

Xilunguine, Lourenço Marques, Maputo – structure and agency in urban form: past, present and future

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Abstract: This paper initially briefly reviews different approaches to urban studies in African urban areas as an introduction to the intention in establishing a link between an understanding of the social significance of the city and the political economic structures which largely produce urban form. The focus is Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, which previously was called Lourenço Marques (under colonialism) and Xilunguine in XiRonga, the language of the historic local inhabitants of the surrounding region. The paper reviews the city centre's history as a backdrop to understanding more recent developments, discussing how changes in the wider political economy of the city are reflected in urban form, yet arguing for an enhanced role of social and cultural agency in challenging the constraints of such parameters – where architects and planners can play a key role.

Keywords: Urban development; urban history; Sub-Saharan Africa; Maputo Mozambique; city centre; social life; new international political economy.

INTRODUCTION

Research in African cities has historically varied across various disciplines with limited integration or inter-disciplinary activity. In addition, serious study of urbanism south of the Sahara was a relatively late development, as during the colonial period it suited the dominant powers to underplay pre-colonial African urban history and indigenous forms of urbanism. In more recent times urban research in the region has become predominantly short term development-oriented and normative, although a re-emergence of critical studies is in evidence – most recently a possible resurgence of studies of longer term change, which avoid some of the determinism of the dominant paradigm or the reactive stance of critical studies (Jenkins 2009b). While geographers have examined the structural impacts on urban form, architects and urbanists often have not integrated this form of analysis with their physically focussed work, thus overly stressing the agency of the 'designer' of buildings or urban form. However this agency-focussed approach is also embedded with a range of values to what is 'good' in the 'urban' which is largely deductive and draws on Northern Experience. The fundamental aim of this paper is to advocate for both more inter-disciplinary research (drawing together that of architecture, urban design, social science and the humanities – especially history) and also advocate for research that can approach evolving Sub-Saharan Africa urbanism from an inductive point of view, permitting new forms of analysis to develop that are more appropriate to emerging forms of urbanism. The intention is thus to challenge developmentalist approaches with their implicit Northern analytical concepts, yet not become critically detached from praxis in terms of proactive urban development.

The core subject for this paper is Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, called Lourenço Marques by the dominant mercantile and subsequent colonial Portuguese powers, and Xilunguine by the local indigenous population. The analysis draws on published texts (written and graphic), extensive personal engagement in research and urban development practice as well as long term living in Maputo/Xilunguine over three decades. It thus draws on both, more 'traditional', academic and professional sources as well as wider forms of experiential understanding. The examination is structured in major periods of political economic difference – highlighting the social life and agency which either underpinned or were submerged in these periods – and in so doing the paper draws on a

new international political economy approach.¹ These six major periods are as follows: the early mercantilist period of city development; the subsequent early, middle and late colonial periods; and the initial and more recent post-Independence period. This more structural urban development analysis is subsequently used as the basis for suggestions of the contemporary role of agency within Maputo, concerning the way we see the city and its development/evolution.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN MAPUTO – THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE CITY CENTRE²

The early mercantilist period – a slowly expanding trading outpost

Remains of human settlements have been found near Maputo that date to the first century in the Current Era, but these were used by mobile hunting/fishing/gathering communities. More prolonged settlement traditions have been dated in the region from the 9th century, when extensive regional and some long distance trade was also practised (through East African links to the Persian Gulf). The bay which the city stands on was ‘discovered’ by Europeans after rounding the Cape near the end of the 15th century and named after the Portuguese navigator Lourenço Marques who first surveyed the bay in 1544. While a series of temporary settlements were established for trade throughout the 16th and 17th centuries – including eventual competition by the Dutch, British, Austrians and French – the Portuguese finally created a permanent settlement towards the end of the 18th century. Their area of influence was, however, very limited and the settlement was predominantly a trading station for ivory and other natural products destined for export, as no precious metals were found in the interior this far south. Changing socio-political structures within the indigenous peoples of the region (speeded up by the *Mfecane* diaspora) as well as alternative aspiring colonising powers (English to the South, based on ‘Port Natal’, and Boer republics based on the interior highlands) meant that Portuguese dominion was continually threatened until the latter part of the 19th century when international agreements finalised colonial boundaries. This led to wars of ‘pacification’ by the Portuguese state of the – by then strong – indigenous states to create a colony that included the Gaza empire north of the city (in the province now of the same name) and the Swazi state (now independent Swaziland).

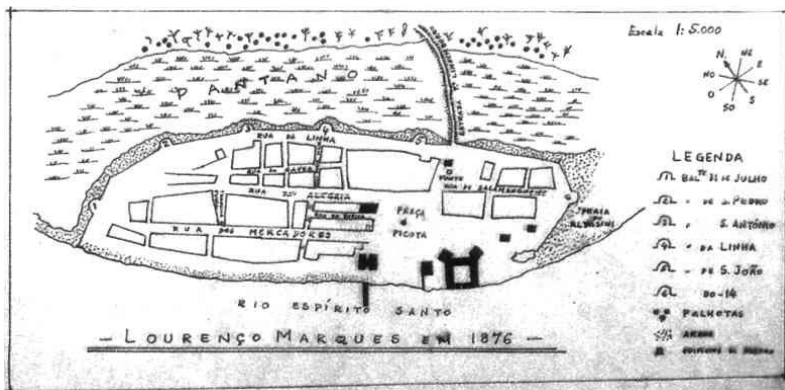


FIGURE 1: The initial permanent settlement and early ‘city centre’ (1876 plan).

During all this period (mid 16th to late 19th century), the settlement that has become Maputo was established on the northern side of the estuary leading to the bay on a sandy island cut off from the mainland by swamps (see Figure 1). The morphology of the fairly precarious settlement was one predominantly of defence – in its location and its built environment. This latter was evidenced in the fortified wall with bulwarks to the north to protect against land attack (with only one access route in and out), these defences continuing round to the west and east, where they linked to the fortress looking to the sea (against alternative maritime attack). Defensive construction accentuated the natural features of the island setting. As in most early Portuguese overseas mercantile settlement building, the actual form of layout was not determined by a rectangular grid as in the Spanish Law of the Indies, but more ‘informally’ developed around a central square (*praça*), permitting a public gathering space and also clear lines of sight from the fortress, and the site of the eventual governor’s house (shown in black on Rua de Alegria near the Praça). Access routes were predominantly east-west with a secondary open space and public water supply (*fonte*) near the entry point to the island. On the beach there was a short quay and the all important customs house (black H shape on plan) as the fragile Portuguese state presence largely depended on local taxation. This morphology reflects the dominance of the main powers over

1 For more on this approach see Jenkins (2006).

2 This section draws on Jenkins (1999; 2000).

the settlement (military, administrative and religious – although the location of the first church is unclear). This island setting reflected the settlement on Mozambique Island – the main Portuguese settlement of the period much further north, and much more important until the late 19th century in economic terms.

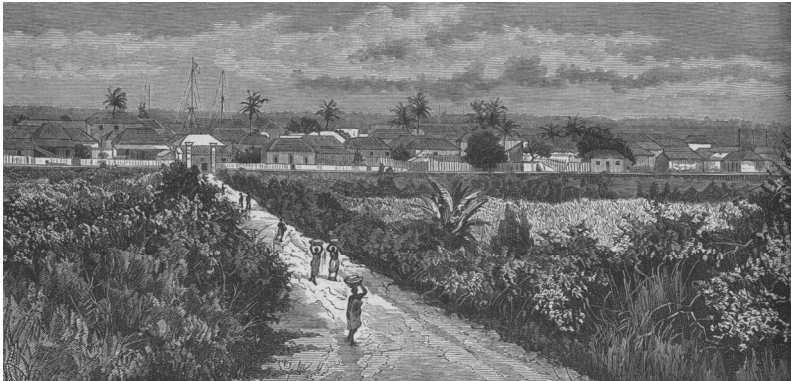


FIGURE 2: View of the early settlement from the north, across the swamp.

The precarious nature of the trade in the region (which changed from ivory as elephant populations were decimated – to hides, amber, and other natural products³) was also reflected in the nature of the construction. The first 'permanent' constructions of locally quarried stone, mud and lime from oyster shells were only built from the 1830's, after the passing invasions of the *Mfecane* to create the northern Gaza state, and when some subsequent military stability was achieved. Land control was initiated in 1858, and land became leased from the Crown from that period as a mechanism to raise new forms of state income. That year the settlement only had 888 residents, including 364 locals, 384 slaves (and another 11 freed slaves) with 73 Europeans and 51 Asians. The influence of the Portuguese probably extended not more than some 10 km around the bay, including negotiated settlements with the local Xi-Ronga clan chiefdoms (Mpfumo and Matola), who were involved in elephant hunting and other trade with settlers. There was also some intermarriage between these indigenous elites and the foreigners in the settlement. In this period, the 'city centre' – if it can be called this – was where trade, political administrative control (governor and customs) and military defence all came together around the Praça de Picota (later Praça Sete de Março), in fairly typical mercantile small town form. All this was, however, just about to change with the discovery of gold in Lydenburg across the border in the Transvaal.

The early colonial period – establishing the city area and state control

Whereas transport from the port into the interior had been predominantly focussed on elephant hunting and trade in other natural products (slaving having always been a minor activity in the south of Mozambique), there was now an imperative to link with the interior 'highveld' goldfields, acting as the geographical nearest port. A road to Lydenburg was initiated in the 1870's and from 1877 a railway link to the Transvaal was also planned. This, however, was only constructed after 1886 (taking 9 years to complete) due to political issues around the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek and Boer Wars – and later routed to Johannesburg with the subsequent discovery of gold there in 1885. Lourenço Marques was elevated to town status in 1876 and city status in 1887, as it became the main port for access to the goldfields, the fastest growing economy of the region. This led to significant changes also in the city's morphology with urban development across the swamp to the higher inland plateau being planned from 1878 when a more permanent bridge was built. From 1886 a land registry was established and in 1887 an expedition from the Portuguese Ministry of Public Works developed the first definitive expansion plan incorporating a 2 km radius to the north within the city, based on the central *praça* in the original settlement and following a grid-iron layout (see Figures 3 and 4). However, it took some ten years for prior land claims and disputes to be resolved and also eventually for a new township, that had been established separately from the official plan from the 1880's on the nearby Polana headland overlooking the bay from the west (mainly foreign 'English' interests) to be incorporated.

The town, and then city, of Lourenço Marques grew rapidly in the latter part of the 19th century – sevenfold from 1844 to 1896, with roughly equal proportions of Africans, Asians and Europeans. The city status and changing external circumstances had led to new church, hospital and barracks buildings outside the fortifications (see Figure 5) as well as construction of a proper dock (for steamship traffic) and new customs house on the shore side of the original settlement. Towards the end of the 19th century major landfills of the swamp were undertaken, including providing for railway access to the city. Piped water and an abattoir and cemetery were other public

3 The Portuguese having concluded that there was no source of precious metals in the hinterland.

works funded by the state, although most roads remained unpaved. Customs remained the major financial base for the Portuguese government as little other form of productive activity took place in or around the settlement other than trade. However, land leasing and sale by the state was an important source of income, especially within the newly planned urban circumference, but also outside of this, where some enterprising investors acquired large areas for speculation (see below on the speculator Sommerschild). A further growing source of income for the State from this period was through the taxation of migrant labour to the mines and farms of South Africa.



FIGURE 3: The city in 1900 showing the 2 km radius layout and separate township on the Polana headland.

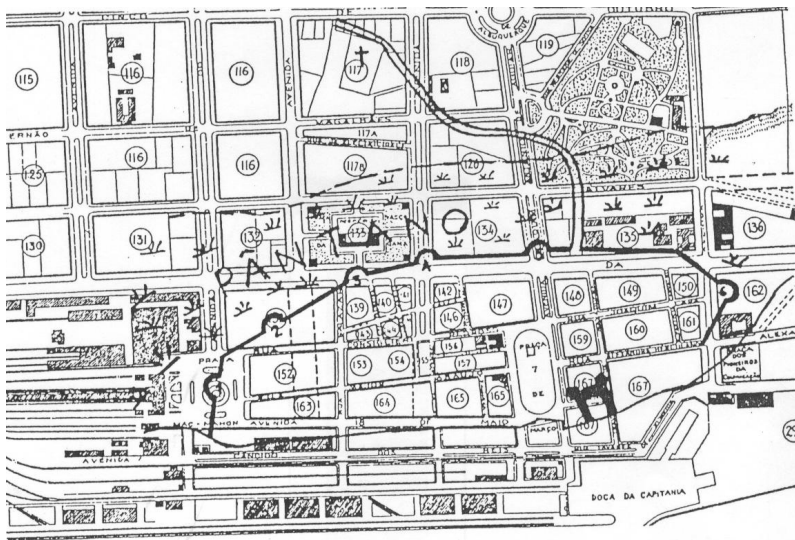


FIGURE 4: Showing the relation between the original settlement and the new city centre (from Mendes 1985).

The city's role also changed vis-à-vis its wider hinterland. The 1884/5 Berlin Conference had divided up most of Sub-Saharan Africa between European colonial powers primarily interested in assuring preferential access to natural resources and eventual markets for their industrialised output. This required evidence from Portugal that it actually dominated its claimed territory in Mozambique and led to the establishment of hut taxes for the indigenous populations and 'pacification' of the indigenous states. By 1887 some 13,500 hut taxes in the city's surrounding hinterland were being collected from some 14 subordinated indigenous clans. This was enforced by a significantly strengthened military presence, including the symbolic construction of a new barracks on the traditional cemetery of the Mpumo clan to the northwest of the planned city on the high ground (Alto Mahe), and then another to the northeast in the 'English' town that was incorporated into the urban plan. This latter was the base for the expeditions that conquered the indigenous Gaza state in the last years of the 19th century. With the relative decline in the trade in the central region of the then declared Portuguese colony, the capital of the country was transferred to the city from Mozambique Island in 1895.



FIGURE 5: View over the emerging colonial city.

By the beginning of the 19th century, the emerging capital city could boast a planned grid-iron network of roads and land registry for urban development and soon also had further key public buildings: the Municipal Market, main Post Office, Public Works, Tax Office, Customs House, Hospital, Police Station, Port Captainty Building, National Press Building, main Railway Station, Law Courts and several other major commercial and private buildings (including banks, shops and a British Consulate). However, while the above were generally in imposing neo-classical style and constructed from permanent materials (Figures 6 and 7), many of the new residential buildings in the expanded city area were from temporary materials – especially corrugated iron sheeting being the dominant material, but also cast iron (components and buildings). In fact, much of the demarcated urban area remained under-developed for many years as the plans of 1903 and 1940 indicate (Figures 8 and 9).



FIGURE 6: The main Post Office (1899).



FIGURE 7: The old Club Hotel, now France-Mozambique Cultural Centre (www.malhanga.com).

The 1903 plan envisioned a whole new modern city with key public investments such as the vastly expanded port and railways to the southwest, and the cemetery to the middle north – but also demonstrates the actual slow build up of the urban area. The concentration of development is in the old central area, now expanding across the swamp with wide Southern European style boulevards, and including a large area dedicated to a botanical garden. The other fairly developed area is the previous ‘English’ settlement to the east on the high headland. At this stage the landfill of the port (southwest) was underway but had not begun in the bay area east of the old centre. In several places existing roads or lanes have been included in the grid-iron pattern and the axial orientation of these has not been dominated by the previous focal place, Praça de Picota (later called Praça Sete de Março), although this does have one short axial line (see also Figure 4). Rather, the new cross city axis (then Avenida Dom Carlos, now Avenida 25 de Setembro), bounding the all important railway and dock area as well as the original settlement to its north, is taken as the starting point for the orthogonal pattern. The original Praça is, however, the centre of the circular 2 km radius urban circumference.

This plan essentially signifies three key changes in the underpinning urban spatial development in an **early period of colonial city development**. Firstly the plan does not respect or adhere much to physical features such as the slopes of the headland (crossed directly by roads ignoring gradient) and coastline (progressively being infilled) – to create later problems of erosion and drainage for the downtown area. Secondly, while the old urban centre still has symbolic and social value (e.g. for cultural and political occasions such as in the Praça Sete de Março, as contemporary photographs of the era show), this is subordinated to the new planned (and ordered)

future which reflects the realpolitik of a subservient, state-oriented, transport-based and foreign investment reliant colonial economy. Thirdly this planned urban future, while integrating the unavoidable present, was inspired by a vision based on quite weak socio-economic perceptions of urban development, and as such represented more of an ideal than a pragmatic approach to urban management. Notably, there is little evidence for any analysis of the actual situation or trends in urban development as the basis for future planning, this being dominated by visionary aspiration.

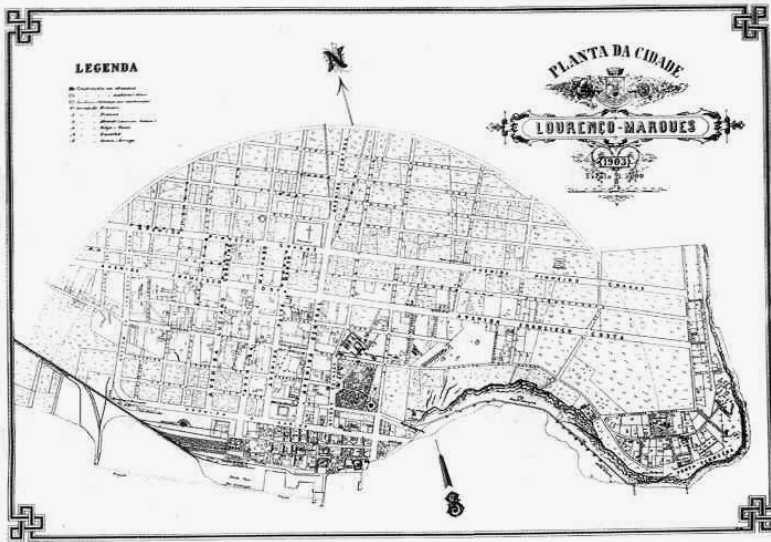


FIGURE 8: The 1903 city plan.

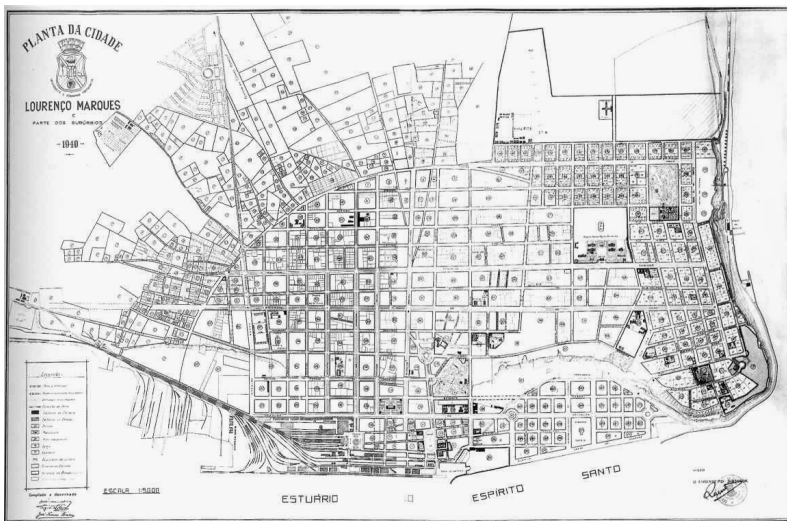


FIGURE 9: The 1940 city plan.

In contrast, the subsequent city plan from 1940 is much more pragmatic, showing the formal and less formal (yet still legal) actual extensions of the city. Importantly, however, now it also includes a proposed extended city centre, expanding into the reclaimed bay to the east and infilling the grid between the previous planned circumference and the incorporated headland town. While this plan is much more of a cadastral map of actual land division than a planned projection, it clearly shows the limitations of urban management in the de facto expansion areas to the north. To the northeast a planned expansion is underway around the then airfield – however hampered by the problems of acquisition of land immediately to the north. Here the Norwegian early city resident Dr Sommerschild had astutely acquired a 1000 Ha area in the Polana chiefdom from 1899 and sold this speculatively to a South Africa real estate company, who in the end – in 1953 – were forced to sell it to the government after considerable costly litigation. To the northwest, in lower lying and often flooded areas, no such large concessions had been made, but had developed in a fragmented fashion through land sales to Portuguese settlers (as the African population was not permitted to have individual ‘modern’ land rights until 1961). Given the lack of any state approach to land or housing provision until the mid 1940’s for the indigenous population – who were attracted to the city to work or passed through the city en route to migrant labour positions in the neighbouring states – this whole area developed as an informal dormitory suburb for the low-

income population with limited citizenship rights under a *laissez faire* urban administration. Here the indigenous population rented shack accommodation provided mostly by colonial settlers (but also some 'assimilated' Africans and mixed race residents), often behind local shop/bars called *cantinas* in so-called *comboios* (trains) in lines of back to back corrugated iron sheet rooms with virtually no services. The earliest aerial photo coverage of the city in the late 1920's shows this large urban – and essentially unregulated – area well established and with the second most important (and indeed largest) municipal market at its core in Bairro Xipaminine.

The middle colonial period – rapid expansion and attempted (partial) state control

It is of importance to this paper that, by 1940, the real basis for Portuguese occupation in the southern part of Mozambique in a **middle colonial period** is graphically portrayed in this latter plan. Excluded from rights to the 'city' (what we would now call the 'formal' area), the now numerically predominant African population was forced to occupy liminal spaces – physically at the margins of this city as noted above (including marginal in terms of rights and services), or within this in servants quarters (as in many other settler states in the region). The 'rentier' basis for the colonial economy, based on taxation of transport and trade as well as migrant labour to South Africa (contracted from 1928) is thus expressed in the encirclement of the city to the northwest (informal housing for *indigenes*) and southwest (where the all important port and railway continued to expand into the bay). To the northeast the other end of the socio-economic and political scale is manifested by the urban settler elite being increasingly ensconced in the emerging highest class suburb, built on the previous airstrip (now being relocated to the north just beyond the informally occupied area). To the south east the city centre is earmarked for a major expansion into newly reclaimed land – following the important west-east access which skirts the old centre and has now become the true centre of gravity for commercial and business activity. Visions for this form of continued colonial development informed the second formal urban plan developed in the late 1940's.

By the Second World War the city's demarcated area had begun to fill up as the population numbers rose, due to growing trade with fast expanding urban areas in the Witwatersrand and intervening areas, as well as Portuguese emigration policies which stimulated migration of the increasingly landless poor from the metropole (Lisbon) to the 'overseas territories' (as they were known). By 1930 the official population of the city had grown to over 20,600 inhabitants, by 1940 up to 44,700, and by 1950 had reached 90,000. Trams provided access to the furthest parts of the planned urban area and also increasingly reached along the coast to the north for recreation. This also opened up the city for tourism – mainly from the South African Transvaal region. Despite there being no formal separation of races, as with class, there was evidence of this embedded in urban occupation, with Africans in the informal areas, Asians in the low part of the city near the commercial centre and Europeans divided by class – lower income to the west and higher income to the east and north (Mendes 1979). In addition to the economically dominant transport sector, industry (mostly basic import substitution for local consumption) had begun to be developed in the southeast near the port and then to the north between the city and the new airport and along the main road north out of the city, north of the informally settled area mentioned above.

Construction was now predominantly in permanent material in the planned urban area, with more buildings going up to 3-4 stories as land became more expensive and the urban population rose. Limited recognition of an 'assimilated' African population had been legislated and a special housing area was provided for this group between the planned city core and new airport, in a low-lying area (Bairro Indigena). In general, however, there was a continued *laissez faire* policy to the now extensive informal settlements to the north and northwest, although some control over permanence of construction as this was all considered temporary and easily removed. These areas had few services and – as many were low lying – were seasonally flooded, and much of the construction was in temporary reed as well as slightly less temporary corrugated iron. However they also represented an increasingly consolidated urban form – called the *caniço* (after the Portuguese for 'reeds'), or *suburbios* (not directly translatable as 'suburbs' in English).

The *laissez faire* approach to *de facto* urban development continued as a backdrop to the 1952-5 urban plan for the city, developed in Portugal by the Urban Planning Office for Overseas Territories. In this, whole areas of the city were left as 'reserves' – representing those with the complex mix of necessary but unofficial African urban settlement and settler rentier activity, effectively creating a constraining ring around at least half of the northern area for potential expansion. Part of this, however, was indicated for re-development (mainly around the state-vented housing for the assimilated class in the Bairro Indigena). This plan, as the previous ones, was based on a vision rather than more detailed research and analysis. However, new expansion areas for industry are also shown immediately outside the ring to the north, both east and west of the airport, both partly developed later. The other main features detailed in the published plan are the massive urban expansion to the northeast, over land recently acquired from the speculators, with a Beaux Arts urban layout incorporating the already existing city golf course (Figure 12). The emphasis was thus on upper income housing provision, given the historic

provision of housing for lower income (settler) groups to the west of the city – although here again some re-development of the informal ring was envisioned, immediately outside of what by then was called the ‘cement city’ (Cidade de Cimento). The previous vision for the eastward expansion of the city centre as a grand government centre – very like Lisbon – is here reinforced in the land use zoning and particularly in the aspirational graphics (see Figures 10-11). These show a formal quayside for ceremonial occasions, surrounded by new monumental civic buildings, only one of which was ever built (by the previous Ministry of Finance). Contrary to the trend in the period of the move to air travel, the airport in counterpoint was sited in the midst of fields to the north with no ostentatious ceremonial buildings – rather, it is flanked to the south by industrial areas and housing for the assimilated class of Africans.



FIGURE 10: The new city centre (1952-55 plan).



FIGURE 11: The new city centre (1952-55 view).

This Southern European form of urban plan, based on a grand formal vision but limited pragmatic analysis, was inevitably going to encounter difficulties in implementation in the realpolitik of the city. As soon as it was published, land speculators purchased and divided a new urban area near the planned axis to the sea from the new residential centre around which the Beaux Arts northern development revolved – so creating the unauthorised Bairro Triunfo that remains today. The *suburbios* or *caniço* areas were never re-developed as projected, partly due to the lobby of the small-scale settler class whose livelihood depended on the exploitation of this land for the low-income population, and partly due to the costs of re-development, which would entail compensation for settler land holdings. Instead, new developments tended to leapfrog this informal ring to areas such as Barrio Jardim near the zoological garden to its north, or to the new town created in the 1960's in Matola to the west of Lourenço Marques.

This **middle period of colonial city development** thus presented a crisis for the city centre *per se*. While assuming that the downtown area, which had developed as the basis for commercial and economic development, would retain this character and expand to the east as before into the land reclaimed from the sea, there was a much higher emphasis on the civic nature of this development – something that was dependent on massive state investment linked to the moderate expansionist interests of the Estado Novo dictatorship in Portugal from the 1930's, but in the event the necessary investment was never forthcoming from the metropole. The other new Beaux Arts centre projected to the north was to have a more residential and commercial focus,

but inevitably would have detracted from some of the necessary investment for the existing downtown. It was never developed however as in fact the city region became the focus for the last phase of colonial city-building.

The late colonial period – continued rapid expansion but reducing state control and increasing private sector investment

In the late 1960's the impossibility of implementation of the 1950's plan was an accepted fact and a local Urban Planning Office within the city council was established. The focus for the new plan – differently from previous plans – started with analysis of the actual land use and potential development, and also examined the city region and not the limited area of the city council *per se* – thus including the newly emerging 'sister' city of Matola to the west. Matola began to develop in the mid 1960's with new impetus for inward foreign investment as Portugal changed its legal structure concerning this form of development, and the new large scale industries opted to install themselves in new areas far from the cramped areas available in the Lourenço Marques city area (and also presumably from the related higher taxation). Associated with the new industries (mineral port, oil refinery, cement factory etc) came the development of new up-market and middle income suburban residential areas – and importantly (for the first time) low income housing areas as sites-and-services – a form of development well established in surrounding Anglophone colonial and post-colonial states, but never attempted in Lourenço Marques. Contrary to previous plans, these partial urban land development plans (usually called *Unidades*) were functional in focus (actual and proposed land use, main transport routes/new airport location, new tourist developments etc.). They served as the basis for a new master plan developed by a contracted consultant (Portuguese urban planning engineer Mario de Azevedo).⁴

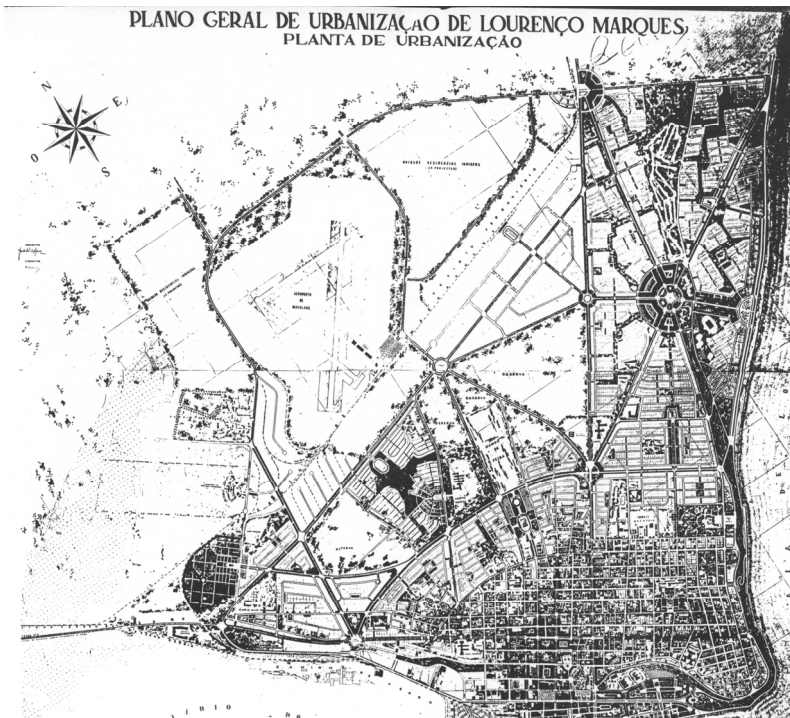


FIGURE 12: The 1952-55 urban plan.

The Azevedo plan was prepared from 1967 to 1969 and approved in 1972 – for the whole metropolitan area including Matols and Lourenço Marques (Figure 13). It can be seen as the first modern era urban plan for the city and was developed by an expanded team including a traffic engineer, demographer, economist, landscape architect, sociologist and a historian as well as the local planning team. It included various detailed studies of access, land use and zoning, and the plan also included proposals to upgrade the *caniço* areas in the immediate 'inner ring' around the 'cement city' – i.e. the areas to the northwest of the original city area. During the latter part of the 1960's and early 1970's the economy of the city grew rapidly as new foreign investment rushed in – yet the areas for physical expansion were limited by this 'inner ring' of informally developed land. This led to a rapid growth of land costs and thus high rise building in the central areas of Lourenço Marques. This context brought significant new private sector as well as state investment for urban development – fuelling a building boom which could only be partly responded to by the existing architectural community and hence a 'hey-day' for those architects who were already established (e.g. Pancho Guedes).

4 Reflecting the change in Portugal from urban planning by architect urbanists following the Beaux Arts tradition to a more pragmatic urban engineering tradition.

However, although this short **late colonial period of urban development** was much more closely based on an improved understanding of the reality of the fast growing city, it – crucially – ignored the wider political context of the wars for Mozambican Independence. By the time the 1972 urban plan was published major new investments in city expansion to the northeast (liberated when the Sommerschield concession dispute was resolved), such as the vast Bairro Kock (including a new railway shunting yard with its associated industrial area and new upper income housing north of the existing formal city area), were being abandoned due to the prevailing political and economic climate in Portugal. The April 1974 Carnation Revolution in the metropole led to the abrupt decolonisation of the country and handing over of power to the coordinated liberation front FRELIMO, with limited violence, but significant exodus of the settler population. The city thus went through a period of stasis in its formal development but with concurrent peripheral development, as many of its indigenous residents – often heads of households on their own who opted to bring their families in from rural areas to join them – rapidly expanded in the *caniço* – including re-occupying areas which had recently been clear through relocation programme for the 1970's formal urban development.

PLANO DIRECTOR DE URBANIZAÇÃO DE LOURENÇO MARQUES

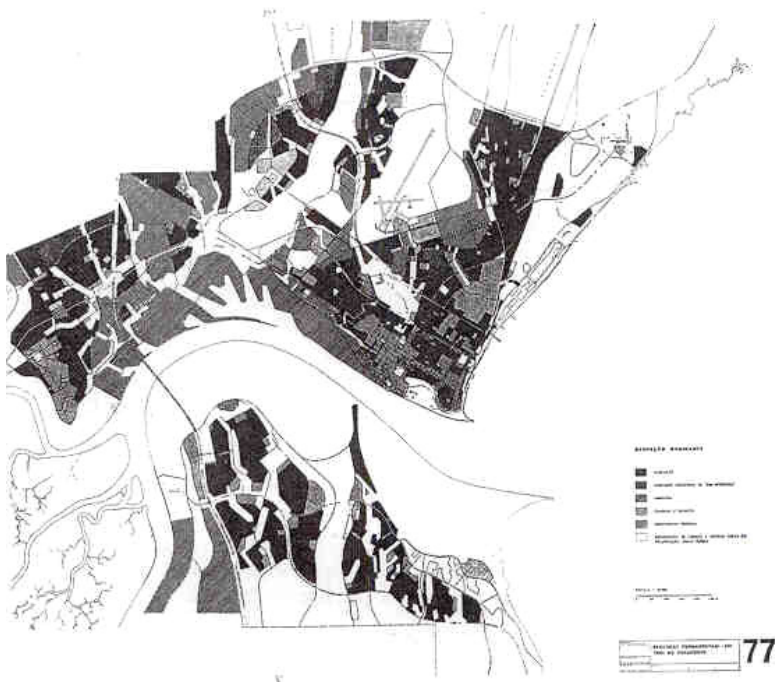


FIGURE 13: The 1972 urban plan.

Post-Independence – continued physical expansion, contraction of economic function, renewed state control functions

After Independence there was an *inter-regnum* period of urban development, when formal sector activity largely ceased as the private sector either abandoned its operations, or waited to assess the position of the new government, and the state sector being in considerable disarray due to the rapid exodus of the settler community which largely constituted it. While most new built investment stopped, some urban development activities were undertaken with state engagement – for instance, a flood resettlement scheme with United Nations support, which eventually led to a peri-urban sites-and-services / self-help housing project and a separate inner ring neighbourhood upgrading project (Maxaquene/Polana Caniço). In addition there was a state programme to take over abandoned, unfinished buildings as a way to provide new government facilities for the expanding state sector. The new, increasingly socialist-oriented government nationalised all land at Independence, as well as rented and abandoned property in 1977, and in the late 1970's began to re-allocate rented housing to needy families (as well as those who came to assist the new regime from overseas) (Jenkins 1990). The new central political orientation, however, focused on rural development as the basis for a 'great leap forward' in industrial capacity – much also destined for location in the countryside. The state also took over many abandoned construction and construction material firms as well as most banks which had financed building development, and re-oriented this to support its development objectives. The end of the 1970's saw this enormous re-orientation of development activity by the state clearly evidenced in a 10 year development plan (1980-1990) with its objective of overcoming under-development. In this, few state controlled resources were

made available for urban areas, including the capital (the name of which was now changed to Maputo after one of the important historic chiefdoms of south of the bay).

The overall effect of this was a severe contraction in formal urban development but, on the contrary, a rapid increase in informal urban development as many previous controls of population movement were lifted. The city's population grew rapidly, replacing the settler exodus, albeit predominantly in the so-called *caniço* areas. These rapidly expanded beyond the existing 'inner ring' and the stalled formal sector developments which were started in the 1970's on the (then) city periphery (see Figures 14-16). In 1980 a new city council urban planning and construction department was created, linked to the National Housing Directorate which had been implementing the UN assisted sites-and-services and upgrading pilot projects. This new planning unit had extremely limited means and strategically opted to focus on developing an outer ring of basic residential areas (with minimal services due to lack of state investment) to control and stimulate orderly land use in the fast growing peri-urban areas. This Basic Urbanisation Programme demarcated over 10,000 plots, based on planned urban land layouts with some basic infrastructure, and provided basic guidance for self-managed house construction to new and existing residents between 1981-7 (Jenkins 1998).



FIGURES 14, 15, 16: Land use in 1969, 1979 and 1989 showing rapid peri-urban expansion and densification.

The impact on the city centre in this period was marked. The previous bustling and rapidly verticalising central business district (the Baixa), with its major associated entertainment and commercial infrastructure, began to 'hollow out' as food became channelled through state ration shops throughout the city and many businesses closed or were run down. The new reinforced state did not concentrate its activities in the downtown business area, as many of its new ministries and directorates etc were located in buildings being finished with state investment and hence spread throughout the 'cement city' – mostly on the Polana headland where much of the stalled investment had been located. The major downtown market became for a time almost deserted (1983-4) as the impact of state commercial control and adverse climatic effects hit home (floods and drought alternating). This was all underpinned by an implicit anti-urban bias in government policy (see Jenkins 2006). While a certain level of civic activity was retained in these areas, this was significantly reduced (except when major national political rallies were held in Independence Place in front of the Maputo city council headquarters building).

In the mid 1980's the (then) National Housing Directorate, together with the City Council Urban Planning and Construction Department, prepared a structure plan for the city. Different from the land zoning focus of the previous 1970's Master Plan, this was based more on strategic development options – and predominantly focussed on the peri-urban areas, with limited attention to the central 'cement city'.⁵ However, this plan was never formally approved, partly due to the lack of any clear legislative basis, but also debates on densities and planning norms (especially plot size). The growing commodification of urban land (Jenkins 1998, 2001) also

5 The plan did include a separate associated document identifying key built heritage for conservation but this was never adequately debated or had any effect outside limited technical circles.

undermined the effect of any such nationally supported initiative at local level. Despite the efforts of the 1980's Basic Urbanisation Programme, rapidly increasing demand for land outstripped supply and growing corruption around urban land allocation eventually led to the closure of the city council urban programme in the latter part of the 1980's – at the precise time that the city was experiencing a renewed spurt of growth due to the civil war. By the late 1980's the country had negotiated with external donor agencies and went into a structural adjustment period – overtly focussing on reducing state roles in the economy and what was perceived as urban bias in development – compounding the growing effect of civil war on urban areas. Initially funded by the 'Rhodesian' and then South African elite settler governments, the war spread throughout the country to affect the outskirts of Maputo in the late 1980's. The effect of this was twofold: the rapid increase in population fleeing insecurity in rural areas in the Southern part of the country into the city and a retraction from the expanding urban periphery due to military incursions – and hence an extreme infill and densification of the peri-urban areas as well as the city centre. Peace negotiated in 1992 was predicated on constitutional change to a liberal economy and multi-party democracy and led to another abrupt change of fortune of the city.

The recent post-Independence period – fast expanding multi-national business and cultural hub

The transition, from a collapsing proto-socialist state to what some international organisations see as an exemplary liberal democracy, has seen continued rapid change in the city. Despite the rigours of the effects of structural adjustment the city has continued to grow rapidly demographically and physically, and now its natural population growth has more of an effect than in-migration. Despite economic development at a macro-scale, there is also increased urban poverty and polarisation of socio-economic groups. Despite multi-party democracy and decentralisation of politics to two autonomous city councils for the greater Maputo area, one political party has dominated national and local politics, transforming itself seemingly smoothly from a socialist to a nationalist centrist bourgeoisie party. With the new constitution most state rental housing was sold off to national tenants, although land was retained in state 'ownership' (actually formally trusteeship using *usufruct* titles). The liberalised housing market and growing elite's socio-economic capacity led to a proliferation of coastal closed condominium developments and some redevelopment of the 'cement city' area – mainly in the sought after Polana and Sommerschild areas. More recently other outlying upmarket condominium and individual private sector developments have continued to replicate, especially along the main transport axes into the conurbation (National Roads 1, 2, 4 in particular).

In the late 1990's there was another attempt to develop an overview plan for the city through a (World Bank sponsored) Metropolitan Structure Plan for the newly autonomous municipal areas of Maputo and Matola, as well as expansion areas in the surrounding Maputo Province. However, this plan and other subsequent international agency funded attempts to address strategic issues at a city regional scale (such as environmental management), have all come to nothing despite detailed plans being based on reasonably detailed empirical studies. The main reasons for this lack of impact have been: the lack of any adequate legislation to approve such plans; the limited technical capacity to undertake urban management that such plans require to be implemented in practice; the weak fiscal base of the new city authorities; and limited political will to control land speculation – at elite and lower income levels (Jenkins 2009). Most recently a new structure plan has been produced for the Maputo city council by the Faculty of Architecture and Physical Planning, Eduardo Mondlane University. A plan for Matola is being finalised, to a great extent re-cycling and updating the 1999 proposed metropolitan structure plan. These most recent plans, however, focus predominantly on projected land use and are not based on in-depth empirical studies of city and city-region functions such as transport, economic and investment trends. However they are seen as serving as the basis for application of the recently approved planning law and subsequent urban land use regulations, to permit more 'orderly' urban land development.

During this period the city centre 'came back to life', with rapid intensification of commercial and cultural activities, including informal retail. Many old tourist facilities have been re-developed and new ones built as tourism picks up again – still strongly influenced by neighbouring South Africa. Banks have also proliferated in the Baixa CBD, including completion of a high rise bank and office block beside the main city market which had remained unfinished since the early 1970's. Most importantly for the city centre, this area has finally moved into the reclaimed land east of the old centre, along Avenida 24 de Setembro. This area had remained virtually unused since its reclamation in line with the 1940's plan – within only the permanent Commercial Fairground (FACIM) with some associated restaurants and recreational facilities being built in the 1960's. Although, as originally envisioned in the 1950's, the first buildings in the extended city centre were in fact state investments – such as the new Mozambican television studios and new Ministry of Finance building, these have quickly been surpassed in the late 1990's and into the new millennium with new speculative office blocks, shops, hotels, petrol stations and other services. The avenue has become something of a USA-style strip development as it is based on the one main access route (which is also a major cross-city route). While many of the buildings are

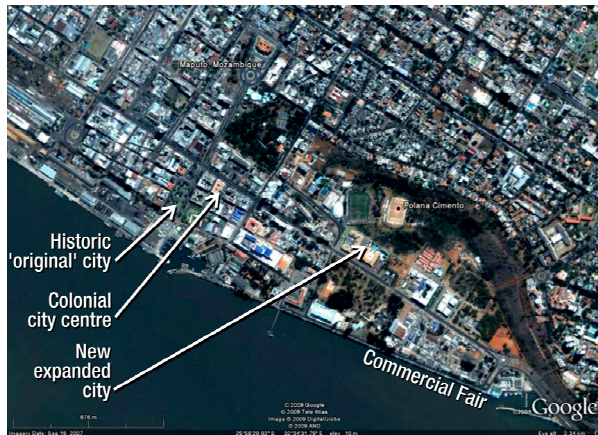


FIGURE 17: The expanded city centre.



FIGURE 18: Rapid and non-descript development in the 'Baixa' area.

limited in height to under 10 stories, this is now again changing with new proposals for high rise development (see Figures 17-20).

The new verticalisation which is taking place contemporaneously is repeating the cycle of the 1970's – due to the limited availability and access to centrally located urban land. The newest buildings are more than 20 stories and located in the central business district (old and new areas) – as well as some along the coastline. The most recent announcement is the Maputo Business Towers with a 41 storey glass tower (with 5 storey underground car park and 35 stories of 150m² luxury apartments, the rest being office space) to be built next to the existing National Press (a historic building from 1906). This follows a new 5 storey mall which is still not fully occupied and a series of other new private and public investments (e.g. the new national Water Directorate building).

A FUTURE CITY CENTRE FOR ALL?

The city centre of Maputo is definitely once again in transition, with strong international investment in the built environment, largely de-linked from the world recession. In this the balance of power between the state and the market in determining urban form has swung once again to an extreme, and the state's presence is largely absent with virtually no planning and/or construction control. In fact the state at national level is a promoter of inward investment and facilitates this in the locality of the city, the new independent city council playing a minor role in both promotion and regulation. In this, the wider lower income population of the city, which came to occupy spaces in the central Baixa in the proto-socialist initial post-Independence period (such as low-income residents in state rented properties that have not been bought out, informal vendors and homeless kids) are likely to be soon pressurised to relocate. This – as in all previous manifestations of the city centre – reflects the political, social and economic realities of the wider context, now with quite extreme forms of socio-economic polarisation, weak local political and governance structures and elite-focused speculative development. The 'cement city' once again seems to be becoming the space for the elite where the subaltern socio-economic groups only have limited and controlled access, as in the colonial period. However, the nature of segregation is no longer racial (although it never was dominantly so in Mozambique) but socio-economic – nevertheless cultural forms also have an important role in this scenario. Currently the dominant cultural form is exogenous with 'development' lauded as being international, and architectural form following international post-modern or Southern African regional styles (e.g. the postmodern neo-classicism much used in South Africa – see Figure 19). In the midst of this flurry of international speculative investment, the city's history and the country's cultural traditions are seen as having little, or no, value and thus standing in the way of progress – whether built heritage (historic or more recent) or other endogenous forms of cultural expression in built form. Unfortunately this bodes ill for an inclusive future Mozambican city for all.

As noted in the introduction to this paper, Xilunguine was the term that the indigenous Ronga people used to refer to the 'city' – the place of strangers. This referred above all to the 'cement city' as they early on had established places of their 'own' in cultural terms (within strict socio-economic and political constraints) within the co-called surrounding *caniço* areas. Here, while traces of the early inter-linkages between the VaRonga clan chiefs and mercantile elites were submerged in the whole colonial and later proto-socialist period – they have re-emerged in the *de facto* way that the majority now get access to peri-urban land from the *nativos* or those with



FIGURE 19: New hotel development in expanded city centre.



FIGURE 20: Maputo Business Tower (<http://www.skyscrapercity.com>)

traditional land rights in the fast expanding peripheries of city – and this link between modernity and tradition is now sanctioned by the state in various ways (Nielsen 2009; Jenkins 2010). However the relatively short historic period in which the majority of the city's residents would have clearly understood the 'cement city' – and especially the downtown central Baixa area – to be inclusive of them in the immediate post-Independence period, despite all its urban deterioration, seems now to be fast vanishing. The city centre of Maputo thus seems doomed to return to be a new Xilunguine in the light of weak political will and local forms of governance, dominated by international speculative funding and limited cultural valorisation of the endogenous. The opportunity to guide exogenous forces to assist create a more endogenous form of urban development (evolving from existing 'indigenous' roots as do most processes of adaptation⁶) thus seems unlikely in terms of the built environment in this context – whether for the centre of the peri-urban areas.

The main focus of this paper with its historical analysis of changing urban form, set within a new international political economy analysis, is that the built environment largely reflects the dominant political and economic realities of each period. However within these structural parameters there is always room for manoeuvre and space for social and cultural agency. What is striking about Maputo's city centre is not the effect of the wider international political economy on the changing built environment, but the seeming lack of interest to filter this and adapt this through local cultural agency. Thus, despite the national university having trained architects/planners/urban designers for about a decade and a half, there is limited impact by these built environment professionals in reflecting on what sort of city is emerging in the *cidade cimento* (especially the CBD) and the fast expanding peri-urban areas. The university itself has undertaken some important studies (both with its own limited resources and in partnership with other researchers), but has limited influence on any policy in terms of urban development. This may be partly due to weak organisational professional structures, but also the competitive architectural environment where many city centre buildings are designed by foreign firms (especially South African). It is also probably a legacy of the limited focus on the wider built environment in terms of urban planning in the architecture curriculum. However this growing body of indigenous professionals is increasingly engaging with urban development issues and can have an influence. Independently other cultural actors can reflect on the form of city emerging and highlight this in more proactive ways. To date there is a strong tradition of popular theatre with social critique, but this has not permeated other cultural forms of expression. In parallel there could be much more nuanced treatment of urban issues in the media, especially newspapers. Despite structural constraints, agency matters. While Mozambique, as any other country, needs to operate within quite limited political and economic options, what form of city is created – and more importantly – how urban spaces are used and accessed – depends more on agency than structure. Professionals in the built environment can play an important role in stimulating wider discussion of this in Maputo.

In this context the recent initiative by the Faculty of Architecture and Physical Planning (at the state Eduardo Mondlane University) and with the National Directorate for Culture to develop a conservation policy and regulation and list an initial 25 buildings as national heritage, mostly in the Baixa / CBD area, is a start. However this activity cannot remain one which is intellectually isolated and easily marginalised politically. It needs to build a popular base for retaining values of Mozambican cultures – indigenous, imported and/or hybrid – and also argue for the social and economic benefits these can bring. Business needs to know what can sell, and people

⁶ It is important to avoid the closed forms of definition of 'indigenous' (originating naturally) – which in reality reflects continual and evolving adaptations to 'tradition' – through a focus on the more open 'endogenous' (growing from within).

need to know what can help them economically. Thus, creating monuments is not the answer. Rather, embedding cultural icons with new economic values is the key. How this can be done is still an open question – and one that hopefully can be taken forward in the near future.

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