

Men between Worlds

Changing Masculinities in Urban Maputo

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In 2003 Mozambique's parliament approved a new legal code that proposes a "Western" view of family and gender roles. These changes question the social organization and the symbolic views of gender in Mozambique. We show how men are reconstructing their identities when caught between tradition and male dominance and the Westernized values of the modern equalitarian family. We analyze change at the levels of individual practices and identities and of societal symbolic models to show how entanglements are produced at both levels. At the macro-level the law legitimates Western values and deals with hybrid realities. At the micro-level, men live entangled trajectories in which they mix different references and social times when relating themselves to hegemonic masculinity(ies). The analysis draws on data collected in urban Maputo both through a survey applied to Eduardo Mondlane University students and in-depth interviews with men from several generations and contexts.

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Men's lives, daily practices, and identities, even when observed through local ethnographies in particular contexts (*Western* or *non-Western*), should always be looked at in the broader light of globalization processes, the increased speed of which has enabled modernity to spread.¹ Such a perspective on masculinities engages at least three basic ideas: the refusal of an Eurocentric or Westernized view of gender relations and identities in favor of the conceptualization of plurality; the notion that this plurality implies the intertwining of different logics, whatever their definition may be (the traditional and the modern, the global and the local, the pre-colonial, the colonial, and the postcolonial, etc.), and must therefore lead to reflections on modernity and its multiple and complex pathways; and finally, the assumption that masculinities (like femininities) are not, and never were, static, but are constantly being reshaped both by macro-level institutional, political, and economic changes and through micro-level agency and reinterpretation.

In a contemporary world shaken by rapid changes in gender relations, where even traditional Western views on masculinity² are being defied by women's empowerment, egalitarian ideology, affection-based family democracy, and views of a "new" caring man, to observe the impact of globalization in shaping complex, and even hybrid, masculinities is of the utmost importance (Altman 2001; Hodgson 2001). If "Western masculinities" are becoming diversified and overlapping so as to generate "mixed identities,"

and are no longer so closely associated with the wage-earning system, widening the discussion to non-Western contexts may be an even greater challenge, if one seeks to shed light on “postcolonial masculinities,” to use a broad term.

Our research addresses change and complexity in the construction of masculinities in a southern Africa locus, urban Maputo. Traditionally characterized by the patrilineal structures of family and social organization that constituted the customary basis of male dominance, the city of Maputo has witnessed rapid change over the past few years. One key factor within these processes (along with migration, a capitalist economy, gender and development initiatives, unemployment and impoverishment, etc.) is the remarkable population growth, which particularly because of internal migration from rural areas reached nearly one million inhabitants (989,400) in 1997, many of them facing huge problems of unemployment, poverty, poor health, and poor living conditions. Nevertheless, migration to the city has changed the ways of life of the rural populations, and also made them more susceptible to Westernization (Andrade 1998; Lubkemann 2004). The research conducted in 2005 and 2006 is of an ethnographic type, although it combines different observation techniques³: from in-depth interviews with lower- to middle-class men from several generations living in urban and “rurban”⁴ areas, which included field observations and a large set of informal conversations, to a small sample survey on a younger and more qualified strata of population—the students of Eduardo Mondlane University.

Both sources of data enabled us to capture values and meanings as well as life trajectories and daily practices. They also guided us, step by step, through the discovery of diversity and complexity in the lives and identities of men who found themselves caught between different “worlds”: that of the “old days” of pre-colonial traditions (which remain, for instance, in the spiritual respect for ancestors or in the practice of *lobolo*⁵); the inheritance of the Portuguese colonial period (which, from the late nineteenth century onward brought about significant changes in the lives of local populations⁶); and, more importantly, that of the “modern” postcolonial society transformed by political and institutional settings, by a multinational capitalist economy and by the spread of a Westernized symbolic order (strongly influenced by the action of women’s organizations in the fields of gender and development, the impact of international migration, and even that of the mass media). Our data become more meaningful when interpreted in the broader context of globalization and the processes of modernization. The institutional framework provided by the new Family Law, ratified in 2003, which was a major starting point for the research, goes beyond the local, and introduces both a historical dimension and a globalized one, by focusing necessarily on postcolonial themes of exchange between worlds, and the Westernization of traditional structures, practices, and values (Connell 2005).

The 2003 Family Law replaces the one inherited from the Portuguese colonial period and finally ends the gendered vision of the family, which prevailed during the “Estado Novo”⁷ and was incorporated into independent Mozambique (since 1975). Proposing a modern and even “Western” view of the family, where gender roles are

viewed through the lens of a desired equality between men and women, the new Mozambican law tries to combine modern views on the universality of individual rights with customary law, which traditionally governed family organization and gender relations. However, to protect women's and children's rights, many of the main points of the law challenge traditional male dominance—both customary and inherited from the colonial period. On one hand, the man ceases to be the unquestioned head of the family, and the woman gains new decision-making powers. On the other, traditional models of family life sustained by polygamy are rejected; only monogamous forms of traditional marriage practices (such as the lobolo) are recognized, even though customary laws of patrilineal inheritance are also set aside. Faced with these legal changes, which challenge not only the forms of family organization but also symbolic views of gender differentiation in Mozambique, how are men constructing or reconstructing their male identities? In what ways are traditional masculinities being challenged by the recent public legitimacy accorded to gender equality? How are “traditional” values and practices being combined with “new” ones?

To answer these questions we will present and discuss data that show nonlinear and multi-referenced ways of constructing “mixed masculinities.” Following major trends in the theoretical approach to masculinities, we support the idea that men's identities are not coherent constructions. Instead, ambivalence and normative conflict are important parts of gender self-perceptions, bringing in plurality and hybridism both in the definition of what represents the hegemonic model(s) of masculinity and in the ways in which real men relate to dominant symbolic references.

To argue for mixed masculinities, we must, first of all, clarify what “mixing” means, which implies at least two analytical tasks.

The first task operates at a macro-institutional level and leads directly to the discussion of plurality in the conception of modernity itself. Profiting from the contemporary debate critical of classical Eurocentric modernization theories, we can examine the institutional changes involved in the ratification of the new Family Law in Mozambique and discuss the transformative impact (and the limits) of “Western-oriented” models of gender relations as potentially “hegemonic” (at least at the symbolic level) in a non-Western society.

The second task switches to the level of individual experience and seeks to understand empirically how men from several generations are (re)constructing their masculine identities in a multi-referenced context. We start by analyzing their life trajectories to illustrate how they combine different historical periods and gender orders to build up practices and attitudes toward gender roles and private and public lives. By focusing on agency and strategies as being relatively separate from normative rules of behavior (Bourdieu 1980), we identify several forms of mixed masculinities, trying to show how their flexibility and hybridity complexify male hegemony but, at the same time, continue to operate as a system of domination of masculinity over femininity. In the following section we will very briefly address the first issue.

The New Family Law and the Complex Routes to Modernity

Transformation processes in non-Western, and postcolonial, social contexts helped to rethink the conceptual discussion on the impact, and also the boundaries, of Eurocentric modernity⁸ viewed as a universalistic model for social organization. The classical modernization theories of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber held that modernity would progress from the West to become more or less worldwide and universalistic. However, scholars critical of Eurocentrism have shown heterogeneous outcomes of modernity in different parts of the globe. Colonial imperialism followed by the rapid development of globalization did not necessarily produce homogeneity in contemporary societies, putting an end to local specificities; they may be transformed economically, politically, and culturally, but along multiple pathways (see, among others, Appadurai 1996; Bauman 1998; Therborn 2003; Berger and Huntington 2002; Eisenstadt 2001, 2002). In this sense, modernity can be understood as global and even Westernized, but not necessarily as universal, unique, or totalizing in its features and processes. Individual rights and the quest for equality (central points of modernity's moral order) may be having a worldwide impact (southern Africa and Mozambique are no exception here), thus altering "traditional" gender orders, but those effects do not erase local history, customs, and cultural settings without trace. Instead, they merge, generating different and "new" modernities.

Theoretical approaches have thoroughly debated how these particular modernities are formed, and have criticized the notions of modernization and globalization as linear processes. Postmodernist views of the contemporary world have stressed, for instance, the issue of hybridism as being essential for understanding the fluidity of societies in general; this term, so easily adapted to research, was incorporated in postcolonial theorizations to grasp the features of complexity and multiplicity in non-Western postcolonial societies (Morrell and Swart 2005). Another interesting concept, perhaps even wider in its theoretical reach, since it diminishes the gap between an ideal homogeneous West and a heterogeneous non-West,⁹ is multiple modernities, as suggested by Eisenstadt (2001). He argues that the best way to understand the history and the impact of modernity in the contemporary world is to see it as a continuous movement of constitution and reconstitution of several cultural programs. Western pathways are a central point of reference, among other reasons because of the West's historical precedence, but are not unique. In this sense, modernity and Westernization are not synonymous; instead, modernity should be defined as an ongoing process, open to permanent reinterpretation and reconfiguration, in which agency plays a key role, which has to be taken into account whenever emerging processes of social plurality are portrayed (Kaya 2004). Multiple, open, or even alternative modernities (Appadurai 1996; Gonkar 2001) are, therefore, powerful concepts for understanding local diversity and global interrelations. In fact, multiple modernities do not merely coexist: they interconnect within societies (producing, for example, mixes of the traditional and the modern) and between societies. This

particularly powerful idea is suggested by Therborn (2003) when describing modernities as entangled, that is to say, permanently interchangeable and reciprocally conditioned by multiple encounters.

Of course, entanglements may be analyzed at various levels, from macro perspectives on institutions, the economy, and the social and political arenas, to people's actions and the construction of meanings. Seen from this angle, the 2003 Family Law provides a good example of overlapping logics at the institutional level, as it suggests a kind of complicity, at least to some extent, between the world of pre-colonial tradition, transposing it to the modern world, significantly oriented by and to Western values in family life and gender relations. The law tries, at least in principle, to codify in legal terms the mixed logics of practices and values in Mozambique, hoping to reduce the gap between civil and customary law.¹⁰ An example of this is the legal recognition of traditional marriage (lobolo) and marital cohabitation, common practices that were not codified by the previous family law, which dated from the colonial period. In spite of its efforts to incorporate customs, the new family law, which was only approved after more than twenty years of political debate, represents a Westernization of local forms of gender and family organization, revealing its engagement with postcolonial "gender and development" approaches to gender inequalities in southern Africa, and broadly in the third World. Polygamy and patrilineal traditions are ignored on behalf of women's rights and gender equality, and individual freedom is underscored, despite the family-oriented tone of the new law. Nevertheless, some of these legal features might be classified as mixed or hybrid, as they make major changes to the local traditions, which are the starting points for the legislation. Let us recall two examples. For instance, they recognize lobolo as a marriage ritual, but deprive it of its significance in terms of lineage, which was the core of this practice. Individual choices are also stressed, but their social recognition depends, to some extent, on family and community acceptance: for instance, a couple must be recognized as such by their relatives. In general, these strategies are the product of the controversial relationship between gender equality and local customs, as also happens in several other African states (Hellum 2000).

The relationship between family law and real practices may be complex, as demonstrated by several studies focusing on egalitarian law outcomes. Some authors (Griffiths 1997; Hellum 1999; Waterhouse 1998) have shown that increasingly egalitarian marriage and family laws have different consequences for different groups of people, especially women: urban, employed, and upper-class women can more easily abide by egalitarian law, for instance regarding property rights, than women from rural areas. Therefore, in practice, there are still large gaps between egalitarian human rights ideals and local norms as applied in everyday life. Recent research, such as that of Hirsch and Griffiths on Bakwena women in Botswana and Muslim women in Kenya, provides evidence of how these women are relying on a combination of individual and family-based rights to ensure their day-to-day survival. Both authors demonstrate the complex process whereby state law based on Western views

of human rights is making its mark on local customs and practices. Starting from these micro-level studies of actions taken by individual women in disputes over pregnancy, marriage, and divorce, these studies raise a number of broader issues in connection with gender and legal pluralism in Africa. In the Mozambican case, the new family law will in all probability create a new scenario for multiple strategies and values, somewhere between customary traditions and the ideals of modernity.

In the remaining sections we turn to the second task outlined above, to examine how men are dealing with changes in values and constructing “mixed masculinities.” In men’s discursive reconstruction of their life stories, we may discover several entanglements, which reflect the merging of pre-colonial, colonial, and postcolonial settings and of different symbolic definitions of gender relations and the male role. In fact, different historical periods and gender orders appear to be intertwined in men’s stories.

Mixed Masculinities in Entangled Trajectories

Drawing on a sample of eighteen men, we selected four cases which, in a generational perspective, illustrate different forms of constructing mixed masculinities and are generally representative of two broad social processes to which we may refer to as *familialization* of masculinity on one hand and *sexualization* of masculinity on the other. The first refers to complex developments whereby men are being drawn into monogamous forms of family arrangements where they are expected to assert their power by assuming provider and guider roles, even if it is difficult for most men to achieve them. These changes can take on multiple shapes and meanings, thus revealing several entanglements of past and present. Generally, the impact of colonial and postcolonial Christianization processes, of the inculcation of ideals based on the male breadwinner model widely diffused in the colonial period, and also of the companionship couple, the interacting family, and the committed father, this one spreading mainly in younger generations, are leaving marks of change and modernization. In the older cohorts, the stories of António, who changed his pre-colonial customs through a process of Christianization, and Miguel, who chose an ideal of the breadwinner inherited from colonial times, exemplify the remaking of masculinities toward more institutional family-based frameworks. Afonso, a younger man in his thirties, exemplifies the fight between traditional power over women and more democratic and companionship forms of negotiating gendered authority within the family. The second mirrors the impact of men’s loss of power in the wage-earning system and points to emerging meanings of predatory sexuality as a source of power over women and other men. The case of Amílcar is quite similar to many others. Deprived of the authority men had as controllers of productive resources whether in pre-colonial terms or as wage earners, he embodies masculine dominance by gaining sexual control over women. Sexuality gains therefore autonomy over other forms

of rule, expressing itself through infidelity, having several women to obtain financial support from them, and use of Westernized fashion as symbols of power. To argue for the importance of sexuality for masculine self-affirmation, as a hypothesis for interpreting a wide range of male discourses, we add a final section using both data drawn from our survey of university students and information extracted from women's discourses on men. We aim to show that ideologies are legitimizing *new* forms of gender differentiation by giving sexuality a key role in masculine domination.

Reconstructing Masculinity Through Christianization: António

The case of António, aged sixty, is interesting because it shows a process of reconstruction of masculinity in the intertwining of different symbolic references: the tradition of pre-colonial "old days" suffers the impact of the development of Christianization, when he converts to the evangelical Zione¹¹ religion and redefines his identity as a man. Today he works as an underpaid private guard, but has the status acquired from being a Zione pastor, which is what most contributes to defining his identity as a very religious man, subject to a Christian moral order which defies the "old one."

When António was younger, and before his religious conversion, he believed in polygamy and even had several women with whom he lived in marital union. In a way, he reproduced the family standards with which he grew up. His father had four wives. He could afford it because he was a rich man in his village: he was the local chief and spiritual healer and had a considerable number of cattle. As António emphasizes, revealing his accurate awareness of transformation in family organization patterns, in those days, to be considered an adult married man a man had to have three or four wives. Moreover, several women were necessary to work in agriculture. Today, in the light of the changes that have taken place, it is no longer necessary to have several wives: they do not help; instead they are expensive and difficult to manage. With children it is the same: having many children may be a problem, mainly for financial reasons.

However, more than any other, the influence of Christian values in the Zione church is the main factor that changed his earlier beliefs and made him see that a man should only have one wife at a time. Therefore, he justifies his adherence to monogamy not by means of modern Westernized values but merely through the fact that a man must have time for God, a discourse that reproduces in its own way some of the logics that colonial Christianization strategies aimed at when transforming local customs (Arnfred 2001). A man with many women is forced to work very hard at management ("to guard his women," as he says), leaving him very little time for prayer, because women have grown to be very demanding in present times. However, one wife is a key factor in both surviving and achieving symbolic authority; he stresses that a man must have someone to clean and to cook meals, as his present wife does. A man must also have a wife to show off socially. António's wife washes clothes for pay and also plants the *machamba*, helping out with the traditional work of women in subsistence agriculture, and cooks for him everyday. In his

discourse on marital relationships, gender, and family, António, as we can see, mixes different references, which in a Western view could be considered traditional, but which in fact are changing values and practices, namely by pointing to forms of the monogamous family where the conjugal division of work takes on more modern features. In António's words the work of women in the "old days" was invisible, whereas today it is recognized as productive. He mentions that in old days women did not need to work (when, in fact, they did), by contrast with modern times when women must work, side by side with men, to ensure survival.

Currently, António lives in a marital union with a woman half his age, whom he met when he arrived in Maputo, having left his home village in the Gaza province in 1996. Like others, he came in search of work and a better standard of living. This was not the first time he left his birthplace; in 1967 he immigrated to South Africa to work in the mines and cohabited there with a number of women. However, he came back to get properly married, according to tradition, in the early 1970s; shortly after, he went back to South Africa, but only after having two children with his first wife. While he was in South Africa she left him for another man. He married once again with a Mozambican woman who died several years ago, still in Xai-Xai (Gaza province), where he left his seven living children.

Now António expects to lobolar (meaning "to make the lobolo" in Mozambican Portuguese). For him traditional marriage is far more important than civil marriage. As he states "lobolo is law . . . the other thing [he refers to marital unions] is for dogs." Traditional marriage is what allows families to unite, so that the couple achieves proper social recognition. The wife also waits for that symbolic moment when she will finally become a socially married woman, after a life marked by a degree of failure to obtain that commitment from a man. Without performing the traditional ritual of marriage, a man continues to be single, despite cohabiting with a woman. However, António distinguishes between the old days, when lobolo was the only rule, and the new days, when civil marriage is also necessary so as to respect the "order of Christ." Following Zione rules, it is necessary to combine traditional practices with civil marriage, thus generating hybrid strategies, rituals, and legitimacy.

However, despite his defense of traditional pre-colonial norms, António is well aware of change and modernization processes in the urban context; for him the city gives rise to different and more liberal behaviors, which would be unacceptable in rural settings, more controlled by local authorities and family lineage-based power. He reveals a mixed masculinity, continuously transformed over his life course through the impact of multiple experiences: the downgrading of his financial situation compared with his father's along with his migration trajectory and what he gained from religious conversion, which, in the context of urban Maputo, may be portrayed as bringing in modern social meanings. Above all, his complex life trajectory points to mixed reference processes in constructing masculinity. In spite of everything, he ended up achieving, as a Zione pastor, a status that may be seen as a modernization of the role attributed to traditional spiritual healers, the status his father had.

Remnants of the Provider Man and the Breadwinner Complex: Miguel

The following case is an example of trajectories constructed mainly in urban contexts, from the Portuguese colonial period until today, and portrays the movement toward an ideal of men as family providers, blending with local patrilineal customs of dominance over women. However, this gendered model is presently facing the difficulties that arise from male unemployment and underemployment. Let us start by recalling the story of Miguel.

He was born in Inhambane province in 1959, but came to Maputo when he was only five years old. His father already worked in the city, where he achieved a comfortable social position in the hierarchy of the colonial system: he had studied up to the fourth grade and found himself a job in the civil service as a topographer. Miguel's father was an *assimilado*¹² in the mid-1950s. He lived in a concrete house, had a Catholic marriage, according to Portuguese standards at the time, and brought his wife and child to live with him in the former Lourenço Marques. Miguel is the only child of his parents, who are still alive and today live in the province of Inhambane. As an only child, Miguel was able to stay in school to the seventh grade, an achievement that meant something in educational terms. Afterward, he had to work to help support his family. He started working as an electrician, but later decided to immigrate to South Africa, where he was a miner for almost two decades. He came back in 1980, however, to marry a local woman in Inhambane when he was twenty-one. His wife was chosen by his father and Miguel lobbied with the money he had saved up during his work in South Africa. Theirs was a traditional marriage properly done, but was not legally recognized as the couple did not marry according to civil law. They had two children, and after that his wife disappeared, leaving the children behind, during the civil war period. Her behavior was consistently explained as resulting from a problem of spiritual possession because of sorcery: a lover of Miguel, envious of his wife's position, unleashed a chain of troublesome events.

Living between South Africa and Maputo, Miguel married for a second time with a woman of his choice, whom he had met in the city of Maputo. After three years he came back to find a job in Maputo, and went to Xai-Xai (Gaza province) to lobbolar his new wife, with whom he had another six children. As he stresses, "a man cannot be without a wife. . . . it is annoying not having a wife, because a man needs his clothes washed and the meals done." In the same way as António, Miguel reveals a highly gendered vision of domestic tasks, which are considered women's business. Being a married man and having a family is an important indicator of male status as an adult man, an attitude that reveals the weight still attributed, in spite of all the changes, to traditional and institutional frameworks of family life and gender relations as a means through which men can assert themselves and construct a dominant, although fragile, position as heads of families.

The awareness of changes in traditional ways is also part of Miguel's discourse. The manner in which he refers to the importance of civil marriage, the need for

women to be protected, and the need for women to have paid work is quite convincing. After all, he also understands that men have lost some of their “old” power: that of traditional patrilineal rules that with the emerging liberty people feel in urban contexts are no longer followed as they used to be, and the power men had as breadwinners and heads of household, as his father had in the framework of the former colonial system. During the interview Miguel hints at his greatest sorrow and deepest frustration, his inability to achieve what his father was able to achieve: a respected and more modern social status, outside the standards of customary systems, a concrete house, a “good” salary, and the ability to provide for his wife and children. When he speaks of his children, he reveals a “breadwinner complex,” significantly Westernized by the colonial experience he had in his childhood, which appears quite clearly when he regrets not being able to support his children through university education. He says “it seems that I don’t like them, but it is the lack of money.” He also expresses sorrow that his wife has to work because life is financially difficult. His wife works as a helper in a crèche; however, for him the ideal situation would be for his wife to stay at home. But his low salary as a private guard gives him and the couple no other choice. As he says, “in the past things were different, now everything is changing.”

Although he chooses the ideal of a breadwinning and powerful man as a model for defining dominant masculinity, Miguel identifies several changes in the gender order. One is the new social role of women. He notes, “today women are ministers, vice-ministers, important directors, so things are not what they use to be . . .” Another important point is women’s rights in family life. He strongly criticizes some men’s detachment from family responsibilities and speaks of the new family law as an important step in ensuring that women are protected. The new law may prevent men jumping from wife to wife without taking on any responsibility.¹³ Therefore, he thinks that civil marriage will afford women greater protection of their rights, namely to inheritance, because today the customs of *lobolo* are no longer respected as they were in the past: “*lobolo* is not a guarantee.” Civil marriage, by contrast, implies legal obligations that are more difficult to avoid. In his opinion the new law holds the home together (“*segura o lar*”). It is more difficult for the man to leave without taking on his responsibilities, as still often happens, in his critical view. Today, he even contemplates the idea of a civil marriage; however, he also mentions financial difficulties. He says, “It is the law today. I want to register as married.”

In the construction of masculinity, men such as Miguel have to deal with a breadwinner complex that emerges from their inability to achieve the status attributed to the role of “provider.” The tensions generated by the transformation of the gender order—namely within the sexual division of labor—have created male reactions that, in the end, are not very different from those found in several Western contexts. The awareness of change in masculinities and in men’s traditional powers, which not only remain from pre-colonial customs but also from the effects of colonialism on masculine trajectories, may tend to create diversified practices among men from

different generations. These reactions to change tend to result in strategies to deal with frustration by increasing the effort to find and maintain paid work and to organize the family to ensure the group's survival and legitimate a position of authority within it. However, if in the case of Miguel ideals of a romantic and companionship couple are almost absent, the case which follows shows how the quest for male authority through breadwinning is combined with more "modern" conceptions of conjugal and family life.

The Rise of Companionship Values and a "New" Family-Based Masculinity: Afonso

The third case we will draw on is that of Afonso, aged thirty-five. He lives in the Mahotas quarter, and is in the process of constructing different forms of mixed masculinities. Afonso's pathway toward modern and family-based values and ways of managing gender relations is quite different from those we described earlier, given that it chooses ideals of affection and companionship as models of behavior and for the remaking of masculine identity. In his search for a more family-based masculinity, he mixes the customary gender codification of relations with a Westernized version of the traditional breadwinner male, but already engages in a fairly romantic view of conjugal life where men appear as caring fathers, whose concerns go beyond traditional authority, and who express themselves through notions such as well-being, happiness, and freedom of choice. From the standpoint of gender relations, women tend to be viewed as social actors with whom men must negotiate power and decision-making. Male dominance still rules, and equality may be almost an empty concept, but then again, the gender balance in social relations is perceived as changing and unsettled. The division of power, status, and family roles from the old days is not appropriate to the new days. Like other men, Afonso reveals, as he speaks, his awareness of change and modernization processes developing at a rapid pace in urban Maputo.

Afonso is married to Maninha, aged thirty-five. He came to Maputo in 1989, from Bilene, in the province of Inhambane, leaving behind his parents and relatives. Maninha came from Xai-Xai (Gaza) with her extended family (parents, grandmother, uncles, aunts, and cousins) about the same time, and the couple met in the city. They fell in love and dated for two years before the lobolo ceremony took place; only then did they "marry," at age twenty-one. In spite of the importance of traditional marriage, their present intention is to have a civil marriage whenever the family finances allow it. However, as Afonso insists repeatedly, most important is to provide for the family, struggling every day to ensure a better future for the children. Afonso emphasizes his daily struggle to support the family, saying over and over again that a "man without a family is nothing." As we may conclude, the idea of having a family is an important element in masculine discourse, but not always for the same reasons. It is undeniable that survival and adult identity are the material and symbolic key issues lying beyond this "familism." But, in Afonso's case,

companionship values (an affectionate relationship, negotiation, and masculine inclusion in family life) have crossed his trajectory, leaving visible (and most probably Westernized) marks.

At present, the couple live with their five children and one other boy they are caring for, in a concrete house recently built after many years of saving. Before, they lived in a reed house. Now, they even have a black-and-white TV, a gift from a Portuguese friend. The improvement of the family's life did in fact require great effort and sacrifice. Afonso has a job as a *chapa* driver and works sixteen hours a day to make a little more money. He gets up at 5:00 a.m. and leaves for work half an hour later, to start his shift at 6:00 a.m. He returns home about 10:00 p.m., feeling exhausted from his very hard day at work. Afonso's wife also works hard: following quite traditional gender differentiation patterns, she takes care of children (all between ages three and thirteen) and grows the machamba, in this way helping to feed her family. The couple's division of labor may be considered traditional, from both the point of view of customs and in terms of Westernized standards, as it reproduces, in general terms, the gap between the "public man" and the "private woman." Nevertheless, to settle for such a classification would conceal the most significant information: the negotiation processes that are taking place within married life. Maninha has a word to say in all matters, and Afonso deeply respects his wife's opinion. It was she who decided not to live in another quarter, far from her family of origin; it was also she who prevented Afonso from accepting a job in Zambézia, a northern Mozambique province. It is Maninha, once again, who demands Afonso's presence at home at least on Sundays. Besides negotiation, the couple invests in "modern" forms of interaction, by giving importance to the time spent together or to things like simply riding with the children for a Sunday picnic. Afonso often compares these activities to Western movies he has seen: for instance, he happily remembers his family journey to the Libombos' hills by comparing it to a Rambo film, to mention one discursive example.

In summary, beyond the remnants of masculine power in Afonso's views of the world and of family organization, the idea of men as uncontested heads of family loses symbolic value. Involvement in the private settings of family life and the discursive emphasis given to conjugal processes of negotiation reveals a more companionship-oriented masculinity, lying somewhere between the customary codes of behavior, the traditional, Westernized, male breadwinner ideals and modern views of a romantic, negotiated, and interacting couple. Evidently, the model of a caring father, whose authority has been softened by affection and expressive interaction, is a major part of this family-based and companionship masculinity.

Masculinity, Symbolic Power, and Sexuality: Amílcar

As we previously pointed out, one way of (re)constructing masculinity in these particular contexts of value change, in which there is a reconfiguration of gender relations and there are difficulties in achieving masculine dominance through either traditional control or financial success, is through the symbolic power attributed to

male sexuality. These practices and ideals were found in the discourses of several men with whom we interacted in the city of Maputo.¹⁴ Younger and unskilled men are facing the breakdown of employment opportunities, and are struggling to make a living and build up an identity outside the codes of traditional male dominance.

Men tend, therefore, to escape from family responsibilities, whatever their definition of traditional power and breadwinning tasks, to assert a positive identity through a “freer” sexuality: having at least two women may be seen as vital in legitimizing masculinity in peer relations. However, in the cases we are referring to here, a man with several women does not necessarily enter into a situation of traditional polygamy; on the contrary, the absence of traditional codification and of gender commitment is incompatible with the traditional customs of polygamy. This masculine strategy for achieving recognition is closer to what some authors (see Arnfred 2001) call *amanismo*: the transformation in urban contexts of traditional polygamy, where women had a proper status as married women, into fluid and informal relationships, deprived of rigid rules or community control.

From this point of view, the story of Amílcar is illuminating.

Amílcar is Afonso’s cousin and presently lives between the Mahotas’ neighborhood, in Maputo’s suburbs, and Johannesburg in South Africa. He travels about whenever he can to try his luck as a street salesman of pirated DVDs: the precarious nature of his business prevents him from envisaging a better future or even a stronger commitment to family life. Despite that, at twenty-five, he has already fathered three small children. The mother of his children still lives with her mother, brothers, and sisters in a reed house, also located in the Mahotas quarter. She works in subsistence agriculture and survives with the help of her family and some very sporadic financial support from Amílcar. Of course, she ends up being the provider and person mainly responsible for the children. Whenever he comes to Maputo, Amílcar has no fixed abode: he can stay for a few days at his companion’s house, but he also frequently stays at his mother’s house. He makes excuses for this by recalling his financial problems: he could not afford to have his nuclear family around all the time. Instead, he tries to benefit from the support (shelter and food) his Mozambican wife provides for him, inverting, to some extent, the standard of the male role as breadwinner.

In fact, Amílcar’s married life is not exactly simple. He promised to lobolar the mother of his children, with whom he lives now and then, informally, but he never did—“for lack of money,” he adds. The truth is that Amílcar has another “wife” in South Africa, a woman with whom he lives during his stays in the country and with whom he does not yet have children; his two wives represent to Amílcar, as long as it lasts and they are willing, a kind of social insurance to guarantee his survival. He does not provide them with much—quite the contrary. However, the major gain of having these two wives goes beyond the financial issue, and points directly to the link between masculinity and sexuality. Amílcar is very keen to brag about his privileged situation of a man who is able to “dominate” two women. Alongside his “official

relationships” he even talks of having other girlfriends at least once in a while. He insists on telling his own tale of a successful man, if not in the financial domain, at least as far as dominating and conquering women are concerned.

As a family man he avoids, as much as he can, his role as provider. Even if he talks with some guilt about his children and their problems in life, he does not feel that he could do any better. He only thinks about returning to South Africa, where, despite all the facts, he believes he can make a better life for himself; when he speaks of his achievements as an immigrant he shows the trendy jeans he is wearing and tells us, happily, that they were very pricey, even more expensive than the amount of the Mozambican minimum wage (about thirty to fifty Euros). Being able to buy that pair of jeans, which are the envy of his male peers and capture sexual admiration from women, is of great significance to him as a man who, against all odds, achieved a positive identity: a valuable masculinity, if defined from where he stands. The “sexualization of dominant masculinity” is thus a movement that appears to be acquiring a certain weight in some masculine sectors of Maputo urban society, to compensate for the lack of financial power some tend to suffer. Such a reading of the facts offers us an interesting hypothesis to interpret stories such as the one Amílcar has told us. The next section, which analyzes students’ attitudes toward gender issues and some women’s accounts of men, will help us to emphasize sexuality as the main sphere in which men seek to assert gender power over women, and as a locus of tensions between ideals and practices relating to femininity and masculinity.

Family and Gender Ideals: Westernization of Values and the Power of Sexuality

We will start by focusing on emerging attitudes toward family and gender values, relying on data drawn from the survey applied to Maputo’s university students. The analysis of such a well-qualified population, still rare in Mozambican education, allows us to observe normative orientations in a cutting edge (young, educated, urban) group of males, already familiar with modern Western views of the world, family, and gender relations.

To analyze male students’ attitudes, eight indexes were constructed (table 1).¹⁵ Each sums up young men’s statements within a scale of variation that goes from 1 (*traditional attitudes*) to 5 (*modern attitudes*). Focusing on the main issues of gender relations and family life covered by the Family Law, these indexes operationalize important value polarizations: the question of conjugal choice (arranged versus romantic marriage); acceptance of, and adherence to, polygamy or monogamous forms of family; the importance attached to the traditional practice of lobolo by comparison with civil marriage; the acceptance of divorce; approval of male power as opposed to a democratic and negotiated conjugal relationship; the ideals of the male breadwinner versus those of shared responsibilities within the couple; the questions raised by recent discussions of men’s avoidance of family responsibilities, leaving them to women; and, finally, the question of women’s sexuality, where ideals of virginity are challenged by the modern image of the sexually active woman.

Table 1
Indexes of Attitudes toward Conjugal and Family Life (Means)

	Family constraints vs. free love	Polygamy vs. monogamy	Traditional vs. civil marriage	Acceptance of divorce	Male power vs. conjugal democracy	Family support: male vs. shared responsibility	Delegation of family responsibilities to the woman	Virgin vs. sexually active woman
Men (n=100)	3.8	4.2	3.1	3.1	3.4	3.5	3.4	1.6
Women (n=70)	4.0	4.5	3.0	3.1	3.8	3.8	3.3	1.8
Total	3.9	4.3	3.1	3.1	3.5	3.6	3.3	1.7
Eta ²	0.05	0.06	n.s.	n.s.	0.11	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.

Scale: 1=traditional 5=modern

Source: Exploratory Survey applied to Eduardo Mondlane University students, Maputo 2005

Even if we cannot regard these data as being statistically representative, analysis may lead us to some interesting conclusions. The first aspect has to do with the spread of Western values regarding equality, affection, and negotiation in marital relationships and family life. Male students are in favor of an affectionate, monogamous, egalitarian, and democratic family, where traditional practices of marriage tend to lose some of their importance. Attitudes toward love, monogamy, and the division of paid labor and family support are particularly close to modern values, thus revealing the impact of Westernization in shaping the values associated with family and gender relations. Male power is also questioned in favor of a negotiated relationship between men and women. In spite of practices that even in urban and modernized contexts may deviate from these views (Granjo 2005; Agadjanian 2002; Loforte 2003; Andrade et al. 1998), young men show themselves to be “politically correct” when expressing their opinions on matters of family and gender roles; they advocate modern values, in line with the norms contained in the recent law. One way or the other, among educated young men living in the cities, traditional male dominance, which relied heavily on male power and the patrilineal gender order, is losing some of its legitimacy at the symbolic level.

However, a second finding may offer a different perspective: in women’s sexual behavior, virginity is still an undisputed value of the gender order, shared both by male and female students. In a country where women represent a major part of the labor force, namely in agriculture,¹⁶ breadwinning responsibilities are almost unimportant for an understanding of symbolic gender differentiation when compared with the key role played by sexuality in reproducing the standards of male dominance. The apparent contrast with actual sexual practices bringing added complexity into this scenario: the fact is that Mozambican women on average become sexually active at sixteen years and one month, and marry only one and a half years later.¹⁷ In the light of this data, it is possible to argue the validity of the hypothesis that loss of virginity is not necessarily associated with marriage (or marital union).

Our reading of these trends in the normative patterns of family and gender stresses the assumption that male sexual dominance is today far more important to the construction of legitimized masculinities than gender relations at the level of the division of labor. The male provider who takes care of his woman (or women) even if she or they work in family-based agriculture becomes less important in the context of changes in values, especially when men find themselves unable to support the family on their own, since unemployment and irregular work are major problems men have to deal with in urban contexts (Morrell and Swart 2005). A positive masculine identity is then obtained through sexual dominance over women, even if in disregard of practices related to women’s virginity.

The women’s point of view on this subject is of interest and reinforces our general argument regarding sexuality. Some of those interviewed, namely those from younger generations, emphasized their disappointment with men, and uncovered,

beyond the value of virginity and the persistent image of men as controllers of women's sexuality, a more sexual and utilitarian view of gender interaction, somehow legitimizing men's flight from family responsibilities. That is the case of Belinha, aged thirty-two, who is a single mother and works as a maid. Failing to obtain commitment from men, she refuses to be the one who provides for "a lazy and bad man," as she puts it. At present, she states her clear preference for fluid relationships offering her sexual pleasure,¹⁸ but without further commitment. Despite asserting her autonomy, her discourse is filled with bitterness. In fact, she ends up occasionally providing shelter for her married lover, but at least she does not have to cook or clean for him on a daily basis. She would like to "make a home," but with a proper man, she adds. Among qualified women, such as Alda, a university student of twenty-four, the complaints are more or less the same. The refusal to incorporate the homemaker role and distrust of men produces a defensive discourse on the subject of female financial and sexual independence. But in relation to sexuality it combines assertion of autonomy with dependence on men. Even if some women feel divided between achieving social identity as married women according to traditional codes and enjoying freer forms of sexual experimentation, it is important to have a man in their lives. For that purpose they are willing to make some concessions. For instance, despite her modern ideals, Alda prepares the food for her boyfriend according to custom, even if she describes the relationship as unsteady because of his infidelity. In this perspective, there are two complementary aspects to tensions related to sexual dominance over women, as the increase of female independence may in a way allow for men's predatory sexual behavior in a more unhidden and non-codified manner. At the same time, women are obtaining more sexual freedom but at the cost of being devalued in their traditional social family-based status.

For that reason, it must be stressed that sexuality is far more important for researching emerging forms of gender dominance than, in general, the gender division of labor.

Final Remarks

To conclude, it is important to review at least three main points, all crucial if one wants to understand the processes of remaking masculinities and the gender order in changing and pluralistic postcolonial contexts. The following remarks accordingly recall some of the processes whereby the gender order is being rebuilt.

One first assumption should start by focusing on urban Maputo as locus for complex, that is to say "mixed," forms of reconstructing oneself as a "man" in the light of the rapid changes that have been taking place broadly toward modernity and, more particularly, toward a new gender order, which, to a great extent, is a Westernized version of modern and egalitarian gender values. Several processes and levels of social transformation are producing multilayered realities: in symbolic references

and gender identities, in daily practices and life trajectories, in family life and the gender division of work, in both customary and institutional codes of behavior. These changes may be viewed as resulting from entanglements in modernization processes, which may be drawn from the encounters between traditional customs, the legacy of colonization, and the postcolonial dynamics of globalization. As we have tried to argue, in today's masculinities different historical periods and gender orders appear to be intertwined, thereby producing mixed identities and practices. For this reason, the analytical linear polarization of *modern* and *traditional* becomes almost useless as a tool for sociohistoric periodization.

These entanglements are present both in the new Family Law that combines modern visions of gender and family life with customary codes of behavior, even if it deprives them of their traditional significance, and in the rebuilding of real masculinities. Legal codification has an impact, moreover, on individuals, either legitimizing Western-oriented values or (re)establishing the boundaries for individual action. Many men, as can be seen from our interviewees' stories, speak of the Family Law as an instrument for social change, especially as far as men's responsibilities toward women and children are concerned. Patrilineal customs are therefore taking on a new complexion at present. Hybridity is also clearly stated in the remaking of mixed masculinities.

The short stories we told to reconstitute the trajectories of four men revealed varied strategies and different combinations of traditions and modernities. The impact of colonial and postcolonial Christianization processes, of the inculcation of ideals based on the male breadwinner model, of global fashion and predatory sexuality, and of the companionship couple, the interacting family, and the committed father, produced what we called *entanglements*, leaving marks of change and modernization that altered customary ways of life, sometimes idyllically recalled from the old days. Evidently, urban Maputo has maintained the inheritances of pre-colonial traditions (the lineage system in family organization, for instance), but not without change and modernization. As men reconstruct their identities, rejecting some traditions and blending others with Western values, references, or ways of life, new modernities are being built and a new gender order is being constructed.

A second conclusion along these lines rests precisely on the processes whereby traditional masculinities have changed. Men's power is increasingly being questioned, despite its symbolic resistance. It is true that men's authority remains strong even when the code of reference chooses gender equality and democracy. However, the inability of many men to support their families and to take on traditional responsibilities devalues both the pre-colonial male archetype and the breadwinner model that proliferated in urban settings during the colonial period. Men find it difficult to match these ideal models and are, therefore, often left to deal with frustration and powerlessness. Even if masculinities are embracing new codes of familialism and companionship, these family-based processes cannot avoid acute tensions. Difficulties in reconciling traditional power with female demands, feelings of frustration, and the loss of social status produce uncertainty and confused meanings.

In such a scenario, sexuality emerges, both in ideals of masculinity and throughout their trajectories, as a crucial element for self-assertion as a man. The status of an adult man is profoundly linked to sexuality, which may sometimes lead to the creation of forms of gender inequality. The traditional work of women in agriculture remains vital to family survival, while men's positions in the labor market may turn out to be more fragile and fluctuating. Under- or unemployment are major problems men have to face in their daily lives. Sexuality may remain a domain less touched by hardship and change, and, consequently, more adaptable to the recreation of masculine power. If capitalist economies constructed men as wage earners and tended to reconfigure masculinity by tying gender identity to work, making new masculinities more vulnerable, sexuality is a key variable for shedding light on the processes of gender change. The newness here is that instead of being combined with other forms of control, many young and urban men are making use of their sexuality as the sole and direct mean of recreating a positive identity.

In fact, both masculinities and femininities seem to suffer from some hybridism, revolving around the tensions between power and sexual dominance. Therefore, one third assumption should focus on the changes in ideals of femininity. Our data (from both quantitative and qualitative sources) allowed us to observe the movement toward a more empowered woman who participates in decision-making and family support and who is able to achieve economic and social independence. However, these egalitarian ideals mingle with schemata of sexual domination. Among them, an important factor is the affirmation of virginity as a significant gender value: a statement that proves to be strong despite some trends to empower women and to diminish masculine power in both the private and public domains. Moreover, symbolic sexual dominance over women is resistant to changes in masculinity and even to the relative downgrading of masculine supremacy in areas such as paid work or politics.

Appendix 1

	1 Unacceptable	2 Bad	3 Acceptable	4 Good	5 Ideal	
	Mean			Male	Female	Total
1) Family constraints vs. freedom of love choices	What really matters is the will of the youngsters, even if the family does not agree with their marriage.			3.15	3.42	3.23
	Children should marry only if parents agree with their choices.			2.44	1.91	2.30
	People should marry for no other reason than love.			4.38	4.55	4.43
	People should choose to marry someone well-established in life, regardless of love and affection.			2.03	2.00	2.02

(continued)

Appendix (continued)

2) Polygamy vs. monogamy	People should marry only one person each time.	4.35	4.55	4.40
	A man should have several wives. It is the tradition of polygamy.	1.77	1.50	1.69
	Polygamy should be legally recognized to show respect for the Mozambican traditions.	1.96	1.87	1.93
3) Traditional vs. Civil marriage	Men can have other women besides the wives.	1.84	1.32	1.71
	Nowadays, civil marriage should be the only way to get married.	2.94	3.43	3.07
	People should always choose a traditional marriage to respect their ancestors and customs.	2.80	3.39	2.96
4) Male power vs. conjugal democracy	The man should impose his authority on the woman; he must be the head of the family.	3.01	2.45	2.85
	In the couple, the woman should be equal to the man.	3.39	3.58	3.45
	In the couple, the man should have the money under his control.	2.93	2.39	2.78
	If necessary, the man should beat his wife to protect his authority.	1.90	1.44	1.78
5) Division of labor, responsibility for family support: male vs. shared responsibility	Women should contribute to support the family, alongside the husband.	3.91	4.00	3.94
	Men are responsible for providing for their families.	2.97	2.76	2.92
	The man should share household tasks and childcare with the woman.	3.73	4.09	3.83
6) Delegation of family responsibilities to the woman	The woman should have the main responsibility for family care and domestic finances.	3.33	3.35	3.35
	The woman should be responsible for raising and supporting the children.	1.95	2.13	2.00
7) Divorce	A couple should get divorced if the partners do not get along well with each other.	3.09	3.23	3.13
	A couple should get divorced when there are serious problems that cannot be solved.	3.09	3.00	3.08
8) Women's sexual freedom: virgin woman vs. sexually active woman	It is normal that a woman has other men besides the husband.	1.36	1.42	1.37
	The woman should be a virgin when she marries.	4.06	3.90	4.03

Notes

1. On this account we must acknowledge the growing link between masculinity studies and globalization theories, with the focus on non-Western masculinities and broadly on postcolonial gender issues. Several recent publications deal with this contemporary issue; see Morrell (2001); Hodgson (2001); Lindsay and Miescher (2003); Kimmel, Hearn, and Connell (2005); Ouzgane and Morrell (2005).

2. Dominant or hegemonic masculinity (Bourdieu 1998; Connell 1996) traditionally embraces a dual archetype: of a man eternally divided between the "sexual predator" and the "family provider," the two poles of the continuum.

3. During our fieldwork we carried out thirty-eight in-depth interviews of eighteen men and twenty women from several age cohorts and with different work activities and family situations. Contacts were initially established through local informants who helped us to build our field network. Subsequent interactions were developed using a snowball method. Some of our interviewees are members of the same family unit, which enabled us to compare male and female discourses as well as generational change within a family lineage. To obtain the qualitative material, which is the core of the research, we had to develop more intimate and trustful connections with several of the interviewees. Information was then obtained through several contacts, home visits, and even entertaining interactions, such as attending family celebrations or going out with the children. Trust was developed by helping out in moments of crisis such as, for instance, illness of a family member. All men and women, despite their diversity, belong to a similar segment of urban low- or middle-low class. Additionally, institutional cooperation with the Eduardo Mondlane University allowed us to apply the survey to a sample of 170 students as well as establishing informal contacts with young and qualified men and women.

4. The term *rurban* used by Lie and Lund (1998) is quite accurate when referring to the semi-urban areas, where people reproduce rural ways of life and economic production to survive in the city. The expansion of rurban local realities is also a product of globalization. In the family organization of labor Mozambican women often cultivate the *machamba*, combining this subsistence agriculture with wage labor from men's employment or even from younger women in their household (on this matter, see also Arnfred 2001, 2002).

5. *Lobolo* is the local word for bride-wealth or bride-price, a common practice in patrilineal societies. Lobolo is, in fact, a ceremony where the woman's origin lineage is ritually and economically paid off to transfer their rights over that woman's offspring to the husband's lineage. The lobolo symbolizes the passage of the woman and her children to the man's family. On recent and urban practices of lobolo see the work of the Portuguese anthropologist, Granjo (2005), who stressed the hybrid logics of lobolo in urban Maputo, pointing out the combination between traditional ritualization of marriage and the Westernized values that are increasingly supporting young and urban couples' lives.

6. As Arnfred (2001) emphasizes, the introduction by Portuguese colonialism of paid work, money, and Christianity in local communities led to significant changes in their forms of social organization.

7. Before the democratic revolution of 1974, male dominance prevailed in the law. In the civil code of 1966, the husband was unconditionally defined as the head of the family (article 1674 of the Civil Code of 1966). Only in 1976 was the principle of conjugal equality legally established (article 1671).

8. Which Giddens (1990, 1) broadly defines as referring to "modes of social life or organisation which emerged in Europe from about the seventeenth century onwards and which subsequently became more or less worldwide in their influence."

9. Multiple modernities is in fact an interesting approach, as it focuses on the intra-European and intra-Western world diversity of modernities, avoiding an excessively unitarist view of the modern West as opposed, in particular, to postcolonial societies. This approach enables us to go beyond the opposition between totalizing and Eurocentric theories on one hand, and postmodernist views of the collapse of the project of modernity, on the other.

10. As Hellum (2000) points out, a characteristic feature of the legal systems of most former European colonies in Africa and Asia is the plurality of customary and religious laws, which coexist with the European law. After independence, several African governments started law reform programs aimed at greater equality, particularly gender equality. Whether it would be best to settle for a unified system, applicable to all groups, or to keep a plural system of laws that accommodates the customary and religious laws of the different ethnic populations has been a recurrent dilemma. The tense relationship between values and principles such as religious freedom, the protection of African custom and culture, and gender equality is today reflected in the constitutions of many African states (Hellum 2000). For instance, the strategy of the Frelimo government in Mozambique was to introduce the equality principle through constitutional reform combined with popular tribunals linked to the local communities. This sought to develop a concept of justice and equality that merged the features of custom with socialist and human rights principles. (See Sachs and Welch 1990; Arnfred 2001). In Mozambique, Santos and Trindade (2003) also studied and discussed legal pluralism.

11. The Zione religious movement is part of what broadly can be called evangelical Christianity and has been rapidly expanding since the early 1980s in southern Mozambique and especially in the area of urban Maputo. The use of the term *Zione* relies on the fact that the movement had its origin in the city of Zion, Illinois, United States; ideologically believers claim the term originated in Jerusalem, in Mount Zion. Today, most Zione churches are located in the suburbs of Maputo, in poor or excluded areas. Zione churches are normally organized around a charismatic leader who, by intervention of the Holy Spirit, performs cures and purification rituals. In terms of family values, Zione churches encourage monogamy and attach importance to the role of women in maintaining family stability. The appeal to Christian moral values can, therefore, be understood as a form of social reconstruction (Silva 2004).

12. *Assimilado* is the Portuguese word officially applied to those Africans and *mestiços* considered by the colonial authorities to have met certain formal standards indicating that they have successfully absorbed (assimilated) the Portuguese language and culture. In principle, individuals legally assigned the status of *assimilado* took on the privileges and obligations of Portuguese citizens and escaped the burdens imposed on most Africans (the *indígenas*). The status of *assimilado* and its legal implications were formally abolished in 1961.

13. This practice is frequently regarded as “urbanized polygamy,” called *amantismo*, which would translate into English as something like *affairism* (Arnfred 2001). Men still have several women, but without granting them the official status they had according to traditional rules of polygamy; *amantismo* would, in fact, downgrade women’s social position.

14. Among others, we may recall the case of Orlando, a traveling street salesman who had several women without providing for any of them; that of Francisco who survived from small business and drove an illegal merchandise truck over the border with South Africa whenever he had the opportunity; that of Gabriel who refused to assume the traditionally female role of working in subsistence agriculture, abandoned his family, came to Maputo, and tried to survive on the streets. Now he helps his several girlfriends find second-hand merchandise to sell in a clothes market (called *Calamidade*, which means *calamity* in English), so that they can provide him with a percentage of the sales.

15. See detailed index composition, item by item, in Appendix 1.

16. In overall terms, female participation in the labor force, in the fifteen to sixty-four age group, reached 84 percent in 2001, according to data from the International Labour Organization. The corresponding male rate was only 7 percent higher. Data from the Mozambican Census of 1997, for women of all ages, also show that in rural areas women’s activity rate is significantly higher: 75.3 percent of rural women are economically active against only 44 percent in urban areas.

17. According to data from the United Nations Population Division 2001.

18. Among women, belief is common that sexual abstinence is detrimental to health if prolonged for more than a year.

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