WLSA MOÇAMBIQUE

RITES OF INITIATION
IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT:

ADJUSTMENTS, RUPTURES AND CONFRONTATIONS

CONSTRUCTING GENDER IDENTITIES

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And, finally, we cannot forget those young women and men who have not been given a voice to express their feelings of rebellion and indignation with respect to cultural practices denying them their rights. To all of them our heartfelt thanks for the lesson of courage they gave us.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AMETRAMO	Association of Traditional Healers of Mozambique
B.R.	Government Gazette (*Boletim da República*)
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CNAC	National Council for the Rights of the Child
CNAM	National Council for the Advancement of Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRM	Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EP	Primary Education
ESG	General Secondary Education
EGSE	Gender Strategy of the Education Sector
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FRELIMO	Mozambique Liberation Front
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
INDE	National Institute for Educational Development
INE	National Statistics Institute
INSIDA	National Survey on Prevalence, Behavioural Risks and Information about HIV/AIDS in Mozambique
MAGEEQ	Mainstreaming Gender Equality in Europe
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MINED	Ministry of Education
MISAU	Ministry of Health
MMCAS	Ministry of Women and Coordination of Social Action
PARP	Action Plan for the Reduction of Poverty

PARPA	Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty
PARPA II	Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty II
PEE	Strategic Plan of the Education Sector
PEEC	Strategic Plan of Education and Culture
PESS	Economic and Social Plan of the Health Sector
PNAC	National Plan of Action for Children
PNAM	National Plan for the Advancement of Women
PNE	National Education Policy
PNSSR	National Policy for Health and Sexual and Reproductive Rights
RENAMO	National Resistance of Mozambique
SADC	Southern African Development Community
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WHO	World Health Organisation
WLSA	Women and Law in Southern Africa

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Preface

Changing processes: initiation rites, culture and identities

This book contributes to the discussion about initiation rites in the current context, opening up new analytical paths and instruments that offer an innovative view on the theme, in the sense that it intends to treat the cultural institutions in constant mutation but also full of contradictions and subject to change. Thus, youths were also selected as target group who, going around in multiple spaces, offer more possibilities, in complexity and diversity, to enhance this change.

This WLSA Mozambique book appears in the wake of other studies with an interdisciplinary character and with a gender perspective, a cross-cutting analytical category of human relations, which have been helpful to deepen studies and thoughts, dealing with practices and rationalities that are founders of various types of inequality and oppression, so very present in society, and which seem to be part of the natural order and of social and political relations. The book appears in a period in which the public discussion around the defence of women's human rights is increasingly effervescent. Indeed, there is a dominant concern to present ideas that offer an alternative to orthodox views and the prevailing political stance, whose essence is based on immutability and the primacy of culture and tradition.

We thus seek to defend models of analysis that respond to the transitoriness and fluidity of cultural phenomena and to incite several voices, namely the marginal ones, to claim access to resources and benefits.

Dynamic models of culture

On the assumption that in the different cultures sexual identities are formatted by the rites into inequalities, which is in agreement with the dominant model that structures gender relations, the authors undertake various discussions and present distinct theoretical positions, seeking to emphasize the material and symbolic mechanisms developed by ritual teachings. The book questions aspects around the current interpretative limits about the body as a place of production and reproduction of a cultural, social and political order. Going beyond the disciplinary boundaries and in a fruitful dialogue, the book reassesses the epistemological and methodological premises of several authors who, in the study of cultures, emphasize analyses of social structures, symbolic classifications and achieved practices.

Thus, in the study of the rites there is a plural multi-dimensional effort to revisit the concept of culture according to analytical instruments emphasizing that the internal and external dynamics of culture, operating on the rites, construct identities by overtures and/or ruptures, acting as elements of consensus and communication, but also consolidating relations of domination. Indeed, the rites, in their capacity to organise and create social cohesion, to regulate behaviours according to precepts imbued with conformism to preserve and emphasize hierarchies, strengthen the differences and inequalities. In the same way, the apparatus to discipline the bodies are strengthened to legitimate a certain type of sexuality related to socially established standards of manhood and womanhood, originating from social and cultural representations constructed on the basis of the biological differences between the sexes and transmitted in the initiation rituals. These internalized representations are fundamental references for the constitution of the identity of individuals.

In the ritual teachings about the body, culture influences the instructions and practices to be adopted and acquired. In the

preservation of the rites as a cultural institution, adherence to and adoption of the norms as a requirement for integration is obvious, but non-adherence to certain values and codes is also clear, making behaviours, once specific ruptures occur, intelligible.

This aspect of the construction of identities, visible in the rites, i.e., the link between the individual and the collective, enables the youths to see themselves as adults, members of a group and to take possession of values and practices, but simultaneously to turn to a position of distinction from the collective in a process of renunciation to emphasize their self. But it is important to understand the meaning that is given to the acquired values in order to understand the mechanisms, the agency used by them to construct representations and practices that identify them as female and male persons.

Thus, in the presence of asymmetric power relations, we may be facing situations of maintenance, but also of non-acceptance on the part of the agents, even with the appearance of some resistance to the preservation of sexual behaviours. The authors emphasize that sexual identities are not static, unchanging. We need to consider that these identities are continuously being readjusted inside the self and in the social relations established with the other.

The study of cultural meanings is of great relevance when we focus on identity processes, rendering the interaction between individual and collective identities decisive and also how in this interaction similarities and differences are being changed, adjusted and ruptured. The importance of this study is to emphasize once again what is mentioned by James Clifford, quoted by Kuper (2001:274), when he states that a collective identity is an often discontinuous process of hybrid invention.

The study elucidates the countervailing power strategies unleashed, with a view to the renunciation of the transmitted knowledge, bringing to light signs of contestation or readjustments that enhance changes. On the part of some youths, we observe a rejection of the socially expected behaviours, while the teachings do not appear freely. Thus, there is visible coercion and the teachings of sexuality

are clearly a battle field. For example, the physical violence inflicted during the rites is contested by the youths and in certain places the girls reject the lengthening of the labia minora, or give signs that it isn't imperative that the transmitted values have to be internalized and assumed in their practices.

The authors offer thus a field that is open to a critical analysis which considers that the mechanisms of reproduction of female inferiority are internalized by the women themselves in the learning processes, transforming them only into mere objects (Bourdieu, 2002). We adopt a position which opposes the idea that the mechanisms of the production and reproduction of domination are so perfect, so free of fissures, that it is difficult to modify them or to present alternatives.

We thus argue that the socially informed body acts as producer and product in the process of appropriation. Individuals define themselves, see themselves simultaneously as agents, as subjects and as objects. The study leads to a thought that we are not dealing with a unitary subject, neither with a notion of a simple and abstractly homogeneous body, in the line of thought of theorists like Foucault (1987). The bodies of different ages and genders have distinct capacities and properties. There is an embodied consciousness in individuals, with aims, desires and agency (Turner, quoted by Vale de Almeida, 1996:15).

Criticizing a static view, the authors demonstrate that cultures are in permanent production and continuity. The urgency thus arises, in methodological terms, to be attentive to tensions and conflicts unleashed by the agents in the change processes of the social order and of culture as a dimension of this order.

We are in the presence of dynamic models of culture that correspond to fluid models of gender identities, laying emphasis on social change processes and the constructed and unstable character of cultural phenomena.

The reversal of the dominant social order implies a choice, autonomy as subjects, in which the claims and confrontations that permeate the

power relations in a model of domination hierarchizing rights, are clearly visible. Or it may, on the contrary, enhance empowerment.

In fact, the capitalization of these spaces to give rise to the conversion of sexuality in relation to the defined norms, materializing the exercise of sexual rights, would only be possible through the appropriation and manipulation of the elements shaping subordination. Though these female practices may constitute a vehicle for the reproduction of inferiority, they have the capacity and the potential to become simultaneously the strategic point for the modification of the systems, creating discontinuities. The very freedom inherent in the exercise of power stimulates the development of strategies, struggles, competition and contestation of the structures of domination.

Indeed, according to Douglas (1971) societies express a formal culture with well-defined ideas and areas of separation between order and disorder. The ambiguities and anomalies occurring at the borders of the systems bring a disorder which destroys the patterns, but also provides the raw material of standardization. Thus, the disorder itself has an ambiguous status, insofar as it represents not only the threat of destruction, but also a creative potential: symbolizing power and danger, it cannot simply be cleared away without leading to the ruin of all powers of the social and symbolic order. It is necessary to reduce the ambiguity, to control the disordered experience.

Emphasis is thus given to the dynamics instituted in the systems and to their instability in contexts where interculturality and the internal diversities of the groups are present.

Multiculturalism and human rights

In the presence of a rigid stance and a view of culture as a set of essentialized qualities and of a totalizing vision of multiculturalism, the authors emphasize for this case of the initiation rites on the one hand a concern to preserve cultural practices according to the social and political contexts lived by the communities, allowing integration and the recognition of each individual in the collective, but on the

other hand also the inherent mechanisms of oppression. They equally emphasize the need to be attentive to the appearance of combat strategies capable of giving answers to the inequalities subjacent to these processes, enhancing the defence of women's human rights. Indeed, one of the risks of the essentialization of cultural identities is to stimulate a cultural homogeneity that impedes the manifestation of differences and diversity within groups.

This fact brings us to the question of the defence of cultural rights, in which the need to ensure to a large extent self-determination is proclaimed, but mainly the right to be different, pointing out the importance of all individuals being allowed to manifest their ideals, to recreate their identity patterns and aspirations. However, the apology of the difference may clash with the notion that there should be coexistence and respect for cultural diversity.

The book concludes that the paradox between human rights, cultural rights and cultural diversity leads to culture being in constant production, subject to changes brought about by social actors, as subjects of rights, and that the State should discourage cultural practices that violate these rights, rejecting cultural models that result in a process of aggravating the subordinated position of women, thus promoting inequality.

In fact, in the guise of preserving tradition we observe a revival of cultural manifestations (the rites are some of the more paradigmatic examples) that reveal the need to preserve an order shaped by the dominant patriarchal ideology. As Lenclud (1987:118) clearly emphasizes, the particular usefulness of a tradition is to enable and offer all individuals who express and reproduce it in daily life, the means to state their differences and to ensure their authority and power.

The rites clearly *genderize* gender identities, not only because they reproduce the social and cultural model of patriarchal domination, but also because they strengthen and legitimate it, through the ceremonies, the spaces and the mechanisms that secure the rites, i.e., secrecy, fear and punishments. But we have to recognise that the mechanisms created to shape their social role need to be

deconstructed and reanalysed, on the basis of the new realities and contexts in which they occur.

Changes in the rites

The rites viewed as symbolic actions and standardized through their repetition in social interaction have been subjected to political and social circumstances experienced by the community. Structured in three sequential stages (separation, margin and aggregation) they have meanwhile been gradually modified, remaining however the primordial objective - the maintenance of gender inequalities around the ascribed social roles, the exercise of sexuality and of rights. In the part of the study dealing with the changes in the rites, the authors offer a field open to a critical analysis of the studies that consider power relations and inequalities between women and men in the field of sexuality, without questioning the structural aspects of the subordination of women. Thus, for example, in the teachings about sex, the disciplining apparatuses of the bodies in general dictate rules under a binary regime: licit and illicit, permitted and prohibited, that are accentuated to legitimate a certain type of sexuality related to socially established standards of manhood and womanhood. These standards originate from social and cultural representations constructed on the basis of the biological differences of the sexes and transmitted through the rites.

These internalized representations are fundamental references for the constitution of the female identity, but mainly for teaching women that their value and their power reside in their body and in its use. The production of meanings on the basis of the body of the other is defined and regulated through discursive practices produced by the disciplinary power designating them, but in which violence prevails. In this way, the apparatus of this construction requires a type of teaching that frequently depends on an ideal that a certain knowledge is fixed to certain identities on the basis of a restrictive power.

The book makes us reflect on the fact that sexuality, as the other dimensions of identity, is a social construction and that it does not

only refer to genital sex. Dealing with this problem presupposes to recognize it as an approach with a multidimensionality at various levels. As Helle-Valle (2005) points out, sexuality should be recognized as a human dimension, which the more it is known and understood, the more the need to broaden its meaning is recognised.

Among its functions held in secret is the sexual repression of girls. The sexual control of the reproductive potential is focused on women. The role of father and husband is defined in terms of authority in relation to his dependants and this relation is formulated through a metaphor of the husband being the head. What gives a girl the status of being a woman is conception, because the female identity is intimately confined to her mother function.

The study is based on the assumption that identity processes function as cultural coordinates in the process of the constitution of subjectivity. In addition to positioning concrete individuals in their relations with the various social groups existing in the cultural contexts in which they are included, these individuals are however marked by unquestionable functions and roles. But as already stated, the book mainly calls attention to the changes, which are disturbing the scenario of a supposed simplicity and immutability of the rites as expression of an essential culture. In this process, the role of the school in the construction of an awareness of citizenship is crucial.

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Ana Maria Loforte

Introduction

"No person is your friend who demands your silence, or denies your right to grow".

Alice Walker

"The essence of Human Rights is the right to have rights".

Hannah Arendt

The rites, whether of passage, of birth, of marriage or of death, have been studied as an autonomous object by the fields of study that make up the social sciences, particularly since the last decades of last century, when mainly anthropology and sociology put the spotlight on the importance of cultural contextualization and its relation to the political, economic and social domains. I.e., the new approaches interfere in the "loss of innocence" of the rites as the expression of a vital, primitive and immobile culture, shifting the gaze to the power structure that influences and guides their functions, organising the representations and practices of the social actors. This means that the rites, as claimed by Van Gennep (1977), regulate and constrain the individual on the basis of a more general order, producer of values and behaviours, through sequences and mechanisms that aim, by conformation, at the preservation of the positions of individuals in the social hierarchy.

This approach, which has its origin in dynamic sociology, recognises the weight of structure (and of the dynamics that organize themselves within it) on the actions of individuals, or rather, on the embodiment of the "safety" mechanisms of the order, which determine social identities. It is in this sense that the rites appear as elements of social and cultural cohesion, allowing the integration and

recognition of each individual in the collective. The structuralists and post-structuralists, such as Bourdieu (1989), are heirs to this position. They see in the constituent dispositions of the *habitus* the decisive elements of the identity construction and action of individuals. Although Bourdieu has in his latest works moved from an "aggressively" reproduction-based vision, as is the case of his work about formal education, to a view centred on the resources that individuals may manipulate to influence, adjust and change the dispositions inherent in what is acquired and appropriated by them, it is in the Weberian tradition that the weight of structure shifts to the system of meanings that individuals ascribe to what is embodied (evident in gestures and discourse), in their search for recognition by others.

While individual identities acquire meaning in their relation to the collective identity, it is important, and even more so in the case of our study, to understand how individual identities are constructed through overtures to and/or ruptures with the collective, and how the ephemeral and transitory character of these identities is influencing the cultural order, whether by the inclusion of new elements or by a change of the meanings that are given to the old elements.

On the other hand, the approach in the writings of Foucault regarding the disciplinary power that is exerted on the body, shaping it through the embodiment of a dominant normativity, made an important contribution to highlighting the importance of sexuality as a battleground, where the elaboration of the naturalization of subordination is constructed and where inequalities are affirmed, not only between women and men, but also between those women and men who are located at the margins of what is socially accepted. Foucault's suggestion, as well as that of Derrida and Butler, while respecting the differences existing between these authors, presupposes viewing discourses as cultural products, but also as producers of the legitimation of the patriarchal order, of a matrix that restores gender hierarchy based on male power. In this sense it is fundamental to identify the mechanisms that enable the establishment of gender inequality as a truth.

However, and though many studies (Martinez, 1989; Braço; 2008; Bagnol, 2011) conducted in Mozambique, and not only there, have produced remarkable analytical work about rites as a cultural institution, with many references to the construction of manhood and womanhood, the question of the essentialization of the difference producing inequality between men and women is only touched upon superficially. Though the reasons may be found in the authors' need to describe the realities found ethnographically, without entering into fields playing with the power structure and with social gender relations, it is also true that only at the end of last century the first studies appeared that introduce a methodological approach which, analysing the rites on the basis of a system of distinctions, allows an understanding of the gender order, necessary condition of its efficacy (Peirano, 2003).

This research about initiation rites results in the first place from a study conducted before about juvenile identities (Osório and Silva, 2008), in which the discourses of girls and boys took us systematically, whenever we were dealing with the construction of womanhood and manhood, to the importance of the contents of the teachings of the rites, maintaining in most cases the same attributes that classified and hierarchized social roles, legitimating the naturalization of inequality based on anatomical differences.[1] This situation was all the more interesting to analyse, as the target group (girls and boys who attended the 1st level of Secondary Education) were at a point in which it was not obvious that the values acquired would continue to be considered decisive in the organisation of their representations and practices. As an instance of socialization, the rites make the silence audible that traverse the teachings of the "use" of the body in the family, whether through the meanings that are given to the sexual division of labour, or through the "mute" prohibitions and taboos that format gender identities and, within

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[1] However, in the discourse of many girls important changes regarding the classical model of domination were also noticed: the number of children they would like to have was much smaller than what was expected (and what common sense considered certain), while they indicated schooling and the practice of a profession as their main future prospects.

these, sexual identities. In the same way, as the rites are of initiation, they initiate the youth at a stage of their life cycle, i.e., into the world of the adults, with a socially determined and accepted order and hierarchy. Thus, the rites, which were not dealt with in the above-mentioned study, are a subject to be explored further.

On the other hand, and in the second place, it was to be expected in the Mozambican context that the initiation rituals would have been object of readjustments and even possible ruptures of the teaching mechanisms, since, in the course of the last 50 years, at political, economic and social changes have occurred, to which the civil war and the change of the political regime are not extraneous, determining the disruption/recomposition of the institutions, such as the family while in a more or less accelerated way the elements of modernity were changing (in conflict or not) the previously existing senses of belonging.

Thus, according to some studies, in many regions of the country the rites were either no longer performed as in times past, or they were very simplified, there being however attempts to renew them, whether through the introduction of sexual/reproductive health-related questions, or by scheduling them outside the school calendar (Bonnet, 2002). There are indications that in some regions the rites, as they had been designed traditionally, are being replaced by ceremonies conducted in churches (Martinez, 1989). The duration of the rites can vary a lot from one region to another, from one ethnolinguistic group to another, while in the financially better off families, longer and more strongly "traditionalized", rites are performed, in the belief that, in so doing, they become more authentic.[2] At the same time, professionalization of the "masters" and "matrons" is observed, which conveys the idea of a certain institutionalization which, while on the one hand legitimizing the

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[2] During the fieldwork it was also observed that the larger number of days used for the rites and the extreme formality of the aggregation phase corresponds to an affirmation of the social status of the families, many of whom already completely urbanized. As we will refer to in the course of the study, this situation is apparently related to the manipulation of culture to which the new political and economic elites resort to affirm themselves.

contents and means of socialization that are part of the rites, on the other hand gives visibility to the ambiguous and indistinct relation with the knowledge acquired in other spaces, such as the school. In other words, the neutrality and universality of school knowledge and the de-hierarchization in terms of gender, which the school transmits, are confronted with practices and knowledge based upon an order and a hierarchy determined by sex and age (Osório and Silva, 2008). This does not necessarily mean the abandonment of the meanings given to the rites, but their "adaptation" to new contexts. As example we mention two types of situations: the first one was transmitted by informants working in State institutions, who deconstruct the rites into two parts: one that provides "respect" for the elderly, and that is strongly supported by the decision-making bodies, and one that teaches about sex and that is either contested or object of "intervention", as happens with the discourse of HIV and AIDS.[3] The other situation concerns the demystification with respect to the invention of false stories (if a girl and a boy have sexual intercourse very early, the next of kin may die or, in the case of boys, the male sexual organ becomes "spoiled"), what makes the matrons and masters to resort simultaneously to the negative relation between the start of sex life and the continuation of studies, thus establishing moral parameters for the practice of sexuality, while they continue at the same time teaching the girls and boys that masculinity and femininity are located in the power structure (situated in the sexualized body), which cuts across the relations between partners.

One of the major challenges of our study is precisely to understand how, vis-à-vis the influence of new contexts, such as the school, groups of friends, entertainment venues, music and the discourses about the body, sexuality and human rights, produced in the official

[3] Work has been done by health agents with the purpose of using new blades for each circumcised boy. On the other hand, there is a lot of information ascribing to circumcision the effect of eliminating the danger of HIV and AIDS contamination, which has somehow been dangerous, given the way in which the information is perceived by the populations. This means that circumcision is understood as a kind of vaccine against HIV and AIDS, which leads to the discourse of the uselessness of the use of condoms.

domain and in the "informality" of stories or in talks with their pairs, girls and boys develop appropriation and renunciation mechanisms of the knowledge transmitted in the rites and embody it in their identities. This means to understand to what extent the countervailing power strategies developed by girls and boys may break with the hierarchized gender model, giving rise to de-hierarchization or, on the contrary, recreate new models of domination, which may eventually not be in agreement with the socially expected behaviours as learned in the rites.

On the other hand, though the phenomenon of initiation rites occurs both in urban and in rural environments, it is a challenge, from a scientific research point of view, to establish a relation between these rites and other social phenomena such as early marriages, unwanted pregnancies and school dropouts. However, in academic and law circles the question of the existence or not of a relation between initiation rites, dropouts and early marriages is still not being addressed, while these are one of Mozambique's most urgent current problems. In fact, data about the situation of girls and children (UNICEF, 2010) suggest the existence of some convergence between what is called traditions and cultural practices and gross school attendance rates. Indeed, even recognizing some improvement in the asymmetries between the school attendance rates of boys and girls, it is clear that one of the biggest barriers for girls having access to and stay at school are "tradition and culture", in which the expression "tradition and culture" is meant to refer to aspects that hinder or make full access to the right to education impossible. In this sense, though a necessary relation between early marriages of girls and initiation rites is not established from the outset, there is a certain consensus that these practices appear to have a negative influence on the primary education attendance rates. In fact, according to some surveys (UNICEF, 2010) early marriages are for example considered being one of the factors "that are prejudicing not only access to school, but also retention and the completion of levels of schooling, mainly on the part of girls" (UNICEF, 2010: 21).

For example, the statistics relative to the education sector – an important indicator to assess gender inequalities – indicate that

between 2003 and 2008 the net primary school attendance rate in the country increased from 60% to 81%, while the net general secondary education attendance rate increased from 8% to 20%, which still is significant, if we consider what this fact represents in terms of losses between the two levels of education (MINED, 2010).

The structural problems of the national education system are, without a doubt, a key factor of its inefficiency. However, the available information indicates the existence of sociocultural barriers which, in the specific case of girls, make that they face big difficulties in their growth, which not only contributes to their low school performance, but also contributes to discourage the continuation of school attendance (UNDP, 2000). In fact, there are references to the existence of tension between formal and traditional education, comprising the latter a series of practices such as early marriages, *lobolo*,[4] initiation rites and so-called alternative teaching, especially regarding Koranic studies (UNDP, 2000). For example, even in places where initiation rites are not an institutionalized practice, such as Matutuíne District, available data indicate that in that area the enrolment rate for girls is low (43.5%), particularly for the more advanced years.[5] A report about women's human rights indicates that "the low enrolment rate on the part of girls is also due to the fact that they are at an early age obliged to take charge of household chores, such as cooking, cleaning the house, fetching water, looking after the young ones. In some areas many families don't not even plan to register a girl for school but do plan to send a boy to school. As mentioned before, 'marriage' at an early age usually forces girls to leave school" (International Federation for Human Rights, 2007:13).

Along the same lines, a diagnostic study conducted by the Ministry of Education (MINED, 2005) indicates that the national education system experiences a substantial loss of girls in the "transition from Basic to Secondary Education". During the year of the survey (2004) it was established that the participation of girls in ESG was estimated

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[4] Matrimonial compensation common in the south of the country.
[5] Government of Matutuíne District (2008). *Plano Estratégico de Desenvolvimento do Distrito de Matutuine*. Bela Vista.

at 36%, against 42% in Primary Education (EP). In general, with the exception of Maputo, the prevalence of big gender differences and a lack of fairness were observed. The enrolment rate of girls (for each 1000 women) varied in this period from half to two thirds in relation to the total enrolment rate. About 40% of the students in ESG-1 and in ESG-2 were girls. However, in some provinces this proportion was even smaller, reaching 20% in Niassa, against 63% in Maputo City. Moreover, the study also established that the dropout rate of girls was twice as high as that of boys, at both levels (MINED, 2005).

Having as target group girls and boys between 12 and 18 years (subjected to the rites) attending grade 7 and as reference group female and male teachers of the same level of education (also ritualized), the research aimed at identifying the role of the rites in shaping social identities, particularly sexual identities, and how the "ritual education" may shift an interest in the school to marriage or to work. As we will expand below, our approach is based on an analysis of the material and symbolic mechanisms developed by the ritual teachings and by the means used for their agency, seeking at the same time to recognise signs of contestation that may enhance changes in the embodiment and subjectivation processes. By taking female and male teachers as reference group we intend to establish by evidence the existence, or not, of differentiated normative patterns in the construction of manhood and womanhood. As these ritualized female and male adults have work and status, it was our intention to understand how the activities they perform determine the construction of predispositions that allow, or not, a questioning of the importance of the rites for their recognition as women and men and change or recompose the power that structures social gender relations.

We also selected as reference groups traditional (and religious) leaders, matrons and masters who direct the initiation rites and public officers who work directly in State bodies with the youth and with sexual and reproductive health. Our intention was to crosscheck the information about the function, contents and means used in the rites, so as to understand how the negotiations/alliances/conflicts are played out, and which strategies are applied by the two orders of

power. In the same way we sought to identify through the interviews of matrons and masters which differences exist between their "time" and the current one, which solutions they find to replace old knowledge (questioned by modernity), which elements still remain crucial for the efficacy of the rites and also which perceptions (and frustrations) they have with respect to the available processes, means and (material and symbolic) resources.

We also interviewed members of civil society organisations who work at local level with the youth and with sexual and reproductive health. The objective of the inclusion of this group was to identify the existence of strategies for the defence of sexual and reproductive rights and their link with formal and traditional power bodies.

The first phase of the study occurred in 2011, in Maputo City and Province, and the second phase in 2012, in Maputo, Zambézia, Cabo Delgado and Sofala provinces, with a total of 244 interviews having been conducted. Considering that 14 interviews were conducted of focus groups, comprising 4 to 6 people, the total number of interviewees goes up to 300.

Although the objectives of the research have been achieved, there were some constraints which to a certain extent interfered in the analysis.

One of the main constraints, occurring in all spatial units, was the difficult access to information, mainly on the part of the health sector, which did not have data regarding assisted institutional deliveries compiled by age. On the other hand, though information about school enrolment, pass and dropout rates, was available in the provincial directorates of education, it was sometimes divergent from the information given in the districts and schools. The absence of these data limited the availability of reliable knowledge about deliveries of adolescents, dropouts due to pregnancy and early "marriages".

Another problem consisted of attempts on the part of political power bodies to control the traditional leaders and the masters and matrons, mainly in Cabo Delgado, resulting in the production of an

ambiguous discourse, varying between the politically correct and frustration about interference which they felt being victim of. This problem was subsequently solved with the use of informal sources, which allowed interviewing matrons and masters more removed from the power bodies. However, the interviews of religious leaders were hampered by the suspicion that the research team had been "ordered" by the political power and by the existence of conflicts within some of the religions, particularly the Islamic one (in Cabo Delgado), where we were not only facing social control over the faithful, but, essentially, the pursuit of legitimacy conferred by the political power.

Regarding the interviews with the youths, we had to deal with the difficulty, already encountered in other studies, of the selection of female and male interviewees, given that it has not been possible to find mechanisms (though precise instructions had been given) that would prevent school managements from interfering with the selection of girl and boy students. This may have influenced the discourses (though the key theme could anticipate this situation), frequently interrupted by moments of silence, timidity and a few tears. The way out of this kind of problems was to start with the feelings of the girls and boys with respect to their life in the family, at school and with friends, entering subsequently into the initiation rites, seeking not to individualize the experience of the student. Whenever felt useful, the female or male interviewer showed having knowledge about the theme, namely the local name of plants used in the rites. This allowed the girls and boys to become less inhibited and made it possible to obtain valuable information. On the other hand, and this situation was only observed in Cabo Delgado Province, all girls and some of the boys did not speak Portuguese, so that the support of translation was necessary. We think that many of the difficulties encountered were not only related to poor knowledge of the Portuguese language or with the proposed theme, but also to the inadequate understanding of the questions, which once again brings us back to how school teaching is being conducted, and to a very authoritatively structured teacher-student relation.

The chapters in this book have been organised taking into account the study object and particularly our intention to understand the place of the rites in the construction of social identities, namely sexual identities, and the power relations and strategies developed by the powers in confrontation. We will therefore in the first part discuss the conceptual tools, namely regarding the discussion about the operationalization of the concept of culture, the relation between power and culture and the theoretical conflict between tradition, culture and modernity and, furthermore, the body ritualization mechanisms and processes. In the second part we will analyse the international and national instruments for the protection of human rights of children and women and public policies, with special relevance for gender policies in the education and health sectors. In the third part we will analyse the rites as a means to maintain social and cultural cohesion and we will also identify, in terms of political action, how the various powers (State and "traditional" powers) establish agreements and defuse conflicts. We will also discuss the appropriation of meanings by the various agents (the signifier-signified relation), taking into account the gender relations. In the fourth part we will identify the mechanisms and processes used by the rites to shape manhood and womanhood, recognizing the markers that "organize" female and male sexuality and the appropriations which girls and boys make of them in the construction of representations and practices about sexuality, analysing as well the conflicts between the different teachings (and spaces) about masculinity and femininity and the discourses about human rights.

Chapter I - Theoretical Dilemmas, Dimensions of Analysis and Sample

The studies about initiation rites conducted in Mozambique have a diversified approach, depending not only on the political contexts in which they were conducted, but also on the preferred theoretical frameworks.

1. Culture and sexuality

The theoretical and methodological concerns were gradually identified during the performance of the pilot study. They also resulted from the fieldwork in the spatial units, in which the concept of culture, the many possible approaches to be adopted and the question of the ritualization of the body, were key concerns. These notions defined in the framework of the research have guided the analysis of the discourses and were confronted with the narratives of the female and male interviewees.

However, it is noted that research about initiation rituals, as an instance of socialization, has preferred a descriptive cultural approach, dissociating itself from social factors that would allow to emphasize contexts and understand the internal and external dynamics which, acting on the rites, add or remove functions from them that restructure the hierarchies and employ differentiated ways and forms of shaping them. Isolating realities in a cocoon merely characterised by stability and doing without the crosscutting view offered by the application of a conceptual framework that enables analysis, the knowledge obtained is only informed by common sense (even when it appears in the guise of erudition), producing partial and parcelled knowledge, apparently objective, but marked by the beliefs and convictions comprising the ideological system.

This methodological isolationism in the treatment of cultural operators presents difficulties, when one intends, as is the case, to identify the factors that constrain the action of individuals, whether those performing functions in State bodies or those directing and determining the ritual functions, or even the girls and boys who subject themselves to and acquire the teachings transmitted in the rites.

This theoretical question obliges us to revisit the concept of culture and its operationalization, so as to clarify our choices in the treatment of the initiation rites. We should however take note of the difficulties of rendering the concept objective and thus of the impossibility to make it uniform, and of its dependence on the various fields of the social sciences. The approaches we have selected have more to do with methodological questions raised by their application and with the dialogue and discussion between the various currents than with a concern of the various disciplines to historize culture and with the attempts of co-option for only one specific field of knowledge. From this point of view and as we consider them already sufficiently questioned, we would like to make it clear that we will not enlarge on the essentialist and positivist currents, though they sometimes still constitute resources that are used to naturalize a tradition that is considered the essence of the "original culture".

Whenever deemed opportune, this discussion will be exemplified and clarified by those cultural factors and phenomena which, intervening in shaping the rites, help us to understand the theoretical options.

Concerning the ritualization of the body and as we will do with respect to the concept of culture, our objective is to enter into a dialogue with the different positions which discuss in the theoretical and methodological field the relation between the functions of the rites and their social utility as element of identity cohesion.

As we will have the opportunity to present, when dealing with this theme we will seek to confront the approaches that take collective identities as fixed and unchanging, opposing then with a perspective that emphasizes the ephemeral and "in transit" character of individual identities. The identification of the processes of

subjectivation and of the mechanisms of appropriation of the elements which, in the various spaces give meaning to girls and boys (and also to adult women and men), will allow an understanding of the multiple meanings ascribed to the teachings transmitted during the initiation rites and of how they are embodied in representations and practices.

In the context of this study, our main concern was to understand how the marks are established on the body which project it as the locus of production and reproduction of the political, social and cultural order, recognizing the mechanisms that transform it in a field of revelation and support of powers, mainly the power establishing social gender relations.

For this reason, special importance was given to sexuality, to the resources made available for its practice and to the different possibilities of expression constructed in the interstices prescribed and permitted by the power structure, which may be subject to readjustments and ruptures with expected sexual identities (through the embodiment of new dispositions).

2. Culture: a dimension of the social order

The functionalist school, in all its diversity, can be considered to have established itself as decisive for the operationalization of the concept of culture by seeking a generalization characterized by the search for general laws through cultural phenomena that perform a function, thus contributing to the internal cohesion of a system of values and beliefs evident in the behaviour of individuals. This static view of culture, defended by Malinowski (1975), heir to the Newtonian mechanics, excluding the notion of conflict and subjectivation, conceives culture as a prescriptive whole which, producing and enforcing norms, hegemonizes individual behaviours.

Borrowing from the natural sciences, Malinowski (1975) argues that culture, existing as a response to people's needs, is a harmonious whole, dissociated from all dynamics that make it a phenomenon in permanent renewal. Malinowski's suggestion presupposes a

deterministic vision (and above all essentialist in its content and functionality) in which culture is taken as an interaction between the evolution of biological needs and the production of ways of thinking and behaving with the function of integration, cooperation and maintenance by distinction from other cultures.

Also in the framework of the (structural) functionalist theory, Parsons (1967) analyses in his work culture as an autonomous system, separating and antagonizing what he categorizes as traditional culture and modern culture. Although different from Malinowski, Parsons also reduces the plurality and differentiation to their capacity of integration in the system as a whole (Leite, 1998), i.e., each element contributes to the cohesion of the structure. This presents problems in the analysis when, in contexts of change, new cultural markers questioning the system are not assimilated by it.

However, Parsons (1967) analyses in his work culture as a subsystem of significant symbols for its agents, mediated by institutions that aim at cooperation and integration. In this sense, culture is seen as a subsystem of the general system of social action, comprising common values and patterns for the actors which thus guide their behaviours. This means that the function of the dispositions of each individual and her/his action is always the sharing of values, conditioning the autonomy of the individuals to a common cultural pattern (Ribeiro, 2006). Influenced by Durkheim,[6] Parsons invokes the principles of solidarity that categorize social organisations, contrasting their absence as an anomy. This also means that the cultural embodiment produces mechanisms to control deviations, strengthening the actions of belonging through symbolic elements recognized by the actors in interaction. The stability and the imperative role which Parsons ascribes to the cultural system, conditioning and constraining social actions, dislocate the power structure and the

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[6] Durkheim breaks with the evolutionist and hierarchical idea of culture to defend an idea of culture as a system constraining ways of thinking and living and which was transcendent to individuals. Concerned about understanding the phenomena conferring social cohesion, as in the study he conducted about suicide, Durkheim emphasized elements of specific contexts to explain the practices of actors.

transitory character of the social order from an interpretation of the cultural reality (France, 2009).

Emphasizing the normative function of institutions, Parsons (1967) disregards the factors of change and actions of actors which change/influence institutional practices. It is the case, for example in Mozambique, of the accommodation of institutions, such as education and health, which perform "adjustments" to reconcile excluding cultural practices in the framework of public policies that are meant to be global. The question becomes all the more ambiguous as the institutional discourses adjust the norms in the context of for example the initiation rites, to the representations and practices of the actors placed in dominant positions in the power structure. In this sense, Garfinkel (1992) analyses the negotiated adjustment of the rules by the agents on the basis of power relations that are developed in specific contexts. This means that, while for Parsons the actions of individuals are determined by normative patterns that control the reproduction of the order, for Garfinkel "the actions of the agents are rooted in practice and in common sense in differentiated cultural contexts" (1992:15). This position defends the methodological need to take into account the struggles, conflicts and negotiations by the agents who, acting in specific contexts, produce adjustments/restructuring of the social order and of culture as a dimension of this social order.

As Giddens states, "contexts form action scenarios and agents usually resort to their qualities as a guide for what to do and what to say to each other" (1996:309). This means that in order to understand cultural realities, recognising which value systems and beliefs condition individual practices is as important as the attributes that organize the individuals' representations with respect to themselves and to others. In this perspective, it is important to identify how the recognisable elements of group belonging are constituted, through intersubjective processes and by means of a language revealing meanings (Habermas, 1987). Through their discourses individuals refer to social practices and representations that make products out of them of the same experience, simultaneously reflecting the appropriations embodied by the individuals.

From this point of view, the understanding of culture leads us to an analysis of the discourse relative to the rites and to the meanings they assume for individuals, to the choices relative to what is more or less important to mention, taking into account the interlocutors and the spaces in which the discourses are produced. In this sense, it was interesting, and contrary to male discourse, to observe the lack of importance conveyed by girls to learning about sexuality in a ritual (and also school) context. It was however profoundly present in their answers to questions regarding the body, in which their discourse about sexual hygiene presented itself constructed on the basis of attributes that characterise the practice of sexuality taking into account male expectations.

So, what we also intend with this research is to understand how and through which mechanisms, in contexts relative to concrete realities, the conflicts/readjustments between the preservation of values and practices and a social order are produced, creating change, not only regarding alterations, often apparently formal, such as the time and duration of the rites, but also with respect to the combination and/or divergence between identity models, expressed in not only plural but even antagonistic discourses, such as the discourse of equality and the discourse of power hierarchies, social roles and functions based on cultural immobility.[7]

Refusing the reductionist approach of culture (as is proposed by the functionalists and the structuralists)[8] to an epiphenomenon or to an existing system in addition to the economic and social structures, Bourdieu introduces the concept of *habitus* as the set of inherited and acquired dispositions expressing the values and practices of a given group, subject to strategies that allow to explain the

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[7] When we consider the duration and the time selected for the performance of the rites as apparently formal mechanisms, we refer to the need to pay attention to the importance these aspects can assume, mainly when these alterations correspond to the introduction of values produced in other spaces, such as the school.

[8] While for the functionalists each element contributes to the cohesion of the structure, for the structuralists the focus of the analysis should be the structure and the form, focusing on action, allowing the existence of regularities. Both perspectives do without coordination and communication between the various social, political and economic domains.

constitution, production and displacement of symbolic capital in a process of circulation and exchange of goods. This perspective leads us to two new elements: one concerning the cultural communication and embodiment mechanisms and another one referring us to the existence of a relative autonomy of the cultural domain (without which there is no longer a link between the various domains) in relation to the economic and social domains. It is this relative autonomy which allows an analysis of the narratives and cultural forms that contribute to the construction of collective identities and to the recognition of the cultural traits becoming common legacy.

Regarding the initiation rites, we think that it is important to take into account how and through which mechanisms they intervene in the construction of group identities and how they relate to/antagonize/readjust the objective, succeeding, or not, in maintaining identity cohesion. It is equally relevant to identify how formal power strategies act and are compatible with cultural institutions, so as to preserve the social order, i.e., how the cohesion, being constrained by the context, exposes itself to new elements that may, or may not, be absorbed and integrated. The representations and informed practices (and communicating with other domains of the political field) allow an understanding of how the relations between individuals are regulated and how power, structuring these relations, classifies, categorizes, selects and predicts what dominates. For example, in the case of the matrons and masters who direct the rites, it is interesting to understand the factors, how control of/contact with formal State authorities and/or increased access of girls and boys to school have produced changes in the course of time in their sources of legitimation, both resorting to the discourse of ethnic identity affirmation and establishing alliances, though informal ones, with religion, situating themselves and seeking to mediate the governmental rights policies with the permanence of markers, such as, for example, those of gender. A particularly interesting situation is that regarding "respect", in the discourse of people considered being one of the elements shaping juvenile identities, and appearing with multiple meanings in the discourses marked by the tension between an abstract notion of respect for "all"

and for "the elderly" and a notion materialized in the gender structure, i.e., for boys it has a meaning of providing for his family and for girls it means to obey and serve her husband and his family.

This question is directly related to the preservation of the rites as a cultural institution, to the powers it mobilizes, to the teachings that one intends to preserve and to the mechanisms that regulate expectations. The question of normativity is one of the most widely studied and most controversial objects, fundamentally opposing the Weberian perspective, in which the actor directs her/his actions on the basis of what is expected by others, referring to a common frame of reference, and the Durkheimian approach in which the social fact compels others to the adoption of the norm, while its embodiment in behaviours results in varying degrees of the norm's efficacy (Leite, 1998). If Weber is the precursor of the interactionist approach insofar as he insists on individual interactions in a system of communication whose variability is altered on the basis of contexts, Parsons (1967), within the Durkheimian perspective, reduces the autonomy of the individual in contesting the norm, due to constraints that are decisive for action. Merton (1970) seeks to solve this problem, distinguishing the individual's belonging group, which functions as the principle of primary socialization, and the individual's reference groups, which allows them, through assimilation/combination/rejection, to compose social roles offering them recognition in different contexts.

In the discourse of the norm, consolidated in the ritual mechanisms, we are observing two movements: one, of adherence, as a fatalistic need for integration and recognition, and another, of contestation, expressed by the rejection of participation in the rites or by the representation of the norm as violent. In all spatial units we noted the emphasis in the discourse of girls and boys on physical evidence and on the necessary corporal punishments to destroy their individual identity and to construct solidarity on the basis of shared experiences. The inflicted pains are not only meant to produce unquestionable behaviours, but also to attribute a sacrificial character to the pains, thus transforming the punishments into an imperative for coming of age and for group recognition. However,

and by virtue of the school context and of the discourse of rights, the punishments and physical violence to which the children are subjected during the rites begin to be contested by the various parties involved, mainly the girls and boys themselves and State sectors such as Education and Health. Now, this rejection of the punitive actions during the rituals removes one of the essential markers for the fulfilment of their function: to define hierarchies and to determine the order, through a learning process not implemented by explanation and free adherence, but by violent coercion.

In this study we have sought to identify which meaning the various parties involved give to the ritual ceremonies and objects and learning pedagogies, how this learning is constituted into a norm referenced to hierarchization and differentiation, on the basis of sex and age. Or, the practices may on the contrary be of a merely performative nature, implying or possibly implying a rupture with the norm. In this sense, what we also seek, on the basis of what was said before, is to recognise how the conflicts between discourses (and within the same discourse) may represent negotiation strategies which, acting on the power structure, change or remove the traditional sources of legitimacy. By this we want to say, for example, that the matrons and masters resort to the public discourse of giving value to the school, to the fight against HIV and AIDS and against early pregnancy, i.e., they ambiguously way play with what are considered elements of modernity, moving back and forth between the preservation of "traditional" culture and the inclusion of more or less formal "reforming" elements of the social roles. This situation lays bare the negotiation/concession/resistance strategies between the various powers and how they use the order of the discourse to conquer new spaces of affirmation and legitimation.

In his study about culture, Geertz sees it as "an intertwined system of interpretable symbols" (1989a:24). I.e., focusing on the interpretation of the meanings which individuals ascribe to their values, with, as stated by Gonçalves (2010) "the symbolic explanation of social action being fundamental, in the absence of social action without meaning" (2010:69), somehow underestimates the practices and representations that on the one hand prompt us for an

understanding of the complexity of social relations with their power networks, and on the other hand for the possibility of individuation. Geertz (1989a) saw culture as constraining action, controlling behaviour, and thus presupposed that all change in the political, social and economic fields represented a confrontation between tradition, which was seen as consistent with the social structure, and modernity, as opposition to culture.

Geertz's critics argue that he ends up attaching an all-encompassing status to culture, explaining once and for all human action through the system of symbols, isolating it from the elements which in the various fields of the order may shake it, thus maintaining a static view of culture.

In other words, if it is important, as Geertz (1989a) says, to study culture from an analysis of the concrete mechanisms (symbolic "artefacts" which people receive from tradition and transmit) controlling behaviours, the study about rites showed the need to take into account the individual's "vanishing points" of these mechanisms and the contexts allowing them to be seen not only as producers/reproducers of culture, but also as producers of ruptures, as is the above-mentioned example about respect that can be manipulated and be used to invert the dominant order.[9] Or also, when girls reject or manipulate the lengthening of their labia minora, in a strategy expressing the appropriation of knowledge, with a purpose contrary to the one given to it. Thus, we consider the theoretical proposal of Geertz restrictive, insofar as culture is also taken as a whole (in spite of his criticism of Malinowski being in this sense), constraining behaviours, rejecting individuation. Indeed, though this author refers to individual ways of cultural inculcation (and in this sense presupposes a relative autonomy to individuals through intersubjective processes), his idea of individuality presupposes a non-choice, thus excluding, as other authors do, the social, political and economic contexts, rendering culture

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[9] Some of the female interviewees stated, possibly due to contamination with the public discourse of rights that, contrary to the discourse transmitted in the rites, respect means having rights, whether the right to work or the right to practice sex.

impenetrable to the economic, political and cultural structures. There remains thus somehow an essentialist vision, in which social action and its dynamics continue being subordinated to cultural mechanisms which, despite the differences of individual appropriation, are restrained by a notion rejecting the internal mutability of cultural institutions.

Contradicting Geertz, Habermas (1987) defends the legitimacy of the norm through intersubjective processes, without domination of the normative patterns of a group. What Geertz in fact suggests, when eliding the questions of mobility, "detraditionalization" and dissemination, is to transform culture into an imposition that is external to the individual and, thus, denying the possibility of action. It is in this sense that the author states that "if it were not guided by cultural structures – by organised systems of significant symbols – the behaviour of individuals would be virtually ungovernable, it would be pure chaos (...) culture, the accumulated whole isn't merely a decoration of human existence, but an essential condition of this existence" (1989b: 50). Though it is necessary to pay attention to the major contribution given by Geertz to the analysis of cultural phenomena, namely in the operationalization he makes in the deconstruction of beliefs and acts, favouring the meaning given to it by individuals (it is less important to define what marriage is and more important to know what corresponds to getting married), this author does not attach any importance to cultural plasticity and to the issues of dissemination and interculturality. On the other hand, while the cultural system can impose assimilation and integration, through its embodiment in the practices of normative patterns that control deviations and strengthen acts of belonging, it is necessary, we repeat, to take into account the mobility and dynamics leading to the conflict between norms and to the production, though often invisible, of alterations that are not settled by readjustments and adaptations of the cultural model to social, political and economic realities in transformation. It is the case, for example, of the cohabitation of youths (even after having passed through initiation rites) outside family control. I.e., the myths transmitted by the matrons and masters that precocious sexual initiation may cause

death, thus clashing with school education, decrease the normative power of the rites and can influence the development of strategies of individuation. This question will be resumed later, when we will deal with the functions of the rites and the mechanisms used by them to shape identities.

In the same way, and considering how culture, while bringing about political practices, is a battleground and an arena of confrontation in which individuals, while simultaneously revealing "conformation" with what is expected from them, develop strategies of contestation, the constructionist approach of culture emphasizes the production of senses and meanings and a discursive language, and how this language interweaves with power relations. The representations contained in the discourses give meaning to the person who expresses them and through them intends to situate her/himself in relation to the self and to others. This does not mean to perceive culture as a mere process of embodiment as a reproduction of social reality, but as a process where choices expressed in the discourses intervene, which have to do with the context as the "field which produces and modifies facts and events, as well as the field which makes the appearance of facts and events possible" (Bernardes, 2004: 38). This suggestion used in the analysis of the initiation rites allows us to understand how the initiated girls and boys learn what they should do and how they can express this "doing" in order to be individuals. I.e., the girls and boys embody cultural practices, which allow them to situate themselves in a specific order of recognition, simultaneously expressing confrontations and tensions existing in the power relations. For example, when in the girls' discourse about *othuna*[10] they say that this practice constitutes a form of construction of the self and of identification with the others, they clearly refer to a power that is exerted with the purpose of giving them new competences, even if these competences subject them. But on the other hand, when girls who are not subjected to initiation rites lengthen their labia minora on their own initiative, the meaning they

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[10] *Othuna* means, in the *Makhuwa* and *Makonde* groups, lengthened labia minora, usually called *matuna*. Among the *Sena* and *Ndau* groups this phenomenon is called *matinji*.

ascribe to this practice must be understood on the basis of the public discourse about sexual rights, i.e., the subjection mechanisms are appropriated as a strategy of countervailing power, without however, at least apparently, changing the model of domination.

What this example clearly shows is the impossibility to reduce the meanings conferred by girls to cultural practices and to the "satisfaction" of belonging to a group. We should instead seek to understand how this recognition of "being a woman" is or isn't expressed in the exercise which uncovers the restriction of the right to sexuality, i.e., the right to pleasure and to desire not resulting from a hierarchization of rights.[11] What this example also shows is that it is necessary to identify the mechanisms that are used in the interstices of the dominant model to seek to manipulate the constituent elements of a subordinate condition, or also as a need for belonging to the adopted group.[12]

2.1.   Culture, culturalism and tradition

The current debate about culture calls into question culturalism which, according to Sardan, takes the form of a "scientific ideology", (2010:20) used by those who base their analyses on immobility and the impossibility of change. Referring specifically to the African continent (the main "victim" of culturalist approaches), the author questions the existence of an African culture which, anchored in the past, projects into the present specificities which imply an all-absorbing homogenization. In this sense, culture is perceived as fixed, and the opposition to change expresses an attempt to distance oneself from what is commonly called the rationality of the West. On the other hand, in their eagerness to return dignity to African cultures violated by the colonizers, the culturalists emphasize a

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[11] When female informants say that they sometimes experience pleasure in sexual intercourse, they say this in a context in which they are not a subject of rights, but as a result of an occasional reality (in which the man defines the rules of the sexual game), which cannot be claimed as a right.

[12] Some women, mainly in Sofala Province but native of the south of the country, lengthened the labia minora in order to be accepted by their partner's belonging group.

standardizing and essentialist view, which is in line with the colonial perspective of the production of stereotypes to characterise the colonized and, consequently, resort to the same system of markedly ideological explanations.

Sardan (2010) shows how culture, emphasizing an African authenticity and purity, is a resource manipulated by the political elites, as for example the justification of illicit enrichment and patron-client networks, taking culture and its role in the construction of an African identity as foundation. This culturalist vision, which apparently emphasizes respect for African values, is based on ideological suppositions that justify in one way or another the action of political powers.

The conceptualization of culture and of a cultural analysis takes us finally to three orders of problems: the first one has to do with acculturation and with the principles of continuity and discontinuity in the context of globalization; the second one has to do with cultural relativism and multiculturalism and human rights; and the third one is related to how culture, human rights and cultural rights interact, conflict and struggle, both at theoretical level and at the level of development policies.

The studies about culture, focusing on the search for aspects considered "original" and founders of cohesion, have alienated elements arising from contacts with other realities which, absorbed by the people, gave rise to what some authors call the crossing of cultures (Cuche, 2004). This situation refers specifically to African peoples, where part of the cultural anthropology studies have ignored changes occurred in how people think and live. The insistence on searching for a distinct cultural identity leads to the restriction of the analyses to the description of the cultural traits (which allows a demonstration of originality), with the result that cultural systems appear as fixed in immobility. Objecting to this position, Kuper (2001) states that:

> "cultural identity can never provide an adequate guide for life. We all have multiple identities. Including that if I accept having a primary cultural identity, I may not wish to resign to

it. (...) If I had to see myself solely as a cultural being, I would be left with little space to manoeuvre and to question the world in which I find myself" (2001:283).

The eagerness to isolate what to researchers seems to be genuine and characteristic of specific cultures has perverse effects on the scientific validity of these studies. The systematic truncation of the realities lived by these peoples in the contemporary world has not added much to an understanding of the meanings given to their representations and practices and to the context of their production. The knowledge obtained is thus not only partial, but also misleading from the point of view of how the internal and external dynamics of a specific culture contribute to its preservation or, on the contrary, to its adjustment or even rupture. Though ethnographic studies somehow appear to provide valuable information about cultural practices, we in fact note in some of them the absence of the social, political and economic dimensions, which reduces their importance, even if we only take into account their descriptive objective. It is very insufficient, for example, to study the culture of the *Makhuwa* group, identifying some cultural traits in it as being permanent and essential, without taking into account the plurality of influences that were exerted on it and admixed with it.[13] Culture, as Merry (2003) states, should be understood in its link with power relations and thus enhancing change. In this sense, the author separates culture from tradition, given that the former, contrary to the latter (which we will discuss in more detail below), is continuously remade and modernized.

The question of acculturation, which can be defined as the result of the changes produced by long-lasting contact between various cultures, implies a continuous embodiment of new elements, of resistance and of transformation of these contents, taking into

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[13] Objecting to these "fixed" positions, it is important to emphasize, in addition to others, the research conducted by E. Medeiros (1995) regarding the *Makhuwa* culture, by A. Braço (2008) regarding the *Sena* culture, and by F. Fernando (2005) regarding the *Ndau* culture, as exemplary in the construction of interpretation systems that have as background the specific production and reproduction contexts of the initiation rites as a cultural institution.

account the greater or smaller permeability to cultural interpenetration.[14] From a methodological point of view, a cultural analysis should pass through an understanding of the elements (why were these and not others acquired), of the mechanisms through which acculturation is produced and, as Herskovits (1952) states, as cited by Cuche (2004),[15] through the recognition of how new values change the cultural meaning or, on the contrary, how old meanings are given to new elements. Authors such as Sahlins (1997) argue along the same lines, mainly in the analysis of the symbolic systems and of the meanings that are given to new objects, when it comes to the flowering of the culture through the introduction of new goods.

In the case of our study, we managed to establish, for example, how the religious action of the catholic missions, though seeking to preserve the structure of the rites, has, through the introduction of the Christian morality, influenced the meanings that are given to the teachings of sexuality. The research concluded that old elements which would culminate the initiation rites, namely sexual intercourse of the children, were replaced by teachings about how to "use" the body. In the same way, a religious character was lent to the aggregation ceremonies (with the performance of processions, accompanied by ceremonies performed in places of worship), and a modern character (with the girls using clothes and wigs), thus adjusting, integrating and harmonizing old and new meanings. On the other hand, meanings are given to old practices, which remain current from the appropriation of modern knowledge, thus providing new sources of legitimation. For example, that the lengthening of the labia minora helps to hold urine. I.e., while the *othuna* serve to give pleasure to the man, they also and furthermore serve, according to the images borrowed (reinterpreted) from a certain "medical"

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[14] It is important not to confuse acculturation with assimilation, which implies the annulment of the cultural identity of a people through the imposition of another. The assimilation process, which contains profound inequalities expressed in the Portuguese colonial policy, was based on the submission of the dominated group and the superiority of the dominant culture, producing among the dominated group mechanisms of rejection of their own culture and also mechanisms of resistance.

[15] J. Herskovits (1952). *Les Bases de l'anthropologie culturelle*. Paris: Payot.

discourse, to maintain hygiene. A similar situation can be found in the justification of circumcision which, in the central and northern zones of the country, gives meaning to what it is to be a man (requiring specific ceremonies that are not limited to the act itself) and which today appears introduced in the cultural and medical discourse, as serving as protection against HIV contaminations and AIDS.

This means that culture and how it is expressed in representations and practices should take into account the contexts in which social relations are developed, the possibilities and strategies of negotiation to preserve or change a specific social order. Acculturation, or as Bastide (1960) calls it, the interpenetration of cultures, must also be understood as a form of resistance to preserve the cohesion of the communities, particularly in the case of Mozambique, which in few decades has experienced profound alterations in the political and economic system (and moreover a civil war), producing, at all levels, very serious disturbances.

When Mozambique becomes independent and a system is established which considers the traditional structures harmful to the construction of equality, referring them to clandestineness or, when the democratic system was established and more recently culture became a recourse used by the political power to reinstitute power hierarchies and to legitimate forms of domination, the cultural institutions, such as the initiation rites, were losing and/or adapting old meanings or gaining new meanings. When we observe today how the bridges between the traditional authorities and those of the State are maintained, finding mechanisms of mutual legitimation, seeking to control the role and function of the masters and matrons, losing ritual secrecy and the power it had in the past[16] and making public knowledge reserved to only a few, we observe necessarily the embodiment of new elements and ways of performance which, with or without calling into question the aims of the initiation rites,

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[16] For the interviewees the past means the years 40, 50, 60 and the beginning of the 70s.

enhance their readjustment.[17] A clear example is the fact that in some places, particularly in Sofala Province, the girls and boys are individually initiated at home or in rooms next to their houses, during an extremely short period. That is, in the absence of a group, with everything involving the performance of coming of age ceremonies, the sharing of values and the creation of bonds of solidarity, dramatizations about the childhood world and the inclusion into adulthood, the rites become more a phenomenon of social recognition than of cultural cohesion.[18] The same can be said when we observe that today the rites are paid in amounts that vary according to the possibilities of the families and that in the case of families with greater wealth the aggregation ceremonies are a show of wealth and of social differentiation. On the other hand, as we pointed out above, it is worthwhile to take into account the importance of the mechanisms of appropriation of the individuals, moving and staying in different spaces, in conformity with existing expectations: young students who reproduce in their areas of origin ways of behaviour and worship (as those of their ancestors) and who, simultaneously, adopt other mechanisms of recognition in the presence of their pairs, when they are at school, in spaces of entertainment or at work.

The intersubjectivities reflected in the discourses, by tensions and by how the agents organize their representations and the meanings they ascribe to their practices, show how culture should be understood through processes of composition, recomposition, structuring and disruption. This means that "culture is a more or less (but never completely) homogeneous dynamic whole" (Cuche, 2004:74),

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[17] When the observance of rites can be "bought" and the rites become visible (sometimes depending on small ceremonies to which the observers have to subject themselves), the influence of the social, economic and political contexts in the readjustments to which they were subjected becomes evident. Readjustments that can be expressed in a granted re-adaptation of new elements to old cultural forms or resistance, for the preservation of old cultural forms.

[18] While both cultural cohesion and social recognition point out a belonging and sharing of meanings, the difference to which we refer has to do with the fact that in the social recognition we find elements which escape from a more restrictive field of culture and are part of modernity.

however allowing, by the more or less coherent way in which its elements appear, the development of individual strategies aimed at the manipulation of culture by individuals. In other words, as argued by Ortner (2006), it is necessary to observe the link between the practices of social actors in concrete contexts and the coercive structures (that can be understood as the Bourdieuian *habitus*) exerted on these practices and which can be influenced by them. When the lengthening of the vaginal lips is carried out by adult women, aiming at seduction and control over the male body, it is evident, resorting once again to Ortner, how residual hegemonies and emergent hegemonies and the possibility of resistance on the part of individuals are brought about. Culture is thus a battleground, which should not only be perceived as a homogeneous collective, but also as a place to which individuals can resort to contest or/and to negotiate, projecting new meanings to cultural phenomena.

For the reasons indicated in this research we sought to avoid the prejudice of pursuing cultural "purity", which would take us to an essentialist naturalization, as well as the prejudice of forcing the existence of change. Our concern is to understand how and which tensions, conflicts, ambiguities present in the discourses of our interviewees are product of the internal and external dynamics of the cultural field, providing mechanisms of cohesion allowing us to understand the internal logic of the functioning of the cultures studied.

The second order of problems has to do with the interrelated questions of cultural relativism and multiculturalism. If cultural relativism has its origin in the idea of culture as a whole (and also as an autonomous phenomenon) that cannot be compared and hierarchized in relation to other cultures, thus receiving recognition as a principle which appears to refuse the evolutionist approach in the tradition of American anthropology, the fact is that relativism, when defending a pure, original and unique position of culture, implies a reductionist and diminished perspective of it. For that matter, Kuper (2001), building on his experience of life in the context of *apartheid*, criticises the approach which reasserts differences, considering them unchanging and distinctive, for the simple

assertion that a difference will always inexorably be a difference. By overrating differences we are excluding the capacity for inclusion and adjustment, for example, of rural populations who, when moving to urban areas, acquire the routines and lifestyles of their new contexts, inevitably influencing their relation to the culture of origin. As Kuper states:

> "unless we can separate the various agglutinated processes, under the heading of culture. And unless, after doing so, we observe the existence of other processes in addition to the cultural field, unless we do all this, we will make little headway in the understanding of what we continue calling culture" (2001: 282, 283).

The ethical principle which ascribes equal value to all cultures has been corrupted and used to justify and tolerate the continuation of inequality, resorting to the difference and to respect for the difference to alienate communities, mainly in Africa, from claims for human rights. As Geza Roheim states (as quoted by Cuche, 2004:145): "you are completely different from me but I forgive you". In this line, Marcus and Fischer (1986), entering the debate about a notion of culture as ideology, criticise the multiculturalist impasse which, on the basis of difference and tolerance, falls into cultural relativism that serves as argument for the violation of human rights, and defend culture as a historical construction subject to successive manipulations and new meanings.

This idea that culture and human rights belong to opposite fields, rendering the link between these two premises impossible (given that culture is "universal, total and unique", subjecting the rights to this "pure and original" world), is one of the ideological foundations (also acquired by a certain vision of ethnography) of cultural relativism. The notion of modernity and particularly the question of human rights are excluded both in the discourse of common sense and in the more elaborate discourse produced by social scientists. As Sardan (2010) states, the past and traditions, perceived in a mythical frame the decisive aspect of which is its absence of clarification, grant the culturalists (with their ahistorical approach of cultural realities)

authority in the interpretation of the present. Part of the ethnographic scientific discourse, staying away from an analysis of contexts and power structures and favouring a synchronic approach (also not taking into account change and conflicts existing in this past), legitimizes the subordination of new cultural realities to a decisive immobility. In the same study, Sardan adds to this criticism of a partial approach of culture, the elimination (by some scholars) of the different "pasts" (pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial) and the entire body of influences which shapes, constrains and reorganizes tradition. Borrowing from some erudition in an attempt to find African purity and authenticity, what we observe in these approaches is the assumption, in scientific clothes, of a dispersed and partial common sense and of a stereotyped construction.

The position taken by Sardan (2010) fits in with the study about initiation rites in Mozambique and with the need to understand the confrontations and the recomposition/readjustment strategies, allowing a rupture with the analytical impasses in the explanation of how practices naturalized by the culturalists are today confronted with new motivations and expectations. Considering, for example, female initiation rites as spaces of freedom, leaving out the subjugation and subordination they transmit, expressed in school abandonment and early marriages, means to conceive the Mozambican cultural reality outside the possibility of change, excluding the parties involved, particularly the youth of both sexes, from active, fluid and ephemeral identity construction.

Taking culture as an "essence", granting it moral superiority (above and beyond individuals) and not as a construction which hierarchizes, granting some people more rights than others, we exclude some of the fundamental questions centred on the recognition and identification of which are and to whom belong the rights laid down by the rites and how these rights correspond to or are in conflict with the public discourse of rights, the Law and public policies based on the presupposition of the equality of all human beings.

Respect and cultural tolerance perceived as a fixed phenomenon, dissociated from power relations, conflict and contestation, legitimizes, after all, that girls who run away from the initiation rites or reject early marriages may be called traitors of culture.[19] The right to culture has thus served to justify oppression and practices which impede access to and the exercise of rights (Cowan, 2002). It is the case, for example, of practices that promote the violent teaching of girls of obedience and "service" to men, which are basic elements of the initiation rites. Until today these practices remain hidden (or neutralized) both in some ethnographic studies, within the same perspective of cultural relativism (taken as methodological principle), and as ideology. This invisibility of the power structure in cultural institutions has also been preserved at the level of political power, which needs, at a time of democratic deficit as is experienced today in Mozambique, to manipulate culture in a strategy which is meant to be one of inclusion, but which clearly turns out to be a form of imposition of a cultural and political model which is also total and totalitarian. This means, and it is not only the case of our country, neither specifically of Africa, that we see today an instrumentalization of culture by the power(s) to promote, according to the political contexts, the difference, unity, the domination of one group over another, and even to naturalize corruption with an essentialist discourse of it being rooted in the networks of kinship.

Multiculturalism, such as the concept of cultural relativism, raises problems from an approach and definition of public policies point of view. Initially multiculturalism can be considered the sharing of spaces by groups with differentiated cultures, taking into account the need to preserve the cultural diversity of each group, developing positive affirmation policies that enable these groups to have access to resources such as education and to participate in political decision-making bodies.

However, the question becomes more complex when it is frequently observed that the multicultural approach starts, as happen with

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[19] It is no coincidence that these situations of a break with a cultural model excluding girls from rights are not disseminated or studied.

cultural relativism, from the existence of cultural patterns characterised by immobility and by the preservation of the purity of the culture of origin. In this perspective, not taking into account the embodiment of other elements that can renew culture(s) "impedes" in fact, mainly regarding the youth, a diversified appropriation of elements comprising their identity, enabling them to situate themselves and go around in different spaces, using a variety of identification strategies. On the other hand, multiculturalism has served to maintain and preserve power hierarchies organised in the culture of "origin": with the argument of cultural and religious respect, a set of strategies is at this moment at stake in Mozambique that aim at regaining ways of domination expressed for example in the requirement to use an "Islamic headscarf" in public spaces such as schools. What this in fact shows is an attempt to impose on a secular State lifestyles conditioned by a religious power (manipulator and holder of a legitimacy based on "knowing" and "interpreting" what is sacred) which restricts access to human rights granted to all male and female citizens of the country.

From this point of view, Regueira (2004) mentions the existence of a conflict between tolerance for differences, which allows individuation, and a multiculturalism isolating submission, which the author considers a "cultural normality". Multiculturalism starts from an essentialist view which, highlighting the importance of cultural differences, disregards tensions existing within the collective. Thus, the "right to be different suppresses the right to equality as citizens" (2004:3). If the multicultural presupposes the preservation of the private as a field of diversity and the public as a field of regulating differences, this means for example in the case of the initiation rites, to "protect" cultural practices that produce fixed identities legitimated by a sacralisation of the past (the frontiers of which are unknown), while regulating mechanisms of social relations in public spaces are delineated. From this premise the private is legitimized as not producing the political, i.e., by seeking to disconnect the two domains of life, the inequalities, whether of sex or in other fields, are maintained as naturally invisible, in an attempt to create a territorialized, fixed and homogeneous cultural identity. For

example, if we take into account the dominant discourse, access to and the exercise of rights, particularly those of women, constructed in the private domain, will remain subjected to a multiculturalist approach which, supposedly respecting the difference, hinders the internal dynamics mobilizing for change from being projected into the public space. In this line, Merry (2002) states that having recourse to the naturalization of the role of women in the context of local cultures, vindicated by some States as unquestionable because we are dealing with cultural identities to be preserved, constitutes a real barrier to the appearance/visibility of ways of contestation/resistance which, in these local cultures, develop in favour of women's human rights. In the same way, to impede that cultural identities are elided (i.e., their disappearance and domination by others), it is necessary to take into account the specificities and the strategies of the struggle developed within minority groups, so as to include them in the activism for universal rights, as well as in the theoretical analysis of these cultural realities.

This question refers us once again to the definition of culture (as a category of analysis) and non-cultures (such as beliefs and practices) and their relation to power (Barreto, 2005). Thus, culture expressed in practices and in discourses "naturalizes" power, showing the mechanisms used to shape social action. Constructed on the basis of oppositions and adjustments, it confers legitimacy to the representations and practices of individuals. I.e., as stated before, culture isn't "natural", it does not produce unchanging belongings of individuals but on the contrary and as Barreto states "culture is a simultaneous process of differences and identification, moveable, contingent and always relative to whom and to what it is differentiating itself, of what and for what it is identifying itself" (2005:10).

2.2.   Culture, ethnicity and human rights

Still with respect to this relation between multiculturalism and cultural relativism, given the object of this study it is relevant to treat,

though briefly, the question of ethnicity and how this concept is used in the study.

On the basis of research done in Nigeria, Cohen (1974) discusses the question of the characterisation of ethnicity in contexts of modernity, showing how old practices tend to persist, when the affirmation of power and economic gains are at stake, emphasizing that "in new contexts, customs assume new values and new meanings" (1974:96). What is interesting about this author is a reasoning constructed around intergroup interaction lines that can strengthen or, on the contrary, inhibit primary forms of ethnic identification, which have to be understood, for example, through the conditions (correlated to the distribution of power) that are available to some groups to access, more than others, economic and political resources. In this sense mechanisms are developed that may or may not bring about new ways of recognition and imposition which seek to distinguish, aggregate and segregate, for example by resorting to a terminology such as "our customs are different" (Cohen, 1974:98). Also for Barth (1969), ethnicity should be understood on the basis of the construction of differences and the recognition of a group in relation to others. Breaking with the essentialist vision, this author defends the non-fixing of ethnic identity and its permanent mobility on the basis of historical contexts.

For Amselle (1985), an ethnic group represents a linguistic unit in a context of mobility, of oppositions , but also of negotiations. In this sense, one cannot speak of an ethnic identity but rather of ethnolinguistic groups, showing how their constitution is brought about through construction processes, resorting to one or more elements which the groups claim as being fundamental for their characterisation, for their distinction and classification. From this point of view, having recourse to ethnicity may constitute a way to legitimate superiority, to resist to a process of domination and belonging, containing simultaneously an element of exclusion.

Although for many authors quoted by Amselle the criteria for the definition of ethnicity "is to have a language, a space, customs, values, a name, the actors' same descent and consciousness of

belonging to the same group" (1985:18), ethnicity can nowadays be considered part of a wider field with a shared religion, political organisation forms and economic mobility, which precludes speaking of an ethnic unit. Examples are the distinctions between inland *Makhuwas* and coastal *Makhuwas*, or those also found in the *Sena* group, who distinguish themselves not only in relation to other ethnic groups, but within the same group, having distinctive signs to impose themselves or to negotiate positions. When in Búzi Town, people systematically said "here we are in the heartland of the *Ndaus*", they intended to assert themselves as the legitimate representatives of the *Ndau* culture, i.e., those who hold the knowledge inherited from the ancestors, and those who necessarily have the power to determine the "authentically" *Ndau* forms of social and political organisation and cultural practices.

Despite the fact that, as Amselle states, an ethnic unit does not exist, the construction of stereotypes about others is one of the forms to assert distinctions conveyed by common sense, for example the classification of being "confused" and being "dangerous and ignorant" attributed by the populations of the south to, respectively, the *Sena* and *Ndau* peoples in the centre of the country and the *Makonde* people in the north.

The assertion of identity and how it is expressed also depend on the contexts in which the individual wants to be recognized. For example, a *Makhuwa* may be interested to assert himself as such or only as a Mozambican, when the distribution of positions of power and/or his recognition of belonging is at stake. Therefore, as Cuche states when referring to the difference between ethnocultural groups, it is less the existing real difference than "the wish to differentiate oneself through the use of certain cultural traits as markers of one's specific identity" (2004:113).

Although the ethnolinguistic characterisation is not an object of this research, whenever required by the analysis in the identification of the functions and mechanisms developed in the initiation rites in the various spaces, we seek to differentiate the representations and practices which we deem to be similar or, on the contrary, distinct.

Another order of problems has to do with cultural rights, i.e., how the discussion about collective cultural rights versus individual rights as expressed in the development policies is organised.

Although cultural rights are included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and later in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966) (the latter only entering into force ten years after its adoption, ratification and accession), it is observed that, contrary to civil and political rights for which mechanisms were defined for monitoring compliance by the States, only with the creation in 1985 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the function of which was to evaluate and monitor the implementation of the dispositions, conditions were created to monitor the application of the defined mechanisms in the scope of the United Nations.

However, and due to the continual difficulties to clarify cultural rights, only in 2002 the Human Rights Commission adopted a resolution promoting the exercise of cultural rights.[20] The main arguments used to explain the difficulties to include cultural rights (as a dimension of human rights, informing us about the diversity of peoples' thought, life and communication) are in the field of the confrontation between the existence of cultural values and practices violating human rights and the defence of these rights as universal principles, applied to all human beings, irrespective of groups of belonging. The fact that culture (the difficulty of using the concept) and respect for culture can serve to relativize and violate human rights, and the implications that State interference may bring for the alteration or destabilization of the social structure, contribute to the situation that even today cultural rights are perceived and applied in very differentiated ways (UNDP, 2004). Allowing to be object of political manipulation by the elites who provoke, to their own advantage, regional/ethnic asymmetries, whether through the distribution of resources such as schools and health units, or through

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[20] United Nations. Human Rights Commission (2002). "Promotion of the enjoyment of the cultural rights of everyone and respect for distinct cultural identities".

the distribution of investments, cultural rights and cultural freedom may be converted into the domination of one group by another.

The question is, as somehow already mentioned above, the link with cultural rights and human rights or, more precisely, which are the conflicts and meeting points in the methodological treatment of cultural rights. We emphasize two ways of conjugation: the first one is based on an analysis of how human rights (expressed in the Law and in public policies) are present or absent in cultural practices and values. The second one takes culture as object, which means to understand how ways of thinking and living are organised, establishing relations between the various domains of life and how in each one of them individuals take up a position and establish relations with others (Merry, 2003).

One of the problems raised by the analysis of cultural rights versus human rights is the question of cultural freedom, referred to both with respect to the right of each individual to be allowed to speak his/her own language and to practice his/her own religion, and with respect to the right of the group to impose cultural values and practices, possibly limiting individual freedom. This situation raises another problem: if the cultural freedom concerns the collective, should it be respected even if the power is based on gender iniquity? Or if the freedom concerns the individual, does he/she have the possibility, within the cultural model limiting his/her rights, to contest and resist? Remember, for example, what is happening with the decision of the Mozambican State (publicly stated by the Minister of Justice, on 24 August 2012) to allow Muslim girls to use scarfs in public schools: is this an affirmation of religious identity or, on the contrary, an imposition on female children to use a garment which makes them unrecognizable in front of their pairs? Or is the use of the veil also, and mainly, a form of training and control over the female body, in complete disagreement with the constitutional principles of equality?

This fact highlights the relation between cultural diversity and cultural identities: while cultural diversity implies the coexistence of cultures with particular lifestyles, cultural identity (if we consider it

in the collective and the individual sense) refers to an identity which may be multiple and plural, and the relation between the two is not always peaceful, even more so if we take into account the exercise of human rights.

As Touraine (1997) states, the question of cultural rights has mainly to do with social inequality and with the possibility to articulate the right to citizenship and to social inclusion with the cultural heritage which may be appropriated and changed in the course of life. The question raised by Touraine is the constantly debated "right to be simultaneously equal and different". This means the recognition of people as social actors, who can intervene, modify and recreate cultural identity rights, allowing them to assert themselves as subjects of new cultural recompositions. In this sense, Gadea and Warren (2005) state that:

> "today the advancement of the cultural paradigm gives prominence to the claim for cultural rights, always expressed in defence of particular qualities, but granting them a universal sense (...) these are identity rights but based on individual freedom and not on communities[21] - even if these rights are instrumental values in the course of a conflict – the case of the struggles for the right to interrupt pregnancy, for sexual rights, for full citizenship for women" (Gadea and Warren, 2005: 43).

We think that, resuming what was said above, ambiguity and the apparent paradox between human rights, cultural rights and cultural diversity means that the coexistence of these three elements is based on three premises: the foundation of the first one is the notion that culture is dynamic, that cultural representations and practices are subject to change and that social actors are agents of these changes. The second premise is that States should interfere in cultural practices that are harmful to human rights, through legislation and public policies and, mainly, through actions promoting the

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[21] The celebration of the concept of community as legitimating culture, frequently hides the power structure, the inequalities and the domination organizing it and which may be at the root of its constitution.

appropriation and exercise of rights, enhancing the identification of individuals/groups living in a subordinate condition, such as women, with a demand for equality and equity. The third premise is the existence of tolerance and respect for cultural diversity, being the States responsible, through policies reducing economic, political and social exclusion, to guarantee effective equality in access to and the distribution of resources.

2.3.   Culture and patriarchal domination

If culture, to be perceived, has to focus on the power structure which, hierarchizing functions and roles, hierarchizes rights, we think that it is fundamental to recognise how the social relations that are established within a cultural institution, such as the rites, are guided by a patriarchal culture. Hence our interest in linking these two elements that constitute the binominal of domination, which may show the invasion of the patriarchal model into the "composition" of the cultural phenomena.

The first definitions of patriarchy made by radical feminism consider it a system of gender-political relations produced and reproduced in the private and public spheres of life, characterised by control over women's reproductive and productive power, guaranteed by the State through mechanisms regulating the institutions.[22] Through the patriarchal system, distinct ways of oppression are naturalized (on the basis of biological differences between women and men), constituents of the norms and values and evident in sexist stereotypes and the mechanisms which, also at symbolic level, turn women into a constituent part of the same system of domination (which however should be historically contextualized), and which have been reproduced in the course of history, irrespective of political and social systems.

Even if we consider that the biological differences between the sexes (disregarding the changes introduced by technology, subverting this

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[22] Marta Fontela. In: http://grupo feministlaruptura.blogspot.com. Accessed in October 2012.

fixation on biology as a previous principle) produce profoundly differentiated gender standards, we observe that the concept of patriarchy used by radical feminism, as any form of male domination over women (Millett, 1971), acquires a more refined and flexible sense with Walby, who defines it as "a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and explore women" (1989:214), allowing to escape from the universalism and decontextualization engraved in the analyses favoured by other feminist currents. This means that the forms of domination and its expression vary according to the social contexts. Culture is thus one of the key components for the analysis of patriarchy as structure and practice of domination, i.e., through culture the gender hierarchies are legitimized and controlled. Patriarchal culture is a material and symbolic system which implies control and violence and which are directly related to the gender order. An example of this is the invasion of control mechanisms in social relations between women, which causes them to think, feel and act on the basis of a hierarchically subordinated position. Even in situations in which they have power (as is the case of women occupying political decision-making positions), these women mediate the system of domination. In the patriarchal culture there is a social mandate which legitimazes discriminatory and excluding practices. It is no coincidence that many of the boys interviewed in the scope of the research had naturalized violence exerted on women.

Sex as well as gender is characterised and classified according to a heterosexual matrix which is simultaneously necessary and constituent of the normativity of patriarchy, i.e., the essentialist view of the sexual (biological) differences does not take into account that this very difference is a construction based on heterosexuality. In other words, when we talk about biological sex, we are interpreting it on the basis of the dominant paradigm, which Foucault (1979) calls biopower, which is the naturalization of subordination on the basis of the bio-sexual binomial. This also means that the notion of a body informed by this normativity produces what Butler calls abject bodies (1990), i.e., "bodies that do not count but that emerge necessarily

from the process producing heterosexual bodies –homosexual bodies which offend" (Walby, 1989:339).

The tensions between sex and gender highlight the instability of the concept of gender[23] which in its operationalization moves from a construction of sex, dichotomizing it with respect to gender, to an interpretation of gender "as a symbolic system that should be studied in specific cultural contexts" (Stolcke, 2004:90). This means taking into account the dimensions allowing an understanding of how the mechanisms of oppression of women are organised, hierarchized and reproduced/changed. In the theoretical debate and in the operationalization of the concept of gender, particular importance has been given to the processes of subjectivation, pointing to the systems of meaning which, as Scott (1990) states, demonstrate the representations of gender present in the normative body guiding and regulating social relations and in the way in which each individual gives meaning to her/his practices (Scott, 1990). Thus, rather than reflecting reality, the discourse gives it meaning, i.e., we must seek to understand how the normative is organized, allowing that the discourse is not only a product of reality, giving it rather a complexity of meanings, arising from the processes of subjectivation of this same reality.

Butler (1990), opposing the essentialist theories, proposes performativity, highlighting not only the influence of the sex-gender system in the construction of identities but also in the normative subversion and, in this sense, as Stolcke states, "gender is converted into something which is done instead of being something which one is" (2004:100). However, Butler's suggestion (1990) leaves the question open of how the cultural, social and political contexts ascribe meaning to the differences between the sexes and how inequalities are constructed/imposed/structured on this difference, which not only structure the social order, but also how gender is

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[23] G. Bonder (2003) refers to the position of scholars who talk about the need for an implosion of the category of gender, replacing it "by a variety of positions of gender deriving from a process of subjectivation traversed by asymmetric relations relative to ethnicity (...), among others" (2003:4,5).

constituted as body. On the other hand, and as the research seems to demonstrate, the performance can legitimate stereotypes, when, for example, matrons, in the case of female initiation rites, dramatize the role of men and the behaviour that may be expected of girls, strengthening the "justness" of control over women's bodies. In this situation and through the discourses of youths as well as adults of both sexes, we were able to establish that this dramatic performance of the naturalization of sexual violence is invoked as "just" in the experiences lived by youths and adults of both sexes, i.e., the performative field is intimately linked to social practices.

It is in this sense that patriarchy pursues the legitimation of the domination of women, irrespective of the variations found and of the mechanisms set in motion in each culture. Saffioti (2004) even defends that greater visibility of women on the labour market or in decision-making spaces (and in more and better public policies in favour of equality) may coexist with mechanisms that do not change the gender order, from the point of view of an analysis of social power relations. The author considers that "there is no biological sexuality, outside the social context in which it is practised" (Saffioti, 2004:6). This means that the two concepts comprising the sex-gender binomial should both be understood as social constructions (and not as opposing nature to culture), no longer seeing one's sex exclusively as the domain of nature and considering it as culturally constructed as well.

It is in this context that the sex-gender system not only refers to the social relations existing between the sexes, but also allows us to recognise how the patriarchal ideology is structured, expressed and instituted (as naturalized constituent of power inequalities) as a system of beliefs acting on how people think, live and act (Facio, undated). This system of beliefs, which has the male as parameter, constraining roles and functions to the sexual "difference", necessarily restricts the possibilities of shifting the individuals' forms of identification and we therefore talk about a system and a whole which differentiates and unequalizes human beings (Lagarde, 1997).

But talking about gender, about the sex-gender system, means talking about a power structure expressed through a hierarchized gender order and about the fixation of subordinate roles and functions, revealing themselves through a discourse expressing the representations (of what it means to be a man and a woman) pronounced by a power structure which urges to "resignation".

Power acts thus through agreed "obedience", through control over the action of others, taking into account, in the contexts in which they are reproduced, the strategies and answers given by the dominated ones. This means that in order to dominate, mechanisms are started that cause individuals to submit themselves to their status of subordinates. The analysis of power acquires new depth when one emphasizes the notion of power in relation, i.e., when the emphasis is shifted from dispositions to obey and the legitimacy of whom exercises it, to "power in relation" (Lukes, 1974). In this sense, Foucault (1976), using the concept of biopower, shows that control over the action of an individual and of a collective has not only to do with the mechanisms that are used to control others, but also with disciplinary power which develops coercion techniques, present in the ways of thinking and living. I.e., disciplinary power set to confront, strengthening/transforming/adapting itself on the basis of the multiplicity of relations characterised by mobility, produces domination (develops more or less coercive control techniques) but also resistance.

This means that the individual is not passive, she/he participates and is an instrument of the domination, while she/he can let loose elements of countervailing power and resistance, forcing the dominator to negotiate and adapt himself, however without the power structure being changed. This structure holds the alterations and the countervailing power strategies, with a view to their strengthening and refinement, expressed in the discourses stating the beliefs and mechanisms used to legitimate them (Luna, 2002).

Returning to Foucault, the discourses reflect, but also produce, the reality, when expressing how the body and the power relations are conceived: the discourses are producers of meaning, not only

enabling taking cognizance of the beliefs, but also of how these beliefs are object of representations that inform about the mechanisms used by individuals to communicate. The analysis of the discourses produced by the various actors as a dynamic exchange of signs and meanings subject to changes operated by the contexts in which the discourses are produced, allows an understanding of how discourses about initiation rites appear in apparent contradiction and in conflict between a sense of belonging and identification relative to, for example, the legitimation of the teachings about the practice of sexuality (as an explicit way of shaping rights and inequalities through a cultural tradition which presents itself as ahistorical), and a discourse of an assertion of rights.[24]

Rehabilitating the role of the actor, Touraine (1996) argues for a dynamic idea of structure in which the actors perform a key function with respect to the preservation of the order as well as in the production of elements that subvert the order. And it is in this order of ideas that the power structure is object of multiple dynamics of an exogenous or endogenous nature, revealing themselves through interdictions and punishments producing normatives that guide the elaboration of stereotypes and practices. At the same time, "changes" and "readjustments" may be originated in the power structure by force of the transformation of the political contexts (as is the case of the establishment of democracy), which generate new and important alterations, by the possibilities of the mobilization of elements allowing, in the political structure, a questioned (or unquestioned) renewal of the forms in which the power is exerted. This phenomenon occurred in the situation of democratic Mozambique by the appearance of a civil society which has enabled the visibility of gender inequality and has imposed legal mechanisms (bringing secret forms of domination exercised in the private domain to the public domain), including them in the political discourse and integrating them as human rights into the State power system. We

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[24] As we will have the opportunity to analyse in the course of the various chapters, the discourses pronounced by the youths about their experience of the rites show their interference with the identity construction, giving simultaneously new meanings to what was transmitted to them.

must however observe that, as Foucault argues, the State is not the sole producer of power, so that we must observe the (multiple and plural) power relations that are mobilized in various and contradictory contexts.

Finally, before dealing with our view of culture, we believe it is important to demonstrate what we consider being the main constituent problems of the concept, expressed in the research about rites. From our point of view one cannot look at cultures without looking at the contexts in which they are produced, i.e., cultural phenomena constrain and are constrained by exogenous aspects which, acting on the practices and representations of individuals, are changing their meaning and sense. In our view, if culture, by any chance of a sacred order, could be understood detached from the contexts, it would cease to exist, i.e., its presence and strength come exactly from its capacity to appropriate, to transform and to domesticate the plurality of external influences, embodied in the representations and practices of the social actors. On the other hand, and related to what we said above, the internal logic of culture is continuously updated, not only by the disturbances that are external to its field, but also by the mechanisms used to preserve itself. I.e., culture contains in itself a power structure which classifies, organizes and hierarchizes and which is therefore subject to attempts to invert this order of power, whether by a peaceful "understanding", or by contestation. While culture is inherited and communicated, to be audible and acting, it cannot be perceived as a list of images and practices, whose interest for the field of science is very partial and reductionist.

The approach to culture used in this study has three key elements: the first one concerns the fact that we take culture as an institution comprising representations and practices expressing a system of beliefs constraining behaviours: culture refers to a normative providing cohesion and recognition for belonging. The second element has to do with the power structure which determines that in each culture positions are hierarchized, systems of inclusion (and also exclusion) are organised and power relations are established. The last aspect has to do with the external and internal dynamics

which transform culture into an institution situated in social, political and economic contexts, pursuing the preservation of the order, through adjustments and recompositions of the elements giving it cohesion. At the same time, changes are being produced in the culture, or rather in its interstices, expressing the flows and transits of individuals, allowing the establishment of disorder, giving rise to new meanings and senses, mobilizing interests and strategies that may or may not call into question the cultural system.

For the analysis of the initiation rites it is in this sense that we seek to identify the presence of the components which give cohesion to this cultural institution, the mechanisms that standardise the representations and practices and the readjustments to which they are being subjected. This means that, while we seek to interpret, through the discourses of the actors, the meanings that are given to the representations, particularly the images that are constructed about gender equality, we intend to understand how, for example through the contamination of the discourse of human rights, individuals transit from one space to another, negotiate positions and develop strategies aimed at the preservation of power, or on the contrary, break with this power. For these reasons and despite the vastness of the subject, we intend to analyse if the existing changes with respect to the time and space in which the rites are conducted, to the markers for the initiation and up to the composition of the rites (in many cases the rites are conducted individually or the groups are very small) interfere with the ritual functions, and how these functions are transformed as a sign of differentiation and group claims.

3. Ritualization: (in)disciplined bodies

The question of cultural markers, identified in the representations and practices of individuals, brings us to different (but related) orders of problems concerning the functions of the initiation rituals as shapers of behaviour, the mechanisms and processes interfering in the construction of juvenile identities and the sexualisation of the body as decisive for the visualization of gender inequalities.

As we did for the analysis of the concept of culture, the treatment of this theme will be exemplified and deepened with issues related to our research experience.

3.1. Briefly reviewing the functions of the rites

The objective of the rites is to produce well-defined and desirable individuals within a sociocultural order, operating as processes which regulate and constrain the practices of these individuals. In this sense, the rites are in agreement with a more general order, determined by processes of socialization which pass through different life stages. While the functions of the rites are elaborated on in the following chapter, here we will treat, in a very basic and introductory way, some of the presuppositions that will guide our analysis.

Meira (2009), in a study about rites of passage, claims that a function of the rites is the standardization of behaviours and values with the purpose of strengthening group belonging. The rites regulate, classify and guide, save from chaos and disorder, thus having a harmonization role, while performing a therapeutic function. By breaking with the past, sometimes through suffering and ill-treatment, the initiate is cured of childhood and prepares her/himself to live and think on the basis of a new status qualifying her/him as an adult. For this reason and for their survival, societies adapt and adjust the old rituals in a search for cohesion, which gives them meaning. For Meira, the rites contain cooperation between the initiates, the recognition of a collective authority and the "determination of responsibilities" (2009: 192).

Peirano analyses the performative question and the meanings that the rites may assume "in the sense that saying is also doing something; in the sense that the participants experiment with a performance that uses various means of communication; in the sense of values that are inferred and created by the actors during the performance" (2003:11). The same author states, as quoted by Rodolpho, that "the ritual is a cultural system of symbolic communication, comprising regulated and standardized sequences of

words and acts, in general expressed through multiple means" (Rodolpho 2009:141). Elaborating on this idea of ritual, Peirano proposes an analysis which takes their importance into account as well as the meaning ascribed to them by the individuals, through the enunciation of rules and discourses which "transmitting values and knowledge" can be communicated, showing to others the agreement with the cultural order (2003:10).

Rodolpho (2009) adds that the initiation rites not only mean a "rite of transition from one status to another (death and symbolic rebirth) (...) but initiation is a rite of genesis which will differentiate the participants or the circle of neophytes from those outside, exactly the non-initiated ones" (2009:144).

For Van Gennep (1977), in the framework of the dynamic sociology, a ritual is an autonomous object, structured in ceremonies which are in agreement with a specific point in time (birth, coming of age, marriage, death). The ceremonies are thus operations that are conducted taking into account implicit aims. The rituals regulate and order, constraining individuals to the more general social and economic order. For this author, an understanding of the rites requires knowledge of the mechanisms and of what gives them meaning. Whatever the rites are, they mean a *passage* which contains a sequence: separation, margin and aggregation. Each one of these points in time has a different meaning, according to the stage of life to which they refer. Van Gennep regards the sacred and the profane, though separated, as linked in the initiation rites: the sacred world is present in the ceremonies (through which the teachings are conducted) since, by placing individuals symbolically in one or another field, they become sacred in relation to others. For example, initiated boys are sacred with respect to women and to all those who are not in the same condition. To penetrate into the world of the initiates is a sacrilege, is a violation of the sacred, marked by the place where to go to and by the ceremonies they perform. Through the integration, the youths enter into the profane world, but profane which isn't independent from the sacred.

Still with respect to the objectives of the initiation teachings, Medeiros (1995) holds the opinion that, more than being a "school", the aim of the rites has to do with the "imposition of a group ideology and its organisation as a body of the social doctrine to which the members of the society were subordinated" (1995:19). This means that the rites, more than consolidating knowledge, shape behaviours and values which determine the integration of individuals into the group, in which circumcision as a biological and social phenomenon is part of the transition from one status to another, as if it were a birth. The initiation should be considered from an individual point of view as the socialization of the adolescent to adulthood, and from a collective point of view in which, through (profane and sacred) practices, the society guarantees its continued existence and cohesion. Thus, Medeiros states that "the initiation appears as an all-encompassing social event insofar as the political, the cultural and the playful realms take part in it" (1995:24). Therefore, the initiation expresses, in addition to the passage from one age (and a status) to another, a social stratification, evident in the political hierarchization and in the preservation of the difference between statuses, whether within the same age class or generational and ancestral. I.e., the initiation rituals were/are pivotal for the preservation and cohesion of the community and for the preservation of the social structure.

Referring to the rituals as moments of identity affirmation in which the rational appears linked with the sacred, Gonçalves states in his analysis the relation of the rituals with the cultural codes which "give meaning to experiences, institutionalizing life experiences" (2010: 338). In this sense, the author elaborates on the question of the fundamental need for rites as an element of cohesion of the social order, giving meaning and balance to social relations. For Gonçalves, the initiation rites, split up into the separation from the families, circumcision and reintegration, form a symbolic rupture (a kind of rebirth) with previous experiences. Being organised through an action on the body (which may suffer uncountable ordeals), the rites determine a pattern of behaviour enabling the integration of the youths into the community, occupying the places and playing the

social roles that are reserved to them according to the social hierarchy.

It is clear that in the analysis of the rites, despite other functions, one should in the first place take into account their social utility, in the sense that they transgress and restore the order, and in the second place that "the rites are signalling systems from codes defined from a cultural point of view" (Rivière, 1996:70). Through the rites, through the messages they transmit and through the meaning given to them, through the emotional consequences and through the negotiation and manipulation processes experienced and also through the continuously (real or/and symbolic) elements of adherence set in motion, the initiated boys and girls are integrated into the social order according to sexual differentiation, i.e., the mechanisms developed in them are markers of roles and functions expressing the socially expected values and behaviours.

A gender analysis emphasizes in general the need to study how the ways and means "used" in the rites bring about the construction of gender identities. The rites of passage may be used as models legitimating inequality between women and men. In fact, through the initiation to adulthood the prescriptions are determined that guide and structure the ways of self-recognition and the recognition of others with respect to the inclusion in the collective. This means that learning to "be a man" and to "be a woman" is done on the basis of values and practices that are founders of a structure of domination based on a social order which defines, according to sex and age, access to and the exercise of rights.

Thus, a gender analysis seems to be a preliminary question to be taken into account in the research, since it allows an understanding of the nature of the relations that are established between gender (conveying the model of domination), the subjective component providing individual appropriations of sexuality, and the cultural and social contexts to be analysed. It is thus necessary to identify if the rites transmit knowledge to the girls which allows them to break, at least apparently, with the submission, enabling them to use, outside family and social control, what they have learned about sex. The

answer to this question may help us to explain some of the reasons for the constant references, even in rural areas, to the "misbehaviour" of girls and boys, even those who were ritualized. This situation can also lead us to a re-examination of early marriage, not only in the sense we ascribe to it today as a negotiation between the family of the child and the man, but also as a strategy of the adolescent to evade family control, nevertheless revealing the construction of a subordinate identity.

3.2. Identities and ritualization

When we refer to the initiation rites it is necessary to revisit the question of identities. Although this problem has been elaborated on by Osório and Silva (2008) with respect to the construction of juvenile identities in the Mozambican context, we think it is important to return to some of what are considered to be presuppositions of the analysis of identity.

Regarding social identities, mainly when referring to the youth, we seek to take into account a definition which leads us in the first place to the contextualization of the concept of youth and in the second place to the forms and means used by the youths to characterise and give meaning to themselves, to distinguish themselves and also to come closer to others.

Pais (1990), reflecting on the social construction of the youth, states that it is done "around two semantic axes: as an apparent unity (when referring to a stage of life) and as diversity (when different qualities are at stake distinguishing the youngsters from each other)" (1990:149). The idea of childhood, youth and adulthood is culturally constrained, i.e., when we for example analyse the rites, particularly in rural areas, childhood as a stage of life varies according to the markers which are only indirectly related to well-defined age groups, and on the other hand the transition from childhood to adulthood, this excludes the intermediate stage of social reality, corresponding

in other contexts to the characterisation of a distinctive culture.[25] This would mean that the generational conflict existing in other societies is "nuanced", as happens in many regions of Mozambique, due to the fact that when youths are initiated earlier, they internalize values more easily without apparent contestation. This does not mean that there are no ruptures expressed in the discontinuity between values and lessons received in childhood and new representations and practices created by the conviviality in other spaces, and also by the existence of references, whether provided by entertainment, by music or by fashion. As Pais (1990) states:

> "culture can be understood as a set of shared meanings, a set of specific symbols symbolizing belonging to a specific group; a language with its specific uses, distinct rituals and events, through which life acquires sense" (1990:164).

Thus, the passage through different cultural contexts enables the girls and boys to internalize the culturally constructed multiple referential systems and meanings, which may counter the original contexts of these individuals, producing varied identities.

The initiated girls and boys constitute a social network structured by various sources of information and teaching of values constraining the actions of each one of them to a model identifying them as belonging to a distinctive collective.[26]

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[25] This premature passage from childhood to the adult world may justify the social naturalization of pregnancy and marriage of female adolescents. In fact, the ceremonies performed with children in the ritual process vouch for early marriages and gender violence.

[26] DaMatta (2000), with another perspective, characterises the state of liminality lived by girls and boys in the context of the initiation rites, as a process in which, while affirming the individuality (by how she/he endures the suffering or the isolation), at the same time views her/himself as belonging to the group and also as a form of social integration, visible in the aggregation ceremonies. For this author and contrary to what Turner (1974) states, liminality does not represent a suspension of the order but a need for order. This means that the "suspended" practices and values of the social normativity (expressed, for example, in the desacralization of sex and sexuality) and of the family and social hierarchies, blend with the regained order. Being outside the world, the punishments and tattoos thus constitute cultural mechanisms which guarantee continuity.

It is this learning which allows the extension over time of these networks, though of a temporary character, due to the pair identification mechanisms (which may remain). This means that the cultural heritage maintains a dialogue, has conflicts with and adapts itself to the appropriated mechanisms in the spaces in which the girls and boys go around and which they use to portray and give meaning to themselves. In a study conducted on parties of boys in the northwest of Portugal, Pais mentions, exemplifying with the interference of girls in male dances (which previously carried a heavy load of sexual differentiation), how today, under the influence of modernity, these parties are a moment of celebration of male identity, of transgression and sharing, resorting to the past, which does however not "mean that in the present, tradition is a mere rerun of the past" (Pais, 2009:4). Contrary to more performative modern parties, which dream up a past reality, without this intervening in the identity composition of the youth, in Mozambique we observe, mainly in rural areas, the imposition of a set of values constraining juvenile identities through social and cultural control mechanisms. However, as we will analyse in the following chapters, there are signs of the loss of meaning of some ceremonies, rendering them merely performative, without constituting identity markers.

Enne (2010), in a comparative analysis of the construction of the history of the Baixada Fluminense in Brazil, through the discourses and professional practices of memorialists and academics (emphasizing the distinction for the promotion of identity by a group's opposition in relation to the identity of another group), resorts to Foucault and Bourdieu to explain the struggles in the field of the legitimation of knowledge as enunciated truth, principle of authority and imposition schemes. The author demonstrates exemplarily that even these collective identities, guided by convergence to the group of each one of the agents comprising it, and by divergence with respect to the other group, are not fixed, depending on changes of the context. As Enne says: "if in this way this concept (identity) is associated with a notion of belonging and exclusion, these references may be changed in the course of the flows" (2010:78). This has methodological implications which go

beyond the case studied by the author: to study identities is to understand the processes constructing them, in which it is pivotal to take into account the interaction between individual identities and the collective identity and, how the similarities and differences are being modified, are being adjusted or are being ruptured through interaction (taking into account the contexts in which the identities are being shaped). The idea that identities are not fixed and lasting, as is the case with culture, is extremely useful for this study, in the sense that it enables us to break with a descriptive and one-dimensional approach.

In line with what is stated by Lopes and Bastos (2010), the process of identification is also a process of non-identification by exclusion, and also by conflict with respect to one's individual identity and to its relation with the collective identity. This brings us to the production of distinctions between the initiated youths and to how these may be related to the symbolic capital and to how it determines (and is determined by) positions in the social hierarchy. In the construction of identities, and this is clearly demonstrated in the rites, there is, as was said above, a dialogue between the individual and the collective in which the youths learn to recognise themselves as adults, thus as belonging to one or more groups, at the same time asserting themselves as individuals detached from the collective, in a movement which acquires sense in the recognition of the self and the other.

In previous studies we established how the sexual division of labour in the family and the silent and mimetic learning in the identity construction should be seen in combination with the influence of the school (formally degenderized) and of the groups of friends among which the youths go around (Osório and Silva, 2008). I.e., when we take the rites as study object, considering them as a decisive cultural instance in the shaping of identities, we intend to analyse how the values and practices experienced during the ritual period are acquired or, on the contrary, are abandoned by the youth in the recognition of the self and the others (and of the others as such). This research seeks to identify the mechanisms that give cohesion to the collective of initiates by similarity or opposition to other groups

(which may be by age class, sex, ethnolinguistic groups, etc.), to their memories and to their past.

Lopes and Bastos (2010), depolarizing the binary frames (which do without plurality), look in the interstices of social life for the elements which escape from the logic of the "walled" classification of individuals. The authors emphasize the flows and transits and the ephemeral, consider identities as a process in which individuals, through successive appropriations, make tradition and modernity meet each other, going about and "theatricalizing" in conformity with the spaces where they go around. The authors state that not only the identities are changing and in transit, but that the individual identity is also full of changes, transits and flows. Therefore, individuals not only go around in differentiated territories, but they also have an identity which embodies relocations and flows, "visible due to contesting policies and epistemologies of homogenising views of our sociabilities" (2010:12).

It is in this sense that some authors indicate the need to recognise how girls and boys, in the process of passage, learn to recognise themselves as adults, in a system of negotiation between the individual self and the collective, between what I am in relation to others (Enne, 2010). This means, as the author argues, that this negotiation occurs in a process characterised by mobility and fluidity where convergent but also divergent elements are at play. In the same way, identities should be understood in relation to the social context and the interaction with others, and also in relation to the processes of subjectivation, of the manipulation of integrating resources of individual identities. As mentioned above, identities are constructed by similarity, but also by conflict, producing negotiations and new shapes.

This assumption brings us to some scattered information obtained in talks with youngsters of Maputo City, who "use" the traditions only in what they consider to be useful for the development of strategies of seduction. Thus, catching from the traditional information the means of "imprisonment" of the other, these young people (mainly girls) preserve however the status which makes them "modern" beings,

displaying an apparent or real autonomy in relation to the patriarchal model. This, though it does not necessarily mean a re-hierarchization of the social power relations, demonstrates their adjustment and re-adjustment.

Continuing in the track of identity as a process, Louro argues that individuals are in transit and "when they move, they transform themselves" (2010:204). Referring explicitly to the construction of manhood and womanhood, the author argues that simply being named a boy or a girl presupposes an organised course with rules and interdictions, permanently reiterated by different bodies developing control mechanisms imposed on pre-defined behaviours. This means that sex is taken as a natural fact for which individuals expect practices that are in agreement with the naturalization and fixation of the biological sex.[27] In the same sense, Benlloch and Campos (2000) state that manhood and womanhood, understood as antagonistic, sustain the hierarchization and domination and determine an intersubjective relation based on exclusion. This happens because the codes and rules which guide the relation are determined by male power and by a female power limited to "affections and to the satisfaction of the needs of others" (2000:125). On the other hand, the authors also problematize the changes which today call into question the model of masculinity and femininity, due to alterations existing in the social structure and particularly in the composition and roles of the members comprising the family (monoparental families, homosexuals, families headed by the mother).

It is this perspective which allows us to observe if there are ruptures with the socially expected allocation of womanhood and manhood or if, on the contrary, there is accommodation of the elements which, distinguishing sex through cultural dispositions, unequalize it, transforming it into gender. On the other hand, it will be important to analyse how the initiation rituals conform sexuality to heteronormativity. An analysis of the discourses, as Lopes and

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[27] We agree with Eleonor Faur when she states that "what is perceived as unchanging isn't the sex, but the materiality of the *sexual* difference which however admits significant variations in how it is symbolized and interpreted" (2003:43).

Fabrício mention, allows us to understand the social practices that lead to "the construction and attribution of meaning to experience and to the social actors, by means of the interactional stances they occupy in the use of language" (2010:288).

The queer theory, referred to below, contributes to break with the identity homogeneity and the heteronormative essentialist discourse, by emphasizing the fragmentation which organizes identities, pointing out that the transience of the frontiers defining sex and gender in a one-dimensional logic, legitimated, through the discourses and practices, the essentialization of sex and gender. This approach allows us to "understand gender and sexuality (...) as multiple, dynamic and contradictory" (Lopes and Fabrício, 2010: 287).

For our study it is necessary to pay attention to the attributes and to how girls and boys communicate and give meaning to the acquired values and behaviours, because here we can find on the one hand the agency used by them to construct representations and practices shaping them (and identify them as female or male) and on the other hand how these narratives not only reproduce the social order but also act on it.

Ortner (1974) points out that the processes of subjectivation, expressed in the discourse, may show an apparent coherence, considering that subjectivation excludes ambiguity, mainly if we take into account, as Scott states as quoted by Ortner "the ways in which societies represent gender, using it to articulate rules of social relations, or to construct the meaning of experience" (Ortner 1974: 80). Within this line of thought Bernardes and Guareschi state that when the discourse is not about gender, it can become the subject of gender insofar as it produces systems of meaning, declared as being true. The authors also identify how the process of globalization "implies changes of meanings, i.e., a multiplicity emerges (...) then entering and becoming present in the private domain", i.e., through permeability, differences of meaning(s) are produced which are going to determine new appropriations and singular modes of appropriation, which allow the embodiment of new identity markers

(Bernardes and Guareschi, 2004: 214). Globalization, as Bernardes and Guareschi recognise, results in a deterritorialization in which cultural differences contrast, which, as Bhabha[28] (quoted by these authors) states "provide the terrain for the preparation of subjectivation strategies which start new signs of identity as well as of innovative spaces of collaboration and contestation in the act of defining one's own idea of society".

3.3. Body and sexuality

The initiation rites are a central object for the production of observations allowing to observe how the experience of female and male sexuality is differentiated by the action exerted on the domestication of the bodies, that the rites are an important moment, and how these experiences are felt and/or rejected during the process of identity construction.[29]

The studies about the private domain and about the body and sexuality start to gain autonomy as scientific knowledge. From the second half of the 60s they assume one of the most successful moments, with the methodology, advanced by Foucault, of analysing the meaning processes and the mechanisms present in the body (resulting in the construction of docile bodies). In the same way, the rupture brought about by the *Annales* School, in France, with the paradigm of classical historiography, broadening the sources of production of historical knowledge to other domains, allows the appearance of new objects of research, for example the work done by Duby and Ariès (1992) who, initiating the study of tensions, conflicts and alliances conducted within families, brings themes to the public space (and to the academic public space) that have not been recognized in the past as scientifically relevant.

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[28] H. Bhaba (1998). *O local da cultura.* Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG.

[29] Their importance resides fundamentally in the identity marks reflected in the course of life of the initiated women, from the strengthening of the tattoos, (the use of *musiro*: a plant which after having been grinded is placed on the face and on the bodies of the initiated women), to the habits of personal hygiene and how to seat and greet.

The body reveals a hierarchized social order, reproduced in the learned and embodied gestures and representations, rendering, through the naturalization of the differences, the inequality of power effective (Detrez, 2002).

The diversity of the *habitus* used by Mauss (quoted by Détrez, 2002)[30] in the Aristotelian sense of *hiexis* (acquired) concerns all culturally linked daily activities (from dressing, eating, hygiene routines). In this sense, the body is thus "the mediation between the individual and the surrounding world. It is through the body that the individual situates her/himself materially in relation to the outside world" (Détrez, 2002:75). This means that the body exists in the context, reproducing it and simultaneously acting on it. A tension manifests itself on the body produced by the internalization and self-monitoring, between the social pressure to conform, until the claim and contestation of the norm, in a game of relations in which, in the interstices of the interdictions, the body is individualizing itself. While communicating, the "body acts at two levels. On the one hand it is memory, embodiment, incarnation of the code, on the other hand it is a signal" (Détrez, 2002: 128).

The body is thus, as Goellner states, defined "by the cultural and social meanings attributed to it" (2007:29). These meanings, depending on the contexts, are expressed and produced in the discourse shaping the normal, the licit and the desirable. This also means, resorting to Foucault, that the monitoring and control exerted on the bodies, transforming them into docile bodies, are mechanisms laying bare the construction of power hierarchies. For example, in the case of our study, the exposure of the *othuna* and *matinji,* before and during the initiation rites, does not only refer to an ideal of beauty or of conformation of the body of the girls, not aware of the system of domination, but also to ways of shaping identities with the clear presence of a gender mandate. There is, once again, in the first place a need to transpose the illusion of a culture dissociated from the social structure of power, which produces and explains the violence and, in the second place, a need to pay attention

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[30] M. Mauss (1950). Sociologie e anthropologie. Paris: PUF.

to the circulation, the mobility of the bodies through different spaces and places, transforming culture into a battleground of resistance and elaboration of new dispositions.

Several authors from the feminist theory of the difference (Irigaray, 1974), but incorporating other systems of explanation to analyse social gender relations (denaturalizing the importance of the biological), show how biology and anatomical differences are used as a distinguishing recourse to legitimate gender inequality (Agacinski, 1999). As sexuality is of the order of representations and practices, clarifying the qualities (and also the "inscription" processes) conferred to the body, sexual identities thus reflect the inscription of gender features:

> "the importance of ritualization, of the social uses of the body, which turn the body of a woman or of a man into a female or a manly body (...) shows the limit of the dualistic reasoning of an objectified body (...) the body is a pivotal element of the identity of an individual, it does not result from the registration of having but rather of being" (Détrez, 2002: 154-155).

The embodiment makes room for automatisms which seem to stem from nature and therefore, according to the same author:

> "behind the ritualization, a cultural manifestation embodied to the point of becoming a second nature, domination announces itself. The social uses of the body, if naturalizing the identity, are not neutral and become places of the confrontation of powers" (Détrez, 2002:166).

Apart from that, in a study about the exposure of women's naked breasts on the beach, Kaufmann (2004) resorts to the force of contexts to analyse how individuals appropriate and embody the rules of the game providing "normality" and adapt them to the role she/he has at that moment, which will more or less be in conformity with the context, depending on the possibilities developed by the individual to cause a rupture, and/or of the elements which in this context are already compatible with the change. And it is this

correspondence between the embodiment of new elements, of new codes and their transformation into routines, which allows the transformation of the *habitus*, expressed in the mobility and instability of the identity.

It is on the sexualized body that the representations and practices are constructed (through sociocultural learning), which conform the sexual identities to the behaviours that are considered socially correct. In our approach we take into account the relational constructivism which allows a less atomized look at the problem, establishing relations with other systems which, acting on the body, are definers of behaviours. When observing the question of sexuality it is in this sense that it is important to recognise, as Heilborn (1999) states, the gender mark conferring meaning to it and connecting individuals to a specific order of values, in addition to which it is also relevant to identify the permeability to other factors, such as the network of convivialities affecting the individual. Thus, for this author, how sex is viewed and how it is practised depends, as is the case for other activities, on socialization (and thus on the contexts setting the norms for interdictions and what is culturally acceptable), through which the socially dominant representations are internalized and manifest themselves, in an expression which is dear to Heilborn, the sexual scripts of individuals. By implication:

> "gender and the asymmetry in the relations between men and women continue being powerful organizers of how the sexual activity and the capacity of negotiation between the partners are unfolding concerning what goes on in sexual intercourse, nuancing in the analytical plane the profound transformation which sexuality would have witnessed" (Heilborn, 2006:48).

In the case of our study, we observe the importance of the rites in the construction of dichotomies in the field of sexuality, pointing to an asymmetry of rights between men and women (expressing in a somewhat clear way what is and what isn't allowed and licit), justified by "our culture". It also becomes somehow evident that a reasonable number of young people, through the influence of the "horizontality" lived at school, adjusts, adapts and rejects the ritual teachings

(Osório and Silva, 2008). We will resume this question below, but what we feel in the narrative about sexuality is the appearance of new dynamics which do not conform to the discourse of "original" culture and which question, though often in an ambiguous way, the power strategies (whether "modern" political power or "traditional" power).

3.4. Sexuality: embodiment and subjectivation

In this research the concept of sexuality involves both the discourse of sex and sex life, and the processes and mechanisms which programme the practice of sex, or its possibility, in a context in which there are determinants placing male and female sexuality at different levels. As Heilborn (1999) states, sexuality is profoundly marked by an organisation of power "in which the lead of the course of this event is ascribed to the male" (1999:43). What we observe in the rites is that sexuality largely determines the classification of being a "good man" and a "good woman". However, the distinctive character is not the same for the two sexes, since the social evaluation of male sexual behaviour falls within "sexual freedom" (contrary to what happens with women) and within the legitimacy to prove his virility as the constitutive nucleus of masculinity. Instead of a reductionist approach to sexuality, very visible in the studies about HIV and AIDS, in which the problem is only analysed from a prescriptive point of view, in which "sex is seen as a place of risk" (Cornwall and Jolly, 2008:34), the feminist theories, introducing a perspective of human rights, allow to understand how the link between sexuality and power is the pivotal domain of gender relations, or as the authors state, "the sexualisation of power relations" (2008:35).

In the research we were able, through the discourse of some of the female interviewees, to establish that learning about sex allows them to exercise a certain power and control over the body of the other (but not over his sexuality), limited however by the precariousness of this domination, which can be changed, rehierarchized and "normalized" on the basis of the transformation of the occasions on which this control is exerted. We think that what is at stake is not a change in the exercise of power, strengthened by the lessons about

the sexualized body, but rather the development of strategies which, under specific circumstances (easily subjected to the restoration of the order), may lead to the exercise of countervailing power in a context in which the patriarchal order will be maintained. From a point of view of scientific rigour it is for these reasons not helpful for an understanding of the initiatory processes to reduce the rites to the space where women subvert the androcratic model, without taking into account that this space of subversion is also a place where women learn that their "value" and their "power" is only concentrated in their body and in the use they should make of it. And it seems to us that this is the key question: being a woman means to learn to accept the sexualisation of power in gender relations, i.e., to contain and limit the practice of female sexuality to strategies of manipulation on the one hand, and to their submission on the other hand, i.e., what is taught as their strength is in fact a brutal manifestation of the policing of her body.

The individual experiences of sexuality are indelibly marked by the contexts in which they occur. Individuals embody the socially located teachings which determine the knowledge and meanings ascribed to sex life, namely what is or is not licit to feel and express.[31] Resorting to the notion of script (in the sense of scenario and staging) developed by Gagnon and Simon (1973), Bozon (2004) analyses the scripts of a cultural order regulating the relations between partners, establishing the interdictions and the norm which are acquired and negotiated at interpersonal level.

Thus, as stated above, the mobility and movements of individuals interfere with the reconfiguration of the representations and practices of sexuality, which can be considered, as Bozon (2004) states, cultural practices. This means that the power structure manifests itself also in how sexuality is conceived and lived,

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[31] During our fieldwork and whenever the subject was sexuality, the interviewed women and men mentioned the behaviours that might be socially expected. It was not uncommon that the statement of young girls and women conveyed their "inability" to manifest pleasure or desire, which are always conditioned by what is expected by the partner.

expressed in the development of new dispositions which are being embodied, adjusted or abandoned in the individuals' course of life.

Sexuality and its prescriptions and interdictions, as well as its possibilities of expression, are in fact simultaneously a text of culture, or rather, a mechanism through which culture arranges the representations and actions of individuals. If we take sexuality as pivotal for an understanding of the gender order (while socially constrained by the cultural model), it can however form a threat to the order, as is the case of girls who, though ritualized, break with the social norms, using, or not, the teachings of the ritual process.

Thus, as we will thoroughly illustrate, the symbolic representations of the sexualized body of women are based on biological characteristics to hierarchize and justify their subordinate condition. As Héritier recognises, "everybody thinks that his/her cultural way to conceive the world is imposed by the observation and need to organize the nature of things" (2002: 246). The argument used with respect to this apparently stable model is the consent of women which Héritier, paraphrasing Choderlos de Lacos, challenges: "to cede is not to consent" (Héritier, 2002:201). Héritier calls this binary classification precisely the "differential valency of the sexes", which justifies the discrimination of women, associated with the construction of a symbolic universe around the superiority of the male anatomic body.[32]

For these reasons, the study about initiation rites must not put aside the question of sexuality as an "historical attribute of individuals, of society and of cultures: of their relations, their structures, their institutions and their spheres of life" (Lagarde, 1997). Indeed, as Foucault (1987) states, sexuality is a preferred field in which knowledge and norms are developed that are guided by the systems of power. And here we talk about the body as a colonized territory, subject to control (and self-control), where prohibitions and taboos are shaped and manifest themselves in the discourse, turning it into a

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[32] In many rural areas of Mozambique, women are still considered a mere container of the foetus. This is one of the reasons that justify the absence of the use of condoms: for "not killing the child" contained in the sperm.

place where power is exercised. It is this perspective that, breaking with the naturalization of the systems of domination, namely concerning the control over reproduction, will allow interacting with the most diverse fields of the social, cultural and political realities, introducing an analysis of power in all spaces in which the norms are produced and reproduced aimed at establishing mechanisms of control social. It is in this framework, continuing to use the Foucauldian and Bourdieusian reasoning as basis, that the body is simultaneously a text and an agent of culture, since, transmitting and uncovering models of cultural and social hierarchization, it expresses itself as a place of control and vigilance, aimed at impeding the disruption of the social order. These mechanisms of control and hierarchization allow the legitimation of the power which is produced through the "consent"/cession of the dominated with respect to an authority which imposes itself as necessary for the social recognition of women and men.

3.5.   Sexualisation of power/ sexualized power

On the basis of the presupposition already enunciated in his work, Foucault refers to the knowledge/power relation expressed in the dominant discourse legitimating the hierarchies and inequalities between women and men, Lauretis (2000), inspired by Foucault's "technologies of sex" (the mechanisms characterising disciplinary power), develops what she calls "technologies of gender" which are mechanisms guiding the way in which one experiences sexuality, in reference to a social and political order shaping social gender relations as power relations. This means that the technologies of gender, reproducing inequality, bring about the production of the legitimate normative discourse about distinct values and practices. In the case of our study the technologies of gender (as processes of establishing female domination) take us to the control over the female body, for example through the violence exerted on girls with the lengthening of the labia minora. This practice, while providing knowledge about *othuna/matinji,* as a way of sexually serving the male, also constitutes a resource to "keep" him. This may mean that the multidimensional mechanisms of control of the female body

provide the techniques used to manipulate the male body without this calling into question the normative patterns of sexuality.[33] In other words, the countervailing power "techniques" are not part of a change of power relations, but are rather, and in a particularly violent way, part of the maintenance of a gender order in which the countervailing power is in itself a non-power, in which the woman is not a subject of pleasure and desire. In these cases, women exert on themselves a huge self-vigilance, seeking through the application of their knowledge to conform the male answer to what they think are male expectations.

However, Foucault's perspective of power is object of a lot of criticism which, according to a series of authors, errs because of the little attention paid to other ways of shaping power, outweighing sexuality as the key question and thus not covering the complexity of the gender order. Rocha (2005), quoting Kerfoot and Knights,[34] states that:

> "though recognizing that women are often subjugated as a result of the exercise of power, Foucault's works neither confront the problem of material inequality nor the production of hierarchical divisions between the sexes, between masculinity and femininity, between management and work".

Giddens, also quoted by Rocha (2005:283),[35] criticises Foucault in the same way, because "what he calls power – that power acting mysteriously at its own will - was in some fundamental aspects gender power. It were the women who were debilitated, withdrawn from the centre of areas of modernity and to whom the capacity to

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[33] A young woman in Cabo Delgado told us, with enormous despair, that she "invented" sexual techniques every night to keep the interest of her partner alive, focusing herself on the pleasure she could give.

[34] D. Kerfoot and D. Knights. (1994). "Into the Realm of the Fearful: Power, Identity and the Gender Problematic". In: H. L. Radtke and H. J. Stam, *Power/Gender - Social Relations in Theory and Practice*. London, Sage Publications, pp. 67-88.

[35] Giddens, A. (2001). A transformação da intimidade: sexualidade, amor e erotismo nas sociedades modernas. São Paulo: UNESP. This study is equally referred to in this book, in the 2003 edition.

enjoy sex was refused - exactly when they started an infra-structural revolution".

We think, however, that the approach of power developed by Foucault, not defining what "it is" but how it is exerted through mechanisms that act on the other, condition her/his practices, makes it possible to analyse the internal logic which mobilizes strategies of power and countervailing power within social relations and in contexts which adjust and adapt themselves. We do not believe, as the authors referred to above by Rocha state, that the analysis of gender power, according to Foucault's theoretical proposal, limits the understanding of the contexts of the production of inequality. On the other hand, when operationalizing the question of power, we think that it is not incompatible to pay attention to the structure as concept bringing us both to its power of transformation, and to its power of domination (Giddens, 2000). Similarly, we think that Touraine's approach (1996), repositioning the power of social actors as producers of reality, is fundamental, if we want to understand the processes of subjectivation and the possibilities of social change. From a methodological point of view, though these currents appear to point to differentiated orientations that cannot easily be reconciled, with respect to our study we seek to intersect the conceptual frameworks (insofar they can be intersected), so that we can question our study object in a more integrated way.

The analysis of sexuality (as an outstanding field of power relations, revealing, reproducing and producing domination), preferred by Foucault, has been appropriated by a large diversity of feminist theories, as one of the objects of research (and also from a point of view of methodological approach) to take the formal inequalities produced in the public space to the private domain.[36]

Loyola (1999), referring to sexuality, states that the social and cultural inequalities were being constructed over the biological differences and it is in this sense that we intend to reflect on how the mechanisms of control over the body are organised, observing both

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[36] Gender relations are constituents, though not the only ones, of power relations.

the maintenance of the traditional mechanisms of the composition of sexuality and the production of elements which threaten this order. It is the case of contemporary societies in which the normativity of sexuality is subject to the appearance of new rules or to the softening of others, leading both to a contestation of the traditional models opposing the male to the female, and to resistance on the part of a patriarchal culture which bases its raison d'être on the existence of sexual binarisms. As Bozon (2004) analyses, the greater autonomy achieved by women, through the increase of their level of education and employment, does not find expression in autonomy with respect to control over their sexuality. What we observe is that, and this is a reality in Mozambique, mainly in the rural areas, due to the limited access to resources, namely regarding family planning and mainly regarding a say on the part of girls and women, the gender roles are maintained with respect to reproduction, the initiative of sexual intercourse and the display of desire and pleasure, though more or less traversed by tensions. As Bozon states:

> "men continue to be considered the main agents of the sexual act and female sexual desire continues to be largely disregarded, as if the place of women should remain limited to affectionateness" (2004:73).

The purpose of the research about rites is the production of evidence, or not, of how the differentiated (but not autonomous) forms of the construction of masculinity and femininity are influenced by mechanisms based on a relation of domination. Making this question more profound and calling into question the dichotomies in the analysis of the construction of masculinity, Vale de Almeida states that to understand the relations of domination implies to understand "how structure shapes individuals and how individuals, through their actions, bring about structures" (2000:147).

What is interesting today, and in the specific case of Mozambique and due to the public visibility of HIV and AIDS, is the projection and interference of a discourse, constructed in the context of the health sciences, to a domain for centuries considered and lived as private. It is important to observe if this contamination of the modern, with all

its paraphernalia of advice about the use of condoms, puts the cultural model at risk, which may be expressed, for example, in the increase of negotiating power concerning the use of condoms or in greater sexual freedom for women. On the other hand, it will be necessary to keep in mind, and this can be demonstrated by a comparative analysis between the older and the more recent generations, the variation between cultural models which, though meant to be fixed, are subject to change. We are also interested to get to know if these models allow us to refer to the appearance of alterations in the social gender relations, or if, on the contrary, we continue to witness a patriarchalised structure, even when the subordinate condition produces elements which, being capable to shape strategies of counter-domination, preserve nevertheless the gender inequality.

In the same way, Vale de Almeida sees "gender as a system of symbols and meanings influenced by and influencing practice and cultural experiences" (2000: 139).

In our research it is interesting to understand how girls and boys construct themselves as gender with respect to differentiated cultural spaces (in terms of urban/rural and ethnicity), i.e., how the teachings about sexuality are genderized and which are the most important elements of this genderization. Stating it more clearly, when the construction of masculinity and femininity is observed, it is ascertained, as Vale de Almeida states, that women and men are subjected to a model of domination, but while in this power structure women are situated in the subordination which dominates them, men, being victims of this domination, are first and foremost dominated by their domination. In this sense it is established that, through the cultural heritage, the male sexual identity embodies dispositions, revealed by what has been learned, to render pregnant, to protect and to provide for.

Referring to the construction of masculinity, some authors formulate the inexistence of a single model of masculinity and characterise hegemonic masculinity as standardized by the heterosexuality expressed in discourses, practices, the occupation of spaces, the use

of resources (whether material or symbolic), in how they assess themselves and assess others and also in how they exert self-control and control over others (Vale de Almeida, 2000; Rubio, 2001). This means that the culturally constrained virility is changing constantly. In the same way, in a single society there are multiple meanings attributed to masculinity (depending on the social group, the religion and the profession), without however apparently ceasing to move towards the same model of domination. In the same way, a study conducted by Gutmann (2009) analyses the stereotypes of masculinity, considering the queer theory as fundamental for questioning the existence of diverse sexualities, calling into question and pulling to pieces the naturalization of heterosexuality, opening the field for the appearance of new objects of study which get away from the reductionism of a single model of heterosexuality and homosexuality, introducing the so-called marginal questions, such as the case of men who do not feel the predictable sexual needs imposed by the cultural normativity.

In the case of the initiation rites, in which boys learn, by distinction and contrast to girls, to be men (incorporating and naturalizing the representations, practices and symbols of masculinity), tensions and ambiguities are produced when, for example, they enter into contact with realities in which the providers are their mothers or when the girls take the sexual initiative. This brings us to the need, faced with the impossibility of a coherent hegemonic model preserving male domination as it is conceived and learned, to identify which resources exist or are used to maintain the structure of domination, since any approach to the female disqualifies them. Rubio (2001) observes that, even when the gender relations seem more symmetrical, in the case of sharing domestic tasks or of women holding public positions, the principles of domination are not called into question because these cases are considered concessions.

3.6.   Sexuality and human rights

Although we deal with this subject in the course of the research, we are having difficulties with the identification, made by some authors,

of the female rites as spaces of freedom where women, while they are singing and dancing to songs with a playful or abusive content for males, learn to treat and to respect their husband (Anrfred, 2010). As we will have the opportunity to elaborate on, we feel compelled to point out, at once, that it is precisely in the marginal stage (in the sense of "marginal" to the group) that these phenomena of transgression take place (and may take place), where chaos is established, the social order is suspended, to be restored and strengthened again with the final ceremonies of aggregation, where the girls present themselves exposing their femininity to the group, which means "to be ready" in the language used by many of the female and male interviewees.[37] "To be ready" must be understood as having acquired the knowledge and "gained" the qualities making of the initiated girls beings prepared for the other.[38]

How much and how the girls learn in the rites about their sexuality does not allow us to analyse this learning in a simple, exotic and linear way, but in a perspective, as Rivière (1996) states, that the function of the rites is the establishment of the cohesion of the order,

> "expressing social relations made visible by staking the very social condition of those performing it, in a game of recognition and mutual oppositions exceeding the limits of the ritual time and space" (1996:70).

In this sense, we agree with Bozon (2004) when he shows how in different societies, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, the initiation to female sexuality occurs from a very early age, aiming at the fulfilment of their reproductive role, i.e., the policing of their sex life. In the same way, the monogamy of women, even in a situation of a polygamous union, and the lack of sexual initiative should be understood as common ways to exert control over the female body.

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[37] Authors such as Victor Turner (1974) make multiple references to ceremonies in which the songs of both sexes express the depreciation of the opposed sex, making clear allusions to the sex organs, without destructuring the order.

[38] The ''other'' means all those who, mandated by a gender order, make it effective. This means the male, but also the whole of relatives holding power in the control of married girls, as is the case of godmothers, mothers-in-law, sisters and brothers of the partner.

This does not mean that male sexuality is not subject to monitoring expressed in the need to manifest his virility in opposition to the "passivity" or apparent "passivity" of the woman.[39]

As Bozon (2004) states with respect to the myths of sexual freedom (relative to sub-Saharan Africa) instituted in the West from the 18th century until the present day,

> "the sexuality of the other is frequently used in the construction of national and cultural stereotypes revealing in their way the relations existing between peoples, and at the same time the dreams and fantasies of an age" (2004:106).

Still regarding the construction of sexuality, a few studies conducted in the region mention the markers defining the start of the initiation rites, their functions and ceremonial contents (Munthali and Zulu, 2007). With respect to girls, the practices are recognised that are exerted on their bodies, supporting their construction as women, through work, but mainly through the perceptions about their body, learning from very early on to manipulate sex (mainly through the lengthening of the labia minora), to use instruments during the rites (which may go as far as penetration), to know herbs and "medicines". In many regions of Mozambique it is possible to establish that through these paraphernalia the girls learn to respond to a social order hierarchizing them with respect to the other, whether through motherhood or through knowing how to give sexual pleasure. Starting from the presupposition that through these practices the girls learn to recognise their sexuality, it is sometimes not taken into account that this construction of womanhood (irrespective of the pleasure they may have with genital manipulation) results from a cultural model constraining the practice of sexuality to a normative

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[39] The defenders of polygamy as a cultural manifestation pay little attention to its meaning as a form of control over the production and reproduction capacity of the women. It is this same logic which explains the bizarre affirmation that it are the older women who want and look for partners who will limit their work load (also understood from the point of view of their sex life). The belief that age restricts desire and sexual competence falls within the patriarchal ideology that women and men are naturally not only situated at different, but also at unequal levels in the framework of sexual and social relations.

defining and limiting their rights. With respect to the restrictions of rights imposed by culture it seems to us that when it is for example stated that men don't accept or despise women who have not been subjected to genital manipulation, the existence of a dominant structure directed to a female subordinate condition is clear. Even if women may enjoy sexual "actions", it seems to be clear that these "actions" constitute constraints aiming at formatting the social roles and functions of women. If we don't take into account that culture cannot serve to justify the continuation of a sexuality restricted by androcentrism, we slip, as some Western literature does, into cultural relativism. This induces us to think that human rights of the "others", in this case of the Mozambican girls, should be restricted on the basis of the social and cultural context shaping them as a non-person, contrary to the standards defining the universality of rights as a conquest for all human beings, irrespective of the geographical space and local specificities.

It appears evident that the process of construction of the female sexual identity aims at the naturalization of male domination, irrespective of the exotism which the practices of domestication of the female body may suggest to views less familiar with gender violence in Mozambique. Although not so much as a process of identity construction, and more as a set of vaginal practices suffered/adopted by girls and women, some studies describe in detail a series of activities exercised on/against the body of women in the course of their life (Bagnol and Mariano, 2011). What seems strange, however, is the link of these practices with the couple's pleasure, without taking into account that all of them are based on a paradigm of the non-choice on the part of women as its presupposition. I.e., access to sexual and reproductive rights is determined by a model constructing them as non-persons, conditioning them, from birth, in the Foucauldian perspective, to their transformation into docile bodies, apparently conformed to and even "enthusiastic" about the place and role reserved to them. In the analysis of these practices we think it is necessary to pay attention to the conceptualization of the cultural model which determines that even the activities of sexual hygiene which are perceived with neutrality with respect to the

construction of female sexuality, are part of an order of power constructing bodies and organizing differentiated and unequal gender identities.[40]

On the other hand and following the tracks of Foucault, attributes are validated on the body and on the sexualized body and means are agreed upon that are used to discipline it, on the basis of identities expressing themselves through a sexual difference which informs and orders the gender hierarchy. In this research we will seek to analyse how the rites, through the information they produce, the dances and counsels they use, can act on the sexuality(ies), creating a normative system demonstrating a gender order. In the same way, we also intend to identify the processes, strategies and mechanisms of resistance used by the initiated girls and boys to choose and/or refuse the "discipline" constraining sexuality to the cultural model.

In this process, in which the youths construct attributes, codes and ways of communication, we seek to analyse how individual identities (in which each individual recognises her/himself through representations and practices) go together and/or conflict with the collective identities conferred by the group. It is important to recognise the mechanisms which the rites originate to inculcate values and behaviours and how the initiated girls and boys execute appropriations and renunciations subjectivating them, rupturing or negotiating the dispositions transmitted by the cultural heritage and confirmed in the initiation rites.

The common experience lived in the rites implies specific forms in which the girls and boys recognise themselves and give expression to a collective memory. In this study we will seek to recognise which are the elements allowing to reach this feeling of belonging and how it, even being contentious, provides requisites that serve for

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[40] This model is all the more effective insofar as it develops mechanisms of reproduction and legitimation of the inequality, as is the case (in the urban environment) of many women with very high levels of schooling, who said that their daughters will participate in the rites. Some of these female informants recognise the violent nature of the rituals but use the argument of "our culture" and of family and social pressure brought to bear on them.

identification with the group. This question, elaborated on by Maffesoli (1988), addresses the individual investment in the collective(s), through individual (and dynamic) forms of accession characterised by transience, by going around and by the plurality of "communities" of belonging. Maffesoli's theoretical proposal, highlighting mobility and the permanent relation between the differentiation and the construction of new identity configurations, is particularly important for the interpretation of the meanings which the girls and boys given to the ritual teachings (particularly in the construction of womanhood and manhood), while it allows to understand the mechanisms of identification or non-identification, with respect to the cultural and social order.

In view of the questions raised by the theoretical debate, in this work we will seek to respond to three big orders of problems: the first one concerns the construction of a culture as resulting from human experience, which (with an existence that is not independent of other domains of life) acts on the representations and practices of the agents. But while culture produces the meanings which individuals give to the images about themselves and about others, and guides the communication processes through gestures and discourses, culture is also subject to change, linking exogenous factors, such as the existence of public policies and legal normatives, with endogenous factors that have to do with the contexts in which individuals are situated, with the spaces where they go around, with the acquired dispositions and also with mechanisms that characterise the processes and mechanisms of subjectivation. This means that the analysis about the function of the initiation rites deals on the one hand with the elements of cohesion that guide the common appropriation of the teachings and on the other hand with the adjustments/changes/ruptures of the patterns that set the norms of the representations and practices.

The second order of problems concerns the strategies of negotiation and alliance between the various agents who, taking up a position in the power structure, aim at acting in favour of cooperation and/or of conflict, of the preservation of the rites or, on the contrary, of their change. This question poses the need to analyse how the social and

symbolic capital of the agents are played and shifted, agents who in the State seek to "domesticate" the rites and the strategies of the leaders, matrons and masters who try to readjust old and new sources of authority and legitimation. For us it is important to understand how, in the performance of the rites, power relations are shaped. For example, how the official discourse of human rights seeks on the one hand to harmonize and on the other hand to intervene in the representations and practices of the matrons and masters, and how they use the mechanisms of the State (such as the discourse of HIV and AIDS and the change of the ritual calendar) to bring about a mediation between the State and "tradition". As guardians of culture, the leaders (and the matrons and masters who appear as important elements for the preservation of traditional power), resorting to the defence of the Mozambican culture (and reserving this cultural right), develop strategies of accommodation with a modernity conferred by State bodies, such as schools. At the same time, these leaders attempt to keep some separation (or also overtures, depending on the contexts), strengthened by the moral superiority given to them by the "naturalization" of the representativeness of the populations.[41]

The third order of problems concerns the contents and pedagogy of the teachings of the initiation rites and the processes of their embodiment into the identities of individuals. This means to take into account the system of meanings that individuals, particularly girls and boys, ascribe to the body and to sexuality. The body as text and agent of culture reproduces the dominant cultural order and produces, through adjustments and preadaptations, new meanings. The disciplinary power regulating the relations of interaction and the processes of interpretation is visible in the way in which individuals think and exercise their sexuality. In this respect we seek to identify the mechanisms controlling sexuality on the basis of the asymmetric construction of masculinity and femininity and in this sense to

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[41] The reasoning that community courts are bodies acting according to cultural consensuses, withdrawing implicitly some "value" from the formal administration of justice system, can be understood in a logic of negation of the power structure that organizes social relations in the communities.

understand how the gender hierarchies are constructed and legitimated. In this research we intend to study in depth how the circulation through different spaces and contamination with the discourse of rights can change the perceptions of individuals with respect to the interdictions and attributes conferred to sexuality. It is in this sense that the identities presuppose an interaction subject to the recognition of the codes, rules and conventions which must not be perceived as separated from an order of power exerted through the tensions existing in this interaction. Social relations reveal the norms which, as Goffman (1974) states, can be symbolically structured obligations and expectations. Sexual identities, constructed from representations and practices, determine the position which each one of the individuals ascribes to her/himself and to others with respect to sex and its practice. The way in which individuals conform, or not, with what is expected, allows to understand how the prescriptions regarding sex are based on a model of domination subject to countervailing power strategies that may change or strengthen the power structure. It is in this sense that we can also speak of a conflict between the personal experience of pleasure and desire and the social representations of female sexuality and, in the case of the Mozambican legislation, the current draft Penal Code, which maintains an entire conceptual structure based on a patriarchal culture revealed, for example, in the classification of crimes against honour, cases of sexual abuse of women.

4. Dimensions of the analysis

In the framework of feminist theories the definition of the dimensions of the analysis is indebted to a conceptual apparatus based on interdisciplinarity, seeking to retain and combine approaches from various currents in the field of the social sciences. The main ones are the following: the constructionist position allowing us to look at social relations from a multiplicity of gender systems, continuously disputed and subject to change, originated from the relation between a social structure acting on the actors' system of meanings and the fluidity and search for new meanings by

individuals, in a movement which is simultaneously contesting the order and adapting (adjusting) and recreating their identity.

As stated above, in this approach the power relations that are constituent of gender relations should be seen as plural and not fixed, determining and being determined by the changes produced in social, political and cultural contexts, though many of them still reproducing the dominant male-centred social standard. This way to observe reality allows new and more comprehensive interpretations of the initiation rites, namely in the understanding of the alterations in the functions and agency of the rites, where the normativity is influenced by factors related to their inclusion in contexts marked by modernity. If we conceive modernity as the existence of institutions such as schools and hospitals, and the interaction between powers seeking the same or different sources of legitimation, we observe the production of strategies that aim both at the adjustment of old power relations to new contexts, and the appearance and development of mechanisms of rupture, questioning the traditional models of subordination. In fact, sexual identities are not static, unchanging entities, aprioristic data defining what is most fundamental in an individual. They are continuously being rearranged inside the self and in the social relations established with the other.

For example, in the realities studied the mechanisms that attribute a function of cohesion and belonging to a group to the rites are reformulated or replaced by others, or are given new meanings. The constructionist approach is fundamental to analyse how in the sexualized bodies the embodiment of the norm is processed, and the subjectivation of meanings and attributes, which organizes the social utility of the bodies, is brought about. On the other hand, it is necessary to add to this construction of the bodies, which simultaneously adheres to the representations constructed about it (representations expressed in the continuously constructed social relations), the deconstructionist perspective which allows to understand "the destabilization in the course of the reiteration of the social norms (...) because it is in this process of reiteration of the norms that instabilities flow in spaces for deconstruction" (Pereira, 2004:188).

One of the most important conceptual tools for the development of the categories of analysis, as we have already exhaustively referred to, was Foucault's contribution about the concept of power and its application to the study of sexuality(ies).[42] The body is the point of reference of the analysis. The body reveals and transmits with great symbolic efficacy the values and norms that guide the models of social, cultural and political hierarchization. Power is thus understood as action on the behaviours of others: the body, gestures and feelings (in action and in reaction) are organised on the basis of constraints that imprison women and men in a totalitarian and unequal vision of social relations, aiming, through sexual and reproductive control, at hierarchising roles and functions.

It was this apparatus that allowed us to identify the mechanisms that, acting on the bodies, transform them into docile bodies, expressed in the discourse that contains in itself the legitimacy of the power that is exerted on the body and on sexuality. This is a power which oppresses, which creates interdictions, but fundamentally it is a power which sets the norms, which, naturalizing inequality, renders it effective and acceptable, while it excludes what is situated at the margin, what subverts the norm. Through the disciplinary apparatus, the bodies enhance themselves to legitimate a certain type of sexuality related to socially established standards of manhood and womanhood, which are originating from social and cultural representations constructed on the basis of the biological differences between the sexes and transmitted through the rites. These internalized representations are fundamental references for the constitution of the identity of men and women.

On the other hand, the operationalization of the concept of *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1989) allows us to break with the binary classification of male and female, on the basis of the naturalization of the structure of domination. For the definition of the dimensions of analysis it was

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[42] The question of sexual complexity and diversity is extremely important to understand that sexuality and sexual behaviour are, in all cultures, subject to gender roles, the construction of social identities and, consequently, are experienced in a different way by men and women.

important to recognise the dispositions embodied by individuals and that act symbolically in male domination. This perspective allows us to recognise the weight of structures on the construction of normativity, through mechanisms of communication, whether through discourses or through gestures. Discourses and gestures that reveal the symbolic violence exerted on women, as is the case of ritualized girls who lower their eyes and cease to participate in the classroom.

It is the link between these theoretical frameworks that allows us to analyse the initiation rites as instances that, with the function of giving cohesion to the group, shape masculinity and femininity, in mirrors game, in which inequality instituted in difference is naturalized as true and essential. With the proposed dimensions we also intend to understand how different social, cultural and political contexts act in a differentiated way on the representations and practices of individuals and how these individuals ascribe new meanings to the embodied values, whether by readjustment or by rejection.

Graphical Expression of the Model of Analysis

Dimensions	Indicators
Function/objectives of the rites	Information (what).
	Training (about what).
	Changes in the function and representation of the role of the rites.
	Elements of cohesion to construct the ritual unit.
Agency of the rites	Legitimate agents to direct the rites:
	• What confers legitimacy: kinship, age, etc.
	• The material and symbolic resources used for legitimation.
Mechanisms/ceremonies of the rites	The time spent: rituals of short, medium and long duration.
	Activities and ceremonies:
	• The distribution of time for each one of the activities.

	Material and symbolic mechanisms (and their meanings) used to conform behaviours: on the body and sexuality.
	Material and symbolic mechanisms used to conform the recognition of the self and of the other: the question of violence.
Values and behaviours transmitted to the youths and adults subjected to the rites and differences with the teachings in the family, at school and in groups of friends.	Teachings about the sexualisation of the body: • The start of sex life. • The question of sexual initiative and the place of desire and of pleasure. • Sexually transmitted diseases and the use of condoms. • Cultural practices relative to control over the body. • The relation between sexes and within sexes. Teachings of male and female qualities (what is being a good man and what is being a good woman): • "Authority". • Resignation. • Conflict management. • The education of children according to sex. • Relations with partners. • The home as the woman's place and the "street" as the man's place. • The construction of the family hierarchy according to sex and age.
Expectations of the ritualized youths and gender structure. Past and present.	Staying at school/ profession, motherhood and marriage: • The number of daughters/sons and its meaning. • What is a good partner. • Access to resources (salary, savings, etc.) and control over the resources. • Say over family planning, sexuality, education of the children and work.

5. The sample

The criterion for the definition of the sample was the distribution of the main ethnolinguistic groups in the Northern and Central regions. In the pilot study, in addition to having studied the initiation rites conducted by *Makhuwa* and *Makonde* groups in Maputo City, a brief survey was done in Matutuíne District in Maputo Province, with the objective to identify the relation between early marriages and initiation rites, taking into account the absence of their performance in this area of the country.

For the sample we selected Sofala Province (Búzi and Cheringoma Districts and Beira City), Cabo Delgado Province (Mecúfi and Macomia Districts and Pemba Town) and Zambézia Province (Mocuba, Alto Molocué and Gurué Districts). The objective of our work in the provincial capitals was in the first place to identify the policies and sensitiveness of the State sectors and civil society organisations with respect to the implications of the initiation rites for dropping out and the measures adopted to reverse the situation. In the second place, we intended to analyse the changes occurred in the rites conducted in an urban context, mainly with respect to the space, duration and ceremonies, relating their efficacy in identity construction with the rural areas in which the fieldwork was done.

The following ethnolinguistic groups were object of this study: *Ndau*, *Sena* (Sofala Province), *Makonde* and *Makhuwa* (Cabo Delgado Province) and *Chuwabo* and *Makhuwa Lomué* (Zambézia Province).

The main objective of the selection of female and male students attending grade 7 (EP2) as target group was to analyse the role of the initiation rites in the construction of social identities, with emphasis on sexual identities. It was also our intention to recognise if school attendance and the circulation through other spaces and groups resulted in some change in the processes of embodiment and subjectivation of the teachings, mainly regarding hierarchies and the gender order. This means to identify on the one hand how the gender mandate form part of the ritual practices and on the other hand how the discriminatory marks were/are object of countervailing power

strategies that may mean, or not, changes in the system of inequalities between the two sexes.

Table 1: Number of interviews conducted for the research on initiation rites

Provinces	Cabo Delgado	Sofala	Zambézia	Maputo	Total
Women and girl students: Individual interviews	31	35	15	9	90
Women and girl students: Focus groups[43]	7	12	11	1	31
Men and boy students: Individual interviews	26	31	19	9	85
Men and boy students: Focus groups	7	14	10	-	31
Mixed focus groups	3	3	1	-	7
Total	74	95	56	19	**244**
				121 Women	
				123 Men	

Semi-structured interviews were applied to the target group and the reference groups with the objective to analyse more profoundly the representations and practices of the female and male informants. The scripts were not distinguished by sex, but by the type of information that each one of the groups of female and male informants could provide us.

Our key concern, mainly in the interviews with the reference groups (male and female teachers, matrons, masters and traditional leaders), was to be able to study in depth the markers that determine the performance of the rites, the greater or lesser degree of formality in the fulfilment of the sequentiality of the ceremonies and means

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[43] The focus groups involved on average 4 to 6 people.

used, and the differentiation of elements provided by the rites for the construction of female and male identities.

With the interviews of staff of State sectors (education and health) and of civil society organisations that work with the youth and/or with sexual and reproductive health, our main objective was to identify their representations of the functions of the rites, the existing changes, the levels of intervention achieved and the link between public policies and discourses about rights and cultural practices.

Thus, in general we sought to follow the scripts, according to the initial proposal, but due to factors such as the content of the discourse which sometimes responded to the questions that would be raised subsequently, or even due to the shyness of the interviewees (particularly girl and boy students) it was necessary to introduce more "inoffensive" questions, such as their expectations for the future, somehow changing the course of the interview. The research team, though recognising that this method could have consequences for the treatment of the discourses, often allowed the interview to flow to unforeseen subjects, such as the absence of desks in the classrooms, the interest/disinterest in some subjects, before introducing the questions contained in the scripts. However, only exceptionally, and for reasons related to the absolute silence of girl and boy students, useful answers for the analysis of the theme were not obtained.

The interviews were coded, taking into account the spatial unit, sex and function of the interviewee (Annex 1).

Taking into consideration the nature of the study, preference was given to the qualitative treatment of the interviews, though existing tendencies and patterns were also taken into account, which enabled us to obtain approximate percentages of the answers of the groups to some key questions.

Brief information about Mozambique

According to the 2007 Census, Mozambique has a population of 20,579,265 inhabitants, with an urban population of 6,282,632, equivalent to 30% of the total. As there is a total of 9,897,116 men

and 10,682,149 women, the masculinity proportion is 48,7. Thirty percent of the population lives in towns and the remainder in rural areas. The main towns are Maputo (1,178,116 inhabitants), Matola (671,556) and Beira (431,583).

Mozambique is administratively organised in 11 provinces (Niassa, Cabo Delgado and Nampula in the North, Zambézia, Tete, Manica and Sofala in the Centre, and Inhambane, Gaza, Maputo and Maputo City in the South), with 128 districts, subdivided in administrative posts and localities. There are 33 municipalities comprising the main urban centres, including the 10 towns with the status of provincial capital and Maputo, the capital of the country, which has the status of a province.[44]

Education

The overall illiteracy rate is 50.4%, while for women it is 64.2% and for men 34.6%.[45] The fact that the literacy rate for men is twice as high as the rate for women denounces how over the years women have systematically stayed further away from access to written information, while they are equally underprivileged concerning the understanding of oral and written discourses only transmitted in the Portuguese language. This situation, in addition to aggravating the claim for rights, creates barriers to having access to formal employment. A study conducted in 2009 (Osório and Silva, 2009) shows that, though by law the local advisory councils should comprise 30% of women, the level of participation is very low and local financing aimed at the execution of projects to fight poverty is, in most cases observed, given to men. This makes women highly dependent on family agriculture, with limited abilities to increase the efficacy of land use and benefit and the commercialization of the produce.

With regard to formal education, in 2010[46] there were 13,927 primary and secondary education schools in the country, 10,444 of which of

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[44] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.
[45] INE (2010). Statistical Yearbook of Mozambique.
[46] INE (2010). Statistical Yearbook of Mozambique.

the 1st level (EP1), 2,990 of the 2nd level (EP2), 374 1st level secondary education schools (ES1) and 119 2nd level secondary schools (ES2). In the EP1 and EP2 schools there were 5,263,399 students enrolled and 821,676 in ES1 and ES2. The EP1 level comprises the largest number of enrolled students (4,385,557) and while in primary education gender asymmetries are not very accentuated, in secondary education the number of girl students is very small - 66,038 girl students against 91,242 boy students. We call attention to the seriousness of the big differences between the attendance rates in primary education and in secondary education, for boys as well as for girls, but particularly for the latter. Also concerning secondary education, of the existing total of 2,890 teachers, only 496 teach in secondary education.

Health

There are 1,430 health units in the whole country, 1,220 of which health centres, 157 health posts, 5 general hospitals, 21 rural hospitals, 16 district hospitals, 7 provincial hospitals and 4 specialised central hospitals.[47]

Religion

According to the 2007 Census, the religion most widely professed by the population in Mozambique is the Catholic Christian religion (28.4% of the total population of the country). In the second place are those who profess the Islamic religion (17.9%), and the Zionist religion comes in the third place (15.5%). It is observed that 18.7% of the population does not profess any religion.[48]

The characterisation by spatial area helps to understand some of the main problems existing in the areas of health and education and their possible correlation with early marriages and school abandonment (Annex 2).

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[47] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

[48] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

Chapter II - Legislation and Public Policies

In this chapter we will present the main international, regional and national instruments for the promotion and protection of the rights of women and children. Considering that our target group comprises minors (children between 12 and 18 years), it was felt necessary to describe not only the legal framework regulating human rights for women and children, but particularly the public policies and mechanisms developed in Mozambique that harmonize International Law with the legislation and political strategies produced in the country. This information, allowing us to link the Law with the policies and actions of the Mozambican State in favour of human rights for women and children will support, through the treatment of the data collected in the field, the identification of the successes achieved and the existing gaps in the protection of human rights.

To analyse these documents we resort to the method of the Mainstreaming Gender Equality in Europe (MAGEEQ) project.[49] This methodology makes an analysis of the political processes, development, improvement and their evaluation, in favour of the embodiment by the actors involved in their formulation of a gender equality perspective, in all policies, at all levels and in all phases.

The analysis developed by this methodology allows us to analyse legislation and the strategic plans for gender equality. Paraphrasing Osório and Silva (2008), this tool allows us to make a critique of the public policies for education through a diagnosis of the problem and its prognosis and solution, with a view to move towards gender equality.

At this point it is relevant to identify some of the international, regional and national instruments that promote human rights and

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[49] http://www.ucm.es/info/mageeq/proyecto.htm, accessed on 29 January 2013.

contain mechanisms that stimulate the commitment of the States with gender equality. We will also make reference to the public policies and institutional procedures adopted by Mozambique for the protection of human rights of women and children.

1. International instruments

Although the legislation at international as well as at national level does not refer clearly to initiation rites as cultural institutions which, intervening in the social gender relations, shape the subordinate social roles and functions of women, we consider it important to identify the mechanisms and procedures for the protection of children and women that seek to promote gender equality.

The main international milestone that propelled gender policy was the Beijing Platform for Action of the 1995 World Conference on Women, in which the principle of the integration (mainstreaming) of gender equality was introduced.

Since then, several countries have adopted a gender perspective in the development of their legislation and public policies, so as to decrease asymmetries in this scope. Thus, in this chapter we seek to identify the contexts that contributed to the integration of gender into the legal mechanisms, plans and strategies, and evaluate the progress and challenges of these public policies, having in view the broadening of human rights, mainly of women and children.

While the 1924 Geneva Declaration, targeting children's rights, and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (stating equal rights of peoples, nations, states, women and men), are important instruments for the definition of general principles based on equal rights, the adoption in 1979 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women by the United Nations defines the structural nature of gender inequality.

Concerning children, the international legislation explicitly mentioning children's rights as separate from the rights of adults was the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child, adopted on 26 September 1924, drawing attention to the following aspects:

(i) "Means for the material and spiritual development of the child;

(ii) Support in situations of hunger, disease, backwardness, orphanhood or delinquency;

(iii) Priority to receive relief in times of distress;

(iv) Protection against exploitation;

(v) The existence of education for life in society".[50]

This Declaration did not have the necessary impact for full international recognition of children's rights, due to the fact that it does not presuppose compulsory enforcement by the States and it was taken as a declaration of the obligations of men and women of all nations.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved in 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations, defines a series of precepts aimed at realizing the protection of the rights of human beings. With regard to children's rights, article 25 of the Declaration states that children hold the right to special care and assistance. In clause 2 of this article it says that motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance and that all children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

From this mechanism the need was clear to develop legal instruments that would guarantee the protection of children's rights in a more effective way. With the existence of this document the States are encouraged to create a system that would be in agreement with the priority defined by the United Nations.

In spite of the existence of legal mechanisms that protect children, it is however observed that their full realization has been limited. The continuous worsening of the situation of children at world level resulted in the adoption by the international community of a legal instrument obliging each State to commit itself to guaranteeing them greater protection. In this context the Declaration of the Rights of the Child was approved in 1959, as an instrument prompting the

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[50] League of Nations (1924). Declaration of the Rights of the Child. Geneva.

adoption of concrete measures. The Declaration was ratified by 193 countries, with the exception of the United States and Somalia.

Thus, the Declaration does not appear as a replacement, but as an instrument complementing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, forcing the States that ratified it to enter into specific commitments and obligations. The Declaration appeals to parents, civil society organisations, local authorities and governments, to recognise the stated rights and liberties and to engage in their realization and observance.

Emphasizing the fact that children should be brought up in an environment of sympathy, tolerance, friendship between peoples, universal peace and fraternity, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959), summarized in 10 principles, states that the child shall enjoy special protection and shall be given opportunities and facilities to enable him to develop in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity; from his birth the child shall be entitled to a name and a nationality; the child shall enjoy the benefits of social security, including adequate nutrition, housing, recreation and medical services; the child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped shall be given the special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition. This instrument also emphasizes that the child shall grow up in a loving and safe environment and, whenever possible, in the care and under the responsibility of his parents; he is entitled to receive education; in the case of a public disaster he shall be among the first to receive protection and relief; he shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation and against all acts that may foster any form of discrimination.

Considering the situation of children in the world, the United Nations proclaimed the year 1979 as the International Year of the Child, with the aim of giving more attention to problems affecting children all over the world, such as, for example, malnutrition and lack of access to education.

Although there are mechanisms in defence of children's rights in other international human rights instruments, the Convention on the

Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted by the General Assembly of the United nations on 20 November 1989, had great impact in terms of adherence to its terms and mechanisms, through their integration in legislation, declarations, charters and statements at international, regional and national level in all parts of the world (UNICEF, 2009). This was an instrument enunciated a series of rights, namely, the civil and political, social and cultural rights of all children. Mozambique, signatory country since 1990, ratified the CRC in April 1994, committing itself to guarantee the rights of all Mozambican children.

The CRC aims specifically at ensuring special attention to children, establishing a broad range of rights and creating conditions to safeguard their right to survival, protection and development. One of the fundamental principles of the Convention is attention to *"the best interests of the child"*, as stated in clause 1 of article 3. This means that all decisions concerning children, adopted by public or private social security institutions, by courts, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, should take into consideration the *best interests of the child.*

The CRC contains provisions defining respect for privacy, condemning the various levels of interference preventing the child from having a violence-free life. In article 2, the CRC determines that the States Parties shall commit themselves to "respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of any consideration of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political opinion (...)." If we take into consideration that the function of the initiation rites is to reproduce the roles and functions that are socially considered legitimate and that this legitimacy is based on interference with the children's construction of their identity, giving them values and attributes that organised themselves and organize a hierarchy based on sex and age, it is evident how some cultural practices constitute impediments to a violence-free life.

It should be noted that the WHO takes into consideration all the above-mentioned legal instruments for the protection of the rights of

women and children. According to the WHO classification (WHO 2008), there are many kinds of female genital mutilation (FGM). The WHO has identified four types, namely:

(i) Type 1 FGM or Clitoridectomy – partial or total removal of the clitoris or of the skin surrounding it (the function of the clitoris is to give sexual pleasure to the woman);

(ii) Type 2 FGM or Excision – consists of the removal not only of the clitoris but also of the labia minora and sometime also of the labia majora;

(iii) Type 3 FGM or Infibulation – narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal by cutting and repositioning the inner and/or outer labia, with or without amputation of the clitoris, i.e., it consists of closing the vaginal opening. This may or not include the removal of the clitoris;

(iv) Type 4 FGM – this category comprises all other procedures that are harmful to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, e.g., pricking, piercing, incising, scraping or cauterizing (burning) the genital area.

The question of lengthening the vaginal lips falls within the last category.

According to the WHO (2008), in all societies female genital mutilation is a manifestation of gender inequality rooted in social, economic and political structures and represents a form of social control over women. This practice is a violation of the human rights of girls and women and is recognized as a harmful practice.

Together with the international legal instruments for the specific protection of children, there are other indispensable documents for the protection of women and that are extensive to children. As an example we have the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which defines the structural nature of gender inequality. Approved by the United Nations in 1979 and having entered into force in 1981, this convention is based on the commitment of the signatory States to

promote and ensure equality between men and women and to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979),[51] addressing itself to the States parties, appeals for the application of appropriate and effective measures with a view to eradicating the practice of female genital mutilation. This instrument explicitly calls for the abolition of traditional practices that are harmful to the health of women and children.

CEDAW (1979), enhanced by General Recommendation 19, states the need to combat cultural practices such as early marriages and genital mutilation, which assent, since childhood, to the exclusion of women from access to and the exercise of human rights, and defines the obligation of the States to develop, evaluate and register progress made in their promotion. In this line, in 2003 the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, through the Commission on Human Rights, urges the States to take measures that allow to identify and combat gender-based violence. In this scope we can recognise the initiation rituals and rites in the framework of the formatting of gender identities that are preserved and reproduced in and through the discrimination of girls.

Critically analysing the approach that devalues human rights to cultural contexts, this document mentions the need for States to combine the international legal mechanisms ratified by them with the development of local policies that discourage cultural practices and dispositions contained in religious traditions based on gender violence. In the scope of the Vienna Conference, held in 1993, and of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994, recognizing the indivisibility of human rights and the necessary intervention for the defence of sexual and reproductive rights, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations severely criticises the omission of States regarding the definition and monitoring of the violation of human rights.

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[51] Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (1979), Recommendation 14.

The Platform for Action adopted in 1995 by the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, was one of the main elements for the development of public gender policies, namely regarding violence against women. Deepening the sexual and reproductive dimensions in the promotion of women's human rights, the Platform for Action emphasizes the protection of the rights of women and girls throughout their lives, identifying early childhood as a marker of women's lack of access to rights, caused by power relations legitimating male domination. The Beijing Declaration states:

> "in order that a girl may fully develop her potential it is necessary to grow up in a favourable environment, in which her spiritual, intellectual and material needs for survival can be satisfied and her rights are protected in conditions of equality. (...) it is time to recognise the girls' human dignity and value and to ensure their full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms (...)".

The discrimination and violence against girls start in the first phases of life and persist until death. Girls have less access to sufficient and healthy food, to physical and mental health services and to education, and enjoy less rights, opportunities and benefits than boys, in childhood and in adolescence. They are often victims of various kinds of sexual and economic exploitation, paedophilia, forced prostitution and possibly the sale of their bodies and tissues, violence and harmful practices such as female infanticide and the antenatal selection of sex, incest, genital mutilation and early marriage (Osório, 2011). Concerning the measures that should be taken for the promotion of Human Rights of girls, the Platform for Action urges the States to enact and strictly enforce laws to guarantee:

- "that marriages are only entered into with the free and full consent of the intending spouses; in addition, enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent (...)" (art. 274, e).
- the development of "policies and programmes, giving priority to formal and informal education programmes (...) on the need to eliminate discrimination against girls

in food allocation, early marriage, violence against girls, female genital mutilation, child prostitution, sexual abuse, rape and incest" (art. 277, d).

- The adoption of "appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the girl child, in the household and in society, from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse" (art. 283).

With regard to the African continent, we should note the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, adopted in the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the African States, members of the Organisation of African Unity, held in 1981 in Nairobi, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, promulgated in 1991 and ratified by Mozambique in 1998, the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, adopted in 2008 and ratified by Mozambique in 2010. These are the main instruments for the defence of human rights. Though all these mechanisms state the principle of equal rights of men and women, emphasizing the need to develop policies and adopt legislative measures based on the international instruments adopted by the States Parties, we consider that, with the exception of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, the power structure mainstreaming the exclusion of women and children from rights is not conveyed. This means in the first place the absence of thoughts about the patriarchal model that is persistently followed in the majority of the African states and which is reflected in the construction of an ambiguous discourse about rights. In the second place it may allow (given the lack of clarity in their formulation) the omission on the part of some States to develop strategic policies and actions committed to gender equality.

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (which elaborates on and explains the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, adopted in 2003 and ratified by Mozambique through Resolution 45/10) urges States Parties to adopt measures that promote equal rights, monitoring and evaluating their progress in all areas of political, social and economic

life and revoking legislation that somehow violates the principle of equity and equality. With a cross-cutting and inclusive view of equal rights, it defines gender equality as "the equal enjoyment of rights and the access to opportunities and outcomes, including resources, by women, men, girls and boys" (art. 1), recommending the elimination of practices which are detrimental to the achievement of the rights of women and their sanctioning (art. 6).

Regarding the rights of the family, the Protocol reasserts that no person under the age of 18 shall marry and that men and women shall enjoy equal rights in marriage (art. 8). If we consider that in Mozambique early "marriages" continue being decriminalized and that the initiation rituals stimulate, through the values they transmit and through the behaviour they convey, marriage as the foundation of identity, we observe the inadequacies in the application of the legal mechanisms with respect to cultural practices harming gender equality. The same can be considered when in article 11 the Protocol specifies the measures to be developed by States Parties with respect to children. Clause 1 of this article stipulates that States Parties shall adopt laws, policies and programmes to ensure the development and protection of the girl child by: a) "eliminating all forms of discrimination against the girl child in the family, community, institutions and at State levels; (...) c) ensuring that girls enjoy the same rights as boys and are protected from harmful cultural attitudes and practices (...)".

Along the same lines of holding the State responsible for equal rights, the Protocol stipulates in article 14 that States Parties shall promulgate Laws that promote equal access to education and prevent dropouts. Similarly, article 21 states that:

> "States Parties shall take measures including legislation, where appropriate, to discourage traditional norms (...) which legitimise and exacerbate the persistence and tolerance of gender-based violence with a view to eliminate them".

On the other hand, article 16 of the Protocol stipulates explicitly that "States Parties shall conduct time use studies by 2015 and adopt policy measures to ease the burden of the multiple roles played by

women". Well then, recognizing that initiation rites are cultural practices shaping the social roles and functions of women in a subordinate condition, being capable of strengthening their "domesticity" and stimulate, in addition to "early marriages", school abandonment, it is important that the fight for gender equality is reflected in the development of counter-cultural policies which put equal rights in the centre of the strategic actions.[52] This means in the first place the mainstreaming of policies, legislation and procedures in favour of the promotion of rights and in the second place the involvement of leaders, State agents and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in raising gender awareness and the inclusion of gender in the programmes to be developed.

It is observed that, in spite of a few limitations, mainly concerning the analysis of the power which structures social relations, it can be said that important progress has been achieved in the African continent, mainly regarding the drafting of legislation and the obligation of States Parties to develop mechanisms for the protection of women's human rights.

In this sense, in 2010 the Maputo Plan of Action for the Operationalization of the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Continental Policy Framework (2007-2010) was approved by the Executive Council of the African Union, emphasizing the need to universalize until 2015 access to sexual and reproductive health services, and stating the importance of eliminating harmful practices present in the patriarchal cultural model, together with the implementation of measures that effectively combat gender violence.

2. Mozambique: legislation and public policies

In this section we will endeavour to articulate the legislation ratified or developed in the country with the gender policy and the strategic plans of the Health and Education sectors that guide the strategies in

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[52] Counter-cultural policies is a concept adopted by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, 2009) to indicate the need for States to implement procedures centred at a rights perspective, which contradict the values and practices based on the exclusion of women from the exercise of rights.

favour of the defence of women's human rights. Taking into account that the initiation rituals are conducted in childhood and/or in pre-adolescence, the legislation and policies specifically concerning children will be described and analysed, while we will address the mechanisms that guide equal rights in Mozambique.

The first reference determining that children should not be subjected to initiation rites, early marriages and *lobolo* (dowry) is made by Resolution 23/79, in the framework of the approval of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the adoption of the year 1979 as the International Year of the Child. It is interesting to note the political context of that time: having been independent for four years, the Mozambican government was engaged in the elimination of the elements of identity cohesion through the discouragement of cultural practices that were considered harmful.

As can be noted, though international instruments have been ratified and national mechanisms have been produced, violation of girls' and women's rights still exists. Although there is commitment with gender equality, there is a gap between the legal instruments, the institutional mechanisms and the practices developed by the State.

The 2004 Constitution states that "men and women shall be equal before the law in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life " (article 36). The embodiment of the fundamental principles of the CRC into the Constitution of the Republic constitutes the recognition on the part of the Mozambican State that children have these rights and liberties and that the country should create all necessary conditions through specific legislation, in order that these are effectively exercised and respected.

Article 47 clearly explains that "all acts carried out by public entities or private institutions in respect of children shall take into account, primarily, the paramount interests of the child " (CRM, art. 47). In the same way, article 121 says that "all children have the right to receive protection from the family, from society and from the State, having in mind their full development". The promotion of the Mozambican culture and the free expression of the traditions and values of the Mozambican society are guaranteed by article 115 of the

Constitution of the Republic. However, we think that the dissemination of traditional values and practices must not clash with the rights of equality enshrined in the Constitution. This means that, when the defence of the full development and the highest rights of the child are defined as a principle, one cannot simultaneously have a "blind" perspective with respect to traditional values which violate equal rights, such as the initiation rituals which have the function to distinguish and differentiate the social roles of women in terms of inequality. For this reason, we think that the references to culture in the Constitution only take into account those elements that neither contradict the international instruments ratified by Mozambique nor national legislation, for example the Family Law (Law 10/2004) and the Law on Domestic Violence Perpetrated against Women (Law 29/2009), which reaffirm the principle of the equality of women and men.

In the scope of the need to study in depth the international legislation ratified by Mozambique in the course of the last few decades and turn it into domestic instruments, the Basic Law on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child was promulgated (Law 7/2008). This Law establishes the legal regime for the protection of the child, considering his/her rights and obligations, and also defines the bases for all legislation to which this law refers. Defending the best interests of the child, this mechanism holds the family, the State and society responsible to guarantee his/her integrity and protection against mistreatment and neglect, while the State is competent to punish those who in any way violate children's rights, in accordance with the provisions of article 24:

> "It is the child's right to be guided and disciplined according to his/her age, physical and mental condition, no corrective measure being justifiable if, by reason of the child's young age or any other reason, the child is unable to comprehend the purpose of said disciplinary or corrective action".

According to Law 7/2008 of 9 July, article 9, paragraph 3, the Child's Best Interest means "anything relating to the defence and safeguarding of the child's integrity, identity, maintenance and sane,

harmonious development", while the State shall provide it with adequate care in case the parents or other people responsible for the child are unable to do so. The Law also recognises education as a key factor for the development of children. Thus, in article 38 it is established that children are entitled to education in order to achieve the full development of their gifts, aptitudes and potential, preparing them to function as citizens and qualifying them for work, ensuring specifically:

(i) "equal-opportunity access and permanence in school;
(ii) the right to be respected by their educators;
(iii) the right to challenge evaluation criteria by resorting to higher educational authorities;
(iv) the right to organize and participate in youth and student organizations;
(v) access to public schooling as prescribed by the laws in force".

Concerning special rights, the Law stipulates that the State shall take specific measures to protect children from kidnapping, selling and trafficking, as well as from all forms of exploitation, sexual abuse, prostitution and illicit sexual practices (articles 62 and 63). The Law also states that harsh punishments shall be given to all those who entice, coerce, abuse, use or exploit children, whether they are parents, guardians, foster families or a legal representative.

Following the approval of this mechanism, Decree 8/2009 created the National Council for the Rights of the Child (CNAC), the principle of which is the "need to institutionalize intersectoral consultation and coordination mechanisms (...) in the framework of the promotion and protection of children's rights, creating conditions allowing their full development". The prerogatives of the Council are, among others, the adoption of procedures that may affect children's rights. Although without references to the specificities expressed in the construction of the female child's identity, particularly affected by a cultural model which limits her access to and exercise of rights, this Decree considers the need to promote gender equality. It is clear that, considering gender equality as a principle, the CNAC should in its

action take into account the family structure and hierarchy, based on inequality between the two sexes.

Analysing the progress achieved in the development of measures that put an end to the violation of children's rights, in 2009 the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/MOZ/2) introduced recommendations on the basis of the periodic report of Mozambique. Although the country has achieved significant progress regarding the protection of children, the Committee conveys concerns about the continued existence of differences between the different regions, namely the North, Centre and South of the country, resulting in unequal enjoyment of the children's rights enshrined in the Convention. The differences to which the Committee refers are reflected in a set of demographic and social indicators, covering enrolment and school completion rates, child mortality rates and access to health care, also indicating constant discrimination against girls, handicapped children, children living in rural and remote areas and also children of economically underprivileged families (CRC/C/MOZ/2, 2009).

With regard to children's opinions, the Committee is uneasy about the fact that they are insufficiently consulted regarding the various situations affecting them, with respect to education, debates about public policies and other issues. The Committee states that certain tradition-based social attitudes continue to limit the full exercise of children's rights, mainly the free expression of girls. The Committee praises the creation of the Children's Parliament but is worried about the fact that the work methods used may affect its legitimacy and efficacy, inclusive of possible political manipulation.

Thus, according to article 12 of the CRC, "the State Party shall incorporate, facilitate and implement, in practice, within the family, schools, and the community as well as in institutions and in administrative and judicial proceedings, the principle of respect for the views of the child" (CRC/C/MOZ/2, 2009:9).

Concerning corporal punishment, we should mention that they are still being applied in families and schools, and are frequently considered being the main form to discipline children. Although

there are laws that protect the child, corporal punishment continues not being object of penalization. Thus, the Committee urges the State to:

a) "explicitly prohibit by law corporal punishment in the family, schools and institutions and ensure that those laws are effectively implemented and that legal proceedings are systematically initiated against those responsible for mistreating children;
b) conduct a comprehensive study to assess the causes, nature and extent of corporal punishment;
c) introduce public education, awareness-raising and social mobilization campaigns on the harmful effects of corporal punishment with a view to changing the general attitude towards this practice and promote positive, non-violent, participatory values and forms of child-rearing and education" (CRC/C/MOZ/2, 2009:11).

These are also some of the questions raised in 2009 by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, with respect to the implementation by Mozambique of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Some of the recommendations to be implemented by the State are listed below:

- That "the Convention prevails when there is a conflict with domestic legislation or common practice and that it is directly applicable;
- That the State Party ensures that the dispositions of the Convention are widely known and understood by adults and children;
- That the State Party reinforces the systematic training of all professional groups working for and with children, including law enforcement officials, teachers, health personnel, social workers and personnel of childcare institutions; and intensifies cooperation with the media to promote and strengthen its responsibility in disseminating information about the Convention;

- The Committee urges the State Party to consider measures, including affirmative action policies, to give priority to ensuring the equal enjoyment of their rights for girls and boys;
- That the State Party ensures that perpetrators of child abuse and neglect are prosecuted in a manner that is child sensitive and respectful of the privacy of the victims;
- That the State Party strengthens its child protection system with effective mechanisms to receive, monitor through the collection of data and investigate reports of cases of child abuse, in a gender sensitive manner;
- There is also concern on the part of the Committee regarding harmful traditional practices, such as high rates of early marriage and the persistence of initiation rites, which lead to early and harmful sexual behaviours. Thus, it is recommended that awareness-raising programmes are developed, with the involvement of families, community leaders and society at large, including children themselves, to curb the practices of early marriage and sexual initiation rites, particularly in rural areas;
- The State Party shall design strategies to prevent the occurrence of sexual violence in schools by organizing nationwide communications programmes on the impact of sexual violence in school and strengthen the recruitment of female teachers who provide valuable role models to young girls and lessen the probability of abuse by teachers;
- School and health services shall be encouraged to detect and report evidence of abuse, ensure full and unannounced inspection of school facilities and wide publicity of the investigations conducted and establish clear reporting systems of cases of violence in schools;
- All necessary measures shall be taken to prevent, prosecute and sanction teachers who commit sexual violence;
- Finally, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, meeting in New York in its fifty-second session, recommends that the Mozambican State take all appropriate measures "to ensure

that those who perpetrate sexual offences against children are effectively punished and that children are supported in denouncing and reporting sexual abuse" (CRC/C/MOZ/2, 2009:7 to 24).

However, the inclusion of the principles of the Convention does not guarantee that children's rights are respected. It is evident that in many countries the reality lived by children does not reflect their rights as guaranteed by the national legislation. The success of legislation depends on the application of the Law and on changes in social attitudes and practices, as well as on firm principles and mechanisms promoting their rights. Many of the practices that are more harmful to children are part of social traditions and cultural attitudes that prevail through the generations. Therefore, the simple approval of a law is not sufficient. It is necessary that this law is supported by a continuous process of education and by initiatives aimed at its clarification, by the construction of capacity, by sufficient resources and by collaborative partnerships, including the children's full participation. These conditions are especially applicable in the case of the protection of the child against violence, abuse and exploitation (UNICEF, 2009).

3. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

In 2000, the United Nations (UN), analysing the most serious problems faced by societies all over the world, defined eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The adoption of the Millennium Declaration in September 2000 by 189 States Members of the UN gave priority to the theme *Development and Eradication of Poverty*. The goals are a partnership between the so-called developed countries and the developing countries with the purpose to create a national and global environment, which leads to development and the elimination of poverty. The members endorsed the goals of the Declaration unanimously and committed themselves to reach them, namely:

(i) "Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
(ii) Achieve universal primary education;

(iii) Promote gender equality and empower women;
(iv) Reduce child mortality;
(v) Improve maternal health;
(vi) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
(vii) Ensure environmental sustainability; and
(viii) Develop a global partnership for development".

The Goals of the Millennium Declaration (2000) were prepared with the purpose of combating poverty and promoting sustainable development, especially gender equality, the empowerment of women and access to universal primary education. In this context the Government of Mozambique committed itself to invest in education to reach the goals and target established. In the area of education strategies were defined and various plans were prepared with a view to the elimination of gender inequality in Primary and Secondary Education by 2005, aiming at the reduction of the illiteracy rate by 2015. The institutional instruments and mechanisms include free access to Complete Primary Education for boys and for girls.

4. Agenda 2025

The main objective of the Agenda 2025 is to increase capacity in the Government, in institutions and in civil society for defining and implementing national economic policies, programmes and projects. In the field of education, the Agenda emphasizes the need to give priority to primary education and considers that, to ensure basic education for all by 2025, it will be necessary to further and increase the opportunities for establishing pacts and partnerships between the State and civil society organisations, the private sector, and international organisations. The need is thus recognised to increase investment in education and training, as this will provide the practical and theoretical tools that will allow citizens to have access to education. It is also emphasized that this education shall cultivate, from an early stage in primary schools, civic, ethical, moral, patriotic and peace-culture education. For this purpose, the agenda determines the need for the country to develop an education based on family values and respect for African traditions, and made

compatible with the universal values of modernity. This vision has contributed to the development of school curricula and programmatic contents for the various levels of schooling, mainly primary education.

5. Government's Five-Year Programme (2010-2014)

Taking Gender as a mainstreaming issue, the Government's Five-Year Programme for 2010-2014 defines the following strategic objectives:

> "i) Promote gender equality by enhancing the status of women and boosting their participation in the country's political, economic and social life; ii) Promote the dissemination of legislation and operational strategies to support women, in order to ensure social justice, equal rights and opportunities for men and women in society and before the law".

The first question is the need to establish a commitment with the defence of the rights of women through actions allowing not only the establishment of provisions and mechanisms ensuring fairness and women's access to resources, but also control over their own life. The absence of a systemic vision of gender equality is also reflected in the existence of a chapter integrating women, the family and social action in an essentialist notion of female vulnerability. While it is true that when one talks about women, this does not mean gender, it is difficult to understand the emphasis laid on strategies of women empowerment from a reflection that should pass through the assumption of a cultural model based on unequal access to and exercise of rights.

In the field of education, the Government's Five-Year Programme (2010-2014), similar to the 2005-2009 Programme, continues to favour basic education with the objective to ensure that, by 2015, all children have access to education and complete basic primary education. As a consequence of this prioritization, there has been an increase of the school network, namely regarding 1st Level Primary

Education (EP1) and 2nd Level Primary Education (EP2) and subsequent levels, as shown in the table below:

Table 2: Number of public education schools, by level (2006-2010)

	Level of education			
	Primary		Secondary	
	1st level (1-5)	2nd level (6-7)	1st cycle (8-10)	2nd cycle (11-12)
2006	8 954	1 514	190	49
2007	9 303	1 842	253	58
2008	9 649	2 210	286	76
2009	10 027	2 577	312	90
2010	10 444	2 990	374	119

Source: INE, Statistical Yearbook, 2010.

As shown in Table 2, the data indicate that the number of 1st level primary schools (EP1) increased from 8 954 in 2006 to 10 444 in 2010. With respect to EP2, in spite of there also being an increase, the situation is critical as there is only a small number of schools teaching grades 6 and 7, namely 1 514 schools in 2006 and 2 990 in 2010. The same happens with secondary education, where the number of 2nd cycle schools increased from 49 schools in 2006 to 119 in 2010.

Table 3 shows the evolution of the number of students, by sex, between 2006 and 2010.

Table 3. Students enrolled by sex and level of education

	Level of education							
	Primary				**Secondary**			
	1st level (1-5)		2nd level (6-7)		1st cycle (8-10)		2nd cycle (11-12)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
2006	1,915,260	1,682,132	288,023	208,008	147,830	107,737	21,649	13,801
2007	2,051,821	1,815,085	350,715	265,376	179,190	132,713	28,694	18,694
2008	2,170,587	1,938,711	395,237	309,269	208,332	158,013	34,674	24,053
2009	2,222,593	2,010,861	450,005	376,592	337,076	274,041	73,364	50,849
2010	2,301,191	2,084,366	472,586	405,256	360,540	303,856	91,242	66,038

Source: INE, Statistical Yearbook, 2010.

As we can see from the table, in 2006 there was a total of 3,597,392 students (M and F). In 2010 this number had increased to 4,385,557 students. In general, gender differences occur at all levels of education, being more pronounced in the classes following grade 1, as the number of enrolled male students is higher than that of female students (MEC[53], 2008). This situation shows that as girl students get older, school abandonment on their part increases. On the other hand, the subsequent classes have a high number of boys. According to the MEC report (2008), sociocultural factors have been the cause of the phenomenon of school abandonment on the part of girl students. The same factors hinder access to formal education, since the families give priority to the education of boys in detriment of the education of girls. There is however evidence that the families believe that for their daughters to have success in life, they should be submitted to initiation rites, through which their children will be considered ready for marriage (MEC, 2008).

It is observed that many actions the Government's Five-Year Programme (2010-2014) have not yet been implemented, because it is insufficient to intend to achieve parity without developing other levels of intervention, which in our view is through the identification

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[53] Ministry of Education and Culture, currently Ministry of Education.

of values and practices producing stereotypes that cause school abandonment.

We consider it important that the Government Programme should convey a more integrated and analytical vision as, despite the existing legislation and institutional mechanisms, violence perpetrated in the country against women throughout their life cycle persists and in some cases increases. Although it can be said that the function of the sector plans is to develop and accomplish the defined principles at macro level, the instructions for guaranteeing women's human rights are insufficient.

6. Gender Policy and Implementation Strategies (2006)

The Gender Policy and Implementation Strategies, approved in 2006, constitutes the basic document which informs the integration of gender into the plans of the various State sectors. Based on the principles of the fight against discrimination and gender violence, this document refers to the various domains in which it is necessary to introduce a gender approach in the plans of the various State sectors. It is important to note its recommendation for the need to take children as subjects of rights and sensitize the communities to discourage practices that prevent girls from enjoying the same opportunities as boys. From this point of view, the National Plan for the Advancement of Women (2007-2010), operationalizing the gender policy, identifies the actions to be adopted by each one of the sectors with the purpose of decreasing gender asymmetries.

The initiative to reduce gender differences had appeared before this period. In 1998 the Social Action Policy was approved defining women as a priority due to their situation of vulnerability and social discrimination. This policy establishes the strategy of the promotion and adoption of measures for the prevention and combat of domestic violence and assistance to victims. In 2000 the former Ministry of Social Action (created in 1994) was transformed into the Ministry of Women and Coordination of Social Action (MMCAS). In 2001 MMCAS produced the first National Plan for the Advancement of

Women 2002-2006 (PNAM). The purpose of this document was to deal with women and gender issues at short, medium and long term. In 2004 the National Council for the Advancement of Women (CNAM) was created, which is a consultative body, through which MMCAS coordinates, boosts and monitors the implementation of policies and programmes approved by the Government for the area of women and gender (MMCAS, 2006). Although there has been some progress, the existence of inter- and intra-institutional harmonization and coordination difficulties is recognised.

In 2007 the second National Plan for the Advancement of Women 2007-2009 was approved, with the goal to study in depth the strategies relative to the defence of equal rights. This second Plan strengthened the areas that had been identified in the previous PNAM (2002-2006). With the purpose of stimulating the implementation of policies and programmes for the area of women and gender, this plan contains various objectives, activities and strategies for the various sectors, among which the social security sector, with a view to decrease gender imbalances. Seven areas of intervention were identified in the Plan, among which that of women's rights and violence. The Plan also broadened its target group with the integration of victims of gender violence, aggressors, women and men.

Education and training constitute one of the strategic options of the PNAM (2007-2009). In the document progress achieved in girls' access to basic education was analysed, namely the increase of school attendance from 42% in 2001 to 46.8% in 2006. According to Osório and Silva (2008), the areas of intervention defined by the PNAM are related to equal access to primary education, the improvement of the retention rate and performance at all levels of education, the increase of teacher training and strengthening institutional capacity for the promotion of gender.

7. National Plan of Action for Children (PNAC, 2006-2010)

Taking into account the need to develop an intersectoral policy for the defence of children's rights, the National Plan of Action for Children (PNAC) for 2006-2010 was prepared. Taking as a starting point that children between 0 and 14 years of age constitute half the population of the country, the PNAC defines various areas of intervention for the defence of children's rights, emphasizing the need to harmonize the international legislation ratified by Mozambique with both the legal and the institutional mechanisms, highlighting the need to institutionalize monitoring mechanisms. Fundamental strategic areas defined in the Plan are the preparation of a legal framework for the protection of children and the supervision of the implementation of the legislation. In fact, the non-implementation of the legal mechanisms referred to in other studies (Osório, 2011) is one of the main problems for the identification and sanctioning of violence against children. With respect to the violation of children's rights, the PNAC also encourages the creation of mechanisms for prevention and the attendance of children, from community awareness-raising actions to the training of police officers and health agents so as to favour the integration and mainstreaming of strategic actions.

The Plan of Action for Children is the result of collaboration between the Government and its development partners and will guarantee the continuation of actions for the protection of children. The implementation of this plan is based on the fundamental principle of "children first". The first National Plan for Children (PNAC I) was in force from 2005 to 2010 and was complemented by the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (PACOV). An evaluation was made of the two plans calling attention to the need to have only one plan reflecting the needs of all groups of children, to improve inter-institutional coordination, to have its own budget and the need for a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. The preparation of the PNAC II (2013-2020) reiterates the commitment to the implementation of children's rights and welfare under the coordination of the National Council on the Rights of the Child. Key

areas of the PNAC II are health, nutrition, education and leisure, protection and participation. This mechanism is based on the principles defined in the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique, the Law on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child (Law 7/2008), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and in other legislation in force in the country.

Concerning education, the PNAC II builds on the Strategy for the Full Development of the Pre-School Child (DICIPE) 2012-2021,[54] to overcome the poor quality of primary education and facilitate the attainment of the Millennium Goals. In the Government's Five-Year Plan it is stated that by 2015 all children shall have the opportunity to complete good quality basic education. Thus, in the scope of the education and leisure sector, the goal of the PNAC II is to improve children's access and retention and the quality of education. The interventions comprise the following levels:

(i) Pre-School: Promote children's access to pre-school education. The defined target is that by 2020 about 15% of the children of the respective age will have access to pre-school education;

(ii) Primary: Ensure that all children have the opportunity to complete 7-year basic education of good quality. The defined target is that by 2016 the gross enrolment rate shall be 54%, with 51% for girls;

(iii) Secondary: Increase of access to vocational secondary education, focused on quality and importance. By 2016 the gross enrolment rate in ESG1 shall be 50%, with 47% for girls.

Concerning protection, the PNAC II recognised the children's vulnerability, with cultural practices that stimulate multiple forms of

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[54] Strategy for the Full Development of the Pre-School Child 2012-2021, approved by the Council of Ministers on 26 June 2012. The aim of this strategy is to increase the welfare of children and their families, through the protection of pre-school children's rights, guaranteeing the beginning of a healthy life, adequate care and early stimulation, so that they can fully develop their potential.

abuse, violence, discrimination and violation of fundamental rights. For this reason the Plan developed the following specific objectives:

(i) "The construction of a favourable environment to achieve children's welfare and remove traditional practices that are harmful to their development;

(ii) Capacity building of the various sectors with regard to the protection of children;

(iii) To prevent and protect children against all forms of abuse, violence, discrimination and exploitation;

(iv) To ensure the right to identity and citizenship;

(v) To guarantee the protection of the rights of vulnerable children" (PNAC II, 2013-2020:30).

We should point out that the actions laid down in the PNAC II will be a challenge, since we currently live in a socioeconomic and cultural context in which an increased appeal to identity cohesion is observed, through the release of African cultural values, the consequence of which is the maintenance of a power structure based on gender inequality.

8. Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty (PARPA II, 2006-2009)

The Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty (PARPA II, 2006-2009) strengthened the Government's commitment to step up efforts for gender equality and identified gender inequality as one of the main barriers to economic development. This Plan, starting from an analysis of the situation of women in Mozambique, defines the principles that should guide the sector programmes and plans in order to decrease gender asymmetries. Referring specifically to the fact that about two thirds of the illiterates are women and that only a quarter of Government investment in EPS (General Secondary Education) benefits girls, the PARPA II proposes, among others, the following priority actions:

(i) "The approval and implementation of the gender policy and its strategy, including the institutionalization of gender units in all sectors at the central and provincial government levels;

(ii) The training of people in the effective integration, implementation, and monitoring of gender issues in sector plans and budgets;

(iii) Integration of the gender perspective into national development policies, programmes and projects" (PARPA II, 2006:62).

This document reasserts the responsibility of the Ministry of Women and Social Action for the coordination of policies and activities developed in the various sectors. The evaluation and monitoring of the level of implementation of the programmes are done through the National Council for the Advancement of Women (CNAM).

Having in view the improvement and clarification of the policies and actions for the reduction of poverty, the Action Plan for the Reduction of Poverty (PARP) 2011-2014, approved on 3 May 2011, is a medium-term strategy of the Government of Mozambique, operationalizing the Government's Five-Year Programme (2010-2014) and continuing the PARPA II. The Action Plan emphasizes the objective to combat poverty and to promote a work culture, with a view to achieve inclusive economic growth and a reduction of poverty and vulnerability in the country.

One of the priorities defined in the 3rd general objective of the PARP is to ensure universal access to 7-year primary education of good quality, guaranteeing the acquisition of basic skills. This consists of the promotion of actions to retain children in school, particularly girls, through the monitoring of the teaching/learning process in the classroom.

9. Economic and Social Plan of the Health Sector (PESS, 2010)

With respect to the health sector, though there is a proposal since 2010 for a gender strategy, the purpose of which is to ensure greater access of women to health care and calling attention to the exposure of women and children to gender violence, the preparation of the Economic and Social Plan of the Health Sector (PESS, 2010) did not take into account the gender perspective defined in this proposal. With a view of health limited to the medical field, this document excludes the integrative vision present in the Gender Policy and in the proposal approved by the sector. This situation is all the more curious when it is acknowledged that the health sector has a key role to play in the identification, attendance and referral of cases of violence against women and children, mainly sexual violence (Osório, 2011).

The National Policy of Sexual and Reproductive Health (PNSSR) was approved in July 2011 and was adopted in the scope of the approval of the Maputo Plan of Action. Its objectives are: to promote respect and the exercise of Sexual and Reproductive Rights among all parties involved; to ensure the provision of Sexual and Reproductive Health Care services (SRHC); to provide timely and adequate sexual and reproductive health care services to the beneficiaries.

One of the areas of intervention of this policy is the integration of gender aspects, the prevention of STI and HIV, as well as the prevention and combat of gender violence and of practices that are harmful to the health of women. In the context of the PNSSR it is recognized that "male and female sexual behaviour is determined by how the concepts of gender and sexuality are constructed on the basis of social, cultural and economic power, affecting the distribution of power" (PNSSR, 2011:14). It is in this context that in some places women have their first sexual intercourse soon after the initiation rites, exposing themselves from very early on to the risk of pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and HIV.

The aim of the PNSSR is to promote sexuality, promoting relations based on equity and mutual respect between men and women, thus contributing to a better quality of life for both and avoiding all kinds of violence (PNSSR, 2011).

Thus, it is proposed that the Sexuality, Gender and Violence component is integrated into Sexual and Reproductive Health Care, with a view to a rapid and multidisciplinary attendance (gynaecology, psychology, forensic medicine) of victims of sexual abuse, covering emergency contraception, prophylaxis of STI and HIV with antiretrovirals (PNSSR, 2011).

INSIDA data[55] (2010) indicate that the age of starting sexual activity is in general similar for urban and for rural areas, both for women and for men. In Cabo Delgado province sexual activity starts at the youngest age. For women, the increase of the level of education is related to a late start of sexual activity. According to the INSIDA (2010), the North of the country is the region with the largest proportion of sexually active girls and boys, particularly Niassa (40% of the girls and 41% of the boys).

These aspects show the challenges of the expansion of access to sexual and reproductive health services by the youth, mainly in rural areas where information is scarce, thus contributing to the limitation of the exercise of sexual and reproductive rights.

10. Education Sector Policy

With regard to the education policies we should identify a series of instruments that contributed to changes aimed at an improvement of the sector. Thus, the various interventions have been defined by the 1995 National Education Policy, which established a review of the National Education System, and by the various Strategic Plans, in which basic education and adult literacy were identified as top priorities. The promotion of the education of girls is also considered a

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[55] National Survey on Prevalence, Behavioural Risks and Information about HIV and AIDS in Mozambique (INSIDA).

priority in this document, which recommends measures such as the creation of a gender-friendly school environment.

With a view to the promotion of equality and equity in girls' access to education, the PNE envisages:

(i) The creation of a school environment which is sensitive to gender issues by identifying and defining the methods of organization of the educational process and by introducing changes in the teacher training programmes;

(ii) The creation of social awareness of the need to reduce the household chores load of girls;

(iii) The promotion of alternative systems for the provision of education for girls, such as through the organization of non-formal educational programmes;

(iv) Entering into agreements with NGOs, religious organizations and other partners in order to involve them in the implementation of programmes for the education of girls;

(v) Increase of the number of women teachers;

(vi) Provision of financial support for the purchasing of school material for underprivileged girls.

The first Strategic Education Plan (PEE I) was in force from 1999 to 2005 and focused on Primary Education. Its specific objectives were: to increase access to education, improve its quality and strengthen the financial and political institutional capacity (MEC, 2006). These objectives remained valid in the Strategic Education and Culture Plan (PEEC, 2006-2010/11), though with greater emphasis on the improvement of the quality of education and on the retention of students until grade 7, as we will see below.

11. Strategic Education and Culture Plan (PEEC, 2006-2010/11)

The education and culture sector prepared the Strategic Education and Culture Plan (PEEC) for the 2006-2010/2011 period. The main challenges of the PEEC are: access of girls and boys to school, improvement of the quality of education and reduction of gender

inequalities. For this purpose, and taking into account the international and national instruments adopted by Mozambique, the PEEC defines the objective of decreasing the gender asymmetries in EP1 (until 2009) and in EP2 (until 2015). In this sense the strategic areas are defined, among others, as: "to improve access to and safety at school, including concerted actions to put an end to the problem of sexual abuse at school; to identify and implement strategies for dealing with other direct and indirect costs of sending girls to school; to improve planning and identify strategies for dealing with regional gender asymmetries; to encourage the recruitment of girls to train as women teachers; to establish support mechanisms for women teachers in the rural areas; to encourage women to apply for administrative and management posts; to ensure effective monitoring systems to measure the impact of specific initiatives; to include themes in the syllabus of teacher training courses, such as gender, sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, to improve the quality of education and its gender sensitivity" (PEEC, 2006:66).

The PEEC establishes the Government vision with respect to the development of Education and Culture in Mozambique, at short to medium-term. For the 2006-2011 period and in agreement with the MDGs, the Agenda 2025, the Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty (PARPA), the Government Programme for 2005-2009, the Dakar Education for All Targets and the Education for All Accelerated Initiative, the PEEC identifies the following main lines of action: increase of access to education; improvement of the quality of education; strengthening the institutional, financial and political capacity to ensure the sustainability of the system; improvement of the quality of education; and retention of students until grade 7.

However, the implementation of the PEEC still faces various challenges, seeing that in 2008 863,000 children, 56% of whom girls, were still not attending school. This fact is due to factors such as "practices, attitudes and behaviours" which attach little importance to education in the rural areas of Mozambique, mainly for girls, early marriages, lack of classrooms, poor support for increasing school access and retention on the part of girls, through the Direct Support to Schools Programme (ADE) (PEEC).

With respect to the fight against gender violence, the education sector, through Ministerial Order 39/GM/2003, curbs the sexual involvement of teachers with students and stipulates that all pregnant girl shall be transferred to evening classes. In the event that a girl gets pregnant with the involvement of a teacher or education officer, the Order defines the following immediate effects:

(i) If the offenders are teachers and other educational officers, the suspension of their duties and salaries and the institution of disciplinary proceedings;

(ii) Those girl students who are pregnant are prohibited from attending day classes at elementary, basic and medium-level of the National Education System, as well as the respective authors, if they are students of the same school;

(iii) Whenever justified, and in the case of schools that don't have evening classes, the attendance of classes by the pregnant girl students will be authorized, by decision of the School Council.

However, the legal instruments are rarely applied because the perpetrator and the relatives of the victim seek to solve the problem in the family, which often results in the payment of a fine or in marriage. There is lack of clarity about the concepts of "harassment" and "sexual abuse", except when the sexual abuse results in pregnancy. The ignorance of these concepts makes that some parents don't take their daughters seriously, when they present cases of harassment and attempts to sexual abuse. As Osório (2011) states, there is no unanimity for the treatment of these concepts. "Sexual violation is both taken as synonymous with sexual abuse and is considered only a dimension of this concept (...) the same principle exists in the treatment of sexual violence which is sometimes confused with abuse and sometimes with violation. The vagueness of concepts allows the appearance of cultural interferences in decision-making" (Osório, 2011:13).

Going back to the 2004 Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique, article 88 defines education as a right and a duty of all citizens and that the State shall promote the extension of education to professional and continuing vocational training, as well as equal

access to the enjoyment of this right by all citizens. We can present the definition of priorities of public policies in the education sector at three separate points in time:

   (i) "The post-independence period, between 1975-1979, characterised by a big expansion of the school network and of school enrolment numbers as a result of the nationalization of Education;

   (ii) Armed conflict period, between 1980 and 1992, in which a significant reduction of the school network occurred;

   (iii) Signing of the General Peace Agreement, from 1992 to the current phase, which was characterised by the expansion of the network and of school enrolment numbers, first of Primary Education and later, particularly during the last few years (the PEEC period), of Secondary Education" (PEE 2012-2016:36).

Public Primary Education is free and is divided into two levels: 1st level Primary Education (EP1, from grade 1 to grade 5) and 2nd level Primary Education (EP2, grade 6 and 7). With the introduction of the new syllabus in 2004, this education was structured into three teaching cycles with the perspective of offering 7-year basic education for all: the 1st cycle (grade 1 and 2), the 2nd cycle (grade 3 to 5) and the 3rd cycle (grade 6 and 7). The official age for entering grade 1 is six years, completed in the year of entering school. The primary schools normally function in two shifts of six periods (45 minutes per period), one in the morning and the other one in the afternoon. To accommodate the expansion of the system, some primary schools, mainly in towns, function in three shifts of five periods (40 minutes). There are schools that also teach EP2 in the night shift, but this situation tends to decrease. Less than 2% of the students attend primary education in private or community schools (PEE 2012-2016). The evaluation system in Primary Education is based on automatic transition between classes and semi-automatic transition between levels.

General Secondary Education has two cycles: the first cycle comprises grade 8, 9 and 10. After completing this level of education

the student may keep studying in the second cycle of general education (grade 11 and 12) which precedes entry into Higher Education. General Secondary Education is not free and tuition fees are collected. To respond to the big demand for places in secondary education, this level of education operates with night shifts, mainly for students over 15 years of age. Moreover, many private schools are appearing at this level of education, particularly in towns. In 2011, these private schools were attended by 10% of the total number of secondary education students.

In addition to Basic Education the Educational System also includes technical-professional and higher education, whether through face-to-face teaching, through distance education or through other educational arrangements.

The current Education Sector Strategic Plan (PEE, 2012-2016), developed on the basis of an analysis and evaluation of the progress achieved and of the challenges identified during the implementation of the Strategic Education and Culture Plan 2006-2011, promotes education as a human right and an effective tool for the affirmation and integration of individuals into social, economic and political life. This analysis resulted in the formulation of the following main objectives of the education sector for the 2012-2016 period:

(i) Ensure inclusion and fairness in access to and retention at school;
(ii) Improve the students' learning;
(iii) Secure good governance of the system.

Taking fairness and inclusion as principles, the PEE (2012-2016) promotes the integration of specific interventions directed at cross-cutting areas such as HIV and AIDS, gender and others, into the existing programmes. The Government's vision about the role of Education is reflected in the PEE (2012-2016) in the following way: "education and training shall give supreme value to the empowerment of the Mozambican citizens providing them, especially adolescents and youths, with the practical and theoretical instruments to be successful in life" (PEE, 2012:17). To achieve this purpose, we are committed to the transmission of rules of good

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conduct, respect for others, cleanliness and hygiene, from pre-primary education onwards, through civic, ethical, moral and patriotic education. However, this education will be developed taking into account the values absorbed in the family, respect for African traditions made compatible with the universal values of modernity (PEE, 2012). However, it is through the discourse of respect for African traditions that the rights of women are not respected and are continuously violated, camouflaged by cultural practices which legitimate them and contribute to a situation in which men and women do not have equal opportunities and access to resources, mainly basic education.

This situation can be demonstrated by the difference in school attendance between girls and boys, with a high number of male students at all levels to the detriment of female students, despite the Education sector, since its first strategic plan, having developed specific instruments to guide and integrate a gender perspective in the education system. However, the gender focus in the strategic plans continues to be only concentrated on equal opportunities through the promotion of children entering the school at the age of six, particularly girls. The purpose of the creation of gender units at ministerial level, as well as at provincial and district level and in complete primary schools (EPCs), with a view to the development of specific actions, is the inclusion of a gender approach in the school environment. However, Osório and Silva (2008) state that, because of the lack of autonomy and insufficient empowerment of these gender units, their capacity to influence actions concerning public policies is limited, so that there is no guarantee that they can eliminate the gender asymmetries in the education sector.

The PEE (2012) states that in the course of the last few years, the proportion of girls attending Primary Education and the 1st cycle of Secondary Education has increased constantly, particularly in the 1st cycle of General Secondary Education, where the percentage of girls increased from 41% to 47%. The same evolution occurred in the districts "since in 2004 there were 22 districts with a female student population of less than 40% and in 2010 there was only one district,

Morrumbala, which still had a female student population of 39.7%" (PEE,2012:28).

In spite of the country having made progress in girls' access to education, the majority of the children outside of the school is of female sex and the measures adopted to guarantee that the children, mainly girls, complete basic education have not had the expected efficacy. As mentioned above, gender differences occur at all levels of education, but are more visible in the classes following grade 1. In 2006 the difference between boys and girls in grade 1 was 2% in favour of boys, while it increased to 20% in grade 7, while in 2008 this difference in grade 1 was 3.6% in favour of boys, while it increased to 12.6% in grade 7. This means that, as the girls get older, they drop out of school. The annual and inter-annual dropout rates are still high, mainly in the North and Centre of the country (PEE, 2012). Cultural factors have been mentioned as main causes of unequal access to education, expressed in the fact that the families give priority to the education of boys to the detriment of girls, and in the occurrence of dropouts caused by early marriages or unwanted pregnancy, which in most cases are related to sexual harassment and abuse.

Along the same lines, Macia (2011) states that gender equality and equity in access to education in Mozambique is a challenge because, notwithstanding the efforts made, there are still snags on the road to real gender equality and equity, some of which related to cultural factors inducing girls to early "marriages" and to their involvement in household chores and also the fact that their parents give priority to the education of boys to the detriment of the education of girls.

According to the analysis and projections produced by the MINED in the PEE (2012-2016), in the next few years it will not be possible to achieve gender equity. It is necessary to make efforts for the realization of the rights of women and children in the country.

12. Education Sector Gender Strategy for the 2011-2015 period

Since 1995, the Government has developed various tools to guide actions with a view to greater access to education, mainly basic primary education. The Gender Integration Action Plan (PAIG) appeared as the main tool to guide the implementation of the PEE in a gender perspective. However,

> "the fact that the PAIG is developed at the margin of the national education strategy has limited the achievement of progress in narrowing the gender gap in the education sector, whether with respect to the participation of girls and women as students, or concerning the participation of women as teachers and in decision-making processes in the institutions as well as regarding the adoption of measures to make the sector more adjusted to the desired changes" (EGSE, 2011).

Between 2004 and 2008 the Education Sector Gender Equity Strategy was developed, with a view to the production of a series of strategic guidelines on the basis of the strategic axes of the sector, namely access to education and permanence in school, the quality of education and institutional development. In order to continue these actions, and because gender differences in the education sector still prevail, the EGSE (2011-2015) was prepared, with the following objectives:

(i) To contribute to the achievement of equal rights and opportunities both for women and for men concerning education and its benefits;

(ii) To guarantee a more equitable participation of both sexes in the development actions planned by the Ministry of Education;

(iii) To contribute to the implementation of agreements and laws for the promotion of gender equality in Mozambique;

(iv) To improve the capacity of the education sector to deal with gender equality and women empowerment themes;

(v) To strengthen the gender mainstreaming processes in the structures, systems, policies and programmes of the Ministry.

This plan is supposed to be a continuation of the actions aimed at achieving basic primary education, so as to comply with the Millennium Development Goals. However, many challenges still persist regarding the protection of children, which the strategy will have to face.

In spite of all these actions, many girls abandon school and there are more inequalities in terms of access to education and opportunities, calling into question all efforts that have been made to offer education for all. Most of the existing child protection policies do not identify a relation between cultural issues and failures at school, which leads to the development of strategies and actions that are not linked to the issue of girls having access to and remain at school.

As can be seen from the description presented, there are legal and institutional mechanisms in Mozambique promoting equal rights. However, it is evident that, in spite of the formalization of the protection and defence of children and women, the efforts made and the resources spent have not produced the desired effects. Issues such as sexual violence against children and women, the continuation of traditional practices such as early "marriages", genital manipulation rituals, *pitakufa*[56] and domestic violence, are still socially legitimated and not sanctioned by the system of administration of justice. This means that the problem is not the inadequacy of legislation and procedures but the incapacity to act on the social and cultural reality, i.e., when the gender order is not considered a basic order of inequality, and when one seeks to reconcile a culture of exclusion with human rights, the efficacy of the strategic intentions will be limited to isolated actions that conflict with the preservation of a profoundly conservative gender structure. Therefore, whenever (or almost whenever) culture and rights enter

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[56] WLSA (2011). "*Pitakufa*" is a purification ritual that obliges a widow to sleep with the brother of her deceased husband. http://www.wlsa.org.mz, Acceded on 27 December 2010.

into conflict, as is the case of early "marriages", the social and institutional silence neutralizes the illegality.

As already mentioned, there are legislation and public policies which, when applied, could safeguard the rights of women and children. However, many proposals for change in legislation or public policies encounter an hostile environment with the argument that they clash with cultural practices. Girls face violence at home, at school and in the community. "There is a big barrier, which is the lack of legal support to legitimate and make the protection of girls against violence effective. The practices, attitudes and behaviours in the community educate girls in the sense of submission and obedience to boys, thus contributing to their vulnerability, with respect to the various forms of violence against them" (UNICEF, 2009:49).

Chapter III - Initiation Rites: Cultural Cohesion and Power Strategies

While the purpose of the previous chapter was to set out the legislative and judicial assumptions and the public policy commitments regarding human rights, particularly in Mozambique, it is also necessary to emphasize that these legal mechanisms are clashing with unfavourable contexts for the enforcement of these rights. In other words, we are faced with a certain degree of ineffectiveness in the use of this set of legal instruments, which may partly be explained by the existence of a power which structures cultural institutions such as the rites, without taking into account the principles guiding access to and the exercise of human rights.

With this chapter we intend to analyse the social meanings and power relations of the ethnolinguistic groups, in the context of the legal force of the modern State. It is not our intention to give an ethnographic description of the rites, their moments and contents. Besides, the observation of Peirano (2003) is relevant, that to understand the rites, we have to bear in mind the social order that the cultural bodies intend to reproduce. Thus, for example, the rites may be analysed through a symbolic approach of their representations and their role in the construction/constraint of identity (i.e. with respect to gender, a group and relationships). The question is that the rites should be seen as institutional symbolic systems (in the view of Pierre Bourdieu, 1981), culturally and politically structured and structuring, of social power relations and "intrigues" (including the very dimension of the more formal State power) and identities. In this sense, we adopt her analysis as "special types of events, more formalized and stereotyped and thus more liable to analysis because already cut out in native terms, as critical events and rituals are more stable, having an order which structures them, a sense of event with a collective purpose" (Peirano, 2003: 8).

As we already had the opportunity to discuss, our main concern in the course of this study, and present in this chapter, is to seek to understand how the rites established themselves as tools for the construction of a world vision and for the projection of a place for the production and reproduction of a political, social and cultural order, recognizing the mechanisms transforming it in a field of revelation and support of powers, mainly the constituent power of social gender or group relations.

Without intending to repeat the above already developed theoretical-methodological precautions and options, our analysis of the rites is supported in this chapter by empirical evidence, taking into account the dynamist perspective of the rites-State adaptability or conflict, in the tradition-modernity and power-countervailing power perspectives. This allows us at once to start from the above-formulated concepts, such as those of culture, power, ethnic/ethnolinguistic group, as well as the correlated concepts of the theory of action and/or the theory of power.

Seeking to understand the dynamics of the rites as power structures, we will do so bearing in mind that the power relations in which they are included exist at two levels, a macro level (in their relation to the State) and a micro level (within their endogenous contexts of reproduction). In any one of the cases they are perceived as autonomous social power and countervailing power relations, which are organised and circumstantial, synchronic and diachronic, reproductive and short-lived, peaceful and discordant, i.e., as a provisional and reformulating system. We should note that the analysis of the interpretation of the meanings of the rites on the basis of the ethnolinguistic groups being studied (differences, specificities and similarities), including the forms of reproduction of roles, identities and powers resulting from the rites, will be guided by a dynamic analysis view of power and countervailing power, i.e., perceiving them as symbolic power institutions. This will allow us to understand the clashes and the recomposition/readjustment strategies of the rites, when confronted with other forms/instances of power (for example, the State), with the objective of breaking with

the analytical impasses in the explanation of naturalized practices by the culturalist view, according to authors such as Sardan (2010).

Thus, we will start dealing with symbolic power, social expectations and the differences and similarities of initiation rites. Then we will deal with the changes and resistances/readaptations of the rites with modernity. Finally, we will discuss the contextualization of the rites in the broad context of State power (threats, alliances and countervailing power/reaffirmation), taking into account their inclusion/legitimation in the *campus* of religious ideologies.

1. Structure, organisation and functional system of the rites

1.1. Concept, organisation and functions/objectives

Rites are classified in different ways, but here it is important to focus on rites of passage (from adolescence to adulthood), what Terrin (2004) calls rites related to the life cycle. According to this author, the term *rite* is derived from the Latin *ritus*, what means established order, which involves a cultural community expression, without however any discursive or thought system prescription for its practical identification. With this assertion the author reveals the complex character of the rite, distinctive from what, for example, the accompanying rituals would be.

Alongside overtures of a more religious character, related to periodic practices of consecration of rituals of mythological sacredness, of gestuality or instrumentalism in beliefs (where the approach of Turner, 1974, comes forward), Terrin also indicates another conceptual line, of authors such as Goody (1961),[57] which considers

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[57] J. Goody. (1961). *Religion and Ritual: The Definitional Problem*. The British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 142–164.

rites a manifestation of symbolic-mystical performances, and not necessarily instrumental.[58]

The phenomenological nature brought by Terrin gives a social contextualization to the rite as:

> "an act of worship, a moment of expression of a whole at community level, an act of cult that has its meta-empirical direction, and as such is capable of unifying in a profound way the experience of the real" (Terrin, 2004: 35).

Thus, alongside their religious nature, the rites should be socially integrated in the perspective of the meanings given to them and of the behaviours.

Although also referred to in the description of the approaches taken by Terrin (2004), in this chapter the psychoanalytic and cathartic, ethological and ecological perspectives, among others, will not be studied in depth. What is central to the study is the analysis of the continuation and restructuring of a social order that is achieved by the rites.

For Van Gennep (1977), in the wake of the dynamic sociology a ritual is an autonomous object, structured in ceremonies that are in agreement with the type of moment (birth, coming of age, marriage, death). The ceremonies are thus operations that are conducted taking into account their implicit aims. The rituals regulate and order, constraining individuals to a more general social and economic order. For this author, an understanding of the rites is subject to knowing their mechanisms and what gives them meaning. Whatever the rites are, they mean a *passage* that contains a sequence: separation, margin, and aggregation. Each one of these sequences and rites has a different meaning, according to the stage of life to which they refer.

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[58] "...with the rite we make reference to a category of standard behaviours in which the relation between means and ends is not intrinsic, i.e., it is neither irrational nor non-rational" (Goody, 1961, quoted by Terrin, 2004).

In the understanding of Van Gennep (1977) and as subsequently stated by Medeiros (1995), it is also observed that the rites of passage, as well as those of the puberty of boys and girls, have a three phase structure: separation, margin and aggregation. Separation involves the violence of a compulsive detachment of the adolescents from the mother's home. There are also traumatic effects of the violence of the initiation rites through the exposure of magical-religious contents, and with recourse to the animal (snakes) and plant (roots, grass, the menstruation tree (*mpila)* in the case of the *Makhuwa-Lomwé* group in Zambézia) domain, all this to express the symbolic death of the provisional beings of the community.

The differences and changes characterising the current organisation of the rites in their three phases (separation, margin and aggregation) will be discussed below. For now, we observe that there are two scenarios to bear in mind according to the empirical data of this study: first, the difference between the geographical regions of the study (north of the country – Cabo Delgado, centre-north – Zambézia, and centre – Sofala), which somehow coincides with the ethnolinguistic specificities of these regions – *Makhuwas*, *Makondes, Chuwabos, Makhuwas Lomués, Senas* and *Ndaus*); second, the proximity of the regions with respect to towns and cities. Although these aspects will be dealt with in detail in subsequent subchapters, at this point they draw attention to the fact that the time used for the performance of the rites has been reduced.

As seen in previous studies (Medeiros, 1995, Braço, 2008) for boys the separation still continues without a mark (though in this study the majority of the interviewers had mentioned circumcision as a ritual demarcation factor). I.e., while for girls the first menstruation, the appearance of breasts, among other physiological marks, still remain decisive elements for being taken to the godmother's house, the criteria for the separation of boys are age, the breaking of the voice, the parents' suspicions about their sexual biological development, as is established by these remarks from a *Makonde* boy in Macomia District:

"A time came at which my father started to take me out for fishing and to the *machamba* (agricultural field), and when my uncle saw this he talked to my father to take me to the ceremonies, because they thought that I had already grown up … I had already started to have hair in my pubic area" (Diogo 1d).

While in the past the departure for the rites was evidently a group movement of youths and adolescents to the "*mato*" (the bush, in the case of boys) and to the "*cabana*" (the hut, in the case of girls), organised by the holders of ritualistic power, today it is more a movement led by the parents/families who deliver their children. The tendency still continues to send the boys and girls at an earlier age, often on an individual basis for the latter. In addition to this, even if for girls the first menstruation is decisive, their entry into the rites is already no longer only determined by this event. In other words, some vagueness of the criteria for the initiation of girls begins even to call into question their menstruation as an unquestionable mark, as is shown by the difference between the examples below of two *Ndau* girls of the same focus group, in Beira City:

"I went to the initiation rites when I was 10, but had not yet started to menstruate; my godmother took me to the house of my grandmother and a few days later I joined other girls in the rites, who were older than me and had already started to menstruate" (Luísa 1).

"When I started to menstruate I was 13 years old. (…) At that time my mother did not explain anything to me, she only called my aunt, the sister of my father, to take care of me, and after that I had the ceremonies" (Luísa 2).

Anyway, mainly in the southern region of the country the recruitment criteria (for the separation phase) tend to be more imprecise for boys than for girls. For girls, criteria such as the first menstruation, the development of breasts and virginity still remain valid/observable, though we have come across cases in which the entry of non-virgin girls is not prevented. With respect to boys, the scenario still continues that their physiological puberty corresponds to

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sociocultural puberty. This distinction is developed by Van Gennep (1977), when he states that one aspect has to do with the point of view of the social expectations and commands that individuals assume outside of their childhood condition, about to prepare themselves for adult life (social puberty), and another aspect has to do with the maturation stage or anatomical and physiological evolution of the individuals, giving them pubescent physical characteristics of final human pre-maturation (biological/ physiological puberty). Besides, even the boys come to the rites without knowing what they will find there (in terms of teaching contents and mechanisms). This justifies perhaps the functional side of the generational secrecy, i.e., the pact of silence of the more "adults" towards the "non-adults". We can see this diversity of the criterion of age and physiological maturation for going to the rites in a focus group of *Makonde* adolescents in Cabo Delgado, Macomia District:

> "I participated in the ceremonies of the initiation rites at the age of 10" (Diogo 1a).

> "I also participated in the ceremonies of the initiation rites at the age of 8" (Diogo 1 b).

> "I think I was 7" (Diogo 1 c).

> "I was 11" (Diogo 1d).

An important aspect has to do with the fact that among ethnolinguistic groups of *Makonde* and *Makhuwa* origin there still remains a tendency to perform the male initiation rites in groups (including the case of adolescents of the same groups in the capital towns, without excluding Maputo City where we did the pilot study in the *Makonde* area of concentration in Military District and the *Makhuwa* area of concentration in Mafalala District). In the cases of the *Ndau* group ritual collectivisation is infrequent and in the *Sena* group this collectivisation has sometimes been making way to ritual individualization, granting a greater degree of intervention to the families. These observations are evident in these remarks from *Ndau* boys in Búzi District:

> "The ceremonies occurred in a hut in the bush. It was my uncle who took me to the bush. When we arrived there, there were other boys. We shaved our head. (...) They circumcised us. (...) We sang together. (...) We were going to the bush singing and hunting" (Luís 3).

> "I stayed in the house of my grandfather for a week. My father took me there during this time. I stayed only with my grandfather but sometimes other people would come to perform a few traditional ceremonies with me" (Marco 3).

An interesting aspect of the recruitment of boys has to do with the entry on the stage of agents representing the public State authority. While the Education sector participates urging the organizers of the rites to conduct them during school holidays, the health units contribute with health personnel, who attend to a list of candidates for circumcision, brought in by the local traditional authorities and rite masters, through technical and hygienically safe means (though there still are symbolic incision practices on the penis of boys, under the pretext of respect for the ancestors and local culture).

An officer of the Health sector in Cabo Delgado had this to say:

> "The circumcision of adolescents during the initiation rites is carried out by nurses here in the health unit, according to a list which the village head has previously given to us. (...) This is good for us because in this way the boys are not exposed to risks of contamination through sharp tools used collectively, and a well performed circumcision allows personal sexual hygiene as the inexistence of the foreskin is an unfavourable environment for bacteria" (Achirafo 2).

Another officer of the Health sector in Sofala said this:

> "Circumcision allows safer sexual intercourse, the skin of the glands of the penis becomes more insensitive to corrosion and microscopic injuries that may facilitate contamination, (...) including HIV and AIDS" (Daniel 1).

Well then, on the one hand, in addition to the correlation between circumcision and sexual hygiene or between circumcision and safe

sex being an assertion without acquired material or scientific evidence, in our view this leads to the legitimation of circumcision in the initiation rites, even if it was previously non-existent in some groups, as is the case of the *Ndau* and *Chuwabo* groups. For example, a man of the focus group of *Ndau* traditional leaders told us during the interview:

> "In our days we didn't have circumcision but today some young parents already take their children to hospital to perform circumcision. (...) It is good because it avoids a few diseases" (Ernesto 3).

As we will see below, this observation is part of a political effort to appropriate an attempt for scientific reasoning with respect to circumcision, promoting an agenda of ideological harmonization between the political discourse of the State and that of the rites (through a legitimation strategy of both).

On the other hand, even if the Health authorities ultimately and without an objective intention end up interfering in the field of traditional power regarding the performance of circumcision, this results in a transformation of its symbolic meaning. However, though the introduction of circumcision occurs through a strategy negotiated with the public power, it does not annul the social and symbolic power of the traditional circumcision agents. This may be exemplified by the observation that the act of circumcision is first of all a moment where two performances are present.

In the first place, the exercise of a mythical professional power that marks the identity of a social group, which is why, even when the boys are circumcised by nurses, when entering the ritual space, a small symbolic incision/cut is made with traditional tools, indicating the authenticity of the circumcision. For example, a *Makonde* master in Pemba, Cabo Delgado told us:

> "When the boys return from the hospital we prick the penis with a needle prepared by our *wanalombo*[59] so that this circumcision has the effect foreseen in our tradition" (Armindo 1).

In the second place, the preparation of male sexual power over women, i.e., circumcision is seen as moulding the penis so that the man can obtain greater control over the sexual act. Without scientific evidence of this fact and observing that this world view does not make any reference to women as a co-participant subject of the sexual act (the female body is perceived as an object), a ritualized *Makhuwa* youth in Mecúfi informed us that:

> "A circumcised penis is more potent than a non-circumcised penis, because while its erection is easy it also lasts longer during the sexual act, because the removal of the foreskin puts the gland of the head of the penis exposed to the natural environment and is thus less sensitive to premature ejaculation" (Vasco 3).

The margin phase continues to be very important as it is a moment marked by sexual education, education about the social division of work between men and women, teachings about "respect" for older people and sociocultural values acting in the sense of preserving a scheme that organizes social relations and hierarchies by gender and by generation. In all the four ethnolinguistic groups (*Makonde, Makhuwa, Ndau* and *Sena*) a ritualized woman shall always crouch when she is in front of older men of the family, and shall never sit down at the same table where her husband and other relatives or friends are seated; when *Makhuwa, Ndau* and *Sena* husbands are dissatisfied with the behaviour of their wives they should first complain to their aunt or older sister; when the ritualized boys, already men, return or pass by the house of their parents they should not enter the room of their parents or touch intimate things of their mothers without asking permission; in the *Makonde, Makhuwa* and

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[59] A *Makonde* master of initiation rites and of other magical-traditional ceremonies and prayers.

Ndau groups it is the man who should – repeating the obligation – build a house for his family. However, in the *Sena* group women also participate in this activity.

Still concerning education for the adult phase, we should note the counsels and coercion in order to establish certain masculinizing and feminizing attitudes in the profile of the "completed" boys (men) and "completed" girls (women). With respect to girls we should note tests of household chores (i.e., sweeping, cooking), of care of the husband (i.e., respond to signs of hunger and/or signs of sexual desire), of sexual and reproductive performance. With respect to boys, resorting to a symbolic coppice (except in the capital towns) is still being done, simulations of the penetration of the penis into objects that simulate a vagina, or even instructions for sexual assault of any woman who by chance passes in the proximity of the place where the boys being initiated are "marginalized" (in the margin phase). In the initiatory period girls are taught to have good performance as women, with emphasis on the demonstration of the sexual act by older women, through dances and other subtle forms of staging and "cultural performance".

Regarding the aggregation phase an expressive festivity continues to exist, evident in the new social statuses (because it is also a moment of sharing and meeting between tradition and the public and civil order). Because these parties are perceived as displays of "cultural heritage", the public and local power authorities are called in this phase as guests of honour to the initiates' adulthood consecration event. In the same logic of proud display of the new adult, in many cases the families (the initiates' parents) reserve for this occasion the only moment in which the parents' unrestricted affection for their children is displayed, through toasts and various presents (mainly in rural areas where parents have few material possessions for the economic sustenance of their children). During the study, many youths said that this is the only festive moment of their life, as a *Makonde* student in Mecúfi, Cabo Delgado told us:

> "I never had a party at home, my parents never had an opportunity to throw a party for me or my brothers, but when

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we returned from the rites we got new clothes, slippers, there were soft drinks and biscuits, there were lots of people in our house" (Vasco 2).

So we see that it is from the aggregation phase that the rites reveal that they clearly represent what Medeiros (1995) calls a decisive element of how individuals appear and position themselves in the social domain. Well then, the rites force the course of social inclusion or exclusion of individuals. We will exemplify this point when dealing with the role of rites in the determination of the social integration of individuals and in the social reproduction of group identities.

1.2. Agents, expectations and social integration

The power of the rites, as factors of social inclusion or exclusion, reveals itself in the form of social recognition ties between individuals, within a framework of expectations of the social group or, if we prefer, within the *campus* of socio-identity reproduction. Let us for example consider the information of a female teacher living in Búzi District, in Sofala:

> "When I got here, coming from Inhambane, after marrying my husband who is *Ndau*, but who had passed through the *Sena-Makhuwa* rites, so he had been circumcised and all his sisters had done *matinji*, his family, mainly his sisters, exerted pressure on me that I should at least create *matinji*. (...) For a long time I refused, until they started spreading word around the entire district that I was a little child and was not a woman to be married. (...) I already started hearing these things in the *chapa*"[60] (Deolinda 3).

For his part, a young *Makonde* man said the following:

> "With this age (19 years) I am still in grade 7, after an interruption of five years, because I had to leave the house of my uncle, where I lived after my parents had died, and which was near the only school in the small town. (...) I moved to the

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[60] Semi-collective public transport.

house of my grandmother in an area without a school. (...) What me did abandon school was the fact that my school mates, friends and neighbours of my age discovered that I was *waanasunke*, a dirty man who has not been circumcised, and they spread this information to all school girls and female neighbours. (...) Therefore I did the rites in Muidume in the house of my grandparents" (Vasco 2).

The statement of Deolinda 3 and of Vasco 2 also show a framework of stereotypes revealing a structuring power, with social and institutional recognition and non-recognition mechanisms affecting individuals for having, or not having, been subjected to rites and because of the sex-gender and/or ethnolinguistic qualities conferred by the rites. In this respect, Bourdieu (1981) gives a more institutional meaning to the rites by classifying them as institutionalization acts/processes.

The rite agents (the organizers, executors and companions) ascribe social features to the initiates which are, ultimately, the expectations of the operating rite agents, i.e., gender roles, physiological physical identity and identity features of the group. For now it is important to highlight the importance of the relation between the rites and the confirmation features of gender roles, as well as of the confirmation features of the relation of those with group identities (in this case ethnolinguistic-cultural identities) and from there seek to establish the link between these two scopes and the social expectations determining their "success", which in our view are of two levels: on the one hand we have expectations projected to social gender roles to be assumed and exercised by the new "adults" and on the other hand we have the expectations projected to the social reproduction of the sociocultural values and qualities of the identity of the social group to which the initiates belong.

In the first case, the rite agents act, through teachings, empirical demonstrations, examples of social inclusion and exclusion, in order that the "new adult" boys are and act as "true men/good men". I.e., heads of family, owners of family property, intolerant with respect to rebellious attitudes of their wives, privileged and dominant in the

relations of the division of the rights of expression and of decision in the relation to women, legitimate sanctioners of the family order. And that the "new adult" girls are and act as "good women". I.e., mothers, responsible for the health care of the children, for the cleanliness of the house, for the moral education and behaviour of the children, for the kitchen, for water and fuel supply for domestic use, obedient to the spouse and his relatives, exclusive and unconditional sexual "devotees" of the husband.

In the second case, the rite agents act through the use of the mythology of the ethnolinguistic group (i.e., historical origin, cultural values, power symbology, safety/protection or spiritual and social success). In this scope, values are transmitted to the new adults which should be perpetuated as instruments of social acceptance (when accomplished) or of social disapproval (when not accomplished): in the context of formal work economy often directed through clientelistic/neopatrimonialist mechanisms (according to the assertion of Médard, quoted by Geffray, 1990b),[61] and in the context of testing group identity relations during moments of social companionship (during these moments the identity of the "masculinizing or feminizing purity" conferred by the social group's order of values is also tested), and in the context of decision-making power and of the choice of a spouse. In this regard, a *Makonde* master had this to say:

> "We, *Makondes*, have to take our children to the rites because there they will have protection from our ancestors. About anything they need to consult, all the values they will have to use to educate their children as well, the correct decision about the woman they should marry, they will know it thanks to the rites (Armindo 2).

On the other hand, a *Makhuwa* master said that:

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[61] J. Médard (1976). "Le rapport de clientèle. Du phénomène social à l'analyse politique". In: *Revue Française de Sciences Politique*s, No. 1, Vol. 26.

"Nowadays, the majority of our youths, mainly those who did not go to the rites, have had a lot of bad luck in life, for example, their marriages are dissolved very quickly because the women do not know their role in the household, their relations with their parents and with the elderly are disrespectful, they marry with any person without knowing the origin of the tradition of these people, they do not know how to treat some diseases of their children in a traditional way, they do not know which cults they should perform in life to steer away from bad luck in life" (Armindo 3).

Well then, it is true that the power of these two scenarios of sociocultural expectations of the rites, in the media coverage of the social inclusion-exclusion of individuals, is not only due to the exposure of the initiates to the symbolic framework of the actions, practices and discourses of the separation, margin and aggregation. There is here at the same time an intervention of "professionals" (in the statutory sense of social role) and mainly of their "institutional power" which in our view is conveyed in three fundamental *campuses* (in Bourdieu's perspective, 1989) of micropower: the *campus* of intellectual memory power (parental, inherited or acquired professionally), the *campus* of the traditional authority and its pact with the local public power/authority and the spectre of domination by social and/or charismatic legitimacy (in Weber's words, 2004), strengthened by its alliance with the power.

Previous studies consulted by us (Medeiros, 1995; Braço, 2008), as well as the exploratory study of this research conducted in 2011 in Maputo City (in Mafalala and Military Districts), seem to have shown that the agents responsible for the rites, whether those of boys or of girls, are exclusively or almost exclusively related to the activity of the initiation rites of this group of youths and adolescents. However, what we note is that these agents develop strategies in order that their professional practice strengthens other sources of social power. I.e., the rite agents are clearly the organizers, executors and legitimators/companions of the entire ritual process, and we found four categories or forms of power of the rite agents, namely, traditional power, public power (domain of the formal authority),

parental heritage and religious power, though these forms may not necessarily act together.

There are several parties involved in the supervision of the rites, the more important ones of which are the masters, matrons, godfathers and godmothers, due to the fact that they appear in the three phases – separation, margin and aggregation – while in many cases the godfathers and godmothers of the initiates accompany their life cycle.

The organizers of the rites (parents, uncles, godmothers, older brothers, heads of the village/quarter, chiefs/queens) act in the separation and margin phases, the executors (informal nurses or surgeons, masters, matrons, preachers of divine and spiritual prayers, healers, elders guardians of mythological knowledge about the group's identity values, already initiated boys/girls, sentinels and executors of punishments to the initiates, singers) intervene in the margin phase, and finally the community and family companions (absent in the two previous phases) receive the new initiates in the integration phase. It should be noted that it frequently happens that the companions of the integration are to a large extent the same who played an important role in the separation, the most important ones being the godmothers and godfathers. The social control of the initiates is carried out by people holding social power over the rites, the community and the families (i.e., community leaders masters/matrons). Besides, as shown above, it is due to this fact (mainly in rural areas) that the social inclusion or exclusion of individuals occurs through the rites.

Ultimately, these situations show, in line with the reasoning of Bourdieu (1989) who treats the "rites as institutional acts*"*, that the rites tend to produce a *habitus* within the social group, i.e., for example, how boys mould their sexual expectations about women and vice versa, how expectations about the domestic sexual division of labour are aligned, how ideas about sources of marital conflicts are pre-conceptualized, how criteria of group identity are judged, even between members of the same community, having furthermore to do with the limits of the *modus operandi* of the rites in the

institutionalization of practices and discourses for the social life of the initiates.

And it isn't by chance, for example, that specialised professionals appear to put pressure on already adult individuals who passed or not through the rites (among the *Makhuwas* in Maputo and in Pemba), or who, having done so, were not circumcised (among the *Chuwabos*). The same applies to cases in which women without *othuna*[62] suffer various kinds of pressure and disapproval for not having them.

It can be concluded that individuals feel integrated or excluded through the construction of gender identities (masculinization and feminization) and of an ethnolinguistic group identity. The preparation of gender roles for conjugal life, the civic order (transmission of "respect" and preparation or manipulation of the "good man/good woman"), the genital and physical modelling, constitute a creation/legitimation of men and women for the matrimonial/conjugal market, culminating in the consecration of the mandate of family parental power and return on the social investment in the children, as can be concluded from the statements of a *Makonde* teacher in Pemba:

> "A boy is fit to marry/having a wife when he is 13 to 15 and already an adult. After a girl has started to menstruate she is already a woman and is fit to marry/have a husband. A serious man shall be one who knows how to take care of his wife, who does not let there be lack of food in his house, and who knows how to discipline his children. And a good woman shall know at what time to leave and return home, how to take care of the children, how to cook and take care of the house. Today there are those women who are married but do not even know how to hold a baby on her lap or how to cook" (Álvaro 1).

Another *Makhuwa* teacher in Mecúfi adds:

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[62] *Othuna* for *Makhwuas* and *Makondes*, *matinji* for *Senas* and *Ndau*.

"A serious man shall respect his ancestors, shall build his house and shall have employment, and a good woman shall be one who produces children and who respects the family of her husband" (Álvaro 3).

With significant importance for the social integration of individuals (according to the social status conferred by the rites), the sociocultural strategies of monitoring access to the matrimonial market (i.e., social reconnaissance of the relatives of the fiancées or fiancés) and to the productive economic market (i.e., agricultural land and/or housing plots) were also identified for the domestic economy, mainly on the part of rural families in some districts (Macomia, Mecúfi, and Gurué). Besides, it is this what in our view continues to determine the power of female rites, because it is here where the matrimonial and economic market for the procreators who see in their daughters direct material or financial sources (from their birth, in the case of Búzi District, dominated by the "*paratu*" phenomenon[63]), is controlled. In the case of the acceptance of the "good son" or rejection of the "bad son", the parents find legitimation to attribute or withdraw from their son some succession, inheritance and property management power. This also happens when, on the basis of the positive or negative assessment of the daughter-in-law or of her family, as this *Ndau* leader in Búzi District says:

"I had bad luck with my oldest son and my subsequent daughters, but thanks to God my youngest son fulfilled all the ceremonies of the rites and has already introduced his wife. We are very happy, I and my wife, therefore we invited him to live with his wife in our house and we gave our *machamba* and our goats to the couple so that they can manage. (...) Now, that bandit [referring to another son] would not deserve this. (...) We don't even know where he is and what he is doing there in Beira, and the daughters are only producing grandchildren just like that for us to bring up. (...) If only they

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[63] This traditional matrimonial arrangement is an element belonging to the cultural model legitimised by the initiation rites.

had listened to us... (...) But also, nowadays, we don't have those *mankôssi*[64] of our times" (Ernesto 3).

Finally, it should be noted that an order of gender relations that may be expected for the social integration of individuals is based on the reproduction of androcratic power, identified in the discourses of parents and adolescents. In other words, the entire direct and indirect discourse is constructed around virilocality and also of parental power of the men in the family. Hence it is clear that the rites are producers of androcracy, as can be seen from the statement of a female teacher in Búzi:

> "After they start seeing menstruation it is better to have our daughters here at home, married to a good husband and taking care of their household, than to be there at school, vulnerable to frivolities with their colleagues or even those irresponsible teachers, and as a consequence get pregnant without anybody taking responsibility" (Deolinda 3).

In the same way, a male teacher in Búzi District says:

> "It is very important for us that our daughters are virgins until the day of their marriage, therefore after coming out of the rites it is much better to marry before any disgrace happens; it would be a disgrace if she had been unofficially beheaded[65] before marrying" (Dinis 3).

Thus, we note that both the patrilineal and the matrilineal organisation of kinship are similar with regard to the androcratic power, strengthened by the rites with respect to virilocality. In other words, while it has been assumed that the matrilineal order goes against the direct role of husbands in taking control of the family and the children, of the land and of production, giving primacy to the brother of the fiancée, the rites, through their teachings of the boys, have been contributing to the transformation of this order, by teaching the boys to be direct holders of parental and property power in the family.

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[64] Name given to the master of rites and of magical-traditional ceremonies.
[65] Slang used to refer to a girl's loss of virginity.

1.3. Ethnolinguistic identity and rites: the case of the *Makhuwa, Makonde, Chuwabo, Sena* and *Ndau* groups

In the first place, we want to repeat here that the objective of this study is not to analyse or describe ethnographically the ethnolinguistic groups with which we have been working. The idea contained in this section is to make a brief characterisation of the identities, from a cultural point of view (regarding the practices and symbology of their rites), of the *Makhuwa, Makonde, Chuwabo, Sena* and *Ndau* groups. We should also mention the difficulties encountered due to the fact that in some cases we did not find factors of cultural regularity related to the rites and also because the historiographical or ethnographic literature is scarce. Besides, even the literature found does not offer historiographical or anthropological details about the subject of initiation rites in the *Chuwabo* (in Zambézia), *Mwani* (in Cabo Delgado), *Sena* and *Ndau* (in Sofala) societies and other societies in the regions studied.

The correlation between rites and ethnolinguistic group evolves through the process of social reproduction in which both occur simultaneously. Medeiros seeks to demonstrate this relation saying that:

> "The rites should also be seen on the basis of a socioeconomic dimension, in which the link to a social structure and its function in social reproduction occurs; and they should also be seen in a sociopedagogical dimension relative to the production of the "man", a cultural and symbolic production, part of which is the reproduction of the group culture; and finally, in a psychological socialization and enculturation dimension" (Medeiros, 1995: 316).

Alongside Medeiros (1995), Augé (1994) and others summarize the social function and objective of the rites as being the fulfilment of roles of reproduction and restructuring of the order of secularizing powers to guarantee group identity between generations. Without studying the rites in depth, on the basis of the groups of the regions

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studied, it would be necessary to verify previously how this (socioeconomic, symbolic, psychosocial, sociopedagogical and even political) correlation occurs between the ethnolinguistic belonging group and the functions/roles of the rites.

But how would the rites participate in the social co-reproduction of the sociocultural (identity, gender and even political) order of the ethnolinguistic groups?

It should first be noted that the ethnolinguistic groups that are object of this study will be described taking into account the socio-organizational historicity and its correlation with the influence of the rites on the construction of identities. The idea is that this correlation is demonstrated via the symbolic and institutionalizing power of the rites for purposes of cognition, beliefs, gender roles, kinship and/or political order, taking however into account the unequal balancing of the content of empirical information on the occurrence of initiation rites in these groups. We will have three descriptive categories for this purpose, namely the group identity marks in the rites (for example, traits of kinship, mechanisms of social inclusion and exclusion), the reproduction marks of androcratic power and the present time and encounter with modernity (changes and inclusion in the field of State political power). For organizational reasons, this last aspect will be integrated into the section about the analysis of the rites in the context of State power in Mozambique.

According to the ethnolinguistic map of Mozambique (Map 1), there are about twenty ethnolinguistic groups within the geographical borders of the country, some of which corresponding to population agglomerations on both sides of the border with neighbouring countries – South Africa (*Zulus* and *Tsonga-Changanas*), Malawi (*Chewas*, *Nyanjas* and *Yao*), Swaziland (*Swazis* and *Tongas*), Tanzania (*Makondes* and *Kiswahilis*), Zambia (*Chewas*) and Zimbabwe (*Shonas, Ndaus*). In the Northern Region the *Makhuwa* (the largest demographic group) the *Yao*, the *Nyanja*, the *Mwani* and the *Kiswahili* (these last two on the coastal region) dominate; in the Central Region and along the Zambezi valley, to the south and the north, the *ma Sena*, *Xitewe*, *Nyungué*, *Shona* and *va Ndau*

dominate, and in the Southern Region the *Tsonga*, the *Tonga* and *va Nguni* dominate (NELIMO, 1989: 6, 7).

Map 1: Ethnolinguistic map of Mozambique
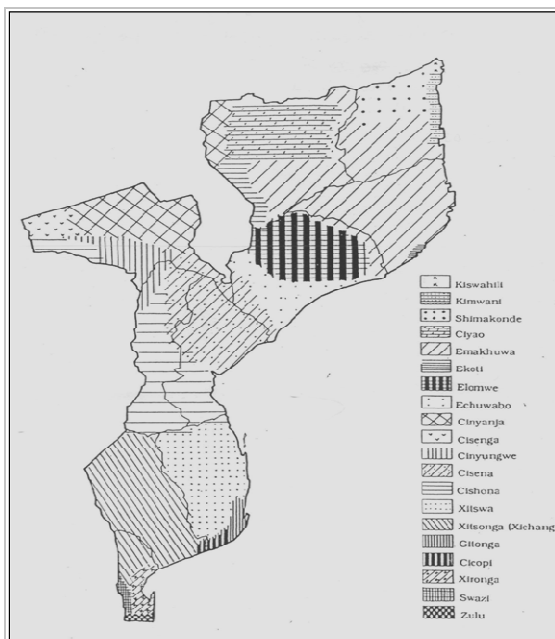
Source: NELIMO. 1989: 8.

Brief history of the ethnolinguistic group identity

Makondes

The *Makondes* (see Map 2) are a Bantu people from Eastern Africa, inhabiting three plateaux in Eastern Africa, in the north of Mozambique and in the south of Tanzania. In Mozambique, though without statistical demographic information, there are two big plateaux inhabited by *Makondes*, namely, Macomia and Mueda, in Cabo Delgado Province (Dias and Dias, 1964: 49-50). The hypothesis

of this origin resulted from an analysis of written and oral sources and is also endorsed by cultural similarities with the *Chewa* people, who even today inhabit a vast area south and southwest of Lake Niassa, in Malawi and in Zambia. The *Makondes* would thus have belonged, in past centuries, to a large *Marave* federation which, according to historical data, would at that time have started its migration to the northeast, along the Lugenda River valley.

History reveals that the *Makondes* kept themselves very isolated for a long time, because only in the 20th century the Portuguese, who at that time colonised Mozambique, managed to control the areas inhabited by them. This late occupation was due to their location, protected by sharply sloping regions, difficult to get to, and by dense forests. A social characteristic of the *Makondes* is their socialization for war (whether to face the hostility of animals on the plateaux or for quarrels with other villages about the preferred occupation of the plateaux). As a result of this they were portrayed as violent and irascible, a reasoning supported by their geographical isolation (Dias and Dias, 1964).

While common sense ascribes a combative dimension to the *Makondes*, it is also true that the idea that *Makondes* must always be ready for war was a common mark in the discourses of *Makonde* masters and boys, as becomes clear in the remarks of this master:

> "We, *Makondes*, teach not to be afraid of the bush. (...) We educate our children resorting to ferocious animals and weapons, so that they will not be afraid" (Armindo 1).

As Dias and Dias (1964) recognise, the geographical location on the plateaux allowed their relative isolation which, associated with a certain social constraint, allowed them to preserve a strong cultural cohesion which, in spite of having decreased in the years following the arrival of the Portuguese, nevertheless succeeded to resist in various aspects (the symbolism of masks and tattoos, the ideals of matrimonial (in)compatibility with respect to some historically hostile peoples, virilocality, the initiation rites, superstition with respect to the forest and ferocious animals, including traditional

religious aspects that were only subjugated and dominated by Christianity around 1930) (Dias and Dias, 1964).

Another interesting aspect has to do with the fact that compared to other groups we observed a tendency in the interviewed *Makondes* of greater secrecy in sharing the values and practices of the rites. This may, in our view, raise questions about the form of socialization of the *Makondes*, as revealed by these remarks:

> "A *Makonde* learns that he must know with whom and where he should talk, because this means respect for the elderly who teach those things, and to be careful with respect to the enemy who may attack us while we sleep" (Armindo 2).

It is true that there are epistemological questions here that could be raised. However, the observation remains that the rites point, with particular visibility among the *Makondes*, to an education which emphasizes courage with respect to danger and justifies secrecy in cohabitation relations (a permanent mistrust of the other).[66]

The *Makonde* rite occurs precisely by and for the group and is directed to a "closed" sociocultural circle (of great community control), even given its behavioural ethnolinguistic characteristic (from there, for example, its high level of secrecy and little exposure of its content on the part of individuals, a factor even observed by the closed character of the answers which the interviewees were giving us). We saw that, compared to other groups, the duration of the rites is longer, with an earlier recruitment of adolescents (even with cases in which the initiatees enter at the age of 6). It was not surprising to have observed, for example, circumcision in cold blood and at ages below those of other groups, and for girls teachings about the manipulating of the lengthening of their labia, deliberately, in a different way than that of the *Makhuwas* (reference group of ethnocultural opposition for the *Makondes*), as was said by a *Makonde* master: "*Makonde* women lengthen their labia in a

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[66] Comando Naval de Moçambique, 1969. Moçambique: Agrupamentos Etnolinguísticos. Aspectos do Estudo do Meio Humano. Lourenço Marques: Empresa Moderna Sarl.

different way than *Makhuwa* women, because they prefer to have lengthened labia of greater length" (Armindo 3).

Makhuwas

Map 2: Geographical area of the *Makhuwas*
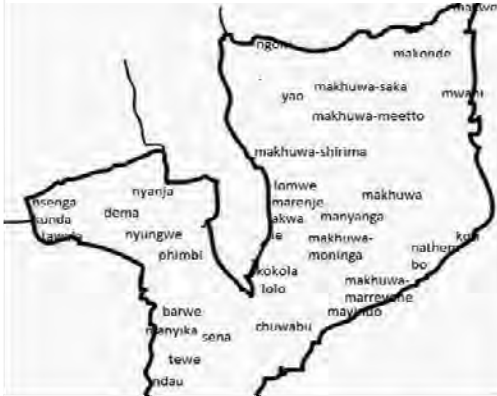
Source: NELIMO

In the analysis made by Geffray (1990b), the *Makhuwas* can be designated in different ways, from *Macoua, Macua, Macuas, Makhuwa, Makoane, Makoa, Mako, Makoua, Makouwa, Makuas, Makuwa, Makwai, Makwa, Mato, Metho, Makua, Wamakua*, among others. The writings of historians state that the *Makhuwa* are a people of Bantu origin from Eastern and Central Africa who settled, through secular voluntary migrations, in Mozambique, in Tanzania and in Malawi. The slave trade widened the distribution of these peoples of *Marave* Bantu origin to regions such as The Seychelles, Madagascar and Mauritius, obviously with linguistic derivations.

In Mozambique, the geographical settlement of the *Makhuwas* covers the entire northern, north-western and north-eastern region, from the coast to the interior, until the north-western part of the Zambezi valley (see Map 2). The geographical location of the *Makhuwas* occurs in a crossroads of several other ethnolinguistic groups, many of which having, in the course of history, waged wars for the occupation of territories and local chiefdoms. It is also for this reason that internally the *Makhuwa* language itself and its subdialects experienced significant variations until the establishment of the *Makhuwa-Lomué, Makhuwa-Moniga, Makhuwa-Saca, Makhuwa-Metho, Makhuwa-Marrevone* and *Makhuwa-Shirima*

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subgroups, with autonomous cultural and social organisation traits (Medeiros, 1985).

Another important fact is the crossbreeding which the original *Makhuwa* group had with other peoples of other ethnolinguistic origin (by virtue of Islam or other socioeconomic and political factors), giving the *Makhuwa* group a dominant perspective in this contact, at least in the region, very much as a result of its demographic size (well-known even today)[67] and/or by virtue of its first Islamization which promoted the creation of *xeicados* (sheikdoms – Afro-Islamic chiefdoms) in the area, as forms of political organisation, long before the Portuguese colonial occupation of Mozambique (Geffray, 1990b).

In the framework of their social organisation the *Makhuwa* villages owe their dances (*tufo, n´soope*), cultural customs (the use of *musiro*, of the *capulana*), cookery (consumption of sorghum and millet), socioeconomic activities (trade of knickknacks, agriculture and fishing) and their religious art of dressing to the crossroads of two contexts, a Bantu one and an Arab-Swahili one (also secular). In this panorama, the matrilineal kinship is the decisive factor of social organisation (Martins, 1989). Besides, as Medeiros (1985) states in his study "*O sistema linhageiro makua-lomué*", among the *Makhuwas* group consciousness precedes a sense of family belonging. At this point, we observe that, though similar to the *Makondes* (historically their main ethnolinguistic rivals of the region), the *Makhuwas* resume their sense of family belonging after entering the adult phase – which is strongly shaped by the initiation rites (not as secretive as those of the *Makondes*, recalling their

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[67] The data of the last Population Census of 2007 of the National Statistics Institute (INE) show that the *Makhuwa*-speaking subpopulation (46.1%) is the largest one. Nampula (until today considered the national geographical *Makhuwa* refuge) is the province with the largest number of inhabitants of the national population, with a population of 3,985,613 (19.4%) against a total population of the country of 20,579,265), followed by Zambézia Province, with 3,849,455 inhabitants. It is clear that it is not correct to state that all inhabitants of a region belong, ethnolinguistically or culturally, to its dominant group, or that the entire 46.1% of the *Makhuwas* are concentrated in Nampula (or in the northern region of the country). This does however not annul these data as general base indicators.

historical characteristic of group openness since their migration, settlement, crossbreeding and various exchanges with other peoples in the regions where they settled), as we will see below.

It is through the matrilineal framework that, by the order of succession of the chieftaincies (of the clan, the chiefdom – *nikholo* – or the family), the oldest son of the uterine sister of the deceased chief has priority over the others in the line of succession. This, according to Osório (2006), does however not change the patriarchal order of the distribution and organisation of power. This is even more significant from a community than a family point of view, according to the respect paid by individuals at each one of the two levels (i.e., the *nikholo* has the power to interfere in the family order); the village heads control access to land for all internal male dependants and for newcomers, by kinship, to the *Makhuwa* group (Martins, 1989).

Chuwabos

In his article about the *Chuwabos* or *Chuabos*, Medeiros (undated) states that these names are of *Lolo* origin and indicate the Zambezian coastal people, between Pebane and the mouth of the big Zambezi River. The ethnolinguistic *Lomwé* group constitutes their basis and local mythology considers the *Chuwabos* natives from Mount Limene, in Tacuane. On the other hand, "the majority of the authors writing about this people say that they are descending from the *Marave*", therefore related to the *Nyanjas* and the *Chewas* of Tete and Niassa (Medeiros, undated). For Freitas (1983), *Chuwabo* means fortification of a place, not with stones or bricks, but with tall, thick stakes. It would thus be the translation of *erika* or *eringa,* which in the Portuguese language became *aringa. Chuwabo* is in fact native of Quelimane, the capital of Zambézia Province.

The *Chuwabos* spread to the north, until Maganja da Costa (Macuze), to the south (Inhassunge and nearby regional continuation) and also to the west (Mocuba). The *Chuwabos* are said to be the product of the crossbreeding of peoples who travelled through the Zambezi valley due to wars and trade. According to the

Chuwabos' traditional cultural standards, a widow should preferably marry the man of the uterine family of her husband and, in case of refusal, should return the *pethe*.[68] And when a woman gets divorced, she must leave the older children with her ex-husband, because the relation the children of the couple have with their paternal grandparents is stronger than that with their maternal grandparents. The paternal grandfather is the head of the entire lineage (Prata, 1983). In this respect, a member of a civil society organisation had this to say:

> "In spite of the children being of the husband and [representing] the extension of the paternal grandfather's lineage, the *Chuwabos*, given their strong crossing and their difficulty to refer to a nominal ancestor, were losing their names and surnames in favour of the names of the bosses of the *prazos*, of Portuguese origin or even invented Portuguese-like names; therefore you can find here someone with the name *Tesoura* (Scissors), *Alfinete* (Needle)" (Ziro 2).

Ma Sena/Senas

According to Rita-Ferreira (1968), the *Sena* group (*ma Sena*) lived historically in the Zambezi valley, covering Sofala, Tete and Zambézia provinces and part of Manica (Map 2). The origin of this group seems to be at the end of the 18th century, after the *Tsonga* victory over the *Marave* and the migratory movement towards the lower Zambezi.

There is a lot of controversy around the identification of this group as an ethnolinguistic group with a singular identity. It is therefore, for example, that, though some scholars suggest, as is the case of the first religious missionaries, signs that in the 17th century the *Sena* language was already being spoken, Serra (1998) states that "the identification of *ma Sena* is related to the old Sena fortress rebuilt in the 18th century". According to Braço (2008), the *Senas* themselves are hierarchized according to their degree of belonging or proximity to an ethnoregional purity – *ntupo* (place of origin). Hence there is

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[68] *Pethe* is a matrimonial compensation offered by the fiancé to the fiancée's family.

among them a distinction between *Sena Podzo* (the "true ones")*, Sena Chuezas, Sena Gonzo* and *Sena Ntualas* (the last ones are the furthest from the *Ntupo* group which, mythologically, is referred to as a rock in Caia Sena that gave rise to the organisation of the group, and where the Sena fortress was subsequently built, according to Serra, 1998)*. The *Senas* of Cheringoma District are said to be a mixture of the *Chueza* and the *Phodzo* subgroups.

Similar to the *Ndaus*, the social organisation of the *Senas*, their leadership and orientation of the kinship (i.e., belonging of the genitors, name of the family), is organised in small aggregates corresponding to a structure whose leadership follows a patrilineal paternal line; by customary law widows do not inherit, the children take the surname of the father and belong to him in case the conjugal companionship comes to an end (separation by death or rejection of one of the parties) – but women can be queens when successors through the male parental line. Marriages are contracted with a marital compensation in the sense that the family of the fiancé pays material goods for a virgin fiancée (a virginity confirmed in the girl's rites). This payment made that polygamy, child marriage or a union between an adult man and a child were legitimate.[69] Male adultery is not culturally condemnable, which is not the case of female adultery, because a woman is regarded a reservoir of reproduction and faithful carer of her man (thus the *Sena* and *Ndau* boys learn, since childhood and in the initiation rites, to call their wives "mother").

Va Ndau/Ndaus

For Rita-Ferreira (1968), the *Ndaus* are an ethnolinguistic group inhabiting the Zambezi River valley, in the centre of Mozambique until the coast and the east of Zimbabwe, south of Mutare. They

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[69] It is noted that the "leave paratu" phenomenon is also practiced among the *Sena*s. Most important is the marriage, in its various forms, in order that the *dzinza* (the legitimate family) is constituted. According to Rita-Ferreira (1968), within this matrimonial exchange, the younger sister of the woman was often also given to the man as proof of respect of her parents.

belong to the *Shona-Caranga* linguistic family with origin in Zimbabwe. In Mozambique their area is limited by the Save River, to the south, and the Búzi River, to the north. There is no uniform explanation for the appearance of the word *Ndau*, but some authors situate its adoption at the time of the *Nguni* invasion, a historical occurrence giving *Tsonga-Changanas* characteristics to the *Ndaus* (i.e., in the kinship structure, *lobolo*, linguistic derivations, power organisation structure). The power structure of the *Ndaus* comprises hierarchically the *mambo,* the *mambo mudoco*[70] and the *saguta*[71]. The *mambos* are counselled by the council of elders (*madoda* or *matombo*), which sometimes assume a power superior to that of the *mambo* himself (holder of spiritual power).

According to Florêncio (2005), the *Ndaus* are organised in patrilineal-based units, called *bhavumbu* or *dzinza* (also a *Sena* name), which can mean race, ethnicity or region. Contrary to what happened before, today one can marry within the same *bhavumbu*. The *Ndaus* practise polygamy and the levirate. Marriage implies the payment of *lobolo* and the form of residence is virilocal. Although women do not exercise power (contrary to the *Senas*), sometimes and in some contexts the sisters of the *mambo* may have some political power, such as to administer small regions, but there are no queens among this people, contrary to what happens with the *Senas*. They are organised in *ucama* (extended family), which is subdivided in *muzi* (wife and/or wives and descendants).

The succession of the *mambos* is carried out through the oldest son of the first wife of the *mambo* (the first one who had been acquired through the payment of *lobolo*). The successor may in certain cases also be a brother of the deceased *mambo*, in a rotation within the same *ucama*, but power should always return to its first origins. An important fact is that the colonial administration in the Búzi Council introduced changes in the traditional power structure. This means that there is only rarely a coincidence between the *ucamas* who held

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[70] Expressing which literally means "little chief".
[71] Chiefs who, in the *Ndau* traditional political power structure, occupy the rank just below those of the *mambos* and the *mambos mudoco*.

power at the end of the colonial period and those who did before the administration of the *Companhia de Moçambique*, whether through the unification of the chieftaincies (*regulados*), or through the extinction of others, or even through a colonial intervention in the succession (Florêncio, 2005).

Rites and social reproduction of the social group organisation model

Makondes

Among the *Makondes*, some practices are important as identifying signs of belonging. In this regard, Dias and Dias (1964: 72) state that:

> "Linked to the ergocultural practices of esthetical expression, the drawings of tattoos or scarifications of the skin (i.e. on the face, the breasts, the chest and the lower abdomen, dental mutilations consisting of breaking the edges of the teeth, giving them a pointed form, as well as the perforation of the lips), though currently in disuse, should be noted. This practice is more frequent among women, allowing in the past and at present identifications between and within ethnolinguistic groups".

Well then, these marks reveal forms of social organisation that distribute social roles within the group. The men, for example, are responsible (taught since the initiation rites) for the construction of family houses and for being holders of the children and the family lineage (repercussion of the virilocal and patrilineal characteristic). In their turn, the women mark with masks their faces according to the status they are assuming in the course of their life (for example, fiancée awaiting marriage; married woman without any group function; married woman with some group function, for example of successor daughter). Women are in charge of water supply for the family (for example, when as daughter at home or even after she is already a wife in another house) and in agricultural production on the land of the men (for example, her father or her husband). The transition from boy/girl to man/woman is guaranteed by the

initiation rites marked by the circumcision for boys and the lengthening of the labia minora for girls. In marriage, while evidence in the case of girls is not very visible, for boys the permanence of an ideology of incompatibility of crossbreeding is however visible, i.e., the idea of the preference for marriage within the same group is part of the content of the male ritual teachings, presented as a form of preservation of group purity and values, as we can see from these remarks of a master:

> "Today we are having problems because of young boys who want to marry in town and young girls who want to marry anyone for money, in town. This is what makes that we, *Makondes*, are in danger, because our secrets are scattered about and because all remaining adolescents are seduced by the town and by money, ending up abandoning their land" (Armindo 2).

From the point of view of the man-woman hierarchy, we observed an aspect correlating with the "combative" group representation aspect. This is not only based on the traditional assumption that men are stronger that women, but is also related to the fact that among the *Makondes*, greater importance is ascribes to the male initiation rites (*likumbi*) than to the female ones (e*mwali*) – rituals whose importance is based on the fact of symbolizing the transition of boys and girls to the status of adult members of the community and defenders of this community and of the families. Another factor of group identity is the male dance ritual, in which masks are used (the *mapiko*) and where boys learn to preserve their commitment to the defence of the community group, well beyond the protection of the family domain, as happens in the case of other ethnolinguistic groups (for example, in the rites boys are taught to have a *canhangulo*[72]). As was said by a boy in Macomia:

> "We are taught that when our neighbour is shouting all men must leave their house, listen to commands of the oldest chief,

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[72] Name of a hunting rifle and former gift for the father of the fiancée in the act of payment of the matrimonial compensation.

and try to see where the danger is, to react immediately. (...) It doesn't matter if it is a lion, what matters it to defend our women and children".

It is thought that it is due to this symbolic characteristic of combative group (inculcated in the rites when boys are taught to face lions and other wild animals), that the *Makondes* have "naturally" been integrated into the military ranks since the national liberation struggle. Later on, residential districts of *Makonde* soldiers, on active service or as a reservist, were created in other towns outside Cabo Delgado, which came to bring/assist their relatives, thus becoming new poles of identity.

Given their historical limited social openness, among the *Makondes* the idea prevails that the participation of other entities alien to the group distorts the rites. This is why, contrary to the *Makhuwas*, they do not accept the entry of "others" (people outside of the *Makonde* community) in their rites. Besides, even the official intervention of the Health sector in the circumcision of boys is superimposed, on the occasion of the initiation, and as mentioned above, by a symbolic incision on the penis to give such legitimacy to the act. Although also identical for other groups of collective rites, the forests (i.e., the plateau for the *Makonde*) are an important symbol of the rites, and for that reason they are represented even in spaces outside Cabo Delgado.

On the basis of the model of male domination, the male rites are considered legitimate when they are conducted by a *Makonde* man and in the forest. However, some subversion (for example, traditional male roles in the hands of women) leads today to the appearance of reactions such as this one from master Armindo 2: "nowadays things are in disorder and therefore even women already interfere with this issue".

The youths learn to see themselves as adults and to disassociate themselves not only from non-initiated other youths, but also from others who do not belong to their *status* and identity social group. They face and dialogue with the difference, as if these distinctions could be indelibly marked by the symbolic capital and by how the

hierarchical positions are defined. This means to identify the mechanisms used by the youths in the negotiations between the individual and the collective, in the relation between "what I am" and the "other" (this self and the other marked by fluidity, by resistance and by alliances), considering that the individual identity only makes sense in relation to the "other". It is thus that we also seek to analyse the mechanisms of identification with the collective, by opposition and similarity with other collective identities (based on gender, religion and ethnolinguistic group).

Makhuwas

This ethnolinguistic group is considered matrilineal, with the characteristics of uroxilocality and matrilineal parental power over descendants. However, in addition to the fact that these aspects do not change the patriarchal mark of the group, they also start to be object of a few profound social transformations, some of which pointed out in this study. Well then, the first evidence that this group or society has a matrilineal basis, but with/for a patriarchal orientation is found in the dominance of the male initiation rites as compared to those of girls, in terms of duration, recruitment, community organisation, domestic material investment, heterosexual education directed at male domination (an also strongly present element in the female rites), among others, described by Medeiros (1995). This does not mean that the female rites are extraneous to male control of power, but rather that this control (which goes from the orientation of social roles to control over the body of women) is present even before the time of the rites. Besides, this trajectory for the case of the *Makhuwa-Lomués* and *Chuwabos*, in Zambézia, has a symbology even in nature, in the case of the menstruation tree (*mpila*), for example, and whose meaning goes until the expression of the symbolic death of the provisional beings of the community (as asserted by Medeiros, 1995).

Among the *Makhuwas* it are the initiation rites (with the mountain forest as their geographical reference centre – perhaps due to the fact that the Nairuco mountain chain in Nampula is situated in the

mythological order of the *Makhuwa* ancestors) that guarantee the teaching and social reproduction of the hierarchy of parental power of the maternal uncles, the mother's brothers. It is, for example, enough to consider that these uncles decide about the moment of recruiting their maternal nephews for the rites, approve the choice of the godfathers of the boys to be initiated, while they themselves in many other cases even assume this function. Excluding the cases in which the rites occur away from the regions of origin of the boys' families, the male rites tend to take place in territories dominated by the *nikholo* of the line of maternal descent, contrary to other patrilineal groups.[73]

While among the *Makondes, Ndaus* and *Senas*, for example, the construction of a house and the property of the children on the part of the husband is the "natural" norm of patrilineal and virilocal male domination, emphasized by the rites, among the *Makhuwas* the boys learn already in the rites to be direct holders of the matrimonial property (for example, the house, *machambas* and children) without being previously subjected to the traditional "proof" of masculinity which the fiancé should take still in the fiancée's parental territory. Excluding, in cases of absence or being far away from this territory, that the supervision by the brother of the fiancée's mother over the household of the couple is seen as a symbolic reference, remaining any live grandmother, brother or female cousin (first or second, even if not consanguineous, as a *Makhuwa* master told us) of the fiancée's mother directly responsible for what will happen within this couple (conflicts, reproduction and diseases, among others).

Another aspect that distinguishes the *Makhuwa* rites has to do with sexuality. With the exception of the justifications related to hygiene, the boys' circumcision symbolizes their preparation for sexual pleasure. However, among the *Makhuwas,* circumcision is related to the Islamic religious identity. It is in the circumcision, as we saw above, that the *Makhuwas* distinguish themselves culturally from

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[73] Comando Naval de Moçambique, 1969. Moçambique: Agrupamentos Etnolinguísticos. Aspectos do Estudo do Meio Humano, Lourenço Marques: Empresa Moderna, Sarl.

their symbolic rivals (particularly the *Makondes*), by how the cut in the foreskin is made. This difference is taught in the rites, also with respect to how the female genitals are manipulated (i.e., the absence of tattoos on the face and breasts as is practiced by the *Makondes,* but rather along the pubic area and next to the labia majora). This diversity, which may apparently not produce differences, generates and reproduces an ethnic consciousness, whether in the agents or in the initiates, as we can establish from the statement of a master, according to whom a pure *Makhuwa* (which according to him refers to an individual from the interior and not from the coast, Islamic, and/or a *Makhuwa* descendant who has married a *Makhuwa* woman) does not grow up without having been circumcised and without taking his children to the rites. Continuing, this master said:

> "For us a *waanasunke* is *haramu.*[74] We take our children to the rites from 12 years onwards, because at this age they are already capable to understand our tradition. Other races and other rites only do this without knowing the Koran" (Armindo 3).

Almost in line with an interethnic *Makhuwa-Makonde* symbolic dispute, Armindo 2, a *Makonde* master, gave the following statement:

> "Nowadays things are distorted because in our times we were taught not to marry men or women from other tribes here in the neighbourhood. (...) We could even marry a *Mwani* but never a *Makhuwa*, but nowadays many of our youngsters don't want to listen to us. (...) Our children should go to the rites very early, even before they have their heads full of bad ideas, so that we can correct and re-educate them".

Chuwabos

This group is of patrilineal influence though it has also a population group recognized by matrilineal descent (for example, when some

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[74] Religious Islamic term meaning sinner in the Koran.

boys mention the influence of the mother's brother and others of the father or their father's brother, in supporting the initiation rites). This fact does not contradict the patrilineal characteristic of the *Chuwabos* coupled with some matrilineal aspects (i.e., the role of the maternal uncle in the marriage of his nephews). In the initiation rites of the *Chuwabos*, the boys are for example taught to credit the family of the girl they intend to marry materially (through work, agricultural foodstuffs, or other means) by his own effort, i.e., the matrimonial arrangement is the initiative of the boy and it is only afterwards passed on to the family, as testified by a *Chuwabo* youth:

> "I did the rites at the age of 12, I already have a girlfriend and I can say she is my wife. I had to work in the *machamba* of her family and after that they liked me. Then I talked to my uncle, the sister of my mother, and my sister accompanied me to be introduced to her family, taking what I brought to offer to the family of my girlfriend" (Gil 1).

This situation exemplifies the fact that until today the wedding ceremony is in general held in the house of the fiancée's parents, and before that the proposal (*mavudho)* is made*,* to which the fiancé's relatives should take five litres of a fermented beverage, a *capulana* and underwear for the girl (Medeiros, undated).

Gil 1's statement strengthens the idea of Freitas (1983) that, following the boy's pledge, the construction of a house of his own, the wedding, the long and prolonged absence, seeking employment, among other actions considered important, shall be done with full knowledge and agreement of the girl's maternal uncle. Interesting in the *Chuwabo* ethnolinguistic group is this matrilineal intervention which, after marriage having been accomplished, is superimposed on the patrilineal profile (i.e., the surnames of the children), while the maternal uncle accompanies the boy to the rites and becomes his godfather, as was said by a master:

> "In our days it was our uncle, our mother's brother, who would take us to the rites. It is true that today this also

happens, but in town the parents or their brothers have been taking our little ones to the rites" (Zuber 1).[75]

The initiation rites confer maturity to the boy, not only to marry but also to position himself as an adult in the relation to his (maternal or paternal) uncle, in subjects such as the kind of talk and advice for life, affinities, his uncle's company in work activities for adults. It is the stage called *opahamwiiko* and, according to a boy:

> "The rites are good because all of us want to conquer what we here call *opahamwiiko,* because from there we already have a voice at home, we can already eat certain things which we couldn't before" (Gil 3).

A large part of the social roles between women and men is learned in the rites and according to models that are identical to those of other ethnolinguistic groups, for example, with regard to sexuality and power between the sexes, namely: the initiative for the sexual act belongs to the husband because according to tradition he needs frequent sexual intercourse; the wife should seek to satisfy him, according to the instructions received from the godmother on the occasion of the preparation of her goddaughter's marriage, otherwise she will be sent back to the house of her parents to be 'educated', according to Medeiros (undated); in the case of infertility, it is always the woman who is held responsible. Thus, she is obliged to accept that the husband takes one of her sisters or another girl of the family as his second wife in order to have descendants in the home (Medeiros, undated). Although, contrary to other groups, among the *Chuwabos* the idea is accepted that the husband may also be sterile since, as a master says:

> "When the problems of sterility continue, even when the man sleeps with other women, such as the absence of procreation, the two families meet, and after this meeting the mother and the mother-in-law consult a soothsayer who, after identifying

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[75] The role of the maternal uncle to accompany his nephews to the rites is known as *n'luga.*

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the cause of the sterility, indicates the adequate *namungo* (healer) to treat the couple".[76]

Similar to the *Makhuwas* and *Makondes* there is no fecundity test in the *Chuwabo* rites. As is the case with the *Senas* and *Ndaus*, the *Chuwabo* rites in urban environments tend to be conducted individually.

This and other aspects help us to conclude that the characteristics of the *Chuwabo* rites are similar to those of the rites of other groups, given the large crossbreeding of the group's social organisation.

Ma Sena/Senas and *va Ndau/Ndaus*

The reason for using the same approach for these two groups is related to three reasons: first, because unlike what we observed, to a certain point, with the *Makhuwas* and *Makondes* (mainly in Mecúfi and Macomia or in Alto-Molocué or Mocuba), with the *Senas* and *Ndaus*, the fieldwork found similarities and also vaguenesses that are not helpful to distinguish these two groups, particularly in Beira City, although the other two study sites (Búzi and Cheringoma) have historically a *Ndau* and *Sena* basis, respectively.

Second, what nowadays contradicts greatly this historical differentiation is the near impossibility to make out (even in Búzi and in Cheringoma) a *Ndau* or *Sena* alignment from the second generation of individuals, evaluated by the social (parental) profile of the interviewees. In other words, at some moment all interviewees informed having *Ndau* and *Sena* ancestors. This does however in no way mean harmony or companionship between these two groups.

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[76] If in the second or third marriage of the husband there are no children and/or the first wife becomes pregnant with another husband, it is proved that the infertility is the husband's. In this case his parents will try to keep his situation secret, but nobody in the community will want him as son-in-law for being sterile (*ngomwa*). To be able to marry he will have to move to places where he is not known and he will never tell his future wife that he is sterile, because according to tradition the man is always fecundating (Medeiros, undated).

Many statements differentiate and even place *Senas* and *Ndaus* in opposition:

> "The *ma Sena* are considered anarchists, pigs and confused, while the *va Ndau* are especially considered kings of the *mpfukwa* (capacity to harm others with witchcraft), but they are sometimes also considered civilized and conservative, and sometimes strange because they eat cats, crocodiles and crows" (Serra, 2006).

Third, it is true, as Braço (2008) points out, that on the *Sena* side history shows the importance of the initiation rites in the social organisation of this group, though with some variants between the various *Sena* subgroups (*Podzo, Gonzo, Ntualas, Chuezas*), even appearing a few similarities with rites of some *Makhuwa* subgroups of the same geographical scope (such as the *maseseto* practice).[77] Today, the big change occurred in the *Senas* was the weakening of the collectivist character of the rites to give way to a more individualizing tendency.

Although the *Sena* and *Ndau* rites do not belong to the same hermeneutic and ontological sphere as those of the *Makhuwas* or *Makondes*, it is possible to align some traits of the history of the ethnolinguistic construction of these groups of Central Mozambique through an analysis of the initiation rites.

The *Sena* and *Ndau* initiation rites are similar in various aspects:

1. With the exception of some cases (which are being reduced, according to the traditional authorities of Cheringoma), the rites are more directly organised by the families, between the grandparents, a few representatives of the traditional authority (i.e., a healer for the spiritual protection of the boy) and their grandchildren. This fact makes that the figure of the masters in

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[77] Although meaning the female ritual, the name is also ascribed to a kind of female dance which, in the female rites, is a mixture of a display of eroticism to seduce the man and a ritualistic practice to learn the sexual movements on the part of the woman.

these two groups may not have the same symbolic weight we found in the past and in other groups;

2. In the two cases there still are sacred places of the rites but with the purpose of testing the boys' fecundity (through the assessment of the potential quality of the sperm in a washbasin with water or through the duration of the erection, as the adolescents informed us). It is necessary to mention that neither the *Makondes* nor the *Makhuwas* mentioned men's fecundity proof (it either does not exist or it is one of the top-secret items of the rites). Masculinity is also conferred through teachings of the boys of work activities as a source of economic sustenance of the family, while the girls are taught how to preserve their body as a guarantee of marriage and social prestige for the family.

3. In the two cases, the girls are controlled by their brothers when they are children, and through the "leave *paratu*" mechanism.

4. According to the adolescents of the two groups, the paternal aunts exercise power over their nephews in the selection and continuous evaluation of the performance of their wives. They are the *vanyamayinga* (godmothers in the *Ndau* context and in the *Sena* context).

5. We were told that in spite of the fact that the *Sena Phodzo* perform circumcision, an important number of the other subgroups no longer perform it as a group practice (i.e., *Sena Gonzo* and *Ntuala*, as a *Sena* master told us: "Here this stuff of circumcision happens more with those people there in Caia" (Dipac 2). This information was confirmed by two *Sena* boys in a focus group in Cheringoma: "I was not circumcised because my father also wasn't" (Marco 2 a); "I also wasn't but I will do it alone in hospital" (Marco 2 b).

This last aspect is more widespread in the *Ndau* tradition.[78] Virilocality and patrilineality are strongly demonstrated marks in the construction of social gender roles among the *Senas* and *Ndaus*.

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[78] Even having started in regions such as Búzi and others, the practice of circumcision for boys cannot be considered an ethnolinguistic aspect of the group

Given that historically the two groups come from rites traditions with different ethnic origins, some differentiations have not yet been toned down by the contact/crossbreeding between them. First of all, while the virginity test among the *Senas* is a qualifying factor for girls (for the rites, and the *masasetu*,[79] for marriage, for family prestige and the evaluation of their mother's performance for continuity at home or the assumption of godmother roles or roles in the community chieftaincy succession), among the *Ndaus* this test only intervenes as qualifier of the girl for marriage and for the prestige of her family (an additional factor is the social disapproval of the girl's woman/mother). Even without an overall profile of collective rites, there still is the weight of the community with respect to them, in the case of the *Senas*, hence for example, as a *Sena* youngster says:

> "We here, before having been with our grandfather, having received his teachings, and for the spiritual protection by the *mambo*, we cannot know yet about *jerwa*[80] neither can we be a *munhu*[81]" (Luís 2).

The *munhu* assumes various attitudes, such as for example the gesture of "not looking back" which symbolizes not returning to childhood. The age for being considered a *munhu* varies a lot between the two groups and within them. It may vary between 11 and 18 years, though there is a tendency to be concentrated between 11 and 14 years. The reference to the rock of origin of the *Senas* is symbolized in the rites, they therefore choose a space in the bush with similar landscape features to perform the rites, where no visits (*lango*) are allowed and where only the old man (master) transmits the traditions.

Well then, while a more family/individual model of initiation rites organisation among the *Ndaus* and the *Senas* is observed, a

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because it derives from an effort that is to be made by the public discourse of the local Health authorities.

[79] Dance of the sieve in which the girl makes movements with her hips, imitating the positions of sexual intercourse, while showing the *matinji*.

[80] Cult, dance and poses equal to the *masasetu* for girls.

[81] Individual having come out of childhood, recognized as adult by the community and with legitimacy to marry and produce children.

consequence is that the rites do not occur in other spaces outside of the regions of origin (even with the population relocation imposed in times past by the socialist State). Besides, this may be understood when, for example, a traditional *Sena* leader and healer in Cheringoma states that:

> "When Frelimo came, they started to confuse the people. They took us away from our land, brought people who do not know the *Sena* traditions, they prohibited us from doing our things, therefore today our rites and ceremonies have been adulterated. We, the original *Senas*, unlike these *Senas Ntualas*, we know how to perform the true rites. For example, we never take a child who is no longer a virgin or whose father is not a *Sena* to the rites, because we would be handing over our spiritual secrets to strangers and this is what has brought us a lot of misery" (Daniel 2).

Through sociodemographic movements in the country, since 1975, there has been a massive displacement of populations and people, previously established by the colonial administration, by virtue of political and socioeconomic objectives, resulting in the creation of ethnospaces (in the meaning given by Dias and Dias, 1964) in the places where these populations settled. This makes that Nampula, for example, is no longer exclusively inhabited by *Makhuwas*, with the representative presence of ethnospaces of former *Makonde* soldiers (this is the case of Muahivire, Muhala-expansão, Carrupeia districts), Maputo City (*Makondes* in the Military District and *Makhuwas* in Mafalala District) or in Beira City (Manga and Munhava districts).

The very rites strengthen these ethnospaces outside the place/province associated with the origin of the *Makhuwas* or *Makondes*, therefore these districts are considered representative ethnic spaces where initiation rites are regularly conducted, with all ritualistic pomp (i.e., dances, such as the *mapico* for the *Makondes,* and *tufo* for the *Makhuwas*). For the case of the *Senas* and the *Ndaus*, the ethnoespatial interpretation should probably be different from that among the *Makondes* and *Makhuwas*, due to their more dispersed character and their occupation, or not, of the political

arena by these groups, in the construction of independent Mozambique.

After this brief ethnographic description of the rites of these five groups, it should be noted that we did not deal with the subgroups descended from them, neither with their ascendant groups. We should particularly mention the expansion and distribution of these ethnolinguistic identities in a context of social mobility, which makes that we should pay attention to the continuation of the rites in territories outside of their original historical spaces (the ethnospaces as defined by Dias and Dias, 1964). It should be noted that this continuation of the rites in the various ethnospaces existing in the country is more evident in the case of the *Makhuwas* and the *Makondes*, while the *Senas*, *Ndaus* and *Chuwabos* are more dedicated to a dynamics of individualized rites, whether within or outside of their places of origin.

2. The rites nowadays: changes, countervailing power and reaffirmation

2.1. The rites yesterday and today: distinctive historical differences

The studies consulted (Martins, 1989, Medeiros, 1995, Braço, 2008) assumed as facts the ideas that: (i) the duration of the ceremonies and the time of the year in which the rites are conducted have been subjected to the political and social contexts experienced by the community; (ii) the circumcision age varies between 6 and 15 years, lasting to about 30 days; (iii) the status of the godfather and the godmother depends on the status of the father and the mother of the initiatee; (iv) the initiation is performed in hidden places built for this purpose; (v) the education is directed to distinct sexual roles and to the community group's profile; (vi) medicines are given to the initiatees with the purpose of curing, protecting, purifying and guaranteeing procreation; (vii) the dances, drums and the use of masks constitute relevant elements during the performance of the rites, marking the most important moments; (viii) the rites split into

rites of separation in which the initiatees are taken away from their relatives and start their confinement, rites of margin in which the boys are circumcised, subsequently receiving advice and a new name (which is called the first and second phase of confinement) and finally rites of aggregation in which the youths return to the community, already adults for marriage.

As we will see below, there were changes in the proceedings of the three phases, however strongly maintaining the objective of the reproduction of gender inequality (social roles, sexuality, expectations and rights), as we will show in Chapter IV. These aspects exist in all the ethnolinguistic groups, though there are other distinctive marks of the changes according to the influence of the historical dynamics of the group in question, namely: (i) collectivisation (*Makhuwas* and *Makondes*) or individualization ("other" *Senas*, *Ndaus* and *Chuwabos*) of the rites described in the previous section; (ii) preservation of circumcision for the *Makhuwas*, *Makondes*, *Chuwabos* and *Senas Phodzo*, decrease of circumcision for the *Senas* who are not *Phodzo*, reaffirmation of circumcision for the *Ndaus,* for political-administrative and not cultural reasons; (iii) expansion of ethnospaces for the *Makhuwas* and *Makondes*, which does not occur for the *Senas*, *Ndaus* and *Chuabos*; (iv) finally, and as we will see below, if we compare the *Makondes* and *Makhuwas* with the other groups, we observe that in the latter the changes in the rites have a more formal character (i.e., new places, new agents, decrease of the duration) than one of content and functionality.

The present study was conducted in 2012, at a time when some aspects of the organisation of the rites had already been changed (mainly due to the increasing approximation of urbanization). However, irrespective of these changes, the organisation of the separation phase continues to be a moment full of magical-religious mystery (consider the prayers and supplications of the healers for the protection of the places where those selected for the rites will be received, the introduction of the newcomers to the use of roots, plants and animal hides, mainly in the case of the Mecúfi and Macomia communities, in Cabo Delgado, and of Gurué in Zambézia).

As already mentioned, the trip to the rites was evidently a group movement of the youths and adolescents to epic places of special geography (the bush in the case of boys and a hut in the case of girls), organised by the holders of ritualistic power, conferred to them by heritage/succession. Mainly in towns, today it is more characterized as a movement initiated by the parents/families when handing over their children for a rapid and symbolic intervention of professional agents (necessarily without community recognition), together with the tendency to decrease the boys' and even the girls' ages (also increasingly ritualized in an individual way). In the case of the latter, we emphasize the fact that the selection itself no longer has to wait for evidence of their physical transformation, which makes us believe that the risk of losing them as a source of economic resources for the family becomes bigger with the advent of modernity.

In the margin phase, the change is much slower. While in the separation the recruitment processes and criteria, the duration and the symbolic and identity demarcation are being modified, and in the aggregation phase the epic and community references give increasingly way to the central family (responsible for ensuring awarding the new adult, by offering new clothes, a party). The changes in the margin phase are less clear, standing out only the sophistication of the contents and the new profiles of the power-holding rite agents (this is a source of internal conflict, around the controversy of the legitimacy of power in the exercise of the activity, for example, the criterion of professionalization).

Besides the fact demonstrated by the masters that the decrease of the children's age serves to find them in a phase of complete unawareness of the facts and processes of their future life, the age of the boys and girls we have interviewed in all places shows that the phenomenon of the decrease of the ages of the initiates occurs in all social and ethnolinguistic groups. Furthermore, there are two other factors causing this phenomenon: one has to do with the role of the school in the construction of the adolescents' awareness of citizenship and the other one is a corollary of the context of rural/periurban economic survival which makes the families to place

their daughters earlier on the matrimonial exchange market. It should be noted that, while in the past:

> "Depending on the existence of a greater or lesser need to introduce the youths more rapidly or more slowly to the movements of the productive domain and of the matrimonial domain, they were later or earlier submitted to the rites of puberty" (Medeiros, 1995:138).

Currently, the entry into the rites has also to do with a presumed context of risk/threat they are facing in modernity, conferring a new social face with respect to their functionalities.

These new functionalities have more to do with the intersocial and political crossroads, to be considered in three perspectives. In the first place, the relation between the power of the holders of the organisation of the rites (organizers, masters, matrons, spiritual agents) and State power, with co-legitimation complicity of the different powers. The first ones are consigned to the category of cultural/traditional power and act for the legitimation of the discourse of the central political power for the "defence/appreciation of our culture", which also silences tacit matters of the violation of human rights, the privation of liberties, early marriages and pregnancy, produced by some of the normative precepts of the rites. Related to the function of political survival is the survival of ethnic integration in a distant context such as Maputo City and the survival of the group in the context of a State acting as aggregator and disrupter of individual identities.

In the second place, the current scenario characterised by the acceptance of other groups of people who come nearer/are interested in participating in the rites as a way to respond to another type of private objectives, different from the original ones. This situation has mobilized the holders of the organisation of the rites, mainly in towns, to give a positive answer to this new market as a mechanism to ensure ensuing material gains. This is the function of economic survival.

In the third place, the construction of male and female identities and control over the body. This function is the core of the ritual teachings and the reason for deserving special attention in this research is related to two aspects observed during fieldwork, first its limited treatment in the literature about rites and second the curious phenomenon of the maintenance, and in some cases even sophistication, of the forms of construction of gender identities and of control over the female body.

Though the chronology of the rites and the sociological character of their actors has been affected, it is important to note that the changes they have gone through have not changed the core of their performance (i.e., for the case in which the rites have a collective dimension, among the *Makondes* and *Makhuwas*, the critical events and the singularity of their occurrence and place in the context of social life of the communities continue), neither when the dimension is more related to the personal status of the individual (which is also an element of the collective rites), in the communities in which the initiation rites have only a more family character (*Senas, Ndaus, Chuwabos*).

Alongside this scenario of changes of the rites, there is another parallel scenario, interfering with the power relations in a structural and conjunctural way, and which has to do with the framework of relations between the professional rite agents, with the relations between these agents and the target group of individuals and with the relations between cultural and State institutions.

Regarding the first framework, in the interviews it became clear that the direction of the change of the rites, for masters and matrons, points to a scenario in which a synchronic displacement of their power manifests itself, arising from the reduction of their action/intervention and respective material and symbolic power compensations. It is this perspective which nowadays makes the older agents to hold the younger organizers responsible for the apparent failure of the youths' social expectations of the rites and to consider them illegal/not authentic. This non-"authenticity" of many organizers causes, according to the older generations, conflicts and a

trivialization of the order of the rites, in contradiction with the rigidity and predictability of their expectations in time immemorial. It is worth noting that this "outdated" rigidity could be related to the limited or non-existent democratization of social relations, allowing, for example, that violence is clearly (and even publicly) a teaching mechanism in the rites that had to be silenced with the coming of the Constitutional State.

We can observe how this framework is spread from this interview with a traditional leader in Zambézia Province:

> "I was subjected to the rites in the bush in Maloa (Mecuburi). There, in the real bush, deep into the bush. I can say that the rites of that time and the rites of today are equal and aren't equal. Many things are not normal today. Formerly, that excitement we had about the rites has already changed now. A long time ago, when a person would arrive at a place where there were older people, he would have to keep out of the way with respect. A person who had passed through the rites would greet everybody on the street, would let older people go first or offer them a seat, he would mind his language, in public and with his parents. The people who conducted the rites were very old and knew the spiritual secrets for things to work out all right, but today they behave just like that, they don't respect the time. In the past we would stay in the bush for three months, now only one week, and ready, and they also don't assess well if a person is ready to be submitted or not. Thus, we have adults just like that. Nowadays people only want money" (Feniasse 3).

In the same diapason, a *Sena* leader in Sofala Province said:

> "In the time of our parents things were much more original. When Frelimo came to power everything started to be corrupted, they brought this democracy and now we are unable to educate our children, we are unable to organize the rites for our children in a good way" (Ernesto 2).

In this discourse the nostalgic idea of the loss of power to use violence/coercion (legally sanctioned in the education of minors) seems to be implicit.

The second framework of relations between agents and subjects of the rites has more a scenario of expectations and a need for change on the part of the latter, rather than an awakening on the part of the former. I.e., when we analyse the interviews of the adolescents we observe that, though they don't question the continuation of the rites, the direction of the change is different. I.e., the adolescents, perhaps due to their role as object-subjects of the rites, mention the need that they should stop being violent (a violence which the masters and matrons consider absent, but which, as we can establish from the statements of a few adolescents, is still obvious) and assume a more democratic level, as is shown by this extract of an interview with a *Makhuwa* focus group in Pemba, when they responded to the question if they liked the rites or not:

> "I didn't. I didn't like it because they beat me a lot. In spite of this I will take my children to the rites because it is part of our culture. I am a *Makhuwa"* (Diogo 1a).

> "Yes and no. To learn how to hunt and dance was good, but I didn't like the food, we only had cooked maize flower. I will also take my children to the rites because otherwise they will not be lucky in life" (Diogo 1b).

> "Certain things yes and others no. I didn't like that they cut the foreskin in cold blood. They tricked me at that time, saying that we were having a walk through the bush to collect bee honey, but they tied me up to cut that thing; I think that circumcision only done in hospital would be enough" (Diogo 1d).

With these statements of adolescents, we can say that the public withdrawal from violence, urbanization (a movement opposed to the need for and role of the bush for the performance of authentic rites, according to their guardians) and the monetization of the activities of the rites (a movement producing new professionals, without the

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respect considered necessary for the traditional criteria of professionalization) characterise the context of change. Furthermore, there is an important appeal for an urban and democratic or citizenship context, in which girls and boys can have a participatory and critical role regarding the rites. Well then, will this be peaceful in a context in which the rites have established and asserted themselves historically on a basis of coercive power relations, of secrecy, and through a process of the transmission of uncritical knowledge, which perhaps no longer fits into the profile of modern individuals?

2.2. Apparent objectives and secrecy of the rites: *continuity and sophistication*

It is certain that there is no homogeneous collective consciousness among the actors who at various levels intervene in the rites. However, the disposition of the practices of the actors involved (fathers and mothers, masters and matrons, children, godmothers and godfathers, community and religious leaders) makes us to conclude, according to the summary idea of Feliciano (1998), that together they follow an order of the distribution of powers and sexual, reproductive, social and economic roles, between men and women, in the structure of societies in which initiation rites are highly important.

We can also establish that one of the marks of the symbolism of the rites is essentially their character of being an object of secrecy, whether regarding their content or their ultimate roles linked to the idea of the transformation of adolescents into adults (some people even argue that the rite persist even today due to the preservation of secrecy). Well then, according to the findings of the research we would say that the causes that make that secrecy is a key element have to do with the preservation of unquestionable social roles and functions, namely the sexual division of labour, circumcision (in the case of *Makhuwas, Senas* and *Makondes*), the inevitable "respect" for older people and traditions, education for the "non-exercise of citizenship" (anti-rights obligations), control over sexuality and over the body (mainly of women), the preservation of a status quo of

political, symbolic and economic domination by traditional leaders, female and matrimonial instrumentalization and commodification and the reproduction of violence and obedience as mechanisms of control over the social order. Continuing as secret domains, the objective of the rites is to confer immobility to the model and to the cultural institutions.

The preservation of the "secret" fields of the rites is today accompanied by sophisticated mechanisms for its performance in the modern era. We are talking about mechanisms of sophistication of the rites that go from the updating/modernization of discourses, for example the cautious discourses of the agents about their effective objectives and contents, as well as the ritualistic or even performative practices occurring there. We should also bear in mind that the discourse that the rites are necessary for the teaching of "proper values" and "respect" (for example of younger people for older people, of women for men) may influence the updating of the form of relationship with State public power, thanks to how the State positions itself with respect to the context of "traditional" power.

All boys, without exception, revealed having gone to the rites without knowing where they were going and even less what they could eventually find there (the majority had been cheated, had been convinced they were going to the bush under any pretext), and that, after having arrived, their eyes were covered with a cloth during the first ritual processes (traditional circumcision, penis erection test, ejaculation and fertility test).

As a *Makonde* boy in Cabo Delgado informed us, he was surprised and frightened because of all the apparatus found in the ritual spaces:

> "When the time had come to go to the rites, I had no idea, my father took me for a walk in the bush saying that we were looking for a bee hive to collect honey" (Vasco 1).

In the same way, a *Sena* boy in Cheringoma said:

> "They forced me to masturbate and ejaculate, then put my sperm into water, I didn't know why, later on I understood

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that they wanted to see if, when married, I would be able to produce children" (Luís 2).

Secrecy is thus one of the fundamental mechanisms for the imposition of the rites, considering the transmission of values meant to be unquestionable, through the establishment of relations of charismatic domination (in the Weberian vision) and through an oral process of transmission of uncritical knowledge (in which cognitive power follows rules of sociocultural status and legitimacy).

Although some parties involved in the rites subvert the norms of obedience, the majority does not reveal information in this regard, leaving us with the alternative to analyse by tabulation of information, such as for example, the link between secrecy and fear and between fear and violence and the relation between age and early marriages and pregnancy, once the girls are ready for marriage after the initiation rites, as a health agent in Zambézia stated:

> "They will never say it, but in addition to health questions in the rites, there is a social factor in them because, in general, the father of the girl wants immediate gain or symbolic money in exchange for his daughter. This also happens with mother widows or grandparents and uncles who take care of orphan children. The more girls they have the more wealth there is in the family. What is important for them is not love, but money. Therefore, though I have never read about this and though I think that the lengthening of the labia does not harm the biological development of the child, the process of lengthening the labia minora is linked to the need for the girl to stimulate her hormonal system, producing oestrogens and progesterone. She will therefore seek somebody to stimulate her. This practice may lead to the appearance of the first menstruation earlier on and, in other words, sexual desire" (Zubaida 1).

We would thus say that among the secret functions are: privation of women's rights in favour of male power (inculcation of violence as a control and domination mechanism of the social order), control over biological reproduction and female sexuality, propagation of a

traditional order of (demographic and health) family and educational planning, in the sense given by Braço (2008) when writing about a romantic perspective of social roles related to the education of individuals (which, according to him, may even be object of official education syllabuses, with an approach that presupposes peaceful cohabitation between not only differentiated but even contradictory educational standards).

Even though in a hidden way and masked by a perpetuated unofficial discourse, a public and official discourse emerges of hygiene and the transmission of good civic values of a "good man/good woman". These are paradoxical discourses because, first, hygiene is based on non-homogeneous and dispersed criteria of public and/or personal health (some communities, such as the *Makhuwas* and *Makondes*, see male circumcision as a mechanism of protection against infections, while others, such as the *Senas* and *Ndaus*, don't have the practice of circumcision in the male rites). In the second place, for women hygiene starts and ends with the sexual spectre of menstruation, while for men it starts and ends with the sexual spectre of circumcision, thus excluding a full range of public and personal health and hygiene questions. In the third place, the notions of "good man" and "good woman" fit on the one hand in the framework of the naturalization of social gender roles and on the other hand in the framework of the legitimation of the power of male domination over women. A "good man" is a head of family and main provider of food and of family income. A "good woman" is a wife who produces children, obeys her husband and his relatives, knows her occupational and decision-making place among the other members of the extended family, takes care of the children and of the house, perpetuating the position of women within what Meillassoux (1975)[82] sees as:

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[82] This does not mean that we are giving an economy-driven stamp to this reality, as Claude Meillassoux is accused of. We are only bringing another dimension, in this case of the order of the organisation of the socioeconomic intentions and performances of the reality in question.

"a socioeconomic exchange of women (i.e., for matrimonial purposes, kinship control, incest control) included in a wider control of the management of the domestic economy or, more precisely, of the relations of production" (Meillassoux, 1975: 30-31).

Therefore:

"In general, the procreative potentialities of women are negotiated at the time of their entry into the host community/family, even including the planning of terms for the observation of the effects of their fecundity. This negotiation and control of the exchange belongs to the patriarchal domain, in which older women also participate in the selection, preparation and making available of girls for the exchange. In this sense, the family, clan, lineage and community are part of a wider framework of control over reproduction and over girls, through strategies of social reproduction" (Meillassoux, 1975: 77-81).

It is necessary to add to this position of Meillassoux the contents of symbolic transformation and countervailing power on the part of the actors of the rites, seen for example in the confrontation between the modern and the traditional discourse, regarding their continuation. On the other hand, the occultation of the ritual ceremonies and a large part of the instruction methods also belong to the order of secrecy (which symbolically constitutes a dimension of power) and has also to do with the influence of the current political order on the traditional bodies, as said by Armindo 3, in Mecúfi:

"a girl is being taught to be stupid, but it is clear that she will not be stupid, this depends on the intelligence of each person, what we want is that she learns to pretend that she didn't see, didn't feel, didn't hear, in order that there are no conflicts in the family".

Thus, the rites conceal themselves in the discourses of "hygiene" and "respect/morals/proper education", as strategies of affirmation in the public domain. To analyse the efficacy of this silence we resort to

Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power (1989) and Weber's concept of domination (2004). According to this author:

> "domination occurs in a situation in which a manifest wish (mandate) of the dominator or the dominators wants to influence the actions of other (dominated) people and, in an effective and material or symbolic way, influences them in such a way that these actions, to a socially relevant degree, are performed as if the dominated persons had turned the very content of the mandate into the maxim of their actions (obedience)" (Weber, 2004: 192).

In this sense there would be two possible radically opposed types of domination. On the one hand, domination by virtue of a constellation of interests (especially by virtue of a monopoly situation) and on the other hand domination by virtue of authority (the power of command and the obligation of obedience) (Weber 2004). If, according to the author himself, the type and mechanisms of domination and coercion are linked to the types of traditional, charismatic and bureaucratic/public authority, the two cases characterise the power relations in the rites between professionals and the target group of the rites (including their families) in a monopolistic framework of reproduction of a type of society (which, in a gender relations perspective, is meant to be and/or confirmed as androcratic).

3. State, religion and rites

3.1. Traditional social loyalties of the political power of the Mozambican State: the cases of the discourses of "our culture" and "national unity"

We would say that the State, like the political associations that historically preceded it, establishes a relation of *domination* of men over men, supported by means of legitimate coercion. In order that this relation endures, the dominated people have to submit themselves to the authority invoked by those who dominate at a certain moment. We can only understand when and why they do this,

if we know the internal justifying foundations and the external means supporting the domination.

For Weber:

> "The modern State begins neutrally with a power of rational, contractual and bureaucratic domination, finding its most advanced expression in the Constitutional State" (Weber, 2004: 525).

In line with this point of view, Amselle and M'bokolo (1985) state that:

> "In Africa the behaviour and practices of civil service are appropriated as an understanding between the State, Public Administration and the dominant political elites, and these tend to be an extension of the context of inclusion of the legitimacy of political power at the level of the structure and distribution of traditional power. A deterministic analysis of the phenomenon is determined by what I would call an African cultural tradition, leaving out elements of political dynamics and the problems of culture without any critical analysis" (Amselle & M´bokolo, 1985: 419-421).

This position allows us to see the phenomenon of connivance between public and traditional powers by means of conflict game factors, brought by agents of the traditional order who seek affirmation in the discourse and context of the modern State, while the State power holding elites seek recognition in the logic of "African tradition or culture" (in this case Mozambican culture), since this is the strongest strategy for the maintenance of power, at least at a time when the democratic game is still incipient.

In the political and academics debates held in Mozambique, mainly since the 90s, a lot of attention was paid to the traditional political institutions. "In Government circles (particularly in the Ministry of State Administration), discussions were held about the social future and necessarily about the political past of the so-called traditional authorities, opposing the ideological position of the authoritarian and coercive Marxist-Leninist State (after national independence)

with respect to the traditional authorities and practices of an obscurantist ethno-cultural nature" (Lourenço, 2008: 115).

The change of the ideological position and propaganda of the State is for example evident in the introduction of the concept of "local power" in the 1996 constitutional amendment (this local power was expressed as a way to exercise political administration through consultative or binding competences at local community level: chieftaincies, local administrations, local councils, etc.), or even in Decree 15/2000 of 20 June of the Council of Ministers, which subsequently recognises the traditional authorities as an extension of the administrative and territorial action of the State (with roles, for example, in the Land Law and in other natural resources, or in the community conflict resolution forums). It was a turn which sought alliances with traditional authorities, in cases of an "historical" extension of political-party links between rural communities and the party in power, Frelimo, and the reinvention of the traditional authority in cases of an "historical" interruption or inexistence of political-party links between rural communities and the party in power (Brito, 1995).

According to Lundin (1998), this whole new offensive of co-option of the traditional power on the part of the Mozambican State is justified by the need to solve the problems of low legitimacy of the representation of political power in the Nation State or the national unity project in Mozambique, a global factor a bit all over Africa, experiencing diversity and ethno-linguistic disputes for the occupation of the national political space. This makes that in Mozambique, for example, the political pact between public power and traditional power is increasingly in force, given the specific elitist and structuring form of African/Mozambican State power (Forquilha, 2006). As Médard would even say, a "neopatrimonial and clientelistic form" of which nepotism is a direct consequence (Médard, 1976).

Martin's proposition (2002) is relevant when stating that the State-citizens political game is dominated by intrigues, apparently coincidental or occasional, hiding intentionalities to which political

science should increasingly pay attention, given their occurrence in social, economic and political life (i.e., representations, interests, opinions, disputes, languages, discourses, etc. of politicians and citizens). And, according to Geffray (1990a), the elitist, neopatrimonial clientelistic intrigue expresses, in the case of Mozambique, the controversy arisen around the *Changana* group in the domination of post-independence State power and the correlative exclusion and contestation of other ethnolinguistic elites (mainly *Senas* and *Ndaus* of Central Mozambique) – which may explain the social support of the guerrillas against Frelimo in the 16-year war (besides, for this reason the armed conflict was classified as a civil war by authors such as Geffray, 1990a, and Cahen, 1987).

Mainly for reasons of electoral gains the traditional elites, by their reaffirmation in the composition of the ruling class of the State and fruit of the new approach of State power with respect to traditional elites and power, enjoy today political status and restored recognition within their communities and secured in the context of public power and discourse (the complicity of micro/community and macro/State powers is justified here).

Furthermore, according to Decree 15/2000, the holders of traditional authority come to be subsidized by the State (residence and remuneration for public activity) and secured by symbols of State sovereignty, such as the national flag in their residences and official sashes (there are authors, such as Cohen (1974) and Mamdani (1996), who see this fact as mechanisms of co-option of traditional power by the State, which Public Law jurists would call the privatization of the State). In this confluence of powers in which the traditional authorities are placed as holders of public and community powers, one would ask: what is to be expected in this context for the development of the status and social power of the rites?

On the one hand, the study establishes that the social and political status of the rites is legitimated in the current context of the power of traditional authorities. In other words, the rites occur in the context of the exercise of power roles by the traditional authority, while political strategies are developed aiming directly at State power.

Besides, we see this "traditional authority" of the rites also as a process of customary jurisdictional, religious, social or political domination, emanated from historical heritage and conveyed by social credit/capital. In this context the chiefs, queens, sheiks, *sampandas, fumos* and *mambos*, the council of elders, and sometimes healers, are holders of this form of power/authority. It is in line with these ideas that during the fieldwork of this study it was no surprise that we had contacts with chiefs and sheiks who bring together rite masters and matrons in their jurisdictional court (see the case of chief Luís-filho in Beira/Sofala, of sheik Lakina Leli in Mecúfi/Cabo Delgado, and sheik Sulemane Momba in Macomia/Cabo Delgado).

On the other hand, the study understands that through this "State-traditional authorities" political intrigue a game of complicity unfolds, through predictable or exceptional, manifest or latent, enduring or circumstantial mechanisms for not questioning the place of the rites in the social life of the communities practicing it, for two reasons: the first one has to do with the silent pact between the State and the traditional authorities, who also survive on the "business" of the rites, and the second one has to do with the discourses of "our culture" and "national unity" which lately have dominated the search on the part of the party in State power for sympathy from the populations. In other words, as traditionally the practice of the rites is a key process of the authenticity of the construction of families, and is under the jurisdictional and material aegis of the traditional authorities (in its various forms), hence the legitimacy of the rites at a moment in which the traditional power seeks public legitimacy. Furthermore, if the rites are the strong point of "our culture", then the State must respect them as "cultural wealth", and accordingly the favourable stances with respect to the rites on the part of some Education and Health authorities and members of central Government become convincing, as well as the institutional conformism of the provincial Social Action departments.[83]

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[83] We should for example remember here that in the movement of legal and institutional contextualization of traditional authorities, as a "natural" extension of

Related to the discourse of "our culture" is that of "national unity". What would this national unity be? Researchers of the nation state theory [84] say that national unity is a continuous process of the consolidation of politico-socio-cultural identities of a population aggregate in a State. And, according to Gellner (2009), the big problem in most cases is the challenge of the coincidence between the frontiers of the State and those of the Nation, because while the former involves artificial efforts of jurisdiction and political power over modern society, the Nation shapes cultural, sociolinguistic, socioreligious, etc., identities. In the case of Africa, as Smith (1993) points out, this national identity appears after the States, which were defined in a context of an external sharing-out of the African territories and peoples, making national unity often mainly related to coercive political projects.

It is our perception that national unity is an object contaminated by dominant political ideologies of the organisation of the social basis of any State. And, for the case of Mozambique, this political project of national unity appears with two distinct and paradoxical dimensions. The first one has to do with the fact that, with national independence in 1975, the monoparty Marxist-Leninist orientation delineated a national unity which destroyed coercively all traditional forms of sociocultural authenticity and political organisation (Geffray, 1990a). This destruction, according to Geffray, found expression in the repression of "tribalism", in the prohibition of traditional healing, in the elimination of local chiefdoms and chieftaincies, among other coercive prohibitions related to initiatives of traditional social, linguistic, economic and/or political self-determination, all this in the name of an idea of a new nation without complicity with the capitalist system (seen as evil) or ideological extensions of the

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administrative State power at village, and locality level (Decree 15/2000 of 20 June of the Council of Ministers), Renamo also took the initiative in giving prominence to chiefs (for example, *sapandas* and *mambos* in some regions of the central zone of the country, such as Gorongosa, Cheringoma, Chibabava), which put the party in power on the alert, making it to launch a counteroffensive in the co-option of these traditional authorities of the opposition (this happened for example in Caia and in Beira, where the chiefs changed their affiliation in favour of the party in power).

[84] For example, Hobsbawn (1990), Smith (1993), Gellner (2009).

previous colonial administration regime, of an idea of the "new man", of a revolution against the traditional and colonial past, of an anti-enemy offensive of the revolution and the people (Lundin, 1995). This policy was thus part of the Frelimist logic of self-proclamation as the sole and legitimate representative of the Mozambican people, eliminating all socially different competitors, capable of calling into question its power (one people, one nation, one culture, one party), with the pretext of preserving the unity of all Mozambicans.

The second dimension has to do with the assertion of the neoliberal market model, since the end of the 80s, in which the discourse of national unity changes, silencing the anti-capitalism, anti-tradition, anti-healers and anti-local chiefs/chiefdoms positions. After this short period of silence about national unity, during the Government mandates between the first general elections in 1994 and the beginning of the years 2000, the period was characterized by a discourse of reconstruction of the country at that time destroyed by the "others" (according to the discourse of the party in power). From the 2004 Government mandate, the discourse of national unity returns in full force and with new ideological appearances, dominated by the ideas of "self-esteem", "promotion of our culture", among others along the same line. It is here where specific advertising programmes reappear of the "traditionality" of dances, gastronomy, local games (see for example the blocks of advertisements of the *Televisão de Moçambique*, national championships of traditional games, national festivals of traditional dances and national gastronomy fairs) which are in line with what some authors (Lundin and Machava, 1995) call a race for the reconciliation with traditional local power (for reasons of the above-indicated ideological and organisational change of the State) and which others (Forquilha, 2006) denounce as a social representativeness mechanism of the State by means of strategies of complicity.[85]

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[85] The authors who defend this position argue that in this strategy the silence of the State with respect to traditional practices occurring in the name of "our culture"

As we can observe, associated with the above-mentioned dilemmas of public power with respect to the rites, they (including the unquestionable side of their secrets, their violence, their encroachment on human rights) find some consolation in the context of the new ideological strategy of the State, on the basis of the discourses of "our culture", of "self-esteem" and, mainly, of the official promotion and pact of complicity with the traditional authorities (main agents of the organisation of the rites).

The observation above does not mean that there is merely a harmonious coexistence in this relation between the State and the traditional authorities of the rites. There is, as in any power relation, a discordant action-reaction determined by factors, such as the struggle for power of social affirmation in the community domain between local agents, for example between chiefs (extension of the State administrative power) and rite masters. We should also mention the meeting and confrontation of parties, when the party affiliation of the traditional authorities of the rites (including the healers) is opposed to the party in power. The position of the deceased chief Luís I in Beira fits in perfectly in this case. According to the press, he gave repeated evidence of being a Renamo sympathizer, at a time when the performance of initiation rites was discouraged by the State, which today appropriates them to obtain party sympathy from the current chief. We also emphasize the struggle for material gains fruit of the business of the management of the rites, as a traditional leader in Zambézia acknowledged in a group interview:

> "The State allows our activities, but those who work in the Administrative Posts are more interested in the money we make with circumcisions and the rites. This money is blood money, for example, when I take the money to share it with a local chief, the others and those of the Administrative Post become aware of this and make war. This is a mistake because this work, without a ceremony, those children don't cut

and "self-esteem" in the communities holding this "cultural wealth" also contributes. The rites fit into this context, for example.

anything, moreover when they manage to get say ten million for their things, they don't remember us, divide the money between them" (Feniasse 3).

Finally, the big question remaining unanswered here (and which has fed the core of the debates concerning the relativism and the defence of culture) has to do with the appropriation of "culture" on the part of the "natives", as an argument to claim the maintenance of inequalities that are interesting for the "traditional" leaders, such as the *apartheid* regime in South Africa which used (through the statesman Smuts) a relativist argument of the "defence of traditions" to sustain racial segregation (Mamdani, 1996).

3.2. Rites and the State: meeting and confrontation in the cases of Education, Human Rights/ Justice and Health authorities

In this section we intend to demonstrate the force of the rites today, in spite of its threats in the current context of a democratic and constitutional State, engendering a situation of complicity (whether through silence or through its political discourses that accommodate or at least do not question the anti-democratic and anti-citizenship side of the rites). For this purpose, let us take three fundamental fields of visibility in the public domain: Health, Education and Human Rights.

Starting with Human Rights, the interview with a human rights activist revealed the following:

> "The situation of human rights, here in the Province, we have been working very hard but we are still facing many challenges. The big problem here is violation of the rights of women and children. Worse is that everything is justified by tradition, for example, "*Urumbwana Camkala Nmotcha*" is a cultural expression legitimating promiscuity and male polygamy, rejecting the claims of the female partner. In my opinion the rites should be considered an illegal subject. You see, in the rites they teach the children to be violent. (...) It is

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there where they learn that men should have several women and also that they are allowed to beat their women. (...) Finally, I want to tell you an episode with which we are dealing at this moment in the Justice sector and which made that the Attorney General came to Cabo Delgado: it is a case in which a woman of advanced age was violated by a group of boys, on instruction of the leaders of the rites, pursuant to the allegation that she was passing by the site where the rites were being performed, something which traditionally is prohibited and the punishment for which is precisely what she got. You see, an episode occurring right in Pemba Town, in a place that is a public access road to water points! (...) Regarding the judicial situation of this case! You see, if it were not the Human Rights League there would be no case at all. We are having problems even with the police command and the criminal investigation police. What gave us strength is that the Attorney General gave orders to the provincial Attorney General's office to take this case to the courts, though at civil society level we are the only ones defending this case" (Amélia 1).

This episode (which is a reality in the places where the study was conducted) is interpreted by human rights defenders, such as Ntchama (1991), as being part of the difficulties of the application of the normative contained in international conventions, due to the dominance of customary law. In parallel, the State's silence shows how this law penetrates and sustains its logic of political power in clientelistic alliances with the traditional power. We conclude that there is here an ambiguity between the discourse of wanting to give an image of a constitutional State and a practice based on connivance and the consolidation of a traditional social order favouring elitist political interests in the name of the State (the discourse of "our culture" fits in here).

As a consequence of the above-indicated situation, it is not surprising when for example the provincial Social Action directorates of the three provinces (Sofala, Zambézia and Cabo Delgado) were unanimous in considering that they have little discretionary power to

intervene in the initiation rites and their consequences for the life of vulnerable children and women, not being able for example to work with their parents who impede their daughters and sons to keep studying in order to marry or work in the *machamba*, go out fishing or do other work. On the other hand, the lack of inter-institutional coordination between the provincial and district levels, for example between the directorates of the Social Action, Health, Education and Justice administration departments, such as the Police and the Attorney General's office,[86] makes that there is no multidisciplinary dimension regarding the social, human rights, health and educational problems caused by the rites. Besides, as we were told, the rites are not yet official institutional intervention subjects (or still in an incipient way) of these entities. This strengthens the public silence and impunity of the actions or effects of a penal and even criminal nature associated with the rites (as happened with the episode of assault and sexual abuse of women who passed by places where male rites were being performed).

In addition to the legal question, which is often ignored, the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Children (PNAC) is difficult. Besides, authors such as Osório (2011) state that the development of a legal framework for the protection of children and the supervision of the enforcement of the legislation are defined in the PNAC as fundamental strategic areas. However, the non-fulfilment of the legal mechanisms for its effectiveness is one of the main problems for the identification and sanctioning of violence against children. This is joined by the fact that the gender units set up in the district and even the provincial directorates don't have strategies or programmes and consequently have no activities plans on the argument that there is no budget allocated to them, or that they are waiting for higher-level directions for their functioning, or

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[86] Exceptions are the cases of bilateral inter-institutional coordination between for example Education and Health in the school health, hygiene and sanitation programmes, between Education and Social Action for scholarship programmes and schooling assistance to orphan or underprivileged children, between Health/health units and the Police/Offices for the Attendance of Women and Children Victims of Violence.

that their functioning (for those that have some activity) is directed to cultural actions (i.e., dances and plays about domestic violence) and needlework, but without calling into question the rites, such a powerful source of the masculinization of power, of domestic violence and of early marriages/pregnancies.

With regard to the Health sector, we observe some frustration on the part of the agents working there, who feel impotent with respect to sexual abuse of children, early pregnancy and the use of plants to speed up deliveries, sometimes causing uterine ruptures. Many of the interviewees refer to cultural practices that systematically impede access to sexual and reproductive rights, as is illustrated by the remarks of a female nurse of the mother and child services in Beira City, in Sofala Province:

> "Mostly girls are coming to the Mother and Child Health services and the Adolescent Sexual Health services, mainly for visits. [Their age is] more or less between 14 and 20 years, this is a normal age, though others appear at an age to 24. Boys come to do a HIV/AIDS test or they accompany their girlfriends for an abortion. For their part, girls come for tests, for abortions, and also for antenatal consultations. There are many early pregnancies here, yes. The data reaching me from the districts are more alarming than those from Beira City. The explanation for this is the fact that in the City girls play around just like that, i.e., they want to have old boyfriends who buy mobile phones and clothes for them and then, when they get pregnant, these so-called boyfriends disappear. In the districts it are the early marriages – big men with children. For example, it is normal to hear that a 40-year old man left *paratu* for a little 6-year old child. This man will wait for some time but in general he will let the girl pass the age of 13 or 14. The violation of children and adolescents as well as polygamy also contribute everywhere. Therefore they sometimes end up assaulting children. Here in Sofala men practice sexual assaults a lot, because they consume traditional plants and roots – *ngonandzololo, txidja bongué* – that stimulate erection, sexual desire for many, many hours.

The result is that they must always have a woman to have sex and have children, and the most vulnerable ones are the minors, sold by themselves or by their own parents as a source of money. As a matter of fact, they even say 'I have a chicken for sale'. (...) In one family the man may have seven to eight women, but do you think this is normal?! In that house one woman may be pregnant, another one is breastfeeding, etc. And in the surveys, if you want to know who the lady of the house is, all of them say they are the lady of the house. (...) This is not possible!" (Dilma 1).

Well then, whether from the point of view of biological maturation, or from the point of view of sexual and reproductive rights, this interview reveals serious public authority and public health problems in view of the silence of the State health institutions, and mainly in view of their accessory intervention when we consider that the health sector only played a single role with respect to the rites (to obtain lists of the initiates who go to the local health units to perform safe circumcision).

According to Van Gennep (2011), physiological puberty and social puberty are two fundamentally different things, which only rarely coincide. While it is difficult to determine the moment of physical puberty, in spite of the continuous observation of its material evolutionary features in an individual, the identification of social puberty is even more complicated. However, the latter has greater exposure, mainly from the ceremonies of consecrating maturity through the social events of the initiation rites. It is in this social consecration where the child is separated from the adult. The question is that we are facing two distinct logics for consecrating children and adults (the traditional rural logic of the rites versus the urban logic of the affirmation of the modern State).[87] Besides, according to Medeiros (1995), in the world of the rites there are no intermediate stages between children and adults.

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[87] This also serves, through the extension of the logic of the rural world to the urban world (for example, the spaces of the initiation rites), to question the rural-urban classification itself.

With regard to the education sector there is a lot of ambiguity with respect to the reconciliation of the objectives of educating men and women to be able to exercise their right to citizenship and the initiation rites, as clearly expressed by an education sector officer in Cabo Delgado:

> "The rites have a good side; when they are performed seriously, as in the past, people come out of them with more respect, as adults, prepared for life. We, of Education, formerly we had problems because the rites were conducted during school time and the parents preferred their children to interrupt school to go to the rites. Now this no longer happens, the rites are performed during the school holidays at the end of the year. The rites have no influence on early marriages and early pregnancies among girl students and consequently dropouts. Here we don't have school abandonment in the province. In the districts we still have only the problem of the distance between the school and home, which causes school abandonment of the students, but we are also solving this" (Achirafo 1).

Well then, this idea of institutional reconciliation, which is notable in the public official discourse, may have the intention to harmonize public and traditional powers. However, it does not function in a cognitive and logical sense, because in addition to the educational logic of the two systems often being antagonistic, this reconciliation only boils down to superficial aspects such as the scheduling of the school year and the rites. Other basic aspects are ignored, such as the new traumatic psychological profile of the children and adolescents when they return to school after the rites, and the consequences of the rites (early marriages, early pregnancies and dropouts).

Finally, as will become clear in Chapter IV, part of the recent syllabus contents of national formal education, contained in the teaching programmes approved by the Ministry of Education (Civic Education Manual for grade 6 and 7 of EP2, Moral and Civic Education Manual of grade 4 of EP1, History Manual of grade 5 of EP1) evoke sociocultural organisation prejudices and foundations of the

Mozambican society (not only "culturally" heterogeneous but also existing under a nation state with an historical problem of baseline cultural identity) under the aegis of the historical existence of the Mozambican "traditions". This, in addition to strengthening the essentially political discourse of the current movement of "our culture", conceals a social and political space for the public framework of the rites, as assumed as part of "our culture", as substantiated by the discourse of the State authorities (at least those of Education and Health) and the silence of the Justice administration authorities, with respect to cases of the violation of rights associated with the rites.[88]

3.3. Social dynamics of the rites: the sociocultural capital, political power and religious symbolism dimensions

Always taking the rite agents as our focus of analysis, here we intend to show the influence of the sociocultural capital of the rites in the political and religious frameworks, strengthening by virtue of this influence the trimensionality of their symbolic power.

As mentioned above about the rite agents, the exploratory study of this research, conducted in 2011 in Maputo City (in Mafalala and Military districts) seems to have shown that those agents (organisers, executors and companions), whether of boys or of girls, are not, as one might think, exclusively related to the activity of the initiation rites. There is a confluence of power capital and mechanisms (including alliances between formal power and traditional informal

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[88] For that matter, we recall the closing address by the current President of the Republic, on the 1st day of the Justice Congress (organized in 2012 by the Bar association), in which he said that "our Magistracy and Justice must organize forms of jurisprudence that do not collide with the customary standards and cultural wealth of the peoples of this vast and beautiful Mozambique" (September 2012, STV Television, evening news). With another position, the predecessor of the current Head of State said in his address that "the initiation rites retard culture", adding that if the leaders of the rites were more informed about aspects related to sexuality, there would not be so many risks (Canal de Moçambique, 31 October 2012).

power), i.e., as seen above, the activity of the rites is exercised in various domains that contribute to their social legitimation.

As it is already known that the first and most obvious social capitalization of the rite agents comes from the internal context of the expertise of their role, whether as organizers, executors or even companions, or as supervisors and mediators (including godfathers and godmothers of the initiates, already previously initiated youths, and elders guardians of the identity values), this obviously confers an authority on them from the accumulation and practice of surgical knowledge, for example for the circumcision of boys (whether in a traditional way or in hospital), the spiritual knowledge and practices for preaching the sacred and the profane, the knowledge and practices for the preservation and preaching of sociocultural/ ethnolinguistic identity values, the accumulated experience of advisers and supporters (godmothers and godfathers) of the initiates' daily life, the experience of active witnesses with roles as educators and sanctioners (i.e., the young initiates of previous seasons), of the coercive or persuasive executors of the mobilization of the separation acts, and of the executors of the experiences of the practical teachings of sexuality and married life.

In general, all parties involved in the teaching process of the rites, primarily in the context of rural communities, are individuals who sometimes are prominent in a religious and/or local leadership context. We are for example talking here about the "coincidence" of responsibilities for the performance of the rites and religious responsibilities (for example, rite masters who are sheiks, in Mecúfi and in Macomia/Cabo Delgado, rite masters who are also healers[89] or members of AMETRAMO). The participation of Christian religious authorities (priests and ministers) in the canonization of marriages of underage girls, arranged in a traditional way, can also be included in

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[89] According to an interviewee, the expression "healer" is more accepted by the class, rejecting the classification of "traditional doctors". Could this boil down to the idea that healers assert themselves as practitioners/doctors with overall powers (biophysical, spiritual and mental treatment), standing out above the specialist/partial intervention of "formal" doctors in the treatment of patients?

this category of "coincidences" of authority capital of traditional roles and religious roles.

The legitimacy and readiness for this traditional matrimonial arrangement are almost always determined on the basis of the initiation rites, which legitimate "wives" who are already marked from commitments such as "leaving *paratu"* among the *Ndaus* and the *Senas*.

The symbolic power of the rite agents has also to do with their position as figures with roles linked to political power (for example, rite matrons in Pemba and Macomia who are at the same time members of OMM, organizers of the rites' community ceremony who are at the same time members of the party in power with jurisdictional positions, such as those of district secretaries, almost all over the country, community leaders, masters and members of the party in power, in Alto-Molocué).

Well then, according to Bourdieu (1989) faith and belief are operators of the institutionalization of political capital, seen as a form of symbolic capital of political recognition. The recognition and delegation of political capital presuppose institutions/strategies at the service of this realization, i.e., apparatuses, investment in people, clients (Bourdieu, 1989: 192-196). In the case of a western democratic State the operation may become more bureaucratic, different from the case of an African State such as Mozambique in which, as we have tried to show briefly, political power is also based on community and traditional foundations.

In addition to the "coincidence of roles", a factor contributing to the politicization (public legitimacy) of the rites is the fact that they are a subject of semi-official organisation and administration on the part of public authorities, such as administrative posts, health services cooperating with the rite agents for the indication of nurses for the circumcision of the initiatees, or even for the indication of rite schedules, in which the Education sector participates insofar as it seeks to reconcile the teaching periods with the ceremonies. Taking

into account Gluckman's study (1958) (quoted by Feldman-Bianco, 1987)[90] we include here for example the observation of the restoration of the entire traditional emblematic framework as a useful tool for the consolidation of local public power, as we can observe in the discourse of "we are from here" proclaimed by local political figures for the symbolic-imaginary restoration of an apparent umbilical link between politicians and local populations, even if the previous traditional modus vivendi has been object/target of rejection, conflict and suppression. "We are from here" has been uttered, in the north of the country, through proof of having gone through the initiation rites (assumed as an unquestionable record of "really being from here").

A fact revealed in a focus group of masters in Cabo Delgado shows how the relation between masters and local (religious and administrative) authorities is organized. One of the *Makhuwa* masters describes that:

> "The master goes to see his *régulo* (traditional chief) to tell him that he is going to work in his area, who will then take care of informing the district secretary. These children are then taken to the hospital for circumcision, then to the house of the sheik to purify the boys, but often the sheik goes to the huts himself. But there is an interesting aspect here: you, the master, must take money from the amount collected for your work and buy your work material and also give it to the others" (Armindo 1).

We recall that these facts enforce the above-described dimensional side of the political force and dynamics of the rites, by means of the sociocultural capital load of their agents in the negotiation and inclusion in the framework of (traditional and public) political power. The link between public power (in the ranks of State power) and the traditional authorities (particularly in cases in which the latter are directly linked to the management of the rites) is made by the

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[90] M. Gluckman (1958). *Analysis of social situation in modern Zululand*. New York: Humanities Press.

recognition they confer to the State as a public and legitimate form to exert power (with a coercive image, mainly in a State with a history of coercion given its authoritarian past), and invests the traditional authority linked to the rites with further power in the context of the traditional hierarchies.

Like agents who combine various levels of community authority, as rite godfathers, local party members, AMETRAMO leaders, heads of local party cells, masters and godfathers, the rite agents enjoy a symbolic power that combines capital from several fields, in this concrete case the religious and the political field. This combined power is the guarantor of the strengthening of the role of the rites in the social life of the practicing communities and also grants the rites, in addition to social status, the transition to political capital (as stated by Van Gennep, 1977).

Since the start of the construction of the disciplinary fields, of the theoretical *corpus* and of the methodological instruments of the social sciences, religion is situated at the base of their concerns, not only as a preferred empirical research field, but rather as an epistemological foundation – from Durkheim's religious categories to Taylor's religious forms as cultural differential evolution,[91] and to Weber's concept of secularization which brought, in modernity, the distinction between the religious and the civil. In this distinction, paraphrasing Pompa (2012:159), there is rarely a historical problematization/deconstruction of the sacred-profane, public-private, religious-civil binomials.

Without intending to initiate the historical problematization of the religious phenomenon and its secular binomials today, this study takes epistemological precautions, indicating three aspects, namely, the concept and weight of religion in the representations of social cohesion of individuals in general, the enclave of religion in State power (the example of Mozambique) and, finally, the meeting of religion and the indigenous/local sociocultural context of the rites.

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[91] E. Taylor. (1920). *Primitive Culture*. New York: J.P. Putnam's Sons, p. 410.

The question of the initiation rites linked to the manipulation of the concept of "culture" obliges us to problematize, for its part, the understanding of "religion" also in a socio-anthropological perspective. Although one of the main problems in the study of religion is the definition of religion itself, according to Geertz (1966) the anthropology of religion involves the study of the religious institutions in relation to other social institutions and the comparison of religious beliefs and practices in different "cultures" (religion as a cultural system).

Anthropologists have considered several criteria for the definition of the content of religion, from belief in the supernatural or confidence in a ritual. With respect to the sociology of religion, alongside Weber who focuses on the comparative analysis of the various forms of belief and of religious institutions, as well as of the respective contributions to the development of rationality and to social change, Durkheim brings up the role of religion as "functional universal", capable of contributing to social integration. This perspective has been pursued by the functionalist theories of religion and by the structuralist theories. By taking this view of religion, Durkheim seeks to establish that religion does not necessarily presuppose a belief in a transcendent God, i.e., it is first of all a "system of beliefs and practices" administrating the profane and the sacred for social cohesion (Durkheim, quoted by Pickering. 2009: 37).[92] Durkheim thus sees religion as a primordial social institution expressed in a collective consciousness and in the endogenous praxis of complicity between its actors.

Well then, in Durkheim's writings religion is seen as a collective phenomenon, seeking to show convincingly that there cannot be collective moral beliefs without a dichotomic character of "sacred" and "profane". I.e., its existence is based on an essential distinction between sacred and profane phenomena. Thus, religion is institutionalized as an entity that defines limits between right and wrong and makes them operational insofar as it rewards who is right

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[92] E. Durkheim (1912). "Les formes élémentaires de la vie religiuese". In: W. Pickering (ed.) (2009). Durkheim on Religion. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

and punishes who is wrong. It is thus a question of promoting a morality of inclusion in and exclusion from a social order. In this perspective, individuals adhere to precepts of morality but with a material feasibility of life in society.

We consider it useful to try to understand the African religious phenomenon in two perspectives. One, in the line of authors such as Georg Simmel (1988),[93] quoted by D'Allondans (2002), who states that the classical religions in their first contact with the African forms of beliefs, sacred rituals, profane symbolization (often viewed by historians as magical-religious practices due to their abstract-symbolic character but with pretensions of a material effect on the life of the people) tried to become hegemonic, in the case of Christianity with the idea and the project of civilization, for example. The other idea belongs to the context of the meeting of religion in Africa with forms of belief and cultural practices of social organisation. In other words, even for reasons of a symbolic crisis or of competitiveness between doctrinal religious corporations, religion will be obliged to establish itself in the world of the "profane and sacred" not on an orthodox basis but rather, and often, on the basis of appreciations in the traditional or political cultural symbolic field (or at least not subverting them), to gain legitimacy for its social inclusion (D'Allondans, 2002: 120-125).

According to D'Allondans (2002), the 21st century will be overshadowed by a crisis of the monotheist religions, among various other factors fruit of a movement, mainly in the "poor" countries (as classified by the author), of institutions of symbolic beliefs and complex rites that value collective and individual human experience, that ultimately form symbolic "mosaics" that give materialism to the life of the people. In this framework the traditional-modern dichotomy in the identity structure of individuals and of the community is lost.

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[93] G. Simmel. (1988). Pont et Porte. In: *Tragédie de la culture*. Paris: Petite Bibliothéque Rivages.

Well then, the meeting between religion and the rites can precisely occur because of the fact that the positive acts of the religious ritual contribute to the moral consolidation of a social collective, of the from there projected social solidarity (projection with a social effect and a religious object), also without forgetting, as Meillassoux (1975) says, the determination of this social inclusion by means of the rites in their participation in the wider game of economic relations and daily work.

The Mozambican case of Christianity and Islam in which, according to empirical data of the study, the religious elites with whom we had contact are increasingly and sometimes even artificially convinced of the union between the classical religious dogmas (from outside the populations' local African traditional context) and the discourses, practices and "idiosyncrasies" of the cultural traditional framework of the rites reveals in this particular case the religion-rites symbolic symbiosis (even for reasons of power and the material sustainability of both). I.e., notwithstanding distinct ideological orientations, there were several episodes in which religious leaders (i.e., Catholic priests and Islamic sheiks of at least two divergent ideological traditions – the Islamic Council and the Islamic Congress)[94] indicated elements of the series of cultural practices (reproduced by the rites) for the future social life of boys and girls. In addition to examples of mimicry of some religions/cults such as the "Zionists in which biblical foundations are processed together with those of African traditions, such as the *kupalha* and the *mhamba* phenomena" (Mahumana, 2003: 2), the study found examples of the defence of circumcision, the repudiation of homosexual marriages, the legitimation of the sex-gender division of social roles, the glorification of reproduction/

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[94] The Islamic Congress and the Islamic Council are differentiated, mainly concerning a few ideological positions about the foundations and the obligation of religious practices such as the use of the veil, the frequency of the cults, the forms of performing the material ovation to Allah, etc., and concerning how dogmas, knowledge and guidelines of the Islamic faith are interpreted, such as the moment/sign of the appearance of the moon to begin "Eid Mubarak", all this derived from the source (places) of legitimacy and inspiration of religious power and beliefs (i.e., Mecca/Saudi Arabia and Sudan as representative of Mecca for the Islamic Council versus the Africanism of the Islam for the Islamic Congress).

procreation, the representations of menstruation, among others, which are either based on the Bible and/or on the life of Catholic apostles and of reference Islamites (in this last case religiously underpinning polygamy and the rituals to prepare the bodies of girls, from birth, for their protection against infertility).

Let us consider the stance of local religious authorities regarding the power relations between men and women in Islam: "it is true that men and women must both be treated with respect but the man is the head" (Matias 1); "the man is the 'head' of the family" (Matias 2); "men and women are not equal. Women must be controlled" (Matias 3); "the man is the one looking for a woman to marry her and she should obey the commands of her man" (Feniasse 3).

It is interesting that the Bible also reproduces hierarchical power relations between women and men, depriving women of access to and the exercise of rights, particularly sexual and reproductive rights:

> "The Bible says that the woman comes from a male rib. Moreover, even in science life has already started in the male reproductive organs, therefore we cannot want both to be equal, otherwise each one will not know her or his place" (Matias 4).

> "The Bible does not approve of family planning, neither of homosexuality" (Matias 2).

> "We advise the parents to have their daughters marry within the social rules" (Feniasse 4).

> "To produce disciples is never against God. It is not correct when children have an early pregnancy but we can also not take abortion as a solution. We condemn family planning and all forms of restricting life on earth, such as abortion and homosexuality" (Daniel 2).

Therefore, rites and religion have their meeting confirmed, precisely on the basis of the institutionalization of the instrumentalization of women and their reproductive social roles and position of a condition that is subordinate to men, of the essentialization of the official, biblical or Koranic founding of socioculturalist prejudices of the

education of the rites, and of the combination of the religious, traditional and public-political social recognition (amplified symbolic power) of the rite agents.

This chapter sought to analyse the occurrence of rites in Cabo Delgado, Sofala and Zambézia provinces. It sought to show changes of the rites and their reconfiguration in the current context of the affirmation of a democratic State, with respect to their refinement in view of new threats to their traditional/original framework of roles/functions, objectives, expectations, mechanisms of social education, agents and professionals and organisation.

In general, the rites still perform social group reproduction functions (mainly when they are more of a community/collective nature, as is the case of the *Makondes* and the *Makhuwas*, in their places of origin and in the recreated ethnospaces), developing social control mechanisms, which can for example be established by the fact that the families still consider them important for the construction of an adult identity. With respect to the changes experienced by the rites, we emphasize the professionalization of agents through market criteria (not traditional criteria, such as heritage and succession), the ambivalent relations with State and religious power, the reduction of the duration of the rites (due to the increasingly hasty need of adults and threats brought by modernity, such as the school, the pressure of human rights), associated with the lowering of the ages of the recruitment of initiatees.

The entry of the public discourse (for example through the idea of "our culture") in the coverage of the traditional practices of the rites makes that there is on the one hand no questioning of human rights phenomena (for example, the violation of children's or women's rights, sexual violence, paedophilia), the exposure to public health risks (i.e., HIV and AIDS risks of surgical activities such as circumcision; obstetric fistula due to early pregnancy legitimated by early marriage); and on the other hand the public authority itself comes into play in the rites (the Education sector harmonizing schedules for the performance of the rites with the traditional authorities, and the Health sector carrying out circumcision of the

initiatees on the argument of a safe surgical intervention). This happens due to the logic of the relation established with the traditional power which, from a certain point in time, was a legitimation recourse for State power. This is how this chapter sought to analyse the functions, organisation and changes of the rites, as reorganisation and reproduction institutions of an order of the organisation of power between individuals of the same social system and in the clash between this system and the macrosystem of the modern State.

Chapter IV - Initiation Rites and the Construction of the Masculine and Feminine

In this chapter we will seek to analyse three sets of questions, which elucidate the role and functions of the rites in the construction of identity, previously presented through an analysis "of the discourse as social practice leading to the construction and attribution of meaning to the experience and the social actors by means of the interactional stances occupied by them in the use of language" (Lopes, 2010: 288). This will allow us to understand the context in which the discourse is produced, to which needs it responds, which processes produce the transformation and adaptation/adjustment, expressed in how girls and boys recognise themselves as subjects of rights.

The first set of problems has to do with the relation between school and family and with the appropriations girls and boys make of the available resources, reformulating identifications, developing strategies and negotiating values and practices. We also intend to analyse how the conflicts between these socialization goals are produced as well as "solved", at school and in the family, and the differentiation of the means used in both spaces. This means seeking to understand the continuities and discontinuities between family and school education, taking into account the cohabitation of the cultural heritage with elements that, deriving from modernity, destabilise the dispositions embodied in the family. This situation reveals itself in the first place in how all parties involved in this education perceive the conflicts, use them to occupy spaces of power and to renew legitimacies, and in the second place in the inclusion or not of socialization processes and mechanisms that contribute to the cohabitation and mainstreaming integration of convergences in the construction of differentiating qualities. For this reason, in this first

point we will also confront the discourses and practices of female and male teachers and of girl and boy students with the proposed syllabus model, so as to obtain evidence for the correlation between the intention of the formal education system and the contents of family action in the constitution of principles constraining school practices.

Another set of problems concerns the role of the rites as a factor of cultural cohesion, i.e., how these instances of coming of age provide, through the spaces in which they are conducted, the ritual duration, the ceremonies and the means and mechanisms used (such as dances, songs and plants), the qualities that constitute the new status, in a process in which the girls and boys internalize the representations and practices that characterise an adult. The rite prescribes behaviours and includes them harmoniously in a new order, which protects individuals "from the splits and discontinuities present in society" (Meira, 2009: 188). Through interaction the individual positions her/himself in relation to the group, shows how she/he embodies the normative and resorts to it, learning to recognise authority. In this process of recognition there is cooperation (insofar as she/he accepts the authority) and there is also conflict, when she/he because of the knowledge she/he embodies in other spaces, is taken to processes of demarcation from the group (Meira, 2009).

From this point of view, it is also our intention to understand how different contexts give differentiated meanings to the representations and practices and how these meanings converge or not on the same model of domination. In other words, what interests us is to analyse how elements that are apparently exogenous to the rites, such as democracy and the mechanisms of citizen participation and of access to rights are, in addition to the social, cultural and economic specificities of the ethnolinguistic groups, the resources used to resist and negotiate new positions in the power structure, imposing the recognition of the youths, namely as subjects of rights. In the same way, the exposure of the girls and boys to differentiated spaces and lifestyles encourages reflection about the existence of multiple masculinities and femininities that, having to do with cultural and ethnolinguistic contexts, may indicate the capacity to change and to

manipulate resources that guide the socially available dispositions and that may be collateral to both sexes. This question brings us also to the attention that should be paid to the changes to which the rituals have been subjected, not only from the point of view of the formalization of the means used, but also and mainly how the relative changes, for example of the space used and the duration of the rites, may cause internal disruption (undermining the original meanings).

In the third set of problems, we will study in depth how the rites seek to shape gender identities and sexual identities (though differentiated, they are linked), which "are always being constituted, are instable and therefore liable to transformation" (Louro, 2007: 27). This means favouring an approach that, though seeking to identify tendencies that confirm the existence of a common symbolic universe, takes into account variability in the construction of gender identities (and sexual identities) and the link between this identity flexibility and the constraints imposed by a cultural model defining hegemonic masculinities and femininities.

If, as Louro (2007) states, gender identities imply the recognition of belonging to manhood or womanhood and the sexual identities take us to the practice of sexuality, in this research it is important to understand how the demarcation factors for the performance of the rites and the spaces and contents of the teachings of sex life are simultaneously producers and reproducers of a dominant social order. As Foucault states, "the ritual defines the qualifications that individuals who speak should have; it defines the gestures, the behaviours, the circumstances and the entire set of signs that should accompany the ritual; and finally, the ritual establishes the supposed or imposed efficacy of the words, their effect on those to whom they are spoken, the limits of their constraining value" (Foucault, 1971: 10).

Gender ideology as a system of beliefs produces and reproduces mechanisms legitimating inequalities, operating and communicating through cohesive and permanent institutions, hierarchies and positions that strengthen the model of domination, even in situations

in which it seems to have been shaken, as for example the sharing of domestic tasks.

When we talk about gender identities, the nucleus of our analysis is the marks causing the body to incarnate the norms and conventions leading to the historically constrained representation of manhood and womanhood. Resorting to Foucault (1976), in modernity coercion makes way for the incitement of the youth to seek compliance with the normative femininity and masculinity, so that when they move, they "execute" performances in agreement with the spaces in which they are located. What we in the first place intend to know is if and how the rites organize patterns that standardise the construction of the individual (constituting references that can be recognized by others). And in the second place we intend to know which strategies of adjustment and resistance may shake the socially and culturally to be expected mandate, calling into question the stability of the gender order. It is in this sense that the sexualized body, i.e., the knowledge about sexuality that refer to it and the powers that structure the practices, and how individuals recognise themselves as subjects of this sexuality, are the pivot around which we will analyse the construction of sexual identities.

Thus, in this way we intend to examine sexuality in a perspective focused on gender relations (which provide the model of domination) and on the individual appropriation of sexuality in differentiated cultural and social contexts (Heilborn, 1999). It is in this perspective that the question of power, i.e., social control of the body, is decisive to understand the maintenance of the mechanisms of construction of subordinated sexuality, being also capable of forming a threat to this social order. We will seek to understand how through the differentiated but not autonomous forms, female and male sexuality is constructed and how they are marked by mechanisms based on a relation of domination, subject to change. As Loyola (1999) states, it is the non-fixation of sexuality in a particular model, but its variation in the course of the history of individuals and societies, which founds the always urgent question of cultural mobility and the questioning of the preservation of the order.

1. Identities, family and the school

Concerning the link between family and school socialization, and considering the analysis of the initiation rites and their role in shaping juvenile identities, we took into account some questions that should be understood as being related: the first one concerns the construction of juvenile identities and the change processes developed around the circulation, adjustment and adoption of new elements in combination with old (and previous) mechanisms allowing distinction but also accordance with the collective(s). Going about in different spaces, individuals are in transit and "when individuals move, they transform themselves" (Louro, 2010:204). This means that through the embodiment of new dispositions acquired through the interaction with other spaces, girls and boys, while constituting themselves as subjects, recognise themselves as belonging to a group. These processes, marked by fluidity and transitoriness, simultaneously characterised by identification and de-identification, explain how social and cultural norms are acquired and transformed by the youths in new ways of recognition, subject to change and flow. Juvenile identities are thus understood as varied and contradictory: confronted with multiple sources of information, adolescents and youths are in constant mobility, appropriating and expropriating, identifying and non-identifying themselves.

Another question has to do with the link between spaces of socialization, particularly the family and the school, which while "presenting" themselves with complementary aims, are guided by differentiating types of organisation which may call into question the expected social coherence. The bonds of conviviality, the hierarchies based on new models of knowledge construction (and on the recognition of their legitimacy as an established truth), the social relations that are developed at school as a space of constraint and a space of freedom (sensed and experienced as such), expose the girl and boy students to a changeable set of resources and opportunities that express, often ambiguously, the combination, but also the confrontation, between family socialization (brought about by imitation and made explicit in silences, taboos, power relations and

functions, producing automatisms that function as an expression of the social norm) and school socialization, which is brought about as a process defining itself simultaneously as a space of complementarity but mainly as a space which, with its own routines and rules, re-develops new mechanisms of normative control. As it is not possible to consider either the family or the school outside of the social, cultural and political contexts which produce differentiated "regulations", we seek to take into account on the one hand the principles that distinguish theoretically family socialization and school socialization and on the other hand the differentiations and affinities that derive from the contextual specificities and that make it difficult to standardize specific forms of linking the two. For this reason, the tendencies found in the processes of primary and secondary socialization have to be seen as subject to change, produced both at the endogenous level of instances of socialization and at the exogenous level, such as, in the case of Mozambique, the influence of the civil war on population mobility, the economic precariousness of people living in rural environments, and the reconstitution of practices intending to restore cultural cohesion (broken or replaced during many years, whether by the imposition of a nation "without culture", or by social destabilization).

Finally, we think that it is important to mention how, in the family and at school, gender identities are constructed through the sexual division of labour and the effect that school "egalitarianism", expressed in the syllabuses, may or may not have on a rupture with the markers of gender inequality. This problem is obviously a key question in this research, not only because in the course of the various chapters we seek to understand how the rites express, through multiple mechanisms, representations and practices that impose the construction of social power relations as "natural" and legitimate them, but also how the school and other public bodies that produce norms, conflict, or on the contrary establish implicit or explicit agreements, with a cultural model that seeks to preserve gender discrimination.

By targeting the 12 to 18-year age group and by considering, as mentioned in previous chapters, the unity and diversity that

characterise this stage of life intermediating the transition to adulthood (Pais, 1990), we operate simultaneously with the concept of youth but also with the concept of adolescence. As Rena states, the latter is the identity in crisis which "contains big risks and great possibilities" (Rena, 2006:34). This choice has to do with two situations: the first one is due to the fact that in most spatial units studied the initiation ritual starts between the age of 10 and 12, which leads us, though in the course of this study we seek to identify the differences between puberty and youth (where the choices, ruptures and appropriations are more visible), to resort, though with precautions, to the term juvenile identity.[95] The second situation has to do with the distinction made by Van Gennep between social puberty and physical puberty, considering the "margin" phase which mediates the aggregation as a "suspension of social life" (1977:103) and which can cover a 10 to 18- year age group.

In the analysis of the construction of identities through the discourse of girls and boys, the preliminary question, and which makes the establishment of tendencies that standardize the processes and mechanisms acquired by the initiated youths from the teachings in the family and at school particularly difficult, is in the first place the identification of how these teachings are conditioned due to the fact that the children have experienced the process of ritualization. Although the embodiment and disembodiment of the ritual contents are treated below, here we will seek to understand, through the discourses of girls and boys, which dominant mechanisms produced in each one of the spaces are used to give themselves meaning and how this happens. This also means that we will resort to the factors that, having to do with the differences between urban and rural environments and also between ethnolinguistic groups which, more or less exposed to the public discourse of rights and to the information conveyed by various sources, enable the youths to accede to resources that break with, are in agreement with or on the contrary combine different types of normativity.

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[95] The criterion to characterise youth was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, in Resolutions 40714 of 1985 and 50781 of 1995, with the definition of the 15 to 24-year age group.

It is thus important to understand how young people learn to recognise themselves as adults and to disassociate themselves not only from (not initiated) other youths but also from adults with whom they confront themselves/dialogue and how these distinctions may be indelibly marked by the symbolic capital and by how the hierarchical positions are defined (Enne, 2010). This means to identify the mechanisms used by the youths in the negotiation between the individual and the collective in the relation between myself and the other (this myself and the other marked by fluidity, by resistance and by alliances), considering that an individual identity only makes sense through the relation with the other. We will thus also seek to analyse the mechanisms of identification with the collective, by opposition and similarity to other collective identities (of gender, religion and ethnicity).

Regarding the way in which girls and boys represent the teachings in the family and at school and their practices, we observe, as demonstrated in previous studies (Osório and Silva, 2008), that about 50% of the youths point out that there are considerable differences between the education received at home and at school, emphasizing the importance of the family as personality building agent ("don't steal, be the boss", Vasco 2) and of the school for providing competences allowing access to work. What we on the other hand and in apparent contradiction observe is that the narratives about the non-discrimination of girls at school (in terms of demands and in social relations) mix the naturalization of the sexual division of labour at home with the equal rights transmitted at school, resulting in the assimilation of elements from one space and the other, apparently without leading to conflicts. In other words, at school and in the family the children behave themselves in agreement with the expectations of each one of the spaces, conforming themselves or resisting within the normative framework imposed on them.

In a line of opposition to the school and to the mechanisms of family socialization, revealing some familiarity with the discourse of rights, about 20% of the interviewed youths denounced punishments at school, such as "carrying 25 gallons of water and opening latrines"

and "punishments and work at home", as a boy in Mecúfi told us (Vasco 16). This is particularly interesting because while these students have been subject to initiation rites where the mechanisms to attain adulthood are applied with a lot of suffering (by part of the youth not perceived however as violence but as necessary for the transition of status), they are capable of rejecting explicitly different forms of training. As we will analyse below, this may be a system of opposition that not only presupposes resistance and contestation of the cultural heritage, but also the embodiment of elements of individuation expressed in differentiated forms of belonging and recognition.

Another group of youths belonging to a third tendency and making up about 30% of the interviewees (10% girls and 20% boys) oppose a discourse which, stating the conflicts between family and school expectations, attach value to access to school, as may be observed in these remarks:

> "Here at school I benefit from many different things, conversing with colleagues, studying, practising certain things, but at home I leave my notebooks. At home my uncle took me to the workshop to work, when my uncle told me to stop "cramming" and become a bus collector, I refused and when he took me to the workshop he said, one thing you have to lose, either you work or you study, so I said I will work and study" (Vasco 1).

This discourse is corroborated by many other students, aged 12 to 14, with big expectations with respect to school, seeking to reconcile, though often without success, work with schooling. It is observed that the youths develop strategies of negotiation with the families in order to be able to attend school, and even in urban areas about 20% of the boys informed that they divide the week into two parts: they go to school for three days and the other days they go fishing or perform other activities to support the family. It is curious that the ministerial definition that skipping classes does not constitute a factor of failing and the order of semi-automatic and automatic transition until grade 7 (at which the performance targets are important for the assessment

of the teachers' performance) has favoured an extremely harmful situation for students who may be kept out of school by their families with impunity and not impeding their transition to the next grade.[96]

As we will analyse in the course of this study, it is interesting that, contrary to girls, the justification for school abandonment and the difficulties that are presented by boys to skip classes have fundamentally to do with work, while girls, though also mentioning poverty of the family, never emphasize the need for work (outside the domestic scope) to support the survival of the family, stating that they stay at home to help their mother and prepare themselves for marriage. The following remarks of a school director (referring to a meeting with a guardian) in Mecúfi District is representative:

> "Because marrying (...) should be to sustain (...) a household. I am already old, I can't manage (...). So the child goes from there thinking that marriage is more important than the school because I will have my home with my property. (...) Because there are parents who even say I have studied but it didn't give me anything. (...) I have my brother, he has studied, but didn't get anything, now, what benefit does the school give you?" (Achirafo 3).

However, despite the difficulties of girl and boy students to have access to school, they have a visible interest in "learning a profession", which only an educational institution can give them. This situation allows us to think that, even when levels of complementarity between the family and the school are identified, or when girl and boy students give value to family teachings, there begins to appear opposition that goes beyond the relation between generations, and that reveals a structure of identity change, expressed in the embodiment of new values and expectations.

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[96] Promotion is automatic within each cycle and semi-automatic between cycles, in this case implying that retention in the 3rd cycle is done exceptionally "in cases in which the teacher, the school director and the parents/guardians reach a consensus" (MEC, INDE, Basic Education Teaching Plan, Maputo, 2003), which does not impede the setting of new examinations for excluded students (as external students) and access to professional courses.

Contrary to juvenile narratives, from an analysis of the discourses of key informants with respect to the link between the space of primary socialization, which is the family, and the school (which in the case of our study can be assumed as secondary socialization), we observe assertively the permanence of a set of phenomena that highlight the differences between how the aims and strategies of school education are perceived (and also their specific modes of distributing time and occupying space, of reorganizing relations between pairs, of hierarchizing agents, of transmitting knowledge and competences) and their implications for the prevalence of values transmitted within the family, which can be understood both as complementary to school socialization and as discordant and maladjusted (Darmon, 2006). In the case of our target group, ritualized children attending grade 7, we observe three situations in all ethnolinguistic groups studied: the first one, more visible in urban areas and in more educated social groups, in which families state the usefulness of school attendance, seeking to integrate and mainstream the knowledge and values acquired in the two spaces.

The second situation in which families, though with a positive expectation in relation to the school, even as a supplement to the absence of opportunities and as a "correction" of the colonial injustice which limited their access to school knowledge, resort frequently to the poor quality of education as an argument to give value to knowledge acquired at home, emphasizing the work experience the children are having, whether in domestic activities or in seasonal activities (such as harvesting, fishing or doing "odd jobs") that cover the family budget. Thus it happens that for an important number of families, the work done by a son is more relevant than school attendance, as a member of staff of the District Directorate of Education in Cheringoma told us:

> "In our families here in Cheringoma there are many children whose families take away their rights. At any moment a father may tell his son that today he cannot go to school, you have to go harvesting. This has been frequent. What happens then? The teacher sends a notification to call the father, but the father doesn't show up, he doesn't care" (Daniel 6).

Finally, we found a third situation, clearly observed in rural areas and in families in very critical living conditions, in which the school is perceived as a place for the production of dispositions contrary to the values received at home, thus constituting a "danger" for the transmission of the cultural heritage, which can be interpreted as the rejection of the family norm, as the "teaching" of having a choice, as the possibility of the denial of the (future) fulfilment of the material obligations of the children towards the parents. When one of our civil society interviewees states that "an educated son is venom for the father" (Daniel 2), this means that fear and mistrust with respect to the role of the school reveals the discontinuity between family and school expressed in the absence of the parents from meetings called by the teachers, which becomes particularly serious with the occurrence of multiple absences of students, school abandonment and, in the case of girls, forced unions of children with adults.

It was also interesting to observe that the "nearer" to tradition and the "defence of culture" (informants such as masters, matrons and a few leaders) the stronger the declarations (because, as we saw in previous chapter, spaces of legitimation are negotiated) that the school constitutes itself as a constraint, particularly in a context that is intended to be democratic, in which children's rights are obstructing what is socially considered the exercise of authority, as is revealed by these remarks of a master in Mugeba, Mocuba District:

> "There is nothing, they say that this is democracy. Democracy, each one does what he wants. And then everybody says this here isn't all right, that's it. Ah...that chief isn't doing a good job, now it is this, then it is that. But how can they allow this? Even in the colonial days, each father had a ruler, I attended there, this Sílvio gang, they had children there, they had a ruler, but they taught the children. When they see that you have an escudo[97] they ask you, where did you get it from? Well, they understand immediately that this child opened the purse and stole this money, he would get a good hiding. From there the child would be very afraid that stealing is bad. It is

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[97] Escudo was the unit of currency used in the colonial period.

just like that, all this happened at school, they would ask you what work did you do? Why did you not do this? Either this or that, they would give a good hiding, then the child would be steadfast" (Zuber 1).

The same kind of attitude was observed in some women's organisations within the political parties which, in addition to denouncing the "rebelliousness" of the girls expressed in the way of dressing, in the non-fulfilment of "family orders" ("they go naked, we would like to teach them to follow the example of their mothers but they don't comply at all"), also accuse the soaps of "teaching to have sex" and the school of "teaching about the human body, which is a problem when they go to the rites and don't listen" (Amélia 2).

The differences between bodies of socialization, such as the school and the family, are organized in and with conflict (in the discourse of many female and male informants), insofar as the school, through its "mechanisms and practices, constitutes school identities" expressed not only in the legitimacy of what is taught, but also of what is rejected or accepted (Louro, 2007:61). As a matron of *Makonde* origin in Pemba informed us:

"Today there are big differences and there are difficulties. Today the children have a very wrong idea, for example, the parents want to educate their children in a good way, when they have a subject to transmit to the children or because a child did something wrong, he doesn't respect his father, nor his mother, nor his brothers, when the parents lay hold of the child in order to give him advice the answer is: for you, this time has passed already. (...) Nowadays counsels between parents and children are difficult because the little ones think they already know everything, because they see all the demonstrations at school and on television" (Arminda 1).

In an even more obvious way a *Makonde* master, also in Pemba Town, accuses the school of having replaced the parents by new values and attitudes that call into question family authority:

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"There is a difference, between then and now, because when all children go to school, and you arrive home and start telling your child, I want to do this with you as in the past, then the child comes and refuses and says, dad I am dealing with the school. He then leaves you and disappears" (Armindo 1).

In the same way, school education about the body constitutes an element of contestation, considering that it breaks (at least apparently) with all the teachings conveyed during the rites. This situation is all the more interesting to be observed as, mainly since 2004 (with the introduction of the new Basic Education syllabus), one tries to approach the teachings and values embodied at school with the cultural practices of the community, reducing the risks represented by the acquisition of new knowledge and practices. As we will analyse below, the intended annulment of the confrontation between tradition and modernity through the introduction of cross-cutting themes in the different areas of education, as is the case of the Local Syllabus and the Moral and Civic Education Syllabus, do not achieve the intended results, not only because two or more teaching models are in conflict, but also, and mainly, because the youths pick up the knowledge and abilities, with resistance/conformation/adaptation, calling into question through the practices developed in the different spaces, the expectable normatives. This means that the inclusion of new ways of complementing school and community may in fact stimulate the capacity of the girls and boys to make their own choices, to negotiate and to represent themselves in each one of the spaces, negotiating what in each space is considered "true" and "good".

This situation in which the school and the family assert themselves as complementary, but in fact fight for the legitimacy of the values and attitudes that are being embodied in the education of adolescents and youths, should also be seen in the context of a disciplinary power contrasting the "modern" normative of which the school is vehicle, with a cultural heritage based on the preservation of hierarchized power relations on the basis of age and sex.

However, in urban environments there is an ambiguity in the discourse of informants who, being very close to bodies that, seeking to act directly or indirectly on the rites, shift and link the masters' and matrons' legitimacy to the State authority. I.e., they seek to combine in an artificial way the teachings conveyed at school and those transmitted during the rites, as is shown by these remarks of a matron:

> "With respect to the State or the school, there is a lot of collaboration. When matrons want to perform rites they know that now the school is the centre. (...) We always present our intentions to the leaders, nobody conducts rites without communicating it to the head of the Administrative Post and the Urban District secretary" (Arminda 1).

It seems to us that this situation is due to a series of factors that have to do with strategies of mutual recognition, in an attempt to stabilize, harmonize and adapt a certain idea of cultural mobility to the marks of modernity expressed in the dominant discourses, in legislation and in the public policies of the modern State. The ideology based on national unity, which is constituted through equal rights and the non-identification with specificities that may eventually impede access to spaces of power, results in that in an urban context the preservation of the "local" is not extended.[98]

However, the more removed from the areas of influence of the State, the more the discourses show forms of resistance of these actors to the changes introduced by modernity, seeking to skirt the influence of the school, of the spaces of conviviality, and of the contamination of the youths having access to and using information received by a large variety of sources. Therefore, irrespective of ethnolinguistic groups, the attempts of a cultural preservation of tradition are on the one hand more effective, but on the other hand sometimes also more controlled by the political power. In all spatial units, particularly in rural areas, it is evident that the strategies of negotiation and

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[98] However, in certain circumstances we observe that it are exactly these specificities that constitute intentional strategies of differentiation for the production of a countervailing local power.

conformation between formal and family education (including here the initiation rites) causes a confrontation of not easily reconcilable values and attitudes. It is for example the case of the appeal for the participation and the hesitations of the already initiated girl and boy students in many schools and the non-application (as accepted norm) of corporal punishment. While the school breaks with the itinerary of continuity in the socialization of the children, the families resort to bodies that eventually may restore the traditional order, such as the churches and the initiation rites. As has been analysed in the previous chapter, the religious institutions seek to co-opt the preservation of tradition, for example by the introduction of ceremonies conferring moral value to the cultural practices.

We also consider it important to identify how, in the construction of identities, the members of a group share norms and values defining them as a group in relation to another, where there are also shared norms that derive from the same social order (gender hierarchies). On the other hand, as Vala argues, "knowledge and emotions are object of evaluative judgements, which means that the knowledge and emotions constructed within groups are not only descriptive but also evaluative, i.e., they mobilize attitudes" (Vala, 1997:11). For our study this meant to identify if and how the identity "opposition" has to do with gender features, i.e., the boys learn to identify themselves as not being children and not being women. Unlike women, men have to prove continuously that they are men, because overtures to the female disqualifies them. I.e., identification means non-identification by exclusion in relation to other groups, but also by conflict in relation to their own collective.

With respect to the construction of gender inequality, Louro (2010) states that the simple indication of what is a boy or a girl presupposes an organised course with rules and interdictions, continuously reiterated by various institutions, such as the family and the school, that are in agreement with the socially existing discrimination and, as we will mention below, with socially recognized models of masculinity and femininity. This means that, though the processes and mechanisms of school socialization presuppose gender equality, there are difficulties inherent in the teaching-learning process, as is

the case of the constraints inherent in the social representations of many interviewed teachers, who continue to let themselves be guided by the dominant cultural model.

Social gender relations are determined by inequality, both from a material point of view (sexual division of labour) and from a symbolic point of view (positions in the hierarchies and inherent statuses). The impossibility to accede to resources, such as to keep studying and the fact of the social and family context being unfavourable, renders girls more incapable to escape from the domination they are subjected to. On the contrary, young boys naturalize the difference through the division of labour in the family and even through the distribution of activities in the public space, symbolizing greater autonomy with respect to the decision-making power regarding their body, as is demonstrated by their sexual initiative and by the use of condoms, which results precisely from the capacity to use the resources that have been placed at their disposal. This means that, while the same information about rights is transmitted to boys and girls and while they are exposed to the same resources, it became clear in the research that the capacity of access and practice is determined by the female subordinate condition.

A situation that was widely demonstrated is the naturalization of female discrimination reflected in a simpler and more concrete way in the sexual division of labour, which is in most cases considered as being fair, not only regarding the inequality in sharing tasks, but also the classification and hierarchization of these tasks. It is interesting to observe that only work requiring physical strength (such as the building of annexes to the family house, carried out after the ritualization) is considered a male attribute and valued as such. Tasks such as carrying firewood, transporting water (often covering long distances) are not considered as requiring strength, i.e., the description of the work of girls is strongly dissociated from what are considered "qualities".

In the discourse of many girls, though there is dissatisfaction with the differences between the discourse of equality at school and the performance of household chores, in the first place some

conformation with gender roles is observed (a discourse that is often accompanied by a non-discordant differentiation between family education and school education functions) and in the second place with a concession to the gender normative, as becomes evident in these remarks:

> "Because I said, mum I am working all the time. I don't want to, mum, I am tired, I don't want to, I don't want to, I am missing classes, but now I understand that one day they will take me to a man, and I will not be able to do anything. So now I understand, as my mother tells me, a girl should work, and she doesn't know anything, not even how to cook, only to sit down, then the man will become nervous and will take you to your mother's house and he will leave you" (Vânia 1).

In cases in which girls live with their father and a stepmother, there is a clear accumulation of differentiation between the two sexes which for example manifests itself in a refusal to buy school supplies and clothes. The feeling of unequal access to resources, whether material or symbolic (even when the controversy does not imply conflict, as we saw in the remarks above) starts to be felt at school, in the work done in the school by organisations, in the acquisition of teaching contents (which we will deal with below) elucidating fairness and equal rights, and mainly through the mobility of the girls and boys. Some girls refer directly to the equality lived at school and the dissemination of rights as motivation for the construction of a new perception about the discrimination lived at home. It is this inequality, according to several of the interviewed girl students, which makes them to want to break with this status, by going to bars, using clothes considered "inappropriate" and by having early sex. It is interesting to observe that this apparent rupture with the norm does not appear to contradict the model of domination, expressed in the use of the girls' bodies, neither does it change the elements that constrain the cultural normative.

It is curious, and contrary to the results of other studies (Osório and Silva, 2008), that there are few accusations of sexual harassment, be it because the measures adopted by the education sector are having

effect or because there are previous experiences of accusations of harassment that reverted the blame from the teacher to the girl student, giving excessive publicity and leaving hanging in the air a suspicion of complicity of the girl student in the harassment.[99] Anyhow, it seems that the dissemination of rights among students carried out at school, but also by the media and by civil society organisations acting in the field, restricts the violent use of the girl students' bodies. However, we think that the fact that we have observed a reduction of the visibility of the violation of girls' rights in school environments does not necessarily mean its inexistence and may also be a sign of a certain corporatism among teachers.

Finally and resuming the link between family and school, it is observed that the uneasiness felt between the school and the families is also expressed in the discourse of teachers who often find it difficult to work in contexts in which the youths are exposed to influences that determine their adherence to lifestyles that are incompatible with the school organisation. I.e., the purposes of the school socialization enter into conflict with the mechanisms embodied by the youth in other spaces of socialization, such as together viewing pornographic films that, according to the teachers, construct violent personalities, marked not only by power exerted on women, but also determining the legitimation of confrontation as a form of conflict resolution (and also of conflict construction). On the other hand, some female informants stated very clearly that many people recognise that the children are victims of a culture that continues to assert itself as a decisive element of Mozambicanness, as was said by a female official in a provincial directorate of education: "Thus, as things are, girls are always dependent and we all know that we are making a mistake in favour of a certain culture" (Ana 7).

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[99] It should be noted however that the harassment is possibly camouflaged by the information we have been receiving in the course of the research, that "marriage" of a girl student with a teacher or a payment to the victims' families has enabled the silencing of these cases of sexual assault. The families having been compensated, the harassment is no longer socially punished, with the complicity of the police and the conflict resolution bodies existing in the communities.

The tensions between socialization at school and socialization in the family are neither simple nor linear. In the narratives of female and male teachers we come across conflicts that are related to the fact that girls after their menstruation are prohibited to talk to their colleagues, as a female teacher in Guara-Guara, Búzi District said: "a father found his daughter talking to a male colleague about this and then he said to the girl: from now on you will not enter my house" (Dilma 11). The same interviewee expressed the opinion that this parental attitude is due to an idea of control representing the girl's body as an object: "other people are saying: no, my daughter cannot go to school, study for a long time, after that she will have forgotten what we taught her in the family and will not accept to marry" (Dilma 11).

In this discourse it is common that accusations persist that the school must not interfere with family education, because it deprives the parents of their power to control their children, as was stated by a teacher, when referring to a dialogue he had with a guardian: "this child you have there is your responsibility, I have no means to sustain this child". These ambiguities revealing a complex cohabitation, produced in one sense or another as a recourse legitimating the practices of social actors, get even worse when the politicization of the school space is presented as a justification for mistrust towards the school.

Finally, the problem of the conflict about the discourse of children's rights was amply mentioned by the teachers, with three main positions: on the one hand, a majority stated that it is difficult for students to distinguish between rights and obligations, which is for example expressed in these remarks of a child: "I have the right to work in the *machamba*" (Deolinda 4), revealing difficulties in differentiating between rights and obligations, expressed in perceptions produced by the situation of dependence of the families in which the children live. This continuously conveyed idea produces extreme vulnerability of the children in recognizing themselves as subjects of rights.

A second position, complementary to the first one, is the absolute incompatibility of the involvement of parents in the discussion about children's rights. This position is revealed in the absence of families when asked to come to the school, as a teacher in Macomia told us: "the parents don't collaborate with the school, for example, in a meeting to disclose the results, if 10 parents appear for a thousand students, it's a lot" (Álvaro 4). And in the case of dropouts, when the parents are called, they say: "the children are mine, we treat them as we want to (Antónia 2). This situation becomes worse when sometimes even the community leaders don't recognise the parents' obligation to send the children to school.

And, finally, a third position which teachers frequently consider indiscipline on the part of the youths when they for example refuse to perform extracurricular activities, such as weeding, fetching water and cleaning latrines. This means that there is an appropriation by the students of the discourse of rights, which contrasts with the dominant idea at school, i.e., with a frame of reference modelled on a culture of obedience. The resistance of girl and boy students, testing the power that legitimates the norm, may also reveal a contestation which may have to do with the transitoriness and fluidity inherent in the construction of juvenile identities (in which a return to conformation with the norm is always possible), as well as with the affirmation of ruptures with the power structure that hierarchizes rights on the basis of status, sex and age.

Thus, we think to have demonstrated that the processes and mechanisms linking family and school socialization are simultaneously marked by continuity and discontinuity, mediated by differentiating logics based on aims that, presenting themselves as complementary, are at the same time discordant, brought about by various sources of legitimation. In the interstices between them new identity mechanisms are asserting themselves and which, subverting, transgressing and putting into action resources, stimulate individuation (Ortner, 2007).

1.1. School: organisation, curriculum and links

Though it was not an objective of this study to analyse the school as a space of socialization, taking into account its action in the construction of identities, as our research advanced the need became clear to treat, though briefly, questions that, being apparently marginal to the study object, could be important for the assessment of their role.

The organisation of the curriculum, started in 2004 in Basic Education,[100] on the one hand introduces and on the other hand clarifies a set of subjects and activities aimed at providing knowledge and contents, namely about community life, local history and values and the values of citizenship which, being capable of constituting focuses of conflict with the families, enable the girl and boy students to acquire new behaviours, namely access to and the exercise of rights.[101] We will only highlight, in the 3rd cycle (grade 6 and 7) syllabuses, the inclusion of the subject of Moral and Civic Education, the Local Curriculum as a cross-cutting activity of all subjects occupying 20% of school hours[102] and also Abilities for Life. The objectives of the Local Curriculum are the introduction of new knowledge and practices that characterise the specific nature of the spaces of which the school is part and the involvement of both the direct beneficiaries (teachers and students) and all those who living in the community (community authorities and families) may contribute to raise the levels of social inclusion of the girl and boy

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[100] Basic Education comprises two levels, the first one with two cycles (grade 1, 2 and 3 form the 1st cycle, and grade 4 and 5 the 2nd cycle) and the second one with one cycle (grade 6 and 7).

[101] Although Basic Education introduces innovations, such as the teaching cycles and the integrated approach, we will only mention themes that are more directly related to the study object.

[102] Moral and Civic Education only appears as a subject in the 3rd cycle; in the 1st and 2nd cycle it is included as a cross-cutting theme.

students, namely contact with traditional values and knowledge through six thematic areas.[103]

Taking into account that our objective is to identify the aims and concept of local cultural practices at the 3rd level of Basic Education, we will only refer to two themes (Local Culture, History and Economy and Education of Values). We have established that in both themes the intention is to reconcile specific cultural features through, for example, the teaching of traditional songs and games, of myths and rites practised in the community, with the introduction of value systems such as equality and equity between boys and girls and human rights. Confronting the educational instructions and practices, two types of problems become evident in the application of the Local Curriculum: the first one concerns the involvement of the communities, whether through the families or through the traditional authorities, in the development of contents. While it may for example be relatively peaceful to collect and include information (though in the research we observed poor parent and community participation in school life) about musical instruments and traditional games, it is more difficult to reconcile the mechanisms of family education and the principles defending children's rights. This situation becomes evident by the persistence of the conflict enunciated by the teachers between the two spaces of socialization, namely when children are removed from school, for working and/or for early "marriage" and when the female and male teachers in general ascribe an important role to the initiation rites for the construction of qualities that conform to the cultural normative. This may reveal the fact that teachers do not question rituals that are discriminatory and excluding rights, eroding the Local Curriculum of its underlying philosophy. Due to the legitimacy given to school knowledge it may even strengthen structural mechanisms of the maintenance of a clearly conservative social order. A second problem has to do with the pedagogical and didactic means determined for the construction/appropriation/transmission of contents. If we take into

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[103] The thematic areas of the Local Curriculum are Local Culture, History and Economy; Education of Values; the Environment; Agriculture and Animal Husbandry; Health and Nutrition; and Crafts.

account the absence of resources, the very large classes and teacher training, we observe that the participation and development of abilities on the part of girls and boys is often limited to a mechanical and bureaucratic process. Some of the main objectives defined in the Local Curriculum, such as the question of the cross-disciplinary nature of knowledge and the performance of activities that may go beyond school hours and that form the basis of an integrated education system, may for the reasons given not be achieved.

With regard to the subject of Moral and Civic Education taught in grade 6 and 7, the objectives focus on "respect for moral, civic, patriotic and spiritual values" (MEC, INDE, Basic Education Curriculum Plan, 2003), developing contents that seek on the one hand to offer information about a variety of themes, from human rights to the principles enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic and mechanisms of citizen participation to the transmission of norms that discipline the relations of conviviality in the family, at school and in society. One of the more interesting enunciated aspects, particularly in the grade 7 programme and manual, has to do with the identification of the signs of puberty and adolescence, with the recognition of the difference and with equal rights. Structured with short texts and simple activities, the manuals of the Moral and Civic Education subject stimulate the participation of the girl and boy students and the development of positions. We note however the absence of thoughts about, for example, gender equality and about cultural practices harmful to human rights. As there is no reference to myths (which are on the contrary considered to be implicit in ethics), no discussion about the power structure that shapes the female subordinate condition and develops the construction of gender identities, no discussion about access to and the practice of sexuality (a preferred theme in talks among adolescents and youths), the intention appears to have been an attempt to combine general information about rights with the permanence of a power structure that hierarchizes sex-based rights. On the other hand, as became clear during fieldwork, the information transmitted about the changes produced in puberty are not embodied by the girl and boy students, in the sense that these biological changes, being natural,

should be perceived through the construction of qualities that differentiate girls and boys in an unequal way.[104] It would be interesting to introduce themes in the Moral and Civic Education manuals that lead the girl and boy students to thoughts about the construction of gender identities, namely the sexual division of labour and the initiation rites, which stimulate and legitimate the violence of forced unions of children. In fact, and as stated by various authors with respect to school manuals produced in many countries, these are ruled by what is socially acceptable and intend to discipline values and behaviours according to the dominant standards (Alferes, 2002).

The third curriculum component directly related to the research is the Abilities for Life syllabus, an activity cutting across all subjects and comprising a Basic Package consisting of a set of educational materials, aiming at an education directly related to HIV and AIDS themes. So far, about a million Primary Education students (of EP1 and EP2) have carried out activities with the Basic Package. One of the more relevant aspects of this action is the possibility and stimulus for the preparation of materials that take into account the local realities, in coordination with the Direct Support to Schools (ADE) programme (which enables the financing of actions aiming at the fight against HIV and AIDS) and the relation with the School Management programme the objective of which is to increase the training capacity and to improve the management of the activities. When analysing the Abilities for Life syllabus, the first question that arises is the defence of an integrated vision of a set of values allowing to transform the traditional norms that exclude children from sexual rights. Supporting this activity and from an analysis of the

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[104] The Teacher´s Guide for 3rd cycle Moral and Civic Education is an important teaching tool, aiming at remedying shortcomings in knowledge about Human Rights and Democracy, while it offers a set of themes and methodological proposals to be introduced in the various subjects. Although the Guide does not give priority to the gender approach, as is clear by the absence of references to women's human rights and by a tentative reference to "gender sensitivity", this document does mention the conflict between what is stipulated in the legislation and forced unions of children, proposing a strategy of overtures between the school and the community.

Mozambican reality, the education sector has prepared a Guide for Sexual Education Parameters in Basic Education (2002) with an integrated vision philosophy, in which it is stated that sexual rights are conditioned by family norms and the gender standard, proposing "a model of intervention that may touch upon these three bases so as to change the current equation" (2002: 4). Disapproving of harmful cultural practices that restrict access to and the exercise of children's rights, the document mentions the contradictions between discourses that defend monogamy and practise polygamy, between the defence of the permanence of girls at school, while "there is a series of initiation rites promoting the start of sex life even before the period of adolescence, both for boys and for girls" (2002: 4,5). This document addresses clearly the need to articulate sexual health issues with sexual education, aimed at allowing the youth of both sexes to exercise the right of choice, rejecting the moralizing perspective depriving the youth of being subject of rights. Although a set of values is indicated in the description of the Abilities for Life, pointing out responsibility in decision-making, it appears to us that with respect to grade 7 the affirmation that "self-esteem has to do with tradition, socio-economic and cultural aspects" (2002: 33) (without clarifying the need to reflect about how these aspects may contradict the exercise of rights by girls and boys) leads, when harmonizing the different normatives, to restrictions that negate access to and the use of information for a change of values and behaviours, also resulting in sexual education with a treatment of rights being relegated to second place. This may be one of the factors explaining that, when questioned about what was intended and what was transmitted, almost all teachers responded that the objective of this strategy was fundamentally to provide information about health, particularly hygiene and HIV and AIDS, adding that the philosophy guiding this curriculum component in these classes aims at teaching to recognise the various forms of contamination and the means of prevention, with emphasis on abstinence. Without the relations that deprive girls of decision-making power in the practice of sexuality being questioned, many female and male teachers expressed a positive view of initiation rites, seeing them as part of an unquestionable and imperative tradition in the transmission of

African values to the youth. It appears that we can conclude that sexual education and even some guidance for its application, are controlled, as we established from the above-mentioned documents, by the dominant standard.

Internally and though in an unequal way in the various provinces and schools, there has been a concern to create gender units and school clubs at Basic Education level. Their objective is to broaden the scope of the instruction to the acquisition of other aspects allowing the girls and boys to discuss subjects of their interest and perform activities that may set the norm for their behaviour. However, the question that arises is that, in addition to the discourse of equality (which does not take into account the structure of the hierarchies that form the basis of inequality), the activities that are performed reproduce the social roles and functions of women and men. Thus, for example, sexual and reproductive health is seen in a moralizing and medical perspective, in which the discourse of HIV and AIDS emphasizes abstinence and sometimes the use of condoms, without questioning the decision-making power male. In other words, as it is information directed to both sexes, the fact that the gender power structure increases the impossibility of girls to take a decision regarding abstinence is not discussed. On the other hand, the existence should be noted of contradictions between acceptance of and conformity with the rites (which stimulate sexual initiation) on the part of the State, which issues at the same time an entire discourse of discouraging an early start of sex life.

The same situation occurs with the focus given to cooking and needlework activities which unintentionally strengthen the gender standards.[105] On the other hand, the representation of girl and boy students about the function of the cross-cutting areas does not contradict the gender distinctions and inequalities, as a boy student in Inhaminga summarizes (when referring to Moral and Civic Education):

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[105] It is curious, and perhaps due to the fact that in rural areas tailoring is clearly a men's profession (exercised in a shelter and in public view), that some boys register enthusiastically for this activity.

> "When you leave this place and go home, when you come home the girls are used to lay hold of the plates, clean the plates, sweep the house and you, men, are used to get a hoe, weed behind your houses, help your father, or you are used to just walk on the road when you are leaving school, you are coming home, you come across a grandfather, you see, carrying 20 litres in his hand, he doesn't manage, you help him, you leave it in his house" (Luís 5).

This means that, despite the implicit aims of the curricula, and the intentionality to stimulate new attitudes, what becomes clear is the strengthening of the sexual division of labour, establishing an essentialist vision of the construction of the roles.

The School Councils[106], which could play an important role in the defence of children's rights[107] and in the mediation with families and community leaders, have in most cases a very limited role, to a large extent due to the lack of availability of their members, and sometimes to wrong perceptions about the way of solving the problems of girl and boy students, as is the case of pregnancy, which implies the transfer of the girl students to evening classes, in most cases resulting in school abandonment. There are however exceptions and there are cases of a concerted action of the Chairman of the School Council, the School Board and the Gender Unit in trying to identify the partners of the pregnant girl and hold them responsible, doing also remarkable work with the communities and their leaders. Although more rarely, there is also an effort, though in a tentative way, given

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[106] Being the highest body of the school, the School Council comprises the Headmaster of the school, representatives of the teachers, representatives of the administrative staff, representatives of the parents or guardians, representatives of the community and representatives of the students. The School Council aims at stimulating the participation of all the parties involved in the teaching-learning process and bringing the communities nearer to the school.

[107] Although the concept of rights and their exercise may be co-opted culturally and politically, serving to constrain them to logics of domination, in this study, as mentioned in Chapters 1 and 2, rights are considered to be those that are enshrined in the legislation and in the conventions ratified by Mozambique and that are based on the idea that all human beings are subjects of rights, irrespective of their living space and conditions.

the weight of cultural practices and the absence of knowledge about the legal mechanisms, to act on early marriages, with the intention to impede their realization or, what happens in most cases, "convincing" the "husbands" to allow the girls to continue their schooling.[108]

However, due to various factors, among which possibly the professional training of the teachers, the persistence of social representations in agreement with the social gender normative, the fact that the teachers live in the communities (sharing daily life) and the resistance of community authorities, their field of action is particularly limited, which also leads to a situation in which forced unions of adults with children are treated (and perceived) as a private matter. It is in this sense that some of the interviewed women teachers, faced with the ineffectiveness of their action, show their frustration in a double sense. On the one hand they state that "the girls go for the scene, go to bars, get pregnant and stop studying", as a female teacher in Beira City told us. On the other hand "the families themselves urge the girls after the rites to find a husband or a man who provides food and this makes them abandon school" (Ana 4). A female leader of a gender unit in a school in Mecúfi stated in this respect:

> "I can say that poverty also contributes, because in a family the parents have nothing, now their child, the girl has already grown up, has to get someone. This someone may be a teacher, a fisherman, they gain something, and that man in that family has to sustain the girl's family, and what does the family tell the girl? [They say that] it is preferable to stop studying and start taking care of her husband" (Ana 9).

While there is on the part of the female and male teachers a disapproval of parents who remove girls from the school to "marry", there is simultaneously also a kind of conformation with a reality on which they are unable to act, and with which they sometimes appear

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[108] We were informed that this proactive attitude of both female and male teachers has in part to do with the school performance targets defined by the Education Directorate, given that it counts for the teachers' performance evaluation.

(by religious influence and cultural heritage) to be in agreement. This situation manifests itself frequently in the discourse of teachers when they justify the dichotomist separation between socialization at school ("the school should only teach" told us a teacher in Beira City) and socialization at home, suggesting the creation of other spaces of education such as the churches. Though the dropout phenomenon is more pronounced for girls, it should be pointed out that boys are often also forced to stop studying, in a gender order that urges them to "organise a family", serving a mandate learned and strengthened by the ritual teachings. Although the teachers and the school boards are somehow held responsible for the permanence of enrolled girl and boy students, it happens that, whether for reasons of the population's nomadism, or because their action in the communities is limited (because they depend on the recognition of the legitimacy of education to intervene), or because there is, as said above, a common understanding that children are not subjects of rights, in most cases concerted attitudes are only adopted when there are accusations or when there is publicity on the part of civil society organisations.

When the question arises of the compatibility between initiation rites and school education, the majority of the interviewed female and male teachers considers in general that both are part of the identity construction process, attributing importance to them for the construction of adulthood. I.e., they are the more valued when the ineffectiveness of the mechanisms of primary socialization in the children's education is mentioned: "the rites are teaching well, respect for obedience to the man and his family and how to organize a house to be on good terms", a woman teacher in Beira City (Deolinda 10) told-us. Although we will resume this theme below, it was interesting to observe that while there is an appreciation of the role of the rites, many teachers and school board members are categorical when they state that these cultural practices condition the continuation of the girls at school, limiting their participation and performance, as a female informant of a civil society organisation in Quelimane told us: "after the rites many children cease to participate

at school, have respect, are afraid, she knows she has to marry" (Zubaida 9).

The question of the link between the school and other institutions such as Social Action, the Office for the Attendance of Women and Children Victims of Domestic Violence and the Adolescent and Youth Friendly Service (SAAJ) depends more on the leaders who are heading the sectors than on the existing mechanisms and routines. The result of this is that we rarely found multisector plans that involve joint work, including information interchange, between the various institutions. The reasons given have to do with the lack of resources and with the specificities of each sector's activities. In this scope, one of the questions that surprised us particularly was the fact that the Social Action sector focuses its work on needy children, so on the supply of school materials and clothes, and does not involve itself in cases of school abandonment, forced unions of children with adults and sexual violence and/or in supporting girl students who get pregnant.[109] The same can be said with respect to the Offices for the Attendance of Women and Child that function in police stations, to which cases of violation of the law, such as sexual harassment and forced unions of girl students with a resulting dropout, are rarely sent. There are few occasions on which talks are given in schools with the involvement of various sectors and, as we were told, the lack of coordination influences the low efficacy of these actions.

With regard to local civil society organisations which support the schools, they do this in the context of programmes that have more to do with donor expectations than with real needs and local realities. On the other hand, many of these actions are performed as a compromise, which means that, for not being locally sustainable, they end up not having any effect. It is the case of study grants for girl students living in boarding schools, who are in a situation that they have to abandon school when the grants end. It also happens with the food that is provided to the school for a certain period of time, producing dissatisfaction with respect to the expectations raised,

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[109] Contrary to the situation in urban areas, the Health and Women and Social Action services in the districts are organised in the same directorate.

when, for donor strategy reasons, the food supply activity comes to an end.

It seems to us that, though requiring a certain level of planning, it would be very useful if the strategic actions were defined so as to make them sustainable at medium-term. For example, the grants would be awarded until the completion of a level of education and not for one or two years. There are however activities that are driven by civil society and that have proved to be very useful, as is the case of the placing of complaints boxes in schools, which do not require large amounts of money and which are sustainable in future.

There is an expressed wish in the education sector to introduce changes that produce effects with the inclusion of new elements that, acquired by the youths, can produce changes in the construction of identities that are better prepared for the exercise of citizenship. Included in this field is the performance of curriculum activities traversing all subjects and the creation of school clubs that enhance the participation of the youths and contribute directly or indirectly to the creation of expectations with respect to the future. It is no coincidence that, as already mentioned, many girl and boy students make great sacrifices to attend educational establishments, even when they have to oppose family interests. In this study we could observe that a large number of female and male teachers, often in unfavourable conditions, perform with great effort activities aimed at attracting students to the school. Not limiting themselves to the performance of teaching activities, these teachers are somehow contributing to the projection of a positive image of work, of citizenship and of rights, even confronting very adverse situations, among which accusations of being responsible for the poor quality of education, which as we could observe is fundamentally due to the evaluation mechanisms, such as automatic transitions, the consequence of which is a devaluation of education, contributing to a negative image of the school on the part of the communities. Contrary to what is thought, the "performance" of the children and the way they move up is very much questioned by the families, offering them an argument to remove their daughters and sons from school or to keep them (without many expectations) because they

don't have the resources allowing them to provide better formal education. Thus, the conflicts between family and school education are not only aggravated because there are ruptures in the socialization, but also because the school does not respond to the expectations to confer competences and knowledge that can be put at the service of the communities.

Finally, a question which appears fundamental to us is the need for clarification and cohesion in teacher training and in curriculum organisation. With schooling levels that often do not go beyond grade 7 and two more years of teacher training, or at best grade 10, it is extremely difficult for the teachers to have the necessary competences for teaching, whether in terms of scientific knowledge or in terms of pedagogical and didactic preparation. The teaching programmes are demanding, requiring a preparation that allows the participation of the students, mainly adolescents and youths, whose curiosity is not satisfied with the repetition of received information. Another problem has to do with the lack of internal coherence of the instructions that contribute to the cross-cutting nature of knowledge and to the integration into the community. As we had the opportunity to analyse, alongside a curriculum line that emphasizes access to and the exercise of rights and that promotes equality and citizen participation, there is an entire school guide that, valuing cultural practices such as initiation rites and procedures in which respect for older people is mixed up with obedience and authoritarianism, places the teachers in an uncomfortable position, which is reflected in the absence of firm and coherent positions regarding their role as educators.

2. Rituals: space, duration and ceremonies

The analysis of the rites and their efficacy in the construction of identities must in the first place take into account how a rupture is apparently produced and how the social order is questioned, while the re-establishment of this order is simultaneously sought. Linking pragmatism with systems of signification, for example learning about hygiene regarding menstruation, refers to a concrete element and to

a set of meanings represented by fecundity, as negotiated/imposed and socially controlled power. Through gestures and songs one intends to communicate an order, as is for example shown by the invocation of ancestors, constituting an element of cohesion and reunion with the community. Thus, as described in the previous chapter, the (more or less well defined) phases that characterise the rites aim at attributing a new nature to the individual, bestowing her/him with rights and obligations and transforming her/him also into a person and also in an object of continuous monitoring.

Taking into account that the rites conform identities, and as mentioned in Chapter I, Meira (2009) defends the rites as having the function of the standardization of behaviours and values with the purpose of strengthening group belonging. The preservation of the rites as a decisive form of cultural cohesion manifests itself in many discourses of informants who play an important role in the transmission of the cultural heritage, as is the case of religious leaders, who present themselves to the communities as having been bestowed a truth resulting from their intermediation with the sacred. The preservation of values and of cultural dispositions is combined with religious discourses, namely those that being proud of the cultural order seek to justify the maintenance of hierarchies and social roles, as is shown by these remarks of a church leader:

> "Experience, what we have heard from the elderly since childhood, we know that the initiation rites are not a modern thing. On the contrary, it is a much older thing than we find now, so that what is important is that this is a social rite that is embodied in people's lives, mainly the Africans, it is something that has always been done, it is not a sporadic thing because it is a thing that is part of human life as an African, which may in no way be absent. Outside of this if you don't pass through them you are outside of society, you don't belong to the current society, the African society. Relating this to Christian life, we would say that it is a baptism for an African to enter social life, to enter the tradition of the family, and I think that even our grandparents, the population, even our parents, do this strictly, with all honour, in spite of the

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fact that for those who receive it, it atrophies a bit. But, when it comes down to it, there is a very profound message that any young person, any one in life, in an African family, in a traditional family, can in no way escape" (Ziro 4).

The objective of this comparison between religious rites, such as baptism, and initiation rituals is, because of the meaning of community inclusion to which both refer, stating belonging and consecration (of the neophyte and the initiatee), to eliminate disturbing innovation. Death and the possibility to participate in funeral ceremonies, forbidden for non-initiates, also means to classify him as someone who, not being able of resort to ancestor sprits, survives at the cost of other members of the community to which he cannot belong (Van Gennep, 1997).[110]

The ceremonies that "comprise" the ritual preserve the cultural heritage, through the preservation of conventions that normalize adulthood, while they are at the same time legitimated by the acceptance and conformation of the initiated girls and boys, performatively expressed in their relation to others, whether by distinction in relation to the non-initiates or by overtures to their pairs. In this sense, the performance reveals knowledge learned in the rites in agreement with the cultural normative. I.e., through codes the performance expresses and communicates, produces realities and subjects, calling together self-implication and participation, which allow cohesion and determine the ritual efficacy (Terrin, 2004). It is in this context that some of the interviewees informed us that families which do not send their daughters to the rites have to move to another district, because it is a shame and a hazard for the child and for the family, running the risk of being pointed to as the cause of disasters or deaths in the community.

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[110] This myth may in part explain the assassination and destruction of property of someone who became rich in the community. Although these cases, occurring with some frequency in the northern region of the country when natural disasters coincide with extreme poverty, may have to do with the identification of the "richer person" with the foreigner who came to destroy the community. The same can be observed in relation to the figure of a *viente* (one who comes from outside) who may hold a certain threat and disturbance.

The rituals that separate boys from their mothers serve to construct a hegemonic identity, i.e., a masculinity structured by sexuality and by opposition in relation to the female. The gender identities are constituted in the rites through the ceremonies and the sacred objects associated with power. Sexual violence, learned in the male rites that guide towards inclusion into adult life, has a mark of gender. The boys learn that girls are objects of the consumption of "food". Even oral penetration has this domination as structure, transforming what is allowed to penetrate, in the female, with a sense comprising subjects and objects, attributing meanings that should be understood in a gender order.

The question today, and which we will further elaborate on below, is to understand how the embodiment by the youth of the performatively revealed values and behaviours transmitted in the rites conflicts with lifestyles established in the spaces where they go around, producing fragmentations that constitute a rupture (or obtain new not all-encompassing meanings) with the ritual teachings. In other words, how this can, or cannot, be represented and experienced without conflicting with the ritual functions. This means to understand if the ritual experience, when being transposed to daily life where it is confronted with other forms of knowing and being, is (and how it is) absorbed or rejected, determining subversion and/or the reconstruction of juvenile identities, developing new representations, values and practices that change hierarchies and influence, or at least set in motion, differentiated regulations in the social, political and cultural structure. In the case of our study, it became clear that girls and boys, mainly in urban environments, move from what they had learned to be in the rites to other spaces mediated by other elements, where new performances are required for the recognition of the self and the other, and where they are confronted with discourses that inculcate into them new behaviours, values and attitudes. For example to have a condom with them which, being socially and politically accepted, constitutes a break with the idea of the "deposit" of semen as a mark of masculinity. There is thus something like a disconnection between worlds in which transpositions, shifts and transits occur, affording subversions.

We observed changes occurring in the performance of the initiation rites, taking into account their spaces and duration, the ceremonies and the activated mechanisms and also the perceptions, mainly of the directly involved parties, as is the case of the matrons and masters and the girls and boys, highlighting the differences between contexts and ethnolinguistic groups. For a better understanding of the reader the presentation will be made taking into account the similarities and differences between the various ethnolinguistic groups, with the urban and rural spaces as variables.

Attention is also drawn to the constraints found in Zambézia Province where we were confronted with difficulties in the correspondence between the spatial units and the preferred ethnolinguistic groups for the analysis, with respect to the *Chuabos*, who either don't perform rites or perform them including themselves in the *Makhuwa Lomué* group. This situation was particularly obvious in Quelimane Town, the provincial capital of Zambézia. On the other hand, we observed the existence here of very critical positions on the part of boys with respect to the ritual teachings, in opposition to the teachings at school, as for example becomes clear in these remarks:

> "I would like to say that in the community, i.e., that method of initiation rites done there in the bush, they normally use them to teach the individual rather mythical criteria to limit this individual so that he will not have clear, specific thoughts. It is only to instil fear. So, I say that here at school, of late, we are already capable to see that now we take stock that they were using those things which limited us and science is already laying claim, it opens up our mentality" (Julião 2).

In some interviews the existence of differentiated representations about sexuality became clear, as is the frequently mentioned case that "the sexual organ does not get spoiled" when one has very early sexual intercourse or when one sleeps with a woman who had an abortion, which does not imply a penalization for the non-fulfilment of the ritual teachings.

With regard to the ritual space, Terrin states that "the space is not only understood as the place and the condition to perform the rite, but is inclusive of a rite in itself" (2004:201). It is in this sense that the space is a sacred space where the separation is brought about and where learning is produced and the order is congregated and recomposed (and stabilized), strengthening the performative and pragmatic level as fundamental components of the ritual experience. The space is thus the marker between the separation and the margin, forbidden for non-initiates, where the rupture with childhood is celebrated: the initiatee no longer belongs to childhood but is not yet an adult. It is possibly in this context that the margin can be associated, as D´Allondans states, "to death, to invisibility and to bisexuality" (2002:47)[111] and also, as Turner (1974) says, to the suspension of social structures.

As the space is a meeting place, a place for the preparation for inclusion into the community and for communication with the sacred, the rituals spaces, mainly in the male initiation rites, were conceived as permanent places, with specific characteristics, unviolated from generation to generation. For this reason, if today the sacred and secret character of the ritual spaces is sought to be preserved, because the construction of a new identity occurs in them, we observed, mainly in urban areas (especially in Quelimane and Beira), a displacement of the symbolic value the ritual spaces had. The same can be said, and in a more marked way, of the female initiation rites, where an increasingly pronounced "informalization"[112] tendency appears. The question of the spaces should be linked with the duration of the rites: while in the past the male rites could be performed for a period of six months to one year, and the female rites for a period of eight to twelve weeks, today, due

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[111] In this sense bisexuality, situating the initiatee between childhood and adulthood "would make him asexual, preserving his own sex, enjoying the prerogatives of the other, therefore it is common to assume travestite roles thus producing a process of differentiation between men and women" (2002:47).

[112] When we talk about informalization, it does not mean the absence of the educational components implicit in the aims of the rites of passage, but the appearance of innumerable specificities that do not allow the identification of tendencies.

to the influence of a series of factors, including school attendance and the monetization of the rites, they don't occupy more than two months for boys and two weeks for girls, with the possibility, in the case of girls, to be reduced to three days. Anyhow, the importance attached to the male rituals in terms of duration and space may have to do with two factors. The first one is the fact that there is a clear male mandate for the domination and governance of things and bodies; the second factor may be related to the early preparation of girls for the construction of a subordinated female identity, an example of which is the lengthening of the labia minora, started between five and eight years.

Regarding the rites conducted in an urban environment (Pemba Town) by the *Makhuwa* ethnolinguistic group, we observed that the strong monetization of the rites is determined by the costs incurred by their performance, namely when there is an intention to "contract" masters and matrons who have a higher status in the community: "nowadays things are expensive, a bag of rice costs 600 or 700 thousand, so for you to send your child to the rite, you have to organize money for 3 to 5 years, while formerly it was enough to have dried cassava, a bit of sorghum" (Arminda 10). This means that the rites end up displaying the status of the families, legitimating the power they already exert in the communities. As we saw in the previous chapter, the strategies of power, the objective of which may be having access to and control over material resources, are "relegitimated" by the fulfilment of cultural practices, as is the case of the rites.

With regard to the space where the rites are conducted there are notable differences with the past, particularly with respect to girls. We were able to observe this situation both in the *Makhuwa* community living in Maputo, and in that of Pemba, where a matron informed us that "the girls stay in a big yard, but there are many differences because formerly it was in the house of the queen, now it is everybody for herself" (Arminda 2). This relocation of the spaces which shows a certain informality (equally observed among the *Makhuwa* community in Mecúfi), is also expressed in the duration of the rites which are much shorter (though this also depends on the

money the families can make available) and where the information is more concentrated and object of a narrative that expresses a certain discomfort with the current situation, as is made evident by these remarks of a matron in Pemba.

> "Nowadays they perform them in the yard, because we notice that if we do it here, we are losing precious time, we are educating the children, but they do not adhere and therefore in order not to abandon simply our tradition of the rites, we propose a duration of three days and finished" (Arminda 10).

Corroborating this information, several interviewees of the *Makhuwa* community stated that after the rites the girls are more undisciplined, without the families interfering. This situation shows how the rites are transforming themselves in an urban environment, in an instance that "wanders" between the preservation of culture and a consciousness of its inadaptation. At the same time, it is becoming clear that the revitalization of the rites in towns and in medium-class families has also to do with the preservation of a status which, contrary to what happened in the first 15 years after national independence with another political regime and another ideology, appears today as a resource expressing itself in access to patron-client networks.[113] The discourse of a Mozambican identity appears thus closely related to the fulfilment of cultural practices opportunely used for the segregation of the other. In the same way, the surveillance carried out by the populations, mainly in inland areas with a more land-bound population, as in Macomia, requires that even people (public servants and youths) who state how the rites caused them suffering, are forced to have their daughters and sons ritualized, under penalty of being disrespected in the community, and of their children and mainly their daughters not being able to marry. In this sense, though the rites are coercive, people are proud of belonging to the community. What ascribes cohesion to the rites is the conjugation of a series of factors in which the feeling of being

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[113] This situation shows the mechanisms of adjustment of the rites to urban life, whether by the nuclearization of the families or by monetization or greater individualization of social action.

protected includes a large variety of aspects such as health, reproduction and shared signs of recognition, even in an environment in which modernity is being embodied as a value and parameter of socioeconomic, political and cultural organisation, and of social subjects and identities.

On the other hand, though there were divergences in the discourses of *Makhuwa* and *Makonde* matrons, it was frequently mentioned that in the past an aggregation ceremony would culminate in the formalization of an engagement, i.e., the rites were a form of preparation for marriage. Today, due to the fact that girls and boys start the rites earlier, because of the influence of the school and intervention of the State, the period between initiation and marriage is longer, with new ceremonies at the time of wedding. However, we could observe that among the elites of the Muslim community engagement and the commitment to marry follow almost immediately after the initiation of the youths. The rites either occur at ages that don't follow the standard (between 10 and 13 years) or they are simplified, being renewed with new teachings at the time of marriage. However, this information is contradicted by some religious Islamic leaders in Alto Molocué, who state that girls are only counselled by ladies in the mosques, without receiving the teachings about sexuality that are transmitted to *Makhuwa* girls, with only the advice being licit in this respect. The justification for the use of the veil ("girls are more vulnerable to sunlight", Ziro 5) has to do directly with control over the female body and with the absence of any possibility of choice with respect to their future, conferring to the parents the responsibility to find a husband: "parents should find men to marry their daughters, from an age of 12 to 15" (Ziro 5). It is interesting to observe that when civil society organisations refer to early marriages as practices that are harmful to children's rights, they are uncomfortable to denounce the legitimacy these practices have on the part of some religions, as if children's rights should be understood, explained and relativized in an institutional context, of which the churches and mosques are part.

With regard to *Makhuwa* boys, we observed in Pemba as well as in Mecúfi, though the duration of the rites is 30 days, that the spaces

are formally maintained. Though they may not correspond to those envisaged for the performance of the rites, as happened in the past, they are, contrary to what happens with girls, more protected from the view of outsiders, mainly women, who are subject to punishments if, by any chance, they pass near the places where the rites are being performed, as a master informed us: "if a woman passes there we grab her, take her to the chief and she will have to pay a fine" (Armindo 2).[114] We should also emphasize the surprise character of the rites, having the quarter head a mediation role in the communication and in assembling the youths whom the families want and may send to the rites. The discourse of this young man is paradigmatic as to the importance of the rites for a change of status:

> "My father once said, you are already grown up, they shaved my head, then I went with other boys to a place in the bush and started to sing songs, I stayed there for two months. In the first few weeks I was afraid, they blindfolded me and the old man cut my penis, but later on I began to like it, there were many things, people covered with cords and banana leaves and fire in their hands. We were afraid, but then we discovered among ourselves that they were men who had put these things deliberately, we had already been to school, we had seen many things and therefore we discovered it at once, we also learned about the sexual organ of women and how we should do it. When I left I felt that I was already grown up" (Vasco 1).

The same narrative was collected among the *Makhuwa Lomwé* in Quelimane:

> "The cut my penis, after that they took us to a place which we ourselves prepared, we learned how to build the palisades where we would stay, we made material for hunting, stories about the ancestors, you also learn how to treat a woman and

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[114] On the WLSA website (www.wlsa.org.mz) a case is described that was reported in the media in 2012 as to the collective sexual abuse of a woman who apparently was walking near a place where male initiation rites were being performed. This case was presented, in the words of an informant, in the previous chapter.

get to know things that the women learn there in the rites" (Julião 3).

This kind of information was also provided by *Makhuwa Lomwé* boy students in Gurué District, who emphasize the learning through counsels of what it means to be an adult, the work they are doing and mainly the aspects that should be observed when they marry, namely the sustenance of the family and the demands they should be able to make due to the fact of being men. Being stripped of everything, the rupture with the past, the fear of death and of loss are perfectly described in the words of a boy in Alto Molocué:

> "They lined us up in order to be cut, circumcised, I was the last one, the one in front of me fled, they grabbed him forcibly, at that moment I was no longer a person, I was not myself, I started to shout, to call my mother, I didn't know they were selling me, and all the time I was crying" (Julião 10).

Masters and godfathers give more details about the ceremonies, identifying what they consider more important in the teachings:

> "A cock is killed and the boy should eat the neck, which means that the sex will be hard, will be very strong, the blood of the circumcision should fall into a *muyeepe* (a rolled up leaf), the penis is washed and everything will be buried in the *munumuche* (a hidden place only known by the godfather). The godfather gives advice about how to ask a woman, puts a coin on the plates and explains the signs to ask for sexual intercourse. We can see that a boy has already learned, when the godfather says vagina and the initiatee has to spit each time he hears this word, to spit means ejaculation. The punishments, often the parents themselves are saying my son is undisciplined, teach him please. We, the godfathers, we do everything, the master only has the job to "immunize" the space in order that everything turns out all right. At the end I give *oteca* which is traditional beer, I will get a medicine (*ecoma*) and let the boys drink it, this is to strengthen the fact

> of really being a man. At the end the camp is burned down, because everything is secret" (Francisco 6).

The appearance of the fantastic in the discourses of godfathers and the reference to animals are important elements for the construction of manly courage which will allow the man under construction to protect the family he will produce. Fear, for example when they are punished,[115] has a decisive function in the negation of human quality to the initiatee, while the fact of overcoming fear means that he is ready to change status. The importance of the rites for shaping the male and his sexual apparatus is conferred through the already above-mentioned situation: "when a girl or a woman appears nearby, you may even hit her, and those old men may even have sex with her" (Vasco 3).

We should also point out that circumcision carried out in health units or by nurses called up for this purpose is not as common as is stated by some masters. Even in urban areas, after circumcision the masters have to mark the body of the children, which is also occurring in inland areas, where circumcision is done by the master, using the same knife and using traditional cicatrisation methods, as a boy in Mecúfi told us: "they put sand and cloths in the wound and they put your legs in a wooden tool, called *nipice* which looks like an eight, to avoid injuries" (Vasco 5).[116]

After the initiation rites, the *Makhuwa* girls in Cabo Delgado and in Zambézia among the *Makhuwas Lomwé*, the aggregation ceremony constitutes an exhibition that the community has received more young girls, ready for social reproduction. With regard to boys, this ceremony is preceded by a ritual in which the boys are covered by cloths that are removed by the mothers to check if their sons are alive:

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[115] As an example a boy narrated: "to put a bamboo between the legs and do as if it were a motorcycle, stay in the sun with a raised leg. When you cry they bring a cup and then they force you to drink these tears" (Vasco 3).

[116] In the *Chuwabo* ethnolinguistic group circumcision is only recently practiced, as a way to prevent HIV and AIDS. There is however information that boys of the *Chuabo* group are since a long time initiated in *Makhuwa* rites in which the practice of circumcision is compulsory.

"After applying anaesthesia, because as there is no good care the wound sometimes infects and the boy dies and they don't inform the parents that their son has already died, even the survivors healed the wound when they leave the place, before putting new clothes they have a kind of mat and they are covered. They stay there covered, they line up, each individual pays money to see his son being uncovered. When in the end he sees that his son is not there, he already knows that things went wrong with my son" (Zita 1).

The aim of this possibility of death, which rarely occurs, is the symbolic display of the worthiness to gain a new status which follows all the trials overcome. Contrary to girls, who return to the house of their parents expecting the arrival of a man who will take them, these male initiates have conquered the right to live outside their house, building their own dependences, to be fed and taken care of by the women of the family. In the same way, though the boy is prepared to have a woman, which means to build a house and sustain his family, and is trained to this end, there is in male initiation rites special attention to the trials identified with courage and authority. For this reason, in addition to those mentioned in the previous chapter, the rite shapes a system of power in agreement with the restored social order, i.e., they restore, reorganize and reorder the cultural and social model. Here we find one of the elements which makes the performance of initiation rites effective and indispensable, insofar as, though subject to actions that may constrain them momentarily, they are guarantors of the maintenance of a power which goes beyond the traditional domain and takes advantage of it, by the use of symbolic resources, for the preservation and imposition of a social and political order that finds in culture one of its forms of legitimation.

Thus, through the disorder experienced in the margin phase of the rites, in which the permitted transgression aims at the re-establishment of the social order, a relation is established between the individual, expressed in how each individual endures the trials (of courage, facing suffering) and the collective of brotherhood, of sharing values, being instituted as a condition of sociability (Damatta, 2000).

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The means used are marks that society introduces into the bodies of individuals rendering them into a non-person in whom the suffering, the cold and physical pain serve to create bonds with the group, i.e., the elements of relative autonomy of the initiatees are complementary and exist as such.

It is in this sense that the insults mean identification with the peer and non-identification with the "other", in which not bathing and feeling cold are part of a perspective of sacrifice, of pain and of violence to merit entering into another status. As Rivière states "the rite is at the same time product, tool, vehicle and symbol" (1996:46), as we can see in this song referring to the male sexual organ, sang by *Makhuwa Lomwé* girls: "it doesn't bite, hold it, your mother did the same, she liked it, maybe she laughed, and you were a child, now you are already grown up, hold it, it doesn't bite, hold it" (Júlia 4).

Regarding the *Makhuwa* ceremonies performed in Pemba, in the female initiation rites the discourses did not reveal a tendency, while the ceremonies that appear as unifying are the exposure of the *othuna* on the first day of the ritual, teachings about the value of respect and service to older people, teachings about male superiority, namely through the way in which men should be taken care of. In these teachings their behaviour in sexual intercourse assumes a prominent place. The virginity test, which we will further elaborate on below, is only rarely carried out. In many cases there must be agreement of the family, which is evidence of interference of the parents in how and even by what means their daughters and sons are to be educated. The same occurs with shaving the head, which symbolically marks the separation with the world that is left behind, but is not always practised in towns.

Religious differences, mainly those concerning Christians and Muslims, already dealt with to a great extent in the previous chapter, were also observed in the kind of information given about sexuality (more controlled teachings among Islamised populations) and in the importance of participation in funeral ceremonies for Muslims. Although the conflicts between religious currents in the Islam are reflected in the interpretation of the Koran, we were unable to

establish the transposition of these divergences to the initiation rites.[117] It became clear that, adopting different strategies (for example, as already mentioned, the co-option by Christianity of the aggregation ceremonies), the Christian and Muslim religions and the new religious sects do not question the structure of the rites neither the means embodying them.[118] However, we note that interviewed Muslim women born in Pebane and living in Quelimane informed us that there is a strong component of education about sexuality from an age of 12 years, followed by marriage: "in this way the child already has a man, and the man says, I want this daughter of yours, and the godmother taught with her boss how to have sex, and said, don't bring shame upon me" (Fernanda 1). Many male and female informants, when referring to the female initiation rites, insist that the contents are focused on teachings about how to serve their man sexually, in the performance of "marriages" soon after the rites and in school abandonment, arguing that the Muslim religion, mainly in the coastal areas, conditions and controls the body of the youths, mainly the girls' bodies, in an exacerbated way, without taking into account the measures proposed by the Government for their permanence at a public or private school (but with the official syllabus of the Republic of Mozambique).

The rites conducted in rural areas are marked by the unexpected way in which the girl initiatees were taken away from their family, as we

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[117] However, in Mecúfi we were told that the current called Africa Muslim is more conservative, adopting a more rigid position with respect to the interpretation of the Koran. The obligation to use the veil, control over the body of girls, namely regarding their virginity, their possibility to feel and seek pleasure, the disapproval of female adultery and the resulting exclusion from the religious community, are examples confirmed by some of the women interviewees, who mentioned the condemnation of the rites on the part of this religious current. The same question exists with respect to male rites which should, according to the Africa Muslim, be limited to circumcision. As this religious current is a distributor of a lot of goods to the community, investing in mosques, madrassas and grants for youths, the problem consists of identifying the strategies developed in the communities to combine, without losing the advantages produced by belonging to this group, the different forms of identification.

[118] It was sometimes observed that the theology of inculturation of the Catholic Church reproduces elements of the initiation rites in the education of believers.

can establish from a focus group interview of initiated *Makhuwa* girls in Metuge, Balama and Chiure:

> "It's like this: we went to my grandmother's house, we started to draw water, I had no idea, then I said there are a few people outside, then I entered the house and felt embarrassed. My aunt said as you didn't pay attention to me, you can go, these people took hold of me and my aunt said you like to insult, you like to insult, I started to cry, mother I have never insulted you here, where did you see me, you like to insult, you like to insult, they took me and said you are already grown up" (Gilberta 1).

The fear revealed by this girl faced with the accusation of disobedience and the "punishment" of not being able to stay in the family environment is in agreement with the secret character of the rites and with the preparation for the separation from her condition. The coercive aspect of this action will unfold in an order which, while removing the girls from their world, imposes a new order on them, apparently discordant with their previous life. Shaving the head, covering the body with *musiro*,[119] repeating and memorizing dances and songs, performing exercises with clay sticks (representing the male sexual organ), the imitation of sexual intercourse, eating a lot (to become beautiful), the permanent surveillance of the godmothers and occasionally of the teachers/matrons, are part of this paraphernalia of means whose aims, without being explained, are training the body and the mind for the fulfilment of roles taken as the only possible ones. Thus, the transgression experienced in the rites concentrates a socially regulated disorder, because it mediates the culturally expectable behaviours, expressed in the aggregation ceremonies when the girls covered with *musiro*, with their new clothes, earrings and other ornaments, expose themselves before a celebrating community, recognizing them as members, of whom the

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[119] *Musiro* is a stick from which a powder is extracted that, grinded, serves to massage the girls' bodies: "the child keeps the *musiro* all the time of the rites, on the day in which she will have a bath, she will become white and will be fine, the body will be smooth" (Antónia 4).

fulfilment of what they have learned is expected and who are watched. In general, particularly in Zambézia and Alto Molocué, the initiation rites of *Makhuwa Lomwé* girls follow the same structure as was observed in Mecúfi, with a very strong component of sexual teachings, with indications that forced unions of children are more frequent.[120] We noticed in the same way, and in other spatial units, that *Makhuwa* informants working in women party organisations have a discourse of deploring the shortening of the rites and the consequences for the construction of the female identity:

> "Formerly for girls it was 30 days, while boys would stay for six months without seeing their parents, being educated there and would leave fully educated. But not today, as the boys stay at school, those seven-day holidays, you can imagine, he has to leave the rites early because he has to go to school, he comes back confused, and continues with lack of respect. Then a girl also says that her friend only stays for two days, so, when she is in her own house, she has forgotten everything. At daybreak, she didn't even sit down or so, at daybreak, she puts a mat, her man comes, sits down, there is nothing, there is no respect and she doesn't even say that her man enters just like that. It dawns, the woman stays in bed, the first one to get out of bed should be the woman to heat up water so that her man can take a bath" (Zaida 4).

It is also interesting to note that differentiated interpretations are given to some ceremonies what may be understood both as a lack of understanding of what is transmitted, and as a reinvention which seeks to be in agreement with new social realities, mainly with the discourses that stimulate the refusal of domestic violence and give

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[120] During the interviews conducted it was not possible to elaborate further on this question. Meanwhile, it became clear that there are forced unions of children, conveyed forcefully by the interviewees of both sexes. However, no evidence was produced if this situation is only due to the rites or if religion also contributes to early marriages. If we take into account that teaching girls about sexuality is condemned, at least formally, by the more radical current of Islam, and as we had established through the interviews conducted in Mecúfi District that sexuality is a key component of ritual teachings, as in other regions of *Makhuwa* dominance, it becomes more difficult to find exact explanations for this situation.

women the possibility to have new partners. It is the case, for example, of the ritual that consists of placing a stone on top of three other stones in which each one of them represents a man, which according to the majority of the informants serves "to explain that each man has his own way to live and girls should know this to learn that they should respect their husband and obey everything he wants" (Amélia 2); however for other interviewees it means the possibility of a woman to "resort to another men, when her husband does not fulfil his obligations" (Amélia 4).

With regard to Mecúfi, where we also worked with *Makhuwa* girls and boys, there was clearly greater clarification of the ritual ceremonies and of the meanings transmitted by them:

> "I was 12, on the first day the family of my mother took me, then they put me in a yard, undressed me completely, put *musiro.* Then a few old women arrived and started a give advice and looked at my *othuna*, performed a ceremony with a medicine, a plant they put in a hole in the earth, the plant remained upright, meaning that I am virgin. If I were not a virgin they would insult me as well as my mother. I was always alone for five days. During this time they taught me to sing and dance and hit me when I didn't know the songs and dances, and these songs said that I shall not speak ill of my man, neither of my mother nor of my father. In the last three days I went to the bush and there it was worse, there were three more girls there and the woman counsellor rolled up a *capulana* and showed how the male sexual organ is and how I should put it inside and also showed me a pan on top of three stones, each stone was a different man and they said that I cannot swap my man, he could hit me. They taught me how I should clean the male sexual organ, we sang a lot, we insulted the male organ, but I cannot talk about that, they gave me another name, on the final day, when I left, they gave me new clothes and I liked it a lot" (Vânia 4).

Once again it is interesting to observe that most of the advice for adulthood are about sexual behaviour and is given through songs and

dances such as the dance of the sieve (*mahunho),* showing and exercising with instruments that represent the penis, as this matron in Alto Molocué told us: "you take a stick to teach how you do it, how you introduce it in the vagina and before that the girl should open her legs and make movements with her *othuna,* then the man goes on top of her and when he has reached his climax, she starts to clean things up" (Zita 5).

In the same way, several informants told us that the rites are still performed in school time, leading to a repetition of exams or to automatic or semi-automatic transition, or even to school abandonment as happens frequently in the majority of the districts of Zambézia, of *Makhuwa Lomwé* influence:

> "Soon after the rites, or even when you are still there, the family fixes a marriage with a man and the child cannot refuse, because she would be considered disobedient and would be discriminated in the community. In the rites she learns everything about how to treat her man and gets another name, which makes it very difficult for the school to be able to identify her. With boys it is different, they learn all these things but are not obliged to have sexual intercourse and stop studying. It also happens that when a girl becomes pregnant, a man turns up immediately saying if it is a girl, it is his, he would give money to her family and when she was grown up she would be given to this man as his wife" (Zaida 2).

In Gurué we were informed that the families publicise it when their girls are menstruated:

> "They leave their house and go singing around the village, saying we already have a grown-up woman and then a man appears and, if he has money, they give him their daughter because they think that their daughter is already grown-up, there are girls who cry. But there is a lot of pressure, the parents tell her she must marry, because they say that, if their daughters are getting older, they don't want any more" (Zaida 2).

The satiation of the teachings about sexuality in female rites, which we will elaborate on below, shows the importance of control over reproduction, with emphasis on the mechanisms developed in the construction of a domesticated and subordinated female body, while they are also in agreement with strategies for maintaining the husband's fidelity, as a matron in Mugeba informed us:

> "Thus, the first thing a woman should be prepared for is that her husband may run away. Well, she has her own way, she picks up grains where he was seated and keeps them. Then, when he wants to start fussing about leaving her, she uses those grains he had left, uses those grains, buries them in her house, he comes and sits down with his wife" (Zita 7).

The punishments (hitting, sleeping on the floor, standing still with crossed arms, or with a foot in the air) that are part of the daily life of the youths and are often applied with the justification of not having learned the songs and dances, are in fact mechanisms that both ensure that the girls have been well taught and can therefore "receive a man", and confer respect and legitimacy to the godmothers and matrons who guide and control the acquisition of the teachings. Punishments are sometimes inflicted without an apparent justification, creating in the girls and boys a permanent feeling of impotence and fear. Although the punishments appear in the discourse of girls and boys as suffering and not as violence, because there is a representation of sharing in which all participate: those who suffer and those who inflict suffering. However, we observed that for many girls and boys a feeling of violence and revolt arises, possibly due to that is learned in other spaces such as the school. This may be one of the reasons that the age of the female and male initiatees is increasingly precocious: the younger and the less contaminated by adherence to other identities, the easier it is to shape attitudes and values.

Regarding the rituals of passage of *Makonde* boys in Pemba Town, as happens with the *Makhuwa* ethnolinguistic group, they were also subjected to change. An example of this is the absence of the preparation of the entire community for the start of the ceremonies.

I.e., in the past there was a sense of participation of the collective in the selection of the initiatees, which is now replaced by a direct intervention of the families. On the other hand, as in the past the rites had a duration of a year, according to some *Makonde* masters the children were educated in a more consistent way for entering adult life. Today, with the existence of the school and the concentration of information (the masters state that the rites are performed during one to three months), the symbolic character of many ceremonies loses part of its meaning, justifying the lamentations heard that "today there is no respect".

One of the central questions raised by the informants is the representation of the rites as separation from the mother, i.e., the construction of the male identity starts with a break with the past without return. This past means opposition to the qualities represented by the mother figure, while the entry into the sacred space determines a break with and the death of the previous life. This space is previously prepared with ceremonies that ward off evil spirits, witch doctors and animals, such as snakes and lions. Before their entry into the space, the children's heads are shaved and a ceremony is performed in which chickens are killed and their blood is smeared on the body of the boys. The chickens should fall with their belly up (symbolizing that the boy will have a woman). The contrary (if, for example, they fall on their side) may mean that the rites will go wrong.

Among *Makondes*, more than among *Makhuwas*, a strong collective sense of defence of the community was observed. For this reason the ceremonies contain particularly violent trials and teachings, as is evident from the reference to deaths that may occur during the rites. In the same way the secrecy and the constant reference that, even when marrying to people of another ethnolinguistic group, their children are *Makondes* and will do the *Makonde* rites, constitute a demonstration of the group's need to withdraw into itself, avoiding contamination and the loss of cultural references. This situation does not have to do with the patrilineal system, but with the specificities of the patriarchal culture assumed by the *Makonde* group. However, also among this group the influence of modernity is felt, mainly

regarding the fact of practising circumcision (previously there was only a slight cut in the foreskin), which shows some efficacy of the health sector strategies for the prevention of HIV and AIDS, while it is also possible to demonstrate (though not as significant as in other groups) interaction with "outside" populations.

The surprise character (systematically mentioned by the girls and boys) preceding the rites and which we found among *Makhuwas*, also exists among *Makondes*, as these remarks of a boy makes clear:

> "My uncle told me let's go here in the bush and cut those bamboos. When I arrived they called me, took hold of my arms, here the feet, and cut the cock. After that we went to the bush and entered a house. They have a house there, where we lived. Yes, they shaved our head and we had a rope around our neck, I don't know for what purpose. We sang songs that we must respect our mother, not enter our mother's room, the rest I have forgotten already" (Vasco 2).

As in the other groups in urban environments, this forgetfulness concerns less fear of what may happen and more the protection of the secrets which symbolically means loyalty and community with the belonging group.

The description of the rites by the *Makonde* boys of Macomia District is very similar to what exists in the provincial capital, with the exception of the duration (between six months and one year) and the fact that the masters (*nalongoswavalume)* perform the circumcision themselves, sometimes using the same knife for all boys. In the rural or semi-rural areas one also resorts, soon after the circumcision, to animal names to name the boys, such as rabbit or *namajuela* (centipede). The punishments are also more violent: "sometimes we urinated in bed and did we stay for two days without eating or we ate *xima* with ash and after that we had the punishment of putting the bamboos between our legs" (Vasco 8). The same student states that they were taught how they should have sexual intercourse: "there was a plant, a kind of small cake which when cut looked like a vagina and we put our penis in it to learn, they also talked about some plants, without showing them, to avoid getting tired when having sex".

Another boy added: "there were songs saying that we should forget our mothers, also songs to insult girls,[121] the vagina deserves that rice is sown in it and who are sowing are men with a dick" (Vasco 11).

Regarding the question about what would happen if a woman passed near the site they said: "we caught a girl who was passing by with her husband, we sent the husband away and stayed with her, all of us put our seed in her, there were 19 of us who did this". The violence demonstrated by these remarks, which is a mechanism used in all groups we studied, associating women (initiated or not) with transgression not only of the secret (since they didn't enter the space where the rituals were being performed) but of the danger of contamination with the past, as these remarks of a *Makhuwa Lomwé* boy in Alto Molocué shows: "a woman cannot even approach that place, when she arrives there she is dead, a woman who comes there is dead" (Julião 8).

In the same district the punishments and humiliations are described in a very harsh and explicit way as these remarks show: "they mixed *xima* with mud, or they shitted and we had to clean their arse with our hand" (Julião 8). But all this violence is described by many boys as a way to demonstrate that in order to transit to the status of adulthood, they had to be subjected to trials which confer them the right to be adults: the harshness of the punishments and the humiliation thus symbolize the necessary stripping for the re-establishment of the order. However, there are other boys who reject the rites completely, as expressed in these remarks of a boy in Alto Molocué:

> "Everything was very ugly, they took the knickers (*nakapa*) that a woman has used for three days without washing, it is squeezed onto sweet potato leaves and we have to eat it. I didn't discover the purpose of that, if they would tell me even today that I would get some money, I would not go there, we learn a lot of things in general culture, those things have no

[121] In the *Makonde* songs about the sexual organ, that of women is called *enonha* and that of men is called *inlomo*.

function whatsoever, you can't apply it anywhere, it is different from the school where you learn and can apply things" (Julião 10).

The difference between *Makhuwas* and *Makondes* in urban environments resides in the fact that virginity is a key condition to be accepted for the *Makonde* rites, and girls are subjected to proofs ("the godmother puts a finger to verify it a girl is a virgin or not", Arminda 3) while today menstruation does not determine initiation. This situation has to do with the following, as a matron told us:

"In ancient times there was this rule: a girl was submitted to the rites after her first menstruation because in those days the children were calm, were obedient, were sympathetic, they had few frivolities but they had to wait for the menstrual cycle. After that they took the children to the rites. But now, nowadays, what we see is that the children are very, but very disobedient, they no longer obey those rules we already had in our *Makonde* tradition. Today, even 11-year-olds already know how to have sexual intercourse with boys, they are already no longer afraid of boys, they have no fear whatsoever, they behave just like that. So, to avoid them becoming pregnant before having been submitted to certain ceremonies, there was this need to submit the children from 11 to 12 years before their first menstruation, because if a girl became pregnant before the rites, she can no longer perform the rites" (Arminda 3).

As among the *Makhuwas*, the *Makonde* female rituals are conducted in a yard or inside a house and may be done individually, without the symbolism that allows the complementarity that can only be reached in a collective experience. However, the secrecy in the description of the ceremonies is greater than in other groups, because once again, the *Makondes*, due to their history, namely the isolation of their area

of origin,[122] constituted themselves as a cohesive group, in which the secret is a condition for their survival.

The teachings of the *Makonde* female initiation rites are similar to those that are transmitted to the *Makhuwa* girls and the aggregation ceremony also means that they are ready (*andicula).* When questioned, the *Makonde* matrons state with a lot of ambiguity that there is another stage which prepares for marriage. However, it didn't become very clear what this means, as is expressed by these remarks:

> "When you come out of the initiation rites, there already appears someone interested, a man, a boy who can already choose that girl to marry her. This is already another phase but in the initiation rites they don't mention the question of marriage" (Arminda 3).

This situation may suggest that, due to the proximity of the State authorities in urban environments (all matrons state having Government credentials),[123] the teachings about sexuality are kept hidden, with the result that marriage is considered the decisive stage for the construction of sexual identities. This situation contradicts other information that characterises the preparation for marriage as a deepening of the teachings in the rites of passage, with some new elements, such as the position of the bed and the exposure of blood after sexual intercourse. In rural areas, it is clear how the rites shape sexual identities, through the discourses of education officials and of women teachers who are less interested in keeping secrets, as is evident in this discourse:

> "They talk like this: you have already grown up, you are already an adult, when you leave this place, if a man comes,

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[122] The history of colonization, mainly during the period of slavery, explains how the *Makonde* "isolation" was being constructed, as well as the stereotypes that continue until today.

[123] The link with the State, represented by the quarter secretary or by the administrative post head, is particularly emphasized by the *Makonde* informants, who conduct the rites after having been accredited, involving representatives of the Government and of the Frelimo party (and in the case of girls, the Mozambican Women's' Association - OMM), in the search for spaces to organize the rituals.

you cannot refuse, you just have to accept that man. And inside the house they even tell you what you have to do inside the house with that man, yes, from there that child is convinced and instead of telling her about schooling she already has in her head what they were talking about there in the bush. (...) The important role there in the initiation rite is just to marry, the girl already knows that she has grown up and the only thing she has to do is to marry" (Ana 11).

In the same way, a person working in the education sector stated that learning about sexuality is comprehensive:

"The *Makondes* also use sexual instruments to demonstrate the sexual act, the care of the husband, for example, in how to clean the penis, with a little towel that should always be kept next to the bed, and also learn to imitate sexual intercourse" (Ana 12).

Characterizing the *Makonde* female rites, a female health agent in Macomia described her own experience:

"I did not like the rites while I was there because they gave a lot of punishments. I have a friend who ran away from the rites. On the first day we went to a small stream and after that they put me in a house where they shaved my head completely, they taught me how to respect the elderly, how to take care of the house, how to take care of my husband, with a clay instrument. We slept during the day and at night we danced and sang, we became very anxious and we cried, they hit us just like that, we were only dressed in a loin-cloth, all of us on a mat on the floor, they rubbed us every day with *musiro*, they put oil on the forehead and if it drops then it's all right. I don't remember many things, they also said that if you talk to your mother or your father you will die, if you become pregnant and a boy is born the entire family of your father will die, if it is a girl then your mother will die" (Ana 13).

A member of the Women's League of a party in Macomia adds:

> "I know they teach everything, I saw a niece of mine, they dressed a woman as a man and another one played the role of the woman and they even lied down with a clay stick and explained that it should be done like this and they even teach how to hold his shirt, so that he will be at ease" (Amélia 7).

In the case of the *Makhuwa* and *Makonde* girls the explicit teachings about sex life and the transgression phenomena take place in the last few days, often moving to a more reserved space. It is here, as if culminating and synthetizing the ritual teachings, that the transgression takes place (and at the same time the construction of sexual identity) through abusive songs about the male organ, the exercise with instruments imitating the penis, the more eroticized dances:

> "They showed us the sizes a penis can have and told us not to be afraid of men, we danced and sang to imitate, they said, this is the man's dick, showing it, and this is the vagina of a woman, both made of clay, they tied that thing to a belt and said, you there, today I will fuck you" (Antónia 4).

The ritual ceremonies and the mechanisms developed in the different ethnolinguistic groups correspond, as was identified in the previous chapter, to the symbolic death expressed in childhood and to the repeated reconstruction of acts that reach the objective of shaping values and attitudes converging to the inclusion into the community, while they individualize the girl and boy initiates as subjects, whose status is in agreement with the cultural order. It is in this sense that Turner (1974) states that in the ceremonies that are conducted in the margin phase there is already a reoriented action constituting itself as the first form of aggregation.

Thus, the break with the social order which the ritual ceremonies appear to reveal, are part of an apparent disorder to which the rites respond with a new social reordering. In fact, the intensity and the concentration of the experiences lived by the girls and boys through the combination of the sacred and the profane, fulfil the function of reasserting a social cohesion of which the initiation rites represent the main dimension. When the matrons and masters and other key

informants insist emphatically on the need to preserve this cultural instance, it is not only because strategies of power are at stake here through the preservation of the cultural model, but also because the rites constitute an affirmation of identification with the community and with the group, and an answer to the threat produced by the contact with modernity, as a *Makonde* matron said: "not being ritualized is a shame for the family, there will be no marriage" (Arminda 20). In other words, it is clear, despite all influence modernity may have, that the ritualization continues to constitute a key element for social recognition.

Though in the discourse of the justification for the performance of the rites an appeal is made to the need for the preservation of culture, which may be called African, in some groups we observed the designation as Mozambican (in the discourse of the elites) or clearly ethnic in the poorer groups, while among these it is observed that the ethnic identity affirmation is brought about by opposition to other groups. This became very clear in the inter-ethnic rivalries, mainly between *Makhuwas* and *Makondes*, in which the latter are accused of promoting a certain sexual promiscuity, with girls being submitted to rites and starting sex life much earlier, with a longer duration (about one month) than among the *Makhuwas*. It can thus be inferred that the *Makondes* are stricter with respect to tradition and thus more respecting their culture, more barred from contamination by modernity. This means that using one argument or the other, the *Makhuwas* convey a "civilizational" superiority, expressed in the capacity of adjustment and reinvention, to which the discourses of the *Makondes* bring forward that, on the contrary (though without having been confirmed in the research), the *Makhuwas* in the performance of their rituals prompt the exercise of a "deprogrammed" sexuality hardly to be controlled by the families.

On the other hand, there is always a duality in the justification of the rites that, with the exceptions of a few informants who refuse or who accept ("we are following what our ancestors said", Antónia 1, female *Makonde* teacher) the rites completely, the majority breaks with everything contained in the ritual education. I.e., they separate in their discourse what they consider being positive aspects, such as

respect and the notions of hygiene, from what they characterise as negative, which consists of the teachings about sexuality and their transmission. As a *Makonde* matron stated, "that the girls are ready for a man, they even teach that menstruation is a disease that is cured by contact with a penis" (Amélia 4). But this artificiality in the demarcation of what is good and what is bad, which results from the struggle opposing a certain idea of modernity and culture, removing from the latter the boys' and girls' identity elements, of which the teaching of sexuality is a key component, must not be perceived as an adjustment or adaptation of the rites, but only as an attempt to manage the tensions produced by the meeting of several "truths" in conflict. On the other hand, the ritual participation, with everything what this implies for the coherent embodiment of values and practices in a process of cultural identification, with reflexes determined in and by their sociability, makes sense in a whole which segregates those who did not experience it and unites those who did participate in it. There are rights which only the experience of the rites allows, as is expressed in these remarks of a female interviewee in Mecúfi: "when one does not go to the initiation rites one is humiliated, you are a nobody, a child, much as you may be an adult woman, if you didn't go to the rites you will come to no good, you will be shamed" (Ana 9).

In the analysis of the contents of the ceremonies in all ethnolinguistic groups, it is clear that the girls and boys by having access to a varied source of information, though questioning and confronting the myths acquired through for example the exercise of sexuality, resort to them whenever their status is threatened.

The discourses of the female and male interviewees revealed that the rites are performed through actions that find their legitimacy in the myths as a field of the sacred and therefore unquestionable. This question takes us to the secret that should be preserved by the initiated girls and boys and whose revelation contains a loss of power (in this case for the masters and matrons was well as for the initiated girls and boys as guardians of the acquired knowledge), desecrating the ritual, limiting it to cathartic, transgressing and playful moments, such as those that are practised today in other realities and, which

Pais (2009) expressed well when he analysed the parties of boys in the north of Portugal or when Peirano (2003) refers to the Brazilian carnival as a rite. I.e., and contrary to what mainly happens in the rural areas where we did our fieldwork, without implications for the resumption of daily life and for the embodiment of values and behaviours in the context of modernity.

Invited to a questioning and to making choices with respect to the diversity of lifestyles, values and practices to which they are exposed on a daily basis, many girls and boys, while having no faith in the myths and the symbology offered to them (for example, that the revelation of what happens in the rites may lead to the death of the mother is today no longer accepted), reject the way in which the ritual education punishes them. Oddly enough, these same youths refer to the rites as important, because they define their place and status, functioning as elements that "secure" them as individuals and as members of the community. The teachings of signs that express the acts of daily life, from greeting, eating or requesting/refusing sexual intercourse constitute for the youth of both sexes a form of mutual recognition and of sharing a body of symbology that functions as cooperation and complementarity, guarantor of social stability.

What is interesting is that even among those women and men who say they wouldn't want to repeat the ritual experience, there is visible pride related to the change of status, but also to the feeling of belonging to the community and to the solidary sharing of the experience lived there with the pairs.

The cohesion reached in the rites expresses the relation, as Damatta (2000) states, between solitarily lived individualization and cooperation with the group, and also contains moments of shared entertainment they have available for sociability, whether through the creation of lasting bonds of brotherhood or through acts that reveal the spontaneity of how each girl and boy acquires the normative that is imposed on them. The games and the playful observations are thus part of the routines that constitute the rites, transforming them in effective instruments of socialization.

Although the *Sena* and *Ndau* rituals have a structure that is similar to what we have described with respect to the above-treated ethnolinguistic groups, there are differences which for example express themselves in the recent introduction of circumcision which ceases to have the symbolic value we found among the *Makhuwas* and which may constitute a factor of de-dramatization of the ritual that the "mutilation" of the penis contains. On the other hand, the fact that the *Ndaus* are the result of a mixture of several peoples originating from the south paradoxically allowed them to constitute themselves as an homogeneous group, with the same beliefs and rituals in the interior and on the coast, despite some variations existing in the north of Sofala, where the presence of Arabs was particularly important. In the same way, according to an informant, the always present element of identification of the *Ndaus* is the existence of a single God (*mwari* or *mwarere*) who mediates through the ancestors the relation with the populations and who was an important resource with respect to the attempts of cultural destruction made by the colonial administration, the Catholic church and the socialist system.[124]

According to Daniel 5, the *Ndau* male rites are based on myths that seek metaphorically to transmit the values of the group in activities such as construction or fishing and in the exercise of sexuality through teachings and the use of various plants for boosting sexual strength. Ejaculation (*kubara*) on the body of women is not only a proof of virility and fecundity, but essentially a symbol of life, guarantor of the reproduction of the community.

In the same way, in the rural areas of *Ndau* predominance, such as Búzi, while circumcision is left to the discretion of the families (for some traditional leaders circumcision is held in contempt as "a Muslim thing"), though there is an effort of the education and health sectors to introduce it, the "sexualisation" of the male rites is, as

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[124] To this situation we add the fact that the *Ndau* ethnolinguistic group claims the first forms of organised resistance to colonialism, as well as to have been the cradle of the guerrilla movement that opposed the regime which, sending the cultural practices into clandestineness, strengthened the unity of the communities with respect to the various attempts of disintegration.

established in the discourses of the interviewees, mediated by a series of instruments that aim at ensuring the sexual performance of the initiates, as is the case, for example, of the exercises to increase the size of the penis ("you have a tree – *mutatarata* - with a hole in which you introduce your penis and it will grow", Luís 2) and the use of plants to extend sexual intercourse.[125] Contrary to what happens with female rites, the space where the male initiation ceremonies are conducted is away from the community, according to the discourse of an initiated boy in Búzi Town:

> "They took me to the bush and started to test and put a root in a bottle (*mutarara*). I drank it until getting a hard-on, I ejaculated (...) and they said that I must not play with the daughter but with women of my age, they taught me to build a bathroom, a poultry house, many things, they taught me that girls have *matinji*, if she doesn't, you will send her back and say *pangira mwana wene* (she is here to be educated), I learned to see if she has *matinji* by the way she walks" (Luís 2).

This interview expresses two important elements in the education of boys: the first one is the question of the sacralisation of the space, which more than a secluded space is a place that shall not be violated, it is a space of death of the past and of life, a space in which transgression makes place for the recomposed order. In the second place, the boys learn to recognise the components of the sexual knowledge of the initiated girls, not only about their behaviour, but also what she must use for the lengthening of the vaginal lips (bat wings burned with oil - *xitonji* or *muroro*, or burning *mfuta* – fruit pit of a plant - with oil), how she must move her hips *(muhunu)*, where she should place the beads, all this knowledge constituting control over the body of women, thus constructing the desirable and socially identifiable corporality. Although this point is further elaborated on below, it is clear that if girls also learn to identify the signs of the initiated boys, the knowledge is used to serve better, to

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[125] In addition to the ejaculation test, there is a test that consists of giving the boy a raw egg, in case he vomits he will not be able to have children.

correspond better to their expectations. Though this apparent male passivity, with respect to the seduction of the woman is evident in the male discourses, giving the idea that the woman has the power to control her own sexuality, we will seek to demonstrate here how, in fact, this proactivity of women exists in a context of gender domination.

The *Ndau* female rites, even in inland areas such as in Guara-Guara in Búzi District, are not collective and are performed during one week in a room of the house where the girls live. The ceremonies demarcating the entry into the rites after menstruation and the lengthening of the labia minora are more formalized and seen as more important by some of our interviewees. When referring to the rites, the *Ndau* girls mention the learning of songs and dances, and the placing of beads, as one girl said, "so that he can get hold of you and when a man asks you, you cannot refuse" (Luísa 3). When the rites are performed individually, the time is used to pull *matinji:* "if you don't have it, he says you are *musopo*" (which means a fish without scales) and will give you back to your mother, saying that this daughter of yours isn't ready" (Luísa 3).

Contrary to other regions, we found female informants who link the first menstruation directly with the start of the rites, as is evident from these remarks of a *Ndau* female teacher in Guara-Guara:

> "I had my first period, then I informed the oldest person. Right at that moment this oldest person left me in a house, and said that I could not cross any road while I was in that condition, was having my period. After that they got some medicine, a plant, removed its ribbon (*mororo*), tied it around my waist and taught me how to preserve those cloths, how to take care of the cloths and how to use them after the end of my first period. Then they told me to take away that ribbon they had put around my waist, in order to tie it to a tree but it must be a tree that produces fruits. So it stays there, nobody is allowed to see you when you tie that thing, you have to do it at a quiet moment, tie it there, then it will rot, nobody will touch it anymore, so that when you become pregnant it will go well.

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When this phase has passed, after your period, they look to
see if you are virgin, this is when the phase has come in which
you are taught how to play with a man, it is the phase when
they think it is just like that, but always say that before
reaching your age you must not let a man approach you, here
we are teaching you this as an instruction you should have as
a woman. I stayed for one month in the hut where my
grandmother slept, so they taught me to make those
movements when you are in bed with your husband, how to
be with him in your bedroom, then they explained the
mahunho dance, I don't know how that pin dance" is called
(Deolinda 2).[126]

What we observe regarding the *Ndau* female rites is that there is a
tendency that allows to differentiate the capital town and the
communities living in the interior (Guara-Guara) where the rites are
more formalized. It is also clear that the instruction mechanisms are
maintained, including the representation of virginity and the use of
plants that dry the vagina, or that increase the sexual potency of the
boys.

On the other hand, there were female interviewees in Búzi Town who
mentioned the existence of profound differences between the urban
environment (capital town) and the rural environment, namely with
respect to the lengthening of the vaginal lips and the participation in
the rites, which the research did not establish with respect to this
spatial unit: there is indeed an attempt to distinguish between the
"civilized" and the "rural". This discourse appears as an argument to
justify the positive action of the State sectors and the political parties
with the traditional leaders, which does not mean that there may not
exist a simplification of the ceremonies in some families originating
from other regions of the country who move to the capital town and
live there, mixing with the local population. There are however
differences between the past and the present, some of them produced

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[126] In the "pin" dance the girl lies on the ground without touching the pin, which may
be a small sharp-pointed stick, and moves her hips. It is a dance that teaches the
movements girls should make during sexual intercourse.

by inter-ethnic unions, by the increase of school attendance and by closer contact with urban lifestyles. These changes are reflected in the way of greeting and in the kind of intergenerational relations and the sharing of household chores between men and women. As a female representative of a local civil society organisation told us:

> "Formerly, when they returned from the *machamba*, the woman would carry the bowl, get his and her hoe while he would take the radio. Having arrived home he would say, go and fetch water, light a cigarette, make light. Now one already observes that the man chops up firewood together with the woman, there is more support" (Dilma 6).

In the *Sena* tradition the female rites are preceded by dances (*manyalala*) in which the girls are naked showing their *matinji,* which is considered the first phase of the rites. As in the other groups we have studied, in these rites they receive advice and learn through dances (*nyongolo*) how to "serve their husband sexually, through signs recognizable by both" (Dilma 8). The tattoos on the hips, the legs and the face (*nyenyezi*), which were part of the sexual education, are still being made only in interior regions. However, as is the case among the *Makhuwas*, the use of beads, for both representing a source of seduction, is maintained. The colours of the beads send signs of interdiction (red beads hanging on the bed means that the woman is menstruating and cannot have sexual intercourse) or permission for sexual intercourse. In the past the ceremonies were conducted in the bush with a duration of one month. According to some female interviewees, the rituals were a very painful process, not only due to the physical pain caused by the blades and needles with which the tattoos were made, but because all ceremonies were extremely violent:

> "They force you to do things, make those movements in which one of you lays down and you have to go on top of her as if you were a sieve, as if you were a bend, now just imagine a very fat aunt who is performing the role of a man on top of you, those movements as if you were a sieve, you have to bear

> it and you don't even know for what purpose, so many girls are asking: why am I suffering?" (Dilma 8).

The punishments were also extremely violent, for example while tattoos are made the girls are not allowed to cry, because they are threatened that they may die or cause the death of someone: symbolically this resignation represents the suffering that may be in store for them and that should be endured in silence.

What is observed today in urban environments in Sofala is a big simplification of the spaces, the rites, and the ceremonies, especially the advice given by the godmothers (*mpango* in *Sena* and *mupango* in *Ndau*) after the first menstruation and before marriage. An interesting fact transmitted by a few informants of civil society is that, mainly in some rural areas, the initiation rites have often lost part of their function of cultural cohesion and have transformed themselves into demands on the part of men who emphasize knowledge about sex as a condition for marriage. It happens frequently that families indebted to a man (who does not necessarily belong to the community) are obliged to send the girls prematurely to the rites, with the objective of being able to pay rapidly the accumulated debts. This being the case, the rites appear as a power strategy structuring social relations in a gender order marked by the subordination of women.[127] This means that the construction of a body disciplined by mechanisms ensuring male satisfaction begins to appear in some discourses, less as an element of cultural cohesion than as an imposition aimed at the sexual and matrimonial satisfaction of the other. There is a relocation of the tradition to modern individualization, in a process of adjustment and renewal.

In rural areas the male initiation rites among the *Senas* are, according to some scholars (Braço, 2008), marked by phases corresponding clearly to the separation, such as when the children move to a secret place where ceremonies are performed aimed at the

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[127] In the pilot study conducted in Matutuíne District, Maputo Province, where rites are not practised, we observed the existence of many forced unions, as a result of the indebtedness of the families to men working in South Africa, whose bargaining chip was the adolescent or pre-adolescent girl.

transmission of male qualities through resistance and courage trials, construct competences such as hunting and the construction of a house, and knowledge relative to sexuality. As the author told us "the rite is essentially an authorization that you can produce children and live in a family, while the sexual organ is represented as the symbol of life". For Braço, the dimension of the sacred appears in the names that are given to the boys and that mean the symbolic death and the separation from childhood and from the mother. On the other hand, the fact that the rites are no longer being performed during harvesting time and with a shorter duration implies a reduction of the intensity of the experiences lived.

However, mainly among *Sena* masters and matrons, there are contradictory discourses with respect to what Braço (2008) stated about a certain immobility of the rites, i.e., for many informants, the changes existing in the social fabric, due to the material and symbolic hybridization with other cultures and spaces, leads to not merely informal changes in people's belonging and in the construction of an identity governed by new rules and norms characterised by mobility. The discourse of lamentations about the changes concerns a set of ritual practices that range from the birth ceremonies and interdictions imposed on the couple, to the initiation rites and finally to the funeral ceremonies. In our view, while school attendance influences unbelief in the myths, this may not only lead to the construction of new myths, but also to their destruction: "formerly boys did not have early sexual intercourse because otherwise their sexual organ would be damaged" (Dipac 1). For this reason, when the inclusion of initiation rituals in the Local Curriculum, as is proposed by the instructions of the MEC and by some informants, is implemented it should, as already mentioned in the previous section, have a critical approach, explaining, discussing and including the cultural practices in the specific historical contexts, emphasizing the changes, the evolution and the existing disruption, not as a phenomenon to be retrieved and imposed, but as part of a process characterised by mobility and change.

On the other hand, among the *Sena* group in Beira City it was interesting to observe that the initiation of boys is very short (two

days), that it is performed in a secret place and is only directed by relatives (the father and grandfather). In general, the rites are not performed in a group and the ceremonies consist of advice about sex, about the behaviour of a good woman. Simultaneously, fishing and agricultural activities are carried out. As a *Sena* boy told us:

> "I didn't do circumcision, I stayed with my father and grandfather without eating for two days and there I received counsels, I know what an adult man should do, which parts of a chicken he should eat, which differences exist between a man and a woman in sexual intercourse, and there were no punishments. When I returned they bought clothes and there was a party" (Luís 1).

To the question about which differences he felt after having been to the rites, he responded: "now I am an adult". What is interesting in these remarks is that, in addition to the fact that initiation does not contain elements of sharing with pairs, being completely devoid of the magical and sacred component, the boy considers himself an adult, due to the new knowledge acquired and not in terms of identification with a group. In other words, the rites, still being a symbolic moment of passage of status, do not interfere with the boys' representations and practices, hence they are approaching a lot what happens with the so-called profane rites.

Regarding the *Sena* and *Ndau* female rituals, there is, as in other ethnolinguistic groups, a decrease from 30 (which could go up to six months) to 7 days. It is noted that in Beira, as was also evident in Quelimane, initiation rites are sporadic, with normally a weekend being reserved for the transmission of advice about care of the body and the teaching of songs and dances aimed at shaping qualities, namely about household chores and sexuality. However, the lengthening of the labia minora continues to be common practice among the interviewed girls in Beira City, not only because it is what may be expected by the men (mainly if they are native of these regions) with whom they relate, but also as a strategy of seduction and as a form of recognition of the sexual identity of the girls of the centre and north of the country.

Referring to the past, a matron in Beira informed us about the importance of virginity among the *Senas* for participating in the ritual: "all 30 days we came to the house and we said to the girl to put her head down and her feet up and we would see if it was white and with a very little hole, then she was a virgin, then we would put flour on her head and take her to the house of her mother" (Dirce 1). If the girl was not a virgin she could do the ritual after the performance of a series of ceremonies and the payment of money.

Among the *Sena* group in the rural areas there is, as is the case among the *Ndaus*, no single tendency concerning the space and the duration of the rites (*zitsanapiyana, tsanba*). Though the space is situated in a restricted place (in the case of boys), the duration varies between two days and one month and the ceremonies are directed by members of the family. Circumcision is also not always practised and the margin stage starts with the ingestion of a drink made of plants, followed by teachings about masculinity, mainly with respect to relations with others, the observation of female attributes and the role each individual should play within the family. The drinking of plants, of which the *ngozololo* is the best known and serves to increase sexual potency, being a demonstration of virility, confers a symbolic character to male domination, legitimating it.[128] The status of being an adult, which in daily life is expressed in the sharing of activities and talks with other men, transforming him, as happens with the others, into a "guardian" of secrets and guarantor of the reproduction of the community, reaches its highest level in the aggregation ceremonies:

> "When we arrived there the old man blindfolded me with a cloth, so that I could not even see my father; that person who wants to see my face gave some money, gave it to my grandfather to see my face, after that my father killed three goats, bought more rice and threw a party there at home (with the chief, the secretary of the area and neighbours), he came and explained to me: you will stay out for two months, not

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[128] The masters also mentioned plants that can be taken to stimulate women, as is the case of mwanamanza, nkundu and xibhangala.

playing with women, stay at home, go to school only, return, not playing with women, let two months go by, after that you go and play with women" (Luís 5).

It is interesting to observe that, contrary to girls whom are taught that sexual initiation should be done in the context of marriage, there is a representation which naturalizes sexual intercourse of the boys outside the framework of marriage, which means that the construction of male and female sexual identities should be understood in the framework of gender identities and hierarchies.

Among the *Sena* girls in Inhaminga the tendency continues to reduce the time dedicated to the rites (about three days), as well as to perform them individually and without the paraphernalia of instruments such as drums, as is for example common among the *Makhuwas* and the *Makondes*. We should recognise, as said above, that this situation possibly reveals specific forms of identification with the group: the absence of knowledge sharing, such as about the lengthening of the labia minora, games, songs and dances, punishments and disapprovals, which are important forms of socialization and sociability, certainly determines less formality of the rites, prompting more easily a rupture with the teachings learned. However, depending on the families and the weight tradition has in the group or in the community in which the family lives, the rites have a longer duration (two weeks), can be organised within the school period and even be performed individually, they can have the participation of neighbours and other friends who have already been initiated. During this time the female adolescents, as was said by a *Sena* girl, are subject to the following ceremonies:

"First a few people came, they put my head down to see if I was a virgin, because if not I wouldn't enter, after that we learned to dance naked, we received advice that, when you are in your own house, you have to respect the relatives of your husband. (...) For two weeks I didn't bath, I left everything out, and each garment she used she had to take a thread, burned it, and put the ash on my tongue and on my back in order that I have no more problems in future" (Luísa 6).

The function of the punishments expressed in insults and not understood by the girls is to constrain their future behaviour, emphasizing the quality of obedience, of acceptance and of not questioning. It was clear for us that many of the teachings are kept secret, by fear or by embarrassment.[129]

As happens with other ethnolinguistic groups, the *Sena* matrons and masters lament the ineffectiveness of their teachings, mainly concerning "respect" relative to the two sexes and the absence of virginity and the existence of "disorganized relations" in the case of girls. It is interesting to observe that the tests of masculinity and femininity follow a gender order, in which virginity means ignorance about sex and is a virtue, while for boys knowledge about the practice of sex is a condition of masculinity, as a *Sena* master in Inhaminga, Cheringoma District, said: "he masturbates, has a bowl of water or a small stream, if the seed goes down, he will have a family. (...) It is an explanation that the family of the girl whom you will marry will receive, while the girl is also inspected to see if she is a virgin" (Dipac 3).

According to interviewed *Sena* matrons, there are changes:

> "For example, in the past the girls would remain more than one month naked while receiving counsels and dancing the *masasetu*, to learn how to play with her husband, how to serve him (with their *matinji* the man gets excited), we also put our head down and we looked if the little hole was closed" (Dirce 5).

Continuing her comparison with the past, the same *Sena* matron stated that: "formerly girls were controlled, their father would prohibit them from watching movies, from going to school, they

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[129] Once again we point out that what we intended with the research was to understand the meaning the girls and boys gave, through their discourses, to the counsels susceptible of being communicated and how the women and men represented themselves. The ethnographic description, as already mentioned in the previous chapter, was only used insofar as it may, or not, confirm our work hypotheses.

couldn't go to school. (...) The problem of the school is not what they teach, it is the environment" (Dirce 5).

Through a few religious denominations the older matrons and women seek to safeguard the cultural order, designing strategies about how to educate daughters, including how important the lengthening of the labia minora is, and care of the husband. This co-option of cultural practices by some religions or religious sects concerns, as said above, the attempt to increase/consolidate their influence in the community, but has also to do, as the interviews of religious leaders expressed, with the conviction that women and men are essentially different and by naturalizing the difference inequality is also constructed. It is interesting that only women are subjected to a kind of coercion which brings them to meet weekly in the church and to agree about the ways and means of reproduction of an order which pacifies conflicts, through the preservation of their subordinated roles and functions.

There are also some religious denominations that seek to control the rites through the organisation of meetings of girls and boys (separated by sex and by age groups) with a duration of two weeks, in which it is taught how they should behave: "the girls should learn to greet, to kneel and the boys should learn to understand the signs, such as ejaculation, and should seek advice at that time" (Ernesto 3). The same informant stated that the church seeks to revive the tradition through tales and myths about the *Sena* group, presenting songs and dances, giving advice about the need to preserve the body. This means that other sanctified practices are superimposed on or adjusting themselves to cultural practices, by the space in which they are conducted and by the agents organizing them.

We were able to observe a general tendency in the structure of the phases of the rites, as is established by various authors (Braço, 2008, Medeiros,1982), in which separation, margin and aggregation persist as moments determining the coming of age, while the various ethnolinguistic groups give a similar meaning to each one of the stages. We noticed however the existence of changes that have to do with several orders of problems, such as the historical contexts that

go back to the colonial past and to the religious influence (which the research touches only superficially), with the "clandestinization" to which cultural practices that questioned the political and cultural exclusiveness of the regime installed after national independence were relegated, with the civil war and with the displacement of populations, which led on the one hand to resistance of local communities and on the other hand to cultural crossbreeding (as for example shown in the interviews conducted with people belonging to the *Chuwabo* group in Mocuba who informed that they practice *Makhuwa Lomwé* rites), expressed in the embodiment of cultural practices, not always in an homogeneous way. This means that the interaction between populations (as is the case found in Sofala and Zambézia provinces) produced a differentiation reflected in how the embodiment of values is brought about and in the meaning given to them.

We should also consider that, though there are notable differences between the provincial capitals of Cabo Delgado, Zambézia and Sofala and between districts that are more exposed to contact with modernity, such as Mocuba and Búzi, we were able to demonstrate that the contamination with public discourses about health, education and human rights have affected the organisation and contents of the initiation rites. We should however point out once again that with respect to the north of the country, particularly in Cabo Delgado (even in the provincial capital), the ethnolinguistic groups that are object of this research seek to preserve in a more explicit way the spatial organisation, the duration and the contents of the ceremonies, which does not happen so clearly in, for example, Sofala.

Taking into account the space, the duration, the ritual ceremonies and the aggregation, we should point out that with respect to the protection of the space, which is the element guaranteeing, by its sacred character, that the rites are accomplished, it became clear that regarding the male initiation rites, with the exception of Quelimane and Beira, their inviolability and the performance of practices considered central in the construction of adulthood, are systematically sought to be preserved, though the duration has been

shortened and some ceremonies simplified, which may, as an opposite sign, also contain differentiated forms of experiencing and projecting the rites to daily life.

We were however also able to establish that the similarities in the construction of an adult identity by the rites are confronted with new realities that question the attempts to immobilize the cultural bodies, as is the case of the intervention of the health sector in circumcision (even the inclusion of circumcision in cultures which did not practice it, as is the case of the *Senas* and the *Ndaus*), the change of the time of the ritual (which has a sense that goes beyond the material meaning given to it), the influence of education (not only by what is taught, but particularly by the new rehierarchizations and normatives) and the circulation of the youths (even in rural areas) through other spaces, in which new information and new lifestyles are superimposed.

On the other hand, and this situation is more evident in the initiation rites of girls, the fact that the rites are frequently performed individually in a space not far away from home, makes us believe not only in the relative importance of the male rites in relation to the female ones, but also in the existence of changes produced by the concentration of the ceremonies and by the non-sharing of the ceremonial, which gave sense to sociability. Although this theme will be resumed in the following section, for us it was particularly relevant to understand how the solitary cantonment of the girls (though accompanied by godmothers, counsellors and more rarely matrons) produced elements of belonging to the group of pairs and to the collectivity.

Finally, as elaborated on in the previous chapter, we observed a hardening of the positions of the traditional leaders, matrons and masters, who seek to produce, in the interstices of State power, new spaces and new elements of legitimacy. This is not only to negotiate strategies for reaching a consensus about "traditional" norms but to use these norms to impose, through the promotion of local cultures (even if these constitute openly a rupture with the law and the State policies), a certain idea of Mozambicanness which, while being of

interest for the political power (to maintain itself), functions as a kind of "threat" currently expressed in the control and ambiguity of the political discourse.

3. Gender identities and sexual identities: agreements and resistance

The analysis of gender identities has been object of debate insofar as it produces more knowledge about the power structure that organizes inequality. Although it is not our intention to refer to the related theoretical questions, it is important to clarify the choices made in the research. In the first place, while we do not yet consider gender as an imploding concept as suggested by Bonder (1998), we think that it is necessary, and this research has clearly demonstrated it, not to fix it only to a construction of the mechanisms that guide the model of inequality, but to relate it to dynamics that, acting on the social order, may both be threatening and strengthening it. This means that, even when we are facing signs of a preservation of the gender order, we should understand the forms of resistance or of adjustment that produce tensions and ambiguities, affecting the way in which the gender relations, as constituents of power relations, manifest themselves (not always in a coherent way) at the level of discourses and practices. For this reason, as happens with social identities, gender identities should be understood taking into account the historical contexts in which they are produced, and also and mainly how the processes of interaction and individuation are reconstituted. In other words, we intended not only to draw on the analysis of cultural bodies that model juvenile identities, but also on how these identities are constructed in their movement and complexity, compromising or not these cultural bodies through discourses that may express conformation or/and conflicts with transmitted values, as well as with the strategies used for the recognition of the self and the other or, as mentioned above, of the other in oneself.

It is in this sense that it is difficult to dissociate gender identities from sexual identities, because if the former take us to an understanding of power and inequality, sexual identities are the

nucleus that allows us to understand how, through control over the body, the mechanisms that constrain the practice of sexuality manifest and reproduce, or rupture themselves. While gender identities identify themselves with manhood and womanhood, sexual identities take us to how we think and live sexuality. This being the case, gender, as Louro argues, concerns the construction of representations and social practices, i.e., identities are constructed from gender relations, which means that "gender, like ethnicity or nationality, creates the identity of an individual, for example" (Louro, 2007:25). Therefore, as the link between gender and sexuality is evident, it is necessary to understand that they refer to distinct realities and to processes and mechanisms that, though interrelated, are constructed differently. This means that in the course of the history of societies and individuals, gender and sexuality are subject to changes, recompositions and ruptures, which in the analysis obliges us to avoid the temptation, while considering the dynamics that intervene in the structure of the relations of domination, to "fix" cultural contexts.

Sexuality, regarding its representations and its exercise, should be understood in its relation to social, cultural and political contexts, and also on the basis of how the experiences of individuals are linked to normative patterns (Alferes, 2002). These normative patterns can be legal mechanisms, as the author mentions, but can also be supported, as is the case of Mozambique, by culturally legitimated practices, the pivot of which are the forms of family socialization based on representations and practices clarified in the statuses conferred to each one of its members and on the hierarchies that organize the distribution of power.

Sexual identities should be recognized, as Foucault (1976) argues, from the production of discourses about sex, of regulatory norms that, legitimately accepted, are considered to be producers of truth. The norms are embodied, are reiterated, but are also contested. Sexuality, according to Foucault, should be analysed through the knowledge and norms that are produced about it and through the powers that structure its representations and practices.

The concept of sexuality used in this research concerns both the discourse of sex and sex life and the actions that programme the practice of sexuality (and its possibility or interdiction) in contexts in which there are variables that place female sexuality and male sexuality at different levels. Referring to female sexuality, Heilborn (1999) shows how it is profoundly marked by an organisation of power, "in which the control of the norms of this knowledge is attributed to the man" (1999:45), simultaneously revealing however the changes that may occur, namely, the transition to another status, due to pregnancy or marriage.

In the rites we observe that sexuality is learned/transmitted through an authoritarian pedagogy shaping the initiatees of both sexes as non-subjects, from where the recognizable values and signs of adulthood are recreated and inculcated, in a binomial in which women and men interact, on the basis of a structure that reiterates domination. This is expressed in how male sexuality and female sexuality are constructed: while male sexuality does not have the same marker character, because the social evaluation made of it is based on the sexual freedom (which is also a constraint) to demonstrate the virility of the man (which is the hard core of the elements of masculinity), for girls femininity is constructed around the repression of their sexuality. Sexuality with its prescriptions and interdictions, as well as its possibilities of expression, is simultaneously a subject of culture, or rather, a mechanism through which culture orders the representations and actions of individuals. As sexuality is pivotal for an understanding of the gender order (constrained to modes and models), it is at the same time a threat to the order, as is the case of girls who, though ritualized and subject to an identity "modelling", break with the social norms, using or not what they have learned in the rites.

The construction of masculinities and femininities runs through the various themes treated in this chapter, taking into account our intention to identify the constituent elements of the gender identities conveyed during the ritual process, the meanings given to them and the mechanisms of subjectivation. The conventions about manhood and womanhood are thus based on practices and subject to change

and negotiation. For Connell (1995),[130] as quoted by Esteban, "physical practices are interactive and reflexive insofar as they contain social relations and symbolisms" (2004:62). To this extent, "gender practices are reflexive-cultural practices that always appear in interaction; practices that are neither internal nor individual, but conform the social world" (2004: 58).

It is in this framework that the hegemonic masculinities express themselves through power and control mechanisms that constitute them as dominant, organised by a heterosexual normative,[131] which, for Butler (1990), constitutes itself in a heteronormative matrix. The violence that is exerted on boys during the rites contributes to the hegemony of a model of masculinity the object of which is the subordination of women, through the demonstration of not being a woman (requiring a continuous manifestation of being a man and being approved by other men). The hegemonic masculinity is structural for the organisation of social relations and as Bonino says "has a powerful normative force" (2004:2).

In the wake of Connell, Vale de Almeida (2000) characterises hegemonic masculinity as normalized by heteronormativity, expressed in discourses and practices and also in the occupation of spaces, in the use of resources and in how the self and the others are evaluated. As is evident in the initiation rites becoming a man consists of overcoming trials that involve effort, courage, enduring pain, competence to sustain a family, so that they will be recognized by themselves and by other men as non-women. For example, in the separation phase, the boys not only distance themselves from childhood but also from the mother who shapes, as a female, what they should not be: thus manhood constructs itself in opposition to womanhood, while womanhood is constructed as a complement subjected to manhood (Kimmel, 1997).

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[130] Connell (1995). *Bodies, masculinities*. Oxford/Cambridge: Polity Press.
[131] We should however make it clear that the "marginal" masculinities find alternative forms to shape masculinities, whether by the reproduction of the model of domination that structures the gender order or by the production of other forms of affirmation of masculinity.

Masculinity, as Connel (2005) and Kaufman (1989) argue, should thus be understood in the sociocultural context which constructs and normalizes a model of hegemonic masculinity with a mandate that organizes its roles on the basis of an unquestionable model of domination. This model finds expression in the opposition of male qualities to female qualities, in the increasing expansion of the discourse of human rights and in the contributions of the feminist movement to the deconstruction of a subordinate condition which grants men the power to control women.

As Kaufman (1989) and Giddens (1995) state, the contexts, namely women's access to education and the changes occurring in the political and legal field, have produced changes in the standards of masculinity and femininity that change values and norms, acting on the hegemony of a model of masculinity.

In the contexts of modernity, and observed by us during the research (mainly in Quelimane and Beira), there is as a result of the discourses of rights and the actions of civil society organisations and of State sectors, particularly education, some visibility of the conflict that opposes various models of masculinity, subject to threats and recomposition, including new references and new ways of thinking. It was interesting to establish how these new elements embody new social identities, presenting themselves as dominant or in a fragmented form (in discourses about qualities and also in the reasoning about female sexual initiatives). However, it became clear that the initiation rites seek to transmit an essentialist idea of masculinity, in which boys have to prove continuously that they are men, sharing experiences and producing discourses, in a tenacious quest for acceptance by their pairs. As we will have the opportunity to analyse, the confrontation of positions observed in the interviews, revealing the existence of different forms of appropriation of the elements learned, is subliminally hidden when defining the attribution of power in the relation between men and women.

Currently, female and male researchers of masculinity (as for example Bonino, 2004) set male powers openly expressed and exercised on a social and cultural basis (pure and simple patriarchal

power) against the micropowers acting in a subtle way, but not less dominant, on women. In this situation are the acceptance of school attendance by girls, simultaneously conditioning the behaviour of girls regarding the way they dress, present themselves and visit inappropriate places, such as the "barracas" (drinking tents), exculpating both their parents who remove them from school (due to their "misbehaviour") and their boyfriends or partners to whom they give the right to invade the school area in a public demonstration of control.

From this point of view the mechanisms contained in the initiation rituals will be analysed allowing us to point out how the differences in the construction of the social identities of boys and of girls are produced, how these differences constitute themselves in male and female qualities, and the meanings that are given by the youths to the values and practices experienced in the initiation rites. It is our intention to identify if and how this embodiment is produced and which strategies are used to transgress, accept or negotiate the mechanisms of identity "formatting", producing ruptures, conflicts and/or conformation with the culturally expectable roles. The demarcation factors of the rites, the dimensions of the ritual teachings, with special attention to sexuality and the signs of permanence or change in how the appropriations by girls and boys is brought about, constitute the object of this subchapter. While before we were concerned to emphasize the "behaviour" of the ethnolinguistic groups with respect to the ritual stages, it is our intention, without disregarding the specificities found, to seek to establish tendencies and to highlight the importance of singularities that allow to clarify the role of the initiation rites in the construction of gender identities, emphasizing how the changes in the mechanisms that constitute and organize the *habitus* point or not to changes at the level of identity construction.

3.1. Demarcation factors of the ritual initiation

The markers determining participation in the initiation rituals, apparently adapted to biological factors, bring about the

establishment in the bodies of mechanisms that will differentiate the values and behaviours conferred to each one of the sexes. Circumcision and menstruation, supported by a huge emotional load, constitute the mortar of the ritual process, in which new dispositions are being constructed in a regulated disorder, directed at conformation with the dominant order.

The differences in the various regions studied between the meanings given to menstruation are expressed in the existence of longer and more detailed ceremonies, with greater or lesser public exposure of the menstruated girl. Mainly among the Muslims on the coast (Mecúfi), the girls sometimes receive also counsels about taboos and care of the menstruated body, while waiting until marriage to initiate them about sex life.[132] However, in all spatial units covered by the study, menstruation remains the same nucleus of female identification: the menstruated body, object of fear and threat, the interdictions (which may vary between different areas but with the same symbolism) and the start of the preparation for entry into the initiation rites. It was also established that, as menstruation represents a sign of change of the physiological functioning (contrary to what happens with circumcision, which less and less corresponds to physical puberty) symbolizing fertility, it seems to us that it is useful to take into account that the first menstruation (being considered by the majority of the authors a moment of rupture with childhood) assumes, as we will analyse subsequently, the quality of a continuity that starts with the lengthening of the vaginal lips and with the early growth of the breasts.

Contrary to this, there are notable differences in the circumcision in the different ethnolinguistic groups studied. The first one is that traditionally it was not practiced among *Senas* and *Ndaus.* The second one is the greater importance given to it among the *Makhuwas*, mainly those living on the coast, for reasons related to the Muslim religion. This fact leads to tensions instigated by the

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[132] We were however also informed that, in clearly Islamic contexts, soon after the teachings received about menstruation wedding ceremonies are held, thus forming a continuum between the girls' menstruation, ritual teachings and unions.

intervention of the health sector which, through the school and community leaders, has sought to carry out circumcision in the health units. This situation which can give rise to conflicts has not been completely solved in the north of Mozambique, where one has opted for having nurses travelling to the community, or to insist with the families and masters to use sterilized blades. On the other hand, among the *Makondes*, the majority of whom Christian, where tradition only imposed the incision of part of the foreskin, the guidelines of the health sector have caused some discomfort among communities, mainly because the removal of the foreskin ("tearing by hand", as some informants reported) was (and still is in some discourses) an instrument of demarcation, by defamation and insults, from the rival group.

As was shown in the previous section, circumcision is preceded by shaving the head of the children and by a ceremonial that may cause, due to the shock it brings about, an intense suffering for the children and youths, mainly in rural areas, where the masters accompanied by godfathers identified by the clothes they wear and by the instruments they have, line up the children, blindfold them, pull and cut the foreskin, using a series of plants with which they seek to avert witchcraft and speed up the process of cicatrisation. As mentioned above, circumcision has a huge symbolic character, mainly among the Muslim *Makhuwas*, represented by the small incisions made by the masters (even in the case of those who were circumcised in hospital), while only after these ceremonies the boys are ready to withdraw to the place where the ritual process will take place. Although circumcision is only a decisive moment in the separation from childhood, its effects continue during the entire ritual process, not only because of the more or less prolonged duration of the cure but mainly because it shows the boy that he has a new body, and a preponderant place in the construction of the new status is reserved to this body, represented by the exposure of the glans, as if the biological function had transformed itself by the mutilation into a cultural phenomenon which recognises in the exposed penis the nucleus of masculinity. It is no coincidence that the boys narrate the frivolities done after cicatrisation, the object of which being pride of

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the virile power represented by the removal of the foreskin that covered it. Circumcision symbolizes inclusion, aggregating the boys who did it, giving them the right to sharing and belonging, to the identification of knowledge and attitudes recognized by their pairs and by the girls belonging to the same ethnolinguistic group. I.e., circumcision is an expression of the cultural cohesion of the community, identifying it and distinguishing it from other groups. For this reason, from the circumcision and during the entire process of the ritual, the parents and godfathers of the children shall not have sexual intercourse, as a form of protection of the son who is outside the world, who is preparing himself to "traverse" a course that transforms him from a non-person into a person. The interruption of sexual intercourse symbolizes the suspended life of the initiatee during this period, as is characterised by Turner (1974).

The non-performance of circumcision (in the Northern Region) is object of mockery and exclusion, for example when the boys are bathing in the river. I.e., the non-circumcised boy represents a threat and a challenge to the social and cultural norms, because he is not yet a person. In our fieldwork, it became clear that boys who returned to the community, after many years of separation, had to submit themselves to circumcision, under penalty of having to leave for another place. This fact shows that circumcision is a condition for ritualization, i.e., it is the physical and symbolic marker of male identity, allowing boys to be welcomed to the sacred space and be returned to the community as adults.

Mainly in the north of the country, circumcision is thus for boys the point in time marking their entry into the rites, which may or may not be related to the appearance of the first signs of puberty. However, and this was often mentioned in Cabo Delgado (but also in other regions and in other ethnolinguistic groups), there is currently a decrease of the age of the children taken to the initiation rites, which has to do with the fact that school learning (and not only that) constitutes a source of information that may interfere with the construction of the system of beliefs transmitted in the rites. For many of the interviewees, when the youths enter into the rites they are a tabula rasa on which the elements that will organize and direct

their inclusion into the community will be established. Well then, the removal of their daughters and sons from possible contamination by other lifestyles, including relations of conviviality with their pairs, when the families intend to decrease the risks of possible resistance, considering the age of the initiated children (9 to 10 years), may be contributing to the ineffectiveness of the rites or to culturally not expectable reappropriations. We observe this with the departure of the youths to other places, in which by the absorption of new identity elements they move away from their place of origin, they withdraw from their family, which effectively ceases being a mechanism of social security. When, as already mentioned, the informants tell us that the assertion that "an educated son is poison for the father" (Dimas 2) is common, or when they insistently say that boys today do not fulfil their obligation of taking care of their parents, or also when they tell us about cases of suicide due to abandonment, we are facing facts that, while perhaps not yet representing a tendency, indicate changes that threaten the dispositions constructed in the ritual process.

The majority of the interviewed boys did circumcision very early (particularly in Cabo Delgado and Zambézia) and in general all of them agree that it should be carried out (because it represents a rupture with childhood) and a large majority also thinks that the rites should be performed between 10 and 13 years because: "while a person is young he can understand something about respect and other things, when he is grown up he doesn't understand anything" (Vasco 3). As stated above, this opinion, which is also repeated by the masters, shows that if the boys enter later into the rites, it will according to the informants be more difficult for them to embody the various dimensions of the teachings.

Among the *Senas* and *Ndaus*, mainly in Cheringoma and Búzi districts, Sofala Province, in the Central Region of the country, circumcision has only in the two last decades started to be introduced, in the framework of the fight against HIV and AIDS. Being hygiene the argument used for the performance of circumcision, the markers for the initiation rites are determined by the parents' observation of the behaviour of their children, such as

the change of their voice, the hardening of their sexual organ (*tokotatumbuka*),[133] wet dreams and ejaculation. For the masters this means a limitation of their power, given that a practice was imposed on the boys that may force a reshaping of the sexual teachings, whether by the symbolic co-option of circumcision or by the little importance given to it. Regarding the question of circumcision some masters either are uninterested or reproduce the rhetoric of hygiene. This means that boys participate in the rites, circumcised or not.

It is also interesting to note that, though many *Sena* and *Ndau* boys have not been circumcised, the reasoning of hygiene, used by the health sector in coordination with the school, has had effect, since almost all interviewed boys said that they had been or will be circumcised, adding to the information obtained the idea (somehow one intends to legitimate the removal of the foreskin) that the suffering caused constitutes another proof of their virility, as was said by a *Ndau* boy: "a circumcised man feels a woman intimately" (Luís 6).

With regard to girls, in all ethnolinguistic groups menstruation (though there are also cases that the appearance of breasts is sufficient for the families to send their daughters to the rites) is the factor of demarcation for their initiation, with the first menstruation being, as Geldstein and Pantelides state (2003) a mandate for sexual initiation. However, though in a smaller number than for boys, information was also obtained that nowadays girls initiate the rites earlier (however at a later age than boys, with some exceptions observed in Macomia, where *Makonde* girls may not wait for their menstruation), not only due to fear for the contamination by other knowledge, but also because girls constitute an economic asset used for the survival of the families, which may be called into question when a girl is not a virgin or has already become pregnant at a certain point in time.

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[133] *Tokotatumbuka* means corncob in *Sena*.

The girl's virginity has also to do with the payment of a matrimonial compensation (*lobolo*), such as in the case of the *Senas* of Inhaminga, as a female teacher said:

> "If she is not a virgin the parents will lose that part of the soft drinks, of the crates, so the godmothers teach how to put a medicine that stays like a rock, so that the vagina closes again; this plant is called *ntombo wakubvalira* and after that she abstains one day from food and asks for forgiveness because she did it ahead of the correct time and made her parents lose" (Deolinda 20).

Virginity,[134] while it has served as a weapon for the defence of ethnic superiority, as happens among the *Makondes* and *Makhuwas*, has been object of recomposition strategies, whether through ceremonies performed in churches aimed at recreating a symbolic virginity (as happens with the Nazareth Church in Sofala), or by the use of plants that, drying the vagina, give the illusion of virginity. This is a phenomenon allowing to establish how the rites, with respect to new realities and contexts, while seeking to preserve its structure, are giving up some of their functions. The remarks of the above-mentioned informant constitutes a tendency regarding non-conformism with the current reality, which does not allow control of innocence, of what may and should be known, and of the power of knowledge (that the youth today is allowed to have), which restricts the formatting of juvenile identities. It is on the other hand also interesting to observe that many of the parties directly involved in the rites, such as matrons and masters, even with knowledge of the current contexts and the plurality of information that the youth is receiving, stage the information about menstruation in the same way, transmitting fear and constructing symbolisms with respect to the menstrual blood and to the secret and the care to have (not only with personal hygiene) in their relations with others. It is in this context of

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[134] In addition to other methods used to prove virginity, there are examples of the use of a plant which is placed in a hole in the ground "and when she tries to take it out it starts to break, saying she isn't a virgin, and the child's mother gets demoralized and everybody starts to laugh" (Antónia 3).

prohibitions and permissions (not being respected may result in death and disease) that the myths are constituted whose function, as Héritier states, is to legitimate and give sense to the "established social order" (1989:17), i.e., to ensure male domination.

As the menstrual blood is dirty, it is simultaneously dangerous because while it cannot be controlled it allows procreation (Détrez, 2003), simultaneously containing the unknown and the evil, as is exemplified by these remarks of a *Makhuwa Lomwé* matron: "after the end of your cycle, only five days afterwards, you are allowed to have sex with your husband, otherwise he will get a hernia and will get those big testicles" (Zita 1). For this reason, the counsels and the series of rituals that accompany the first menstruation are structured by fear on the part of the girls and by a series of recommendations that have to do with control over the body and with the fact that menstruation confers a power which, if exerted, can break the mechanisms that regulate and discipline the body. The girls' bodies correspond through their tears and the godmothers by their oppressive questioning to cultural codes that direct behaviours "responding to social and cultural norms" (Détrez, 2002:79). In other words, it is expected of the girls that they cry and of the godmothers and matrons that they shout and punish.

Thus, a social fact is constructed over the biological fact and, as Checa (2003) argues, the gender identities are revealed by the menstruated body, constructed from how its use is perceived: "menstrual blood is dirty and as such represents the natural explanation of the inferiority of women, while the display and also the legitimation of domination is present in the female body" (Détrez, 2002:183).

The dirt and the danger of menstruation, because when not controlled it constitutes a symbolic possibility of power, is explained by whom transmits the counsels as a form of setting the norm for hygiene, but mainly to regulate behaviours through interdictions, whose function is to format female behaviour, through the myths that are transmitted. In this regard a group of matrons in Quelimane said: "we told the girl that the must really be afraid, have respect, when

meeting older people walking slowly, otherwise your modess[135] may fall down, we are only threatening" (Zita 1).

The girls, even those who already knew somehow the functioning of the human body, are afraid, because this is what is expected of them:

> "I was very afraid, and kept silent, then I started to ask my aunt, and she said you have already slept with an adult man, I cried and denied it; then, my aunt, you may even die, and then they put me in a house and talked about more things (you are already grown up, you can't play around just like that)" (Vânia 1).

This form of dealing with menstruation is much less violent in urban areas and in families that are more open to information, but the mother of the child is rarely involved in the counsels that follow the first menstruation, since this marks the rupture with childhood, and the proximity of the mother may be perceived as a rejection of the relevance of the situation, as a woman counsellor of the rites informed us:

> "From now on you cannot do like this, this is a disease. (...) You first frighten the girl, her grandmother starts frightening the girl, I just don't know how you got this, I don't know if you slept with a man, I don't know what happened, how you got this disease. This disease is very dangerous, so you must hide this, you must not leave it lying about, someone who does not have this yet, you must not tell her, even not a friend, you must not tell her" (Amélia 5).

The influence of the churches that mediate between tradition and modernity, and the fact that the teachings about menstruation, colliding with other teachings, do not attain the results expected by the families, leads ministers and priests in some regions, such as in Quelimane and Beira, to bless the menstruated girls on the occasion of their first menstruation, sanctifying a biological phenomenon which constitutes itself simultaneously as a commitment and a

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[135] "Modess" is a brand of a sanitary towel.

sharing of experiences linked to beliefs and cohesion with the community.

In some cases, such as in Búzi, a series of ceremonies is performed during the first menstruation aimed at guaranteeing the fertility of the girl, as was said by a female health agent:

> "For example, when a girl has her first menstruation, they usually take that cloth, but another cloth is cut of the mother's *capulana*, it is fastened and put in a tree, under a tree, then she starts there to clap hands, to show that her daughter is already a woman. They say that you have to take that rag and give it to your grandmother, your grandmother prepares the blood in a little pan and usually puts it in a cool place, may be on the river bank, near a well, bury it there, for the fertility of the woman to be always fresh. (…) They have to know that the place is here, so that in the case of ceremonies if that woman does not conceive, they will go there, start performing all those ceremonies there" (Dilma 13).

However, it is interesting to establish that the fear shown, the questioning to which they are subjected, the huge list of interdictions in their relations with others and with daily life (for example, the prohibition to cook or to put salt in the food), exerts on the girls, as Bettelheim states, "an irresistible fascination (…) because they believe that their menstruation gives them power over men" (Bettelheim, 1971:31). It is this power arising from their condition of being a woman which brings many interviewed girls to combine their fear and timidity to talk about menstruation with pride revealing a magic power they have and can use.

The body is thus a place where social representations are expressed that are constructed as culturally legitimate. It is in this sense that circumcision as well as genital mutilation, such as the lengthening of the vaginal lips, are explained as cultural elements. However, as Héritier states, these are not of the same order of magnitude because while the effect of circumcision is "to give evidence of a kind of permanent virility by the display of the gland" (Héritier, 2002:172),

the effect of female genital mutilation is to constrain the woman to sexual subordination, which is the key field of male domination.

While in all ethnolinguistic groups menstruation is a marker for ritual initiation, it was however established that needy families have sometimes economic difficulties that brings them to postpone the inclusion of their daughters for one or two years. This situation shows that the monetization of the rites is today a reality, part of the market economy, with reflexes on the role and function of the rites. In other words, contrary to the past when the amounts given (often in the form of some food) had a merely symbolic value, because what was decisive for the cultural cohesion of the community was that all girls were subjected to the rites, what is observed today is that there is not only an adjustment of the rites to new realities, but also that the main parties involved have professionalized the rituals, which have lost a large part of their symbolic load.[136] This means that the current survival of the rites has not only to do with safeguarding past culture, but also with the maintenance of a power which is not only expressed economically but also socially and politically. The discourse of the preservation of culture is a recourse permanently used by almost all interviewees of both sexes, having an effect of exclusion on all those who did not do the rites, as a group of *Makonde* women teachers in Pemba informed us:

> "When you grow up and you are not ceremonized, you will not have friendship with anybody, (...) also because you have no education. (...) It is thus, tradition is tradition, it is at this moment that you know that you shall not enter your father's room, neither stay with him in his bed, your father will get inflamed, he will feel like a man, he will feel that this person is a woman and there are even cases in which the father renders his daughter pregnant" (Antónia 1).

There is in these remarks in the first place an idea that the rites provide stability, with a normative defining the behavioural codes in

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[136] This situation can somehow be seen as a resymbolization in a market logic, maintaining its efficacy in a new frame of reference.

the family and in the second place that the absence of this education produces disorder, expressed in incest and justified by a rupture with tradition. This means that the "disappearance" of the rites points for most of the older informants, particularly masters and matrons but also women teachers and Government officials (though for the latter a sharp ambiguity is evident between the respect taught in the rites and the respect constructed in other spaces) to a profound social instability, affording that disorder is established within the group, breaking with the order regulating the positions of each individual and giving rise to the disgrace of the group and to social degeneration.

3.2. The dimensions of ritual teachings

As was demonstrated in previous chapters, the key dimensions of the initiation rites teachings are respect and sex life. We can even state that the function of these two dimensions, constituting the ultimate goal of the rites, is not only and fundamentally to transmit some cultural specificity, but to guide the construction of social identities that seek to reproduce the social, political and cultural order in agreement with the preservation of a power structure organised by mechanisms of control of the social subjects. In this sense, it would perhaps be more effective and rigorous to call the initiation rites cultural institutions where cultural practices are performed, rather than to reduce this form of organisation of knowledge and attitudes simply to peculiarities that can be presented as dispersed and without the meaning contained in the rites.

Respect, which is the main component of the discourse of the female and male interviewees, does not contain, as some utopia would have us believe, tolerance, equal rights, respect for others, inclusion, but is mainly a quality which segregates or aggregates, which ties or unties the social actors to/from a certain order of values and practices. It was very interesting to verify the almost total unanimity of the female and male informants in removing the meaning of respect from the system of beliefs, i.e., of an ideology clearly based on the distribution and hierarchization of power. While it may mean everything and

nothing, respect must be socially and culturally contextualized, deconstructed in each one of its components (taking into account the meaning given to it) and again constructed as an idea, with which one can operate.

The other dimension studied was the contents and the meanings given by the girls and boys to the teachings about the body. It is interesting to establish, particularly in the discourse of young girls, that sexuality is perceived and lived on the basis of service to the other, in a system which explains or implicitly removes access to and the exercise of the right of choice. The permissions and interdictions, that may appear phenomena of empowerment to more distracted views, reveal in fact a power structure based on a gender order.

3.2.1. The question of respect

The teaching of respect is one of the main components of the initiation rites and is intimately related to the inequality between women and men, while its contents have clearly to do with the cultural heritage and with how the social gender relations are structured. The meaning that is given to respect, to obedience and even to the way of looking at other people is a distinctive form corresponding to cultural representations that attribute differentiated rights and obligations to men and women: while men learn to provide, to render pregnant and to protect their wife and children, incorporating the transmitted values (and strengthened by imitation), the obligations to serve and care are attributed to women. As a *Makonde* master told us:

> "The wife should wake up in the morning, leave her husband in bed, go outside, fetch water, puts it in the bathroom, goes inside again, talks to her husband, there is already water for you, she then starts to wash the dishes, then when her husband leaves the house, she stays to wash his dirty clothes" (Armindo 1).

In this regard, a boy added: "the woman should be in the *machamba* with her husband, after that she should search for firewood, find

curry, give food to the children" (Vasco 7). And a good husband is characterised as:

> "A good man is one who doesn't beat, a good man is able to get money, who doesn't finish it drinking, who also finds a way to buy food for the family, to buy clothes for his wife, to respect his wife, to respect his family, inclusive his wife's family" (Amélia 5).

There is a sexual division of labour not only corresponding to the distribution of differentiated tasks, but also to the symbolism that is given to the qualities of both sexes: to the man-provider corresponds the woman who produces the conditions that ensure the male mandate, i.e., the differences are hierarchized, as is evident in these remarks of an official of a Gender Unit of the Education sector:

> "A house is like a company, there is always a boss. This boss is the father of our children, head of the household, even if people talk about gender equality, we have to understand that this equality does not mean that the husband is going to cook or wash the napkins of the baby, it also does not mean that the wife goes out at night and goes to the bar, as her husband does, because her reputation will be affected" (Ana 12).

Rena explains how the "naturalization of the leadership of the family can, through symbolic and pragmatic mechanisms, exert control over the female body and reproductive life" (2006:39). An interesting aspect of this notion of respect is the embodiment in some discourses of notions such as "not beating the woman" and "helping the woman on the *machamba*", which are product of the influence of a certain modern discourse already embodied in the practices of men and women. However, and in the inland rural areas, beating and punishing are practices legitimated by the non-fulfilment of household chores.

The question of work and of providing, in view of juvenile unemployment and the impossibility to keep studying, is today a focus of major tensions: while the interviewed youths describe their qualities, they show difficulties in exercising them. It is the situation

lived by many boys, mainly in the Central Region of the country, who refuse completely to live with their partner in a house that is owned by her, or even whose salary is higher than his. This situation is perceived as a reversal of socially legitimated values. In the rites, the teachings about attributes assume proportions of great violence which are distinctive marks vis-à-vis the non-initiates and vis-à-vis girls and women.

What is clear in all spatial units, is that a pattern still continues to exist which distinguishes attributes, corresponding to power relations and being an object of conflict when behaviours do not correspond to the patriarchal culture. This situation is visible in the discourse of many masters and matrons who, particularly referring to girls, deplore that the sexual division of labour, the respect due to the husband (who is always the head of family) and the husband's family, the resignation and tolerance with domestic violence, are today questioned by some of the girls who are charged with the burden of family violence and destabilization. It is interesting to observe that the accusation of boys and girls of breaking with male and female attributes, are more vehemently expressed in the case of girls, possibly because a new femininity constitutes a threat to the preservation of the patriarchal culture. I.e., while the attributes conferred by the rites to men can still be reconciled with the socially legitimated model of domination, the changes introduced by modernity, denaturalizing female submission, may constitute a risk for the stability of the cultural model. In this resistance of girls to obedience and resignation, the adoption of new ways of life, from dressing to socializing with their circle of friends, we find perhaps the explanation for the affirmation, so often expressed by our female and male interviewees, that "formerly these things of violence did not exist, there was a lot of respect, she would be silent, waiting and afterwards could talk to her husband" (Zita 1).

Bonino (2004) refers to the categories which he calls utilitarian micro-machismos, which are those who delegate to women the responsibilities for the distribution of household chores. It is what we found in the research, when teachers and authorities see the domestic occupation of girls as natural, accepted and even claimed by

them as their competence: "men should learn to cook in case there is no woman at all to do it" (Dora 1). The provider character inherent in male subjectivity organised in the "dominant hierarchical way" (Bonino, 2004:177-180) is an element that appears in the discourses of boys and as a result of the male mandate of superiority, and also as a lamentation of this very mandate when, for example, interviewed boys complained of the lack of male employment, without taking into account that this lament largely followed the male claim of the provision of the house. The construction of an essentialist masculinity that is based on a reference to their competence for power, for example through the sustenance of the house, slips frequently into the activation of other mechanisms of domination that justify the continuation of the exercise of power.

This means that women and men are not only under community vigilance, but they also practise self-vigilance in the fulfilment of their mandate, shaping the principles of a disciplinary society which produces docile bodies in the sense given to it by Foucault (1984), as these remarks illustrate well:

> "A girl has to enter into the initiation rite in order to learn a lot more about life. But I entered upon insistence because it was not my free will. But after having entered into the initiation rite I did not like it much, I liked it a bit because I learned many things. I learned how I can respect my family, I learned how to live with the elderly, I learned how to take care of my own home" (Leocádia 3).

The differences between male and female attributes (showing how gender is ritualized) is also observed in the meaning given to the aggregation ceremonies which for girls mean to show their beauty, to sing and dance cautiously, while boys distinguish the importance of displaying their body, with their long trousers (symbolizing manhood) and with the money given to them. There is a performative demonstration in these ceremonies of the place which each boy and each girl is allowed to occupy in the community.

There is a crisis of masculinity when traditionally male competences are introduced in the construction of womanhood, hence answers

such as the devaluation of school attendance, as if female conquests, such as power, had been granted by men: "I have to be the head of the family, because men are taller" (Vasco 2). This notion of magnitude has to do with the power that is given to men and with the representation of women as "incomplete" beings, naturally incapable of taking their lives into their own hands. The position of many teachers, particularly women teachers, clearly opposes this discourse. They emphasize passionately the affirmation of equality, though this equality often doesn't question the power structure, i.e., there is no divergence from the excluding normativity.

As already mentioned, in towns, and this situation was particularly visible in Quelimane and in Beira, the rites are often performed by the boys alone, accompanied by their parents and by an older person (godfather)[137] who, belonging or not to the family, is socially and culturally respected. However, this informality does not prevent the transmission of knowledge about masculinity and about the expectations related to the behaviour of the partner, as is the case of this *Sena* boy in Beira City:

> "I was 13, I learned that a good woman is one who does not return late when she goes to the market, who knows that the neck and the legs of the chicken are for the man, who takes care of her husband, who does not dress just like that" (Luís 1).

Regarding sexuality, these remarks also transmit the idea that boys should take the sexual initiative, because "a girl who takes the initiative is good-for-nothing", also showing that who expresses these words recognises the behaviour of an initiated girl. However, in the discourse of this and of other urban boys, the fundamental relevance of the rite is the assumption of the status of adulthood (of which the aggregation party is the main occasion) which gives them belonging to the group of older men, without being clear if and how this teaching was embodied in their behaviour. Allusions to the fact that

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[137] In the notion of respect the gender and generation components are linked in shaping the hierarchical matrix.

town life is different from life in the bush "there they do a lot of things" (clearly perceived in the question of children's human rights and in the rejection of domestic violence) are introduced in the narrative, and may mean a wish to transmit the possession of information, and also expressing a change of attitude with respect to the gender power structure.

This kind of hybrid discourse reveals that juvenile identities are fluid and complex, their permanence being subject to processes and mechanisms of individuation and subjectivation, which may be changed in the course of life by the contexts and by the possibilities of choice in social identification and recognition. This means that though the options for lifestyles, values and practices are conditioned by a dominant order providing the limits of the identity "autonomy", they should rely on opportunities allowing the establishment of new practices reflected in representations and in new ways of "being" in social relations.

When questioned about the contents of the respect taught in the rites many boys responded in a very controlled way, as these remarks of a boy in Macomia shows:

> "The master said that, after leaving the initiation rite, you are already grown up, you are already of our age. Thus, you should respect the elderly, neither steal nor go to the market, nor sit among boys doing things. You should go and help the elderly at home and go on doing your homework. And you are also already grown up, now you are ready to face and challenge any kind of woman irrespective of being old or a girl. You may have sex with these people, you are already prepared for that, you are already grown up" (Vasco 10).

Describing the attributes learned in the initiation rites, a girl in Pemba stated: "they taught me to work well at home, to leave everything clean, to obey my husband, to have patience when he is angry" (Vânia 1) and another girl in Macomia added: "the husband commands his wife, a woman has to keep silent when her husband comes home angry, and he also says how many children he wants" (Vânia 7).

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Regarding what it is to be a good man and a good woman, though in all ethnolinguistic groups respect is described, which for women is obedience and for men "to eat what she has prepared, not getting angry, educating his wife", there are however variations with respect to the legitimacy of domestic violence, which is more acceptable among some groups in the north of the country, possibly due to the cohesive way in which the rites shape masculinity, in which male power is organized as an established whole through the knowledge that is transmitted and the trials to which they are subjected. For some boys domestic violence consecrates the need to discipline the woman, culminating the male mandate for domination. As we will see in the following remarks, there is a perception that beating his wife is an obligation justified by the non-fulfilment of her attributes, being simultaneously an anticipation of the normality which organizes in a stable way the relations between partners:

> "The woman today does something here, and you immediately tell her that you don't like that thing. She continues to do it and the day after she does the same thing. Damn, I don't like this what you are doing to me. After that they said they had to go to the house of her brother, to go and talk, then if she does it again, while she is being told by her brother, you just give her a good hiding, but don't get used to that" (Vasco 5).

However, and possibly due to the conjugation of various factors such as school attendance, the discourse of rights and the dissemination of legislation penalizing domestic violence, there is a narrative which, while justifying violence (when there is no other way to solve the problem), restricts it to what is considered to be absolutely outside the norm. It is as if the violence exerted against women would symbolically confer added value to the act – he beat her after having exhausted all initiatives, he beat her in spite of being opposed to violence, he beat her because he is a man and she was beaten because she is a woman.

In gender relations we can establish how manhood and womanhood are constructed through the practices. This means to understand the effect of male domination through male organisation which

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penetrates into all fields, as for example the exercise of violence against women, justified by some initiated boys as resulting from the ritual non-fulfilment on the part of girls. I.e., while the rites are acquired as organisational mechanisms of adulthood, always perceived and accomplished by the constitution of a family, the transgressions threaten and question not only the mechanisms used to conform the bodies, but are also factors that point to the disintegration of hegemonic masculinity, as these remarks of a boy in Quelimane clearly express:

> "In those days a man would be explained that he had to be the boss of the woman or in this case that the woman is inferior to the man. Irrespective of the age of this man, this man was considered a man within the family, because of the physical preparation he had received in the rites. You would get exhausted with all those tasks, you were told immediately that your main target is the woman, i.e., all this training is for you how you will be yourself in society, in this case how you will respect your child, how you will deal with your wife. But the main target they had here in this case was the woman. So, if a person is physically prepared and the indicated target is the woman, then when the woman had a deficiency, he would return to that time of the training he had, the suffering he had to endure, the kind of tree trunk he had to carry, how he did it, then he would see, I was directly prepared for this woman. So, it is where a man was taken to violence. A bloke stayed there for two months isolated, carry tree trunks from here to there, without sleeping at night, singing only to come and educate this woman, if this woman does these things to me, what kind of education? I would assault her, to a certain extent they could explain that this woman is your wife, in this and in that case, but their main essence was that a man must give an education to his woman, he must explain what she should and should not do, those things that would induce a man to be an aggressive type" (Julião 2).

It is interesting that in this discourse, as in those of other boys, there is a search for detachment from domestic violence, putting the

narrative in the third person, while a certain empathy with the aggressor manifests itself, which ends up transforming itself in a guardian of the cultural normative. In this sense, these remarks of a *Sena* boy in Inhaminga District are enlightening:

> "For example, a husband comes home from work, his wife has to serve food, give him water to wash his hands, water to drink. Well, there are other women who, when their husband comes home, indicate where the food is, it is there, it is there, and she leaves, she goes out to the house of a friend, her man doesn't like it and gets annoyed. When she comes back, he asks her, where have you been? And she doesn't respond properly" (Luís 6).

Concerning domestic violence, though in general rejected by many boys and by most girls, even in urban areas there is an idea, as is the case of this *Ndau* girl student in Beira City, that "when a woman is beaten she should not complain, she should stay in her corner and cry. If her husband has no reason, then she should complain" (Luisa 2). These remarks shows in a satisfactory way that information about domestic violence is perceived by many men and women according to the status of each one, i.e., the way in which the social roles are constructed. This means that, though it is clear that beating is a crime and there are rights prohibiting violence, it may be justified in cases in which there is a violation of culturally constructed norms accepted by the victims. On the other hand, knowledge about children's and women's rights is often verbalized by boys and girls, without however impeding the justification of the use of violence in the framework of the naturalization of male superiority and of the differentiation of the rights of men and women which, culminating in the teachings of sex life, has also to do with the division of labour and with the notion of respect. This is expressed in these remarks of a girl in Inhaminga:

> "In the rites they taught how to please a husband. While she is at home she had to prepare food, would leave the food under a cover and when her husband arrives she has no right to send other food to her husband, to have other food to give him, she

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had to go out herself, get the curry and serve her husband so that he can eat. From there after having finished the meals she could talk to her husband again. How was your work today, from when you left until now, if everything is alright or not" (Luísa 6).

In the same way, though among boys there is also a perception of shared rights at school, with respect to learning and equality between women and men, violence against girls is justified, as is evident in these remarks of a boy in Búzi Town:

> "You have a reason to beat when those women leave, for example, they leave the house, leave the children, leave at 6 in the morning. If she were to leave, she should at least cook before leaving, isn't it? They leave at 6 and only return at midnight, the husband asks where have you been? That's not your business, then he gets very rebellious: how come, not my business? You are my wife, you have to tell me where you were. The husband gets angry, starts beating her, and things get nasty" (Luís 2).

This narrative is all the more curious as the boy gives an extreme example, seeking by his exaggeration the consent of the listener. It is also interesting that this same interviewee states that a man has no reason to beat when:

> "It happens that he goes out to drink, he returns home... ah, you prepared his food and everything else. He finds his food on the table, throws everything on the floor. I don't know if you didn't like it, I don't know what, then he starts to beat his wife, I don't know if it is because he is drunk or that he doesn't know what he is doing" (Luís 2).

In these remarks we find an understanding of domestic violence, while in extreme situations one simultaneously seeks to obtain it through the roles attributed to each one of the sexes.

The violence structuring the teachings of sexuality is expressed in a magnificent way in this narrative:

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"If your husband beat you, he committed a crime, but you, your heart, has not yet accepted this. (...) And you will do as if you are not angry, neither will you show you got a hiding. You will do the following, he already beat you in the morning or in the afternoon or at 18 hours, at night you had a fight, it was a big problem, so you fought. Then it was already late, you are in bed, you should open your legs because a man is different from a woman. That sperm of his, before it leaves him and enters you is very painful, it cannot stay inside him, therefore he has to get it out. And, instead of throwing it away, he has to put it in the organism of a woman, he has to take his organ and put it in her vagina. Then, in your turn, you take it and when you take it you connect two bodies, two sexes. After the frivolity, a few minutes, that thing comes out, it is wet and after it has become wet, at that moment you have warm water in the bowl under the bed. Then you wash first [the organ of the man], you clean it with a rag, you have to buy a very light towel, you can't just fetch any *capulana* because it causes wounds. First you have to take it out, do as if you are pealing a banana, then you clean it and when you take water you start to wash from the inside out, then it shrinks, leave it, don't pay any attention and go to sleep" (Zita 2).

The symbolic representations of the sexualized body of women hierarchize and justify male domination, such as when they make believe that resignation and obedience are inborn. From this point of view, Héritier states "that their cultural way of conceiving the world is dictated by the observation and the need to organize the nature of things" (2002:247). The observation of the difference between the sexes, in which the capacity of fecundity is the crucial point, has set in motion a system of representations that hierarchizes and classifies, from this observation, the distribution of power.

When we observe the question of polygamy and the position of the interviewees we found two sets of discourses on the part of women: the first one is interestingly produced by matrons and a few women teachers in the rural interior, such as Guara-Guara in Búzi District (which on the one hand points to changes existing with respect to the

sharing of loving affection, opposing the ideal discourse of a polygamous life), in which the women stated that they don't like it but accept it, using plants (*mutchena*) they put in the body or in the food of the man to seduce him, developing strategies of attraction and competition with the other women. Another set of discourses, on the part of girls and women teachers, says that polygamy is not acceptable and that they would prefer to stay alone above living in this situation.

Some civil society organisations working with the rights of women and youths informed us that also in Sofala Province polygamy is a common practice and is considered a form of family planning, since in the *Sena* and *Ndau* tradition, during breastfeeding (which may go up to two years) a woman shall not have sexual intercourse. This rational way to try to explain sexual exploitation and the work of increasingly younger women, should be perceived in the context of the construction of a masculinity that is exerted by force, hidden by the discourse of tradition and cultural wisdom about birth control. It is interesting, as said above, that opposition to polygamy begins to appear, often encouraged by the mothers, but without much success, given the inexistence of a policy of welcoming these girls on the part of the State.

Regarding the male interviewees, there are a few differentiated positions that consist, in the first place, of a categorical affirmation that having many women is a male right and a cultural tradition, which finds its justification in the essentialization of male sexual needs, but also in the fact that the older women can be freed from working in the field and from "sexual service", which may indicate the recent influence of the discourses of rights. In the second place, for the majority of the younger male interviewees, Government officials and teachers, polygamy is not accepted, but it is understood with a reasoning of African culture and pride. It is interesting to observe that even in the presence of existing legislation these positions can be expressed with relative ease and conviction, which shows two things: first, a patriarchal structure which, though subject to change, admits the possibility of maintaining some of the principles that give it cohesion, and second, the ambiguity between

legislation and public policies defending rights and some political discourse intending to restore polygamy through the manipulation of a misleading cultural argument, permanently contested by new dynamics. It is curious to note the affirmation of a few civil society interviewees who defend that the existence of many children in a polygamous context does not mean, as in times past, wealth or protection in future, since many young people emigrate and do not return, continuing however to constitute a symbol of virility.

Infidelity and adultery were two questions presented to the various groups, with the intention to get to know the veracity that women, mainly *Makhuwa* women, are permissive, not only with respect to their husbands' infidelity (as happens with the other ethnolinguistic groups) but also with respect to their own infidelity. What was established is that the myth that was created during colonization about the sexual independence of *Makhuwa* women can only be explained by a certain lack of understanding of the matrilineal lineage structure for the projection of the appearance of their body, with a saturated concentration of sexuality, for a possible liberty in the practice of sexuality. It became clear that this sexualised seduction of *Makhuwa* women, mainly on the coast, does not provide them with the means to access choices and to resist to the patriarchal imposition, while infidelity is exceptionally accepted, and only in case the husband is unable to provide for the family, but never for desire or their own will. This does therefore not change the gender order and the roles conferred to them. In other words, the sexual gratification marked on the body of *Makhuwa* women, contrary to what common sense would suppose, symbolizes a destination rendering her particularly subject to group vigilance. The use of *musiro*, of beautiful *capulanas*, the seductive looks, even if all this hides suffering and humiliation, they bring about the ritualization which turns women into dependent beings.[138]

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[138] During the pilot study fieldwork, in Mafalala District, Maputo City, one of the more powerful women was indicated to the team who could provide information about the *Makhuwa* rites. The woman, let's call her Isadora, caused a strong initial impression: her face covered with *musiro*, with very beautiful clothes, overflowing with cheerfulness and a huge ease to talk about the rites. A few days later she asked

The cultural construction of fidelity as a female quality and the naturalization of infidelity were observed in all ethnolinguistic groups, as is evident from these remarks of a girl in Beira:

> "A woman has the obligation to wait for her husband, when he is travelling, but a man cannot wait because he has many needs. A man will never forgive his wife if she has another man, but a woman will always forgive" (Luisa 4).

As already mentioned, it is observed that regarding the qualities of masculinity that are trained in the rites, though containing the same dimensions of respect and sex life, there is a series of activities that are carried out and included in the category of respect, and that should be unquestionable, as a master in Mecúfi said:

> "Nowadays women are polygamous, they have no respect for men. A female minister may have four men. The woman is the basis of the house. She educates the children, the father is the chairman of the house, the woman is the secretary. But today it is no longer like that" (Armindo 3).

Though sexual initiation is also performed very early (around 13, 14 years), the plurality of teachings which the youths receive during the rites indicates that this does not imply marriage, as a teacher in Pemba told us: "for a wife it may be at an earlier age, but on the part of a man he needs to find a *paratu*, to do the job" (Álvaro 1). On the other hand, with respect to the sexual teachings of boys conducted in the rites there is less "dramatism" and importance, at least among the *Makhuwa* group, as if there were a previous naturalization of male power: "a man needs to be gratified" (Armindo 3). In this way, in the rites he knows to identify what should wait, but his sexuality is

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to talk in private and recounted her life history, the material difficulties she had to face because her husband (though being rich) did not give her anything for the sustenance of the house, the conjugal infidelity that made her suffer and humiliated her, the defamatory looks of the neighbours and a whole series of insults she was suffering. When I asked her why she did not leave her husband, since the house was hers and she had a market stall where she did some business, her answer was: "what will they say about me, that I didn't even support a man, he seems very good to others, they will say that I am not even capable of doing those things I learned. How can I be a woman counsellor?

intimately linked to penetration, to the possession of the body and not decisively to female pleasure. Thus, in the rites, male teachings about sex have more to do with the display of an aggressive virility and with the competence to "show he is a man". As a teacher in Quelimane told us: "a man learns not to negotiate" (Zair 2).

This notion of masculinity seems however to be questioned, when it is said that men should learn to please the woman (sometimes giving the idea that this pleasure arises from the intimate satisfaction of having controlled female sexuality). The stimulants used (that allow having sex five times in a row or during a whole night), particularly among *Senas* and *Ndaus*, are part of a logic of power that needs to be updated continuously. When we put the question of pleasure in these terms some interviewed women told us: "how can you have pleasure with a man, with that weight on top of you, without sleep and waking up with a breast in his mouth" (Daniela 1).

The qualities of manhood and womanhood, as Lagarde (1997) argues, are interwoven with sexuality, insofar as this is a field in which the aspects that naturalize inequality are mainstreamed and legitimated, while sexuality and the qualities are historically and culturally constructed, as is observed by the mechanisms present in the body of the female initiates that bring about their relation to others, emitting recognizable signs, whether through lowered eyes or by how they greet and sit down, showing that they "are ready". As a male informant in Gurué District, Quelimane Province told us: "when a man arrives looking for a woman, the parents accept him to marry their daughter and this cannot be negotiated" (Ziro 3).

When we questioned a few civil society organisations about the possibility of community leaders supporting a change of the power relations, a female interviewee stated:

> "A woman is submissive because there in the community he is the one holding knowledge, though not always, but he is the one who determines everything and how I want to be in this home, I have to obey what he determines. (...) And some of them are leaders, these leaders who should pass their example to the communities" (Daniela 1).

What is evident in these narratives about respect is a profound asymmetry between the difference in the meaning given by each one of the sexes to this quality: the female obedience associated with the provision of sexual service, the resignation, the acquisition of a certain shrewdness in their relation to an "angry" man, may constitute for the less attentive observers a strategy of countervailing power, enabling women to face embarrassing situations, controlling, or "turning around", as is expressed by common sense. However, and though it is observed that girls resort to mechanisms that subordinate them to "keep" the man satisfied, they are still in a position of inferiority which manifests itself in the assumption of male power and in being responsible for his appeasement, even taking into account, as we will see below, the changes existing in an urban or urbanized environment.

3.2.2. Sex life: discourses and practices

At this point we will seek to link three orders of problems: the first one concerns the biological manipulation of the female body and its transformation into a useful body. In other words, the mechanisms that, interfering in the body of the child, form part of the conformation of subdued gender identities and sexual identities, anticipating and preparing the legitimation of a model of domination whose nucleus is the taming and domestication of the body. We will seek to understand, through the meanings that are given to the action on the sexual organ and to the changes to which it was subjected, the construction of female identities guided by and for a cultural, social and political model based on the binary opposition between sexes and sexuality within a heteronormative matrix of male domination. It is also our intention to identify on the one hand how gender features are or are not amplified by the manipulation of the body and/or on the other hand to recognise the countervailing power and resistance strategies expressed in the use of the mechanisms present in the female body, to reverse, control and "appease" the effects of domination.

The second order of problems concerns the way in which the social and cultural normativity constructs representations and practices of sex life. It is for us important to recognise how the ritual teachings about sex and sexuality shape (through conventions, codes and protocols) hegemonic masculinities and femininities and how these, confronting themselves with values and practices that may question or not the transmitted knowledge (and even use it), subvert and violate cultural expectations. In this field there are questions related to pregnancy outside family control, female sexual initiative and female and male pleasure.

The third order of problems, related to the previous one, concerns the way in which initiation rites, as an institution, encourage, through the teachings that are transmitted there (which are constituted as truth), the early start of sex life, early "marriages" and school abandonment. Taking into account the tensions and ambiguities between the discourses of the various female and male informants, the question will emphasize the conflicts that occur between human rights of children and youths and a cultural model based on the assumption that children are not subjects of rights. We will seek here to restate the problem of cultural relativism and of neo-colonial tolerance with respect to the intolerance revealed in how some cultural bodies construct power hierarchies that are excluding rights.

a) *Othuna* and *matinjis*: forced sex or the force of sex

Sexual identity is marked by the establishment of dispositions in the body defining its behaviour, while performativities, corporalities and stereotypes of what was came to be called a female attitude are constructed through gestures (how they walk, dress and sit down).

Each society produces mechanisms of control over the body, of which the conventions are part, turning it into an agent and text of culture. As Foucault (1987) states, the rhetoric about the body reveals these conventions which, when not adhered to, lead to exclusion and marginality, transforming it, as Butler (1990) states, into an "abject" body. The body, resisting, negotiating or submitting itself to the

norm (which judges and evaluates), is "a body that being unique and revealing an "I myself", is also a shared body because it is similar to an infinity of other bodies produced at this time and in this culture" (Louro, 2007:40).

Children adapt their gestures and model their bodies to what is asked of them. For Mauss (2007), individuals learn by socialization to make use of their body, constituting themselves in techniques that are developed on the basis of the environment and the decency that is asked of them at that time. The body is shaped to what is expected of it and in this sense one learns to locate it and use it as a technique.

What distinguishes, what classifies womanhood and manhood is not sex, but what is attributed to each one of the sexes will produce female and male bodies and subjects. Differentiating the sexes is the basis for the maintenance of male domination, while the naturalization of the difference between the sexes (rendering them complementary) produces a system of representations which hierarchizes and classifies. I.e., signs, beliefs and practices are constructed about the sexes that legitimate inequality. Instituted as the norm, inequality validates values and behaviours that, being products of a wider political, social and cultural order, is sophisticated insofar as it resorts to social and cultural cohesion for its continuity.

Both in Cabo Delgado and in Zambézia and Sofala, girls learn (around the age of 8 years or less) to perform the lengthening of the labia minora, at sunrise and at sunset.[139] This practice, done with the use of various plants mixed with oil, is watched over by their mothers, aunts and grandmothers.[140] Ignorance of the usefulness of

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[139] In Dakar, in 1984, The Inter-African Committee considered genital mutilation an attempt on women's rights. In the Fourth World Conference held in 1995, in Beijing, genital mutilations are defined in the context of sexual violence. The WHO defines the lengthening of the vaginal lips as a level IV genital mutilation.

[140] There is a large variety of plants which, after having been grinded and mixed with fat, mostly oil, are used to perform the lengthening of the vaginal lips. Besides lengthening the labia minora, the girls are taught to "spit in their hands and to massage their hands with the same plant with which they rubbed their *matinji* and knead their breasts in order to grow" (Vânia 7).

genital manipulation ("they only told me to do it and you will see the result", Matilde 1) and the accompanying pain is perceived by the children as an exercise of extreme violence, which is strengthened in the rites with the obligation to expose the *othuna:* the timidity felt by the girls get worse when the lengthening is considered insufficient, being subject to criticism and jocose comments.

Also in Sofala the lengthening of the vaginal lips *(matinji)* starts very early, following the same protocol as in the Northern Region and having the same meaning of service to the other, as was said by a *Ndau* girl in Beira City: "to have *matinji* is good because if you don't have it, men send you away. I know a girl who was abandoned because she didn't have it" (Luisa 6). Or, as was said by a female teacher in Inhaminga, referring to men: "the *matinji* are their entertainment" (Deolinda 5).

To have *othuna* or *matinji* is thus a condition of adulthood and of acceptance by men who may legitimately give girls back, with the argument that they are not sufficiently satisfied. Many boys say they can recognise in how girls walk if they have been subjected to lengthening, as if a predatory look were studying and assessing them.[141] The *othuna* and *matinji* are mainly a form of ritualization in the construction of gender identities and object of monitoring on the part of the godmothers matrons, being appropriated by the girls as a condition of their femininity, not in the sense of forming shared pleasure, but as an agency of a subordinate condition: "pulling is to hold the man's penis. When you don't have it, the man slips and gets out quickly. So, it is necessary to have it, otherwise he will send you away" (Antónia 1)[142]. And as a boy told us, "if she doesn't have *matuna*, I will send her away, she still has to learn" (Vasco 2). And another boy, referring to what he had learned during the rites: "when

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[141] Many girls talked about their discomfort with the public exposure of the lengthening, mainly in the schoolyard, where the observation to which they are subjected appears as an assessment of their capacity and competence for sexual intercourse.

[142] Informers of the Health and Social Action sector mentioned the transmission of diseases by how the matrons manipulate, without washing their hands, the *matinji* and *othunas* of the girls, using for all of them the same "ointment".

a girl is ceremonized she is ready for marriage, if she has not been to the rites she is only good to have sex with" (Vasco 1).

While the female discourse of *othuna* and *matinji* is justified by the qualities women should have to be a woman, constituting it during the ritual process as a marker of female identity, in the male discourse the lengthening of the vaginal lips is not only a form of recognition of this identity, but also an expression of the exercise of male power. In other words, the value of *othuna/matinji* resides in the power structure and it is in this sense that, since childhood, girls prepare themselves (even when they don't know why they do it) for a model of femininity based on the practice of sexuality under control.

When questioned, all girls expressed the pain and the fear they felt when they started to pull their vaginal lips, without any explanation and with a lot of suffering. The shock of the girls exposes in the first place a pedagogy supported by violence. Even for those who have heard rumours about the fact, the experience lived in seclusion (which can only later be shared with friends) is represented by the children as a mutilation which will transform their body, shaping their way of walking and dressing and limiting them in their interaction with the other sex. This painful experience of life is in the course of puberty accompanied by teachings that generate pride, creating mechanisms of identification and belonging to the group and at the same time of exclusion vis-à-vis those who did not perform the lengthening of their vaginal lips. This means that, validating the apparent empowerment given to this practice as the norm, the domestication of the female body if naturalized, creating symbolic agreements and investments.

It is in this sense, in which the lengthening of the labia constitutes itself simultaneously as forced sex and as the force of sex, that Foucault (1976) argues that power is understood as a strategy and as an effect. The discourse as producer and product of power prompts revolt, countervailing power. This means that the body is product of the social and cultural order "against which we react, which we accept, resist, negotiate, violate, both because culture is a political

field and because the body itself is a biopolitical unit" (Goellner, 2007: 39).

b) Learning about sex: conformities and resistance

In learning about sex life, the bodies are shaped and disciplined, and this set of norms constitutes itself in an ideology and a belief (Bordo, 1988). The power that is exerted on the body of women and men brings about answers that render the power effective, thus allowing control, as is visible in the pedagogy of sex education in the rites, in which women learn to stretch in the manipulation of techniques to please their partner and men learn about sex as a form of domination. This is evident in the words of this boy in Mecúfi: "they taught us that having sexual intercourse with a woman is like flogging that woman" (Vasco 5).

If we make a comparative analysis of the discourses of boys and of girls about sexuality, we observe that for boys it is clear that the ritual ceremonies of the girls focus on teaching how to "treat" her husband sexually, because they are the guarantee for the cultural survival of the community, both in terms of the reproduction of the hierarchies and of the preservation of the cohesion of the community. In this sense, the function of the matrons is to ensure that the male mandate for domination is fulfilled. At no time of the research we observed on the part of the agents directing the female rites an intention to transmit the importance of school and work, entailing the key role of teaching about the sexualized body. It are these representations of the value of the body which, establishing a subordinate condition sometimes perceived by girls as power (and therefore these mechanisms are effective), expressed in control over (her own and her partner's) body, which structure sexual identities normalized by inequality.

The body supports inequality symbolically, embodying the conventions and norms that transform it into a female body, "appearing as interface between individuality, what is unique of her, and the group, but equally between the biological and the social" (Détrez, 2003:4). When discussing the power structure present in the

relations between men and women, Grosz (2000) points out that the binarity does not only oppose one sex to the other, but also hierarchizes one as dependent on the other. The question does not reside in the existence of two sexes, but in the classified opposition of the superiority of one sex in relation to the other one. The body of women is subjected for reproduction which imprisons her and transforms her body into a docile body for the sexual satisfaction of the other, as these remarks of a party organisation member in Mecúfi clearly show: "a woman is obliged to have sex, even if she is cooking, she has to leave the pans and go there" (Antónia 4). And a girl in Macomia adds: "we were taught that, if you are tired, and you are cooking, you are in the kitchen, you are cooking, and if your husband becomes rigid, is even calling you come here, my wife, come here, you have to leave the kitchen and go to satisfy him, we were taught like that" (Vânia 7).

For this reason, when studying sexuality we observe that:

> "Sex is not only an isolated or minor contingent variation of a subjacent humanity. It is not trivial for the political and social status of each one (...). Somebody's sex cannot simply be reduced to the primary and secondary sexual characteristics (or contained by them) because somebody's sex is different in all functions - biological, social, cultural functions – if not in opposition, certainly in its meaning" (Grosz, 2000: 83).

In the same way, Foucault (1976) states the dominant presence of sex, from laws, policies and the narratives of novels, but it is kept secret and it is this secret that gives it value.

Although in all spatial units studied the question of sexual attributes is transmitted with the same appeal to female subordination, in the *Makhuwa Lomwé* discourse in Zambézia Province the need is evident to submit the rites to Islamic law, with respect to both the obligation of circumcision and the dropping of all contents involving explicit teachings of sexuality. This means that the instruments symbolizing the penis are not shown, neither is the sexual act imitated, conveying the idea that only just before marriage a few instructions are given about the girl's sexual behaviour and that

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"everything is written in the Koran". However, as is shown by this discourse of a Muslim *Makhuwa* matron, saying that, if girls only learn to obey and respect their husband, this teaching is done through sexuality as the central nucleus of femininity and masculinity:

> "A good woman is one who respects her husband. When she respects her husband, gives her husband what he needs to be satisfied, her husband will buy something to give to his wife, if she then dresses what her husband bought she will be beautiful. If she respects her husband, he will also respect her" (Zita 10).

Regarding the question raised directly by the interviewer about the possibility of the woman refusing sexual intercourse (for example, when she is tired), the same interviewee said:

> "No, she has to accept. Accept that her husband, when entering the house is going to sleep in the bed. And you, when he comes, you will warm up water, when you enter the bed, you have to massage your husband while he is there. He likes that, that's how it is. Now, at daybreak your husband is going wherever he goes, he will go to the shop and buy something, a dress, to take it home" (Zita 10).

These remarks, in agreement with many others uttered by women and men, ordering the relations and interactions in an apparently non-discordant context, reveals the efficacy of the power exerted on the body of women, through the symbolic representation of a normality naturalized through mechanisms conforming subordinated identities.

Observing more specifically the positions about the knowledge of sex life that is transmitted in the rites, the existence of a confrontation between various discourses, mainly in rural areas, became clear. Though showing a generational differentiation, these discourses express a kind of agreement with the meaning given to the practice of sexuality. If for the masters and matrons, there is a whole system of beliefs that represent sexuality and sex life as reproduction of the

community, which is exercised through male power and control over the female body, the interviewed girls had an ambiguous discourse ranging from "I did not like it because it is violent" (Dora 2) to an endured "acceptance", thus projecting this violence symbolically to resistance to domination or, in a less complex way, to the assumption that sex life (and the exercise of a sexuality they do not control) is part of the female condition.

The discourse of the partner as head of the family and of the impossibility of taking sexual initiatives often appears associated with a kind of knowledge allowing them to "manipulate" the body of the other. As a girl said: "now in the rites, I learned very well not to be afraid of men" (Vânia 7). This element does not mean greater capacity of control over their body, on the contrary, it shows the teachings they received about pleasing: not to be afraid of one's husband does not refer to a confrontation with male domination. On the contrary, its purpose is the sexual satisfaction of the man, because it is this knowledge of the other that allows her, through submission, to be a woman. From this point of view, the same girl student said: "a man has every right to ask for sex. For us, we can only accept it, it is compulsory" (Vânia 7).

On the other hand, and this situation is common in both urban and rural areas, the commitment undertaken by the family with a fiancé or boyfriend implies his obligation to provide for the girl's needs in exchange for sex, frees the parents from their responsibility for the survival of their daughters, thus transmitting a notion, constituting itself in belief and practice, of the despoilment of the child as a subject. This is evident in these remarks of an Education sector officer in Cabo Delgado: "after the rites the girls will seek a material provider and the boys will pursue money" (Achirafo 5). This discourse lays bare the mechanisms focused on the use of the female sex as a "species" of power, disconnecting girls from the importance of choice, from the fight for opportunities, from the creation of a subject of rights. In view of this discourse, it is without surprise that the attitude of girls who in the *barracas* offer themselves to men should be seen: looking us straight in the eye these adolescents do

not feel any kind of constraint, because what they are doing is to fulfil in a "free-and-easy" way what they had learned about their body.[143]

The teachings about sex should thus be understood in a context in which, though the normative models come together for the construction of identities that are meant to be fixed and unchanging, there are within these models resources that, questioning them (like the case of girls who go around *barracas*), do not question, at least apparently, the structure of the teachings in the rites.

When it is stated that the initiation rites are a school of education for life (Braço, 2008), aiming at harmony and the welfare of the community, it should be recognised how this education is structured by a system of references which, developing mechanisms and constructing dispositions, format behaviours through mechanisms that are organising and legitimating the gender order. This is visible in these remarks of a group of girl students in Pemba:

> "We learned very well how to massage the penis of our husband. We did it with a clay stick. We, *Makhuwas*, can enter into the rites without being virgins, but they taught us to put a powder that dries, so the man is satisfied. It is very painful, it may even bleed. (…) we should not take sexual initiatives. It is the man who should do this, and the woman cannot refuse because he is her husband. They taught me to clean the penis of my husband, to prepare water for him to bath" (Dora 1).

Another girl in the same focus group stated: "they taught me the positions I should take, they had a kind of stick" (Dora 1). And another one: "to dry his cock you wash it with salted hot water" (Zita 2). Or, as was said by a female informant in Cheringoma: "grind

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[143] "Barracas" are a kind of bars situated in the informal markets, where pornographic films may be shown and where the presence of young girls is generally accepted as permission for having sex.

mafuta[144] and put it on his member, this will cause lacerations, the penis will become quite dry" (Daniela 4).

As a member of a Women's League of a political party told us: " in the rites the children learn that they can already have a boyfriend who may give them soap, buy clothes, so when she leaves she is already looking for a man, she gets pregnant, she abandons schools" (Amélia 9). There seems to be a condemnation here of the contents of the rites, but these people appear, once again implicitly, to be in agreement with their performance, blaming the girls for becoming pregnant and leaving school.

Although the girls have talked about the teachings of sex life it was much more complicated to obtain information from them than from boys. Their remarks were often made with lowered eyes, with many interruptions, as if they were dealing with something hidden and secret in the field of what remains unsaid. Their discourse normally referred to an asexual body, while in the whole narrative there was simultaneously an "enlargement" of sex.

In line with what we have just said about the knowledge of sex transmitted in the rites, a young female official said:

> "We know the body. So, when we are in front of the mirror, and say that we have a female sex, that we can do something, maybe to please, but I also think that from the moment of the initiation rites and the matrons say that you have your sex and you can use it if you like, there is a choice. I think that at no time there is an obligation or there is pressure on you to do that, but then, if we are talking about a minor who enters the initiation rites, then I can say that she has no choice, in the first place because she is a minor and she has not yet considered other possibilities" (Ana 5).

The question raised by the interviewee has to do with the age and with the decrease of options for the children. We think, however, that if girls and boys would enter the rites at a later stage, these would

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[144] *Mafuta* is an oil that may be extracted from plants, such as mafurra (fruit of an oleaginous tree).

lose a lot of their efficacy in formatting masculinity and femininity: it is precisely because nowadays children have more access to information and to take positions (though in most cases they cannot exercise them) that the initiation rites start earlier, in an attempt to eliminate resistance.

The sexual identity, expressed by gestures and attitudes, is normalized by conventions that, constructing qualities, guide the recognition of what is represented as being the dominant sexual identity. Or, as was said by a *Makhuwa Lomwé* matron in Alto Molocué:

> "To clean the man's member is very important, it is a reason for divorce. If she does it well, he will give her a *capulana*. She cleans, gets the new capulana, puts it on top of the man. After cleaning, she pulls his fingers, pulls his arms, she is massaging him. No, a woman can never be massaged" (Zita 5).

In agreement with the content of the teachings, the question of sexual health is only raised in terms of hygiene (also perceived as culminating sexual intercourse, traversing a cycle that starts with the recognition of signs the woman should know how to interpret and correspond to) in a context of the fulfilment of qualities and never of access to and the exercise of rights: "they taught me not to use a condom because it has worms" (Dora 1). In the discourses of some interviewed girls and boys sometimes the idea is implied that biomedical knowledge about the prevention of HIV and AIDS is not part of the knowledge transmitted to the initiatees of both sexes. On the contrary, there is a transmission of local myths about the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases.

These remarks are in agreement with the discomfort of a female official of the Health sector who, after mentioning that her work experience with matrons is very positive, clearly showed that the rites are an incentive to sex life and that the use of condoms is rarely mentioned: "when we told the matrons that they should not talk so much about sex life, they responded that this will side-track our culture" (Ana 7). And in fact the matrons are right, because removing

the component of sexuality from the rites (as it is today perceived and transmitted) is to break with its core dimension. The problem begins to be posed, not as a return to a cultural "purism" (which today constitutes itself as a source of survival and demarcation of status for many boys and girls), but in the strategies that should be developed to strengthen those girls and boys who reject ritual violence, not only from a material, but fundamentally a symbolic point of view, making known the changes existing in the construction of new identities. As said before, the cultural order presupposes normatives based on dispositions that determine values and practices. In other words, the cultural heritage is subject to changes that result from the interaction between cultural, but also social, political and economic contexts and processes.

As we could observe in the interviews, there is a clear idea that the rites are a condition for marriage, for having sexual intercourse and becoming pregnant, which constitutes (given the symbolic value children represent) the culmination of the girls' fulfilment. However, some matrons and other key female informants stated repeatedly:

> "Formerly they taught that, when you leave the rites, you are not allowed to find a man, you will get spoiled, your womb will break and your baby will not come out, but today it is no longer like that, thy become pregnant immediately. (...) Today we show them a big stick and we tell them: you see? Hold your sex and, if you insert it, it will come out on the other side, where you shit" (Zita 4).

Thus, they are in fact confronting and opposing information obtained by the girls at school, in hospital or in the media, with the information provided during the rites, which means putting the knowledge created in the different spaces into conflict/tension. This does not necessarily mean that a range of choices is presented to the girls from which they can choose, negotiating or rejecting the transmitted teachings (though, as we will see, this situation may also occur), because when the myths and stereotypes are questioned they resist and continue to serve as a pattern for identity classification.

This situation raises another problem that has to do with the constant decrease of the age for entering the initiation rites, because if in the last few decades a decrease may somehow have occurred of the age of the first menstruation, it appears to us that the main reasons for the fact that the children start heir initiation much earlier (in some regions where the *Makonde* group is dominant even before their menstruation) are an attempt to legitimate knowledge, coherently organising an order of knowledge embodied in the body and expressed in the processes of subjectivation and interaction that often lead to early pregnancy. The result of this may be that the participation of children of 10 to 12 years of age in the rites leads to the existence of a high percentage of obstetric fistulas in the country.[145]

Also, whenever a pregnancy is unwanted in urban areas, it can often be avoided and interrupted, resorting to health centres. In rural areas this is more difficult, not only because there is no access to planning and one resorts to traditional methods of abortion, but mainly because pregnancy gives rise to a status of adulthood. Regarding this situation of adulthood conferred by pregnancy there is an idea, which mainly finds expression among the *Sena* group in the centre of the country, that:

> "Girls have to become pregnant very early, because, if she passes that early age, she will have other problems and will no longer be able to have children. Therefore girls get pregnant very early, between 11 and 12 years, from their first menstruation. When they are 18 they already have five, six children. (...) After the rites the priority is to get married or

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[145] Although it is a subject that only recently has started to be discussed and there are no exact data (there are however indications that about 100,000 girls and women are in this situation), the Health agents mention the existence of a significant number of obstetric fistulas in girls who had their first delivery between 12 and 14 years of age. Mercedes Sayagues et al. (2011). *Omitidas: Mulheres com fístula obstétrica em Moçambique*. Maputo: WLSA Mozambique.

find a man and have children just like that, mainly daughters" (Daniela 1).[146]

However, though many girls become pregnant by amorous blackmail or because they want to "have a family", one of the decisive factors is the incitement to the early exercise of sexuality, as we saw in the remarks above, engendered by the rites in the construction of the girls' identities. The consequences of early pregnancy, in addition to school abandonment, are profound physical and psychological traumas for the children:

> "Many girls have obstetric fistulas and after that they can no longer have children and they dry up. They get that trauma and become sad girls, very sad girls, you look at their face and ask them what's wrong, but they say there is nothing, but are unable to smile" (Daniela 1).

Sexuality is thus experienced in a violent way, being part of the vast set of obligations a woman has to fulfil. In the rites girls learn to subordinate themselves, whether through the teaching of strategies to appease her man, or through sexual intercourse and the application of the learned techniques, or through endurance and tolerance in cases in which, even not knowing the reasons of their husband's anger, they should "accept" it. The normative guiding the construction of the girls' identity in the rites is clearly a way to discipline them and guide them towards submissive values and behaviours. This does not mean, and more due to modernity than to traditional knowledge about the body acquired in the rites, that the girls cannot resist or manipulate the knowledge learned and imprinted on their body (as a mark of submission) to develop mechanisms that, pleasing their partner, confers them some power, due to a series of factors that often have to do with violence suffered in the family or at school. This possibility of power and belonging, which produces satisfaction by participation in the rites, is related to cultural and social recognition and fundamentally to the usefulness

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[146] This reference to daughters shows how women conform themselves with a strategy of family survival.

of the body, reduced to sex, which is "rice and maize" (expressions used in some ritual songs). What becomes increasingly recognizable is that the ritualization of the body, whether in the dimension of respect or in sex life, is marked by the construction of gender identities and sexual identities, profoundly enchased in the performed ceremonies.

As several authors such as Foucault (1987) state, sexuality is interwoven with power. In the case of women this power comes from their reproductive capacity and their sexuality. But this power is limited and constrained by the qualities and mechanisms that discipline the body. This means that the power of women is a necessary power for the construction of relations of domination. Women have the power of those who don't have power, conforming themselves, resisting or finding forms of countervailing power the premise of which is more often than not the naturalization and reaffirmation of male power, which includes some practices taught during the rites such as that "after menstruation a woman should put a towel to stay warm, keep her vagina well closed and this is what a man likes most" (Zita 1).

On the other hand, the sexuality transmitted is perceived in a context of the exchange of material goods for sex, in a process stripped of affectionateness, or with a logic of affectionateness mediated by a representation of the female sexual organ as a material asset, as was said by a girl in Pemba, telling her own history:

> "My mother died at childbirth. (…) So, after I had participated in the rites, (…) I asked him [my father] for notebooks, sometimes he would give them, sometimes not, and then I got to know someone. He became my friend, he gave me room to talk about myself, so I did. And he said, with what I earn I will help you to pay for the university. (…) Within a month I became his girlfriend. Today, when I meet him, I have already finished the university, today I am unable to sleep with him again. So I understand that somehow I was doing this because I knew that I wanted to study, and he gave me money, he bought a computer, and I finished my course. And related to

this situation of the initiation rites, I pleased him, I did everything they taught me, and it worked. I did everything, everything, everything, and each day with a lot of creativity, you have to convince, you have to convince, it is an anything goes, it is serious, it is every day, it is even if it were a research, every day you have to dream, what will I do tomorrow? (…) Then comes the next day, the day after, then you have the idea to convince them to stay. (…) You become a technicist, you must be a technician, you have to think, to think to keep or to set your mind on what you have, it ends up being, it ends up being a job. Others are working at the office, doing everything to have their final report, you are also drawing up plans, well, that's it, this is more or less what happens" (Ana 5).

Regarding the reaction of the family, the same interviewee said:

"I am a student, but I have to send money to my grandfather, and he knows I don't work, so where do I get this money from? I start to use the laptop at home and my father doesn't ask me where I got this laptop from. I put the question to my father. I tried to do this as a wake-up call, but nothing happened. Well, I think I'm not to blame, but these things make me very sad, so that when I look at those other women today, I respect them, because the first thing I think is that that woman must have some problem, something she needs, so…" (Ana 5).

In this sense, Giddens refers to the "hijacking of the experience" as a result of the "confinement of female sexuality and the generalized consideration that male sexuality is not problematic" (Giddens, 2003:195). This means that in modernity the liberation of choices depends on a series of factors that can or cannot allow the practice of sexuality, because people continue to be subjected to social and institutional control (though depending on the social and political contexts) through mechanisms that, acting on the gender normative, can prepare answers that in advance maintain or adapt the gender inequalities.

In the same way, with respect to boys, sexual teachings constitute one of the central nuclei of the rites. They are however conducted, in spite of the huge amount of violence, with a sense that intends to embody the values of command and control over themselves and over women:

> "There in the rites they have something that looks like a hole in a hammer and another thing which is a fruit (*lipude*), it looks like a papaya but it is a climber. After cutting it, they put a few hairs around the fruit to symbolize that it is an old woman, and the hole in the hammer is a girl, well it is to say that we cannot have intercourse with an old woman" (Vasco 9).[147]

The reasons that the trials through which boys have to pass are more violent and harsh than those of girls fit into the male mandate for domination, of which sexual initiative is an example: "I must take the sexual initiative, because I am a man, a woman cannot do it" (Vasco 3). And as a teacher in Beira City also stated: "a woman who takes the sexual initiative is an *anachinhoca,* which is an insect instigating her to take the initiative" (Dinis 1). Or as was also said by a matron in Inhaminga:

> "A woman may feel desire, but she can wait for her husband because it was her husband who liked her, it was her husband who took her from her parents' house to her own house. If she takes the initiate there will be a big problem, your husband will say you are a whore" (Dirce 5).

However, both sexes have learned how to identify the desire to have sex, but it mainly becomes women to show that they recognise the signs, with an assistant/"vigilant" role being reserved to the man while she is making movements that are recognizable by men as correct, as was said by a matron:

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[147] The assertion of it not being allowed to have intercourse with an old woman can be seen as a result of the danger and the myths constructed about the old age of women (menopause).

> "Men don't like her to take the initiative, she has to wait until her husband speaks, he is saying to the woman to get that castor bean, to burn it, to start to pull, the husband is lying in bed watching her, so when he needs her he just taps his fingers. Now she knows that she must go to bed" (Zita 3).

This apparent passive role of men before the start of sexual intercourse is expressed in domination with penetration and with all the acts that follow sexual intercourse, such as cleaning the penis of the partners. It is interesting to note that among groups with some social status the discourse of the repression of female pleasure and of the imposition of male initiative are mixed, with the possibility of caressing the women during sexual intercourse, however without this being perceived as a right of the woman to feel pleasure, but as proof of male virility. In other words, female sexual pleasure is not represented as a sharing of desire, but fundamentally as a more sophisticated form of control over the body of women, as was said by a boy in Búzi: "she will like it, so we will like it, we will be satisfied, it is good for us" (Luís 3). This statement contradicts what a female civil society informant in Cheringoma told us: "pleasure, it is possible in town, but out there in the countryside they have never pleasure. He mounts her and doesn't even alert you, you only feel he is already there, he is already on top of you, she will be frightened, he is already there and you cannot react" (Daniela 4).

However, the domestication of the body also engenders resistance and gives rise to strategies to revert the relations of domination, as was made clear in a statement of a young woman in Beira City, who said that, though not having been subjected to initiation rites, she did the lengthening of her vaginal lips when already an adult, out of curiosity, and because she had heard that is gave added value, with an influence on her own and her partner's pleasure. This apparently means that the pressure of the dominant cultural normative for female wholeness is not perceived by the informant as important for the need felt for having *matinji.* The gender features based on the body may allow a hiding of the structure of domination as well as mean a change of this structure or of some of its components. The result of the lengthening of the vaginal lips is both inclusion into the

model and its change. In other words, the use of *matinji* may mean a process in which knowledge, preshaping the development of countervailing power strategies, confronts the immobile and fixed gender relations, with its contingency and change. As in the case of our interviewee, the practice of sexuality must be seen together with access to work and to status, which ends up prompting a series of emancipatory elements, such as when she says: "I bought a fridge, my money has been invested according to my wishes" (Daniela 2), subverting gender relations as power relations, and asserting herself as a subject. This process of individuation is strengthened by the political capital of the interviewee and by the contact she has with the discourse of human rights, which may have led to the production of a narrative of re-identification. Appropriating a mechanism the object of which is the genderization of the biological body of women, the discourse of this interviewee shows the possibilities to reverse the patriarchal normative, or at least to shake it.[148] Resisting the culture and bringing about change, the body should be perceived through the link between the social and cultural contexts and the subjectivation expressed in the meanings that are given to the images of sex and sexuality.

The same situation of contestation and resistance is found in the discourses of some women teachers who construct a differentiated narrative, allowing a departure from the excluding normativity, for example when they refuse polygamy, even when practising Islam. They state being allowed to take sexual initiative and to masturbate, simultaneously identifying gender inequalities with respect to unpaid household chores carried out by girls, contrasting it with the possibilities created by the activities of the boys (it is common for them to do odd jobs, help a neighbour, work in a workshop and receive money). This discourse, though rare, is very important because it touches on one of the core aspects of the gender order,

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[148] It should be noted that the lengthening of the vaginal lips of this woman does not fall within the process of ritualization to which girls are subjected. It was an adult choice which, though it may somehow also be related to the dominant cultural normative in the Central Region of the country, appears as liberating, using the mechanisms of control as a strategy of countervailing power.

which is the fact that the sexual division of labour is directly linked to a normative which, essentializing and hierarchizing work, situates it in a power order.

The body is effectively normalized, regulated, but as we saw above it may bring about confrontation (reproduction versus pleasure) and thus introduce changes in the gender relations. The hegemony of patriarchal domination should be seen as a process that can be questioned and transgressed. As Esteban (2004) states, all empowerment of women involves the body, how they experience it, how it is recognized, how they innovate and create. This author insists on the need to go beyond the social structure and study the possibilities to reverse the order, the transgressions, the capacity of innovation, of confronting the accepted order with new experiences and new meanings.

The body is a place of power for women but subject to the model that conforms domination, while for men the starting point of the model imposed on them is their domination, as is exemplified by some matrons when referring to the existence of a sofa in the room, where women sit down and open their legs to show their *othuna* to their husband and thus rouse his desire. Some of the female interviewees mentioned that, even if a woman has no desire, she should do this to show that "she is ready". As Begoña Pintos states, "the body as a material reality defined in a social context; the body assumes and represents again and again the set of interpretations received about it (2001:9).

It is no coincidence that many boys, mainly in Cheringoma and Búzi, mention constantly the sexual potency achieved by the use of plants such as *gonandzololo* and *kisagongo,* which extend sexual intercourse or allow a man to have it several times. While, from a culturalist point of view, the use of sexual stimulants is meant to represent the virility of the African man, engendering stereotypes (an idea that is not only an attribute of a certain colonial anthropology) that are based on a gratifying sexual intercourse, uncountable interviews of boys emphasize male power as the basis for the use of these plants. Although the existence of plants that constitute

stimulants for women has very rarely been mentioned, from the various narratives we can deduce a notion of masculinity imposed on the sexualized body of women.

The discrimination of women is present both in the urban and in the rural world, shaping a power relation that is adapting itself, despite the existing possibilities and resources, including the discourse of rights. Individuals embody the gender marks, but they are also agents insofar as the practices are transformed. It is in this sense that Esteban (2004) considers the body a subject and proposes to elaborate methodologically physical itineraries that reveal the conflicts and tensions between the cultural mechanisms of control and the possibilities of contestation. The author states that this methodological relocation to the body will allow to understand how manhood and womanhood "are not stable and fixed categories without splits" (Esteban, 2004: 1), as is for example observed in urban centres, where some girls are pressured on the part of other girls to have sexual intercourse, while they are often insulted or provoked, as happens in Quelimane Town where they are called "mother Maria". This situation may mean both an agreement with the ritual teachings and a challenge and a form of contestation and liberation from the cultural and social stimulus for sexual initiation. However, and this situation is more visible in rural areas, a girl who refuses the blackmail of sexual intercourse, hears from her male friends things like these, as told by a girl in Guara-Guara, in Búzi District: "[He said] you don't want to sleep with me, because you used my money? Should I also sleep with you to pay the money you used? And after that he beat me" (Luísa 3).

We observe that through the teachings of sexuality and through the role it occupies in the ritual process, female desire is constrained by mechanisms that place women in a situation of risk and "alert" with respect to sexual intercourse: the pleasure of the woman is a corollary of male desire, i.e., it occurs or may eventually exist in addition to the efforts that the woman makes to control the "situation" to please the man. Although it is object of policing, because it is a condition of masculinity (the constant display of virility as a cultural obligation), male sexuality is free and licit,

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contrary to surveillance that is exerted on female sexuality. Penetration into the female body is one of the most important forms of the manifestation of a sexuality confined to domination (of which the deposition of sperm in the body of the woman is an example) to which affectionateness is frequently marginal.

The power that is exerted on the body occurs in a relation in which men and women use strategies of domination and counter-domination, or as Foucault calls it, insubmission. Therefore, as mentioned above, reaction to control is in itself a form of control and of a subjection of the self, as is clear in the question of pleasure, in which the woman "knows" that pleasure can only be felt insofar as the other is satisfied and insofar she has compensation, for example expressed in the offering of goods or, to be more precise, in the pacification of the house. This situation is particularly visible in the rites, as the large majority of the female interviewees reacted negatively to the possibility of feeling pleasure alone or with other men "because a man doesn't like to enter a place where the dirt of another man is present" (Antónia 2). Therefore, a woman does not seek satisfaction of her sexual needs, but it may occur, always and when they are "imprisoned" in a relation with a partner; it is in this context that pleasure may occur, in the framework of the entire power structure that shapes their interdictions and limits. In this line, as was said by a girl in Pemba:

> "In the rites they say at no time that you have to learn to give pleasure to yourself, but rather to give pleasure to another. What they say, for example, is that you have to make love each time your partner wants to. Isn't it? You have to be obedient, you have to cook whenever he wants to eat, so, everything is directed at obedience. (...) A woman is not allowed to show desire, it is even said that she should avoid asking, because it may show that a woman...isn't it" (Ana 5).

It is however interesting that some of our younger female interviewees, such as women teachers or even girl students, said that a woman has the right to ask for sex, but as was said by one of the female civil society informants in Pemba: "this depends on the heart

of the man to accept [otherwise] there are beatings, everything is in the hands of your husband" (Amélia 5).

In the same order of ideas, when we talked to a *Makonde* matron her position was very clear with respect to the impossibility of a woman showing desire to have sex:

> "A woman cannot be the first one to ask because, when she is the first one to ask, the man automatically thinks that this woman is a prostitute. This already instils mistrust in her husband, because after all, my woman already has the courage to ask me for sex, which means that when she is with other men she does the same" (Arminda 1).

The same discourse of the impossibility of taking the initiative to sexual intercourse is observed in these remarks of a *Makhuwa* girl in Mecúfi: "she cannot take the initiative because the man starts to distrust her" (Vânia 4). To a question about the possibility of a woman refusing to have sexual intercourse, the same interviewee responded: "that man will be very suspicious, he will normally say, ah so you already made love to another person, therefore you don't want (…) and he may beat you" (Vânia 4).

There are however changes, mainly in towns and among women teachers, in the sense that there is a right to sexual pleasure and to sexual initiative, as was said by a female teacher in Beira City: "today everybody lives in a modernized world" (Deolinda 10). The transmitted idea of modernization may both mean the possibility of choice and impunity with respect to the choices made, and a disorganization of the social order. This means that modernity is a recourse people use to assert positions and values, producing a balance between the elements defining belongings, whether ethnic or of gender, with a variety of sources of information and lifestyles allowing them to embody new representations and practice new behaviours.

c) Sexual initiation, early marriages and school dropout

The legislation in force in Mozambique stipulates that minority ends at the age of 18, so that from this age marriage is allowed (Family Law, Law 10/2004 of 25 August, article 30). Therefore, all marriages contracted before this age can only be accepted exceptionally. Data published by the INE indicate that in Mozambique 18% of the children had married before reaching the age of 15 and 56% before having completed 18 years (UNICEF, 2011). The table presented below is representative of the high rate of early marriages of girls before the age of 15 and of the high rate of incidence in comparison with the Southern Region of the country (where female initiation rites are not performed), which supports the argument that the initiation rites are an important factor, mainly in the rural areas. The overall average for the country is 21.4% for the rural areas and 11.2% for the urban areas.

Table 4: **Child marriages contracted before the age of 15, by province**

Province	
Niassa	24.2%
Cabo Delgado	29.6%
Nampula	20.6%
Zambézia	22.3%
Tete	19%
Manica	20.8%
Sofala	18.6%
Inhambane	9.4%
Gaza	8.8%
Maputo Province	5.8%
Maputo City	3.9%

Source: INE, 2008.

In the same way, this document informs that 34% of the female adolescents aged 15 to 19 are mothers. It states that "in absolute numbers more than 700.000 girls aged 12 to 14 are married or live together", adding that "early marriages are associated with social risk factors, since they help to explain the incidence of dropouts (...). The

dropout rate of 15 to 19-year old female adolescents is over 40%" (UNICEF, 2011). Although the document states that early marriages are directly related to the patriarchal culture and to practices that perpetuate asymmetric gender relations, it lacks depth and it also fails to establish relations between the difficulties in the application of legislation and public policies and the existence of a continuous uncritical appreciation of the traditional institutions.

The Human Development Report, *The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World* (2013), indicates that Mozambique occupies the 185th position (in the framework of countries with the lowest Human Development Index (HDI) and among 187 countries that were object of this study). With respect to the HDI figure (0.327), the Gender Inequality Index (GII) is 0.582, corresponding to a classification of 125. This UNDP document also reveals, though the percentage of women in Parliament is 39.25%, that only 1.5 % of women has at least secondary education against 6% of men (between 2006 and 2010).

In a study conducted about early marriages, Nhantumbo et al. (2010) relate early marriages clearly with gender violence, considering that the socialization mechanisms structure roles that exclude women from rights, prescribing their expectations and shaping their future. For the authors "early marriage constitutes a phenomenon that develops directly linked to the process of the construction of female identity emphasizing the subordination of women" (Nhantumbo et al., 2010: 23).

Regarding sexual initiation, the research conducted by us established that, irrespective of spatial units (being however more evident in the rural areas) and due to a series of already above-mentioned factors, the initiation rites constitute a mandate for the start of sex life, not only by what they learn, but by the pedagogy used in the transmission of knowledge and by the meanings given in the construction of female adulthood.

I.e., girls do not only start sex life earlier because they have participated in the rites, but because the rites stimulate their curiosity and more than that, they provide the arguments for

premature sexuality. Although the matrons have stated that "we have only said that they are ceremonized girls and must not become pregnant just like that" (Arminda 3), what is taught and how it is taught and, mainly, the fact that the status of adulthood is made concrete with pregnancy and marriage, brings many girls to consider that having sexual intercourse very early is not only legitimate (12 to 13 years), but to this legitimacy the support of the communities is added, provided that the practice of sexuality is controlled by the family (as is the case with early marriages). Therefore, and we state it once again, what is at stake is not sexual intercourse or knowledge about their body, and mainly about the body of the other. The question is that this knowledge is to be applied in a gender order in which the power relations develop in a context of female disempowerment, as is evident in this statement:

> "She had her first menstruation and her aunts informed her grandmother. They took her to the bush, where she stayed during the entire menstrual period, receiving teachings about how she should take care of her husband, how she should learn to be a woman, I don't know what. And on the final day of the menstruation, she came out of the bush with a group of women, her grandmother with a cheap *capulana*, a red scarf on her head, a sign that she is now ready for a man. And they pass through the whole village, the whole world gets to know it, the whole world sees it. It is as if it was a party, then they took her to her house, and there was already a man waiting for her. So this is very complicated! She left the house, she started getting involved with men very early. And she had her first child when she was 13 and she thinks until today that it is her body, and that with her body she may satisfy everything and everyone. Now she is 25, she already has 4 children, which is a sign that she ... I don't know, there in the initiation rites I don't know what she learned, that she can do anything with her body" (Leocádia 2).

In the same way, a female teacher in Guara-Guara, Búzi District, stated that the rites favour the premature start of sex life: "for example, before the rites I didn't feel anything, even when seeing a

man I didn't feel anything, but after the rites I started to dream about them" (Deolinda 2).

When at the end of the rites the matrons say "you are ready" or "you should not be afraid of a man", this means that a social role and function for the production of children (as a resource and as identity affirmation) and dependence on male sexual desire was ascribed to the girls. However, in the discourse of matrons a great animosity is observed against girls who after the rites start sex life in an uncontrolled way, as this discourse shows:

> "For example, what forces us in these modern days is the evolution because a girl wants to use trousers and trousers means money, so she has to go with António who gives her 200, the trousers cost 700, so she has to complete those 700, she has to go to João, who is already telephoning her. Love, I want to see you, I feel homesick for you. [And she:] All right, come there at 18 hours. She goes, she has not yet washed the liquid inside her, and goes to meet another man, what the other man has you don't know, neither what the other man will leave behind, you don't know, she is already with António. The second time she completes 400, to have 700 she still needs 300. It is true, the girls are like this nowadays, they sell their body, they don't have sex for love ... no, they have it out of self-interest, for an objective, therefore there are these diseases. It is normal for a girl to go to bed with 3 to 4 men to complete the value of a pair of trousers. Then she goes to the Nigerians and buys these trousers with a short zip, thus, come back, leave it for tomorrow. She starts another search to find shoes because she cannot use those, people call them narrow bottle" (Zita 1).

This narrative shows, in addition to the conflicts between a tradition contextualized in a past that one wants to be present and new realities (not susceptible to being adjusted), the strategies developed by the girls, from the teachings they receive in the rites: the objectives of the rites are questioned and manipulated as a recourse by the girls, which constitutes precisely the contrary of their function,

to order and regulate behaviours. This must not be used, as some culturalists denounce, to acquit the rites of the construction of subordination and gender hierarchization, serving precisely to show that, taking into account the current contexts, the initiation rites stimulate the strengthening of a gender order expressed in a particularly violent way: the questioning of the order and the strategization developed by the girls continue to be done, according to the standard of sexual teachings (transmitted in the rites) as countervailing power, within the same model of inequality. Corroborating violence with what is done in the teaching of identity, stimulating obedience, with the negation of the self as a subject, a *Makhuwa Lomwé* girl in Gurué, confessed:

> "I was dozing and the mistress said: ah... because you, that thing, she said, I don't want you to talk to me. She undressed, let me fall down, slept in my belly, started to dance there while she had, what's its name... her period. All that dirt there right on top of me. So from that moment I started to hate that woman" (Júlia 1).

While male initiation corresponds to the initiation of virility that contains exercises of domination in the field of sexuality (but not only that), with respect to women it corresponds to a subordinate condition, even if this subordinate condition produces elements that may shape strategies of counter-domination, while the gender structure that organizes inequality between the sexes is maintained.

The incentive for sexual intercourse that the rites transmit and not for the practice of sexuality by choice and as a right, is expressed well in these remarks of a young female State official in Pemba Town:

> "From the moment I entered the initiation rites, I already observed it, they say that the girl is already grown up, and somehow her parents stop buying a school uniform, they stop enrolling her. So I think that the girl feels somehow obliged to do something for herself, in addition to what her family does. So I think that it is made easy, because she has also already the acceptance of the family, if she appears pregnant at some moment, for her parents it ends up being a relief, because

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they have the idea that she is already grown up, the moment has come to leave the house because she has already performed the initiation rites. So it ends up being a stimulator, as if to say, she can marry, the moment has come to leave her parents' house" (Ana 5).

The mothers are often reproached for not only stimulating marriage, but also the exchange of goods for sex, as this discourse of a girl in Beira City shows: "I had a friend whose mother said, I won't give you any soap, I'm not prepared to suffer for you, solve it yourself, alone (...) and that girl ended up becoming pregnant when she was 14" (Luísa 2). Another female informant clearly relates the families' stimulus of the sale of sex for goods:

"We have no money, I have five children, what will they do tomorrow? Open your legs for notebooks, if he even brings fish to the house... mum, uncle gave me 20, (...) and you will not even beat her, you take the money and start cooking, it is absolute poverty" (Zita 1).

As we saw in other interviews, poverty is a much used argument, but it can only be understood in a context in which the girl's body constitutes, as was said by a male informant in Beira City "crates for her father" (Dimas 2). In other words, any tolerance with this argument (frequently found in public discourses) reveals complicity with the violation of children's rights and a material and symbolic contempt for the female condition.

Many initiated girls state that after the rites their "friends abandoned school, because their parents married them, others become pregnant at once and also stop studying, they already feel a woman" (Vânia 1). But while this happens, there are signs that girls increasingly ask women teachers to help them not to marry. This situation raises the problem, first, of the need for intervention in the community on the

part of State sectors, and second, of the creation of mechanisms that allow these girls to continue studying.[149]

However, in towns, though a premature start of girls' sex life is also observed, it may not lead to drop out from school, be it because there are more means to take a decision about pregnancies or because many families don't consider the practice of sex by girls a justification to leave school, contrary to what happens in some rural areas where girls' sex life is a strategy for family survival, whether through forced unions due to debt or a promise of the parents or because the rites transformed them into "ready" women who have to participate in the sustenance of the families. As a girl in Búzi told us:

> "I have a boyfriend, his family came and brought "*paratu*", they put some money and he buys a school uniform, notebooks and a bag. (...) As he already gave me things, he has the right to go to the school to control me and threaten me when I am chatting with any boy student" (Luísa 4).

It is because of the "*paratu*" that when men decide (many of them returned from South Africa) that girls should be given to them, even if they are attending school, "the parents cannot do anything because they would have to return the money, something that never happens, because the money has been used for household expenses" (Dilma 10). However, Health agents reported cases of girls whose parents want to marry them and who demand that the man does a HIV and AIDS test, either because they heard that he was sick, or because they

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[149] In Búzi Town the research team was told that on the initiative of a local organisation complaint boxes were installed in all schools, where girls and boys can deposit their complaints. Already in the first month, a girl asked the school for help because her parents wanted to marry her. From a joint intervention of teachers and the District Directorate of Education with the community leaders and the girl's family, it was possible, at least apparently, to reverse the situation. However, during the week in which we were in the district, this girl was not at school and we were unable to communicate with her. We called the attention of the school directorate for this fact, but we had not yet been given an account of the situation. Well then, it appears to us that there should be a kind of accompaniment that could prompt more accusations and more community involvement. If not, these situations can even show the students of both sexes that it is useless to lodge complaints, underlining that the school and the State are unable to fulfil their function.

heard about the importance of the test at school. In one of the cases in which it was confirmed that the man was seropositive, the parents wanted to force the girl to marry him under the argument that he had already paid the "*paratu*". The question arising here is not so much the commitment assumed with the man, which had been broken due to the assumption of the disease, but the honour of the family, appearing in the eyes of the community as failing the norm, constituting itself as a family without honour, irrespective of the reasons that have led to the breach of the promise.

Many teachers and Education sector staff relate the participation in the rites directly to school abandonment, as was said by this teacher in Pemba Town:

> "The girl leaves the initiation rites and there is a strong idea, but there in the rural areas, (...) in which the parents or the women themselves, an education is introduced that she is grown up, she can do anything, do anything concerning sex, so exactly this girl can marry. (...) It can be in love and the parents say, you are already too big to attend school, you are losing time, while they incite the girl to marry (...) and occupy her place in the household. So, it is from here that people consider that part of the initiation rites promotes school abandonment" (Álvaro 1).

There are, though less often, teachers who indicate that the initiation rites also exert pressure on boys to start working, to leave home, as is expressed in the remarks of this teacher in Mecúfi:

> "These initiation rites contribute because, when they go there, they usually get another education that they are already grown up, it may be the father saying this, it may be the mother saying it. It is the tendency even when they leave the rites, the student wants to assert himself, the father usually says, you are already grown up, now you should have your own house, you should have your wife, and he then starts to follow his father's behaviour, which makes him abandoning school, he no longer goes to school to study, he starts to think that he has to take care of a house, heavy work, he abandons

school, he starts to work in the *machamba*, he starts to go fishing to sustain himself" (Álvaro 2).

The correlation between early marriages and initiation rites is a reality established by the study, but it does not explain the reasons because in other regions where no rites are conducted, as Matutuíne Town, Maputo Province, the existence of early marriages is observed. We think that it is necessary to consider three orders of other factors (equally present in other regions). The first one has to do with the fact that the socialization of the children, irrespective of their areas of origin, is directed to functions that have to do with a cultural order which distinguishes and differentiates them with respect to rights and opportunities to exercise these rights.[150] The second order of factors may be explained, as already mentioned, by the parents' fear that the start of their daughters' sex life (outside their control) will result in the loss of important gains from the marriage of these girls, gains that should not only be seen from a material point of view, but also from the point of view of social and cultural recognition. The third order of factors has to do with the level of information that the families already have, as a male informant in Beira City told us: "today the parents already know that they can marry their daughters earlier, without their sexual organs getting rotten or the mother dying" (Dimas 5). While there are girls who oppose themselves successfully to forced marriage, in many remarks we observe a certain fatalism: "those who do not accept are expulsed from home and thus become prostitutes" (Luísa 3).

Many teachers observe that after the rites the children are more "respectful", more silent, they don't participate in the lessons, they keep their eyes lowered, as if they were in a space that no longer belongs to them, awaiting their destination: "when you leave the rites, you are already grown up, so any man thinks that you are ready.

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[150] Many children in Matutuíne are removed from school, sometimes while sitting for end-of-year tests, due to the indebtedness of the parents with men, most of them workers in South Africa, who come at the end of the year to Mozambique to collect the debts, i.e., to take the children to their houses, becoming their wives. This is almost always done with the complicity of the girls' families, while any intervention by teachers is considered by the community as interference.

So the parents want her to marry. She also wants it, with those counsels of the elderly she no longer thinks about school" (Álvaro 2). A matron adds: "only this is said by the parents, they have a man who wants to marry you, whether you like it or not, be quiet, you cannot refuse" (Zita 2).

In the course of these remarks we note the existence of tension between the function of the initiation rites and the new realities brought by modernity, by the market, by the Constitutional State and its organs, such as education. This tension, which in the discourse sometimes appears as a conflict, shows how the shaping of the social roles of boys and girls, prepared to live in contexts that have little to do with past realities, are perceived with some constraint, even in the case of matrons and masters who defend a power, which falls apart vis-à-vis the confrontation with the demystification of the meanings that are given to the traditional practices. The attempts to co-opt, adjust and reconcile modes of thinking and living, expose the mechanisms that, with increasing consistency, are no longer capable to impose behaviours on the girls and boys that are normative of their identities. Even when the discourses reveal fatalism and an impossibility of change, reality takes charge of uncovering the conflicts between the identity dimensions constructed in the rites and the new elements that girls and boys will look for in other spaces and sources of information.

However, and we say it once again, the awareness of the problems brought about by an initiation that subjects the girls and boys participating in it is not a sufficient reason for not sending their daughters and sons to the rites. A female teacher said it like this: "I took my daughter to the rites, otherwise they could think that I am an agitator and that I don't respect tradition". As there is no courageous and stimulating political position of access to and the exercise of children's rights, clearly rejecting that harmful cultural practices should be fought and punished, this narrative, full of ambiguity, is an example of the efficacy that the renewal of the cultural bodies is having in the last few years, in which the cultural question has served as an appeal to unanimous political and ideological action.

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It is also interesting to observe that, though the majority of the boys doesn't show any sympathy for the situation of girls who are obliged to marry prematurely, which is revealing of the influence of the rites on the naturalization of violence,[151] there appear in any case boys who revolt against early marriages, attributing the responsibility for this to the families and taking up a position against the teaching of sexuality in the rites. This is all the more curious as, even for these boys, the discourse of culture and identification became so powerful and so restrictive of new choices, new ways of life, that it impedes them from finding or reflecting about alternatives. We think that this situation is related to the political context of intolerance which, transposed to culture, creates a need for homogenization, under penalty of being marginalized by the community.

However, and we must mention it as important information to retain, a group of *Makhuwa Lomwé* teachers in Alto Molocué, contrary to all other informants who ambiguously proposed to remove "only" the contents about sexuality from the rites, clearly exposed their perplexity and dissatisfaction, not only with the information transmitted there, but also with the results and the agents transmitting it:

> "I would like to comment a bit about the main theme. The question of values ... we are talking about initiation rites. What was a value yesterday, may today not be a value because what happens, what often happens is that there is a "sex-centeredness", the intention to see everything in relation to the sexual aspect. Why is this? As my colleagues were saying, in the initiation rites of times past, in which the boys and girls had to respect this aspect, to question this aspect meant to violate an established rule. Not today, therefore society has to sacrifice some aspects. We, as members of society, should sacrifice some aspects that are not helpful at all. What do I gain, taking an adolescent to the rites? We have to consider which values, in which context this is transmitted, in which

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[151] "The parents already spent all the money on the rites and don't have any left for her to keep studying" (Francisco 1).

context. Is it that what we are transmitting will be positive, is important for good governance? Thus it is this what is at stake, they are inculcating into an adolescent girl who had not yet started sexual activity that survival is on the basis of sex. (...) I remember, I performed the initiation rites in my home ground, in Milange, we were obliged to embrace a tree as if it were a woman, to make some movements, as if it were a woman. Well, I have studied this, but what is it? What is the impact of what they did to me? There is thus a serious problem in the idea of initiation rites" (Francisco 4).

Forced marriages (as also happens with excisions and the lengthening of the labia minora), which may be explained in the same context of recognition of the legitimacy of male domination (Héritier, 2000), are a harsh reality that teachers, education sectors and members of civil society organisations at local level associate with the initiation rites.

There is a perception in the large majority of the interviews that the families have exclusive competence to take decisions about the initiated girls, which constitutes a right that cannot be questioned (even not by the traditional leaders). This clearly shows how the structure of the rites constructs the adult through a pedagogy that deprives them of rights, strengthening obedience and paternal dependence. The decision about the child belongs to the family, even if this means to exclude it from rights. The argument of money spent with the child for food and the satisfaction of its basic needs is frequently used to remove the child from school. The expression "leaving *paratu*" (that we have been quoting frequently) means that there was a man in the house of the parents (the child may be five years old, or less) and left some money that will be increased gradually until the end of the rites, then requiring that the girl is given to him. This situation is so trivial and considered very fair, and in fact it is, in the context of the patriarchal culture. In this regard we were informed that when in a meeting with State leaders in Búzi District the question was raised of a girl having refused to be given to her payer, who then lodged a complaint with the leaders, the solution found by the representative of the Mozambican State was that the

parents had to give back the money received. This situation which today could be object of a fictional story (given that with respect to the legislation in force the only possible answer of the State would be to arrest the parties involved in the trafficking), shows the complicity with the crime, and more than that, it reveals the mechanisms used in the gender order, naturally perceived as fair. In the question of early marriages, at no time the children's rights enter into the rules of the game (Ana 1).

On the other hand, some teachers, when trying to avoid school dropouts, tried to talk to these men with the objective of letting the girls study, having received this answer:

> "They were threatening, these traders threatened the family, well, if it is like that, I will leave your daughter at home, the family felt uneasy because money would cease to enter, and we teachers we cannot do anything" (Álvaro 3).

Many examples of school abandonment on the part of girls were given by the teachers, as a discouraged teacher told us: "you see, in this school there are today 21 girls and 18 boys, while in grade 7 there are 14 girls and 31 boys" (Armindo 4).

Some civil society organisations are doing very praiseworthy work to combat early marriages, but the results have not corresponded to the efforts put in. There is a lot of resistance on the part of the parents and the communities who consider that civil society is interfering with the life of the community, endangering their autonomy. This means that, depending on how the link between State powers and the community is brought about, on the benefits that all parties can receive from the intervention of the organisations, the populations are not very sensitive to change.

However, we have interviewed girls in Búzi Town who had managed, through relatives living in the provincial capital, to resist to early marriages. At the time of the interview they were between 14 and 15 years old, having been forced around 12, 13 years. When questioned if they had performed the initiation rites, all of them said yes, but that they intend to stay at school and study to have a job. The interest

of these cases is the existence of people belonging to the same extended family, who protect and stimulate the girls, paying some money to the parents "as compensation". This means that these children were capable of developing mechanisms of non-conformity with the teachings in the rites. When we insisted about what would have motivated them to refuse marriage, some of them said, smiling, that the men were very old and had AIDS: "I was 14 and he was 40" (Matilde 4). Another girl said that she had learned it on the radio, in church, at school, emphasizing the role of the Brazilian soaps where she saw that girls had rights. When I questioned them about the heroine of the soap, they responded with conviction that she was the scoundrel of the story, i.e., she was the one behaving herself in a more or less marginal way, with respect to the norms imposed by the family. This situation must be understood in the context of the individuation of the processes of identity construction, in order that they contributed to a series of factors that allowed delegitimizing the power structure in which they live and circulate. But also these girls are unable to break with the images constructed about the qualities of femininity conferred by culture, stating that they will send their daughters to the rites to be in a good light by the community and in order that they will not be given back by their husbands. However, in the interstices of the norm resistance is being constructed and identities are being reshaped, as is shown by this statement of a young woman, daughter of a *Sena* father and mother, who refused to lengthen the labia and to participate in the initiation rites:

> "My father was a military man and we travelled a lot, but when I was seven I went to stay with my grandmother. When I was 9 or 10 years old my grandmother forced us girls, me and all my female cousins, to pull the labia minora of the vagina. (...) And it was very painful, isn't it? When I peed I always felt a burning pain. So, I felt as if something was going to be different in me, so I ended up desisting. And each week she also forced us, all the girls, to show it, you see? If we were still virgins or not. We made a queue, then my grandmother called us to open our legs and she would see if we had already lost our virginity or not. I desisted, perhaps because I was a

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girl, perhaps I could say I was an informed girl because I was born in a military environment, my father was a military man, we were well-considered, isn't it? So I think it was this influence, and also at school, I always studied in these public schools, I was always a girl who was always ahead, so they thought that we were not complete to serve a man. But it isn't true, I never felt like that, I never felt something abnormal in the relations I have, always the only thing I already felt, it is that situation, I don't know if it is part of the rites, of women using those herbs? Or they put them to be able to reduce the size of the vagina? Well then, in some cases, some of them demand it, I don't know what, they demand it, saying that you have to put this, but it is that thing, I really don't know! Because sometimes women are disturbed, so people feel obliged to do everything to satisfy. Even after my first marriage, I had this education, but at a certain moment I saw that things were difficult for me. And as I am an informed person and I was always very daring and very much inclined to involve myself in the associative movement, I was gradually able to see that no, that attitude isn't correct, isn't it? So I was always contrary, what my parents said, I was always contrary. I ended up opting for myself and I divorced and I have already married again, they have already criticised me a lot, they have criticized me a lot, my father stopped talking to me for a year" (Leocádia 2).

This statement shows the importance of the contexts for the construction of the resistance of this young woman. Belonging to a family acknowledged for their participation in the armed struggle for national liberation, frequently moving to another region, without time or political predisposition for traditional cultural inclusion, attending school from a very early age, this young woman was capable to resist to the lengthening of the vaginal lips and participation in the rites. However, her reference to plants that narrow the vagina may point to pressures produced by her relations with partners who were not subjected to the same order of values as the interviewee (in the interview she referred quite a lot to the

control of her former husband over her work, the daily use of time and his control over her body), which seems to have originated her divorce. It is curious to observe that the transgression accepted by the parents, with respect to her refusal to participate in the rites, is limited, when it concerns breaking with the gender order (as happened when she divorced her first partner). In other words, the appropriation of modernity does in itself not mean a change of the gender relations, but rather the possibility to readjust them, reshaping some hierarchies and more explicit forms of gender violence.

The feeling of refusal or at least of consciousness about the violence of the rites has several times been aired during the research, as can be observed in these remarks of a girl in Macomia who, when asked whether she knew someone who had abandoned school because of the rites, responded: "I myself, I am already an adult, it is enough to be ceremonized, your father will say now you can already have a husband, go and let him bring rice to our house, we will no longer give you anything, even notebooks, but I am resisting, I am asking" (Vânia 8). Some of these girls are forced to prostitute themselves to be able to keep studying, they know that they are ill reputed in the community, but they pursue a destination freeing them from subjugation: studying, the aspiration to leave the district, waning to be somebody, are expectations for these girls motivating them not to abandon school.

In the entire description the girls and boys gave of the ritual teachings, the existence of transgressions became clear, for example denunciations by adult informants of the behaviour of boys and girls, revealed by the little assistance given by them to their families, as well as by the "uncontrolled" way in which girls exercise sexuality. However, the transgression of the girls and boys, expressed in the clothes they use, in how they socialize, in their choice of partners, in their circulation through various spaces, is also codified and has to be accepted by their pairs. In this scope sexual initiatives and the games of seduction are present, which can only be practiced and accepted in specific contexts and with limits, under penalty of exclusion. New norms are created that substitute the old interdictions but that may

also constitute themselves in interdictions, if they exceed the jointly accepted limits. We should also take into account the possibilities and opportunities allowing that each of them may act against or go beyond the inculcations that were imposed on them, and the strategies that may question or break with the old order, negotiating new ways of interaction. One of the cases told by a female teacher in Inhaminga about a girl, who fled from the rites, clearly shows how transgressions are being produced:

> "I have a cousin from Nampula, she was studying in Maputo and attending grade 8. Her parents sent her to Nampula to perform the rites and she left, she said she didn't want to, and her parents became very angry because they had already spent a lot of money for the godmother and the matron. When she returned, her parents said you are no longer our daughter and she said, it's all right, I will stay on the street. And now she is well married and has her licentiate degree, her parents even divorced because her father said that it was her mother's fault that she had not performed the rites, but today my cousin is happy with her marriage and with her work" (Deolinda 20).

Finally, it is important to point to three big groups of questions concerning the teachings transmitted by the initiation rites and the meanings given to them by the various groups of interviewees. The first group has to do with the construction of identity and with the role the rites perform in the preservation of a past through the transmission of the *habitus*, subjecting new realities and experiences according to a principle of continuity. By the attribution of characteristics defining behaviour, the rites seek to shape identities, constituting themselves, as several authors state when discussing national identities (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982), in a system of cultural representation defining belongings and mobilizing individuals for the production and reproduction of a normative that is referenced and naturalized. It is in this sense that the whole idea of diversity is conceived as a risk, because it allows decentralization and identity fragmentation.

It is in this context that through the rites individuals learn to break symbolically with childhood, re-establishing the social order through their actions and the meanings (that are given to them), which is intended to be fixed and unalterable. This means that the rites not only confirm the social order, but also provide, through beliefs and practices, its mechanisms of legitimation.

In the research it was notable that all teachings were related to myths that anchor knowledge and truth, impeding or rendering useless their questioning. The teaching of gender identities is done in close connection with sexual identities. We can even state the difficulty of their distinction, considering that the construction of masculinities and femininities focus on the sexualized body. The conventions of good conduct, even those concerning the division of labour and "respect" are satiated with sexuality. Boys and girls learn to distinguish and to recognise themselves on the basis of a male mandate for domination, whether with respect to the distribution of functions and roles, such as head of family, or through the regulated incitement to sex life. In fact, the rites provide the guide constraining bodies to values and practices which constitute a factor of inclusion into the community. It is in this sense that gender violence can be understood and for example expressed in early marriages and early pregnancy.

The second group of questions has to do with the tensions caused by new contexts that allow on the one hand to demarcate conventions and on the other hand to question them. We refer particularly to the fact that early marriages are contracted, or at least perceived, as more frequent and at a younger age, which has to do with the decrease of the age of the first menstruation, but mainly with the rupture and demystification of "diseases" and death, provoked by early sexual intercourse. Contact with other spaces and sources of information allows that both the families and their children can resort to an early start of sexuality without the fulfilment of the predictions. As mentioned above, early marriages are part of a strategy of survival of the families, which is in agreement with the ritual teachings. Saying that after the rites the girls "are ready" means permission for sexual initiation and for handing over the child to a man. The rites can thus

not be acquitted from dropouts and forced unions of children: this fact is confirmed by the reaction of the communities and their leaders with respect to families who hand over their daughters in exchange for money and goods, taking them out of school. The families continue to be recognized and included in the community, without their prestige and honour being affected.

On the other hand, the appearance of new meanings is observed,[152] mainly among girls and boys, with respect to learning, not only the link between the violence and suffering caused by the trials and punishments to which the children are subjected, but also with respect to the formatting of identities, as is the case of the rejection by some boys and girls of domestic violence and polygamy, of forced unions and of the assumption of sexual initiation and pregnancy as a choice. This means that, open to other spaces, the youths include transience, fluidity and questioning or negotiating old loyalties into their identities. Individuals proceed to defining themselves by uncountable belongings, in a discontinuous and fragmented process in which new ways of re-identification are being constructed and normalized. This whole process occurs under tensions that sometimes lead to extreme acts such as the suicide of parents rejected by their children and homicide committed due to the incapacity to manage the conflicts between a past taken as reference and modernity which displaces and decentralizes individuals (Giddens, 2000).

Individuals are summoned by modernity to multiple choices, they are involved in reflexivity, in the questioning of tradition and the complex establishment of the relation between tradition and modernity. The traditional hierarchies are replaced or can be reformulated on the basis of new hierarchies that emphasize equality and freedom against the conformation characterised by the preservation of the order, as for example happens when women resist

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[152] And also of the progressive abandonment of certain practices such as female tattoos, mainly among the *Makhuwa* and *Makonde* population, considered central to male sexual satisfaction.

to violence, leave the house of their husbands without fear or face social disapproval.

The last question and to resume what we analysed at the beginning of this study, the research made clear that it is possible, and necessary, opposing the cultural relativism that, observing the rites in a context of pre-modernity, resorting to a linear, simple and fixed past (which criteria to localize the past?), to observe how the cultural institutions, how the initiation rites constrain or not access to and the exercise of human rights. When one criticizes the imposition by the West of a single approach to human rights and anchors this on a neo-colonial and imperialist position, one leaves out two facts: the first one is that human rights were constituted, and are even today around the world, through minority movements (interestingly stigmatized and repressed, employing the same kind of reasoning used today, to claim that cultural differences appeal to different rights) which when laying bare and imposing the inclusion of all human beings as subjects of rights, did so in the name of a humanity which, despite the diversities, has in common that the rights are undivided and universal. The second fact is that culture is subject to change, opposing inherited interests, hierarchies and rights, expressed in the discourses and practices of individuals, naturalizing the regime(s) of inequality, through the available mechanisms and resources used by a power in order to reproduce itself. What became clear in the research is that the existence of new meanings attributed to the initiation rites not only question their efficacy as an element of cultural identification, but also introduce new problems that have to do with resistance to a system of beliefs that impedes access to and the exercise of rights. Included in this case are those girls who run away from the rites and refuse to lengthen their vaginal lips and those girls who, in Búzi, refused to marry and to abandon school. "Betraying" the pure and original culture which limits their rights, these girls, seeking new ways to express belonging, reinvent new senses and new meanings allowing them to shake a subordinate condition.

Conclusions

The treatment of the initiation rites in the spatial units that were object of this research departed from two presuppositions: the first one concerning the rites as a cultural institution, taking into account both the system of representations and practices that establish cohesion and belonging to a group as the mechanisms that, intervening in their regulation, are subjected to successive adaptations and readjustments. It is in this sense that the analysis made takes culture as a complex and hierarchized system. This system is perceived through the power structure and by how individuals situate themselves and act through mechanisms allowing them to negotiate, adjust or break with the fixed model of normativity. Culture must thus be understood on the basis of social, economic and political contexts which, acting on it, can produce changes and/or resistance. Breaking thus with the hegemonic and essentialist vision of culture we seek to understand the meanings that girls and boys are conferring to the teachings and the mechanisms of embodiment in a fluid and unstable process.

Another presupposition related to the previous one is the link between culture and human rights, a question frequently raised in the course of the study. Breaking with a reductionist vision of relativism, which restricts and subordinates the rights of individuals to a homogeneous cultural model that is intended unchanging, we sought to understand how the circulation of individuals through spaces, the contamination of the discourses of rights and the existence of a modern State attempting to regulate the social order, act on the processes of ritualization. This action results in the recomposition of the functions of the rites, and in how individuals at the various levels of intervention renegotiate powers, seeking to preserve the elements of cohesion through adjustment to new realities or, on the contrary, question in the final analysis the

ideology expressed in the beliefs transmitted by a traditional symbolic order, putting in play new meanings and practices.

From these premises the research established three orders of problems that lead to the need to redimension the cultural question and, in this case, the initiation rites, taking into account the diversity of contexts in which they are conducted. In the first place, the existence today in the Mozambican reality of an attempt, coming from various fields, to bring about a legitimation of tradition, linking it to an idea of nationalism versus patriotism based on a certain self-seeking immobility of culture. This phenomenon is expressed in the growing assumption that human rights laid down explicitly in the legislation, as is the case of the Constitution of the Republic, the Family Law, the Law against Domestic Violence and the Law for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child, are not, or cannot be closely related to the cultural reality. I.e., human rights, being imported, cannot and should not (according to some more radical voices) be adopted, or should be adopted with a certain relativist precaution, when it comes to defending the rights of the youth of both sexes, who are excluded by the hierarchy of power present in the cultural model, as subjects of rights. We are mainly referring to children and women but also to men who receive a mandate of domination from which it is difficult to escape. We will resume this subject below.

Although we have discussed this question at length, we would like to emphasize that human rights are not a specific condition of some people or region (neither are they inherent in western culture), but the product of long and painful conquests that make that today the claim to the universality of rights is a conquest of all human beings. This is also the position of the Mozambican State enshrined in legal mechanisms and in public policies. However, during the research it was established that there is so to speak a deflection between the discourse of rights and the preservation of cultural institutions, without taking into account the changes that the latter have been seeing in the last few decades. This results in ambiguities and ambivalences expressed in an attempt to control the initiation rites with regard to the time at which they should be conducted (school

holidays), the intervention of the Health sector in circumcision and, mainly, advice to remove sex and sexuality from the ritual teachings. On the other hand, the school curriculum still contains the promotion of the rites, as an example of our culture, while discourses are produced and actions organised aimed at the promotion of access to and the exercise of rights.

It became clear that these formal changes in the rites (relative to the time, the ritual space and the fact of circumcision being carried out by health agents and/or by using new blades) led to a closer link between actors at different levels of the social order. This means that power distribution relations are established between community and traditional leaders, between masters and matrons and State officials which, though on the one hand legitimating the rites and their agents, deprive them, or may deprive them, of an hegemonic knowledge which imposed itself as the one true and transcendent knowledge in the framework of the social order. It was interesting to observe the monetization of the rites expressed in a rehierarchization of families in the communities: contrary to what happened before, when the payment of the rites was merely symbolic, the rites shape, as we have already argued, a status which has not only to do with the passage to adulthood, but also with the social position of the families and their initiatees of both sexes.

Another order of problems concerns the differences and similarities between the initiation rituals between the various ethnolinguistic groups and between urban and rural environments. While in the towns, with the exception of Quelimane, where the frequency of the performance of initiation rites was not identified (neither the need for their existence as a form of identity affirmation, even among the *Makhuwa Lomwé* girls and boys), in Pemba as well as in Beira (though more in the former than in the latter), there is a shortening of the ceremonies and greater informalization of the spaces. The close contact with modernity, greater access to school and the experience of life in a more cosmopolitan environment, engenders the creation of opportunities that enhance choices, allowing new ways of identification and rejection or, on the contrary, the exploitation of the ritual teachings to put at stake, and in a more

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sophisticated way, the mechanisms of power and also of countervailing power in social relations, particularly social gender relations.

In the rural areas, though the initiation rites fulfil more vigorously the functions of community cohesion and identity shaping, and the conflicts between discourses and actions about rights are moderated by the lesser degree of penetration of the factors of modernity in the communities, as for example the small number of schools for children attending the 2nd level of primary education (between 10 and 12 years of age), we observe resistance, though still in a tentative way, against practices allowed and somehow encouraged by the rites, as is the case of early "marriages" of children. This situation is evident in districts such as Búzi, where the circulation and ethnolinguistic miscegenation enables greater capacity of negotiation and transgression.

However, and here we enter the third order of problems, the rites continue to be, by the factors of demarcation for their performance, by the ceremonies that constitute them and by the meanings that are given to them, a factor of cultural cohesion. When we talk about cultural cohesion, we talk about elements that identify the belonging of each person to a certain way of looking at and situating him or herself in the world. The cohesion contains thus both the recognition of belonging through the conformation with representations and practices consecrated in the processes of interaction and also of subjectivation, and the recognition of exclusion for those who do not belong to the group.

Therefore, the concept of cohesion contains in itself inclusion and exclusion, but more than that, it contains the prescription of social roles and functions performed through a power structure which harmonizes hierarchies (rendering them legitimate), while simultaneously incorporating the mechanisms of control and surveillance of behaviours.

The rites of coming of age are, through the contents of their teachings, constructors of differentiated gender identities and sexual identities. The mechanisms of identity inculcation are brought about

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with extreme suffering. The punishments and trials to which the girls and boys are subjected, with the purpose of regulating behaviours, should also, and not only symbolically, be seen as legitimation of the violence exerted on those girls and boys who, being at the margin, are not individuals, but should mainly be understood in a context that is meant to be impervious to change, i.e., in which any change constitutes a threat to the established order.

As we had the opportunity to analyse and exemplify, in addition to the sexual division of labour, the teaching of respect and of sex life are the core elements that organize and articulate the ritual function, in a differentiated and unequal way for each one of the sexes. The discourse of respect that always appears associated with a feeling of tolerance and inclusion which should guide social relations is, in fact, perceived in a different way for boys or for girls. For the latter it means obedience to their partner and a resigned acceptance of the male command. For boys, respect is presented in a less explicit way, but always remaining the idea of the provision of a house and heading the family. This dichotomy between the two sexes which genderizes the established relations is today, on the part of many girls and some boys, object of conflict: by the influence of the school and the discourses about rights, the subordination leading to female silence begins to be questioned, though in most cases women continue to be charged with the obligations inherent in patriarchal culture.

Regarding the analysis of sex life we sought to identify the representations and practices of sex and sexuality and the mechanisms used for the construction of the body relative to the other and to the self, taking into account the contexts producing the discourse. It was our intention to understand how the teaching of sex life confers to each boy and girl initiatee the power of knowledge about their own and the other's body, and how this knowledge is, or is not, a mechanism of control over their own sexuality. In this field, it was important to understand which meanings the girls and boys ascribe to sexual pleasure, to sexual initiative and to decision-making about their sexuality. The research also sought to understand how the initiation rituals produce the changes "imposed" by new realities,

incorporating them, or not, in the learning process. With this we want to say that more than seeking the exotism of any cultural purism, we had the intention to contribute to an understanding of how the cultural practices interfere with the construction of the social identities of girls and boys, taking into account the embodiment of new dispositions which, using the ritual teachings, confront it by putting in place new modes of recognition.

During the study we observed that the teaching of girls and boys about sex life uses mechanisms aimed at the preservation of a gender order. Initiating a child from very early on in the lengthening of the labia minora (as a pre-ritualization), depriving girls of sexual initiative and imposing it on boys, symbolically denying female pleasure, transforming the female body into a docile body that should recognize itself as being at the service of a partner, subjecting girls to constant self-surveillance and preparing them for the precocious start of sex life, the initiation rites intend in fact to inform and situate the social place of each one of the girls and each one of the boys. The discourses about early "marriages" show how the initiation rites legitimate the forced unions of children and school abandonment.

However, and as we sought to explain in the course of this study, by virtue of a series of factors, such as the school, conviviality among pairs and the exposure to actions and discourses about human rights, strategies are launched which, aimed at opposing and resisting the mechanisms of the subordination of women and the hegemonic female and male models, new and contrary meanings are being given to the teachings about sexuality, contributing to the construction of new identities, for example running away from early marriages, the refusal of ritual violence, including the refusal to participate in the rites.

When dimensioning the ritual process in its components of respect and sex life, we would like to make it clear that we did not follow a reductionist purpose, depriving the initiation rites from their complexity and their dynamics that can only with difficulty be perceived in isolation. Our options have to do with the need to understand, in the studied contexts, how the construction of the

elements expressed in the social normativity (which the rite congregates) is produced, allowing to observe the multiplicity of elements that are converging to characterise the gender identities, simultaneously seeking the opposition subverting the dominant order in its interstices. This means to take into account the power structure guiding the social relations between the various sex and age groups and the possibilities for transgression of the norm, expressed in the new meanings that girls and boys ascribe to the mechanisms conforming identities.

Finally, we consider it important to mention the importance of the existence of informed debates between academics and between State institutions, so as to identify, in the complexity of the cultural institutions, the change processes imposed by a plural reality in permanent mobility. We do not believe it useful to subject the cultural analysis to the knowledge inherited from contradictory schools which, fixing themselves frequently in ideological presuppositions, impede that new ways of treating the processes of the construction of social identities, mainly gender identities and sexual identities, come to light.

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Annex 1

Codification of the identity of the informants

Chart 1: Codification of the names of girls and boys (individual interviews)

Sex	Maputo City	Maputo Province	Cabo Delgado	Zambézia	Sofala
Women	Joana	-	Vânia	Júlia	Luísa
Men	João	-	Vasco	Julião	Luís

Chart 2: Codification of the names of girls and boys (collective interviews)

Sex	Maputo City	Maputo Province	Cabo Delgado	Zambézia	Sofala
Women	Augusta	-	Dora	Gilberta	Matilde
Men	Augusto	-	Diogo	Gil	Marco

Chart 3: Codification of the names of matrons and masters

Sex	Maputo City	Maputo Province	Cabo Delgado	Zambézia	Sofala
Women	Lúcia	-	Arminda	Zita	Dirce
Men	Libério	-	Armindo	Zuber	Dipac

Chart 4: Codification of the names of adult men and women

Sex	Maputo City	Maputo Province	Cabo Delgado	Zambézia	Sofala
Women	Carminda	-	Antónia	Fernanda	Deolinda
Men	Carlos	-	Álvaro	Francisco	Dinis

Chart 5: Codification of the names of State sector informants, by Province

Sex	Maputo City	Maputo Province	Cabo Delgado	Zambézia	Sofala
Women	Leonor	Bernarda	Ana	Zubaida	Dilma
Men	Bento	Bernardo	Achirafo	Zair	Daniel

Chart 6: Codification of the names of civil society organisation informants, by Province

Sex	Maputo City	Maputo Province	Cabo Delgado	Zambézia	Sofala
Women	-	-	Amélia	Zaida	Daniela
Men	-	Januário	Arménio	Ziro	Dimas

Chart 7: Codification of the names of traditional leaders, by Province

Sex	Maputo City	Maputo Province	Cabo Delgado	Zambézia	Sofala
Women	-	-	Mafalda	Felismina	Eduarda
Men	Hélio	-	Matias	Feniasse	Ernesto

Annex 2

Characterization of the spatial units

1. Sofala Province

Sofala Province is situated in the Central Region of the country. Its capital is Beira City, the second largest city of the country. In 2010,[153] Sofala had a total population of 1,812,811 inhabitants, 881,471 of whom are men and 931,337 women. This number represents an increase, as the 2007 Census indicated a total population of 1,685,663. About 38.3% of the population lived in urban areas and 61.7% in rural areas.[154]

Education

In Sofala Province, 43.4% of the population is illiterate, with an illiteracy rate of 61.9% for women and of 23.0% for men. These figures show that the levels of illiteracy are three times higher for women, and about 11% higher than the national average. The Census indicates that the cause of this inequality between the sexes is possibly the fact that the procreators give priority to the education of their sons to the detriment of the education of their daughters. There is a variation of the literacy rates, according to area of residence and sex, with a 59.9% rate in rural areas and 20.8% in urban areas.[155]

The majority of the population above five years of age speaks Portuguese (62.9%). This percentage is higher for men (75%) than for women (51.6%).

Although the gross enrolment rate[156] is high, the net enrolment rate at all levels of education covered by this study [157] is much lower, as can be observed in Table 1.

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[153] INE (2010). Statistical Yearbook of Mozambique.

[154] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

[155] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

[156] Percentage ratio between the total number of enrolled students at a certain level of education (irrespective of age) and the resident population of the normal age for enrolment at this level.

**Table 1: Enrolment Rate by sex,
according to level of education**

Level of education	Enrolment Rate (%)					
	Gross			Net		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
EP1	123.5	131.6	115.5	89.2	93.0	85.4
EP2	73.8	82.8	64.9	26.5	27.6	25.3
ES1	43.5	48.5	37.8	17.4	19.0	15.8
ES2	16.0	18.2	14.0	3.7	3.9	3.6

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning (2011),
"3rd March" statistical survey.

As can be observed in Table 1, the gross enrolment rate at level I primary education is 123.5%, revealing the existence in EP1 of a high number of students older than 10 years of age, which is the minimum age to complete this level without repeating. According to the 2007 Census, this phenomenon may be related to late entry into school or to repeaters or dropouts. This fact can be sustained by an analysis of the net rates, because it is observed that in the transition from EPI to the next levels, the percentage of enrolled students tends to decrease, and the situation is even more critical in ES2 where we have only 3.7% of students studying at a level of education corresponding to their age.

Health

In Sofala Province there are 152 health units, 119 of which are health centres, 28 health posts, 4 district hospitals and 1 central hospital, situated in Beira City. There are 134 doctors, 112 of whom are working in Beira City. With a total population of 1,812,811 inhabitants, this means that each doctor attends an average of 13.5 people.[158]

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[157] The net enrolment rate indicates the percentage of the population in a certain age group enrolled at the level of education corresponding to their age.

[158] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

Languages

The most frequently spoken maternal language is *Cisena*, spoken by 49.1% of the population, followed by *Cindau* (29.8%) and finally Portuguese (13.3%). The majority of the Portuguese-speaking population resides in urban areas (90.5%) while the percentage in rural areas is only 44.5%.[159]

Religion

Concerning religion, and according to the official source that we have been quoting, a large part of the population of Sofala has no religion (33.2%), 21.2% profess the Evangelical/Pentecostal religion, 18.5% the Catholic religion, 18.9% are Zionists, 2.4% profess the Islamic religion and less than one percent of the population professes some unknown or unspecified religion.[160]

1.1. Beira City

Beira City is the capital of the province and the second largest city of Mozambique, after the capital of the country, Maputo. According to the 2007 Census, Beira has a population of 431,583 inhabitants, 219,624 of whom are men and 211,959 are women.

Education

As we can we observe in Table 2, at the various levels of education there is a total of 156 schools. The number of students is 130,171. There are more than twice as many students in EP1 than in EP2. This is quite significant as the information is for the provincial capital and the second largest city of the country. The losses between the two levels of primary education can not only be explained by the number of repeaters in the first few grades, but has also to with the number of schools. As this number does not satisfy demand, it leads to school abandonment and/or the transfer of students to evening classes. With a total of 2,946 teachers the teacher/student ratio in primary education (EP1 and EP2) is 50 students per teacher and in secondary

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[159] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.
[160] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

education (ES1 and ES2) it is 34. It is interesting to observe that in Beira City the differences between the enrolment numbers of girls and boys are much smaller than those in the remainder of the province, though there is also a decrease in the enrolment of girls in ES1 and ES2.[161]

Table 2: Number of schools and number of students by level of education and sex

Level of Education	No. of schools	Number of Students		
		M	W	Total
EP1	64	34041	33963	68004
EP2	49	12375	12873	25248
ES1	28	13612	15451	29063
ES2	15	3626	4230	7856
Total	**156**	**63654**	**66517**	**130171**

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Health

In Beira City there are 29 health units: 1 central hospital, 8 health centres and 20 health posts. There are 112 doctors, which means that with a total population of 431,583 inhabitants, each doctor attends on average 3,853 people.[162]

1.2. Búzi District

Búzi District has a population of 159,459 inhabitants, 75,181 of whom are men and 84,278 are women.[163]

Education

In Búzi District there are 133 schools teaching at EP1, EP2, ES1 and ES2 level. A total of 125 of these schools are public institutions and 8 are community institutions. There is a total of 44,258 students in the

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[161] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

[162] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

[163] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

district, 38,381 of whom in EP1 and EP2 and 5,877 in ES1 and ES2. As the data of Table 3 show, the number of male students is considerably higher at all levels of education, particularly in ES2, in which there are 606 boys enrolled against 286 girls. It is also important to observe the considerable decrease of the number of students of both sexes, from level 1 of primary education to higher levels. The number of students enrolled in EP2 is almost 6 times lower than the number enrolled in EP1, which is in agreement with the discourses of families, State officials, community and religious leaders and civil society organisations about the families' low expectations with respect to schooling. Many boys abandon school to start working and girls abandon school to "marry". In the same way, it is necessary to take into account the sharp decrease of the number of schools in EP2 (99 in EP1 against only 24 in EP2), which emphasizes the tendency of school abandonment due to lack of places.

Table 3: Number of schools and students by level and sex.

Level of Education	No. of schools	No. of Students		
		M	**W**	**Total**
EP1	99	17336	14809	32285
EP2	24	3115	2573	6096
ES1	6	2965	2020	4985
ES2	4	606	286	892
Total	**133**	**24022**	**19688**	**44258**

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

There are 708 teachers in the whole district, 207 of whom are women and 501 are men. In primary education the teacher/student ratio is 66 students per teacher and in secondary education it is 48 students per teacher. Contrary to other spatial units, in EP1, a level of education which in the other study units favours teaching by women,

the number of male teachers is twice as high as the number of female teachers.[164]

Health

There are 28 health units in the district: 1 rural hospital, 6 health centres, 5 health posts, and 16 village health posts. There are 3 doctors in the district for 159,459 inhabitants, which means that each doctor attends on average 53,153 people.[165]

1.3. Cheringoma District

With its district capital in Inhaminga town, according to the 2007 Census Cheringoma has a population of 34,093 inhabitants, 16,768 of whom are men and 17,325 are women[166].

Education

As can be observed in Table 4, the district has 55 schools distributed over the various levels of education, with the same tendency of a decrease of the number of schools in the 2nd level of primary education (40 schools in EP1 against 13 in EP2). With a total of 15,232 students, the number of enrolled boys is higher than the number of enrolled girls. En ES2 there are even three times as many boys than girls.[167] In this district there are also many dropouts in the transition between the two levels of primary education and between primary and secondary education. The same reasons indicated with respect to Búzi District may explain the situation found. The situation may even be worse than that identified by the statistics, because as we were informed informally, halfway the school year the classes, mainly in EP2, may even be reduced to less than half, due to the harvesting time in June/July, the performance of initiation rites

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[164] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

[165] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

[166] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

[167] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

(though as we have analysed in Chapter IV, there has been an effort to shift the rites to the holiday period) and early "marriages".

Table 4: Number of schools and students by level of education and sex

Level of Education	No. of schools	No. of Students		
		M	W	Total
EP1	40	5920	5748	11668
EP2	13	1241	826	2067
ES1	1	785	427	1212
ES2	1	193	92	285
Total	**55**	**8139**	**7093**	**15232**

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

In Cheringoma the total number of teachers is 352. We should note the limited number of women teachers, mainly in EP2 (52 men against 15 women), ES1 (29 men against 5 women) and ES2 (7 men against zero women). The average teacher/student ratio is 44 students per teacher in primary education (EP1 and EP2) and 37 students per teacher in secondary education (ES1 and ES2).[168] This means that, despite the incentives of the State and civil society organisations to attract women teachers for the rural areas, the results are not yet as hoped for.

Health

Cheringoma District has 8 health units: 1 rural hospital, 4 health centres, 2 health posts and 1 village health post. There is only one doctor in the district for 34,093 inhabitants.[169]

2. Cabo Delgado Province

Cabo Delgado Province has a total of 1,632,065 inhabitants, 790,264 of whom are men and 841,801 are women. About 44% of the

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[168] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

[169] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

population is younger than 15 years. This province is administratively divided into 16 districts and 4 municipalities.[170]

Education

In this province the illiteracy rate is 66.6%, varying according to age and sex. Thus, it is lower for younger ages, and much higher for women (81.7%) than for men (54.2%).

Concerning enrolment rates, as Table 5 shows there is little access in the province to the secondary level, taking into account that the (gross and net) rates are very low, particularly the net rates in ES2, corresponding to almost 1%. It should be pointed out that, as in Sofala Province, when moving from one level to the next the percentage of students decreases, leading to the conclusion that among the spatial units studied this is the province that presents the biggest difference between the net enrolment rate in EP1 (90.1) and that of EP2 (11.0).

Table 5: Enrolment Rate by level of education and by sex

Level of education	Enrolment Rate (%)					
	Gross			Net		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
EP1	133.2	141.6	125.1	90.1	94.1	86.3
EP2	54.2	60.0	48.4	11.0	11.6	10.5
ES1	24.8	28.6	21.0	5.9	6.1	5.7
ES2	7.8	9.4	6.3	0.9	0.9	0.8

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Health

The health network in the province comprises 112 health units: 1 provincial hospital, 3 rural hospitals, 79 type I and II health centres,[171] and 29 health posts. There are 50 doctors working in the

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[170] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

[171] A type II health centre is the smallest health unit providing Primary Health Care in rural environments, and is meant to serve populations in their direct area of

province for 1,632,065 inhabitants, which means that each doctor attends on average 32,641 people.[172]

Languages

According to the 2007 Census, the maternal language of the majority of the population of Cabo Delgado Province is *Emakhuwa* (67.1%), followed by *Shimakonde* (20%) and *Kimwani* (6%). *Shimakonde* is mostly spoken by the population of 50 years and above, contrary to *Emakhuwa* which does not present a significant variation according to age. A tiny 1.2% of the population speaks *Kiswahili*.[173]

Religion

Regarding religion, 53.8% of the population professes the Islamic religion, followed by 36.1% professing the Catholic religion. Inhabitants without religion, 7.6% of the total, occupy the third place. The percentage of the population professing the Anglican and Zion religions and those professing an unknown or unspecified religion represents 0.5% of the population.[174]

The population of Cabo Delgado is mainly made up of three ethnolinguistic groups: the *Makhuwas*, usually cultivators and living in the south and the north of the Province, on the coast as well as in the interior; the *Makondes*, from the plateau in the extreme north of the country, and the *Kimwani*, mainly fishermen and living in coastal villages in the coastal area of the centre and north of the Province.

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influence, of between 7,500 and 20,000 inhabitants. This type of centre is situated in the capitals of sparsely populated Administrative Posts. In its turn, a type I health centre is a more differentiated and larger health centre, meant to serve populations of between 16,000 and 35,000 inhabitants. They are in general situated in the capital of districts with little population and in the capital of Administrative Posts or localities. This type of centre may have a doctor, if justified. (BR, Ministerial Diploma 127/2002).

[172] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

[173] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

[174] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

2.1. Pemba Town

According to the 2007 Census, Pemba is the capital of Cabo Delgado Province and has a total population of 138,716 inhabitants, 69,936 of whom are men and 68,780 are women, while 42,5% of the population is younger than 15 years.

Education

As Table 6 shows, there are 156 schools in Pemba Town, 64 of which of EP1 and 49 of EP2. It is interesting to observe that, contrary to other spatial units and with the exception of ES2, at all levels of education the number of enrolled girls is higher than the number of enrolled boys.

Regarding teachers, the statistics show a total of 2946 teachers. It should be noted that in EP1 the number of women teachers is almost twice as high as the number of male teachers, contrary to the tendency in ES.[175] This reveals a series of factors that possibly have to do with the lower schooling level of women, poor motivation or a preference for men in the selection of teachers. The teacher/student ratio is approximately 19 students per teacher in primary education (EP1 and EP2) and 10 students per teacher in secondary education (ES1 and ES2), which is clearly higher than in the other spatial units.

Table 6: Number of schools and students by level and sex

Level of Education	No. of schools	No. of Students		
		M	W	Total
EP1	64	12859	14120	26979
EP2	49	3842	4539	8381
ES1	28	3926	4252	8178
ES2	15	1519	1369	2888
Total	**156**	**22146**	**24280**	**46426**

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

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[175] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Health

In Pemba Town there are 8 health units, namely 1 rural hospital, 3 type II health centres, 1 village health post and 1 urban health centre. There are 29 doctors working in Pemba, giving a ratio of 4783 inhabitants for each doctor.[176]

2.2. Mecúfi District

According to the 2007 Census, Mecúfi District has a population of 43,285 inhabitants, 20,485 of whom are men and 22,800 are women. The majority of the population of the district is young, as approximately 48% is younger than 15 years. More than 53% are women.[177]

Education

Table 7 shows the existence in Mecúfi of only 25 schools, teaching 1st and 2nd level primary education (19 of EP1 and 6 of EP2) and 2 1st level secondary education schools. Contrary to Pemba Town, where there is gender parity until the end of ES1, the number of girl students (290) attending ES1 in Mecúfi is less than half the number of boys (741). There are no ES2-level schools in this district, so that many students, whose families have no money to send them to Pemba, stop studying.

Mecúfi has a total of 230 teachers but, contrary to what happens in Pemba, in the first few classes the number of women teachers is very low. Of a total of 154 teachers in EP1 only 59 are women, while of a total of 43 teachers in EP2 only 10 are women.[178] In primary education (EP1 and EP2), the ratio is 44 students per teacher and in secondary education it is 22 students per teacher.

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[176] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

[177] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

[178] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Table 7: Number of schools and students by level and sex

Level of Education	No. of schools	No. of Students		
		M	**W**	**Total**
EP1	19	3715	3743	7458
EP2	6	615	622	1237
ES1	2	451	290	741
ES2	0	0	0	
Total	**27**	**4781**	**4655**	**9436**

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Health

There are only two health centres in the district and only one doctor for 43,285 people.[179]

2.3. Macomia District

According to the 2007 Census the district has a population of 79,825 inhabitants, 38,412 of whom are men and 41,413 are women.[180]

Education

Table 8 shows the existence of a total of 61 schools in the district with 17,578 students, 9,491 of whom are male and 8,087 are female. Two tendencies persist with respect to school attendance: the first one shows that in primary education the number of students decreases in the transition between the two levels of education. Enrolment in EP2 is about 7 times lower than in EP1. The second tendency is the progressive proportional decrease of the number of girl students when transiting to a higher level of education. The small number of EP2 schools (only 12) should also be noted, which aggravates school abandonment on the part of boys and girls and stimulates "early marriages" of girls.

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[179] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

[180] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

There is a total of 352 teachers, 66 of whom are women and 249 are men.[181]

The teacher/student ratio in the district is approximately 42 students per teacher in primary education (EP1 and EP2) and 30 students per teacher in secondary education (ES1 and ES2).

Table 8: Number of schools and students by level and sex.

Level of Education	No. of schools	No. of Students		
		M	W	Total
EP1	47	7592	6908	14500
EP2	12	1150	814	1964
ES1	1	681	333	1014
ES2	1	68	32	100
Total	61	9491	8087	17578

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Health

In Macomia there are 4 health centres, and 2 health posts. There is only 1 doctor in the district for 79,825 inhabitants[182].

3. Zambézia Province

Situated in the Central Region of the country, Zambézia has a population of 3,890,453 inhabitants, 1,878,160 of whom are men and 2,012,293 are women. About 47.8% of the population is younger than 15 years.[183]

Education

In Zambézia Province the illiteracy rate is 62.5%. The rate for men is 43.5% and for women it is 79%. This rate, as is the case in the other

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[181] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

[182] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

[183] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

provinces covered by this study, varies according to the area of residence, being higher in rural areas (68.2 %) than in urban areas (37.5%).[184] It should be pointed out that for the total of students attending the various levels of education, the net enrolment rate is very low, including a tendency of asymmetries between boys and girls (Table 9).[185]

Table 9: Enrolment Rate by level of education and by sex

Level of education	Enrolment Rate					
	Gross			Net		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
EP1	162.3	173.1	151.6	*	*	*
EP2	57.4	68.3	46.6	14.2	15.9	12.5
ES1	23.3	29.1	17.7	8.3	9.8	6.9
ES2	6.3	8.0	4.6	1.1	1.4	0.9

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Health

Zambézia has 210 health units, namely 154 health centres, 47 health posts, 8 (general, rural and district) hospitals and 1 provincial hospital. There are 75 doctors, giving a ratio of one doctor per 51,872 inhabitants.[186] Thus it is clear that this spatial unit has the largest doctor/inhabitant ratio, exceeding that of Cabo Delgado Province by almost 20 thousand.

Languages

The maternal language most widely spoken by the population is *Elomwe* (37.1%), followed by *Echuwabo* (23.5%), Portuguese (9.2%) and *Cisena* (8.2%).[187]

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[184] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

[185] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

[186] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

[187] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

Religion

In this province 40% of the population is Catholic, 15.2% has no religion and almost 10% of the population professes the Islamic religion.[188]

3.1. Quelimane Town

According to the 2007 Census Quelimane, the capital and largest town of Zambézia Province, has a total population of 193,343 inhabitants, 99,172 of whom are men and 94,171 are women.[189]

Education

As we can observe in Table 10, Quelimane Town has 63 schools, 27 of which of EP1 and also 27 of EP2, seven schools of ES1and only two schools of ES2. The town has a total of 64,522 students, 32,220 of whom are girls and 32,302 are boys. At all levels of education the number of boys is higher to the detriment of the number of the girls, with the exception of EP1, where there are 17,556 girls and 16,718 boys.

In Quelimane there are 1462 teachers, 776 of whom are women and 686 are men. It is interesting to note that in EP1 the number of women teachers is higher than the number of men: there are 477 women against 127 men. On the other hand, and as we saw in other areas, in ES1 and ES2 the number of women teachers is very low (237 men against 74 women in ES1 and 147 men against 32 women in ES2).[190] The teacher/student ratio in EP1 and EP2 is about 47 and in ES1 and ES2 it is 37 students per teacher.

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[188] idem

[189] INE (2007). III General Census of Population and Housing.

[190] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Table 10: Number of schools and students by level of education and by sex

Level of Education	No. of schools	No. of Students		
		M	W	Total
EP1	27	16718	17556	34274
EP2	27	6028	5876	11904
ES1	7	7653	7142	14795
ES2	2	1903	1646	3549
Total	**63**	**32302**	**32220**	**64522**

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Health

Concerning health units, this district has 1 provincial hospital, 4 urban health centres, 3 health posts and 1 type III health centre. There are 38 doctors, giving a ratio of 5,088 inhabitants per doctor.[191]

3.2. Mocuba District

According to the 2007 Census, Mocuba has 300,628 inhabitants, 147,202 of whom are men and 153,426 are women. With an area of 8,803 km², in 2007 the population density was 34.15 inhabitants per km².

Education

Table 11 shows that Mocuba District has 261 schools, most of which of EP1 level, a small number of secondary schools and only one school teaching ES2. There are 117,303 students, with a larger number of boys than of girls enrolled at all levels of education, namely a total of 62,195 boys against 55,108 girls. The fact that the number of EP2 schools is almost 4 times smaller than the number of EP1 schools is possibly one of the reasons for the extreme decrease of the number of students attending the second level of primary education. Once again, and in a quite significant way, we observe the limited opportunities for the population living in Mocuba to move up

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[191] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

the school system and to have access to formal employment, particularly on the part of girls.

With regard to teachers, of a total number of 1714 teachers only 728 are women, while at all levels of education the number of women is lower than that of men. The teacher/student ratio in the district is approximately 64 students per teacher in primary education (EP1 and EP2) and 140 students per teacher in secondary education (ES1 and ES2).[192]

Table 11: Number of schools and students by level and sex.

Level of Education	No. of schools	No. of Students		
		M	W	Total
EP1	198	47185	43086	90271
EP2	55	7318	5867	13185
ES1	7	6278	4984	11262
ES2	1	1414	1171	2585
Total	**261**	**62195**	**55108**	**117303**

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Health

Mocuba District has 1 rural hospital, 2 urban health centres, 8 health posts, 2 type III health centres and 3 village health posts. There are 6 doctors in the district. With a total of 300,628 inhabitants each doctor attends 50,105 persons.[193]

3.3. Alto Molocué District

According to the 2007 Census this district has a population of 272,482 inhabitants, 131,709 of whom are men and 140,773 are

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[192] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

[193] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

women. With an area of 6386 km², in 2007 the population density was 42.67 inhabitants per km².

Education

Table 12 shows that there are 272 schools in Alto Molocué District, 217 of which of EP1 level. There is only 1 school teaching at ES2 level. Once again, access to the second level of primary education is very limited, considering that there are four times less EP2 schools than EP1 schools. In the same way, the number of students decreases sharply in these same levels: from a total of 70,500 students in EP1 to only 11.084 in EP2. Even considering the existence of repeaters and changes of places of residence, a difference of about 60.000 less students in EP2 is not very convincing. This situation is even more serious if we consider that the data provided by the Ministry of Education show that the large majority of girls and boys does not complete primary education.

There are 1511 teachers in the district, 1015 of whom are men and 497 are women. Regarding the teacher/student ratio, in primary education it is 57 and in secondary education 73 students per teacher.[194][195]

Table 12: Number of schools and students by level and sex.

Level of Education	No. of schools	No. of Students		
		M	W	Total
EP1	217	35149	35351	70500
EP2	51	5878	5206	11084
ES1	3	2963	2298	5261
ES2	1	925	521	1446
Total	**272**	**44915**	**43376**	**88291**

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

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[194] As in Mocuba District, the teacher/student ratio in secondary education seems too unrealistic. This was however the officially obtained information.

[195] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Health

There are 21 health units in the district, namely 1 rural hospital, 1 type I health centre, 6 type III health centres, 5 health posts and 8 village posts. There are only 2 doctors which means that with 272,482 inhabitants, each doctor attends 136,241 people.[196]

3.4. Gurué District

According to the 2007 Census, Gurué District has a population of 297,935 inhabitants, 145,989 of whom are men and 151,946 are women. With an area of 5,606 km², the population density is 53.15 inhabitants per km².

Education

Table 13 shows that Gurué District has 262 schools, the majority of EP1 level. There are 69 schools of EP2, 4 schools of ES1, and only one school of ES2.

As can be observed, at all levels of education the number of girls is lower than that of boys. From Table 13 we can deduce that access to education on the part of girls is still limited.

There is a total of 1609 teachers in the district, 1030 of whom are men and 579 are women. In EP2 there is an enormous difference between the number of male and female teachers, as there are 226 men and only 82 women. This discrepancy also exists in ES1, where we find 76 male teachers and only 16 female teachers[197]. The teacher/student ratio in the district is 66 students per teacher in EP1 and EP2 and 52 students per teacher in ES1 and ES2.

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[196] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).

[197] Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Table 13. Number of schools and students by level and sex

Level of Education	No. of schools	No. of Students		
		M	**W**	**Total**
EP1	188	44009	42296	86305
EP2	69	6193	5264	11457
ES1	4	3116	2331	5447
ES2	1	966	457	1423
Total	**262**	**54284**	**50348**	**104632**

Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (2011), "3rd March" statistical survey.

Health

Gurué District has 29 health units, namely 1 rural hospital, 6 health posts, 17 village health posts, 1 type I health centre and 4 type III health centres. There are 4 doctors in this district and 297,935 inhabitants, giving a ratio of 74,484 inhabitants per doctor.[198]

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[198] Information provided by the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation of MISAU (2012).