

build-up of centralized control over logistical space at bay' (p. 264). Fortunately, these kinds of oversights blaze the way for future scholarship, which Schouten and his contemporaries will hopefully redress collaboratively in future work.

Matthew Sterling Benson

London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK

Email: [M.S.Benson@lse.ac.uk](mailto:M.S.Benson@lse.ac.uk)

doi: [10.1017/S0001972023000475](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0001972023000475)

Karine Ginisty, *Services Urbains et Justice Spatiale à Maputo (Urban Services and Spatial Justice in Maputo)*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de Paris Nanterre (hb €23 – 978 2 84016 379 4). 2021, 354 pp.

Equal access to goods and services is an essential condition for affirming that a given society is developed. Unfortunately, this ideal remains utopian, even in 'developed' countries, but the situation is all the more worrying in so-called developing countries, where the population's access to goods and services (including basic ones) remains extremely unequal.

*Urban Services and Spatial Justice in Maputo* is the result of a doctoral thesis in geography carried out at the University of Paris Nanterre between 2007 and 2014. It focuses on inequalities in access to urban services (water and urban waste management) and their role in the construction of local experiences of justice and injustice in the capital of Mozambique.

The book is comprised of five chapters. The first is a historical presentation of the urban duality of Lourenço Marques (now known as Maputo) and the influence of the Mozambique Liberation Front (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique or FRELIMO). The second chapter focuses on AGRESU (Apoio a Gestão dos Resíduos Sólidos Urbanos na Área de Grande Maputo or Support for Urban Waste Management in the Greater Maputo Area). This project is given greater attention in Chapter 3, which also discusses the Maputo Water Supply Project, which was supposed to grant water access to peripheral districts. The fourth chapter explores city dwellers' relationship to public space when feelings of injustice arise in the context of access to water. The last chapter looks at the political experience of city dwellers in order to understand the choice of silence when feelings of injustice arise.

Maputo (Lourenço Marques until 1976) could be a prototype of many cities in the 'developing' world – that is, cities in countries with a history of colonial rule, independence and an authoritarian regime, followed by a form of democratic government. Such cities are also typically marked by visible segregation. Maputo was structured around a dichotomy between the *Cidade* (city), the space urbanized by European settlers during the colonial period, and the periphery, underequipped and marked by a partly informal urban fabric. The latter was named the *Caniço* (or 'bamboo reed', after the most commonly used construction material), a space designated for Black populations, outside the jurisdiction of the municipality, dominated by small straw huts.

This 'urban apartheid', denounced in the local press from 1974 onwards, left traces in the current structure of the city.

Ginisty positions the book within broader research on the 'right to the city', although there are few references to this notion. In Chapter 3, this concept is connected to the right to water, which could have been part of the book's title, given the focus on the topic. It appears again in Chapter 4, when the author rhetorically questions the capacity of vulnerable people in Maputo to make claims to a right to the city, understood in its most literal sense: the right to live there.

Henri Lefebvre's quite abstract concept of 'the right to the city' is premised on the right to urban life, to renewed centrality, to places of encounter and exchange, to life rhythms and time uses. Ginisty enriches this concept with more concrete objectives, such as the right to water and a healthy and sustainable environment. As this book shows, there are places in the world where even basic needs remain unfulfilled. However, Lefebvre's attention to the multiple aspects of the human experience, including 'play' and social life, is relevant to understanding the holistic nature of human needs. It is obvious that, in urban life, higher-order needs (such as the development of personal potential) cannot be fulfilled if basic ones (such as access to water) are unmet.

As David Harvey states, the right to the city is a collective rather than individual right, since changing the city inevitably depends on the exercise of collective power over the processes of urbanization. The book's contents confirm Harvey's thesis: single individuals have little power, as we can see in Chapter 1, where Ginisty describes the urban planning of the former authoritarian regime. Similarly, in Chapter 5, we find that Maputo's city dwellers know little about the role of public institutions and generally avoid them. This phenomenon is manifested by the lack of public expression of feelings of injustice (through mass protests, for example).

Collective power is also difficult to practise under conditions of uncertainty, when individuals are focused on daily survival. Many families in Maputo experience daily precarity due to a tangle of situations and events that have weakened them socially (Chapter 4). This is illustrated by interviews conducted by the author with some of the most vulnerable city dwellers. The accounting of daily expenses punctuated these interviews, exposing routine problems, from the composition of dishes to the number of cans of drinking water to obtain.

All these issues have an obvious impact on the mental and physical health of city dwellers and urban and environmental health in general, and they should be considered seriously by decision makers and policymakers seeking to fulfil UN Sustainable Development Goals. This book is extremely valuable for its extensive field research, including interviews with both locals responsible for urban affairs and ordinary/vulnerable people; relevant photographs from the daily life of city dwellers; and a rich dive into local newspaper archives. With an engaging style of writing, *Urban Services and Spatial Justice in Maputo* offers valuable insight into developing inclusive urban policies, which could ensure everyone's right to the city.

Gabriel Camară

Department of Geography, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Iași, Romania

Email: [gabriel\\_camara@yahoo.fr](mailto:gabriel_camara@yahoo.fr)

doi: [10.1017/S0001972023000487](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0001972023000487)