

Strategies of Urban Inclusion in the Imagined Modern Luanda

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Abstract Luanda, the capital of Angola, has recently been subjected to extraordinary changes, supported by increased wealth and investments associated with the end of the war. The ideas of modernity that clearly stand out are deeply rooted in the city's configuration and reconfiguration over the years. They inform not only the modernising perspectives and philosophy of policymakers and investors but also those of the urban dwellers. Often, however, the imagined modernity and its benefits do not match the lived realities. This chapter makes reference to the evolution of the city, emphasising the differences between main periods and identifying the underlining strategies in terms of inclusions and exclusions. The conclusions presented, based on empirical and documentary research, point to shifting strategies of urban inclusion and changing categories of the excluded.

1 INTRODUCTION

Since its formation, Luanda has been a city of marked exclusions and inclusions, materialised in the built environment and in the spatiality of socio-economic relations. Exclusions and inclusions have been reshaped over the years, at the whim of political, economic and social transformations

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and, importantly in recent times, by the three-decades-long civil conflict and its consequences. One common feature that has permeated urban imaginaries is inclusion in the city by access to the modernity which the city represents. Modernity refers not only to objective conditions urban residents associate with urban development in its infrastructural sense but also to a set of subjective features related to lifestyles that provide notions of the imagined and desired urban life. Having access to these urban 'ideals' therefore represents inclusion.

The aim of this chapter is not only to describe and highlight the main ideas of these urban imaginaries as they relate to modern life but also to discuss the conditions for the production of exclusions perceived as one the key challenges confronting the governing of cities in Africa. The main argument is that within urban situations comprising both exclusionary policies and exclusionary social and economic transformations, urban dwellers have developed strategies for inclusion that envisage adapting to the changeable conditionality. Urban renewal therefore implies constant negotiation between real and imagined lives in an effort towards urban integration and inclusion in the modern city.

A substantial part of the chapter is devoted to the analysis of the transformation in the urban social organisation and exclusions in the last decades, framing them in a tentative non-absolute periodisation related to distinct phases of Angolan urban history. These phases encompass an early colonial cosmopolitanism which then combined with the creation of distinct spaces for the excluded *musseque*¹ migrants; the late-colonial modernisation and the attempt to secure political power through assimilation but which nevertheless did not solve the problem of the excluded peripheries; the post-independence incipient projects for modernisation and the newly excluded—those not politically connected; a free-market opening and urban gentrification that kept the non-political excluded but also more visibly started to exclude the non-wealthy; and the recent post-war booming of urban modernisation, with increasing numbers of excluded poor. For each of these periods, the discussion is then centred on the identification of who the excluded are and their main characteristics, which will then lead again to the notion that modernity has been a transverse imagined and palpable feature of urban inclusion, though not always materialised in real, everyday lives.

Among all Angolan cities, Luanda is the most interesting urban case for analysing these type of transformations, not only because it is the capital city but also because of its unparalleled capacity throughout the years to attract population from the whole country. The city's five centuries of

urban history placed it as one of the crucial centres of the colonial international circuit; and, after that period, the city consolidated its important position in the region and within the Atlantic Ocean routes. Its attractiveness was, however, heavily conditioned by the internal dynamics of massive displacements caused by the long civil war (1975 to 2002), which continuously forced the population from the entire country to settle in this safe location and consequently lead to rapid urban growth and urban congestion. The recent extraordinary changes did not reverse the rural–urban migrations but, on the contrary, continue to bring more people to the now extended metropolitan area, where major projects for urban renewal and urban modernisation are taking on a more noticeable shape.

In order to bring forth the intertwined issues on which this chapter focuses—modernity, exclusions and strategies—the analysis will concentrate on the developmentalist modernising perspectives and philosophy of the state throughout the years, emphasising its main characteristics. Moreover, the ‘modern’ ideal of the urban and the rural is described based on data collected in Luanda on several research trips, mainly through interviews. Evidence of the spatiality of urban exclusions is also provided by the portrayal of the physical and social change of the city in distinct periods and by urban planning. The construction of inclusions and exclusions and the strategies that support them are then described, taking into account long periods of fieldwork in Luanda (see References) as well as the existing literature that, especially today, provides important information regarding the issues under analysis.

In sum, the chapter attempts to emphasise the changes in urban exclusions in recent decades, showing continuities and ruptures, focusing firstly on the colonial domination and conformation of the city centre and *musseques* to these changes; secondly, on the post-independence ‘apparently equal’ access to the city and the underlining idea of progress; and thirdly, on the post-war increased wealth, investment in the cities and modernisation producing new poor and new exclusions. The commonalities of urban transformation, as they permeate the discussion, are based on the acknowledgment that Luanda has always been, despite formal planning, a city whose growth and management rarely complies with idealised mechanisms and features, with a substantial degree of informality invading all aspects of urban life and an urban growth that constantly emphasises the need to address infrastructure and housing problems. Studies conducted recently, both in the new relocation settlements for impoverished people evicted from the city centre and in the new centralities aimed at the emerging middle class, show the contradictions of the new

urban forms in Luanda, between the ‘dream’ and the ‘ordinary’ (Buire 2014). Imaginations traverse the practice of everyday lives and the collective, creating communities of sentiment (Appadurai 1996, pp. 5, 8). This imagined reality is not only a production of the urban dweller, recent migrant or long-time resident of Luanda, but especially of the government, namely, that created through the recent post-war reconstruction projects, ‘adopting the imagery of illusion’, the government’s ‘view of the future’ (Pitcher and Moorman 2015, p. 124; see also Cain 2014 on ‘urban fantasies’).

More interestingly, however, is that despite all these difficulties posed by the real urban life (Udelmann Rodrigues and Frias 2015), the at-times quasi-utopian ideal of modernity continuously traverses the urban imaginaries, providing the basis for urban inclusions and exclusions beyond the objectivity of material life and stimulating the development of creative strategies of inclusion. Continuously, the reconfigurations of the city call for a ‘re-imagination’ and ‘re-working’ of categories of class, ownership and nation (Gastrow 2014) and of access to the urban ideal. The imagined urban life is systematically confronting the urban reality of exclusions.

The chapter starts by describing the nexus of modernity and inclusion and its translation in city life. It then addresses the changes in urban exclusions throughout the different recent periods of the history of Angola, identifying in each the predominant strategies, before making global conclusions.

2 VISUALISING URBAN MODERNITY AS INCLUSION

While no longer perceived in a teleological sense—though absolute perspectives still appear at times—but rather as a local (‘native’) shared notion (Ferguson 2006), modernity is increasingly a useful concept for analysing the relative perceptions of inclusion and exclusion. This has led instead to a more accurate notion of ‘alternative modernities’, which help us find (Piot 2001, p. 90) the modern everywhere while also preserving a sense of that which might be locally distinct. To a greater extent, modernity tends to be a global way of thinking and perceiving ways of living, while simultaneously it is a locally produced concept, an *emic* category that derives its meaning from the local experience and logics.

With particular constructions both in urban and in the rural settings, modernity trespasses the ideas of the city, present and future, and constitutes a fundamental aspect of the urban transformation in Africa (Nyamnjoh et al. 2002; du Pisani 2004). Modernisation, associated with

the city, is above all an urban concept that integrates not only the idea of modernity itself but also of globalisation and culture (Nederveen Pieterse 2009). Usually, cities are expected ‘to be fully modern and effective’ (Simone 2010, p. 150); and these expectations, in the meaning ascribed by James Ferguson (1999), guide the strategies of inclusion in the city as well as the quest for the city. These ideas inform the lived experiences of urban dwellers and also the ‘global modernist project’, contradicted by the actual ‘non-linear trajectories and multiplicities of pathways’ of the African countries (Ferguson 2008, p. 9). Analysing modernity and how it is associated with the city then involves a finer analysis of urban life, of the ‘urban sociality’ and ‘cityness’, in terms of the urban dwellers themselves, an exercise that goes beyond development and urban policy concerns (Pieterse 2010), beyond the ‘megarhetoric of developmental modernization’ (Appadurai 1996, p. 10).

The aspirations inherent in modern urban life in Angola are comparable to the urban ideals elsewhere that are leading the apparently unstoppable urbanisation of the world. Achieving ‘urbanity’ is associated with accessing modernity, and the nuanced access to this modernity produces differentiated degrees of urban inclusion and senses of achievement. Modernity encompasses ideas of an improved material life and access to services and infrastructure, which are repeatedly present in the discourses on the subject. The perceptions of a cosmopolitan urban life and of urban styles reveal a widespread desire for separation from rural references in favour of embracing global ones (Ferguson 1999), combined with subtle features related to lifestyle and consumption—such as clothing or fashion, leisure, sports, music, gender relationships, sexuality or marriage patterns (Mbembe and Nuttal 2004).

Access to the modern city has in various contexts continually been the principal driving force for urbanisation and for rural exoduses. But while the concept of modernity helps delineate references that steer urban dwellers’ lives, strategies and urban aspirations, a central recurrent concern is that Africa’s ‘unfulfilled expectations of renaissance and modernity’ (Nyamnjoh 2013, p. 125) are always present. The ‘right to the city’ (Lefebvre 1968; Mitchell 2003)—which involves housing conditions; access to employment, health, education and leisure, among others; usufruct of the urban space; and participation—has been persistently denied to a large number of urban residents, particularly in the cities of the global South. The discrepancies between the real and imagined lives in the city are constantly noticed, by both the urban dwellers and the social sciences.

Exclusions are of different types and change with contexts, as would be inferred, but they are nevertheless always present.

Urban exclusions and polarisation in the global cities of the world (Sassen 2001), are largely based on significant immigration of low-skilled manpower and, in the case of Angola and other non-industrialised contexts, of incipient tertiary sector 'middle classes' that could attenuate the socioeconomic discrepancy (Hamnett 1994). According to Beall et al. (2002), in many African cities, 'the new socially excluded are those who are superfluous to the requirements of the global economy' (p. 41). The authors define exclusion, in broad terms, as (a) a side-effect of global economic realignment within a neoliberal perspective; (b) the broader approach to poverty, which also includes the interlinked inability to participate or to exercise full citizenship; and (c) processes by which people are evicted from spaces they previously occupied or are deprived of rights of access in the first place (pp. 43–44). More generally, within a 'transformationalist' perspective, an approach based more on the structure of societies and economies, 'social exclusion is distinct from, but often accompanies, poverty outcomes, and (...) implies something different from other relational concepts such as racial oppression or gender subordination' (Beall et al. 2002, p. 50). As Bhalla and Lapeyre (1997) state, 'social exclusion overlaps with poverty broadly defined, but goes beyond it by explicitly embracing the relational as well as distributional aspects of poverty' (p. 413). They argue it is then a 'society-specific' concept which should therefore be considered within the framework of the social and cultural norms and institutional context (p. 430). For this reason, it is a 'complex and multi-dimensional process' that 'involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities, available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas' (Levitas et al. 2007, p. 9).

The debate on the 'right to the city' and the critique of neoliberalism has, however, evolved; and new perspectives, increasingly based on the experiences of the cities of the global South, 'insist on the importance of theorizing the agency of the local state as potentially developmental, even progressive' (Parnell and Robinson 2012, p. 594). There are other processes going on in the cities beyond neoliberalisation; and there are more pressures on the state to address poverty and urban developmental planning concerns, without recognising the multiplicity of existing livelihood strategies (Parnell and Robinson 2012).

Policy implications of the conceptualisation of social exclusion refer to impediments for participation in social life, focusing on the ‘production of disadvantage through the active dynamics of social interaction’ (Kabeer 2000: p. 84). In Angola, the main—but not exclusive—forces of exclusion have been, at different times, the colonial discriminatory policies and practices, the independent state constitution of privileged layers around the political power and administration and the free-market-driven economy, punctuated by inheritances of the preceding systems. Some specific groups subject to exclusions have been analysed in the specialised literature, such as persons with disabilities (de Carvalho 2008); farmers, the illiterate unemployed, street children, ex-combatants, internally displaced or single-parent families (Oliveira 2012); and women, ethnic minorities and informal economy workers (Abreu 2012). The urban excluded have been mostly analysed in terms of their spatial distribution in the city.

Spatially, exclusions and segregation are often associated (Udelsmann Rodrigues 2009) and materialise in the urban-built environment. One of the main visible features of urban exclusion is the spatial distribution and (constant) reconfiguration of the residential and sociabilities’ spaces. The polarised, segregated, divided (Beall et al. 2002) cities of the global South are a very concrete materialisation of the exclusions. In Luanda, while ‘urban and/or housing transformation produced by the lower-income social groups has contributed to the access to better quality of urban life’ (Viegas 2014, p. 521), the results achieved are on a very small scale compared to the visible urban social disparities and precariousness that today characterise the city.

The concern here, however, is to provide a wider portrayal of the main transformations taking place in the urban society in the last decades, how they produced different types of excluded and how the excluded have created strategies to contradict the exclusionary forces and seek inclusion.

In the face of exclusionary urban dynamics, policies and types of renewal, the Angolan city dwellers have developed and reproduced strategies aimed at contradicting these exclusions. The claims for the ‘rights to the city’ of the excluded translate into social, economic and residential strategies of inclusion, of varied types within the limits of possibilities. Briefly, colonial forces of exclusion, anchored in the existing racialised society, mobilised strategies of ‘integration’ by assimilation on the part of excluded Africans. Post-independence forces of exclusion, restricting access to non-supporters or non-participants in the state and its structures, called for political engagement and participation in the political dynamics, specifically at the urban level. Post-war forces of exclusion—which include urban planning and evictions, gentrification and

restricted access to resources such as employment—engender strategies of compensation-seeking, mobility and investment.

Recent analysis has brought to the fore the often disregarded agency of Africans regarding modernity and the Western world associated with it. Modernity is not a useful concept when perceived as ‘fantasies’ in the Marxist sense; on the contrary, its capacity to generate ‘resistance, irony, selectivity and, in general, agency’ needs to be acknowledged (Appadurai 1996, p. 7), placing Africans in a more active and intervening position. This agency is clearly recognised in areas such as literary production in which ‘reading and writing become important instruments of challenging a certain strand of Western modernity’ (Ogude 2008, p. 2). Resilience and improvisation, or in the words of AbdouMaliq Simone (2010) ‘experimentation’ are important resources for the urban life, though they are not always sufficient and require constant reformulations. African cities then appear to (Simone 2001, p. 18) keep residents in an almost permanent state of changing gears and focus, if not location, revealing the capacity of urban residents to constantly recreate the urban life.

The strategies, however, do not allow coping with all the difficulties of urban life at all times and in the same way, particularly in Angola in recent years, where accelerated urban growth took place. While transformation over the years has produced mixed situations that inherited and reformulated the previous social and economic dispositions, each major phase of Angolan urban history has clearly defined contours that can be underlined. Usually, proposals for this periodisation in urban terms consider the colonial period up to 1975, a ‘socialist’ period following independence extending to 1985 or 1990, and a ‘neoliberal’ phase from 1990 to 2002 (Viegas 2014). Others prefer focusing on the ongoing post-war reconstruction as a particularly outstanding phenomenon that started more evidently after the end of the war in 2002 (Soares de Oliveira 2015). They remain, however, exemplary in terms of the actual years they refer to—as a result of the aforementioned mixed processes—and also regarding their designation and the actually dominant socioeconomic features.

3 EARLY-COLONIAL COSMOPOLITANISM AND LATE-COLONIAL MODERNISATION AS A POLITICAL RESOURCE

The idea of modernity is intrinsically connected to the cosmopolitanism accelerated by the colonisation of the coastal cities in Angola that started in the sixteenth century. Early Angolan cities (and Luanda in particular),

built to serve as trading port cities in the Atlantic, later integrated rail-road and other communication infrastructure, becoming crucial interconnectivity and commodity trade hubs. Along with this intensification of circulation of people and goods, the exchange of knowledge, ideas and cultures soon made them points of intersection of a cosmopolitan vision of the world and of a cosmopolitan way of living (Amaral 1983; Monteiro 1973; Neto 2012). Key in this construction was the contact between the Europeans and the Angolans, the later increasingly coming from the rural areas looking for opportunities in the cities and engaging in social and economic urban relations with the colonisers and other Europeans. This migratory movement consistently continued during the colonial times, motivated by the search for an urban way of life and better opportunities.

While the many variations in the urban society and economy of early colonial Luanda did not produce a spatial organisation more complex than the obvious centre/periphery distinction—nevertheless a perspective emanating from the colonial state—the increased European migration of the 1950s and 1960s called for new urban management rationales (Udelsmann Rodrigues and Salvador 2012). As a result of unplanned growth in the 1950s, Luanda saw the emergence of a new typology of occupation—the precarious unplanned spaces surrounding the city, the *musseques*—where the rural migrant population agglomerated. In the 1960s, the poorer layers were the majority in these peripheries. The result of both main waves of migrants settling in the city was then beyond the capacity to expand the concrete city to accommodate the settlers from Europe, producing an increasingly clear distinction between those having access to the modern city and the increasingly excluded *musseques* migrants. While the inner concrete city produced a spatial division between the *Cidade Alta* and *Cidade Baixa*,² the demarcation of these central spaces from the *musseques* became gradually clearer. In the latter lived a majority of the poorer and lower-ranked population. The major spatial distinctions in the city then crystallised in the built environment, with increased distinctions in terms of housing and infrastructure of the concrete-built centre and the cob-walled *musseques* of the periphery.

Social mobility, anchored in the colonial racial system (Messiant 1989; Monteiro 1973), was also associated with spatial mobility. Planning itself, though somehow tardy, recognised the socio-spatial distinctions. While the late-colonial discourse of ‘assimilation’ and ‘integration’ of the Portuguese colonisation contrasted with the colonial policy of other European colonisers, discrimination and segregation were in fact practised (Neto 2012;

Silva 2015), materialised, for instance, in the *bairros indígenas* (native's districts) built in Luanda, with differentiated types of housing, urban infrastructure and services for the Europeans and for the Africans, and unequal access to land (Amaral 1983; Silva 2015). The main distinctions built over the colonial years were profoundly based on race, with the Portuguese and other whites accessing economic, political and social resources in a privileged way, in contrast to the black Africans. The few exceptions, of particularly wealthy powerful African traders (especially slave traders), are historically referenced (Hodges 2001; Jorge 1998; Messiant 1989). The colonial regime in Angola imposed a clear social organisation, and the difference between 'civilized' Europeans, *assimilados*—those 'assimilating' the European ways of life—and natives was defined and cemented over the years (Messiant 1989).

These social differences were directly translated into the residential aspects of life, and social mobility depended directly on residential factors. The city became, more evidently in the beginning of the twentieth century, characterised by a 'segregation of spaces, mainly in terms of housing and services' (Carneiro 1987, p. 45). The urbanised centres, where services and administrations were located, were mainly inhabited by people of European origin and were the areas reserved for their sociabilities. The native population and rural migrants lived in the peripheral areas of the cities which were unpaved and dominated by shanty-type housing (Amaral 1983).

Assimilation remained for centuries not only the strategy of the colonisation for reproduction of its dominance but also a possible strategy for social mobility of the Africans. On the one hand, modern and urban (proto-) integrative planning of the colonial system was actively used as a socio-political instrument. On the other hand, the same assimilation policies constituted the pathways for upward mobility of the urban residents, which was highly controlled by the colonial system.

While the contours of the late-colonial distinctions were acquiring a clearer shape, resistance to the colonial powers that had become more active called for political and urban managerial reorientations. One important attempt to secure political power, especially in the poor *musseque* and *bairro indígena* areas where a number of educated urban youth were becoming more aware of the socioeconomic constraints, was to transform, at least through plans, the discourse on which social exclusions were grounded. Urban plans in Angola were produced starting in the 1940s and continued up to independence in 1974 (Silva 2015), as an acknowledgement of urban spatial and societal issues to be addressed. The Luanda Master Plan

of 1961–64, though not approved, oriented the urban management of the city, proposing an expansion based on Neighbouring Units (*Unidades de Vizinhança*) with distinct housing typologies according to the social and ethnic groups who would share collective equipment within a social integration policy framework (AIV2 2009, pp. 30–31). At the same time, the demonstration of colonial capacity and power was to be materialised in major extraordinary enterprises and projects in the centre of the city, built by the government and propagandised internationally. The idea of “progressive assimilation” of Portuguese citizenship and culture by the native population, behind the plans of the colonisers (Milheiro 2015, p. 29), especially as a response to the initiation of the liberation war in 1961, made Luanda “a laboratory for a modernist, multi-racial urban ideal” (Rodrigues 2015, p. 81), with projects featuring multi-racial, inter-social characteristics like the famous Prenda district (Fiúza and Milheiro 2015). However, this idea recurrently encountered resistance and discrepancies in the face of a socioeconomic reality much different from the one imagined.

On the side of the urban dwellers, the gradual adoption of modern, urban references, habits and lifestyles—foreseen in the ‘assimilation package’ conditions (Jorge 1998)—represented the existing possibilities for social mobility. Coping with and responding to the economic, social and political constraints of the colonial situation called for efforts on the part of the then-excluded, which ‘shaped the economic and social [urban] life (...) and changed their own lives in the process’ (Neto 2012, p. 3). They became a common reference for both the *assimilados* and the ‘indigenous’, increasingly widespread and known to all social groups and strata, part of a process that was, at times, termed ‘Westernization’ (Monteiro 1973). It included mostly the adoption of what were then literally called modern urban lifestyles (Udelsmann Rodrigues 2016)—such as having formal employment, access to education and modern houses—and conforming to corresponding behaviours, including, for instance, monogamy or secular religion. Social strategies of urban dwellers then creatively combined these assumptions.

4 ENTHUSIASTIC BUT INCIPIENT POST-INDEPENDENCE PROJECTS FOR MODERNISATION AND EQUALITY

Independence implied major population movements; with the Portuguese leaving Angola, inhabitants of the periphery occupied the centre and new migrants from the interior soon began to arrive to escape the civil conflict

that followed independence. While for many years the spatial mix did not allow a clear distinction between the new rural migrants and the former *musseque* and *bairro indígena* dwellers—including in the latter group the *assimilados*—the ideologies of new egalitarianism brought on by independence went against the thinking of urban management within the colonial segregationist model. The enthusiasm for the erosion of social difference, propagated by the political discourse, echoed among the urban residents, and gradually both the society and the polity incorporated a certain perspective and rationale of egalitarianism.

The colonial spatial distinctions in the city were then significantly erased (Mendes 1988; Roque 2011; Udelsmann Rodrigues 2009) and were integrated into a newly mixed city in terms of housing and type of infrastructure, combining and intertwining the concrete central areas, the precarious peripheral *musseques*—old and new ones created by the continued rural exodus—and new *musseque*-type ‘rurbanised’ areas (Amado 1992) built in the centre. New self-construction of housing resulted in both the penetration of the displaced, disadvantaged population into the central areas previously occupied by a wealthier population, colonials and African elites and at the same time the expansion of the peripheries of Luanda. While the new peripheral areas grew and the *musseques* invaded the asphalt, the few scattered building initiatives led by the state, with the support of Cuban cooperation (Cain 2013), did not significantly change the spatial organisation and features that Luanda was starting to acquire: a disorganised, congested, precarious city, where infrastructure and services, beyond insufficient, were also collapsing. The so-called ‘Cuban houses’ ended up being a few isolated buildings, whereas the original project foresaw ‘a large housing project being built on what was once a golf course’, then called ‘Project Golf’, targeting ‘housing for some 20,000 individuals from the adjoining slum’ (Bender 1978, p. 9).

If not completely erased in some of their features, social differences were reconfigured to accommodate the ‘new society’ being built, particularly the new distributions of wealth and power. Reality, however, imposed new exclusions on those not participating in the political hierarchies, especially the new waves of rural migrants. The main forces of exclusion were the restrictions imposed on those not supporting the party or not participating in the state structure in term of access to goods, privileges and even assets. Unequal access included, for instance, shopping cards, travel and state assets such as cars or housing, and benefits to which the group closest to the state and government had privileged access.

New forms of social mobility then imposed new strategies, which became particularly dependent on political and social capital related to the political elites and state structures. In the process of urban reconfiguration, the mobilisation of this socio-political capital only very slowly allowed for residential mobility for those in more advantageous positions. On the other hand, for the newly arrived migrants and in part for the former *assimilados* residing in the *musseques*, occupation of the houses left vacant in centre, right after independence, was sometimes an accessible residential strategy. Another was the engagement and participation in residential level groups, linked to the political structures, such as the district committees (*comissões de bairro*). Socio-political precedence remained central when it came to social, economic and residential strategies as a whole. Interactions between the old elites and the newly (re)created elites were naturally varied, with some of the former losing their privileges while others emerged, particularly those linked to the liberation movement that came to dominate the political structures. Nuances of this process of transformation of the society also need to be taken into consideration, particularly between what some authors called the ‘revolutionary period’ (1975–1990) and the ‘clientelist period’ (1990–2004; Hodges 2001; Pestana 2005) that led to the society of today. Continuities and ruptures throughout the recent history of the country and of the city are therefore only indicatively framed within the time periods identified.

5 FREE-MARKET GENTRIFICATION AND POST-WAR BOOMING MODERNISATION

The enthusiasm regarding society and urban life has, however, slowly waned in the decades that followed independence. Not only has the economic situation started to change significantly with the redirection towards the market, but also the political scene has changed, with elections taking place and a return to war again forcing more displacement towards the cities. Simultaneously, the interest in Angola by foreign firms, especially those in the oil business, has steadily increased since the 1990s. The reorientations of the philosophies of the state and the new perspectives for a free-market economy that would consolidate the already booming informal economy in a liberal society produced new ways of urban living.

In terms of the city dynamics, the demand for housing for the oil-business expatriates and a growing interest in centre city housing on the part of the new wealthier strata slowly stimulated processes of inner city

‘gentrification’. Still, in this period, some large-scale companies operating in the country, both national and international, had also started to build closed condominiums in outlying areas, namely, in Luanda Sul. Moreover, international investment groups, particularly motivated by the end of the civil conflict, initiated major transformations in terms of modern construction. Among these, the China-Angola partnership is the most significant and has produced profound changes in the city and its surrounding areas. Luanda now is a city of new wealthy peripheries, with mushrooming condominiums and both old and new poor peripheries—including the already existing *musseques*, new *musseques* and new resettlement districts—all intertwined with persisting inner city poor *bairros* and gentrified others (see Development Workshop 2011).

These processes, taking place simultaneously and at times rapidly, have led to the present configuration of the city, a mixed situation of old and new centres, peripheries, wealthier and poorer locations (Cain 2013). ‘The city centre [...] and the southern area (Luanda Sul and Belas) are in fact expressions of Luanda’s urban history, but they also layout [sic] patterns of socio-economic differences and ways of living that are mirrored in the architectural forms, spatial blueprints and physical traces of daily practises’ (Vanin 2015, p. 166). The post-war situation is therefore more complex, with important new changes taking place in the built environment, leading to different urban situations that equally accommodate more differentiated social strata.

Exclusions today, almost exclusively dependent on the socio-political capital, are highly related to the economic capacities of the urban dwellers (Udelsmann Rodrigues 2009; Udelsmann Rodrigues and Frias 2015). The excluded are therefore more clearly the poorer strata, although other types of accumulated social capital still play an important role in determining exclusions and inclusions. Spatial separation and segregation, inherited from the colonial model and reconfigured after independence, is today again reshaped by the city’s social dynamics of the housing and real estate market (Croese 2012; Gastrow and Josse-Durand 2013; Roque 2011). The ‘nicest’ colonial areas again tend to be inhabited by the more affluent socio-economic strata, wealthy families or wealthy foreign investors. Gated communities of condominiums represent the need to mark social separations (Udelsmann Rodrigues 2009), and an estimated 75 % of their residents belong to a (Jenkins et al. 2002, p. 146) high-income bracket. Post-war drivers of exclusion are then mainly the increased inequality in terms of access to resources, not only of businesses but also

employment and formal social benefits. Also, the new spatial reconfigurations are increasingly based on planning, evictions and resettlements, gentrification, and real-estate supply and demand dynamics.

New forms of social mobility call for renewed strategies, particularly for those excluded or potentially excluded from their 'right to the city'. In terms of management, the new organisation of the city is prone to crystallise these reconfigured social differences, although the rationale rather points to increased harmonisation. The 2011 Integrated Plans of Urban Expansion and Infrastructure for Luanda and Bengo (Presidential Decree 59/11)—a regulating tool to be used until the approval of the Luanda Metropolitan Master Plan in late 2015—clearly foresees and describes a distribution of the population by income groups in order to frame the development of housing.³ In this sense, it aims for a better mix than the historical division between the 'richer Luanda Sul' and the lower-income 'northwest and southwest' areas in central Luanda that attract this population in search of economic opportunities (p. 1570). For this purpose, it establishes four socioeconomic groups, spatially distributed in terms of housing typologies, mixing in various percentages populations of different income levels. Group 1 will have 85 % high-income population, 10 % medium-income population and 5 % low-income population. Group 2 figures will be 80/15/5 %, respectively; Group 3 figures will be 20/50/30 %; and Group 4 will have a mix of 5/20/75 % (p. 1571). Higher-income housing is planned to be concentrated mainly in the south area of Luanda (though also accommodated in all urban areas, according to the group mixings above), while the northwest and southwest will have higher concentrations of lower-income population. This plan, however, is based on studies conducted in the early 2000s, and Luanda has always proved to be able to generate urban realities other than those planned. It remains, however, part of the city imagined by the government; it is yet to be confirmed whether these are only more 'urban fantasies' (Cain 2014; see also Pitcher and Moorman 2015).

When it comes to the urban dwellers' strategies, there is a clear distinction between those who seek to emphasise their socioeconomic differences through 'self-exclusions' and those who attempt to reverse the forces of 'hetero-exclusions' provoked by resettlement, housing prices and a combination of precarious situations they find themselves in. The former have principally sought demarcation by moving to closed condominiums and centralities and adopting militantly urban modern lifestyles, especially in recent years. Upward social mobility is today increasingly concentrated

on housing. The latter have limited options in the face of scarce economic resources and, most crucially, fewer options in the context of urban land redistributions and relocations (Cain 2013). Certain trends and possibilities have been widely explored in recent years, namely, the occupation of areas potentially dedicated to new construction projects in order to claim them as compensation or the longstanding practice of buying, selling and renting houses and land from central areas of the city and moving into peripheral ones. Access to modern urban lifestyles, highly dependent on resources, is in these cases concomitantly limited. Investment in education as a means of producing social capital encouraged the private sector in this area, but the results for poor families must still be evaluated case by case.

6 CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding its nuances, reconfigurations and contexts, modernity perceived as an urban style of life is an intrinsic feature of the city. The analysis of Luandamn urban society and its spatial configurations brings this notion to the fore, highlighting the persisting vision of the attractive modern city over the years. The cosmopolitanism that emerged from the city's early integration in the world system soon created imaginaries of attraction to the urban way of life, subjectively beyond the actual infrastructural conditions. This attraction, replicated since then, became even more crucial in a prolonged context of civil war affecting the countryside. The city accumulated the ideas (and ideals) of opportunity, modern life and safe haven. The recent post-war reconstruction itself is based on notions of the possibilities of living the modern urban life: 'Luandans—whether they live in the *musseques* or in apartments in the downtown—desire modernity, with which they equate consistent electricity and water, functioning elevators, and access to shopping and transport' (Pitcher and Moorman 2015, p. 130) as well as other subjective ways of experiencing the urban life.

Like other places, however, the urban world has produced its own typical exclusions, as argued in the chapter. Above all, the poor have always been the obvious excluded and still are, but the urban society of Luanda has also created other particular types of exclusions in different periods and contexts: those colonised for an extended period of history and those not integrated into the political structures in the post-independence society. The mechanisms for urban inclusion, though variable and mutable over the years, try to provide urban dwellers with ways of coping with

the drivers of exclusion. Strategies envisaging social mobility and inclusion depend on societal conditions and have changed accordingly in different time periods, in terms of both urban management and the urban residents: within the system of colonial domination, conforming to the rules of urban exclusion was punctuated by the efforts to ‘assimilate’ a limited segment of the society and, later on, integrative planning aimed at avoiding political contestation, which nevertheless led to independence and a major transformation of the society. While independence disseminated imaginaries of easier and freer access to the city, the delusions of the excluding mechanisms being created, requiring active participation in the political and administrative structures, soon became clearer. Wartime and post-war massive urban growth through rural migration, combined with increasing private and public urban investments, set the conditions for the construction of new mechanisms of self-exclusions, urban mobility and businesses related to real estate. While envisaging urban integration through actual residential dynamics, the construction of modernity and of modern urban lifestyles goes hand in hand, reformulating the urban ideals and imaginaries.

In a context of more and faster inter-linkages to the global world, Luandan society now definitely faces new challenges regarding its self-redefinitions that require more and better knowledge. The excluded, old and new, in their efforts to access the city and the idealised urban life, are required to elaborate more sophisticated strategies, which increasingly demand more than just location. The recurrent features of the unplanned, ungoverned, informal and precarious city are, nevertheless, contradicted by a positively idealised urban life that often alleviates the negativity of the actual conditions the urban dwellers face. The apparently difficult contradiction, implying negotiations between the fast-modernising city and the precarious peripheries, is constantly addressed by the urban resident and inevitably by instances of urban management. They do not necessarily annul each other, and practical use of this knowledge is potentially welcomed: ‘a more productive way forward is to pursue a dual track that allows for showcase and iconic new urban projects while focusing special attention on slum urbanism and creative thinking that links the two approaches and situates urban projects within a sustainable development paradigm’ (Grant 2015, p. 294). Cities of the global South continuously need to prove that they are ‘viable and worthy [...] yet different from the urban logics that subjugated them’ (Simone 2010, p. 151). The ways of dealing with the contradictions

require, therefore, not only the creativity that Luandans have already demonstrated they possess but also new approaches to urban life by Luandan urban management.

NOTES

1. From the Kimbundo language (red-sanded place), the term refers to the poor precarious peripheries of Luanda though it is currently used in all other urban contexts in the country.
2. This refers to the colonial expansion of the new neighbourhoods of *Cidade Alta* (uptown) from the old colonial commercial centre of the *Cidade Baixa* (downtown).
3. Chapter 7.4, Distribuição da População por Grupos de Rendas a Fim de Conformar o Desenvolvimento de Habitações, p. 1570 and following.

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