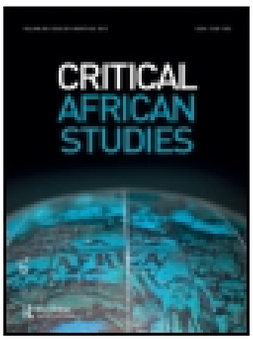

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Insurgent aspirations? Weak middle-class utopias in Maputo, Mozambique

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Based on ethnographic data from Maputo, Mozambique, this article explores middle-classness as an often-utopic aspiration articulated through particular forms of divides, that assert themselves by continuously deferring the stabilization of a supposedly growing middle-class population. As we argue, however, it is precisely by way of this deferral that new forms of urban citizenship are produced – that are available to the assumed members of the 'middle-class', as well as potentially to other residents enacting middle-classness as an urban ideal. After a brief review of how middle-class areas can be identified, the paper discusses the above argument through a comparison between two of the largest state-sponsored urban planning initiatives to be implemented in Mozambique in recent years. The first is in the Intaka Community on the northern periphery of Maputo, where residents re-configure the material aesthetics of the area in order to separate themselves from a collective that is based on supposed state-sanctioned middle-class values – but to which they do not want to remain attached. The second is in the KaTembe peninsula, where squatters have invaded the building site for the 'New City' and commenced building reed huts and laying foundations for cement-block houses in order to be resettled elsewhere. Strikingly, in both instances, middle-classness seems to be actualized by groups of urbanites that do not desire typical spatially envisioned middle-class status. However, the surprising effect is that this still articulates a particular conceptualization of middle-classness with a dominant utopian ideology for urban living.

Keyword: middle-classness; Maputo; Mozambique; urban citizenship; urban development; urban management

S'appuyant sur des données ethnographiques de Maputo, au Mozambique, cet article explore la classe moyenne comme une aspiration souvent utopique à travers différentes formes de division; articulées à travers des formes particulières de division, qui s'imposent en reportant constamment la stabilization d'une population de classe moyenne supposément croissante. Comme nous le défendons, cependant, c'est précisément par le biais de ce report que de nouvelles formes de citoyenneté urbaine se produisent – disponibles aux membres présumés de la 'classe moyenne', ainsi que potentiellement pour d'autres résidents ayant comme idéal urbain une classe moyenne. Après un bref passage en revue de la façon dont les zones de classe moyenne peuvent être identifiées, l'article discute l'argument précèdent à travers une comparaison de deux des plus grandes initiatives de planning urbain sponsorisées par l'Etat devant être mises en œuvre au Mozambique dans les années récentes. La première se trouve dans la communauté Intaka dans la périphérie Nord de Maputo, où les résidents reconfigurent l'esthétique matérielle de la région afin de se séparer d'un collectif basé sur des valeurs de classe moyenne supposées sanctionnées par

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l'Etat – mais auxquelles ils ne veulent pas rester attachés. La seconde se trouve dans la péninsule de KaTembe, où des squatteurs ont envahi le site de construction de la 'Nouvelle ville' et ont commencé à construire des huttes de roseaux et poser des fondations pour des maisons en blocs de ciment afin d'être relogés ailleurs. Remarquablement, dans les deux cas, la classe moyenne semble être actualisée par des groupes de citadins ne désirant pas un statut de classe moyenne typiquement envisagé dans l'espace. Cependant, et cet effet est surprenant, cela articule encore une conceptualisation particulière de la classe moyenne avec une idéologie utopique dominante de vie urbaine.

Mots clés: classe moyenne; Maputo; Mozambique; citoyenneté urbaine; développement urbain; gestion urbaine

Introduction

If urban citizenship is articulated through particular forms of social and material differentiation, what kind of difference articulates urban middle-classness in situations of rapid urbanization and political-economic weaknesses? Based on ethnographic data from Maputo, Mozambique, this article explores middle-classness as an often-utopic aspiration articulated through particular forms of differentiation, that assert themselves while continuously deferring the stabilization of a supposedly growing middle-class population. As we shall argue, however, it is precisely by way of this deferral that new forms of urban citizenship are produced that are available to the assumed members of the 'middle-class' – as well as potentially to other residents enacting middle-classness as an urban ideal.

After a brief review of the nature of middle-class urban areas in the city, the discussion takes its point of departure in a comparison between two of the largest state-sponsored urban planning initiatives to be implemented in Mozambique in recent years. The first is in the Intaka Community on the northern periphery of Maputo and the second is the projected, but still not realized, 'New City' (locally known as 'China Town') in the KaTembe peninsula across the Maputo Bay. Strikingly, in both instances, middle-classness seems to be actualized by groups of urbanites that do not desire typically spatially envisioned middle-class status. In the Intaka Community, residents reconfigure the material aesthetics of the area in order to separate themselves from a collective that is based on supposed middle-class values – but to which they do not want to remain attached. In the KaTembe peninsula, squatters have invaded the building site for the planned 'New City' and commenced building temporary shelter while laying foundations for permanent houses in order to be resettled to formally planned residential plots elsewhere. Significantly, these processes are clearly guided by middle-classness as an ideal and – while none of the involved urbanites seem to want to remain in the areas where they are currently living – the surprising effect is the inherent challenge of different manifestations of aspirational middle-classness to the dominant utopian ideal for urban living.

In recent years, academic work on the middle-class has moved beyond a distinction of class as either a material phenomenon that needs to be understood in terms of relations of production (Marx and Engels 2008 [1848]; Giddens 1981; Mills 1951; Thompson 1963; Urry 1973) or an associational category activated by people who are aligned around common socio-political goals (Bourdieu 1984; Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich 1979; Rodrigues 2007). Without ignoring that the emergence of the middle-class is tied to the history of capitalism (Bose 1990; Poulantzas 1978), a growing number of scholarly works considers the middle-class as a phenomenon in its own right (Birdsall 2010; Davis 2010; Heiman, Freeman, and Liechty 2012; Kharas 2011; López and Weinstein 2012; Ray 2010; Simone and Fauzan 2013; Villegas 2010; Wacquant 1991). As a bundle of organizational, economic and cultural assets, the middle-class is also examined based on the consumption activities and market positions of actors, whose self-identity and location in the class structures arise within specific historical and spatial circumstances

(Austin 1984; Brosius 2010; Fehérváry 2013; Heiman 2000; Lacy 2007; Liechty 2003; O'Dougherty 2002).

A recurring feature of middle-class situations in sub-Saharan African cities is the effort of differently positioned urbanites to mobilize middle-classness as a catalyst for moral inclusion and securing of formally recognized urban citizens' rights (Banerjee and Duflo 2008; Kharas 2011; Melber 2016; Southall 2018; Sumich 2018). In cities across the continent, new social topographies thus seem to arise from the often uncoordinated attempts of urbanites to establish themselves as members of an emerging middle-class, that distinguishes itself in relation to other social groups through its claims to formal rights and access to resources based on such an alleged privileged status (Centner 2010). Hence, rather than considering the middle-class as a generalized category based on consumption and income, in this article, we explore the socio-economic, political and aesthetic dynamics that are being activated by figuring the middle-class as a dominant urban ideal. *Middle-classness* is consequently the concept by which we refer to this dynamic configuration of powers, interests, desires and affect guided by the 'middle-class' as a particular ideal of urban living.

In his seminal work on urban housing and citizenship in Brazil, James Holston has examined how poor urbanites legitimate their agendas of rights and participatory practices on the basis of their occupation in the city (1991, 1995, 1999, 2008). As residents living in so-called 'informal' peri-urban areas make their claims on the city – e.g. regarding viable housing mechanisms, sanitation and infrastructure – new identities and practices are introduced, which have the city, rather than the nation-state, as the primary political community of reference (2008, 23). Since the 1970s, Brazil's working class has urbanized its neighbourhoods and improved its living conditions through processes of self-managed house construction (*autoconstrução*). In the relatively impoverished auto-constructed neighbourhoods of the peripheries, new forms of belonging and articulations of rights-based claims have thus emerged as residents build and make improvements on their houses (1991, 1999, 2008). As Holston argues,

> … (H)ouse builders in the periphery use their constructions to demonstrate that they are respectable, in spite of their grinding poverty. Above all, they want to distinguish themselves from squatters whom they consider … depraved, dishonorable, and dirty. In this sense, the auto-constructed house is a symbolic means of creating differences among the poor. People use it to proclaim membership in a moral community. They achieve this self-promotion through a standard set of architectural and domestic elements. (1991, 458)

Through the transformation of fragile shacks into physically consolidated and beautifully decorated homes, *autoconstrução* has become a potent medium for articulating new forms of membership in a nation-state that is still built on the reproduction of economic differentiation and social inequality. The effect has been, Holston tells us, 'a confrontation between two citizenships, one insurgent and the other entrenched (2008, 6), which destabilizes conventional state-citizen configurations and offers new ones based on residents' experiences of and participatory practices in the city.[1]

Holston's lucid account of Brazil's urban predicament sheds light also on the situation in many cities across the sub-Saharan African continent. African cities are, indeed, a 'strategic arena for the development of citizenship' (Holston and Appadurai 1999, 2) – this, despite (or perhaps even because of) the often incoherent and chaotic functioning of many public administrations. In the resulting multiplicity of interweaving, but never fully decipherable, political agendas and economic strategies, urbanites act themselves into politics. A key mechanism for this is by engaging with the physicality of the city as they secure access to land and build houses (Nielsen 2011; see also Pieterse 2011).

However, while urban occupancy – and its physical manifestation in housing and related land use – serve as a medium for challenging entrenched national citizenship in both regions, the question is whether membership in the city's 'moral community' is articulated in a similar manner. Whereas middle-class housing aesthetics in São Paulo symbolically index the house-owner's inclusion in the city as a respectable citizen *in loco*, in Maputo it can also provide a way to catapult the house-owner away from the current situation. This is the case, we argue, not because a middle-class housing aesthetic is a powerful urban trope – but precisely because it is not.

By focusing on two middle-class housing projects in Maputo, Mozambique, in this paper we suggest that urban citizenship may be articulated through certain forms of divides, such as those that arise in gated residential communities, without a clear relationship of inter-dependences established between the two. In fact, it is this lack of inter-dependence that allows both to assert themselves with particular force and urgency in the rapidly changing urban fabric. Could it even be, we therefore speculate, that such dynamic socio-cultural relationships are at the core of new forms of class-based citizenship that are currently manifesting themselves in cities throughout the world? As such, might they constitute an incipient form of insurgent urbanity that allows for new urban imageries to be actualized (cf. Jenkins 2013)?

Beyond socialist urban planning?

The urban areas in Maputo were originally all subordinated to a grand plan for the so-called 'cement city': a demarcated 2 km radius 3/8ths circle centred on the original settlement and laid out originally in the late nineteenthth century. This manifested southern European urbanist styles with grand tree-lined avenues and (rather less organized) sub-divisions in the interior of city blocks. Outside of this central urban area there was an early (1930s) growth of unplanned settlement to the northwest, led initially by colonial settlers 'farming' land for indigenous Africans (who had no rights to land or housing in the 'city'). This unplanned settlement later expanded also to the northeast, with urban influx immediately prior and post-Independence (Jenkins 2000). Some new 'formal' (i.e. state sanctioned) urban housing areas 'leapfrogged' this broad unplanned band around the central cement city, but most of this urban expansionary impetus either went to the fast-developing sister city to the west (Matola), or was only in early stages of development in the early 1970s as Mozambique moved towards independence in 1975 – and then summarily stopped and never continued.

Matola's city council was more astute politically – possibly as this was the main site for inward foreign direct investment (FDI) after the change of fascist regime in Portugal in the late 1960s – and picked up in the then international trend for 'sites & services'. The municipality planned and minimally serviced plot layouts for lower income groups – as supported by international agencies since the 1970s (albeit with a longer history in some colonial systems). These new housing areas were developed by those who could buy the land at low cost – in parallel with more typical suburban housing layouts and developments oriented to the (mainly colonial settler) middle-class. In contrast, Maputo city only very belatedly picked up on this trend and demarcated a few such areas within the city periphery (albeit had not completed or allocated) by the time of Independence. These areas – whether in Maputo or Matola – were essentially scaled back versions of the typical suburban layouts, including 'garden suburb' forms (e.g. curving streets, relatively low target densities). However, that changed with the advent of the post-Independence proto-socialist government.

The new post-Independence Frelimo government soon espoused Marxist–Leninism and nationalized land, rented property and abandoned housing amongst other abrupt changes in urban management (Saul 1985). It took some time for the relevant institutions to implement such an approach and then more time to formulate what that meant in policy terms. However,

by the early 1980s the (then) National Housing Directorate was already active, with a core staff of 'cooperantes' (mostly politically left-wing 'volunteers') to create a basic cadre. This core group developed new land planning principles for urban (and rural) settlements, which embedded certain forms of aspirational social collectivity. In Maputo city these were then further developed at scale by the new Executive City Council staff, who had minimal capacity but a clear strategy for developing as much peri-urban land as possible to guide and direct rapid urban expansion, otherwise happening in unplanned ways – essentially through a programme of sites with minimal services (Jenkins 2000).

The difference from the prior peri-urban 'loteamentos' (sites & services) was primarily in the way the political administrative structure for the city mapped onto space, as decided in the First National Meeting on Cities and Bairros in 1979. The key was creating urban 'quarters' (*quarteirões*), which would in turn be overseen in groups of 10 or so families and constitute the governance system of the neighbourhood (Bairro) through the 'Grupos Dinamizadores' (in fact more as social control than direct participation in practice (Jenkins 2001)). Key to this was providing some open space (*praça*) for collective activities in the centre of each urban quarter, with also a prioritization of access ways through blocks of 8–10 plots (which also permitted flexibility in implementation to allow for physically existing elements). This quite successful, albeit minimally funded, 'Basic Urbanization Program' in Maputo city developed more than 10,000 urban plots with this land use planning system in the 1980–1987 period, working closely with the 'Grupos Dinamizadores' and urban quarter leaders – and thus significantly controlling land development over a large outer band of the city's edge at that time. However, the envisioned social (and even productive) function of the physical centres of these *quarteirões* rarely became realized, with these eventually being sub-divided 'unofficially' – at least in planning terms (Jenkins 2003).

Hence, in time, many of these socialist, utopian inspired, yet basically planned neighbourhoods ended up falling prey to growing commercialization of land, with the central *praças* being divided up and often allocated with partial monetary payment (Jenkins 2004). However, the aesthetic of such neighbourhoods retained a fairly open 'profile' until fairly recently – and still does in many places. Growing gentrification has however begun a process of 'individualisation' of these extensive neighbourhoods, where forms of collective life become subordinated spatially.

This process is reflected in the making of subsequent peri-urban neighbourhoods, which are sometimes the work of 'official' (i.e. municipal) planners (albeit often with plans significantly mitigated), but others are 'unofficially planned' while retaining much of the plot size, aesthetics and urbanist profile of the earlier socialist plans – e.g. Magoanine (Andersen, Jenkins, and Nielsen 2015; Nielsen 2010). This reflects to some extent the slow local upgrading, with limited incoming gentrification – with other more recent forms of land development being more enclave-like (as explained below). While the weakness of the government still largely lets the urbanites develop land and housing as they see fit – and here they follow local aesthetic and socio-economic norms (Jenkins 2013) – the process of self-management is now spreading to self-planning officially, as in some recently gentrified, previously unplanned, areas in Costa de Sol where municipal architects now encourage residents to collectively contract private architects to draw up urban plans for their areas as a way to 'officialize' the occupation (Mazzolini 2016)

Middle-classness and housing in Maputo

If we examine the post-Independence period in Maputo, there are essentially four trajectories that have created middle-classness in housing in explicit ways (See Image 1 below). This period covers two major, and one minor (transition), regime period: the immediate post-Independence

Image 1. Overview of Maputo and Matola with the Intaka Community to the far north and the KaTembe peninsula across the Maputo bay.

'proto-socialist' period (1975–1990 approx.), the 'transition' period (1990–1995 approx.) and the neo-liberal period (1995-present).

The initial manifestation of what we term here as middle-classness in residential urban space is manifested in the creation of *enclave communities* – initially for international agency and/or diplomatic personnel in the latter part of the 'proto-socialist' period. In the 'transition' period this state-driven initiative (albeit reacting to requests) then spawned purely private sector investment. While cautious at first, this process of creating (physically separated) enclave communities aimed specifically at an upper middle-class (that may or may not have been resident/national), was manifested in the first private gated developments along the major arterial road Avenida Julius Nyerere. This was in turn mirrored in the transition period by the local government creating a few special up-market housing areas nearby, which were not gated (but socially separated). Sommerschield 2 was the first, shortly followed by an initial extension to Bairro Triunfo on the coast road. In the subsequent 'neo-liberal' period these types of developments multiplied – mostly privately financed, but also with parastatal and state company investment. The favourite location for these was along the coast road but mostly inland given the constrained access to sites along the coast (Melo 2017)

The most recent phenomenon in this line of implicitly state supported, but private investment driven, housing and commercial investment is a series of new high-rise complexes including apartments, shops, offices and parking arising along the coast road to the Costa de Sol bridge. The process of private gated community development has subsequently leapfrogged past the prior natural obstacle of the Costa de Sol area (with very poor access) with the new 'ring road' that extends the coastal road north before circling the urban area. These developments, whether gated or not, are essentially enclaves with socially, if not physically, restricted access (Costa n.d.; Morange et al. 2012). They have proliferated also in other parts of Maputo city, e.g. the national EN1 road north from Bairro Zimpeto outward – and more so in the Matola city periphery, along the relatively new EN4 road to South Africa – and cater to a range of emerging middle-class interests at different income levels, mostly Mozambican. One of the most recently planned middle-class developments follows other major enclave developments elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially in the nature of foreign direct investment FDI. This is the 'Katembe' new city planned with Chinese investment, through building a bridge linking a very under-developed part of the city south of the estuary to the geographically adjacent central city (see more below).

A second manifestation of middle-classness includes selective gentrification of specific non-formal areas – e.g. older occupied inland coastal plain areas of Bairros Polana Caniço & Costa de Sol – as well as widespread gentrification of previous 'class-less' socialist planned areas – e.g. Bairros Laulane, 3 de Fevreiro and Mahotas on the higher plateau above the coastal plain. Some of this latter gentrification also manifests changing economic circumstances for prior existing residents and not only ingress of the better off. The former trend is, however, more obviously 'classically' gentrification with prior residents being bought out and better-off residents occupying and re-developing plots. Some of these areas have been re-developed with collective effort to acquire 'officially planned' status and hence the right to (individual) usufruct land titles (DUAT), but others have been more incremental. This former sub-category has some of the elements of an enclave but one that gradually emerges as prior occupants are bought out and re-located ahead of re-development – but these areas are not developed as physical enclaves *per se*.

While this second sub-category is not physically separated (i.e. 'enclave-like'), it does cover the majority of peri-urban *bairros*, which are favoured for a kind of development (and re-development). Here the middle class usually opt for better located areas vis-à-vis access roads and as well as access to other amenities, as manifested in middle-classness aesthetics. This form of urban aesthetics in fact a core feature of changing Maputo, with residents who probably would not be considered 'middle-class' in economic terms adopting middle-classness in housing solutions, including the incremental manifestation of this phenomenon.

Recent research into the impact of the growing middle-class on the city of Maputo was undertaken in the period 2016–17 – and focused on this second manifestation of middle-classness. Given the lack of socio-economic data for a quantitative definition – and particularly bearing in mind the limitations of such (as discussed above) – the researchers developed spatial proxies as the basis for defining the middle-class in an exploratory manner – focusing on the peri-urban area. These proxies refereed to: (a) physical urban land planning characteristics (through investigation of multiple urban plans including empirical field surveys and interviews); and (b) residential construction characteristics (including the spaces produced and their actual use – again field survey work). These research results affirmed the usefulness of spatial proxy definition (with some possible minor refinements) – but also provided mapping and quantifiable estimates of middle-class expansion in the city fabric (Melo and Jenkins 2019, forthcoming).

The third manifestation of middle-classness – and one that started earliest in the post-Independence period – is through the occupation of alienated state housing stock. As noted above, rental and abandoned housing had been nationalized soon after Independence but then was sold off after

a new political settlement and consequent policy change in the early 1990s. While much of this housing stock was occupied in the immediate post-Independence period, this was originally with relatively little class differentiation, this however manifested itself when the new policy permitted Mozambican tenants to purchase (as only the better-off could afford the prices, even with a marked discount). A significant majority of tenants who were able to purchase their previously rented properties then became landlords due to strong demand from (initially at least) international agencies, and later non-residents linked to private foreign direct investment (FDI).

The strength of demand meant limited improvements were made to these properties, in the early years of renting but through time as alternatives appeared (see below), there was considerable re-investment in re-affirming middle-classness in these residential properties – through the rehabilitation of individual properties and, more contentiously, then the collective areas of apartment blocks and neighbourhoods. The high rentals paid for these well-located properties (vis-à-vis centrality of urban functions and higher order work locations), eventually led to new investment – mostly foreign direct investors with Mozambican institution partners – and in the past 5 years there has been a proliferation of new apartment buildings replacing older individual houses in the most sought-after areas of the city (e.g. Polana Cimento). These are clearly marketed to the new middle-class including foreign nationals, and the multiple supply has led to a general rental fall in these central areas of the city (as demand has also waned somewhat in the most recent period). While this speculative apartment-building impetus slowed down with the impact of the foreign aid reduction – due to discovery of illegal government loans (Hanlon 2016; Navarra and Rodrigues 2018) – within a few years it picked up again, with additional new investment from Turkey and Malaysia (as well as previous Portuguese and Brazilian finance).

The fourth manifestation of middle-classness in residential urban space in Maputo is the development of new state-sponsored housing developments and some directly state-funded new housing developments. While some of the recent city centre apartment buildings and even some of the gated developments along the coast had state involvement, this relatively recent phenomenon has been an initiative by the state to both benefit from the housing demand of the emerging middle-class, but also (importantly) provide improved housing for state employees who would possibly qualify for lower middle-class status, but who also aspire to middle-class ideals in wider ways (e.g. teachers, nurses, public functionaries). Various such small developments have emerged over time – e.g. the areas developed by the parastatal Housing Development Fund (*Fundo de Fomento de Habitação* FFH) – funded theoretically from the sale of nationalized properties, but in fact mostly by new state budget allocations.

However, some large new middle-class developments also have been developed, including the flagship 'Casa Jovem' project to the north of Costa de Sol bridge – a complex of mostly mid- to high-rise apartments blocks, which has been slowly developing under the patronage of past President Joaquim Chissano. Aimed at 'young people' (up to 40 years old), these are relatively well located but still quite expensive. A less expensive version is the Bairro Intaka on the northern outskirts of the city, whose expected residents are first time buyers from the lower middle-class. (The Intaka Community is discussed below). Overall, however, the recent severe reduction in state current funding (with international agencies cutting balance of budget payments due to the illegal loans), has meant these projects ground to a halt – and have still not significantly re-started at the time of writing (mid 2019). So, for instance, house-buyers in Casa Jovem have either lost their investments or have been forced to continue the building projects individually.

In summary, there are multiple ways in which middle-classness has asserted itself in the physical fabric of the city, with perhaps the most widespread still to develop through time in the second manifestation described above – where those who would not normally be considered 'middle-class' in economic definitions still display middle-classness in aesthetic and spatial terms. This is something that has been investigated in recent research as noted above – but for now, this

article will look in more detail at how the embedded ideals of middle-classness are appropriated and manipulated by residents in some of the specifically state-developed middle-class housing areas – i.e. the last of the above four categories.

The Intaka Community

Located just outside Maputo's northern city limits, Intaka is the largest state-led gated community built to date in Mozambique. When it is completed, it will cover an area of 320 hectares and comprise more than 5.000 housing units that will accommodate an expected population of 15–20.000 residents. The building project, which started its second phase with 700 housing units already built and more than 300 occupied, is organized as a collaboration between the national Housing Development Fund and the Henan Guoji Real Estate Ltd., a Chinese construction consortium, and is expected to cost approximately 164 million USD.

Significantly, while Intaka is envisaged and developed as a residential 'privatopia' (McKenzie 1984) detached from the surrounding peri-urban environment and with its own schools, hospital, churches and shopping malls, the ambition with the project was to promote new forms of social collectivities within the compound, based on shared middle-class values. Individual plot sizes vary but most are either 15 × 30 m2 or 20 × 40 m2 with the size of main houses – both detached and semidetached – ranging between 32 and 260 m2. In contrast to many gated communities across the region, whose layout encourages the physical seclusion and privacy of individual households, plots in Intaka are separated only by small 40-centimeter-high fences or wooden crisscrossed 'Belgian' fences reaching halfway across the open areas in front of the houses. According to the chief architect, Daniel Simbine, the interior layout and aesthetics were explicitly inspired by socialist ideals of collective habitation that were first introduced during the initial post-Independence years.

'Frelimo knew that communities are made in public', Simbine told Nielsen during an extended interview in October 2015.

> And therefore they designed their *bairros* without walls and with a strong emphasis on the importance of public spaces, squares and communal activities … To begin with, we didn't even want walls (*nem queriamos fazer muro*). We were envisioning a certain aesthetic … a certain movement, you know. We wanted to encourage daily interactions among the residents.

To the chief architect's bewilderment and frustration, however, the majority of residents already living in Intaka do not seem to share his enthusiasm for social collectivity. The first phase of the building project was completed in 2014 and shortly afterwards, more than 300 housing units were purchased by newcomers having paid circa 25.000 USD for a small two bedroom houses (40 m2) and circa 90.000 USD for three bedroom houses (60–70 m2). On an inspection trip to Intaka in late November 2014, Simbine noticed with surprise that many of these newcomers had already begun to reconfigure the aesthetic design that had been envisioned as a vehicle for creating a tight-knit collective. 'After having made the first payments, some of the residents unfortunately began to erect walls', Simbine explained with a deep sigh. 'While we had imagined a certain aesthetics of openness, they apparently opted for closure and separation … '.

A few days after the interview, Nielsen visited Intaka in order to potentially verify Simbine's puzzling statement. Taking a left turn from the northbound N1 highway, one has to drive more than a kilometre along an unpaved and bumpy dirt road before reaching the guarded entrance to what will eventually become Mozambique's largest gated community. And, to be sure, the contrast between the Intaka Community and the surrounding area is striking. Whereas the peri-urban neighbourhood on the other side of the dirt road is composed mainly by small cement houses and

reed huts built on irregular plots of land, the sections of Intaka Community that have already been completed do initially seem to reflect a surprising uniformity and aesthetic rigidity that is uncommon in many if not most of the city's habitation areas. Traversed by 10-meter wide concrete paved roads, the community is laid out in parallel rows of identical detached or semi-detached houses with painted walls and tile roofs. Whereas the smallest semi-detached houses have only one bedroom, two living rooms and one washroom, the larger detached villas have separate sitting rooms and dining rooms, bedrooms and washrooms.

According to the elegantly designed project catalogue made by the Henan Guoji Real Estate Ltd, the detached villa's 'façade is decorated with unique bricks … The four slopes roof design and the abducent entrance corridor symbolize the high taste of the master' (quoted as written!). Having passed only a few rows of houses, it was abundantly clear that Simbine had been accurate in his description of the area. All houses were surrounded by 40-centimeter-high plastered cement walls painted bright white – on top of the original walls, however, many residents had built additional 2–3-meter-high cement walls and often added electric fences with surveillance cameras monitoring activities on the pavement immediately outside the property (see Image 2 below). Twice, Nielsen even saw security personnel sitting in the shade outside detached houses, which they were clearly guarding.

In order to explore further why so many residents have decided to tweak Intaka' uniform aesthetics and further secure individual plots inside the compound, Nielsen met up with two separate residents, Clara and Oscar, both in their early thirties, who recently moved to the area. Clara and Oscar work as low-level state officials in different ministerial departments and both were living in

Image 2. Different versions of 'add-on walls'. The owner of the corner house completely rebuilt the original wall and added an electric fence. The two neighbouring houses to the right maintained the original walls but added cement structures on top.

rented apartments in the city centre before moving to Intaka. 'I wasn't even thinking of moving here', Clara said with a laugh. They had barely sat down in Clara's air-conditioned living room before she started to explain to Nielsen why she and many other middle-class urbanites had moved to in Intaka. 'We really wanted to get out of the inner city and buy a house in a nice neighbourhood from where we could commute to work but for young people like us, it's simply too expensive'. Oscar nodded. 'Yeah … but Intaka we could afford'. Whereas a two-room house in one of the city's more attractive neighbourhoods would have cost more than 150.000 USD, Clara and Oscar paid around 25.000 USD (1.812.000 MZM) for the detached houses that they were now living in.

Still, despite offering them a unique opportunity of acquiring their own houses away from the everyday chaos, logistical challenges and dysfunctional infrastructure of the inner city, Intaka did not quite fulfill Clara's and Oscar's expectations of what an ideal housing situation might be. When they received their houses, the rooms were completely empty with only a zinc plate as kitchen table, no kitchen appliances, toilet facilities of very poor quality and interior walls that had to be plastered and painted anew. Furthermore, as the building project was still in its second phase, Chinese and local construction workers would traverse their plots on a daily basis and gaze through the windows with little respect of their privacy. 'So we build high walls to secure our privacy', Oscar explained. 'You are inside your own house and if someone passes by, he knows everything that is going on inside your house. But with walls, you can sit outside in your garden as you please' (*com o muro tu podes sentar no teu jardim à vontade*).

To these two ambitious state cadres and many other newcomers living inside the walled compound, Intaka style middle-classness has served as a vehicle for transporting them away from the everyday hardship of living in the city centre but it has not taken them all the way towards the stability of suburban tranquility and safety. Very few residents trust that Intaka's security company can properly protect them when they are inside their private homes. And, more importantly, they do not want to become involved in a social collective that they will soon leave. Many Intaka houses are currently owned by state officials, such as Clara and Oscar, whose career plan is to quickly advance to higher pay rates in order to be able to afford bigger houses in the city's attractive other middle-class suburbs.

The KaTembe New City

In 2011, it was announced that the ruling Frelimo government had signed a memorandum with the Chinese government on the financing of a suspension bridge that will connect the Maputo city centre with the KaTembe Peninsula across the Maputo Bay. A year later, an official loan agreement was signed and on 20 September 2012, the first brick was laid in the ground for the largest public works project to be initiated in Mozambique since the country's independence in 1975. The project was implemented by Maputo Sul, a state institution created for implementing the KaTembe bridge and a new ring road encircling Maputo, in collaboration with the China Road and Bridge Corporation as part of the project of building a new highway that stretches from Maputo to Ponta do Ouro (a distance of 209 km). With a total length of 680 m and towers 135 m high, the suspension bridge is one of the largest on the continent and now connects Maputo with South Africa along this new highway. Several large-scale development projects have been mooted in the now more accessible southern part of Maputo Province due to the bridge (including a possible new East African port at Ponta Dobelo), but the only evidence so far is an expanded (now Chinese-owned) cement product factory near the old Limestone works at Salamanga, and much more tourism/recreational access to Ponta Douro and the Maputo Elephant Reserve.[2]

According to investors, politicians and residents in KaTembe, life in the peninsula is expected to be forever changed with the new bridge. In order to clear the land for the bridge pillars and make space for the planned four-lane highway that now traverses the entire peninsula, several residential areas were demolished and more than 1200 families resettled. Prices on land in the peninsula have sky-rocketed since it was announced that the slow and inefficient ferry that used to take people back and forth across the Maputo Bay would be paralleled by the bridge.[3] As soon as it was announced that there was funding for the new bridge, many local residents were approached by investors and middle-class urbanites wanting to purchase land along the picturesque seaside towards the Maputo Bay before the peninsula was completely urbanized. Indeed, if the government's ambitious urban development plans are realized, a new city may eventually be built on the peninsula comprising more than 2000 housing units intended primarily for the growing middle-class as well as a number of public buildings and plazas, such as a huge 'Heroes' Square' (*Praça dos Heróes*) designed by Chinese architects.

Only a few years after the memorandum was signed by the Mozambican and Chinese governments on the financing of the suspension bridge, an unexpected hindrance slowed down the building process that was otherwise running like clockwork. In the fall of 2014, a huge area stretching across the designated construction zone was illegally occupied by 60–80 families, many of whom came from the Nampula region in the north of Mozambique. Without overall organized coordination, the majority of the families parceled out small plots and built reed huts or, in a few instances, even laid foundations for one- and two-room cement houses. The illegal occupations stretched across an elongated area that was previously used only by small-scale farmers for growing crops and vegetables in separate *machambas* (cultivated fields). Since they first settled in the construction zone, the current occupants cleared the land for their small and irregular plots as well as for the interweaving system of trails and traversing pathways that connect the area to the main dirt road going across the peninsula.

In late September 2015, Nielsen visited the peninsula in order to meet some of the occupants who are currently living within the construction zone. Located some 50-odd meters from a nearby unplanned cluster of reed huts, Almeida built a two-room permanent house for himself, his three children and his wife, Claúdia. While living in Nampula, Almeida tried to make a living as a carpenter and, later, as a fisherman. Over time, both of these projects failed and he therefore, reluctantly, agreed to move his family to Maputo when encouraged to do so by his brother-in-law, who was already living in KaTembe. When Nielsen met Almeida, he was working for a local fisherman while trying to save up money for a small fishing boat that he was planning to buy with his brother-in-law. Still, despite the ambition of creating permanent stability for his family, Almeida was expecting to be leaving KaTembe shortly. 'Yeah', Almeida laughed, 'this cannot be our home (*isso não pode ser a nossa casa*) … this area is for them (Almeida nodded in the direction of the city centre across the Maputo Bay). It's not for Almeida, that's for sure'.

According to Almeida and many other occupants who lived in the construction zone, it would only be a matter of time before some unidentified state cadre would arrive in the peninsula and announce their imminent and potentially forced resettlement. To many occupants, however, the prospect of being resettled was not something they feared or were actively seeking to avoid. Considering the high political priority that the project had – not to mention the public attention it was getting – they judged that the Mozambican government could not afford a prolonged dispute with a group of informal squatters. Hence, as Almeida reasoned, the expected resettlement process would most likely result in his family being allocated a formally parceled plot elsewhere in the city and possibly even with financial compensation for the costs that he and other occupants had endured while illegally occupying land in the peninsula.

Notwithstanding the prospect and, indeed, expectancy of being resettled, Almeida had built a cement-block house, whose aesthetic properties indicated some kind of permanency and stability.

As a reflection of the uncertain economic conditions that many residents in poor and even lower middle-class areas in Maputo live under, a preferred construction strategy is to build houses 'little by little' (*pouco a pouco*) (Jenkins 2013; Nielsen 2016). House-builders will consequently commence construction processes by erecting one cement-block room and add additional ones over time when they have gathered sufficient money beyond what is required in order to secure a basic subsistence level for the household.

And, indeed, the aesthetics of Almeida's house suggested that it had been built *pouco a pouco* with a second room added to the original construction (see Image 3 below). Both parts of the house had the widely preferred sloping roofs, which supposedly create an improved indoor climate with heat ascending. Hence, if Almeida eventually add two additional rooms to the house, it will come to resemble a fan (*ventoinha*) if seen from above – a common lower income housing aesthetic (Lage 2001). After the interview, Almeida invited Nielsen to see the house and was soon caught up in a detailed step-by-step account of the construction process. 'It's beautiful, right?', Almeida smiled and stepped a few metres back to get a proper view of the building.

> It might not be one of those *classe média* (middle-class) houses that the Chinese are building here but it is sufficient for my family. And if we can't stay here, they will have to build another house like this for us somewhere else.

Ideological debris

During the last decade, Africa has experienced stable economic growth at around 5% annually, which makes it the second fastest-growing continent in the world (Economic Commission for

Image 3. Two recently built cement block houses in the designated construction zone in KaTembe. Almeida's house is the one to the far right.

Africa 2013; for a critique of the African 'success story' see also Taylor 2016). What is particularly noteworthy about this promising growth rate is that it is increasingly also fueled by domestic consumption rather than predominantly mineral and energy resources, or other commodity production. According to Lopes, 'growth in private consumption and investment … is expected to continue to drive overall GDP growth, based on consumer confidence and an expanding middle-class' (2015, 1).

If middle-class is defined in absolute terms based on daily consumption between $2 and $20 (an enormous margin of difference), then, by 2010, the African middle-class had risen to 34.3% of the population from 26.2% in 1980 and it is expected to continue to grow so that in 2060, it will comprise 42% of the population (Ncube et al. 2011). Both politically and economically, the middle-class is increasingly envisioned as 'Africa's future' (Ncube and Lufumpa 2014). As urban citizens – and not least as consumers – members of the middle-class are expected to spend an increasing proportion of the household income on consumer goods, housing, foodstuff and civic activities (e.g. participation in interest groups, NGOs, political associations). By introducing new and intensified patterns of income consumption, the middle-class will thus supposedly rebalance the African economy towards greater dependency on domestic demand and bolster macro-economic and democratic gains.

However, despite the above promising projections for Africa's urban middle-class, income inequality remains extremely high. In 2008, about 100,000 Africans had a net worth of 800 billion USD, which is roughly equivalent to 60% of Africa's GDP (or 80% of sub-Saharan Africa's GDP) (Lynch 2010). At the other end of the economic spectrum, there is increasing evidence of a conspicuous movement from the poor to the lowest segment of the middle-class; what is considered as the 'floating middle-class' with per capita consumption levels between $2 and $4 per day (Ncube and Lufumpa 2014). In a recent report by the African Development Bank (Ncube et al. 2011), it is estimated that 21% of Africa's population falls in this category while 61% falls below the $2 poverty line. Still, while the growing size of the floating middle-class indicates a significant change in the economic composition of many African populations, there has been surprisingly little movement of this class into the more stable section of the middle-class with consumption levels between $4–$20 per day. An imminent challenge for African urban policy makers is therefore to consolidate the floating middle-class by facilitating a gradual transition towards the lower middle-class for the many urbanites who still live on $2–$4 per day.

At the face of it, Maputo's recent building boom seems to indicate that local policy makers are taking seriously the need to consolidate the growing urban middle-class. As noted above, driving through the inner city, it is impossible not to notice the many new construction projects that are being initiated mainly by local entrepreneurs or through state-private collaborations with international building consortia. To take one prominent example: in 2012, there were more than 80 gated compounds in and around the city centre with around 30 complexes of 5–10 hectares concentrated along the picturesque Costa do Sol road bordering the coastline (Costa n.d.). According to recent ethnographic research carried out by one of the authors, at least fifteen more complexes have been built in the same area during the last five years.

What we need to ask ourselves, however, is whether these and many other recent urban initiatives do, in fact, represent a serious and concerted attempt at consolidating the growing but still extremely fragile floating and lower middle-class? This, in particular, was a key driving question for the above-mentioned research into the impact of the growing middle class on the city fabric. Jenkins (2009) had suggested that a growing middle class would assert their political and economic power through manipulating regulatory processes – essentially asserting their 'right to the city' – to the detriment of lower-income groups. The recent research not only found evidence that this has, indeed, been happening but that the local government has explicitly turned to focus its (albeit limited) urban land planning activity for the middle-class – away from the socialist-inspired

urban programmes of the earlier period. Not only so, but despite capacity limitations, which have been drastically aggravated with the recent economic crisis that followed the already mentioned debt scandal, this state-led activity is pronounced both within the Maputo and (especially) Matola city limits – but even more so in the adjoining Boane and Marracuene districts of Maputo Province – creating a de facto metropolitan area (Melo and Jenkins 2019, forthcoming).

Over and above this state-led land planning initiative, and returning to focus on exclusive middle-class urban construction, Morange et al. (2012, 17) recently argued that the increasing number of private enclaves that are being built in and around Maputo for higher-income groups 'make up for the lack of public resources … As a result, the municipality even turns a blind eye to the building of such complexes on land where construction is supposed to be restricted'. Indeed, even during the period prior to the debt scandal when the national economy was steadily growing at an annual average of 7.5%, the Mozambican government has been extremely inefficient in providing a viable socio-economic infrastructure for the population as a whole (Hanlon 2007).[4] According to UN Habitat (2016), in 2014 80.3% of the urban population[5] was living in slum areas with 49.1% (of the entire population) living below the poverty line. At the same time, the extended period of stable economic growth intensified a process of accumulation by a national capitalist class that is feeding on the privatization of public assets, such as urban housing, without encountering political conditionalities or serious popular resistance. Following Castel-Branco (2015, 3), it may thus be argued that,

> (T)he government's preference for social porosity and private appropriation of surplus suggests that the porosity of the economy plays a strategic role in accelerating private capital accumulation, which has become the focus of public policy and its interaction with private capital.

In this unstable and, indeed, economically porous environment, *middle-classness* is only partially a medium for 'self-promotion through a standard set of architectural and domestic elements' (Holston 1991, 458). To urbanites as differently positioned as Clara and Oscar living in the already built section of the new Intaka Community on the northern outskirts of the city and Almeida and Claúdia, who were illegally occupying a two-room cement house in the KaTembe peninsula across the Maputo Bay, middle-classness is primarily an aesthetic conduit of social mobility that will supposedly transport them from a previous and unstable position and towards a subsequent more secure one. None of these four young urbanites expect to remain where they are for extended periods of time. Either of their own volition or pressured to do so by state authorities, they will be relocating to other areas of the city, which may (or may not) provide permanent stability and security – but can provide them with another, improved, outlet for their aspirations to middle-classness.

As an interstitial position from which to advance towards a desired future elsewhere in the city, we argue that middle-classness articulates a peculiar political-cum-aesthetic vision of the city. With a national government that is clearly prioritizing the interests of a small capitalist elite to the detriment of the majority of the population who live in extreme poverty, the promotion of the middle-class citizen as a vanguard warrior for the urban population seems far-fetched even to those, who might be captured by this vaguely defined category. Indeed, to many urbanites, such as Clara, Oscar, Almeida and Cláudia, middle-classness is a symbol of a utopian urban future that few Mozambicans have never truly felt they could believe in – but with which many nevertheless engage actively in the hope of pursuing alternative urban trajectories.

Middle-classness as aesthetic moral community

When a dominant trope, such as middle-classness, ceases to index a stable relationship between content and form, the political signification that it may carry becomes equally ambiguous.

Without a relationship of necessity between the different layers of political signification, the system of representation is essentially flattened into a singular surface of interweaving signs and tropes that are no longer hierarchically distributed (Rancière 2004, 2009, 2010; see also Zizek 1989, 1999). There is no structuring correspondence between concept and phenomenon, you might say, and this is what establishes new circulations of signs and tropes, desires and affects. As argued by Rancière (2004), such disruptions of existing conceptual arrangements are also a way of implementing equality: there is no hierarchical differentiation between the written and the experienced or, for that matter, between the factual and the fictional.

Crucially, however, the collapse of a stable relation of correspondence between form and content does not imply that potent political tropes, such as middle-classness, suddenly disappear or lose importance. Rather, in such instances, key tropes may become invested with incommensurable registers of significance that allow for the simultaneous readability and an experience of almost uncanny incomprehension. And it is the 'perceptual shock' that is caused by the articulation of such diverse registers of significance through the key trope that may result in the production of new arrangements of signification; what Rancière describes as a 'redistribution of the sensible' (op.cit., 43, 63).

Long before it can be evaluated whether the promises of stability and security that middle-class consolidation in fact deliver what has (speculatively) been projected – leading to substantial improvements of overall life conditions for the city's growing population, -'formal' middle-classness is potentially exhausting itself as a social, economic and aesthetic utopian ideal. Still, as we argue, it is precisely because middle-classness ex post facto starts to exhaust its own potentials, that it may also allow a new form of insurgent urbanity to assert itself with particular acuity and force. In contrast to the poor urbanites in São Paulo, described by Holston (1991) – who use middle-class housing aesthetics as a vehicle for social differentiation and internal identification – the 'moral community' of Maputo residents (such as Clara, Oscar, Almeida and Cláudia) is one that is founded on the vacuity of middle-classness.

To Almeida, the house that he was building in KaTembe did not necessarily articulate a set of moral urban values that he identified with. And, equally, Clara never wanted to be part of the Intaka collective, whose moral aesthetics might allow for a distantiation from the inner-city chaos but which still does not catapult her into the privileged echelons of society. The insurgent citizenship, to stay with Holston's apt term (2008), of these urbanites is one that is enacted by playing on the incommensurability of different registers of middle-classness. To all four Maputo urbanites cited above, middle-classness is an aesthetic form, which clearly cannot deliver what it promises. The imaginary of middle-class housing – as an immediate pathway to economic and political privileges, new patterns of consumption and social stability i- s as fractured and incoherent as the political system which promotes it. And that is precisely why it may allow for new openings and possibilities.

To paraphrase Rancière (2004), middle-classness may give rise to a 'perceptual shock' that results in the 'redistribution of the sensible' when it is used as a conduit for movement away from itself. Put somewhat differently, it is precisely because of the fractured relationship between the concept and its content that it becomes possible for urbanites, such as Clara, Oscar, Almeida and Cláudia, to articulate a new form of urban insurgency. This is through their engagement with land and housing – as on-going negotiations between the simultaneous but incommensurable registers of significance. Judging from the aesthetics of their houses, all four urbanites described in this article seem to take middle-classness very seriously: they have purchased or are in the process of building houses which overtly express widely recognized middle-class ideals. At the same time, the alleged identification with middle-class values is flatly rejected by all four urbanites, to whom it serves to activate a fragile urban system, which is characterized predominantly by its own incapacities.

Being extremely cognizant of the government's political and economic priorities, Clara and Oscar aspire to eventually buying houses in one of the city's upper middle-class neighbourhoods. On a day-to-day basis, they are confronted by the limited public attention to the needs of the lower middle-class and so they consider the Intaka Community as nothing but a stepping-stone towards eventual inclusion in the only urban community with political clout and social recognition; namely the increasingly powerful capitalist elite. In the KaTembe peninsula, Almeida and Cláudia have no aspirations of remaining in their small two-room cement house. In contrast to certain poorer peri-urban areas of the city, where the imitation of state-defined urban building standards is often a sufficiently powerful strategy for acquiring relatively secure occupancy (Andersen, Jenkins, and Nielsen 2015; Nielsen 2010, 2011), the activation of middle-class aesthetics in KaTembe is a way of negotiating the terms of relocation – albeit most likely to a site that is further away from the city centre that their current location. In both situations, it is the simultaneous vacuity and importance of the political and economic trope that allows these entrepreneurial urbanites to experimentally assign new socio-cultural coordinates to their life in the city.

Conclusion

In the still half-built Intaka Community and in the future construction site for the KaTembe 'New City', we argue that middle-classness is elicited as a fracture in the urban fabric actualized by groups of urbanites who do not desire the middle-class status envisioned by the developing authorities. In the Intaka Community, residents re-configure the material aesthetics of the area in order to separate themselves from a collective that is based on supposed state-sanctioned middle-class values but to which they do not want to remain attached. And, in the KaTembe peninsula, squatters invaded the building site for the 'New City' and commenced building reed huts and laying foundations for cement-block houses in order to be resettled elsewhere. None of these processes are explicitly expressed in an idea of middle-classness as an ideal in itself – and none of the involved urbanites want to remain in the areas where they are currently living – and, still, the surprising effect is the articulation of their conception of middle-classness with a dominant utopian ideology for urban living. While both examples do constitute 'extreme cases' (Flyvbjerg 2001), they are essentially intensified manifestations of broader socio-political tendencies, which, we argue, will massively impact the Mozambican society *writ large* in years to come.

Hence, in this paper, we have ethnographically examined middle-classness as a form of urban differentiation (manifested in urban land and housing options) that distinguishes itself by a particular kind of utopian deferral. By its very material constitution and insurgent re-configurations, Mozambican middle-classness seems to facilitate an almost mystical aspirational movement from the past through to a future – that, however, it no longer controls. In a sense, middle-classness asserts itself foremost as an activation of a utopian impulse that underpins a widespread propensity to long for and imagine a life otherwise (cf. Bloch 1986). Wilde (1930) describes Utopia as the land we aspire to reach but which, when we think we have arrived, is quickly revealed to be far from perfection. In a similar manner, middle-classness invests the present with an uncanny sense of existential otherness that serves as a reminder that any final destination is yet again projected onto a still unknown future. Rather than outlining the contours of an idealistic urban community, it suggests the method for getting there is necessarily 'accompanied by the recognition of provisionality, responsibility and necessary failure' (Levitas 2007, 290; see also Miyazaki 2004).

In his study of auto-construction (*autoconstrução*) in peri-urban areas of Brazil, Holston (1991) states that,

> (F)or millions of working-class Brazilians the experience of the auto-constructed house in the urban periphery crystallizes in an especially legible, public and urgent way their experience of modern

> society and their images of a better future. This is to argue that auto-construction engages them in the modern knowledge-world through an essential new sense of agency, both political and personal. (…) Nevertheless, the paradox of auto-construction is that it develops through the reiteration of the kinds of (…) relations that ground the very social order that exploits them as workers. (Holston 1991448)

Similar to the Brazilian house-builders living on the fringes of the city, urbanites in Maputo are *de facto* acting themselves into politics by actively manipulating the physical materiality that anchors their current spatial occupancies and associated affordances. The Mozambican situation differs from the Brazilian one so vividly described by Holston, however, in terms of the temporal fixity afforded by middle-classness. Rather than considering formalized middle-class housing as a final destination, to many Maputo urbanites, it affords them with an opportunity that potentially allows them to leap into more desirable futures elsewhere in the city – which represent 'other' and potentially insurgent manifestations of middle-classness.

Notes

1. Holston emphasizes that 'people practice everyday citizenship because it is in their self-interest, because it gives them rights, powers and privileges' (ibid., 17). Still, as is seen from his analyses of insurgent urban movements, this does not entail solipsist egoism, as it requires social relations and public performances to establish objective and subjective claims.
2. Whether such large-scale development projects will ever take off is questionable, given the experience of the Maputo Corridor, when many such economic objectives were also mooted, but never realized – and the corridor serving more for commercial access and tourism (not to mention smuggling).
3. In fact most local residents – and quite a few tourists – still use the ferry boat as it is much cheaper and gives better access to the city centre as well as the northern coastline of KaTembe – where the majority live (and most restaurants etc are located).
4. With the debt crisis, the pace of Mozambique's economic growth was drastically reduced from 7.4% in 2014 to 3.8% in 2016 (The World Bank 2017). Shortly thereafter, there were signs of some improvements. In the first quarter of 2017, the GDP growth picked up to 2.9%.
5. In 2015, the urban population was 8,737,000 million (UN Habitat 2016).

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