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Edited by
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Toyin Falola

Carolina Academic Press
Durham, North Carolina
Dedicated to

Kunle Afolayan
A committed filmmaker
## Contents

Series Editor’s Foreword  
Preface  
About the Contributors

| Introduction · Re-Imagining the Spaces of Development, Human Rights, and Citizenship |
| Adeshina Afolayan & Toyin Falola |
| Prologue: The Season of Tragic Migration |
| Theorizing Human and Africa Development |
| Out of Africa: Governance and the Urban Challenge |
| The Essays in this Volume |

<p>| Part I · Gender and Child’s Rights |
| Chapter One · Empowering Children and Enlightening Parents: An Assessment of Child Protection Education in Rural Togo |
| Komi Begedou |
| Child Protection in Togo: Strengths and Weaknesses |
| Hindrances to Effective Implementation of Child Protection Services in Togo |
| Empowering Children and Enlightening Parents on Child Protection |
| Conclusion |
| Additional Sources |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Two · Historicizing Child Wage Exploitation in Nigeria</th>
<th>39</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chukwuemeka Agbo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual/Contextual Clarifications</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Wage Exploitation in Twenty-First Century Nigeria</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Leadership and the Legal Instruments on Child Wage Exploitation</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Wage Exploitation, Insecurity and Violence in Nigeria</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Three · Policing Humanity: Revisiting Human Rights and Human Trafficking in South Africa</th>
<th>63</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Typhanie Hill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights Defined</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking Defined</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty and Forced Labor</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Exploitation, Corruption, and Poverty</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Exploitation and the Nexus of Police Corruption</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking and HIV Health Risk</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Four · A Political Economy of Gender Inequality in Esan Society</th>
<th>83</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tunde Agarah &amp; Onoh’Omhen Ebhohimhen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esan Feminist Scholarship and the Gender Trap</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theorizing Gender Inequality</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Inequality as Class Struggle</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Features of Gender Discrimination in Esan</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Circumcision</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowhood Rites</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under-Representation of Women</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriarchy and Gender Inequality</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART II · RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY, AND THE CITY

Chapter Five · Pentecostal Rhetoric and Òrìsà Worship in Ilé-Ifè, Nigeria 109
Enoch Olujide Gbadegesin
Introduction 109
Impacts of Christianity 111
Ifè as Òrìsà Sacred Realm 112
Pentecostalism in Ilé-Ifè 114
Maintaining and Transforming Boundaries:
   The Politics of Religious Identity 119
Creating Ritual and Social Boundaries 120
Taking the Battle to the Gate: The Earth Is the Lord’s 124
Embracing Religious Pluralism 128
Conclusion 129

Chapter Six · The Logic of Exclusion in Lagos and the Imperative of Cosmopolitan Rights 131
Oladele A. Balogun & Ademola K. Fayemi
Introduction 131
Lagos Urban Space Management 132
The Logic of Exclusion as a Moral Issue in Lagos Urban Space 134
Cosmopolitan Rights and the Future of Lagos Urban Space 137
Conclusion 143

Chapter Seven · Human Rights in Africa: Beyond Social Relativism 145
Temisanren Ebijuwa
Introduction 145
Conceptions of Human Rights 146
Claude Ake and Social Relativism 147
Beyond Social Relativism 150
Conclusion 153

PART III · TECHNOLOGY, DEVELOPMENT, AND SURVIVAL

Chapter Eight · “Top Up, Pay as You Go!” Mobile Telephony and the Internet Revolutions in Sub-Saharan Africa 157
Bamidele Aly
Introduction 157
A Short History of the Mobile Phone and the Internet 158
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born in the USA</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Telephony and Africa</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Macroeconomics of the Mobile Telephony and the Internet in Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Banking and Financial Inclusiveness</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Telephony and Reduced Asymmetry of Information for Farmers</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next New Frontiers of Mobile Telephony and the Internet</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Commerce and the Local Customers</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Education May Be Creating an Additional Social Divide</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter Nine · Economic Growth and the Nigerian Capital Market**

*Maryam Abdu*

| Introduction                                                                 | 181  |
| Literature Review                                                           | 184  |
| History and Origin of the Nigerian Capital Market                           | 188  |
| Research Methodology                                                        | 190  |
| The Model                                                                  | 190  |
| Measurement of Variables                                                    | 191  |
| A Priori Expectation                                                        | 191  |
| Data Presentation and Analysis                                              | 192  |
| Descriptive Statistics                                                      | 192  |
| Correlation Analysis                                                        | 192  |
| Summary of Regression Result                                                | 193  |
| Test of Hypothesis                                                         | 194  |
| Results for Test of Hypothesis One                                          | 194  |
| Results for Test of Hypothesis Two                                          | 194  |
| Results for Test of Hypothesis Three                                       | 195  |
| Results for Test of Hypothesis Four                                        | 195  |
| Conclusion and Recommendations                                              | 195  |
| Appendices                                                                 | 196  |

**Chapter Ten · Land-Use Change and Surface Temperature**

*Folasade O. Oderinde*

| Introduction                                                                 | 199  |
| Study Area                                                                  | 203  |
| Methodology                                                                 | 204  |
Contents  

Results and Discussion 206  
   Land Use Pattern of Ijebu-Ode between 1984 and 2013 206  
Discussion of Findings 211  
Conclusion 212  

Chapter Eleven · Is the UN’s Force Intervention Brigade an Effective Peace Enforcement Model? Evidence from DR-Congo 215  
Brian O’Donnell  
Introduction 215  
Historical Overview 217  
   Conflict in Eastern DRC 217  
   International Response to DRC Conflict 219  
Factors Contributing to M23 Decline 221  
Methodology and Sources 222  
Analysis Part One: Quantitative Assessment of the Humanitarian Situation in Eastern DRC 223  
   Battle Casualties and Violence against Civilians 224  
   Internally Displaced Persons 226  
   Summary of Quantitative Analysis 227  
Analysis Part Two: Qualitatively Assessing FIB Influence 228  
   Streamlined Structure of FARDC 228  
   Internal Division of M23 229  
   Loss of Rwandan Support for M23 231  
   Deployment of Force Intervention Brigade 233  
Alternative Hypotheses 235  
Summary of Key Findings 236  
Conclusion: The Future of FIB and M23 Reintegration 237  

Index 241
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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