert their control. Vera, for instances, explained that, by hitting her partner, she wanted to make him aware of how hurt she was by his actions and his non-apologetic attitude. She thus incorporated violence in the set of characteristics only shared by intimate couples.

Vera's parents and the few friends who knew about the couple's use of violence condemned Vera's logic. However, many informants and general rumours in the city would point to the use of violence as a widespread control mechanism in relationships; a few informants mentioned witnessing the use of violence amongst their parents when they were younger. Coincidentally, during my fieldwork in July 2009, the Mozambican Parliament approved the Law against Domestic Violence, which aimed to "protect the physical, psychological, patrimonial and sexual integrity of women against all forms of violence exerted by her husband, ex-husband, partner, boyfriend and relatives" (Law 29/2009) with similar effects for men within the logic of gender equity. Even prior to the establishment of the law, domestic violence was criminalised. Amongst a number of male informants, there was a fear of perpetrating violence against their partners because some had witnessed acquaintances being jailed, because their wives had accused them of being violent towards them. However, as Victor put it, "it is not fair when the woman starts hitting you with a pan (...) what are you going to do? Go to the police station... no way... that is shameful for a man." Thus, one still witnesses a situation in which notions of hyper-masculinity hinder men from actively exerting their legal rights.

When middle-class couples are in a crisis, they may resort to witchcraft and sorcery. Clearly used as a control mechanism, as Geschiere (1997) discussed, the local term to identify the kind of *feitiço* (witchcraft) associated with intimate sexual relationship is *engarrafar* (literally 'to bottle'). This type of witchcraft works similarly as love charms and spells, referred to by Junod (1927: 108). In the city, such rituals are

practiced by a number of *feitiçeiros* (witchdoctors), who come from all provinces of the country and even from other African countries; they advertise their services in local newspapers and with posters on the trees of Maputo city.

By using witchcraft to 'bottle' the partner, one acquires the capacity to control him/her, as the *feiticeiro* would have made sure that the partner under the *feitiço* will follow the 'rules of engagement' of that couple, or those expected by the partner that has used the *feiticeiro*. In general, young adults of the middle class perceive themselves as 'modern'. Even in the subjectivities of their modernity, which incorporate 'African/Mozambican/Ethnical traits' (such as polygyny, and puberty rites of passage), there is a general disgust and fear of *feitiço*. Most simply state they do not believe in it, while others believe that it exists, but that it cannot affect them. Another group of youths, in contrast, believe that they must protect themselves against the effects of witchcraft and, through their relatives; they thus visit witchdoctors to protect their bodies against spells.

Religious young adults, mostly those praying at Pentecostal churches (Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus – IURD [Universal Church of the Kingdom of God], Igreja Deus é Amor, Igreja Envagélica Cristã Maná, Igreja Baptista Renovada e Igreja Envagélica Assembleia de Deus) – prominently Brazilian churches – believe that they can ensure protection against witchcraft in their churches. At IURD, for example, the pastors cater to such kinds of needs during the *Terapia do Amor* (Love Therapy) ritual. Van de Kamp's description of such ritual, which is aimed at breaking the "evil powers of witchcraft that keep persons entangled in depressing relationships of jealousy and hate", shows how a series of steps are followed in the ritual to mark the cleansing from evil forces:

> *"The participants had to walk through a bath of salt water in bare feet to neutralize any evil powers. And to strengthen the emotional and bodily experiences of transformation, dramatic sound effects accompanied them, as they walked." (Van de Kamp 2011)*

Clearly, these youth have an ambiguous relationship with witchcraft. Their positioning is mediated, in my view, with the notions of modernity, very much

influenced by the post-colonial Marxist regime that would clearly condemn practices such as witchcraft as out-dated and not fit for 'modern' beings. Such notions are reiterated by the Western media (the Western model being the most aspired to model of modernity), which simply does not bother to mention it. Nollyhood[42] productions, for example, which are becoming widespread in the country, highlight witchcraft in their story lines and those events are parallel in the imaginings of the general youth with backwardness and non-modernism. However, most of the men and women in this study had known and/or experienced stories related to witchcraft. Rita, for example, explained to me that, even though she had never believed in witchcraft before, she now saw no other alternative but to resort to it in order to keep her partner in their relationship.

Rita was in a long-term relationship with a man with whom she was in love. After about a year, she became pregnant and the problems started. Soon after the baby was born, the man left the house and started a relationship with another woman. Rita was desperate, as she was still in love with him and was not able to cover the expenses of the baby fully on her own, and she was receiving no help from her partner. After many months, during which she and family members tried to convince him to return to her and pay for their baby supplies, she followed the advice of a friend and went to see a witchdoctor. A few weeks after this consolation, her partner left the woman he was with and returned home. Rita was amazed! However, a few months later, he left the house again. Nonetheless, by the end of my fieldwork, I attended a number of events, at which the couple appeared together.

It seems that the advantages of the effects of witchcraft, even if temporary, are worth engaging with in desperate moments. However, reactions from the acknowledgment of being *engarrafado* (bottled) are sometimes extreme as I heard of examples of people dropping the relationship altogether or threatening the other partner.

Individuals revert to these different strategies to keep the peace when things go wrong in their relationships. However, as some of the examples demonstrate, even

[42] Nollyhood is the Nigerian film industry based in Lagos.

such strategies may not be sufficient to maintain relationships. Thus, in the next section, I will reflect on the notion of dignity and personhood in break-ups.

7.4 Love as a political stand

Although love is sometimes articulated as a space of emotional uncontrollability and irrationality, I argue that love is a highly political space. The crucial factor allowing individuals to enjoy being together in an intimate and a stress-less sphere, far from social pressures and expectations, is their agreement with regard to their general life philosophies, ideals and praxis, which I conceptualise as political. Different couples from my research sample shared a number of ideals that were key to remaining a couple. Such ideals thus highlight the couple's identity, and they are a core aspect for the couple maintenance that I like to refer as the sacred aspect of the couple's relationship. These sacred aspects of the couple allow them to remain a couple. By negotiating, merging and crafting new philosophies of life, both individuals define the couple's ideology. Such standpoints simultaneously work as a political stand that guides the couple and identifies them in society in general. Thus, it constitutes the couple's identity.

On the one hand, this political stand has a personal impact for each individual in the couple, as it allows each of them to be themselves with the other, thus permitting the above-mentioned relaxation to occur when intimate. On the other hand, the political stand has a social impact too, as the visible features of their sacred aspects positions them in society. For example, Vera and Ismael emphasise their intellectual conversations about national and international politics and economics. On the occasions that I was able to witness, they both dominated the debates and group conversations on these topics. The couple's level of complicity on such topics was very high, as they completed each other's examples; they would praise each other's positioning and analysis of specific topics, among others. Thus, I can argue that one of the spaces that unify this couple is the intellectual one. Freedom and relaxation in the intellectual space is something that allows their intimate relaxation to occur, but it also permits society to categorise them. Ismael and Vera were referred to as the

intellectuals amongst their peers, and highly praised in some social spheres, where their opinions were considered valuable.

The non-fulfilment of the political aspect of the couple's political stand creates problems in the management of relationships. Thus, irrationality and emotional uncontrollability emerges. These create the reasons for the fear of love that participants expressed. Indeed, it is not love that creates unmanageable situations but the lack or failure to accomplish those aspects that are sacred for the couple. Hence, political agreements are at the centre of healthy, intimate relations.

This final chapter has debated the role of love in the lives of the young adults in Maputo. It has highlighted as it works a catharsis mechanism while it is simultaneously feared. Also, love emerges as a space for couples to define their own ideology thus, positioning them politically in society by following specific lifestyle. The chapter also discussed emotional stability in relation to love and relationship and the challenges that emerge that may put people exposed to violence and witchcraft within romantic relationships. To finalize the thesis, the Conclusion below will round up the arguments highlighted so far and reflect on practical and theoretical implications for Anthropology and similar fields.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I explored the interconnections between sex, gender and class in a group of young middle class and elite men and women in Maputo, Mozambique. I argued that this specific group reconfigured pleasure and intimacy in ways that move beyond well-rehearsed arguments in the literature about the patriarchal nature of gender relations. Class was the frame of reference in this analysis, as I explored the emerging middle class and elite aesthetics and family taste within the backdrop of novel sexual practices, conspicuous consumption, global popular culture and the making and remaking of traditional gendered roles in Africa. In this sense, I believe that my work constitutes a contribution to the emerging literature on youth, gender, sexuality and subjectivity in (urban) Africa and more widely in Anthropology, as well as in other similar disciplines.

I have arrived at such conclusions, as I attempted to examine how young men and women from elite groups and from the middle class express and experience their sexuality, and as I examined how it is used and experienced in their construction of a sense of self in contemporary urban Maputo – a landscape characterised by rapid transitions, and widespread characteristics of post-independence, post-socialist and post-war sites. My analysis has led me to acknowledge that sexuality is embedded in young adults' lives as constituting an essential element of their self-expression as contemporary subjects of the world. The living and expression of sexuality is indeed a marker of adulthood as well as a relational category, since sexual attractiveness and sexual skills are perceived as vital characteristics in the scope of desired features for intimate sexual relationships in Maputo, similar to other sophisticated locations of the world. Thus, expressions of sex and intimacy are constructed as ways of belonging to a global youth urban and cosmopolitan culture that is experienced by young adults in Maputo via the media and social network platforms as well as via their first-hand interactions with individuals from other sites of the world, through their travels.

The immediate implication is that these practices contribute to highlighting contemporary everyday practices through which Africans manage to recognise and maintain an unprecedented familiarity with the world (Mbembe 2002), thus reducing the stereotypical 'othering' process towards Africans. My investigation demonstrates how, through their expression and experience of sex and sexuality, my interlocutors express something that is their own, which simultaneously concurs with the rest of the world in its generality. Moreover, specifically within this category, the young cosmopolitans identified themselves with a global subculture of youthful cosmopolitanism, in which fashion, entertainment and intimacy constitute significant elements.

Secondly, I have argued that manifestations of sex, sexuality and intimacy among young adults impel social transformation in their immediate social milieu. Young cosmopolitans' performance of non-hetero-normative sexual practices and the politics of management of emotional and intimate attachments in sexual relationships prompt timid transformations in gender praxis, thus denoting more equity, more autonomous sexual lives for women, and the emergence of discourses of control of the masculine body. Clearly, class is a marker here, as it becomes an element of levelling gendered relations that, in the context of Southern Africa, in particular, has widely been examined under the discourse of inequality, in the context of poverty and imbalanced access to resources. However, such transformations are limited: sexual experimentation and more equity in one's private sex life or access to professional competitive positions for women, even in this class, is still paired with public silencing and enormous pressure being placed on these women to keep their arrangements private.

The level of embeddedness of sex in young adults' lives is expressed in the title of the thesis, when I argue that sexual relationships create a space that grants young adults emotional as well as social acceptability. In such relationships, young adults have a chance to pair with individuals who share similar philosophies of life and to whom they are physically attracted, therefore constituting spaces in which they manage to enjoy sexual pleasure, to share political stances, to find emotional stability

and to distance themselves from social pressures – all of which they articulate as a space of love. Simultaneously, by pairing with each other and by performing their political stance, the couple displays to society an identity that grants them social acceptability. Also, romantic relationships are sociologically highly perceived in Maputo because they are regarded as indicators of maturity; preparations to build a family and have descendants are important. Consequently, being in a relationship confers a social status onto individuals, and consequentially, increases social acceptability. In this fashion, sexual relationships are lived and continuously (re-)constructed as spaces and symbols of social integration and, simultaneously, as expressions of emotional stability. These two dimensions contribute significantly to creating a balanced sense of self that links to notions of well-being, happiness and fulfilment.

As I argued in my thesis, sex and sexuality are part of the vast array of practices and ideas that contribute to one's formation of a sense of self. The contradictions experienced with regard to models of intimacy (the normalisation of the sexual appetite or monogamy, as I have discussed) are the cornerstone of an individual's processes of construction of his or her own sense of self. Such processes are contradictory in contemporary Maputo, where gender norms are being restructured, professional opportunities for men and women are shaping new subjectivities, and sexual practices are introducing nuanced ways of relating among couples and society in general. The management of contradictory expectations in relationships re-opens a space for the use of sorcery and witchcraft, and for the use of violence as a strategy to create an imagined sense of balance and harmony in domestic life. Even if people from this class were part of the post-independence regime at the vanguard of spreading and maintaining the values associated with the *Homem Novo* (New Man) – led by work, science and national unity, and distanced from 'tradition' in a secular state – the dilemmas of today's society seem to require a return to such cosmologies. It is at this intersection that I locate a fundamental question asked by the lives of young adults: Is 'modern African' an oxymoron?

This question emerges as I acknowledge that the processes described here are mediated by social notions of masculinities and femininities, relationships, personal

trajectories within the discursive frame of 'modern (and) Africa (n)', which is sometimes experienced as an oxymoron. Social notions in postcolonial Mozambique combine a number of values (imaginings of pre-colonial Mozambique and 'Africa'; colonial discourses; post-independence Socialist ideologies, post-structural adjustment and donor ideals), all of which are mediated by the intersection of varied modernities from the globalised world. Also, the personal trajectories of the young adults studied herein are varied and, even if they are all cosmopolitan, they are linked to diverse family backgrounds, regional values and racial identities. The combination of these diverse social notions and eclectic personal trajectories results in the redrawing of local "regimes of subjectivity" (Mbembe and Roitman 1995: 324), which create parallel sexual moralities where individuals navigate, often in conflicting ways.

As similarly found by Spronk, the urban youth

> *"find that they need to balance being African with being modern, which highlights their ambivalent attitude to modernity. Their ambivalence shows in the fact that their sexuality not only entails the promise of pleasure but also harbours a potential for anxiety because of the risk of being considered un-African"* (Spronk 2006: 225).

Thus, being a 'modern African' is an identity in itself, as the subjectivities of everyday life force people to navigate in diverse worlds. Conflicts emerge with regard to social acceptability, as, for example, when a peer jokes about an engaged man's refusal to respond to the advances of another woman, by referring to him as *fraco* (weak) and as lacking 'African' blood, for example.

Navigating successfully through such complex scenarios requires, as articulated by my interlocutors, skills and cunning, which is expressed in the word *esperteza* (cleverness). Such term equates to Honwana's 'tactical agency' (Honwana 2005). Honwana draws her concept from De Certeau's distinction between 'strategies' and 'tactics' (1984). Although Honwana's use of the term refers to a scenario of conflict in which child soldiers make use of tactical agency to "cope [with] and maximize the

concrete, immediate and circumstances of the military environment in which they have operate" (Honwana 2005: 32), the concept is still relevant for non-conflict scenarios, such as the one I am analysing.

Tactical agency gives young adults the capacity to manoeuvre through their social milieu in ways that allow them to capitalise on their positions. One could argue that such term would be suitable for reading realities in Africa, where, for example, tactical agency could theorise how citizens survive financial hardship in economically challenging conditions. Although the social and economic conditions in today's Mozambique are worsening (Hanlon and Smart 2008), the middle class and the elites tend to be less affected by such developments. Indeed, in today's Mozambique, the middle class (as well as those from upper groups) tend to form an economic elite that still manages to accumulate wealth due to its family relations, high educational levels and entrepreneurial skills. Thus, social expectations for these young adults, in the city, and within the generation that I investigated, are primarily related to the establishment of families. Therefore, both men and women consider sexual relationships as an investment, which may ultimately be concretised into marriage. However, within the complex regimes of subjectivities mentioned above, finding suitable partners and/or pursuing relationships according to the social expectation of family formation exposes a conflict between the ideals, morals and practices of individuals. Thus, young adults in Maputo to maximise benefits, which – in this case – are social and financial, as well as personal, use tactical agency.

Marriage for the young urban class becomes the cornerstone by which one's choices and models of life are defined. Both men and women define themselves as either in favour of or against the institution of marriage, and they act accordingly. It is here that 'tactical agency' (*esperteza)* becomes central in the management of relationships in order to attain a desired objective. Being *bom de cama* (good in bed) is an example of a tactical agency action, which, combined with seduction, can be used to captivate a particular man or woman. Also, some women and men willing to get married *ficam espertas/espertos* (become clever), even engaging in *golpe da barriga* (a woman's strategy of falling pregnant without consent from the partner) or *empacotar* (a man's similar strategy of quickly impregnating the woman) – a strategy

that in this class group seems to work – in order to start a family and convince the partner to marry. Secrecy and concealment, preferably in connection to networks of friends that will emphasise such concealment, also work as strategies for attaining intimacy related objectives that simultaneously grant social acceptability. Tactical agency also encompasses making functional choices for marriage partners. Thus, marrying somebody who is not necessarily the person with whom one is madly in love, but who will do as a spouse because they are responsible and kind, constitutes an enactment of such agency.

As in other sites across the African continent, marriage becomes a central point of reference for young adults and their sexual lives. Contemporary youth's sexual cosmopolitanism is expressed as a continuation of previous generations of Mozambican urban dwellers (the generation of their parents), as they were already *townsmen* (Mitchell 1969) within the category of *assimilado,* aspiring to marriages and greatly influenced by notions of love and partnership, with a social life that expanded to references of world music, cinema, fashion, amongst others. Thus, the historical context of Mozambique, particularly the specificities of Portuguese colonialism, brings to light differences among contemporary young adults. This differs from reports from other sites of the continent, where contemporary youth mark their gender philosophy and sexual relationships in opposition to their parents' generation. The examples of young professionals in Nairobi (Spronk 2006) and young couples in Southeast Nigeria (Smith 2007) are paradigmatic in this regard.

My research has shown how the study of sexuality constitutes an original and innovative approach to understanding what it means to the young in post-war and post-socialist urban Mozambique, and most likely in other contexts marked by similar transitions. The understanding of young Africans has too often focused on the poor, the criminal and the ill – the outliers of society. My research, I believe, constitutes a breath of fresh air, as it explores the everyday practices and experiences of young middle class and elites in urban Africa, a category often ignored. Theoretically, the research also challenges mainstream analyses of sexuality in Africa by negating, on the one hand, racial theories of hyper-sexualised masculinities and passive femininities and, on the other hand, the recurrent use of gender

inequalities to explain men and women´s sexuality, which has gained momentum in the context of HIV and AIDS. By ethnographically describing emotions and intimacy in the sexual relations and gender praxis, interesting dynamics emerge. A shift to wealthier urbanities shows how sex and sexuality become spaces that potentially reinvent gender patterns, albeit with limitations. Class becomes a token of new subjectivities, creating a quasi-third gender/sex or even heterosexual queer practices and *modus vivendi.*

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As I write this conclusion, much is happening in the city. In 2011, Maputo hosted the All-Africa Games, a major sporting event that is changing the infrastructural landscape of the city as well as exposing diverse expressions of African modernities to my interlocutors and other youths. I have received an invitation with terms of reference for a consultancy in the city, exploring men who have sex with men and lesbian identities: sexual expressions that are rapidly gaining visibility through exposure in local media programs and that are influencing the dynamics of sexuality that I have explored. The lives of my interlocutors and friends have reached new ground too: Victor, Ilundi and Nília got married. Both women are pregnant and expecting their second and first child, respectively. Melissa had a second child, and Marbella is moving to the Netherlands to pursue another specialisation of her degree, leaving her partner behind. Linda, Cláudio and Idalina have broken up with their partners. Cláudio has moved to a different province in the centre of the country, while Linda is progressing with her innovative and entrepreneurial activities. Idalina is betting on a scholarship to Australia as a *tactical strategy* to escape from the social questioning of why she ended such a long-term relationship, while simultaneously building up her social reputation through professional improvement.

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