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Urban Challenges and Survival Strategies in Africa

Edited by

Adeshina Afolayan

Toyin Falola



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Dedicated to

Kunle Afolayan
A committed filmmaker

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Series Editor's Foreword

The *Carolina Academic Press African World Series*, inaugurated in 2010, offers significant new works in the field of African and Black World studies. The series provides scholarly and educational texts that can serve both as reference works and as readers in college classes.

Studies in the series are anchored in the existing humanistic and the social scientific traditions. Their goal, however, is the identification and elaboration of the strategic place of Africa and its Diaspora in a shifting global world. More specifically, the studies will address gaps and larger needs in the developing scholarship on Africa and the Black World.

The series intends to fill gaps in areas such as African politics, history, law, religion, culture, sociology, literature, philosophy, visual arts, art history, geography, language, health, and social welfare. Given the complex nature of Africa and its Diaspora, and the constantly shifting perspectives prompted by globalization, the series also meets a vital need for scholarship connecting knowledge with events and practices. Reflecting the fact that life in Africa continues to change, especially in the political arena, the series explores issues emanating from racial and ethnic identities, particularly those connected with the ongoing mobilization of ethnic minorities for inclusion and representation.

Toyin Falola
University of Texas at Austin

Preface

The essays in this volume emanated from the 2015 Africa Conference at the University of Texas at Austin, United States, on April 3–5. The theme of the 15th conference was “Development, Urban Space, and Human Rights in Africa.” The theme was timely because it constitutes a robust attempt at intervening in the understanding of the complex interaction between urbanization, development, and democratic dynamics on the African continent. The essays in this volume have been specifically chosen for their diverse multidisciplinary response to the complexities of globalization, the trajectory of urbanization, and the imperatives of democracy on the survival of the continent and of Africans.

A note on methodology is required. This volume has a very modest intention of generating some significant insights on the conceptual and empirical trajectories of urbanization and survival in Africa. The idea is not to attempt a country-by-country case study. Rather, it is to focus on a few to make larger points. Nigeria, South Africa, Togo and DR Congo featured in this volume as representative examples that could serve as comparative catalysts for further studies. For instance, the war in the DR Congo has been so emblematic of the African predicament that it signals a singularly peculiar survival problematic at both the individual and continental levels. The brutal and protracted nature of the war in DR Congo give it a referential advantage for studying other wars in Africa and the interventionist dynamics of international organizations. The same goes for the incidence of child abuse/child trafficking in South Africa, Nigeria and Togo. These countries are actually significant because they constitute the central hubs for child trafficking in Africa. It is expected that some of the conclusions generated in this volume, with its modest aspirations, will assist in galvanizing further discourses on human development, urbanity and survival in Africa as a whole.

We also hope this volume, especially in its multidisciplinary richness, will be useful as a discourse starter for academics, students, and especially policy makers in Africa who are concerned about how, for instance, the tide of migration away from Africa to Europe and America can be stemmed; and how democracy and democratic governance can intervene in the management of urban spaces and the hordes of urban dwellers who demonstrate terrible human development indices.

We will like to acknowledge all those who made this volume possible, beginning with the contributors who tirelessly consented to revising and reworking their essays to meet the high standard set for this volume. We also appreciate the indefatigable organizers of the 2015 Africa Conference for keeping alive the pan-African spirit of the conference that ensure that scholars from across the world would gather every year to brainstorm on the state and progress of the African continent. Lastly, we appreciate the publisher, Carolina Academic Press, for the publication of this volume.

Adeshina Afolayan & Toyin Falola
Summer, 2017

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