

1 Introduction

Peri-urban Areas as the Habitat of the Future

Episode 1:

Once in the street, the Italian seemed overcome by the coolness of the afternoon. The market women were clearing up their goods and an immense peace seemed to be returning to the inner recess of things. Risi sat down in the only bar in town. He seemed to want to be alone and I respected his wish. I sat myself down further away, enjoying my dose of fresh air. People passed by and greeted the foreigner in a friendly manner. Many minutes went by and I asked him whether he wanted to return to the guesthouse. He didn't want to. He didn't feel like anything except to stay where he was, away from his room and far from his duties. I sat down next to him. He looked at me as if for the first time:

Who are you?

I'm your translator.

I can speak and understand. The problem isn't the language. What I don't understand is this world here

(Couto 2004: 25–26).

The opening paragraph of this dissertation originates from Mozambican writer Mia Couto's¹ famous novel *The Last Flight of the Flamingo* (*O Último Voo do Flamingo in Portuguese original*). It plays at the end of Mozambique's civil war, when the Italian United Nations officer Massimo Risi is sent to the village of Tizangara to investigate the mysterious deaths of local United Nations peacekeepers, who have suddenly been blown up. The local Joaquim is the narrator of the story. He is the visiting stranger's assistant and translator. In the quoted scene from the beginning of the

¹ Born in the Mozambican city Beira in 1955, Mia Couto worked as a journalist at the time of the 1975 Independence. Since then, he published several collections of poetry, short stories, and novels of international reputation and translated into several language Couto 2004: front cover.

novel, he describes Risi's first encounters with the villagers, which are marked by deep frustration due to various misinterpretations and misunderstandings.

Throughout the novel, author Mia Couto links these problems of understanding to the clash of different worlds and cultures, each with their own meanings and interpretations of situations and things. Not only in terms of the differences to the life-world of the European officer Risi, but also in terms of the diversity of Mozambican worlds, such as between generations or between the state administration and the local population.

As in the context of qualitative social research at large, this dissertation's empirical research process was likewise characterised by the interpretations and understandings of social situations. In intersubjective encounters, the researcher and the research participant come together in moments of spatio-temporal immediacy. Afterwards, each one leaves the other to make his or her own interpretations of the encounter. As the second episode from the field aims to illustrate, the initial phase of the empirical research was particularly decisive in this regard:

Episode 2:

The drive out of Maputo's centre was unusually fast. The otherwise busy streets were still empty. It was Saturday morning at 7 am, and the sun was just rising. After arriving at secluded Pescadores beach (cf. photo 1), we had to wait more than an hour for the tide to come in before sailing over to Xefina Island. The two fishermen waited patiently, as they do it every day. We met them a few days earlier when they invited us to accompany them. On the way to the island, I was allowed to take the helm of the boat, and they showed me how to steer it properly. Xefina is infamously known for its advanced erosion, and some old Portuguese fortifications are meanwhile almost entirely swallowed by the sea. We asked them how they perceived the environmental changes and how they would affect their lives. They asked us about the beach in Germany and the fish we would catch there. Later, on the island, we could see the Maputo skyline in the distance, with its modern and ever-increasing office and apartment towers. One of the fishermen eventually said: "from here, the city looks beautiful, but to be there in the midst of it? That's not for me!"

On the one hand, there is the interpretation of my colleague and myself, us immersed in our world of geographical thoughts, asking typical researcher questions. On the other hand, the two fishermen are placed in their everyday life's reality at Maputo's coast, asking their typical fisherman questions. For each of us, the world as we know it represents the reality taken for granted. It is the most common thing for me as a researcher to be curious about environmental processes, as it is for the fishermen to earn a living just by being a fisherman. However, as in Mia Couto's novel, it is not only the cross-cultural difference that arrests attention but also the differences re-



Photo 1: Pescadores beach at low tide

Source: Photo by author (2019)

garding different local worlds. Although being residents of Maputo, both fishermen prefer to keep a distance from its urban core, sharing a sense of discomfort with the strangeness of the urban world. After all, this pertinent moment was productive in guiding this research. It means that all individuals take a subjective perspective on the world in which they live and come to their own interpretations of it. Finally, one inevitably has to embark on this subjective perspective to understand this world and the reality that the individual is facing.

This dissertation takes the subjectivity of perspectives as its starting point. Based on the example of the Mozambican capital, Maputo, it seeks to understand a world that has not yet received the necessary scholarly attention it deserves. The peri-urban areas on the outskirts of African cities represent the centre of this world, the meaningful life-worlds of countless peri-urban dwellers the object of investigation. Against this background, the introduction to this dissertation presents the relevance and motivation for this research (cf. chapter 1.1.), followed by the research objectives (cf. chapter 1.2.) and a brief outline of its structure (cf. chapter 1.3.).

1.1 Relevance and Motivation

Africa's urban geography is currently experiencing overwhelming transformations. The cities on the continent are increasing at an accelerated pace. Between 1950 and 2015, the urban population grew by 2,000 %. The number of its cities increased from 624 to 7,617 (OECD/SWAC 2020: 15). Africa represents the world's most rapidly urbanising continent, with an urban growth rate being 11 times more rapid than in Europe (UN-Habitat 2016: 7). While the world is currently home to 4.2 billion city dwellers, this number is expected to rise by 2.5 billion to a total of 6.7 billion people in 2050. Africa and Asia together will account for 90 % of this growth. Within this period, the African urban population is about to triple, and its share of the world's urban population is projected to grow by more than 70 % (from 13 % in 2018 to 22 % in 2050) (UN-DESA 2019b: 10).

2007 marked the historical point when the global urban population exceeded the global rural population for the first time. But only in 1950, 70 % of the world's population was still rural. One century later, in 2050, the distribution will be nearly the inverse, with 68 % of the global population being urban. With its dynamic catching-up urbanisation, the African population will be 59 % urban by 2050, while it is currently still just over 40 % (UN-DESA 2019b: 5–7).

Mozambique is symbolic of the African continent's demographic developments. In 2019, the country had a population of 30.4 million people, with an annual population increase of 2.9 %. By 2050, the population is expected to double and exceed 65 million people (UN-DESA 2019a: 826–828). Whereas in 1990, the number of the Mozambican urban population was 3.3 million (25 % of the total population), it has meanwhile tripled to almost 11 million (36 % of the total population). By 2050, another triplication is projected with roughly 37 million people, accounting for 55 % of the country's total population (UN-DESA 2019b: 21).

The Mozambican capital, Maputo, was merely home to 92,000 inhabitants in 1950. Within the following decade, it grew by 100 % to 181,000 inhabitants. In 1980, it exceeded 500,000, and around the turn of the millennium, the mark of 1 million inhabitants was surpassed, while the neighbouring city Matola almost reached half a million (UN-DESA 2015: 338) (cf. figure 1). Facing these numbers, the population of Maputo is still moderate compared with the megacities on the African continent such as Cairo, Kinshasa or Lagos (UN-DESA 2019b: 18). However, the situation of the Mozambican capital is still emblematic for the developments on the continent.

The reasons for the rapidity of Africa's urban growth are the natural increase in the population and continued rural-urban migration flows (UN-Habitat 2020: 12). In Mozambique, 44.4 % of the population is younger than 15 years. The country exhibits a fertility rate of almost five births per woman (UN-DESA 2019a: 823). On the other hand, cities grow, and urban areas expand towards their peripheries. Hence, neighbouring settlements are incorporated, and former rural areas are reclassified as

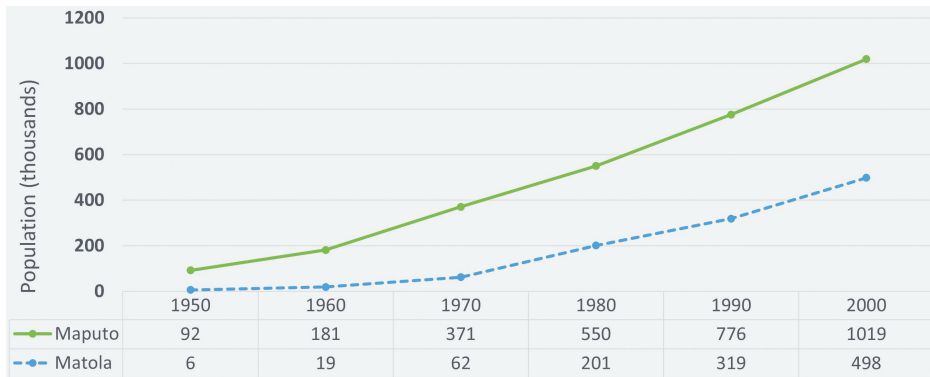


Figure 1 Population growth of Maputo and Matola between 1950 and 2000

Source: Illustration by author based on data from UN-DESA (2015: 338)

urban settlements (UN-DESA 2019b: 14). The urban sprawl of agglomerations and the in-situ urbanisation of pre-existing rural habitats are significant components of Africa's urban growth. These developments are explained by the flows of rural-urban migration and increasingly by the flows of populations from the city centres towards the urban peripheries (OECD/SWAC 2020: 26).

The emergence of vast peri-urban areas represents the most striking outcome of these dynamics. Peri-urban spaces are located at the frontier of the growing and expanding cities. They absorb the bulk of the arriving population. With an increase in the population, the area occupied by settlements increases even faster. Thus, the already tremendous spatial extensions of peri-urban areas continue to expand further towards the rural hinterlands. According to a study with a sample of 120 cities worldwide, between 1990 and 2000, the built-up area of these cities grew two-thirds faster than the rate of their populations (Angel 2015: 2).

According to estimations of Cattaneo et al. (2021: 1), one-fourth of the global population is already living in peri-urban areas of smaller cities. In this regard, Ravetz et al. (2013: 14) highlight that peri-urban areas “may become the most common type of living and working situation in the world in the twenty-first century”. Thus, places in peri-urban environments will be the centre of the life-worlds of the future urban populations. In proximity to both urban and rural areas, they represent a unique environment and habitat where the lines between the urban and the rural are increasingly blurred (OECD/SWAC 2020: 15).

However, peri-urban spaces still suffer from a lack of attention from scholars and policymakers. In particular, the failure to accept their persistence as an inseparable ingredient of African urbanisation processes denies the social dimensions of peri-urbanity as being the habitat of the future. Instead, most contemporary conceptualisations describe them in terms of territorial dimensions and functional characteristics or by foregrounding their transitional character (Follmann 2022: 5). Simon

(2008: 168), for example, criticises the hitherto “widespread perception that the urban fringe represented a short-term transitional area that had little enduring and importance”. Too often, peri-urban spaces are regarded with an overemphasis on their negative features, such as the “front line between the problems of the city and the countryside” (Ravetz et al. 2013: 14). Furthermore, by emphasising their deficiencies, either by losing rural features (e.g., biodiversity, fertile soils, cultivable land, etc.) or by lacking urban characteristics (e.g., infrastructure, services, etc.) (Allen 2003: 136). Thus, there is a need to look at peri-urban areas not only by their negative features but also by foregrounding the opportunities and benefits for its growing populations (Ravetz et al. 2013: 13–14).

A closer look at Maputo’s urbanisation dynamics reveals that its peri-urban areas are not a transitional phenomenon but habitat of the future for the generations to come. The urban sprawl of the capital has long reached beyond its municipal boundaries. The agglomeration already encompasses the neighbouring city of Matola and extends far into the province of Maputo (cf. figure 2). The continuous built-up area’s extension from Maputo’s centre to northern Bobole already measures 40 km. According to the most recent census from 2017, 1.1 million people reside in Maputo. Together with the province’s population and its capital Matola, the number adds up to 3.1 million. Until 2050, the growth for the city of Maputo is only projected at 0.2 million. However, the province’s population will increase by 160 % and become the home of an additional 3.2 million inhabitants (cf. figure 3) (INE 2017a, 2017b). Hence, the immense population growth does not take place within the urban core areas but rather outside in its peri-urban surroundings.

In Maputo and in other cities of the region, the territory of the peri-urban sprawl already stretches across municipal boundaries. Different administrative units at different government levels (e.g., local, municipal, regional) are responsible for sectors like transportation or land-use planning and the provision and maintenance of infrastructures and services like roads, water, energy, and waste management. Likely, these are equipped with different resources and capacities and a lack of cooperation may result in uncertainty and conflicts regarding the division of responsibilities (Allen 2003: 138; Simon et al. 2006: 11–12). Besides these aspects of “institutional fragmentation” (Allen 2003: 138), peri-urban areas are also typically characterised by governance arrangements where customary institutions and norms exist in parallel to statutory state law (Tacoli 2003: 7; Förster & Koechlin 2018: 232).

For local, municipal and regional authorities, peri-urbanisation processes are associated with “profound governance and planning challenges” (Simon 2021: 2). Indeed, the dynamic pace and extensive scale of the transformations make it impossible for urban structures to emerge simultaneously on the scale required. Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, the rapid transition from a rural to an urban society is clearly overstressing the capacity of governments to provide land, adequate housing, jobs and services. Urban structures are overstrained, and cities are unable to accommo-

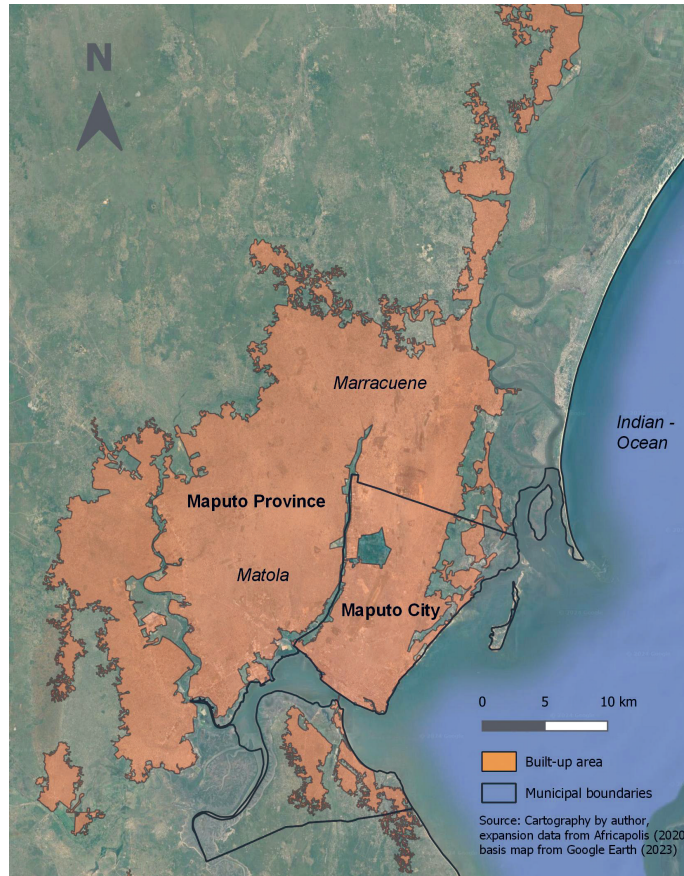


Figure 2 Map of the urban expansion of Maputo beyond its municipal boundaries

date the influx of migrants and the growing urban-born population (Simon 2008: 169). In line with the already weak capacities of postcolonial nation-states, much of the infrastructure and service provision is realised outside of central state control, but through the self-sufficiency of the population (Jenkins & Smith 2001; Simone 2004).

Thus, according to Lund (2006: 686), it is distinctive for postcolonial nation-states of sub-Saharan Africa that “there is no shortage of institutions aiming to exercise authority”. Alongside the authority of the state, they constitute “places in which diverse and competing claims to power and logics of order co-exist, overlap and intertwine, namely the logic of the ‘formal’ state, of traditional ‘informal’ societal order, and of globalisation and associated social fragmentation” (Boege et al. 2008: 10). Situated between the urban and the rural worlds, peri-urban areas are a particular arena where a variety of different actors coexists, interact, and compete for resources. In-

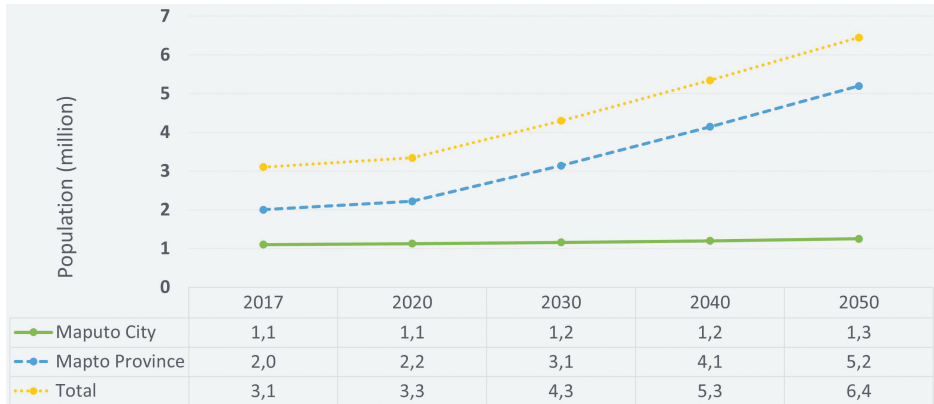


Figure 3 Population projection of Maputo City and Maputo Province
 Source: Illustration by author based on data from INE (2017a, 2017b)

deed, they are characterised by their heterogeneous social composition, which refers to the common presence of different actors in the same spatial context, often as opponents with diverging interests and perceptions (Brook & Dávila 2000: 1; Allen 2003: 137). The composition of actors, however, is not in a stable state but, as Allen (2003: 137) reminds us, “subject to change over time, in a process characterized by the fluctuating incorporation of new stakeholder”.

Issues regarding the social inequalities inherent to peri-urbanisation processes are barely emphasised by scholars (Narain 2014: 974). Likewise, concepts considering power to examine peri-urban contestations and conflicts (Mbiba & Huchzermeyer 2002: 127). In line with the aforementioned failure to taken the persistence of peri-urban areas as serious, Bartels et al. (2020: 1238) add that “neglecting peri-urbanisation as a phenomenon entails disregarding inequalities that are embedded in the processes of peri-urbanisation or emerge in peri-urban spaces”. Researching peri-urban processes, therefore, has to go beyond its descriptive character and explicitly include analyses of power to assess peri-urban conflicts and contestations between different social actors (Mbiba & Huchzermeyer 2002: 127–128).

Once again, Maputo is emblematic of these dynamic rather than static peri-urban realities. In particular, the city’s northern coastal plain. With the recent construction of the *Circular de Maputo* ring road system in 2017, vast tracts of land have suddenly become accessible for urban expansion processes (Beja da Costa & Mazzolini 2021). As a result, the life-worlds of long-time peri-urban dwellers and local farming communities are confronted with the emergence of new actors in their surroundings, such as middle-class residents, investors, and municipal authorities. These developments are accompanied by even more profound changes, such as new institutional arrangements and land tenure systems. With the rapid expansion of the city to its periphery, competition for resources is increasing and the growing commodifica-

tion of land poses significant threats to the agricultural practices and customary systems. In this regard, peri-urban areas constitute “spaces in which contestation associated with different practices and values of different domains takes place” (Long 2001: 59).

Returning to the initial quote from Mia Couto’s novel, the peri-urban interface (PUI) represents primarily also a social interface where different worlds and meanings collide and clash (Long 1989: 1–2). The lack of an understanding of each other’s world leads to misinterpretations and the incompatibility of actors’ perspectives and interests to far-reaching conflicts. Many of the conflicts and contestations associated with development processes occurring on the outskirts of cities arise precisely from the lack of a proper understanding of peri-urban spaces. It is necessary to understand peri-urban life-worlds in order to arrive at possible explanations for the causes of discontinuities and conflicts. This means that it is inevitable to embark on the subjective perspective and to come to see and interpret the world from the point of view of the acting subject.

1.2 Objectives and Research Questions

Given the multiple challenges that peri-urban spaces pose to scholars, practitioners, and planners, Brook et al. (2003b: 134) aptly describe them as “a space crying out for attention”, which this dissertation is envisaged to pay. It embarks on the presumption that at the outskirts of Africa’s rapidly growing and expanding cities, the ideal-type and simplistic dichotomy of being either urban or rural has long ceased being a reality (Simon et al. 2006: 4). At the peri-urban interface, where the urban and the rural features interact and intertwine, new categories of sociality, places and spaces emerge. They constitute not just a fringe between the city and the countryside but rather “a new kind of multifunctional territory” (Ravetz et al. 2013: 13). Since our being in the world and our relation to land, environment, and places is, without doubt, a two-way and reciprocal dependence (Malpas 2018 [1999]), these emerging peri-urban spaces also shape specific peri-urban life-worlds and vice-versa.

The life-world as the “total sphere of experiences of an individual” (Schütz 1970: 320) and the mental horizons of peri-urban dwellers expand continuously, thus producing “a new awareness of one’s place in the world of opportunities, dangers, and risks that we inhabit, along with cultural changes in individual attitudes and conduct that occur at seemingly hyper-rapid speed” (Friedmann 2016: 164). Through a phenomenological life-world perspective and by reconstructing peri-urban space and place experiences, it becomes possible to gain empirical insights into peri-urban existences. These are helpful to address the complex challenges for governance and planning, and the inequalities which are produced (and reproduced) in peri-urban areas (Simon 2021: 1–2; Bartels et al. 2020: 1238).

Indeed, solutions for the diverse conflicts over land use and land access which result from rapid developments that often take place outside officially planned interventions (Simon 2021: 1–2), require a change in perspective which has to embark on the perspectives of the ones immediately experiencing it. Bartels et al. (2020: 1243) argue that for a better understanding of peri-urbanisation, it is “important to place in the foreground the descriptions and understandings of their environments by people who live in spaces categorised by scholars as peri-urban”.

Using the example of Maputo’s peri-urban coastal plain, this dissertation seeks to explore the intrinsic qualities of everyday life in peri-urban areas. At the same time, it aims to assess peri-urban governance arrangements, state-society interactions, and the multiple contestations and conflicts that arise between different actors. On the one hand, this requires an inductive approach by the phenomenological life-world perspective. Based on the reconstruction of the subjective experiences of peri-urban dwellers, it seems more appropriate than other approaches for exploring the essential qualities of peri-urban spaces. On the other hand, the deductive actor perspective is indispensable for assessing peri-urban governance and conflicts. Thus, from the disciplinary starting point of human geography and based on a critical realist ontology, this dissertation combines life-world phenomenology with an actor-oriented approach.

Against this background, this dissertation pursues two fundamental research objectives. The first is to understand peri-urban life-worlds, and the second is to explain peri-urban governance and conflicts. Two research questions underpin each overarching research objective:

Objective 1: Understanding peri-urban life-worlds

1. What does it mean to be a peri-urban dweller in Maputo?
2. What spatial, temporal, and social dimensions of lived experiences are constitutive of peri-urban life-worlds, and what are the constitutive dimensions of peri-urbanity?

Objective 2: Explaining peri-urban governance and conflicts

3. How do actors act and interact in shaping peri-urban governance in Maputo, and how do state-society interactions evolve?
4. How do peri-urban dwellers experience urban expansion processes and state interventions, and how do these cause social discontinuities and conflicts at the peri-urban interface in Maputo?

From a phenomenological and life-world perspective, human experiences represent the primordial epistemological perspective for conducting social research. Thus, phenomenology’s concern with the essential meaning of people’s experiences is crucial for addressing the first research objective. According to van Manen (2016: 42), a phenomenological question asks what a phenomenon “really” is like. Therefore, in

order to understand peri-urban life-worlds, this research seeks to explore what it is really like to live in Maputo's peri-urban spaces. Thus, following van Manen (2016), it must ask about what it means to be a peri-urban dweller in Maputo. Moreover, the stratification of the life-world into the spatial, temporal, and social dimension is most central to Schütz's work and thus to this dissertation (Schütz & Luckmann 1973). The life-world dimensions of the lived body, space, time, and relations are universal and guide empirical life-world research through a reflective and comprehensive inquiry (van Manen 2016: 101–102). The reconstruction of the lived experiences of the life-world dimensions is therefore, as a second research question, essential for a proper understanding of peri-urban life-worlds.

The second research objective is to explain peri-urban governance and conflicts. Interactions between actors are inherent in governance processes and in situations of contradiction and conflict. An actor perspective focuses on the actions of actors and their interactions in social situations. Thus, the third research question concerns peri-urban governance such as the provision of public goods and services through actors. It asks about the actors involved beyond the state, and how interaction with the state evolves. The fourth research question asks about the social discontinuities and conflicts in Maputo's dynamic interface situations. In particular, about the conflicts caused by urban expansion processes and state interventions such as new institutional arrangements and land tenure systems. Thus, explaining peri-urban governance and conflicts means acquiring knowledge about the causes of actions and predicting their outcomes. However, the life-world perspective of actors must be understood before their actions can be explained. "Understanding precedes explaining" (Eberle 2022: 107), and although they are realised in two separate operations, the answer to the second research objective necessarily builds on the first one.

1.3 Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of seven chapters. This first introductory chapter has already discussed the relevance and the motivation for this research. The research objectives and the respective research questions were also presented. A brief outline of the structure of the remaining chapters follows, with a more detailed outlook on the content following at the beginning of each chapter.

Chapter 2 sets out the theoretical and conceptual considerations. It is based on three pillars consecutively building on each other to provide a solid basis for understanding this work and the further procedure. Life-world phenomenology and human geography form the first pillar, which is mainly informed by the fundamental work of Alfred Schütz. After an introduction to the philosophical foundations of interpretative life-world research and the associated beliefs towards ontology and epistemology, Schütz's methodological journey is outlined. The following consolidation between

life-world phenomenology and human geography represents the main theoretical endeavour. It traces the roots of humanistic geography with a focus on place as the stage of the life-world and provides this dissertation's basis programme: a geography of lived experience. It builds on Schütz's stratification of the life-world into the spatial, temporal, and social dimensions and extends it with a human geographic interpretation based on the role of the lived body, lived time, lived space, and lived relations.

A conceptualisation of peri-urban life-worlds forms the second pillar. It introduces the phenomenon of peri-urbanisation and discusses the dominant urban studies literature, which continues to marginalise peri-urban spaces despite promising entry points for their theorisation. Based on the shortcomings of contemporary conceptualisations of peri-urban areas and processes due to their overemphasis on development interventions, a framework for understanding peri-urbanity through a phenomenological life-world perspective is presented that is apt to overcome the theory-development dualism. It provides a starting point for theorising peri-urban life-worlds.

The third pillar is informed by governance and the actor perspective. It introduces governance and its emergence as a concept of interacting actors beyond the state to provide public goods and services. In this regard, some conceptual premises on governance, the state, and self-organisation in sub-Saharan Africa follow. Based on Norman Long's actor-oriented approach, the relational actor perspective is introduced afterwards. It provides a framework for assessing governance and conflicts at the peri-urban interface before concluding the chapter with the dialectical theory of social action that underpins this dissertation.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology and the qualitative research design for reconstructing life-world experiences. In a reflective section on the positionality in conducting empirical research in a postcolonial setting, ethical considerations and underlying issues of power are considered. This is followed by a discussion of the methodological challenges of researching the subjective perspective of people's lived experiences. These are translated into a methodologically sound programme for place-based research and life-world-analytical ethnography. It informs the subsequent design of the empirical research process with a detailed presentation of the applied data collection methods used. The chapter concludes with the applied analytical and interpretative strategies.

Chapter 4 provides an introduction to Maputo and the study area. It begins with a historical overview of the Mozambican capital, from an early settlement on the Indian Ocean, through Portuguese colonisation, to the more recent socialist revolution and independence. It presents the current structural context of urban planning and land management at the national level of Mozambique and at the municipal level of Maputo, with the respective housing and land legislation and the contemporary planning context characterised by the implementation of several large-scale infrastructure projects. Finally, it presents the local historical, administrative, and planning context of the study area, providing a rich ethnographic description to become familiar with local dynamics and place names for the subsequent life-world analysis.

Chapter 5 represents the first one of two major empirical chapters. It responds to the first research objective of understanding peri-urban life-worlds. Therefore, it is structured according to the stratification of the life-world into the spatial, temporal, and social dimensions. It begins with the meaning of the dwelling place as the spatial centre of the life-world. By doing so, it addresses the topic of land access and the creation of the home with the multifunctional meaning of the plot, exploring the fundamental question of how people live in peri-urban areas. The description of peri-urban infrastructures and mobilities comes second. It asks how people experience the socio-material infrastructures of their surrounding world and how people appropriate this world, moving through it while pursuing their everyday activities and plans. The presentation of peri-urban farming follows third, introducing the collective production fields of the so-called *machambas* as an essential example of the peri-urban life-world's meaningful places, thus asking what it means to be a farmer in Maputo. The discussion of the peri-urban sociality comes fourth. It asks how people live together in the neighbourhood, highlighting how others are experienced and typified and by what type of sociality collective community life is determined. Finally, the chapter culminates in formulating a thesis on the constitutive dimensions of peri-urbanity, consisting of locality, self-sufficient practice, and community.

Chapter 6 represents the second of two major empirical chapters. After understanding peri-urban life-worlds, it is dedicated to explaining peri-urban governance and conflicts of state-society interactions. Thus, it responds to the second research objective and builds on the relational actor perspective. First, local peri-urban governance arrangements are discussed. A focus is put on land governance and tenure and the role of community authorities. Local regulations are fragile, and with the expanding city, the local governance system is at a crossroads. Based on two in-depth cases, the chapter assesses the social discontinuities and conflicts arising in line with new actors and state institutions entering the life-worlds of peri-urban dwellers. The first example discusses the ambiguity of urban plans and land use titles in light of radical transformations and displacement processes. The second aspect addresses land use conflicts between peri-urban agriculture and real estate developments. In line with the previous chapter's thesis, this chapter culminates formulating an antithesis of state-society interactions. It critically questions the illusory vision of the state in planning as opposed to the local reality experienced by the peri-urban population.

Chapter 7 represents the final chapter of this dissertation. It aims to provide a synergy between peri-urban life-worlds and the actor perspective. First, it proposes a life-world approach to planning that is not illusory but realistic and based on the everyday reality of peri-urban life-worlds. Thus, it presents the synthesis between the thesis on the constitutive dimensions of peri-urbanity and the antithesis of state-society interactions. Second, and in conclusion, a critical appraisal of the combination of life-world phenomenology and an actor-oriented approach is presented based on which final implications for future research follow