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Building Ideology: Planning, Housing and Urban Life in the City of Livingstone throughout the Second Colonial Occupation and Beyond

Abstract

My dissertational project is set out to study the social history of Livingstone during the so called "development era" between the 1940s and the 1970s. It seeks to explore the dynamics and processes that formed and altered its urban space and society over the transitional period of late colonial to early postcolonial times. In synthesizing and harmonizing historical research with social and political theory three societal and institutional layers - planning, housing, and urban life - are to be analyzed in order to shed light on two questions which revolve around the project: How was urban space organized and mediated between these three layers? And how did ideologies in the sense of everyday practices interfere or concur with official policy and discourse? The three layers in question will be accessed using primary sources like colonial documents, urban reports, plans, photos, films, and articles in newspapers as well as an Oral History approach with city dwellers. These various sources will then be scrutinized through a theoretical lens which bundles concepts of space, habitus and ideology. In specific terms, the projects aims to integrate Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice, habitus and the social field and Henri Lefebvre's theory of space in order to locate spatial practices within the confines of urban forms. In unravelling the social history of Livingstone the project is understood as a contribution to the study of small cities in Africa during the transitional period of the development era.