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Empregados do Quintal (Male Domestic Workers) in Nampula City:  
Domestic Work, Masculinities and Matrilinearity

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ABSTRACT

This study questions why domestic work that is generally considered a feminine job is yet a field dominated by men in the city of Nampula, Mozambique. In the attempt to explain this phenomenon, the research explores economic, social and cultural aspects. Due to the fact that Nampula is a province with a strong Islamic presence and the majority of the population identify themselves as belonging to the Makhuwa ethnic group—which is traditionally defined by a matrilinear kinship system—I argue that the domestic sector remains masculinised because of the influence of the matrilinear values and gendered practices. I also argue that the Islamic patriarchal values play a decisive role as men see themselves as the exclusive family providers and for that reason forbid their wives to develop and to get engaged in economic activities outside the household. This study also explores notions of masculinity in connection with domestic work and examines how male domestic workers, coming from rural areas and employed in the city, perceive and perform their masculine identities. How does the job of the domestic worker shape particular understandings of masculinity? Given the fact that many domestic workers in Nampula are immigrant people from the rural areas of the Zambézia province, I argue that migrating and working in the city is considered as a way to achieve a manhood as immigrants have access to goods that can only be purchased in urban contexts and are scarce in the villages. The access to all these “modern” commodities and the experience of the city make the immigrant young boys to gain respect in their original communities.

Key Words: Domestic work, masculinities, matrilinearity, gender, Mozambique, Nampula, economy, migration, Makhuwa, Islam.
DECLARATION

I declare that this mini thesis: “Empregados do Quintal (Male Domestic Workers) in Nampula city: “Domestic work, Masculinities and Matrilinearity” is indeed my own work. It is submitted to the University of the Western Cape in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in Anthropology. At no other University or institution has it been submitted as a requirement for a degree or any other qualification.

Signature........................................................................................................

Date........................................................................................................

UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE
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<tr>
<td>AEDOMO</td>
<td>Associação de Empregados Domésticos de Moçambique (Mozambican Domestic Workers’ Association)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRELIMO</td>
<td>Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Mozambican Liberation Front)</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<td>INE</td>
<td>Instituto Nacional de Estatística (National Statistic Institute)</td>
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<td>OTM</td>
<td>Organização dos Trabalhadores Moçambicanos (Mozambican Workers’ Organisation)</td>
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<td>RENAMO</td>
<td>Resistência Nacional de Moçambique (Mozambican National Resistance)</td>
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<td>SINED</td>
<td>Sindicato Nacional de Empregados Domésticos (National Union of Domestic Workers)</td>
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Historically located as an extension of slavery (Smith, 2013), domestic work in Southern Africa is a phenomenon that results from the encounter between Africans and colonialism. For instance, in the colonial cities, Africans constituted the labour to serve the families of the European elites that grew as colonialism was consolidating. Seemingly, in colonial Mozambique, and other neighbouring colonies, domestic service was an important employment-generating sector in the urban areas. A labour survey conducted in 1949 showed that in the country about half of the registered employees were domestic workers (Penvenne, 1994: 142). Despite this significant participating number, the notion of domesticity brought by the West seemed to be in contrast with African customs, habits and values. Western ideals were often filtered, reinterpreted and some were assimilated while others were not considered (Hansen, 1992).

Even though in the Western context domestic activities seemed naturally associated with women, in the European colonies of Southern Africa, including Mozambique, domestic work was considered an employment for men (Hansen, 1992). In colonial times in Mozambique the presence of men in waged labour was higher than the one of women. Fleeing forced labour, xibalo, men migrated to the cities in search for better opportunities. Because the Mozambican colonial cities were not viewed as the centres of industrial production, the urban areas were mostly associated with the tertiary sector. When young people came to the city, they found domestic work as an easy employment alternative. Moreover, the colonial policies had a patriarchal understanding of the position of women in society. A woman was always seen as inferior to men, and the Catholic education believed that the place of a woman was the household; her tasks were the care of children and the domestic chores. The expectation of colonial authorities was that a woman would marry and have children as soon as she reached puberty and that she would preferably remain in rural areas (Sheldon, 1992).

Moreover, European women were afraid to hire black women with the fear that they might get sexually involved with their husbands (Penvenne, 1994; Burja, 1992; Schmidt, 1992; Sheldon, 1992). Equally, black men were concerned that their wives or daughters would become targets of
the sexual greed of the white man (Penvenne, 1994; Burja, 1992; Schmidt, 1992; Sheldon, 1992). In other contexts, black women were considered lazy in comparison to black men who were said to learn quickly under the teachings of European women (Penvenne, 1994; Burja, 1992; Schmidt, 1992; Sheldon, 1992). The extremely low wages also discouraged women to take up those jobs (Penvenne, 1994; Burja, 1992; Schmidt, 1992; Sheldon, 1992). Hence, until independence, women were occupying very marginal sections of the domestic service in colonial Mozambique.

After the independence of the country in 1975, the new authorities influenced by liberal economic models, introduced free and equal participation of men and women in the job market. This new approach encouraged and increased the participation of women in diverse sectors inevitably resulting in a renewed interest of women in job positions as maids in households. The opening of the public space to women combined with the massive migration movement to the cities due to the armed conflict, and the emergence of new job opportunities for men, led to a gradual feminization of the domestic sector (Penvenne, 1994; Zamparoni, 1999). Penvenne (1995) argues that in 1950 there were 9,816 male workers and only 706 female workers in Lourenço Marques. Evidence also shows that in 2007 the landscape of domestic work had changed drastically, with an estimation of 40,000 domestic workers in Maputo, of which 5,000 are men and 35,000 are women (INE, 2007).

However, the feminization of domestic service is not a common phenomenon across the country, as it concerns mostly the southern and central regions. In the North, contrary to the global trend that naturalizes the feminization of the domestic work (ILO, 2013), in the city of Nampula where the research was conducted, domestic work is a job for men. It is often men who are hired to work as “maids” performing all household chores including, but not limited to, cooking, washing and ironing clothes, taking care of the children and the elderly, shopping at the market, and cleaning the house.

This study seeks to understand the reasons why the feminization of domestic work didn’t take place in the north of Mozambique, as it happened in other parts of the country. I seek to examine why domestic work that is generally labelled as being a feminine job is instead a field occupied by men in the city of Nampula. The research explores the economic and socio-cultural reasons that attempt to explain this phenomenon. Nampula is a province with a strong Islamic presence
and the majority of the population identify themselves as belonging to the *Makhuwa* ethnic group, which is traditionally defined by a matrilineal kinship system. In my work I discuss the extent to which religion and the traditional matrilineal system contribute to the massive presence of men in the domestic work sector. At the same time this research explores how male domestic workers construct their masculine identities. I investigate how working in the city as servants, domestic workers create and perform particular notions of masculinity. I seek to understand what it means to a male domestic worker, to be a servant in the city, and how this employment shapes what it means to be a man. Ultimately, this research study aims at understanding the relationships between men and women, gender roles and modern, waged domestic work within the frame of the matrilineal kinship system.

This research study attempted to answer the following three questions: Why today mainly men are employed as domestic workers in the city of Nampula? To what extent does the matrilinear system contribute to the active participation of men in domestic work? How do male domestic workers construct their masculine identities against the backdrop of the larger normative gender roles defined by today’s Mozambican society? In this mini-thesis I describe the main economic characteristics of Nampula city and I examine the dynamics of the job market in the city. As the majority of young people in Nampula are involved in the informal economic sectors, I examined the existing gender ideology produced in Nampula to understand who and why work in domestic labour sector. I also investigate the main features of paid domestic labour in Nampula and the reasons for the limited involvement of women. Islam, dominant in northern Mozambique, plays a key role in understanding women’s participation in waged labour. I attempt to analyse how a religious ideology contributes practically in the understanding of the forms of the domestic work sector take in Nampula. As most of the domestic servants in Nampula are immigrant people from the surrounding districts, I seek to identify the motivations that lead young people to leave their home and settle in the city. I also attempt to understand why most of these young immigrants end up becoming domestic workers.

As economic explanations grounded on market demand and gendered employment dynamics are insufficient to explain the masculinisation of domestic work in Nampula, I argue instead for the need of taking into account cultural and social elements. Since the province of Nampula is predominantly inhabited by the *Makhuwa* ethnic group that is historically matrilinear, and
despite the fact that this traditional kinship system has undergone major changes due to the influence of colonialism and Islam, I have investigated the ways in which traditional matrilinear values are crucial in the understanding of masculinity. I argue that the matrilinear system, generally conceived as empowering women, still plays an important role that may help us in understanding the massive presence of men in the domestic work sector. Most domestic servants come from rural areas where the matrilinear system is strong. I argue that young immigrants from rural areas easily engage in domestic work also because of traditional customs, values and meanings that are ascribed to manhood.

Masculinity is a culturally constructed phenomenon that varies in time and space (Kimmel, 1998). In this research, I investigate the ways in which young domestic servants construct their masculinities. First, I analyse the role initiation rites, a tradition still rooted in northern Mozambique, play in defining the gendered identities. I explore how the breadwinner ideal built during colonial era influences the ways in which young domestic servants acquire social status in their home community. I present their discourses on what it means to be a domestic worker in the city and I discuss how the experience as servant shapes representations of masculinity. The representation of masculinity that the domestic servants have been discussing with me consists on a combination of different ideals and values linked both to the “breadwinner” role instilled by colonialism and forced labour and the traditional understanding of masculinity associated to uxorilocal marriage practices.

This work should stand as (1) a contribution to the body of knowledge on matrilinearity—which is insufficiently studied in Mozambique—particularly in relation to modern urban settings such as Nampula city. My thesis also (2) challenges the common held western contention that seems to naturalise the domestic space as exclusively feminine territory. (3) Finally this research is also part of a larger effort to study the dynamics of gender in Mozambique, moving away from Western approaches that take the feminization of domestic work as universal. It seeks to answer to the calls for the decolonization of gender studies as it addresses issues of multiplicity and diversity of the experience of gender construction.

The study takes a qualitative approach as much of my data have been collected using face-to-face interactions, interviews and observations—as it is ethnography of domestic work in
Nampula. In the future it would be perhaps important to expand the study further, also achieving some quantitative data. Informants who have taken part in the study were selected using the snowball approach, taking advantage of the social networks that exists between immigrants. The fieldwork was carried out in Nampula between February and April 2017. Data were collected with in-depth interviews, informal conversation and participant observation. The people interviewed included domestic workers, employers, religious leaders and some citizens of the city. All informants were duly informed about the purpose of the study and their participation was on a voluntary basis; they were all aware that they could leave the study when they wanted to. Their identities are kept anonymous in this mini-thesis.

The research was carried out in province of Nampula, geographically located in the north of the country—as shown in Fig. 1 below. Nampula is the third largest city in Mozambique and the most economically important town in the north of the country.

![Map of Mozambique showing Nampula](https://etd.uwc.ac.za)

**Figure 1: Mozambique's Localities and Cities (Map designed by Cesar Mahumane)**

The second chapter presents the review of the literature. It firstly discusses how gender has been appended in anthropology and gender studies, focusing on the contribution of African feminists. It secondly reviews scholarship on the “study of men” with particular attention to the crucial
theoretical concept of my research, the one of “masculinities.” This chapter also assesses scholarship on domestic work and domesticity in Mozambique, and the literature on matrilinearity and ethnicity in the Nampula province. I have also included theoretical discussions in the chapters that analyse and present my findings. The third chapter outlines the research design that I have adopted in this study showing the sampling of the informants and the methodologies used. In this section I also present my fieldwork, the challenges that I have encountered and I also include a reflexive account of this experience. The following three chapters present and analyse the research findings. Chapter four discusses the main characteristics of the city of Nampula, highlighting its social, cultural and economic factors. This chapter is based on the existing literature but it also includes observations and data that I have collected in the field. As to grounds on information collected through interviews, informal conversations and direct observation, chapter five presents the main features of the domestic labour sector in the city of Nampula. Chapter six discusses the way in which male servants build and perform their masculine identities and examine the gender discourses that emerge amongst young immigrants.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research study draws on and connects different bodies of literature and diverse theoretical approaches. I have decided to not separate the literature review and the theoretical framework as they overlap and cross over. I have also attempted to discuss the theory together with my findings in the analysis of the data collected during my fieldwork (see chapter four, five and six). I have organized the literature review in three sections. In the first part I discuss how gender has been apprehended in anthropology and gender studies, focusing on the contribution of African feminism. In the second section I review the literature on the “study of men”, illustrating one of the crucial theoretical concepts of my research: “masculinities”. I conclude with a short section reviewing the literature on matrilinearity with specific attention to the cases of Mozambique. The literature review is by no means exhaustive, however I have attempted to flesh out the discussion that are relevant for the research that I have conducted.

Gender, anthropology and African feminism

The feminist movement was influential for several Social Sciences including anthropology, as it questioned the way in which women were represented by the disciplines. The first feminist works within anthropology date the 1970s and were known as the “anthropology of women”. Their purposes were to discuss how anthropological literature was marked by a “male bias” (Pine, 2010; Moore, 1998; Kumar, 1999). Feminist anthropologists argued that the discipline was male dominated since anthropologists were mainly men, and the few female anthropologists were trained in a male-biased discipline, itself the product of a male culture where women were viewed as inferior to men (Bernard, 2010). They pointed out how anthropologists valued male informants in their fieldwork assuming that men were more accessible to outsiders and that they had the knowledge and the control of the information (Pine, 2010; Moore, 1998). On the contrary, the anthropology of women tried to focus more on what women said and did and their ethnographic studies aimed at giving more visibility to women’s lives. Feminist anthropologist,
however, soon realised that the biggest issues were not to be found in the objects of research but rather at the level of theory and analysis (Moore, 1998: 2). Two different approaches have emerged in this period: one arguing that female oppression and male power were not universal phenomena, and another that believed in the universalization of female subordination and male domination. Following the first line and influenced by Marxist theories, authors as Sacks and Leacock argued that female subordination is to be apprehended as a historically located event, associated with the relations of production, private property and shaped by colonialism and capitalism (Bernard, 2000; Pine, 2010). This perspective suggests that there were times in which more equitable societies in terms of gender roles existed, where the division of labour had the same social value. Thus, female subordination is an event that surfaces in relation to specific economic conditions and policies.

Some feminist anthropologists have tried to explain the origin of what they believed to be a universal phenomenon—the female subordination. Based on the dichotomy of nature and culture, Ortner (1974) explained that women are seen as being closer to nature because of their role in childbearing and child rearing. This division that puts the woman in nature and the man next to the culture is not a “natural” one, but rather a cultural construction. Ortner (1974) points out that a woman is not close to nature even if she is so universally perceived. In turn, Rosaldo (1974) argued that the origin of women’s oppression is to be located in the division between public and private spheres, where the domestic one is assumed to be the space of women and children. Comparing the various models of society throughout the history of mankind, Rosaldo (1974) concluded that, for example, in the hunter-gatherer societies the degree of separation between the public and private spheres was lower compared to the industrial societies. It follows that the former were supposed to be more egalitarian societies compared to the latter. The author stated that female subordination is universal because women, in different ways and according to different degrees, have always been excluded from the public space.

By the late 1970s and more recently African feminists, political activists, and theorists influenced by postmodernism begun to challenge the emphasis on the universal nature of women’s subordination. In opposition, the concept of gender, understood to be better positioned to generate debates on gender difference without assuming the universality of female subordination, and without referring to dichotomies based on Western ideals (Pine, 2010:322),
emerged. African feminists rejected the universal dichotomies because it reflected the dominant Western discourse. Oyewumi (1997), for instance, highlighted that male dominance is a Western discourses product based on the established hierarchy between male and female. She argued that as the Western worldview is “bio-logic”, that is to say grounded on the biology of the sexes, the difference between the sexes is perceived in terms of hierarchical power relations and spatially distant, indexing the dualistic notions of nature/culture, public/private and visible/invisible (Oyewumi, 1997: 7). Oyewumi goes further saying that “the assumption and deployment of patriarchy and ‘women’ as universals in many feminist writings are ethnocentric and demonstrate the hegemony of the West over other cultural groupings” (2004:15). The postmodernist critique of anthropology also argued against the tendency of feminist anthropology to emphasise the views of Western women and universalise their experience (Cole and Phillips, 1996).

In the nineteenth and early 20th century, historiography and ethnographic studies, portrayed African women as irrational and guided by instincts, they were considered as sexual objects made to satisfy men’s needs, subjugated to the interests of man, or perceived as lower, speechless beings, housekeepers and breeders (Amaduime, 1997; Beoku-Betts, 1976; Casimiro, 1999; Cornwall, 2005; Kisiang’ani, 2004; Oyewumi, 1997, 2004). As Mudimbe (1988) argues, the European colonial project in Africa was never a question of understanding to control, but a question of transferring knowledge and imposing specific European constructions of Africa for the benefit of the colonial imperialist project (Amaduime, 1997:2). And here the classical anthropology played an important role. Beoku-Betts explains that in Europe during the nineteenth century:

“Women were confined to domestic duties in the home since they were classed as the weaker and less intelligent sex. Men on the other had performed the role of breadwinners and they were expected to be physically and intellectually sound, aggressive and authoritative. Those men who were sent to Africa accepted this way of life as the only valid one. Thus, they tended to neglect women as an area of ethnographic study since they were so characteristically uninformative and uninteresting” (Beoku-Betts, 1976:20).
But, if on the one hand, African women suffered the impact of the colonial period, losing privileges, social status and material powers; on the other hand, according to Cunha (2006), in Africa, colonial power did not exist nor was imposed on an empty space of gender relations. In many pre-colonial rural societies women had control over their lives; they could produce trade and distribute crop in local markets. They had the right to use and enjoy products from the land. They were very powerful because they had at their disposal councils and political bodies of governance where they could make complaints and decide on punishments or other forms of conflict regulation (Cunha, 2006: 5-7). This is clearly a contrary picture to that shown in several studies about Africa.

Moreover, Cunha (2006) noted that after African independences, the political discourse on gender relations did not change substantially. She argue that if it is true that the construction of the independent nation does not totally inhibit or silence women as the colonial system did, it is also true that post-independence discourses and practices of many African notions placed women still in the domestic sphere as wives and housewives (Cunha, 2006). This ideology, built in the colonial period was not questioned by the discourses adopted by nationalist scholars during the post-independence (Casimiro, 1999). Kisiang’ani (2004) points out that post-independence Africa came into an intellectual identity crisis because Africans could only study the African man and woman from Western analytical theoretical frameworks. Efforts to adopt local perspectives in the analysis of African gender relations were always difficult because of language barriers, and financial, educational, political and economic issues.

African feminists criticized Western feminist for being Eurocentric and for falling into the same ethnocentric shortcomings (Amadumue, 1997; Casimiro, 1999). African feminists criticised Western analytical theoretical frameworks arguing that (1) women in Africa do not constitute a homogeneous group, as some are oppressed, others are oppressive, and other have benefited from slavery and colonisation; (2) women were not passive victims but actors from different moments of history; (3) gender relations that oppress women vary according to a range of issues such as class, race/ethnicity, national-imperialist relations, nationality, gender identity, marital status and age; and(4) it would be impossible to speak of an “African culture” nor “African woman” (Casimiro, 2014:98-99).
African feminism emphasises how the notion of gender is socially constructed and also as a historical and cultural phenomenon. Regarding to this Oyewumi argues as follow:

“If gender is socially constructed, then gender cannot behave in the same way across time and space. If gender is a social construction, then we must examine the various cultural/architectural sites where it was constructed, and we must acknowledge that variously located actors (aggregates, groups, interested parties) were part of the construction. We must further acknowledge that if gender is a social construction, then there was a specific time (in different cultural/architectural sites) when it was “constructed” and therefore a time before which it was not” (Oyewumi, 1997:10).

Oyewumi further states that it is logical to assume that in some societies the concept of gender simply did not exist (Oyewumi, 1997; 2004). African feminists argue against the conceptual dualism of the Western feminism, one that seeks to fit the lives of women close the nature, family, and reproduction and locates them within the private, domestic, informal, traditional spheres and ascribes the domains of culture, work, production to men who inhabit public spaces, the political, the formal and the modern (Casimiro, 1999: 46). This binary does not take into account the plurality of the experiences and the interrelationships existing in social realities. Also “men” have often been overlooked, taken for granted, or treated as a unified, homogenous category (Morrell and Ouzgane, 2005:7); the various appeals for decolonization of gender studies in Africa emphasise the need to deconstruct these homogenising categories.

As in other African contexts, Mozambican reality suggests an analysis outside this Western binary framework. The complexity of gender relations in Nampula is such that it is best captured if men and women are not taken as homogenous categories. The Makhuwa notions of masculinity and femininity, the initiation rites, the traditional matrilinear system and the religion play an important role in the construction of these gender relations. This approach is valuable because it allows deconstructing the Western ideas that naturalizes and universalizes the woman as belonging to the domestic space, clearly questionable looking at the reality of Nampula.
Masculinity and the study of man

Despite being focused on the study of women and gender relations, feminist studies have made masculinity a central concept for the analysis of gender relations (Hearn and Kimmel, 2006). Recent works in anthropology have contributed to the study of masculinity with ethnographies from different cultural contexts. Across disciplines, the lack of works that focus only on “man as a man” gave rise to the emergence of a new field of study: “man and masculinity”. There is still no consensus on its designation as the terms vary forms masculinity studies, male dominance studies, critical studies on men, or men’s studies (Hearn and Kimmel 2006). The main concern of this body of literature, which theories emerge from a wide range of disciplines, is to understand man as a cultural being (Shefer et al., 2010).

The adoption of masculinities as a plural term, rather than masculinity at the singular, is one of the major contributions offered by this new area of study. According to Hearn the word masculinity “derives from the Middle English masculin, from Middle French and from Latin masculinus—“male, of masculine gender”, “male person, male”—and masculus, “male” (2007: 390). Hearn adds that “in the 1960s and 1970s masculinity was understood mainly as an internalised role, identity or (social) psychological disposition, reflecting a particular (often US or Western) cluster of cultural norms or values acquired by learning from socialisation agents” (2007: 391). Psychology and psychoanalyses, especially Freud and Adler, are seen as having taken the first steps in the modern analysis of masculinity, having shown that the adult character was not biologically predetermined but constructed through emotional attachments in processes of growth (Hearn, 2007; Hearn and Kimmel, 2006). Widely used from the 1980s onward, the concept of masculinities, “refers to the social roles, behaviours, and meanings prescribed for men in any given society at any one time” (Kimmel, 2003: 503). This notion emphasises the role of social relations in the construction of masculinity. The use of the term as a plural aims at showing the variations and instability across different groups throughout the world. Different ways of thinking about masculinity are also present in the same society, at the same time. Thus, one cannot speak of masculinity but rather of several masculinities. Constructions of masculinity vary across culture and time, they change over the course of a person’s life and at any given moment, several understandings of masculinity coexist (Kimmel, 2003: 503-504).
Connell’s theory of hegemonic masculinity is recognised as one of the most influential theories about man and masculinity (Wedgewood, 2009). It arises in rejection of biologic essentialism in which gender is viewed as fixed and inherent to individual’s characteristics (Ratele, 2015). Essentialism, also known as sex-role theory, has a binary view of gender identity. The male sex role was used to identify common male attributes and “was defining against the female sex-role, suggesting that there could be only a single identity for each sex” (Hobbs, 2013:385). Built within a social constructionist perspective, hegemonic masculinity is defined as “the form of masculinity in a given society-wide setting that structures and legitimates hierarchical gender relations between men and women, between masculinity and femininity, and between men” (Masserschmidt, 2012:58). Defined in this way, Connell’s theory relates hierarchically four types of masculinities in interaction with each other: hegemonic, complicit, subordinated and marginalised. Following Levy (2007) the dominant masculinity is the accepted ideal/model of what a man is in a given culture, at a given time; the second category—complicit—comprises the majority of men who accept and participate in the hegemonic masculinity system and who benefit from female domination. Cornell also explains that “a man in the subordinate position suffers that fate despite appearing to possess the physical attributes necessary to aspire to hegemony” (Levy 2007:254). The category of subordinate refers to the gender roles and values that are not consistent with the hegemonic system and ideology. Finally, marginalised men are “those who cannot even aspire to hegemony, most often men of colour and men with disabilities” (Levy, 2007: 254).

Hegemonic masculinity theory then encompasses a multiplicity of masculinities and is constructed from a double domination represented by what Demetriou (2001) called the internal and external hegemony. The internal hegemony “refers to a social ascendancy of one group of men over others” and the external hegemony is connected to the institutionalization of men’s dominance over women (Demetriou, 2001:341). Built on the notion of a global domination of men over women, “hegemonic masculinity is therefore understood as both ‘hegemony over women’ and ‘hegemony over subordinate masculinities’, (Demetriou, 2001: 341). The hegemonic masculinity theory has raised many criticisms. One is that it legitimizes the domination of women by men. Demetriou argues that “it seems that hegemonic masculinity is first and foremost a strategy for the subordination of women” (2001:34). Moreover, Mfecane (2016) noted that a range of research on hegemonic masculinity in South Africa pointed out that
there is no single form of hegemonic masculinity. Miescher (2005) argued that because of colonialism and the imposition of other foreign forms of gender, it is very difficult to find in Africa a dominant form of masculinity as it happens in the West. He suggests that this concept is therefore not useful to analyse African contexts. Seemingly, Aboim (2008) use hybrid masculinity instead of hegemonic masculinity concept, arguing that dominant masculinity in a given historical context incorporates diverse and even contradictory elements. She explains:

“The emancipation of women, the incorporation of feminine traits in the ideals of masculinity and the emergence of a post-colonial world, came to challenge the organic domination: men over women, white men over black and even heterosexuals over homosexuals. They were generated new combinatorial, hybrid forms of masculinity that cannot simply be regarded as subordinate or marginal (Aboim, 2008: 275).”

Thus, far from being static elements, masculinities are permanently rebuilt in relation to both political and economic changes, and according to individual action and reinterpretations, as such masculinities are better understood as hybrids forms (Aboim, 2008).

Several scholars unanimously argue that the colonial encounter in African societies did not take place in an empty space of gender relations since African pre-colonial societies had great diversity masculinity and femininity forms among different groups. Morrel (1998) name these notions and masculinities constructions of “African masculinity” meaning that they constituted the hegemonic masculinity in pre-colonial African societies (Morrel, 1998).As an example, Uchendu (2008) describes how the notions of masculinity among the pre-colonial Zulu societies were constructed showing the diversity according to age. According to Uchendu’s description (2008), honesty, wisdom, bravery, aggressiveness, loyalty, courage, sense of responsibility, self-confidence, athletics, endurance and absence of emotions were the main elements that characterized Zulu masculinity. Boys aged 11 to 13 were required to undergo an initiation rite called 

"Qhumbuza Izindlebe. This was the first step to manhood. In this ceremony they learned to be loyal and obedient to their parents and elders; to fulfil their duties and to help others. The entrance to manhood took place with the appearance of with the first nocturnal emission with the beginning of the most important masculine ritual—the Thomba ceremony. This was an important
ceremony that ended with a bath that symbolically meant the washing of all childhood habits and the incorporation of manhood’s one. From this ritual on the boy was treated as a man. The following initiation phase consisted in the entry into military service where he remained until he reached the age of 30. At this point he had attained “full” manhood and could then form a family and take the responsibility of a woman and children.

These “local” forms of masculinity constructions were eroded by the colonial rule in Africa. The colonial waged labour took many men out of rural areas, leading them to assimilate new urban values different from the ones that existed in rural areas (Uchendu, 2008; Silberschmidt, 2001). New understandings of masculinity were constantly being reshaped (Morrel, 1998:623) leading to the coexistence of different forms of masculinity. Similarly, in northern Mozambique, it is not possible to speak of only one type of masculinity, given the influence of the traditional matrilineal system, the practice of initiation rites and the Islamic religion, and their socio-economic conditions. So, to analyze how in Nampula domestic workers construct their masculinity identity we must take into account the multiplicity of factors that contribute to the coexistence of a variety of forms of masculinity.

Matrilinearity: the power of women

The study of kinship systems has a central place in anthropology. From the emergence of the discipline it has always been a concern for anthropologists to understand the different cross-cultural kinship systems. The first group of works on matrilinearity was produced in the 1940s and 1950s at the height of the British social-structuralism. The African System of Kinship and Marriage by Radcliffe-Brown and Ford is a classic example of this approach (Peter, 1997). In the 1960s, another volume entirely devoted to the “matrilineal kinship” was edited by Schneider and Gough; in the 1970s and 1980s matrilinearity is resurrected through issues brought forward by feminist studies (Peter, 1997).

The main debate that illuminates many of these studies was inaugurated in 1950 by the British anthropologist Audrey Richards and became known as the “matrilinear puzzle”. Richards (1950), arguing about the conflict of authority in matrilineal societies, explains that “the problem in all
such matrilinear societies is similar [...] the difficulty of combining recognition of descent through the woman with the rule of exogamous marriage” (Peter, 1997:126). Richards argued that:

“By the rule of exogamy a woman who has to produce children for her matrikin must marry a man from another group. If she leaves her own group to join that of her husband [in virilocal marriage] her matrikin have to contrive ... to keep control of the children.... The brothers must divide authority with the husband who is living elsewhere. If, on the other hand, the woman remains with her [matrikin] and her husband joins her there [in uxorilocal marriage], she and her children remain under the control of her family, but her brothers are lost to the group since they marry brides elsewhere and they are separated from the village where they have rights of succession (Richard 1950: 246 cited in Peter, 1997:126).”

The matrilinear puzzle became a subject that fuelled several debates and many studies sought to solve it. Some of these studies, however, were criticised because their use categories (patrilineal/matrilineal) seems to be very general and do not allow to see the varieties and crossovers that groups may present (LeVine, 1966). Casimiro (2012) argued that because of the dominant patriarchal view, studies on matrilinear societies developed in the 1970s and 1980s presented some limitations. She contends that matrilinearity was “often understood as the counterpart of the patrilinear, or, according to an evolutionary vision, as the primary form of social organisation that was absent in the context of capitalist, patriarchal relations of production” (Casimiro, 2012: 219).1

In the same line of thought, Arnfred (2011:221) states that there are very few studies on matrilinearity because of the prejudiced that considers it an abnormality located at the early stages of the development of civilisations and a feature that is doomed to disappear with progress. Arnfred goes further by stating that this tendency has to do with the fact that matrilineal societies present different gender patterns, which give more independence and

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1“É muitas das vezes entendida como a contraparte da patrilinearidade, ou como uma forma primordial de organização social desaparecida no contexto de relações de produção capitalistas e patriarcais, de acordo com uma visão evolucionista” (My translation).
authority to women. “A deeper study of matrilinearity, on its own terms, threatens to destabilise the cherished mythologies of male dominance/female subordination” (Arnfred, 2011: 222). Feminist studies offered a new look into studies of matrilineal societies. These studies argued for the importance of looking at the “relationship between matrilinearity and gender relations”, “the role of historical analysis”, and “matrilinearity as a set of features rather than a whole” (Casimiro, 2012: 221).^2 This new approach highlights the power women have in these societies, challenging the prevailing notion of male dominance/female subordination.

In Mozambique there are two matrilinear ethnic groups, *Makonde and Makhuwa*. The *Makonde* people live in the northern province of Cabo Delgado while the *Makhuwa* are scattered over a wide areas covering the south of Cabo Delgado province, the whole province of Nampula and the northern province of Zambézia. This is the largest matrilineal ethnic group of Mozambique (Arnfred, 2001: 25). Recent studies on the matrilineal societies in Mozambique are unanimous in assigning relative power and independence to women when compared to patrilineal societies (Arnfred, 2001; Geffray, 1990; Medeiros, 1997). Geffray’s study based on fieldwork he carried out in the Erati district (Nampula) in the 1930s shows that the power of women derived from the total control of food since the granary management was an eminently female function as only women were socially recognized as capable of their administration (Geffray, 1990: 58). Women were the ones who decide the quantities required to prepare food, to sell or to offer.

More recently, in a study developed in Ribáuè district (Nampula) in 1990s Arnfred also confirmed this tendency. A testimony of a *Makhuwa* woman taken from this work reveals this feminine power:

> Things to do with food are decided by me. I am the one who knows the life of children and the numbers of visitors during the year. So I’m the one in control (Arnfred, 2005: 240).

Arnfred (2005) argues that if the husband wants to sell part of the products (maize, beans, cassava or groundnuts) he must ask permission to the women. The use of money from the sale of

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^2A literatura feminista permitiu um novo olhar sobre as sociedades matrilineares a partir de três questões: a relação entre matrilinearidade e relações de género; o papel da análise histórica; a matrilinearidade como um conjunto de características e não como uma totalidade (My translation).
these products should also be negotiated. The man does not use it just as he pleases. From these studies we see that the power of women is also extended to sexuality. Besides the art of cooking, women were trained openly, from an early age, to the art of sex. According to Arnfred (2005) sexual proficiency is considered a reason of pride and privilege for the woman, for this reason in puberty, through initiation rites, young women learnt sexual practices, such as for instance labia elongation. This practice was “considered an important aspect of a young girls’ preparation for lovemaking, and for giving and receiving sexual pleasure (Arnfred, 2005:260). Different from patrilinear contexts, women are expected to have proficiency in erotic arts which aim is not only to give pleasure to men but also to themselves.

These studies also reported that before Mozambique's independence, marriage was defined by matrilocal residence—the man would move to live in the family house of his wife. It was hoped that the young man living in the house of the in-laws, would be able to guarantee the continuity of the group through procreation. With the birth of the first child, the man demonstrated that he was capable of having his own, independent house. Children born from this relationship belong to the woman’s family and traditionally the father would have no authority over them, but rather, instead he would exercise his control over the children of his sister. Apart from procreation, a young man was expected to show willingness to work. He was expected to work in the fields of the in-laws and perform all the household chores without complaint—cleaning around the huts, fetch water, grind sorghum and all others task that are asked to do. This required work was known locally as pette and represented the “price of the service.” As emphasised by Geffray “fertilize and produce are the two requirements that a young married must fulfil” (1990: 48) and when these conditions are satisfied, the marriage gains social relevance and a young male achieves the prestige he desperately needs.

Colonialism, capitalist modern economy, Christianity and Islam have affected in many ways matrilineal ideology, and have fostered patrilinear arrangements of families (Phiri, 1983; Osório 2006; Bonate 2006). Gough (1961) cited by Narciso (2013) argues that market economy is the main reason for the disintegration of the matrilinear system. For Narciso (2013) market economies involve the transaction of large amounts of money, concentration on cash crops, wage labour and emigration. These elements lead to a weakening of matrilinear descent groups and the strengthening of the nuclear family, with the consequent disappearance of matrilinear systems.
Nevertheless, many matrilineal societies have been able to reinvent themselves in contemporary worlds (Casimiro, 2012; Bonate, 2006) just as happened in northern Mozambique, especially in rural areas of Nampula, as we shall see in Chapter 4.
CHAPTER 3

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research design. It firstly provides the description of the research approach and the sampling method, the methodologies employed and equally it provides a motivation for the selected methods. The chapter presents the fieldwork and introduces the informants of the research; it outlines how participant observation was carried out and offers a reflexive account, while at the same time introduces some ethical considerations.

I have spent approximately two months in Nampula city conducting research, using qualitative research techniques as the objective was to produce an ethnographic account of the domestic work sector in Nampula and the analysis of the meaning male servants give to their profession. The research was developed at Nampula city because of its status as economic capital of the North. Besides being one of the most populous cities in Mozambique, it is the place where people from all over northern parts of the country migrate searching for work. The domestic work sector is strong in the city and is mainly occupied by the immigrant population.

I was interested in exploring the existing gender ideologies produced in Nampula in reference to religious and ethnic belongings, and “traditional” forms of kinship. The ethnographic data collection method was preferred because it arguably “requires directly talking with and observing the people being studied” (Neuman, 2011:179). Interacting with people was central in capturing life histories, habits and practices, hopes and emotions, discourses, representations and the web of relationships that exist between immigrants and domestic workers. Data were collected through a combination of self-developed questions for in-depth interviews, narratives of life stories, informal conversations and direct observation. The nature of ethnographic data aims to understand and gives meaning to the practices of a given people. Similar to Neuman’s suggestion, the wish was to “begin with the point of view of the people we study and then find out how they see the world and define situations” (2011:179). This study is thus an ethnography of domestic male workers in Nampula city. It explores the existing gender ideologies with particular reference to gender roles. It also analyses masculinity and the interaction between men and women in Islam informed spaces and within families that identify themselves as matrilinear.
The study seeks to understand why young, immigrant men are prevalently employed in the domestic work sector in contrast to the feminization of domestic work that affect the rest of the country and that is found globally. The research tries to understand to what extent the dominant matrilineal system and the Islamic beliefs and values shape and somehow determine the masculinization of the domestic profession.

A snowball sampling method was applied for this study. According to Vogt (1999) cited by Atkinson and Flint (2001: 1) “snowball sampling may simply be defined as a technique for finding research subjects. One subject gives the researcher the name of another subject, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so on.” It is regarded as a non-probability sampling method “based on the assumption that a bond or link exists between the initial sample and others in the same target population, allowing a series of referrals to be made within a circle of acquaintance,” (Atkinson and Flint, 2001:1). A week prior to travelling to Nampula was devoted to the process of identifying and choosing the potential participants of this study. This was done with the support of a research assistant, Amade Ali, whose services were crucial for the success of entire fieldwork process. He lives in Nampula and at the time of the fieldwork he was a third year student in the public administration diploma course at the Pedagogical University of Mozambique, Nampula campus. He speaks eMakhwa and he knows the city very well. I met him through a colleague who worked with him years ago in a different research project. The research assistant started by contacting some of the employees he knew who in turn suggested other contacts they knew. I have found ten young domestic workers who were willing to participate in the study, three of them were local from the Nampula province and the remaining were migrants from the Zambézia province.

The first phase of the fieldwork was devoted to in-depth interviews with all selected domestic workers and several informal conversations with ordinary residents of Nampula to get their sense and understanding of the low female participation in the domestic sector. The analysis of preliminary data collected during this phase pointed to the need for a second fieldwork trip that was specifically focused on the study of initiation rites and the Islamic religion, the construction of gender ideologies especially in reference to the division of labour. It was also necessary to know what informs the employers to ultimately decide on a suitable candidate for domestic work. Consequently, the second phase of the fieldwork was conducted in April 2017. At this
stage I interviewed five additional domestic workers, two religious leaders, five employers, and some young Makhuwas.

Doing fieldwork in Nampula had a special meaning for me because it is my birth place; my family had to move when I was 3 years old and I had never returned. It was exciting to go to Nampula because it was a good opportunity to reconnect and know the city where I was born. I arrived in the city in early February 2017 in a hot and rainy weather. Temperatures were averaging 30 degrees Celsius and it rained almost every day. I was staying in a residence in the centre of the city, an ideal place to feel the pulse of the city. I quickly got used to the motorcycles on the roads. It was fascinating because I had never seen so many bikes in any place before. Motorcycles are mostly preferred as compared to mini-bus taxis, chapa, as a means of transportation because they are flexible and fast. When I needed to meet my informants I also used this motorcycle taxis. The first week of data collection was devoted to conducting observations. While walking around the city the number of the mosques caught my attention. I also visited the main markets. They are very busy places especially between 9am and 4pm. In the markets, the sellers were mostly men; they sell all kinds of goods and services. The sale of the ready-made food in the market is however handled by women. The customers are also mainly men. Some market vendors and some city residents explained to me that most of these customers were domestic workers sent by their patroa, bosses. This information supported the idea that in Nampula the domestic servants are mostly men. In these early days I visited neighbourhoods such as Muatala, Muhala-Expansão and Namicopo. In these neighbourhoods some markets had a more balanced presence of both men and women.

I have also contacted the association of domestic workers and interviewed the secretary general. It was not easy to talk to him. He is always busy and can rarely be found at the association's premises. I finally managed to meet him after much insistence. Our conversation was very useful because it allowed me to get a general sense of the domestic work sector in the city, the work carried out by the association and the dynamics of the servants’ participation in the association. I went to Nampula city convinced that the men domestic servants were local but the Secretary of the Association informed me that the sector is dominated by young migrants from the Zambézia province.
Informants

Finding informants for this study was not a difficult task; the research assistant was a key to this process. As a resident of Nampula, he had relatives who employed domestic servants in their homes who became part of the study. It was easy to interact with them perhaps because of the presence of someone they knew. These domestic workers, in turn, recommended other informants that they knew. Throughout the fieldwork in Nampula new friendships were established and I also visited friends that I met at university in Maputo and that were now residing in the city; they also allow me to interview their domestic workers.

Of the fifteen domestic workers participating in this study, only two were women. Although attempts were made to find more women it became obvious that in Nampula there are very few women working in this area and most of them are either single or divorced. Both female informants that I have interviewed were unmarried. Most servants in service in Nampula are young migrant people from Zambézia province. The ages of the informants vary between 19 and 38 years. Some of the interviewed male domestic workers are married with children and have left their families in their respective villages. All of them only attended the initial classes of primary school, except one of them who had attended the secondary school until grade 10. Not surprisingly, most of the domestic workers indicated their low level of education as the reason why they looked for a job as domestic workers.

In general the informants were willing to share their experiences, although not everyone clearly understood the reasons why I was conducting this study. In these few cases I had to make an additional effort to explain that they were participating in an academic research and that all shared information would be used exclusively for that purpose. There were situations where informants after our chat sessions asked for money for taxi fares or to purchase airtime for their cell phones.

Below is a table that elucidates the demographics of the interviewed people. Fictitious names are used for confidentiality purposes.
Table 1: Profile of domestic workers interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>José</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Makuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Arlete</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Makuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Gregório</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Makuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nassone</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Makuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>João</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Makuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ussene</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Lomwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Lomwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Filipe</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Lomwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Cândido</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Lomwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Aurélio</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Lomwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Benjamim</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Lomwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Lazaro</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Lomwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Samuel</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Lomwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Manuel</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Lomwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ponciano</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Lomwe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I selected five employers and an additional woman who are residents of Nampula who were interviewed and I identified some other key informants. Fetterman (2008:477) explains that key informants are “individuals who are articulate and knowledgeable about their community [and] play a pivotal role in the theatre of qualitative research, providing an understanding of cultural norms and responsibilities”. During the first fieldwork phase I did research on Islam in the city, particularly focusing on the construction of gender ideology inherent to this religious practice. This was very important as Islam is the predominant religion in the city. I contacted two Islamic leaders who were interviewed with the help of the research assistant who is also Muslim. The two selected informants were leaders from the mosque he frequents. Other than the formal interviews, I had informal conversations with some young anthropology students at the Eduardo
Mondlane University upon the return to Maputo. The intention for the conversations was to understand the migratory trajectories of young people in the region.

**In-depth interviews**

Interviews were conducted with key informants. The interviews with the domestic servants all happened outside their workspace. This was decided to ensure their comfort while answering questions; I also did not want to interfere with their work schedules. Our meetings were always held when they were off duty. For most of them, Sunday was the ideal day because it was their official day off. The location of the interviews varied according to each case. Some preferred to be interviewed at their homes in Muatala, a neighbourhood known to be the home of migrant people. Some of the informants preferred public places like local food stalls, barracas, located in their neighbourhoods. Although some barracas were busy and noisy, sometimes disturbing our conversations, they were a relaxed space. The informants felt good and willing to cooperate.

In the interview informants were encouraged to respond openly and in depth. The interviews aimed at identifying the underlying factors that lead young people from Alta Zambézia to migrate to Nampula city and their participation in the domestic work industry. When asked who was responsible for house chores in their own homes, the male domestic workers were quick to identify it as women’s responsibility and emphasized that this is in accordance with tradition. Interestingly, they do not define what they do in the city as women work. Servant’s discourses around these issues suggest the role the Islamic religion and the matrilinear system play. Then, the interviews also explored these subjects. My interview also aimed at exploring the working conditions of the domestic workers which are characterized by precariousness and low wages. I also wanted to understand the job marker, the recruitment methods and how domestic workers were hired. How do employers perceive the increasing demand and supply of men in the domestic work sector? Employers’ explanations also led me to question about the influence of the matrilinear system on gender relations in Nampula.
This research also examines the way domestic work influence self-identity among male domestic workers. This was crucial to clarify issues around masculinity and social status for men who participate in activities that are generally viewed as a feminine domain.

All interviews lasted an average of one hour and were conducted following prepared questions. All interviews were conducted in Portuguese except for one which was conducted in eMakhuwa. The research assistant played a crucial role here as he also helped as interpreter. All interviews began with the explanation of the objectives of the research and the signing of the consent form. All interviews were recorded and were transcribed and translated into English. Although he agreed to the recording of the interview, one employer expressed concern about it, fearing that the content of the interview would be released on social networks such as WhatsApp and Facebook. I reassured the informant guaranteeing him that the recordings would be kept in a safe place and that it would be used solely for academic purposes.

**Informal conversation and participant observation**

Throughout the duration of the fieldwork in Nampula, several informal conversations with residents took place. I tried to create discussion on the reasons why women not take up jobs in the domestic sector. In all the chats informants always responded to my questionings with the answer “cultural reasons”. This is why I decided to interview some religious leaders to better understand the picture. Conversations with these leaders sought to understand to what extent the Islamic religion influences the city’s wage labour. Another recurring theme throughout the fieldwork was the role of initiation rites in the construction of gender roles. As a way to explore this topic in depth, especially trying to understand how and what teachings are reproduced in these ritual spaces, I decided to engage in conversations with three Makhuwa young people who had just passed through the initiation rites. Some sessions took place in their residences and others on the streets of the city.

I had a more formal conversation with the Secretário Geral da Associação de empregados domésticos de Nampula (Secretary-general of the Nampula Domestic Employees’ Association). This happened at the premises of the local National Union of Workers where the association
operates. In this interview I was interested to map the situation of domestic servants in the city of Nampula. In this interview I addressed issues such as working conditions and the role of the association. I complemented these conversations with observations from the main commercial centres of the city such as markets and streets, as I was trying to get a glimpse of the informal sector in Nampula.

Outside the city of Nampula, I had conversations with some Lomwe students at Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo. These interviews aimed at understand better the reasons why young people usually left the province and migrate to Nampula and other parts of the country. In Mozambique, Zambejian people are known as the “immigrant people” and I was also interested in exploring the reasons behind the departure of these young people.

**Reflexivity and ethical considerations**

Conducting this study made me realize how precarious domestic work situation in Mozambique is. In Nampula, domestic workers work more than eight hours a day without any rest, they are poorly treated and earn miserable wages. The average salary of domestic workers is 2000 Mt (R400) per month and it is not enough to meet basic needs of an individual. The precariousness of the domestic servants made me think on how domestic work is little regard as a professional job. The domestic servants’ vulnerability was very clear in the relationship I established with my informants. After our interviews, some of them did not hesitate to ask me for money. Others have asked me to help them find better job opportunities. They assumed that because I am from Maputo, the capital city of the country, I would know people who could help them. Some of my informants were willing to travel back to Maputo with me, where they believed the wages were better. Many of these youngsters had a sense of uncertainty about their future. Given the low wages, many of them could not save money or send it to their families back in the villages. This inability to provide for their families was the souse of great frustration for them. Some of them who had been in town for over a year were wondering if it was worth to work for such little money.
This study was challenging because it demanded to be constantly vigilant, I also had to think a lot about my own prejudices regarding this profession. I come from a region (South of Mozambique) where the domestic activity is naturally understood as belonging to women and household chores are considered as a practice that “undermine” and “diminishes” one’s masculinity. A man who performs such activities is perceived as not being a real man. The challenge was to not allow my prejudices to interfere with my research.

Concerning the ethical issues, all informants were duly informed about the purpose of the study. Their participation was on a voluntary basis and they were aware that they could leave the study at any time, when they wanted to. In order to guarantee the confidentiality of the information, their identities are kept anonymous.
In this chapter I intend to present the main characteristics of the city highlighting its social, cultural and economic aspects, referring to the existing literature but also including observations and data that I have collected in the field.

Nampula is a city established by the Portuguese colonial Administration in the second half of the 20th century. The first Portuguese presence in Nampula province dates back to 1896 and aimed at the subjugation of the Macuana, Maurusa and Mongole kingdoms (Araújo, 2005). In 1907 Portugal settled a military post in the territory of the chief Uampula, a name that later gave rise to the currently known name of the city, Nampula. At this time, the headquarters of the Portuguese captaincy were transferred from Intocolmo to Nampula, which had become the new operation centre of the Portuguese expansion in northern Mozambique (Araújo, 2005). In 1930, when the construction of the railroad from Lumbo to Nampula ended, the colonial administration for the Northern regions definitively settled in Nampula and four years later (1934) this locality was elevated to the category of a village, reinforcing the strategic, political and economic importance that it was attributed to it. In 1935, the village of Nampula became the capital of the Niassa territory, at that time covers the geographical areas of Nampula, Cabo Delgado and Niassa provinces, and on the 26th of August 1956 the village became Nampula city.

Currently, the Nampula occupies an area of 404 km2 and has an estimated population of 743,125 inhabitants (INE, 2017). In fact, Nampula is the city with the highest population growth since the country’s independence in 1975. In 1970, five years before independence, the population of the city was only 23,070; in 1980, five years after independence, the population number rose to 145,722. This high growth was associated with the departure of the Portuguese settlers and the concomitant occupation of the city by the population coming from the countryside. With the outbreak of civil war in 1977, the city grew demographically as cities were considered safer places. In 1991, one year before the end of the armed conflict, the population of Nampula was 232,167 inhabitants. The first census after the independence of Mozambique, which was undertaken in 1997, estimated that the population of Nampula city was 303,346 inhabitants.
(Araújo, 2005). These shows that in twenty-seven years (between 1970 and 1997), the population of the city grew 6 times, making Nampula one of the most populated cities in Mozambique (Araújo, 2005: 214). In the following years, the migratory flow from the countryside to Nampula continued at high rates. Given its economic importance, people from North Zambézia, South of Cabo Delgado and East Niassa regions also started migrating to the city of Nampula.

The city’s economic importance is due to the Nacala development corridor—an important railway linking the port of Nacala with the interior of the country, Malawi and Zambia—which passes through Nampula (Lopes, Araújo and Hermind, 1995). Nampula is also “crossed by the central-northeast highway axis, vital for the development of the northern Zambezi river that reaches towards the province of Cabo Delgado in the North; the province of Niassa in the West; and the coast in the East” (Araújo 1995: 210). As authors emphasise, this location gives the city a prominent role as an economic centre connected to all the northern territory. For this reason, the city is affectionately known as the “Queen of the North” or the “capital of the North”.

Currently, the population growth is also related to the establishment of tertiary education institutions in the city. A considerable number of young people from other northern provinces come to the city to enrol in universities. In recent years, Nampula province has also welcomed refugees coming from the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa. Nampula hosts one of the biggest refugees camp known as Maratane.4

The city of Nampula is also a municipality, which is comprised of six administrative posts (see Table 3) that encompass eighteen neighbourhoods, twelve of which are in the peri-urban areas and the remaining in the city centre. The central administrative post corresponds to the geographic, economic, administrative, urban centre of the city—the cidade cimento—where the main social, economic and administrative infrastructures are located. The urban model is typically Western, structured in broad avenues with well-demarcated residential and service areas. There are several buildings in the cidade cimento, such as banks, shops and warehouses.

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3 “A cidade é cruzada pelo eixo rodoviário Centro-Nordeste, vital para o desenvolvimento a norte do rio Zambeze e que, a partir daqui, se ramifica em direção à província de Cabo Delgado, a norte, a província do Niassa, a ocidente, e o litoral, a oriente” (Mytranslation)

4The Maratane Refugee camp was set up in the Nampula Province in 2002 as a result of the closer the refugee camp in the outskirt of Maputo city. The transfer of this center to the North came after political agreements between Mozambique and South Africa. It is presumed that due to the proximity to that neighboring country, many immigrants crossed the border, which was a problem for the RSA (Wetimane, 2012).
hotels and restaurants. The other five urban administrative posts are located in the cidade caniço, a designation used to mirror its precarious conditions. The cidade de caniço is characterized by constantly moving crowds. More than half of the population of the city lives in the cidade caniço. It is organized in a chaotic way that shows the lack of urban planning and the consequent unregulated constructions; the neighbourhoods are seriously affected by the erosion. The houses are built of precarious materials such as reeds, zinc sheets, mud and so forth. The houses are very close to one another and there are no fences between the houses and the streets. This means that there is no clear distinction between the private and the public space. People who live in the cidade caniço come mainly from other provinces in search of work. Muhahivire and Namutequeliua are the most populated neighbourhoods of the city since colonial times (Araújo, 2005:213).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Administrative Office</th>
<th>Neighbourhoods</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Bombeiros, 25 de Setembro, 1º de Maio, Limoeiros, Liberdade, Militar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muatala</td>
<td>Muatala, Mutauhanha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhala</td>
<td>Muhala, Namutequeliua, Muhahivire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namicopo</td>
<td>Namicopo, Mutava-Rex</td>
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<tr>
<td>Napipine</td>
<td>Napipine, Carrupeia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natikiri</td>
<td>Natikire, Marrupaniua, Marrere</td>
</tr>
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Table 2: Urban Administrative Office in Nampula. Source: (INE, 2009)

**Economic description of Nampula city**

The main economic activity in Nampula province is agriculture, which is rain-fed and practiced by 82.9% of its rural population. Given this and because the climatic conditions are not always favourable, families encourage their young members to move from rural to urban areas in search of jobs to improve the life of the household. The city of Nampula is “flooded” of young people coming from Zambézia, Cabo Delgado and Niassa provinces, who are attracted by the employment opportunities they believe the city can offers. It is estimated that about 47% of the population residing in the city is immigrant (INE 2009) and therefore finding formal
employment today has become an illusion for many. The city has been receiving a lot of people but no new infrastructures, formal economic activities or new jobs were created. This situation is further aggravated today because many commercial activities and industrial factories closed down (Araújo, 2005:219). Currently, due to the shortage of formal employment, a large portion of the economically active population is engaged in the informal economy. The term “informal economy” became commonplace in the 1970s in reference to activities carried outside public and private organizations and came about in response to increased self-employment and casual work in Third World cities (Hart, 1973). In Mozambique, the self-employed, non-wage earning, and unemployed populations are very high. The first national survey on the informal sector carried out in 2004 revealed that 10,191,800 people or 75.2% of the economically active population worked in the informal sector while only 7.9% had formal employment (INE, 2005). In the case of Nampula province, only 4.2% of the population engaged in formal activities and 79% (1,852,400) of the labour force work for the informal sector (77,500) (INE, 2005). This survey classifies informal economy as the set of activities characterized by low level of organization, limited or no division between labour and capital; and labour relations usually based on occasional collaboration, family relations or friendship rather than formal contracts (INE, 2005:13).

In this survey, agriculture appears as the informal sector that engages the largest number of the population (94.3%), mainly in rural areas. However, also the so-called “urban peasants” engage in family farming and sale the agricultural surplus in the informal markets. This informal activity is mainly developed by people who continued to use the knowledge, experience and technology from their areas of origin. These peasants have around their house in the urban area, small parcels with diversified crops—vegetables, manioc, corn and fruit trees (Araújo, 2005:220). Despite agriculture, in the city of Nampula, the vast majority of the working population is engaged in street and market vending, in the provision of numerous services like transporting people or/and goods, and other forms of jobs that do not entail any formal contractual agreement such as housework. Young people constitute the largest informal labour force. As many young people complete secondary school and university degrees but cannot find jobs, many young people are pulled into the already overcrowded informal sector (Honwana, 2013). Motorcycle and bicycle taxis are one of the most important activities played by the young man in the city. The amount of motorbikes and bicycles that circulates in the city does not go unnoticed to
anyone who visits the area. There is a preference for motorbikes and bicycle compared to the mini-buses public transport because, as people say, they are quicker, cheaper and easy to find. In all corners of the city, there are several motorcycle and bicycle waiting for customers. Public and private institutions represent formal workplaces but the access to those positions is limited to the vast majority of young people who often do not have sufficient qualifications to fill such positions. Moreover, the general perception is that in order to be hired one needs a patron, a “godfather” or money to bribe. Because of this, many young people, even if qualified, do not apply for the available positions because they think that having no money they will not get there.

Retail trade, very often located along the main avenues of the city, is developed by young people who sell all kinds of goods: clothes, briefcases, shoes, cell phone airtime, tomatoes, onions, etc. In addition to the street vendors, informal trade is carried out in the main markets where one can find different products such as imported, agricultural, manufactured, processed and fresh goods. Mercado Central, 25 de Junho (better known as Matadouro), Waresta, Cavalaria and Beleneses are the main and the busiest markets of the city and all serve the surrounding areas.

In terms of gender, the female presence in the informal economy is very low compared to other provinces of the country (Tvedten, 2009). Usually, women sell from their home and at the 25 de Junho market, perhaps because it is inside of a working class neighbourhood, Muhala. Young people from the coastal districts—Ilha de Moçambique, Angoche, Moma—are the most experienced in commerce due to the long tradition of trade and commercial exchanges with the Arab, Persian and Indian Ocean communities that have marked for centuries the history of those spaces. Makhuwa men from the inland districts such as Namapa, Rapale, Ribawe, Murrupula, Moma and Mecuburi are more involved in informal street commerce or are employed as guards in private houses, albeit in smaller numbers. Immigrants, mostly from northern Zambézia, known and self-identifying as Makhuwa-Lomwes, are mainly involved in domestic work.

Another segment of the immigrant population in the city consists of men and women from the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa countries. Escaping from the political and economic crises they settled in the city of Nampula as refugees. This group is mainly composed of Somali, Burundian, Ethiopian, Tanzanian and Nigerian people. They are involved in commercial activities, and own a large number of clothing stores; they also dominate the markets of the
household appliances and car. As previously indicated, this group of immigrants comes mainly from the Maratane Refugee Center, which is about 25 km from Nampula city. In recent years the centre has faced the problem of fleeing refugees. Some of these settle in the Nampula but most of them migrate to South Africa, making the centre a mere transit site (Wetimane, 2012). A report from Jornal Noticias,\(^5\) a local newspaper, questioned why people with refugee status instead of staying in the reception centre go to the city and rent residences, build houses, buildings, warehouses, stores and other infrastructures? A possible answer to this question is that the Mozambican legislation on refugees provides two possibilities. The first one is to be housed in a government-sponsored centre; the second is to integrate with the community (de Sa Consolo, 2015). This last option seems to be the one followed by many refugees in the city of Nampula.

**Nampula: An Islamic province**

Silva (2010) points out that the Islamic presence on the Eastern coast of Africa dates back to the 7th century when Arab and Persian traders and travellers settled in Sofala, Quíloa and Pemba with the aim of trading with people from the coast and with Arabia and India. Bonate (2010) argues that the archaeological evidence show that at the midst of 7th century the Eastern coastal zone of Mozambique was part of Swahili world where people usually shared ideas and practices of Islam. Arabs, Persians and Indians in the East Coast enabled the establishment of a solid commercial network between East Africa and Asia known as the Swahili trading system. It was a Muslim-dominated system that traded in gold, ivory, and involved relations between various East African cities\(^6\) with Comoros, Madagascar, Socotorá, Mecca, Yemen, Oman, Persia, India, Ceylon, Indonesia and China (Silva, 2010: 35). These trade relations also involved religious, customs, languages and technologies exchanges. These coastal cities were therefore formed by these interactions (Silva, 2010). Up until the 15th century, the Islamic presence in Mozambique was located along the coast, especially in Mozambique Island, Ilha de Moçambique, and Angoche. At the end of the 19th century, Islam spread inland, ceasing to be a purely coastal phenomenon. This was due to the frequent marriage between Swahili men and local women.


\(^6\) African cities like Sofala, Angoche, Moçambique, Quíloa, Mafia, Pemba, Mombaça, Gedi, Melinde, Manda, Lumu, Pate, Faza Brava, Merca e Mogadíxo (Silva, 2010).
which allowed the merging of Islam and matrilineal ideology (Trentini, 2016:79), as well as to the political and economic relations between the coast and hinterland as a result of the slave trade. Both the coastal and hinterland social formations developed strategies to ensure the flow of slaves from the hinterland to the coast. This commercial coastal-inland relationship also influenced the spread of Islam to the hinterland (Bonate, 2010; Trentini, 2016). Furthermore, most of Makhuwa people (inland African population) adhered to Islamic religion to escape slavery (Trentini, 2016).

Before the Portuguese colonisation, Islam in the northern coast of Mozambique was understood as a “regional Swahili tradition, incorporating African culture and the influences of the Western Indian Ocean regions” (Bonate, 2010:575). During this time, the main actors of Islam were the local people, a local leadership based on kinship and the Mwalimu traditional authority. Mwalimu was considered the main source of traditional (spiritual and ritual) knowledge. Because of the Mwalimu influence, in the nineteenth-century the northern Mozambique Islam was, therefore, developed into a “walimu style of Islam” (Bonate, 2009:276). The abolition of slavery in 1836 led to the economic recession of the coastal area and the emergence of coastal migration to the city of Nampula, which allowed continuous expansion of Islam to the hinterland (Trentini, 2016:81). During this period, the coastal Muslim who settled in the city, brought the Sufi Islam with them. As a result, two new Sufi orders came up in northern Mozambique: Shadhuliyya Yashrutiyyain 1897 and Qadririyyain 1905 (Trentini, 2016; Bonate, 2006; 2009; 2010). Bonate (2010) explains that this Islam was not attached to African clans neither integrated into kinship systems or religion networks. These two new groups claimed a religious authority which so far had been in the hands of the African leadership. Moreover, these two new orders had a changing agenda that aimed at correcting the local Islam and then implant an orthodox version of it. The new orders tried to weaken the matrilineal ideology by eliminating the use of traditional practices such as “dance societies, drumming, possession rituals and ancestor cults, all on behalf of the Islamic sharia law” (Trentini, 2016:81). They tried to transform matrilineal descent patterns into the patrilinear Islamic one. Notwithstanding the strong opposition of African population and Portuguese colonial rule, matrilinearity was maintained. In fact, as pointed out by Bonate (2017), the coexistence between Islam and matrilinearity is a paradox.

7 The slave trade in Mozambique reached its peak in the 18th and 19th century (Zonta, 2012)
given the patriarchal feature of Islam. But this coexistence was only possible because the Portuguese regime incorporated the local chiefs in their system of administration to rule according to local customs and traditions. This attitude, to some extent, safeguarded matrilinearity because the local chiefs were responsible for the application of local traditions and customs (Bonate, 2017:443). This positions adopted by the colonial rulers obliged Muslim chiefs influenced by the *tariqa*-based Islamic ideology to uphold matrilinearity even if they found it discordant with their religious believes (Bonate, 2010:280-281).

During the colonial period, the Portuguese people conceived Islam from northern Mozambique as “African” or “Black Islam” (Bonate, 2010: 284) as for them Africans were receivers of foreign and imposed Islam and not important actors of Islam (Bonate, 2010). At the last stage of Portuguese colonialism, Sufi orders were questioned by the emergence of a reformist group of Muslim self-designated *Wahhabis*. This group was composed by Muslim from India, Saud Arabia and Pakistan with high degree in Islam studies (Trentini, 2016). For the *Wahhabis*, Sufi leaders were incompetent and with limited training to take the right decisions about Islam (Bonate, 2009). After Mozambique’ independence in 1975, Muslims created a national Muslim organization known as “the Islamic Council”. But, as some of the Muslims, particularly those linked to the Sufism, were not happy with Aboobacar Ismael Mangira\(^8\) as the coordinator they created “the Islamic Congress” in 1983. There were significant differences between these two organizations. While the council allowed groups and local associations to be autonomous, the Islamic council centralized and controlled all its institutions and members (Bonate, 2009). Today, these two institutions are still operating in the country. The council is more active in the south of the country (particularly in Maputo) and the Congress is well represented in the northern Mozambique (especially in Nampula).

Currently, the Islamic presence is very strong in the north of the country especially in Cabo Delgado, Zambézia and Nampula provinces and even in the Niassa province (Arnfred, 2015: 206). In Mozambique as in other parts of Africa, Islam was easily accepted by local communities due to its malleable characteristics. Islam has always sought to adapt itself to the mentality and customs of the people to which it was directed (Bouene, 2004; Arnfred, 2015). Islam was more

\(^8\) Aboobacar Ismael Mangira was the main face of the reformist movement *Wahhabis* (Arnfred, 2015:208).
flexible in adapting to the local customs and for that reason some African societies saw correspondences between their institutions and those of Islam. Polygamy, for example, is common in many African societies and also accepted by Islam. As noted by Arnfred (2015), unlike the Catholic missions, Islam did not ask its new believers to abandon their customs but it adjusted to them:

“Islam did not condemn the initiation rituals. In fact, the rites have been Islamised (both the female and the masculine initiation rites), seemingly without major changes. The rituals and the related custom of labia elongation, making tattoos or wearing beads, remained unchanged”

This is one of the reasons why up to the present days the initiation rites are consistently carried out in the North but not in the South of the country, which is conversely mainly Christianized. The Islam managed to coexist with local customs ensuring their survival over time.

The agents through whom Islam was disseminated were also critical to its wide acceptance. While Islam used locally established and respected men, with a family and flourishing economic activities, the Catholic Church had missionaries coming from the European continent with a significant cultural difference (Bouene, 2004). This was a crucial factor because seeing people of the same colour, who spoke the same language, belonged to the same social background, and who shared the same cultural habits, leading the religious services contributed to making the Islamic phenomenon more attractive locally (Bouene, 2004: 122). Islam had great popularity, also because it was seen as a threat to the Portuguese colonial regime. Local leaders saw Islam as a modernizing agent as it meant literacy and the possibility of being educated (Arnfred, 2015: 207). In fact, one of the characteristics of the mosques was that they also functioned as schools enabling their members to learn the Koran and Arabic.

At the time of Independence, about 15% of the Mozambican population declared to be Muslim, that is to say one millions of people were divided into the two streams, the African Islam and the Asian Islam. The former is predominant in the North especially among the Makhluwa and the Ajaua ethnic groups, while the latter is more predominant in the South, especially in the cities of

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9“O islão não condenava os rituais de iniciação. Na verdade, os ritos foram islamizados (tanto os femeninos quanto os masculinos), aparentemente sem fazer nenhuma mudança, quer seja nos rituais eles próprios ou, no caso das mulheres, no costume relacionado de estender os lábios vaginais, fazer tatuações ou usar miçangas” (Mytraslation).
Maputo and Inhambane (Bouene, 2004: 125). Currently, in the Nampula province, the largest Islamic presence is found on the coast. According to INE (2007), 90.3% of the population of Ilha de Moçambique district is Muslim. As we move into the province, the Islamic presence decreases. In the city of Nampula, 40% of the population is Muslim. The Direcção dos Assuntos Religiosos do Ministério de Justiça (Directorate of the Religious Affairs of the Ministry of Justice) in 1998 counted approximately 1,266 mosques in the Nampula province, mainly in the city of Nampula, Nacala Porto, Ilha de Moçambique and in the Districts of Angoche, Moma and Memba (Silva 2010). Surely, today this number has grown.

**Makhuwa from the north: a matrilineal society**

The *Makhuwa* or *Makhuwa-Lomwe*\(^{10}\) is an ethnic term that indicated people originating from Eastern and Central Africa who have settled through voluntary, ancient migrations in Mozambique, Tanzania and Malawi. The entirety of the Nampula province is occupied by the *Makhuwa* ethnic group, which is the largest ethnic group in Mozambique and has an estimated population of 5 million, about 30% of the country’s population (Espino, 2002). As shown in figure 2, this group occupies the area in the North of Mozambique of about 300,000 km\(^2\) which covers, in addition to the Nampula province, the southern Cabo Delgado province, the eastern Niassa province and northern Zambézia province (Martinez, 1987: 37).

*eMakhuwa* language speakers are also distributed in neighbouring countries such as Tanzania, Malawi and in some islands in the Indian Ocean (Madagascar, Comoros, Seychelles and Mauritius), as a result of a migration processes occurred between the last quarter of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, as well as the slave trade during between the 17th and 19th centuries (Martinez, 1987; Medeiros, 2007).

The word *Makhuwa* had until the 20th century a pejorative and even insulting meaning, being used by coastal Muslim people to mean “rude, savage and backward people” (Medeiros, 2007:61). Trentini (2016) places the term *Makhuwa* as originating in the context of slavery. She

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\(^{10}\) The *Makhuwa* and *Lomwe* have sometimes been considered as the same ethno-cultural entity and sometimes as two different entities (Medeiros, 2007: 55). In this work I consider *Makhuwa-Lomwe* group as same ethnic group.
explains how the population of Nampula was roughly divided into two main groups: the 
Makhuwa of the inland, generally farmers and Christians and the Amaka,\textsuperscript{11} designated term for the Muslim population coming from the coast. While the Amaka were civilized and slave traders, the term Makhuwa was used to call people living in the bush, which were no longer slaves and could be civilized (Trentini, 2016:72).\textsuperscript{12} The ethnic connotation of the term Makhuwa is relatively new; it is historically located between the nineteenth and twentieth century’s. Medeiros (2007) shows that in the past there was no Makhuwa ethnicity but communities with similar social status lived in the vast geographical space of northern Mozambique (Medeiros, 2007:61).

Several subgroups emerged in the Makhuwa territory, some with a different history but with many cultural elements in common. As indicated by Martínez (1987), the various subgroups that make up the Makhuwa group share an original unity insofar as they all associate their emergence with Mount Namuali, and a linguistic unity, for although they speak different dialects. These languages are like branches of the same tree—the eEmakhuwa language (Martínez, 1987: 38). According to Martínez’s classification (1987: 35) the main Makhuwa ethnic subgroups are the following:

1. The Makhuwa of the hinterland or Emakhuwa who are scattered in the districts of Mucuburi, Muecate, Meconta, Murrupula, Mogovalas, Ribawe and Lalawa, in the province of Nampula; Mecanhelas, Cuamba, Maua, Nipepe, Pebane, and Metarica, in the province of Niassa;

2. The Makhuwa-Meto or Emeto, who are spread over the districts of Montepuez, Balana, Namumo, Pemba, Ancuabe, Quissanga, Meluco, Macomia and Mocimba da Praia, in Cabo Delgado province and in the districts of Marrupa and Maua in the province of Niassa;

\textsuperscript{11}Local version of Mecca. It was a term that served to differentiate the Muslim coastal population from that of the countryside (Trentini, 2016: 72).

\textsuperscript{12} The word derives from the term Nikuwa which means bush.
3. The Makhuwa-Lomwe or Elomwe who are located in the districts of Gurue, Gilé, Alto Molocue and Ile in the province of Zambezia, the districts of Malema, Ribawe and Moma in the province of Nampula, and in Mecanhelas in the province of Niassa.

Traditionally, the Makhuwa ethnicity is characterized by a matrilineal descent system (Arnfred, 2015). Scholars explain that before the Mozambican independence one of the distinctive features of this matrilineal system was the matrilocal marriage, which stipulated that usually with marriage the husband would move to take residence in the home of his in-laws, working on their land and developing a range of manual activities to please his wife’s relatives (kin). The tasks and responsibilities of the new husband consisted of “clearing the bush for new fields, preparing
existing fields for cultivation, planting, building and repairing houses, and weaving baskets, mats and vessels for holding water or beer” (Lovett, 1997: 173). This was called the “bride service,” that is, the work for the compensation of the daughter who is given in marriage (Arnfred, 2001: 27). Differently to what used to happen in patrilineal contexts, like in the south of the country, where a man was supposed to pay the lobola—conferring him a set of rights in relation to his children and wife—the bride service does not give to the husband any of these rights (Arnfred, 2001: 27). Conversely, in the matrilineal system it was man who was evaluated to ascertain whether he was a good worker. This assessment also extended to his procreative capacity, since a man is expected to give offspring to the women’s clan. Arnfred (2015) clarify that in the matrilineal context:

“What [was] tested on the night of the wedding is not the virginity of the woman, but the virility and the fertility of the man: the old women keeps an eye on the young man’s performance in bed, and she will gather some of his semen, examining it to verify if it will provide a good prospect for procreation (Arnfred, 2015: 194).”

After being held in his in-laws home and especially if a child is born, the man could be excused to go live with the woman on her own land but only upon the approval of the mother-in-law. For this reason, Lovett (1997) argues that in the matrilineal context the relationship between a man and his mother-in-law is socially and hierarchically unbalanced as the mother-in-law exerts considerable power over her daughter’s husband. As she explains “not only did they have access to and profit from these man’s labour, but, because they ultimately could refuse to allow their sons-in-law to leave with their families for their own villages, women also had the capability to mould male behaviour” (Lovett, 1997:174).

Another important feature of the Makhuwa system is that the children of the marriage belong to the maternal clan, and the paternal authority is entrusted to the maternal uncle instead of the biological father. The husband had very little control over the wife and her children; the wife’s brother was the guardian of her sister and her children in all social and judicial matters (Phiri, 1983: 259; Kishindo, 1994: 63). Reproductive decisions were often controlled by woman’s husband and her brother, who fulfils the role of guardian in her life (Bauw, 2014: 437). In this
system, the mother together with her brothers and sisters guarantees ownership and succession rights to her children. For instance, in the case of divorce or death of the husband, the woman always returns to her relatives and it will be up to her brother to guarantee her subsistence (Phiri, 1983).

Similarly to other matrilineal groups such as the Chewa and the Yao from Zambia (Brantley, 1997; Phiri, 1983) and the Lakeside Tonga of Malawi (Lovett, 1997), the matrilineal Makhuwa system has undergone transformations over time. For instance, colonial wage labour determined the abandon of the matrilocal residence while new patterns of virilocality appeared. Medeiros (2007) argues that during colonial times in the Zambézia and the Nampula provinces there was a strong migratory flow linked to the sugar cane, sisal and tea plantations and to the constructions of roads and railways in Beira, Nacala and Lourenço Marques. The monetarisation of the peasantry who employed in waged labour empowered men who gained authority over their own children and wife. Medeiros (2007) explain that this lead to the end of the practice of bride service and to the emergence of virilocal marriages. A case study carried out recently by Osório (2006) in Nampula province precisely in the districts of Angoche, Mugovolas and Nampula-Rapale concluded that almost all the marriages were no longer matrilocal, the couples resided in the husband’s land or in so-called “neutral zones” such as the city of Nampula (Osório, 2006:1). My respondents also confirmed this trend by stating that in Nampula province marriages tend to be more virilocal with a few exceptions in some districts.

“In Nampula when a man gets married he takes the woman to his house. It is always the woman who moves to the man’s house and not the other way around.”[13]

“In the city, the most common is the girl being taken to the house of the boy or his parents. But in the districts of Namitiwe, Mecubure e Murrupula the rule is that the husband must live in the courtyard of the in-laws for at least 3 to 6 months to be watched.”[14]

[13] Interview with Anastacia, 17 February 2017
[14] Interview with Abudo, 19 April 2017
However, this trend of changes is more visible in urban centres. Rural areas, more conservative, tend to keep traditional habits unchanged. For example, my respondents, married domestic servants from Alta Zambézia said that when they decided to look for a job in the city they had to leave their wives at their in-laws homes where they also lived, meaning that in many rural areas matrilocal marriages are still a reality.

As in the colonial era, nowadays many young people attracted by rapid urbanization and job opportunities supposedly available in the cities, migrate to the city of Nampula to find work and improve their living conditions. Husbands can no longer fulfil their obligation to work in their in-laws as a “payment” for their spouse, because they leave the city. As Brantley (1997) puts it in relation to the Bemba group from Zambia, allowing young people to go for migrant work has resulted in the cessation of the payment of the bride service and the husbands began to give small payments for the brides. This also appears to be happening in Nampula where there have been reports of payment of monetary amounts as compensation by the bride. One of my respondents even referred to this as lobola, a term very usual in patrilinear settings to mean bride wealth.

“The day the man goes to ask to the woman’s father or uncle in marriage, it is stipulating the lobola money to be paid by man. It is a symbolic amount range from 500 Mt [R100] up to 3000 Mt [R600].”15

The reference to the term “symbolic amount” aims at differentiating this practice from the lobola that is characteristic in the patrilinear contexts in which the amounts paid could be quite high and the rights attributed to the man are significant (Arnfred, 200: 26). In Nampula, the compensation paid in cash does not guarantee the father’s right over the children who continue to belong to the mother's family. Colonial wage labour promoted of values of the nuclear family (Arnfred, 2015) to the detriment of extended family structures, by giving power over wives and children to me and in so doing diminishing the interferences from relatives and the role of the maternal uncle (Medeiros, 2007). If in the past, the responsibility for the sister's children was attributed to the maternal uncle, now the biological father has increased responsibilities for the care of his own children. Traditionally the maternal uncle’s would be the one deciding on matters related to the

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15 Interview with Momade, 22 April 2017
initiation rites, marriage schooling, and general financial matters (Phiri, 1983:273). Currently, fathers are perceived as responsible for these kinds of expenses.

As mentioned before, Islam is a very influential religion in Nampula, especially in coastal regions and its prescribed norms have with time influenced the matrilineal system. Islam “defines kinship patrilinearly and put men at the apex of power relations within families as well as the wider society, but also provide detailed legal injunctions on inheritance and the rearing of children” (Bonate, 2017:441). This has also influenced the gradual loss of power of the maternal uncles. The Islam religion has always been hostile to the non-exercise of men’s power over wives and children and so the teachings of Muslim schools emphasized the need for husband’s authority over his wife and children. Nevertheless, here again, we should not generalize. Especially in the villages, the maternal uncle’s authority still has an important role. Some of my young informants indicated that in their marriages the wife’s uncle was the figure who still gave the approval for the union:

“When I wanted to get married I first talked to my uncle, my mother’s brother, and he went to my wife’s parents to tell them about my intention. Her parents said they would still tell her uncle about the decision.”16

“When a young man wants to get married, he will talk to the girl’s maternal uncle. He is the elder brother of the mother and it is him who is responsible for the daughter of the sister.”17

These testimonies show that the authority of the uncle is not completely lost. In some families, the uncle still has some decision-making power on the nieces, the sister’s daughters. My fieldwork also shows that for the initiation ceremonies, parents cannot do without the authorization of the maternal uncle. The same can be said of the apparent loss of power of the maternal family. It is true that the matrilineal system has transformed but it is also true that the maternal extended family remains a crucial point of reference in the lives of Makhuwa people. Some of my respondents when asked about who their family members were, of

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16 Interview with Abudo, 19 April 2017.
17 Interview with Momade, 22 April 2017.
course referring categorically to the maternal relatives. They were raised knowing that their families were those on their mothers. The children continue to belong to the woman’s family. This is why in the case of divorce; the custody of the children is not negotiated as it is implicit that it is of the mother. Crehan (1997: 222) noted that as in matrilinear setting woman could leave the husband and take her children with her since the husband’s power is limited. Like in other matrilinear groups in Nampula, divorces are frequent. Small arguments or simple claims of “being tired” are plausible reasons for the dissolution of weddings (Arnaldo, 2002). In Nampula, divorce is perceived as something natural. It is normal that a woman marries several times over the course of her life.

The matrilinear system in northern Mozambique is undergoing a gradual transformation mainly due to urbanizations processes, however in the rural areas, the values of matrilinearity remains strong. My findings corroborate with Bonate’s conclusion that “matrilinearity is still alive among Muslim communities of northern Mozambique despite post-colonial attempts to modernise, secularise and even eliminated its ideals and practices” (Bonate, 2017: 447).
Domesticity is a historic construction in Southern Africa that derives from the encounter of African societies with Europeans (Hansen, 1990). It is a phenomenon that has been analysed from historical and economical point of views, focusing on aspects related to race, class and gender. Several studies conducted on domesticity in colonial Africa—Tanzania (Bujra 1992), Southern Rhodesia (Schmidt, 1992), Zambia (Hansen, 1990) and Mozambique (Penvenne, 1995; Sheldon, 1992; Zamparoni, 1999)—demonstrate how European colonial authorities had a common vision of domestic work. These studies illustrate how despite the fact that Western ideology assigned household chores to women, men largely dominated the domestic work sector in the colonies. African women were supposed to stay in rural areas, and only men were considered fit to work in the cities.

In Mozambique, colonial authorities entrusted the responsibility of women’s education to the Catholic missions. Women were taught in schools how to sew, cook and care for the children. It was in the interest of the colonial authorities that women would remain in the rural areas where they would work for the reproduction of the labour force; but it was also in the interests of African men that women would not travel to the cities. In this regard, Schmidt states that:

“African men objected to the departure of their daughters from the rural areas, where they were so crucial to agricultural production and lineage reproduction. Male alders feared losing control over young women, their marriages, their bride wealth, and their labour (Schmidt, 1992: 222).”

In addition to being the labour force in agriculture, women symbolically represented a precious commodity for men. Their journey to the city could culminate in sexual intercourse with men and this would reduce the value of the bride price. The few women who were employed in paid jobs were normally not married or divorced, or were women who were not in a position to comply with the activities of the household. A survey conducted in the 1950s in a cashew factory showed that of 1,308 women who were employed, only 9 were legally married. Most of them
lived without a man, in an illegal marriage or in a customary relationship (Sheldon, 1992: 294). Normally, a woman received half of the man’s wage. Law wages were one of the reasons that discouraged African women to enter the domestic labour sector. The following table from Penvenne’s work (1995: 143) captures this landscape from the 1940s to the 1960s:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>8.832</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>14 to 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>9.816</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>14 to 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>14.792</td>
<td>4.692</td>
<td>3 to 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Registered Domestic Servants in Lourenço Marques District 1940-1960.

The domestic work sector was the last preferred option for women. In colonial Mozambique there were very few job alternatives; women were employed in the tobacco industry and in the cashew processing. Women preferred to work in the factories rather than being domestic workers because the remuneration was regular and overtime was remunerated.

Another cause that discouraged women to participate in this sector was the preference of white mistresses for male employees. European women accused African women to be lazy and to cause problems within the households. They were also said to be slow in learning. The mistresses feared that their husbands would get involved in sexual relationships with black women—a fear that was also shared by black men who were equally reluctant to accept that their daughters or wives would be employed as domestic worker. On the other hand, the men who entered the domestic service preferred it because it was easily accessible and was a platform to acquire at a later stage other better-paid jobs or to migrate to South African mines, especially in the case of southern Mozambique (Penvenne, 1995). Xibalo, forced labour, was pointed at as another major cause for the massive influx of young people into the domestic work sector. According to the 1899 labour law, all natives between 14 and 60 years had a moral obligation to work for three to six months as indentured labourers. Young natives were recruited into forced labour in cities; those young people who could not have a contract to work in South African mines, took refuge becoming domestic workers.
This situation changed after the independence of the country in 1975. The newly installed government adopted a socialist orientation and sought to distance from the policies enforced by the colonial government. Engaged in building a modern society, FRELIMO government operated by setting measures that were aimed at giving greater empowerment to women. According to the socialist ideology women that suffered from social exclusion during colonialism, were now to be emancipated by waged work, as they were offered the same opportunities than men in the job market. The result was that women started to have access to waged jobs. The civil war erupted soon after independence and it increased the migration of women from the countryside to the cities. Women and their families escaped from the conflict zones and their presence and participation in the labour increased in the informal and formal economies. After 1980s women’s presence in the service sector grew mainly due to the economic liberalisation that took place in those years. Today women actively participate in the labour market, with particular emphasis on the informal areas—the markets and the street sales—as well as in the domestic work sector. New black employers prefer to hire women rather than men as maids (Castelo-Branco, 2013; Chipenembe, 2010). For instance, in Maputo, the largest economic centre in the South, in 2007 there were about 35,000 women against 5,000 men employed as domestic workers (INE, 2007).

This trend was later followed by other countries outside Europe such as Latin America, China, India and Southern Africa where domestic work became almost exclusively female (Hansen 1986). In Southern Africa, the feminization of domestic labour is a post-independence phenomenon. For example, in countries such as Zimbabwe (Pape, 1993); Swaziland (Miles, 1999) or South Africa (Le Roux, 1999, Cock, 1998), domestic work came to be mostly exercised by women with the end of colonial regimes. However, as Bujra remarks (2000), this trend cannot be generalized. Bujra (2000) argues that the assumption that servants are everywhere women is perceived to some extent as a logical extension of the domestic role of women. However, these assumptions do not precede when we look at Zambia (Hamsen, 1986a; 1986b; 1990) and Tanzania (Bujra, 2000). These are examples that show how even after the end of the colonial regimes, men continued to dominate the domestic work sector. As in these two countries, in Mozambique especially in the city of Nampula, wage domestic work continues to be exercised.
by men as it was in colonial time. The feminization of the domestic work is characteristic of the southern and central parts of Mozambique.

The Mozambican domestic work legislation defines paid domestic work as one that is provided on a regular basis to a household, comprising activities of food preparation, washing and treatment of clothes, cleaning and tidying of the house, care to children, elderly and sick, gardening, care of domestic animals and guard services (Boletim da Republica, 2008: 385). Many studies on domestic work highlight the precariousness of this job. For instance, Gorban (2012) points out that in Argentina, servants are mostly poor and undocumented migrants, with very low level of education. They work in precarious conditions and do not enjoy the same rights as other workers. Similarly, Sales & Santana (2003) describe that the Brazilian servants work for long hours per day and their work is heavy. They also say that this job is mainly occupied by Afro-descendants, people with low levels of school education. Grant (1997) argues that in South Africa domestic work has the worst working conditions. The rates of physical and economic abuse are high and the labour law offers little protection.

In Mozambique, the scarce existing literature (Chipenembe, 2010; Castel Branco, 2013) describes domestic work as one of the most precarious jobs. There are no official data on the exact number of domestic workers in the city of Nampula. Information provided by the Secretário Geral do Sindicato dos Empregados Domésticos de Nampula (General Secretary of the Domestic Workers Union of Nampula) indicates that in the city of Nampula there are about 16000 domestic workers distributed among the various categories, coming mainly from Gurue, Ile and Alto Molócue districts (Alta Zambezia) and Rapale and Namapa districts (Nampula Province).

Based on data from semi-structured interviews, informal conversations and direct observation, I present the main features of the domestic labour sector in the city of Nampula describing the process through which young people look and find jobs. I provide information on the nature of the work they perform, the working conditions, and the relationship with their employers and the role of the Nampula domestic work association.

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18 In the southern and central regions of the country is women who mainly work as servants.
Immigrant people

The issue of immigration has been connected to the phenomenon of domestic work in several studies (Bartolomei 2010; Moya 2007; Scrinzi 2010, Sarti & Scrinzi, 2010; Ray 2000). These studies emphasize that domesticity in many European and African countries is associated with international and domestic migration, and this is why domestic servants are mainly persons who have immigrated and are not considered as “locals”. This phenomenon, although in a more local dimension, is what characterises the domestic work in Nampula; domestic worker mainly come from the inner districts of the province of Nampula and especially from the region of Alta Zambézia. The Alta Zambézia region is constituted by the districts of Gurue, Alto Molócue, Ile, Lugela and Gilé, and its population belongs to the Makhuwa-Lomwe group which is considered a subgroup of the Makhuwa group—which main language is the eLomwe, a variation of eMakhuwa. As indicated above, under the Makhuwa term several other ethnic denominations are brought together. These ethnic subgroups were considered as presenting relatively autonomous cultural features and specific patterns of social organization. These perceived differences exist still today in terms of ethos, moral values and conduct. Young Lomwe people tend to distance themselves from the Makhuwa from Nampula city, which are stereotyped as disrespectful, treacherous—especially the women—, lazy—especially the men—and easily lured by money. On the other hand, the Makhuwa people see themselves as a superior to the Lomwe. Differences in class, professions, power—employers and employees—and financial availability, provenance—rural/urban divide—clearly perpetuate and aliment these perceived ethnic differences.

The district of Gurue, Alto Molócue and Ile are the regions from where many of the young people employed as domestic workers in Nampula come from. In these districts farming is the base of the family economy. Maize, cassava, beans, peanuts and sweet potatoes are the main cultivated crops. Agriculture depends on rain and this determines conditions with high risk of loss due to the low storage capacity (INE 2011). The most common type of housing in these districts is the hut with a pavement made by terra batida, soil and the roof made of grass or thatch; the walls are sustained by sticks and mud. Many areas still do not have electricity; the bicycle is the main means of transportation; houses do not have sanitary facilities and running
water which is collected in wells or water boreholes. These are villages marked by high levels of poverty.

![Image of Alta Zambezia Region](https://etd.uwc.ac.za)

**Figure 3: Alta Zambezia Region (Map produced by Cesar Mahumane)**

The precarious conditions of these districts, similar to many other rural areas of Mozambique, are considered by some scholars as one of the main causes for the internal migratory flows. As pointed out by Araújo (2003), conjectural factors such as the liberation armed struggle, the civil war and natural calamities have made the rural environment undesirable and the urban spaces more attractive. Patricio (2016) also argues that the exodus rural is result of economic asymmetries between the countryside and the city. Disadvantaged rural conditions—lack of infrastructures—lead to an increase in migratory levels. Rural-urban migration then is an individual and collective response to limited local resources, and individual dissatisfaction (Graves & Graves 1974).

Generally, men from Alta Zambézia aged between 15 to 25 years old leave their districts and move to the city of Nampula hoping to find a stable and paid job to help their families. Nampula is the closest city from the Zambézia and the domestic work is the easiest employment these young people can find. Since most of them have low qualifications and education, their options
are limited. To be a servant does not require any school qualifications or documents such as a curriculum vitae or an ID which many of them do not even have. One of my informants explained the employment process as following:

“When we get to the city, we look for the quintal job [housework] because it is a job that does not need a school to be learned; there is no need of an interview to show that I know how to wash dishes or that I can cook. For us, it is the easiest activity to begin with because what happens is that each family has its own way of life and we just have to adjust to that way of living and do the jobs according to what the family demands. This makes it a very easy job to do.”

*Lomwe* young people also leave their districts because it is culturally expected that from when a boy turns 15 years old he should start his own life by distancing himself from his parents. The boy should build his own house (even a room in the parents’ yard) and be able to provide for himself and prepare to have a wife. As in Alta Zambézia people’s livelihoods depend on subsistence agriculture, which is only enough to provide food but not enough to cover other needs. In the city, youngsters have the possibility to buy better clothes and shoes, cell phones and save money. Benjamim explained:

“I’m here in the city because we don’t have much to do at home; our life there is just about going to the fields. We take a lot of time to have money; the harvest is only once a year. To have clothes to wear we have to wait for a year, our biggest concern is what to wear. We prefer to come here [to Nampula] because it is easy and the transport does not cost as much money as in other places.”

Given this, many young people, especially those already married migrate to the city hoping that in 6 months or a year, they will be able to save enough money and buy goods such as dishes, pots, chairs, radio and, the most desirable, a bike. But, given the low wages, saving money is very hard, and young people tend to stay longer in the city. In the city, they work as domestic servants and when they manage to get what they came for, they just return back to their villages.

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19 Interview with Lazaro, 26 April 2017.
20 Interview with Benjamin, 20 April 2017.
If they need to acquire other goods or to get more money to perform a ceremony, they may return to the city and work again as domestic workers. There are also young people who go to the city seeking to continue their studies and maybe getting a good job. In the districts there are only primary schools and many parents are unable to enrol their children in schools of subsequent levels either because of the lack of money or because they do not exist locally. They hope that by getting a job during the day they could attend school at night. Many of these young people believe that completing secondary education level would enable them to get better jobs in the future. For these people, domestic work is just the starting point.

Predominantly, the employers prefer to hire the Zambezian servants instead of Makhuwa one, because, according to them, they are humble, flexible and willing to learn. But this preference seems to be associated with wage bargaining power. It is the employer who determines the wage and usually they are very low. Ussene, a servant noted that:

> “Many bosses prefer us from Zambézia because they know that even if we don’t get well paid we will not leave because we have nowhere to go, we have no family here. Usually they mistreat the Lomwe people and pay almost nothing. 1000 Mt [R200] or 1200 Mt[R240]; The Makhuwa man cannot stand to work for 1000 Mt and still be humiliated. He would instead prefer to quit the job, because he has where to go, he has his family and his mother here. But we can’t do it! When you ask the boss to raise your salary he replies: if you want to go, go, there are a lot of people here who want to work. Where are you going to? Nowhere!”

The following 2 life stories exemplify the days of the Alta Zambézia young people. Lazaro is a 25 year old man from Gurue district where he worked on the family farm. His father died. He was used to sell part of the harvesting once a year. Seeing other young people from his community, including his older brother, going to the city and returning with several goods that did not exist in the district, Lazaro decided to try his luck in the city. His goal was to get money and help his mother and his three younger brothers. With only grade five, he travelled for the first time to Nampula in 2007. He started working as a yoghurt seller in the streets and later he found a job as a domestic worker in a household where he worked for three years. As a domestic

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21 Interview with Ussene, 23 February 2017.
worker, he took care of the laundry, washed and ironed the clothes, cooked and cleaned the house. With the salary he received, he was able to buy chairs, crockery and clothing for his mother and siblings. In 2011 he decided to return home, with the purpose of getting married and one year later, he returned to the city of Nampula. He wanted to buy goods for his new own home. In 2015 he decided to take his wife to Nampula where he still lives and works until today.

Benjamin, coming from Alto Molócue district, is a 28-year-old man. He first came to the town in 2015 with the purpose of getting money to enrol his children in school. Here he worked as a domestic worker for eight months and then he returned home. He went back again to the city in late 2016 as he needed money for his religious wedding ceremony since he was only married traditionally. In Alta Zambézia he lives with his wife in his in-laws home and the religious marriage was the condition he had to perform to leave to family house and have his own. In the city, he works as a night guard and during the day as a domestic worker in a Makhuwa household.

In both cases, the main concern of the young people is money: they need it to achieve their goals and better their everyday life. This pattern of migration is what Graves & Graves (1974:118) call the foraging type defined as being the one that “involve temporary forays into neighbouring regions in order to supplement local resources”. This migration involves people willing to work in urban areas where unskilled job opportunities are many and diverse (Graves & Graves 1974). In Nampula, this pattern of migration mainly involves men coming from other provinces. This kind of systematic movement from the village to the city has, however, consequences for both sides. As identified in the Estratégia de Desenvolvimento Rural de 2007 (2007 Rural Development Strategy), one of the most worrying aspects is the rural exodus, the “flight” of the few young professionals with work skills compromising the local development efforts. (Conselho de Ministros, 2007). As an example, this document report that in Mozambique the agricultural production levels in rural areas has decreased dramatically in the last three decades. Today only 5% of 36 million of arable land has been used for agriculture against 12,5% in 1980s. This seems to be a clear sign of “lack of hands” which systematically leave the districts.

In the city, the negative effects are visible when the employment opportunities, housing and sanitation are scarce. Attracted by urban infrastructures, many young people migrate to the city
but in many cases they do not find jobs. Lack of employment and the emergence of environmental problems are some of the main consequences of high migratory flows into cities.

 Searching for Job

When the young people coming from rural areas arrive in Nampula, the search for employment begins and it involves visiting the houses of potential employers, going from door to the door. Most of the employer I talked to said that they found their workers in this way.

“Usually hiring employees does not have a formula, it depends from house to house, but what happens is that almost every day boys and young men knock on the door looking for a job, and when someone looking for a job appears you have to evaluate him to see if you may or may not choose him.”

“Usually, they walk around the neighbourhood, looking for a place to work. If they find a house that needs them, then they discuss the salary and start working immediately.”

In addition to door-to-door strategies, employers also often use intermediaries and networks to find suitable applicants. One may ask another servant to help him find someone who is interested to work as domestic worker. Among the domestic workers there is a communication network created to help newcomers to find a job. This network also works for those people who are already employed but wish to change home.

The young immigrant people ideally stay at the city up to a year. But, sometimes they can take more time. Many times when they want to leave, they call a friend or a relative (their brothers or cousins interested to come to the city) to replace them. As turnover is common, some young immigrant people come to the city with a job which is already guaranteed. They explained this as such:

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23 Interview with Yotamo, 25 April 2017.
“My brother called me: he said come to Nampula there is a job for you. A friend of my boss wants someone to work for him.”24

“Working in the quintal is easy for us. For example, I’m here working and my boss asks me if I have a friend who wants to work as a servant. So, I start looking for people I know because I know who is available to work in backyard.”25

This kind of network involving family, friends and village neighbours is what Graves & Graves (1974) named as group-oriented strategies. According to them this happened when “migrants turn for help to other people, usually kinsmen, fellow villagers, or migrants from his own ethnic group” (Graves & Graves, 1974: 128). The support is not just about finding jobs but also in sharing available social resources. For instance, fellow immigrants can temporary offer an accommodation to one who just moved into town to live until they get their own space.

Sometimes, immigrant people have to “purchase” a job vacancy, to bribe someone in order to get a position. This is, actually a frequent practice in the city of Nampula. Several of the young people I talked to during the fieldwork said that they struggled to get a job either in the state institutions or in private companies, because they did not have money to bribe officials. Domestic workers also explained that bribing people in order to become servants is becoming to be a common practice in the city:

“I was looking for a night job (guard) because I saw that they paid better than in the quintal. Then my friend told me that I could go to a guy to ask for a job. I went to him and he asked me to pay 300 Mt [R60] so that I could have this job.”26

It seems, however, that this “purchase” system is more frequent in the case of positions as night guards. This is perhaps because this job is better paid than domestic work positions.

24 Interview with Filipe, 10 February 2017.
26 Interview with Nassone, 19 February 2017.
Working Days

The Mozambique Domestic Work Regulation (Decree No. 40/2008) stipulates that the normal effective working period cannot exceed 54 hours per week and 9 hours per day. But in practice, in Nampula, servants work for ten to twelve hours per day. The working days for many of them start early in the morning around 6 or 7am and end around 6 or 7pm. For those who work and live in their employer’s home, the situation is worse. They work for long hours and they have difficulty in separating the working time from the rest time. One employee explained this to me:

“I wake up every day at 5:00 a.m. In the morning I first sweep the yard and then boil the water for them to take a shower and have a tea when wake up. During the day I do a lot of things. I cook; I clean and fetch water and other things. I just rest after my boss comes back home, sometimes at 7pm and other days at 8pm. I have to be there to open the gate and make sure his food is hot and ready.”

This means that although the regulation stipulates 9 hours of work per day many servants end up working for longer hours. Castel-Branco (2013) points out that the Mozambican regulation requires longer working days compared to neighbouring countries. For instance, the South African legislation does not allow servants to work for more than 45 hours per week and entitles uninterrupted 36 hours to rest. In the Zimbabwean case, domestic workers enjoy 30 minutes per day of rest and have one hour for lunch (Castel-Branco, 2013: 316). The Mozambican labour regulation mandates a minimum of 30 minutes for lunch but in many cases domestic workers complained that they do not have this break time. Domestic workers also complained that they are constantly being bossed rudely and yelled by their employers. Ussene explains how difficult it has been to find time to rest during his work:

“When I start working in the morning, until the time I leave I can’t rest. It is an order after another order. Madam can’t see me sitting down, she always asks me to do something. She speaks a lot, she screams a lot. It is not easy to work with noise, it is hard!”

27 Interview with Aurélio, 20 April 2017.
28 Interview with Ussene, 23 February 2017.
In Nampula domestic workers have only one day off per week, usually Sunday. The paid annual leave, although is regulates, is something that none experiences. Some of them did not even know they were entitled to have a remunerated leave and others reported that when they leave for few days they suffer cuts on their salary. Manuel, a domestic worker explains his situation:

“I work every day from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. from Monday to Saturday. I have time off only on Sunday. It’s during this day that I sit at home and rest and my neighbours come to see me. I don’t have vacations as others servants have; I can’t stay a week at home to rest; I work every day.”

Another obstacle in complying with this is that some employers expect their workers to arrange a replacement when they are absent, but servants look to this practice as a risk to lose their job because it could happen that the employer prefers the other person (Castel-Branco, 2013:318).

The range of activities performed by domestic servants varies from house to house. In certain houses more than one servant are employed, each of them responsible for specific tasks. But in general, housekeepers work alone and are responsible for a range of tasks such as the external and internal house cleaning, the laundry, the fetching of water, the cooking and the care of the children or the elderly. Meals are not always the servant’s responsibility because some Makhuwa employers prefer their wives to cook. But in many cases, servants are the ones who cook for their employers. During their working day they have the right to a meal, however, this doesn’t mean that they can have a portion of what they cook. Arlete explain this clearly:

“Most of our bosses like to humiliate us; they treat us like if we were not people. For example, on the first place where I worked, we were not allowed to eat the same food of our employers. They gave us money and sent us to buy phphaï [corn flour] and capapau [fish]. Our meals were always phphaï and capapau. The meal we ate was measured; it was 1 kg of flour for 3 people to eat in 3 days. But they eat good things, what they ate we could not eat.”

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29 Interview with Manuel, 26 April 2017.
30 Interview with Arlete, 12 February 2017.
The food the servants have access to, is usually of very poor quality; miserable is also the salary they earn. The domestic workers regulation is criticized for not fixing a minimum wage as it happens with other classes of workers (Castel-Branco, 2013). In the domestic worker sector, wages are exclusively defined on the basis of negotiation between the two parties of an unbalanced power relationship which favours the employer (Cock, 1980). In Nampula, the housekeepers constantly complain that they income is not sufficient for the costs of living. They explained that the poor wages erode the possibility of saving money. With low wages, servants are unable to save and send money to their families in the villages. The average wage of domestic workers in Nampula city of is of 2000 Mt (R400), well below the minimum wage of 3600 Mt (R720) stipulated by the Mozambican government. The next two servants' comments explain better this:

“It’s been four months since I started working here. Since then, there is nothing I can say I got to buy with my income. Look, I earn 1000mt [R200]. It’s too little. To buy 10kg of corn meal I spend 500mt [R100], and I still have to buy clothes for my wife and other things like dishes for my house; there’s no money left.”

“As a guard, I earn 2200 Mt [R440] and that money is not enough. To buy 25 kg of corn for the meals I have to spend 1200 [R240] Mt and more 500 Mt [R100] to pay the rent, and there is nothing left. That’s why I’m saying: I’m not seeing what I’m doing here. I want to work but the salary I'm getting here does not helping me.”

Nevertheless, despite these wage constraints many young people state that still prefer to work in the city rather then returning to the villages and work in the fields.

The precarious working conditions of domestic workers characterized by long hours of work, lack of rest, absence of paid holidays and low wages is due to the failure of an effective regulation of the domestic work sector. But, this is also a result of the individual relationship between the employer and employee. Grant (1997) argues that the individual nature of domestic work sector is one of the reasons of the high level of abuse, especially in patriarchal societies.

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31 Interview with Benjamin, 20 April 2017.
32 Interview with Cândido, 8 February 2017.
https://etd.uwc.ac.za
where domestic work is treated as woman’s job after marriage (Grant, 1997: 62). For this reason, domestic work is not considered “real work” and is labelled as unproductive work (Lutz, 2013). Domestic work is located within a power relations system which it is clearly dominated by employers. As Cock (19980) argues, the long hours of work with no vacation leads to the deprivation of family life since the servants do not have time to visit their family or to participate actively in family life. For example, a study by Le Roux (1999) in South Africa indicates that one of the consequences of the absence of parents employed as domestic workers is the delinquency of their children.

Domestic workers are also deprived of living as they wish with friends. Their lives boil down to work at their bosses’ homes. The only day off, Sunday is insufficient to have leisure activities such as going to church, joining other social organizations and/or visiting friends. For many servants Sunday is a day of rest to do some domestic activities in their own homes. Unfavourable working conditions, low wages, deprivation of family and social life raise the level of dissatisfaction among domestic workers. It is a job that gives no pleasure and at the same time gives servants lower status in the city. In the course of daily activities employees are faced with a variety of situations which, according to them, hurt their dignity. They are forced to do humiliating tasks such as washing underwear and dispose of children faeces, or being constantly bossed rudely and yelled by their employers. This level of discomfort and stigma associated with this work can lead, as in Brazil (Sales & Santana, 2003), to mental problems characterized by depression and anxiety. The data collected show that most domestic servants do not know that there is a domestic worker regulation that gives them some benefits. Others servants know about the regulation but do not know the content of it. There is still much work to publicize this legal instrument, which must be done by both government authorities and domestic workers’ Associations.

Employers and Employees

The city of Nampula, the economic capital of the North, attracts people from several parts of the northern region and some from the central and southern provinces. The city is mostly occupied by a population from the coastal zones (Ilha de Mozambique, Nacala, Angoche and Moma) that for several generations settled in the city, residing mainly in the central urban districts. The city
is also occupied by migrant populations coming from south of the country and by foreigners coming mainly from Horn of Africa and Great Lakes countries. People living in the central urban districts are the main employers of the domestic workers in Nampula. They are merchants, shop owners, government employees, employees of private companies, etc. Given their purchasing power income, all of them are able to hire one or more domestic workers. Normally, the servants work in households composed by the husband (who is usually absent all day) and the wife who coordinates the domestic activity. Some husbands hire domestic workers to assist their wives in relation to the heavy housework tasks like taking water, washing and ironing clothes and cleaning the house. In cases where both the man and the woman are absent from the house during the day, the co-ordination of the employees still remains in the woman hands who gives the instructions early morning when she leaves the house.

Bujra (2000) explain that because domestic workers work in households, this creates an opportunity for employers to treat their servants in a cruel way and to isolate them from others. She explains that “domestic service is therefore characterised by Tellis-Nayak as a relationship of ‘patron-clientage’ rather than wage labour; by Chin as an ‘essentially premoderrn institution’ (1998:4) and by Callinicos as a ‘quasi-feudal’ (1975:61).” (Bujra, 2000:39). Bujra (2000) also emphasizes how in domestic service settings it is the servant, the person, who is hired rather than his/her skills. In Nampula, the employment relationship between the employers and the domestic workers is often similar to the landlord/vassal relationship. The way many employees have been treated, especially by the wives, is so hard that some servants have considered quitting the job. Mistreatment, insults, long hours of work without rest and low wages speak of the precariousness of these jobs. This may explain why servants change their bosses all the time. Furthermore, there is some ambiguity in the relationship between employers and domestic servants. As Gorban (2012: 34) notes, the kind of relationship that is established between employers and employees is of social distance and physical and affective closeness. The care and family work protection make the servants to “belong” to his employer’s family. Guarnizo & Rodriguez (2017: 4), in turn states that the closeness of the relationship between the employers and servants generates physical and emotional intimacies. The same authors go further saying that the level of intimacy in domestic work is related to the level of informality between employees and employers relationship. As they say:

https://etd.uwc.ac.za
“In domestic work, the closer the social interaction (i.e., forming a strong tie) between employer and employee, the less rigid, more intimate, and more flexible the contractual working relationship, and thus the more informal the labour arrangements are. Conversely, the more distant the social interaction (i.e., forming a weak tie) between employer and employee, the more structured, specific, and thus more formal their contractual working relationship is. We thus assume that informality would be higher for domestic workers toiling inside the house (childcare, housecleaning, etc.) than outdoors (landscape and garden maintenance)” (Guarnizo & Rodriguez, 2017:10).

According to these authors, informality in the domestic work sector happens differently compared to the business/market area. In the domestic work sector the greater intimacy between employers and employees implies higher level of informality since their relationships is more flexible. As consequence, the servant often has no choice but to accept situations that were not been discussed previously, such as the increase working hours, doing additional unplanned tasks without prior consultation (Guarnizo & Rodriguez, 2017: 12). In Nampula, the servants spend more time with their mistresses. It is with them that sometimes the relationship is established with high levels of informality.

The domestic workers union

During the colonial period, in Mozambique the domestic workers were highly regulated but little protected (Castel-Branco, 2013). In 1904 the Regulamento de Serviços e Trabalhadores Indígenas (Regulation on Indigenous Service Workers), was introduced and the servants were forced to buy a chapa, a registration proving that they worked for a single employer (Penvenne, 1994). In 1926 the identification card system was replaced by a caderneta or passbook that specified the worker’s employment history and their tax obligations. In 1966 the Regulamento dos Empregados Domésticos (Regulation on Domestic Workers) came into force with the aim of protecting the working class although in practice the servants continued to work long hours with high levels of control and abuse (Castel-Branco, 2013).
With the end of the colonial regime in 1975 domestic labour was not subject to any legislation until the Domestic Work Regulations were approved in 2008 (Chipenembe, 2010). After a long unregulated period, the approval of the legislation was only possible thanks to the role of domestic workers organizations in the country. According to Castel-Branco (2013) there are four domestic worker organizations in the country: AEDOMO—Associação Moçambicana de Empregados Domésticos (the Mozambican Association of Domestic Employees) based in Maputo with 7990 members; SNED—Sindicato Nacional de Empregados Domésticos (National Union of Domestic Employees) based in Maputo with 2038 members; SEDOM—Sindicato de Empregados Domésticos de Moçambique (Union of Domestic Employees of Mozambique) and SINGED—Sindicato Nacional de Guardas e Empregados domésticos (National Union of Guards and Domestic Employees) affiliated to the Mozambican Workers’ Organization—Beira (OTM-Beira).

The SINGED association has a provincial representation at Nampula. With 450 members, this association represents domestic workers, home gardeners and guards operating in and around Nampula city. According to its Secretary, the number of members is very low compared to the real number of the workers in the city:

“The number of domestic servants in Nampula is very large, there are so many, but there is not much desire to join us. They just want to be members when they face problems. They come to the union when they have problems. A statistic made in 2014 indicates that there are about 16,000 domestic workers in the city of Nampula.”

These data elucidate that the number of associates is by far too small in comparison to the actual number of domestic workers. One reason for this weak representation has to do with the fact that during the week, domestic workers do not have time for anything else than work. Monday to Saturday, employees work from morning until early evening. No time is left for other activities. On the Sunday, the only day off, the union is closed. The union has the purpose to protect workers’ rights. His main function is to help the employees to solve their problems and to fight for better working conditions. But, in Nampula, the union has little voice and influence because

33 Interview with SINGED/Nampula Secretary, 12 February 2017.
it has few members and depends on contributions from them. According to the Secretary, of the 450 members, only 20 members pay regularly their fees.

The union chose as its priority the dissemination of the domestic worker regulation. However, it is still very little known not only by the employees themselves but also by the employers. Even with SINGED efforts, servants still have very low wages, long hours of work and are abused and ill-treated. Perhaps because of the weak participation of domestic workers in the association, the union still faces many challenges in responding to the concerns of the domestic servant class. In fact, most interviewees stated that they become servants not because they choose it but rather because they had no options. This was not the kind of job they would have chosen if they had the possibility to choose.

Du Toit (2013) argues that domestic service sector is difficult to organize and regularize because it is quite individualized and not standardized. The author use the term “non-standard” to refer to workers who have vulnerable and precarious jobs, those who are not employed in formal workplaces. It is a difficult sector to organize also because “employers are thus left with a large measure of discretion and are in many cases resistant to legal regulation on the basis that domestic work is not ‘employment’ but, rather, an aspect of private family arrangements” (Du Toit, 2013:2).

Despite these constraints, the union has managed to do some work. The association Secretary explained that:

“When we created the union there was a large number of workers with problems such as late payments and low wages. Because of our presence, today these problems are no longer experienced with the same frequency. To solve the servants’ problems, we ask the presence of the employer and we talk with him. We managed to persuade the employer to solve the conflict and do not dismiss the employee. When we cannot resolve it, we sent the case to the Conflict Mediation Institutions.”34

34 Interview with SINGED/Nampula Secretary, 12 February 2017.
Even with these efforts, the challenges are still great, especially with regard to the participation of the servants in the association and the almost non-existent knowledge of their rights stipulated in the recently approved regulation of domestic servants of Mozambique.
CHAPTER 6

DOMESTIC WORK AND MASCULINITIES

Scholarship defines masculinity as a socially constructed phenomenon. Kimmel argues that masculinities “(1) differ from culture to culture; (2) vary in any culture over a period of time; (3) vary in any culture through a set of other variables and (4) vary throughout the life of any individual man” (Kimmel 1998:105). Silberschmidt (2001) highlights that masculinity (and femininity) are neither universal nor static; they vary through time and space and are produced by a social and cultural processes. These definitions underline the convergence of a multiplicity of masculinities in a particular social context. “Multiplicity of masculinities” is according to Collinson and Hearn (1994) a concept used to refer to the temporal, spatial and cultural diversity of masculinity, meaning that when we look at a particular society, we cannot speak of masculinity but of masculinities in the plural since masculinity means different things for different groups of men at different times (Kimmel, 1998: 106). Masculinity then must be understood in relation to issues of race, culture, religion and belief systems, environment and historical experiences (Uchendu, 2008). For example, “what it means to be an old, black, and gay man in Cleveland is probably very different from what it means to be a young, white, heterosexual farmer in Iowa” (Kimmel, 1998: 106).

Despite the multiple definitions of masculinity, scholars argue that each society develops a single form of masculinity which is dominant; this is what has been called “hegemonic masculinity” (Connell, 1995; Morrell, 1998). This masculinity is conceived as a cultural prototype or an ideal of masculinity widely recognized and accepted by men and women in a given society (Groes-Green, 2009: 292). Any male who fails to conform to one of the ideal features defined in a society is likely to be viewed as unworthy, incomplete and inferior (Raimundo, 2008:192). This implies that there are subaltern and subservient forms of masculinities for those who do not comply with the dominant form of masculinity. Connell’s hegemonic masculinity has inspired many scholars and many studies have embraced this model to analyse masculinity in African

35“(1) Variam de cultura para cultura; (2) variam em qualquer cultura no transcorrer de certo período de tempo; (3) variam em qualquer cultura através de um conjunto de outras variáveis e (4) variam no decorrer da vida de qualquer homem individual” (my translation).
societies. Nevertheless, not all scholars consider it appropriate to understand African realities and many of them criticize it for not being able to account for the dynamics of the continent. Miescher (2005) for instance argues that it is very difficult to find in Africa a dominant form of masculinity as it happens in the West. The same author also highlights that the hegemonic masculinity approach “does not recognise situations, like those in (post)colonial Africa, where competing notions of masculinity, of local and foreign origins, coexisted without any one of them becoming hegemonic” (Miescher, 2007: 261). Baker and Ricardo (2005) show that there is not a typical young man in sub-Saharan Africa neither a single African version of manhood. They note that often there are urban and rural versions of manhood, including those associated with war, with being warriors and with farming or cattle-herding. They also note that there are indigenous definitions of manhood associated to ethnic group practices, and newer versions of manhood shaped by Islam, Christianity, Western influences, and global media (Baker and Ricardo, 2005).

Following this argument, it’s difficult to find in Northern Mozambique a single dominant form of masculinity. Northern Mozambique is traditionally characterized by a matrilineal system that has undergone transformations over the years. Cities, particularly Nampula, have experienced rapid population growth, largely due to rural-urban migrations that have contributed to the changing of the way of life of rural populations, making them more likely to incorporate Westernized norms and customs. This has actively worked towards the coexistence of different forms of masculinities, some based on traditional values and others linked to more modern models. In Mozambique, the construction of masculinity is also associated to the ideal of being the provider of the family. However, due to increasing unemployment, many men can no longer fulfil this role at risk of losing their symbolic role within the household.

This chapter explores how domestic workers craft their understanding of masculinity with a coexistence of diverse possibilities and values. I intend to explore how the job of the domestic worker shapes particular understandings of masculinity. Given that many domestic workers are immigrant people from the Zambézia province, often coming from rural settings, I present their discourses on what it means to be a domestic worker in the city and I discuss how this experience has shaped their representations of masculinity.
Domestic work: a “job for others”

As we have seen, paid domestic work occupies an important place within the city and it is mainly taken up by the male migrant population. As my informants pointed out, Makhuwa men and women from Nampula rarely seek such employments for cultural and religious reasons. Makhuwa women do not engage in paid domestic work and more broadly in waged labour because of the gender ideology that is widely accepted and that places women within the domestic sphere. It is the woman who must devote herself to the childcare and the household chores. The man is considered the provider of the house. It is up to him to “ir procurar,” that is to say to provide for his family. Discussing the gendered division of labour, Hirata and Kergoat (2007) point out that while the work of man is often associated with the productive sphere, women are related with the reproductive function, and therefore their work must be performed within the domestic sphere. Bernard (1981) argues that societies, and specifically the division of labour, are organized on gender difference, men and women generally perform different kinds of work and occupy different spaces. The Makhuwa women and men who I talked to during my fieldwork agreed that a woman’s place is at home with the children. Expressions such as “it’s our culture, the woman’s place is at home” or “women are used to stay at home” or “Makhuwa women like to be dependent” are very common.

In this respect, the Islamic religion also has a firm position. My informants said that according to Islamic principles, women should be seen only by their husbands and they must avoid daily exposure in the streets or markets. For this reason some Muslim Makhuwa men forbid their wives to exercise activities outside the house. Speaking about the habits and customs that characterize a “good” Muslim family life, a religious leader explained that:

“For Muslims, women should always stay at home to serve their husbands. They are exempt from providing for the house. This is an exclusively male responsibility. The man who knows that his wife stays at home is proud and eager to please his wife; he walks safe and comfortable because he knows that his wife is at home.”

36 Interview with Jemani, 13 February 2017.
Another reason why women engage very little in paid work has to do with the uses of the income. According to Makhuwa customs, reinforced by the Islamic values, the woman who earns an income is not obliged to use this money for the expenses of the house. The money of her salary is used according to her desire. My informants said that financial independence reduces wives’ dependence from their husbands; some men forbid their wives to work fearing that at any time they may abandon them. In fact in Nampula divorces are as normal as marriages (Arnaldo, 2002): in the same way in which marriages are arranged to ensure the survival of women, they are easily dissolved for a variety of reasons, including the inability of men to effectively fulfil the role of the “good provider”. Tvedten et al. (2009) in their study on gender and poverty in Nampula reported that women left their husbands when they met other men who they thought could take better care of them.

However, my informants noted that nowadays this reality have come to a change. The economic crisis that has plagued the country in recent years and the increased urban poverty have pushed Makhuwa women to seek for jobs. Nevertheless, of all the activities in which they are involved in the city—such as vending and other informal jobs—domestic work is still considered the last option. Generally women do not hire women as maids as they fear they could get sexually involved with their husbands, and women are considered lazier than men. Moreover, low wages and poor treatment do not motivate women either: domestic work is perceived as a degrading and humiliating job attracting only few women. The few Makhuwa women employed as maids that I have interviewed said that they have been harassed and mocked by the other women from their own neighbourhoods. Maria, for instance explains:

“When I started working as a domestic worker some women in the neighbourhood laughed at me and asked me: ‘Why do you have a job while you have a husband?’ They also asked me how could I endure being mistreated, taking care of other people's children, washing another woman's panties?’”

37 Interview with Maria, 09 February 2017. It is important to notice that washing someone’s underwear is considered as one of the most demeaning and shameful tasks. Often domestic workers wash clothes but this doesn’t include the employer’s underwear.
For many Makhuwa women from the city it is unthinkable to work having husbands that support them; for them being a maid is a degrading work. This means that despite the poverty and the scarcity of jobs, Makhuwa women still disregard and condemn domestic work. They rarely take up these employments, not only because they are considered dishonourable jobs, but also because they have to care for their own children. As Hansen puts it “a woman with small children just doesn’t leave her own household to attend to someone else’s children. And if she does, it is as a last resort, for who wants to be ordered around by another woman all the time on a slave wage” (1990:127). Moreover, many employers (mostly Makhuwa people themselves), do not hire Makhuwa women who are generally considered lazy and flirtatious. There are many records of young women who have become sexually involved with their employers, their patrões. There is great distrust towards female domestic workers in the household. The wives are the ones who most resist against the presence of maids in their houses because they are worried of the seductive powers people believe Makhuwa women have. The sexual and seduction techniques learned during the initiation rites are considered a powerful weapon on the hands of a woman who is considered able to conquer any man (Bagnol, 2013) and the Makhuwa women are aware of it. In this regard a young woman explained:

“A housewife knows that it is not right to hire a maid because she can do much good and her husband will prefer the maid over his own wife. Women have tricks that can please the boss. They can even use traditional herbs to make their bosses fall in love.”

Makhuwa women are considered a threat to employers’ homes, for this reason they are rarely hired and the few women working as maids that I have met come from outside the Nampula province. Since women are not interested in these positions, men are preferred. But again the young men from Nampula do not consider domestic work as an option. They understand domestic work as draining, as often servants have to work for long hours with almost no days off, being constantly humiliated and underpaid. The salaries of domestic workers in Nampula vary from 1000 Mt to 3000 Mt (5 Mt = 1R). Obviously, young men prefer odd jobs that give

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38Interview with Eufrázia. 23 March 2017.
them enough money to start a small business rather than to work in the *quintal*. This is why the general stereotype of a *Makhuwa* man from Nampula is the one of someone who is proud and lazy; this is also why employers who are looking for domestic help do not hire them. A young man explained this as follows:

“To work as a domestic servant is humiliating. Imagine, I come to a house, ask for a job as a servant, and a child come and send me to clean his room! Honestly! I do not accept that. It is better to take my hoe and go weeding, work the fields and die like this.”

Muslim men, because of their religious obligations, prefer to engage in commercial activities. They consider that being employed in a house doesn’t give them the space to perform the five obligatory prayers during the day, more easily practiced when one is a seller in the market.

“The employers we have in Nampula are of different religions than Islam. Then there are those that when their employees ask to perform the obligatory prayers, they refuse. Therefore, those who are Muslim and who seek to follow with all care the rules of Islam do not look for housework jobs or others jobs that do not give them space to pray.”

Backyard work is considered such a depressing job that it is allocated only to the migrant population. Indeed, as it happens in other countries “native of the city—both women and men—are less likely to work as servants than the natives of the surrounding provinces, who in turn are less likely to do so than those born overseas” (Moya 2007:569). Araújo (2003) and Patricio (2016) argue that the dynamics of the internal migratory processes in Mozambique mainly follow the rural-urban movement. The migrant population in the main cities comes predominantly from districts located in the same province but also from neighbouring provinces (Araújo, 2003: 168). The migrant population in the city of Nampula is mostly made up of young people from the inner districts of Nampula province and by the population from the districts of

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39 “Trabalho de quintal” it is a Portuguese expression, mostly used among the *Makhuwa* people to refer to domestic work. Literally *trabalho do quintal* translates as backyard work.
40 Interview with Alberto, 13 February 2017.
41 Interview with Leonardo, 15 February 2017.
the north of the Zambezia province, where most of the domestic workers come from. These districts are located in the region also known as Alta Zambézia and its population identify as the *Makhuwa-Lomwe* ethnic group.

**Masculinity and breadwinner’s role**

In many African societies achieving some level of financial independence, employment or income, and having a family is a social requirement for achieving manhood. Groes-Green (2009) argued that in Mozambique the man’s role of the provider cemented during the Portuguese colonial transformation of the society through forced labour and became the main understanding of what a man is, or, as I argue in this research, “the hegemonic masculinity.” In the early years (1885-1926) after the occupation of the Mozambican territory, Portugal developed an economic system with a strong presence of non-Portuguese foreign capital where the southern region of Mozambique were transformed into a manpower suppliers to the neighbouring countries, especially to South Africa which mining industry had the monopoly of the direct recruitment of Mozambican migrants. The central and northern regions were leased to the *companhias majestáticas*, also financed by foreign capital (Wuyts, 1980; Arnfred, 2015). The *Makhuwa-Lomwe* territory was administered by the *Companhia de Niassa* (Provinces of Cabo Delgado and Niassa) and by the *Companhia da Zambézia* (Province of Zambezia). The Nampula province was the only one under direct control of the Portuguese central government (Wuyts, 1980; Martinez, 1987). Although initially these companies dedicated themselves to exporting labour to the neighbouring countries such as South Africa and Malawi, the main local economic activities were the exploitation of sugar cane, sisal, coconut, tea and the cotton plantations. *Makhuwa-Lomwe* people were primarily working for the plantations of the companies (Serra, 1980). To persuade the population to work in the plantations, the company’s management introduced a tax locally known as *mussoco*, which payment was mandatory. The 1890 labour legislation determined that all people working for the companies were obliged to pay the *mussoco*; half was paid through labour in the plantations and the other half in money or in export goods (Serra, 1980). Only “the local pre-capitalist aristocracy, those under the age of 14, the elderly over the
age of 60, the invalids and the *cipaios* (native soldiers) were exempt” from this tax (Serra, 1980: 36).\(^{42}\) The *mussoco* was not only a way of forcing the population to work in the plantations’ fields but it was also an important source of revenue for the central Government that held about half of each payment. Given its importance, the fixed payment increased over time. In 1890 the *mussoco* was set at $80 per year,\(^{43}\) per capita, and in 1899 it rose to $120. In 1913 it was increased to $60, and in 1921 to $50. Two years later it reached $600 of which $80 reverted to the Government (Serra, 1980: 38). From 1919 a new legislation was introduced according to which everyone was forced to work six months in the plantations against the previous two weeks to two months per year. At the beginning of the 20th century, according to the new legislation, a strong migratory flow linked to the plantation of sugar cane, sisal and tea involved the population of the Zambézia and Nampula provinces (Medeiros, 2007: 90).

Scholars argue that this socio-economic configuration of indentured, migrant labour, introduced new social roles for men and women. It gradually became a “male responsibility to generate income through the work outside the household such as contract labour in semi-industrial production and odd jobs in the informal market” (Groes-Green 2009: 292). Arnfred (2014) argues that the man’s role promoted by the Portuguese ideology was the one of the husband, the worker, the breadwinners and the natural head of the family. On the contrary, the woman’s role was the one of the “queen of the home”. This means that agriculture was considered a women’s responsibility while men were employed in waged, forced or contracted labour (Arnfred, 2004). This new gendered role were critical to define new forms of masculine identity—a man achieved male authority when he managed to become a provider for his wife, children and other family members (Groes-Green, 2009: 289), to fulfil this role, he needed to reach some level of financial independence (Raimundo, 2008: 200). The ideal of the family breadwinner became a crucial feature in the definition of the Mozambican masculinity.

The Islamic religion, dominant in northern Mozambique, also reproduces the ideal of man as the provider for the family. During the interviews with several Muslim men in Nampula they all claimed that it is clearly stated in the Koran that men must take care of their wives. In Nampula

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\(^{42}\) “A aristocracia pré-capitalista local, os menores de 14 anos, os velhos com mais de 60 anos de idade, os inválidos e os *cipaios*” (Serra, 1980: 36) (my translation).

\(^{43}\) Portuguese Escudo.
often married women are forbidden by their husbands to work, even those who attended secondary school. A young Muslim man said:

“I would rather give her the money she would get if she had a job than accepting her going to work. The responsibility of bringing money home is mine.”

This repeated discourse highlights the importance the Muslim men give to the expression “ir procurar”—to look for money in order to maintain their male authority within the family. In Nampula in the markets, the shops, the hospitals, the streets of the city the female presence is quite small. Men are those who carry out almost all kinds of activities in public spaces, including selling vegetables and domestic work—activities considered as feminine in other parts of the country.

Traditionally, on the contrary, in matrilineal settings, a husband had different social roles. Among the Lele, a matrilineal group from the Democratic Republic of the Congo “men were obliged to prove their masculinity through service to parents-in-law and the wife's community” (Uchendu, 2008: 13). Formerly, the Makuwa and the Makuwa-Lomwe groups also had similar practices. As part of the wedding ritual, a young man needed to settle in his in-laws home and work in their fields at least until he became a father. During this time, he was also supposed to do all the other household chores. The in-laws used this time to evaluate the son-in-law in order to find out whether he was a good or bad husband for their daughter. A young man was often positively assessed when giving signs of not being lazy.

In matrilineal settings women determine and define people’s positions. Watson-Franke (1992: 478) argues that men are literally “women defined men” because they grow up and are socialised in groups defined by a female core: first in his mother group were he become socially affiliated through their mother and later, through marriage, as his wife’s group is built according the same principle. After marriage a Makuwa husband subjected himself to his wife’s family and became a labour force in it. Given that the economy was mainly of subsistence agriculture, women (mother-in-law) hold a key position as the provider of food, controlling and deciding on the

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44 Interview with Namicano, 20 February 2017.
45 These works symbolized the “bride service” and were locally known as pette. See chapter 2, section on the matrilineal Makuwa system.
provisions (Arnfred, 2011), while the son-in-law worked as the producer. To offer his workforce and deliver part of his own production to his in-laws was a way man used to acquire social recognition (Geffray, 1990).

The “man producer” role, different from the postcolonial “man provider (and consumer)” ideal was one of the features that defined traditionally Makhuwa male identity. The value of the “man producer” still has an influence in the current matrilineal context. Culturally the image of a man is linked to the household chores and the domestic space, today the performance of house chores by Makhuwa-Lomwe young men is in fact perceived as “natural” and not as something that diminishes their masculinity. Quite the contrary, the domestic work is seen as a work of a man. Some of my informants reported that as a child they were systematically integrated into domestic chores as a way, they said, of being “prepared for adulthood.” This reveals the importance Makhuwa-Lomwe families give to domestic work as a space for the crafting of manhood.

Initiation Rites: a step to manhood

One of the important cultural features of northern Mozambique is the initiation rituals. These are ritual ceremonies in which the passage from childhood to adulthood is celebrated and the traditions of the group are handed over from generation to generation (César, 2014:51). Among the Makhuwa and the Makhuwa-Lomwe groups puberty were performed before the independence of the country. Martinez (1987) explain that in that time when a boy reached the age of 10 or 12 he was taken to an isolated place, away from the community, in the bush to perform the rituals. For about 6 months the boy was kept secluded, he was circumcised and participated in intense teachings rituals interspersed with traditional singing and dances.

However, soon after the independence, FRELIMO (Liberation Front of Mozambique) introduced policies against traditional customs and prohibited the practices of initiation rites, lobola and polygamy, labelling them as retrograde and “woman-oppressive” customs (Arnfred, 2010). As result, initiation rites became rituals that were performed secretly until the end of the civil war in 1992 (Arnfred, 2010).
Although the initiation rites are no longer prohibited, the way they are performed today has undergone significant transformations. Especially in urban centres, the duration of rituals has decreased from the previous 6 months to 2 or 3 weeks—the time that is needed to heal the circumcision wound. The circumcision ritual is now done with involvement of nurses or health practitioners. Today, especially in the cities, the ritual may involve only the boy’s parents and relatives contrary to what usually happened in the villages when the ritual had a huge symbolic meaning and involved all the community (Osório & Macuácua, 2013: 200).

But, despite these transformations, the initiation rites still play a fundamental role in the construction of ethnic and gender identities among Makhuwa and the Makhuwa-Lomwe people. Initiation rites are still performed in the rural sittings, boys are thought about respecting the elders, knowledge on the ethnic group rules and the procedures required in the event of death of a close relative. They also learn about what people expect from them as men. During the rituals boys are prepared for adulthood with teachings that stresses their duty as men that one day will be at the head of their future families. They leave the ritual knowing that the husband’s responsibility is to support his family, wife and children. The ritual symbolizes the passage to adult life (Bagnol, 2013);

Among Makhuwa-Lomwe groups being circumcised and going through the set of initiation rites is important to define the masculine identity. Those who have not undergone initiation rituals are not respected as men, and they are still considered boys. All my informants have said that they have undergone initiation rites and that this was the first step to acquire status of a manhood which will be full attained when they constitute a family. For domestic servants to go through initiation rites is the first condition to become considered as a man. The teachings and sufferings involved in the ritual process are important driving forces of the Makhuwa male identity.

Given that in the rural areas, where large part of domestic servants come from, the initiation rites still have a strong symbolic value, the puberty rituals play an important role in defining what it means to be a man in that context. Makhuwa initiation rites reinforce the sexual division of labour by lining up the role of woman and man. Symbolically, these rites demonstrate that the man is responsible for the family, is the head of the house, while the woman is referred to as the execution of domestic work (Osório & Macuácua, 2013). Osorio (2015) explains that initiation
rites first have the purpose of forming identities and of saying what is right and wrong. They are presented as truths that cannot be questioned under penalty of violating “the culture”. Then, for domestic servants, to be a man means being the head of household. However, due to the influence of the process of urbanization and the increased access of young people to the city, new forms of masculinity emerged.

*Migration, domestic work and masculinity*

In the districts of the Alta Zambézia people’s livelihoods are based on farming; children, youth and adults participate in farming cycles. The main income of the households derives from agrarian production although some men also sell wood, firewood and reeds. As farming is the only activity available for young people, many of them choose to look for other employment opportunities outside the districts. Informants described this agricultural work as “hard and with little money” suggesting that it is better to look for work in Nampula. Cândido, a domestic employee in Nampula, said that because he was tired to work on the farm he opted to leave the village as he heard that in Nampula people said he could find a better job. Like Cândido, many other young people followed the same path. For these young people the city is a place with several employment opportunities. The city represents their chance to “get away” from the farming work perceived as being hard and low yielding. Working in the city means access to money, very scarce in their villages. Alberto told me his story:

“In 2015 I got a job here in the city. I worked and in early 2016 I went home. At home my wife insisted I should not go back to the city again. I stayed at home all year but living in disgrace. I had no place to do paid work; there was only farm work. I could not take this job anymore, there is no money. I started thinking about my life and I decided to go back to the city. Today I’m here again, I have a job and I can send some money home every month.”46

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46 Interview with Alberto, 20 February 2017.
The search for money is the reason why many young people migrate to Nampula. Married men feel that they are the ones in charge of the family, so it is up to them to look for alternative sources to the family farming production. Influenced by the image of success transmitted by other migrants, single men also go to the city and try to earn some money hoping to get cash to build their homes or to start a small business in the village. Alberto explained this:

“When I came to Nampula my aim was to save money to buy a piece of land. It’s not right for a young man of my age to live in his mother’s house. People can talk a lot. So, I wanted to have a parcel where I could build my own house.”

Traditionally, in Northern Mozambique after a certain age young people leave their parents’ home and must be financially independent. Especially in rural areas, it is expected that after 15 years old a boy would build his own hut and get married. But due to lack of employment options, many men seek work in the city. People interviewed asserted that it is always men who migrate as they recalled the social defined gender roles to explain the reasons for why women do not leave the villages:

“Women do not travel. Only men do. They can only come to town if their husbands call them. The men own the house and have the right to travel. I cannot sit at home and my wife goes to city. If she travels, who will stay with the children?”

“Women do not search for paid work in the city. They should stay at home while their husbands go out to look for money.”

These statements reveal domestic workers’ perceptions on the different social roles existing between men and women. Men, hoping to become providers for their families, recognize that the search for employment in the city is their exclusive responsibility. On the contrary, the domestic role of women implies that they will be taking care of children, stay at home and work in the fields. Quite obviously women are also “breadwinners,” even if men hardly recognize this in their discourses, especially in the long periods in which they are alone at home, while the

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47 Interview with Alberto, 20 February 2017.
48 Interview with Benjamin, 20 February 2017.
49 Interview with Aurélio, 20 February 2017.
husbands are in the city. Women provide for their children, the family and tirelessly work in the fields. Studies in northern rural areas of Mozambique (Brauw, 2015; Pitcher, 1996), illustrate how women have played a decisive role in the development of rural agriculture when their husbands are absent.

But the Alta Zambézia young men do not emigrate to Nampula just to escape from unemployment; they also seek to acquire the status of men. Migrant men achieve some level of social respect if they manage to “come back well”, meaning to return home with valuable goods. According to the informants, returning home with a motorcycle, a bicycle, furniture or money to start a business are means of social recognition:

“When you come back with something beautiful or if you manage to change a way of living in your home, then people will respect you. They will see that you had travelled. If you come back and succeed to buy a land and start building your house, people will respect you.”

“If you come back home with a lot of things your friends will say like yah ... this one was in the city!”

This means that these rural, young people perceive “travelling to the city” as the synonym of success in life and as an opportunity to achieve social recognition. Osella and Osella (2000) noted that the access to the city and to different forms of consumption can change the status of a migrant, his relationship with others and grant him the opportunity to forge new identities. In Nampula domestic workers have access to goods that can only be found in urban contexts and are scarce in the villages; they are exposed to different modern commodities in the houses where they work, and the access to all these “modern” goods means respect from their communities. Similar perceptions are also common among southern Mozambique young men migrating to South African mines. The workers become the image of success when they return well dressed, showing newly purchased commodities to their families and neighbours, generating hope for

50 Interview with Benjamin, 20 February 2017.
51 Interview with Alberto, 20 February 2017.
those intending to emigrate (Mungoi, 2010). These perceived successful stories give honour and prestige to the workers and for their families. Regarding to this one informant has said that:

“When I went home I returned with different stuff and people used to ask me how the life in the city was and how I managed to purchase that stuff. People admired me and respected me.”

Lwambo (2001) noted that it is not only the access to money that makes a man. To be a “real man,” a man needs to share the benefits of his earnings with the family. According to the informants their departure to the city generated expectations from their parents, siblings, uncles, who demanded them to bring back something which could help the family. When a young man is able to send or bring clothes, dishes, chairs, or to send money to his parents, he gains respect.

The harsh work conditions these migrants face in the city is also important to define their masculinity. As Donaldon, Howson (2009) and Raimundo (2008) argue, what gives high status to a man is his choice to migrate and work in difficult conditions in the city for the sake of his family. Like domestic workers, the immigrants’ work in the city is always hard since they are “often employed in a few specific sectors, usually the so-called three-D, ‘dirty, dangerous, and demeaning,’ which correspond to the least-protected parts of a highly segmented labour market” (Quartararo and Falcinelli, 2003:364). Some servants report that:

“There are those who think they are men, but in fact, man is the one who goes and suffer there in the city and in the end manages to come back with chairs or radio.”

“I can even suffer in the city but if I have money, there is no problem.”

As highlighted in these quotes, the work as servant in the city requires sacrifices and many of them are aware of the sufferings they need to go through to achieve their goals. Domestic workers usually complain about the humiliating jobs they are forced to perform, such as washing underwear, but they know they need to go thought this to be successful. Some servants are concerned about the demeaning nature of their work, but as they say, they are doing this job far

52 Interview with Cândido, 08 February 2017.
53 Interview with Benjamin, 20 February 2017.
54 Interview with Aurélio, 20 February 2017.
from their village, and for that reason they can easily handle with it. Nevertheless, as some informants said, for their communities it does not matter which kind of work they are doing in the city. What really matters is that they have achieved results. As long as it is a honest job, they say, with benefits for the family, the work will be recognized as a good job and the servant will be well-regarded by their family. Lazaro, a domestic worker, explained this:

“People do not care about which kind of job we’re doing here. What is important is to send money home or to come back with something. No one cares if you are doing a servant or a carrier jobs. Everyone will be happy if you come back with a suitcase or chairs.” 55

On the contrary, those young people who remain in the districts working in the fields and with little access to cash are called names, as explained by some informants:

“When you just work on the farm, people laugh at you. They say you don’t have money. At home you just find money at the harvest time and this little money you must share with your wife, what is left you buy clothes and the money is gone. You should wait a long time for the next harvest.”56

“A man is respected when he gets money. But if he does not travel, he just stays at home with no money; people will call him bad names. They will say you don’t have anything; you are still a boy living at the expense of your mother.”57

“Young people who do not travel are considered matrecos (a fool, a puppet). The girls laugh at you, not directly but you will know. Friends will tell you. And you will want to travel at all costs.”58

These statements reveal the frustrations young men face in their communities; without money, good clothes, chairs and radios, amongst other goods, they are not considered men. Those who fail to have these assets are seen as unworthy, incomplete and inferior men. Of course not all

55 Interview with Lazaro, 26 February 2017.
56 Interview with Benjamin, 20 February 2017.
57 Interview with Lazaro, 26 February 2017.
58 Interview with Alberto, 20 February 2017.
those who decide to migrate will succeed in the city. The average wage that is paid for the domestic work sector is very low and this is aggravated by the increased costs of living that have plagued the country in recent years. Several servants said they were struggling to save or send money home. Others said that they had to stay in the city longer, well beyond the time they had originally planned. With the high costs of living and low wages, servants can barely live.

The data presented here suggest that the notion of dominant masculinity of these young domestic servants consists of a combination of two ideals: the provider and the consumer. Both of them are clearly ideals as in the current neoliberal order, in Mozambique as in the rest of the continent, very few are the cases in which the ideal matches the practice. In reality young immigrants are able to provide very little for their family and themselves, intermittently. If a young man wishes to be a man with status among his peers he must to go to the city and look for money and bring back commodities. As in many African contexts, the “big man” is the one who shares his wealth with his fellows. Yet, it is important to note that, because people are not always able to succeed in their plans, travelling to the city acquires also a symbolic value. For these young immigrants, going to the city is an experience similar to a rite of passage. They will become men even if they don’t succeed to become “providers” and “consumers” because they have worked hard and endured sufferance, but also because they have experienced, even if not fully participated to, a “modern” world, different from village life. In this regard, young Makhuwa-Lomne understandings of masculinity are not only defined by the modern ideal of the breadwinner who has access to cash and has purchase power but they also evoke older, more traditional ways of conceiving manhood which are reminder of the work young men had to perform in the house of the in-laws in order to be considered worthy and good husbands.
CONCLUSION

In colonial Mozambique, black women were identified as domestic beings; their tasks were the care of children, work in the fields, and household chores. Men engaged in wage labour as they were considered the work-power in the colonial factories and plantations. Fleeing from forced labour, many men migrated to cities where they preferred to work as domestic servants instead. Going to Lourenço Marques, the capital city of colonial Mozambique was considered as a fixed passage that would grant the opportunity to migrate to the South Africa and work in the mines, which was considered a well-paid job. The aspiration of many Mozambican men was to work as domestic worker in the city first and then move to South Africa. During colonialism domestic work was considered a “man job”. Women were not hired because they were considered lazy and the white women feared that they would become sexually involved with their husbands.

With the economic liberalization, state policies encouraged women to seek for waged labour. The hatching of the civil war shortly after 1975 national independence led to an urban rural migratory flow of women who joined the existing male labour force in the cities. As a result, progressively, the number of women employed as maid grew, especially in the South and centre of the country. Women started looking for jobs as domestic workers, and the new black employer preferred to hire women over men. On the contrary, despite all this, in Nampula domestic service remained in the men’s hands. In this study I argue that in Nampula the domestic work sector remained masculinized because of the influence of the matrilineal system that still persists in the northern regions of the country. In spite of the transformations this system has undergone, mainly due to the pressure of the urbanization processes, Islamisation and Christianisation, especially, yet not exclusively, in the rural areas where most of the domestic workers come from, the matrilineal system is still strong. In Nampula, many employers I interviewed described their male domestic workers as “humble” and “good workers” stressing their excellent performance in the house chores. Because culturally the image of the Makuwa-Lomwe man is linked to the domestic space—traditional the matrilocal practices demanded the husbands to move in the house of the bride after marriage and perform house chores for his in-laws at least until the birth of the first child—young people have no prejudice towards this kind of employments and execute them with dedication. In the city, many men look for domestic
work positions in the first place, not only because they haven’t suitable academic qualifications or skills to be hired in other jobs but also because they find it easy.

The masculisation of the domestic work sector in Nampula is then explained by the men’s familiarity with the domestic tasks but also by the absence of the competition of women. Nampula gender ideology, influenced by the ideal of the “man-as-provider” built throughout the colonial era, places the man as the natural provider of the family, limiting the participation of women into waged labour. This ideal is reproduced by the Islamic religion that in Nampula paradoxically has coexisted and coexists with the matrilineal system. The Islam patriarchal values, increasingly influential in the cities, where the traditional matrilineal system is losing power, also limit women’s participation in waged labour in general. Muslim men see themselves as the exclusive family providers and for that reason prohibit their wives to develop economic activities. Women, in turn, do not engage in paid domestic work because they consider shameful and derogatory to work as maids, especially when they have their own children to care for. Moreover, in Nampula there is a general perception of the Makhuwa woman as a threat to the employer’s households due to her seductive powers and her flirtatious attitude.

Since domestic work is considered one of the most demeaning activities, it is take up by the migrant population. Nampula is a city where almost half of the population is immigrant (INE, 2007). The majority of the immigrants are involved in the informal economic sectors which includes also domestic work. From the approximately 16,000 employed domestic workers in the city, the majority of them come from the districts of Ile, Alto Molócue and Gurue located in the Northern Zambezia province. These are districts located in rural areas where agriculture is the core economic task for the family. The initiation rites are a current practice; following the ritual learning, a 14- or 15-year-old boy learns what it is socially expected from him: that he will have to move out of his parents’ house, get a source of income and constitute a family. But, because agriculture is the only activity available in the rural areas, and farming is often perceived as being hard and low yielding; youngster prefer to look for job opportunities and fortune in the urban centres like the city of Nampula.

Influenced by the idea of a provider and by the image of success transmitted by other young people who returned from the city, these youngsters migrate to the city with the purpose of
making money and acquiring valuable goods. The trip to the city also means the possibility of achieving social recognition. Travelling to the city has become synonymous to success in life and an opportunity to become a man. Because in the city, domestic servants have access to money and to “modern” goods—their understanding is that they have been in contact with “modern world” different from rural life--; this make them become respected by their communities at home. Travelling to the city is a means to be recognized as man even if effectively these youngsters do not manage to make money and save it and send it back to their families. The simple fact of going to the city and the presumption of success, make them be men even if notwithstanding the harsh conditions they face daily.

To conclude, while several studies attribute exclusively to women the space of domestic work, in this study I have shown how Nampula is an exemplar space where there is no “natural” correlation between the women and domestic work. This geographical area seems to “resist” to the general trend of feminization of the domestic work. Whether for economic or cultural reasons, the domestic space is occupied by men. Contrary to the argument according to which matrilinear societies do not survive in market economy environments (Narcissus, 2013; Arnfred, 2005), Nampula is an example of how the matrilinear system remains alive and still influences the living in the communities. I have shown how the notion of dominant masculinity in Mozambique is a combination of the: “man-as a-provider” and “man-as a-consumer”. While young immigrants from Zambézia aspire in becoming consumers and providers for their families, their understanding of masculinity is still informed by alternative, traditional, matrilinear values.
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