

Finding the Maputo Central Market: Seeing the Informal Economy in Formal Architecture

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Finding the
Mercardo Central de Maputo / Maputo Central Market
Seeing the Informal Economy in Formal Architecture

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Detailed Dissertation Information

Full dissertation title: Finding the Maputo Central Market (*Mercardo Central de Maputo*): Seeing the Informal Economy in Formal Architecture

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Department: Department of Architecture
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Project Summary

Programme: Urban Market and Consolidation of Informal Trade

Site Description: The area immediately around the existing historic Maputo Central Market (Mercardo Central de Maputo) in the Baixa CBD area of Maputo, Mozambique.

Proposed Client: Maputo Municipality and a donor organization such as the World Bank

Users: Vendors and micro-enterprisers currently operating in and around the Maputo Central Market, and their customers.

Site Location: Consolidation of sites to the East and West of the existing Maputo Central Market.
Address: cnr. Avenida 25 de Setembro & Rua do Mesquita, Baixa, Maputo, Mozambique
GPS Coordinates: S 25° 97' 0715''
E 32° 56' 8541''

Architectural Theoretical Premise: Micro-enterprise and informal trade in Formal Architecture within a historic city centre

Architectural Approach: Facilitating informal trade and micro-enterprise within an area rich in built and un-built heritage through the expansion of suitable formal architecture, in order to formally recognise previously marginalised street vendors.

Research Field: Urbanism and Human Settlements

Abstract

The low-lying Baixa area of Maputo, is the historic and current city centre of Maputo. The district is an important transport hub, and business centre of Mozambique.

The *Mercado Central de Maputo* (Maputo Central Market), is the only infrastructure provided in support of the micro-enterprisers and traders of the city. The Central Market has reached capacity, and informal street markets have developed to the north. These have become fractured and disconnected from facilities that allow for clean, comfortable, hygienic trade, and a healthier business environment.

The architectural proposal offers a solution to the current inadequate trader infrastructure, while also recognizing the area's heritage and economic significance. The fluxing character of the market is also important in the design. While promotion of micro-enterprise and consequent economic growth will be achieved through an upgrade and expansion of market related facilities. This will allow a greater number of marginalised vendors formal recognition and legitimacy.

The intervention will act as a catalyst project in the urban regeneration, through the consolidation of the fractured market areas. Increasing the market's drawing power on potential customers will promote the Central Market as a destination within its own right.

Samevatting

Die laagliggende Baixa gebied van Maputo, is die historiese en huidige sentrale besigheids distrik van Maputo. Die distrik is 'n belangrike vervoer-, en sakeentrum van Mosambiek.

Die *Mercado Central de Maputo* (Maputo Sentrale Mark), is die enigste infrastruktuur wat mikro-ondernemings en handelaars van die stad ondersteun. Die stampvol mark het informeel versprei na die strate in die noorde. Hierdie straatmarkte is afgesny van skoon, gemaklike en higiëniese fasiliteite wat 'n gesonde besigheidsomgewing kan skep.

Die argitektoniese oplossing bied voldoende handelaar infrastruktuur, terwyl dit die erfenis, en ekonomiese geskiedenis erken. Die veranderende eienskap van die mark is belangrik in die ontwerp. Die bevordering van mikro-ondernemings en gevolglike ekonomiese groei, sal bereik kan word deur middel van 'n opgradering en uitbreiding van die mark-verwante fasiliteite. Dit sal 'n groter aantal entrepreneurs akkommodeer.

Die konsolidasie van die verwyderde straatmark in die argitektoniese oplossing sal as 'n katalisator vir stedelike hergebruik dien. Die projek sal die Sentrale Mark as 'n bestemming vir potensiële kliënte in die stad artikuleer.

Plagiarism Declaration

In accordance with Regulation 4(e) of the General Regulations (G.57) for dissertations and theses, I declare that this thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree Master of Architecture (Professional) at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

I further state that no part of my thesis has already been, or is currently being, submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification.

I further declare that this thesis is substantially my own work. Where reference is made to the works of others, the extent to which that work has been used is indicated and fully acknowledged in the text and list of references.

The dissertation is 23 552 words long (excluding captions, tables, contents & reference sections).

Signed

Byron Snow

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Preamble

Oxford professor Nabeel Hamdi in the book *Small Change: About the Art of Practice and the Limits of Planning in Cities* states that “Not knowing can be an advantage. [Since] It leaves space to think creatively in search of alternatives”, he presses designers to challenge popularly held consensus (2004: 131 & 137). In this case, perceptions, assumptions, and consensus regarding both the tangible and intangible context of Mozambique had to be abandoned and the given context evaluated from a neutral point of view.

The following dissertation deals with an approach to architecture in this developing ‘third-world’ country, in an area with strong environmental and historical influences.

Glossary and Terms

Avenida – Portuguese: (n.) Avenue, used throughout the document with the Portuguese street names.

Baixa – A word used to refer to the downtown CBD of Maputo, literally descriptive of the flat low-lying area near the historic port reclaimed in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Inclusive of much of the oldest most historically significant built fabric of Maputo.

North Baixa – The Baixa area North of Avenida 25 de Setembro

South Baixa – The Baixa area South of Avenida 25 de Setembro

New Baixa – The Baixa area East of Avenida Samora Machel, generally inclusive of larger newer built fabric on reclaimed land.

Old Baixa – The Baixa area West of Avenida Samora Machel, generally inclusive of the oldest historic fabric and the initial trading island from which the city of Maputo sprang.

Calçada Portuguesa – Portuguese: cobbling using small angular stones no bigger than a fist. Particular to Portuguese tradition, used extensively in Maputo, often in patterns of contrasting stone colours.

Chappa – A mini-bus taxi. These operate along informal routes, stopping where needed to pick-up or drop-off passengers, who pay cash. In Mozambique these are notoriously overloaded, and are major part of the public transport system, being used by a large portion of the population.

Fortaleza Nossa Senhora Da Conceição – The name of the Portuguese *Fortaleza* or Fort in the Maputo Baixa. Reconstructed in the 1960s.

Praça – Portuguese: (n.) a park, plaza, or public square. Used throughout the document with the Portuguese names.

Rua – Portuguese: (n.) Road, used throughout the document with the Portuguese street names.

Run / vending run – An unbroken usually linear arrangement of vending areas. Usually parallel to pedestrian movement.

Trinta-três-andares – Portuguese: (n.) Thirty-three-storeys, the nick-name given to the 33 storey landmark ‘M-Cell building’, tallest in Maputo and in Mozambique

Tshova – Two wheeled push-cart pushed by a single mobile vendor or *Tshovadore*. *Tshovas* can also be hired to make deliveries and sometimes operate as mobile vendors.

Tuk-tuk – Term used throughout the document to refer to small three wheeled motorcycle with a wind-screen and canvas hood to protect the driver and one to three passengers seated on the rear bench seat. Known in Mozambique as *Tchopelas*. Generally used for short-distance transport.