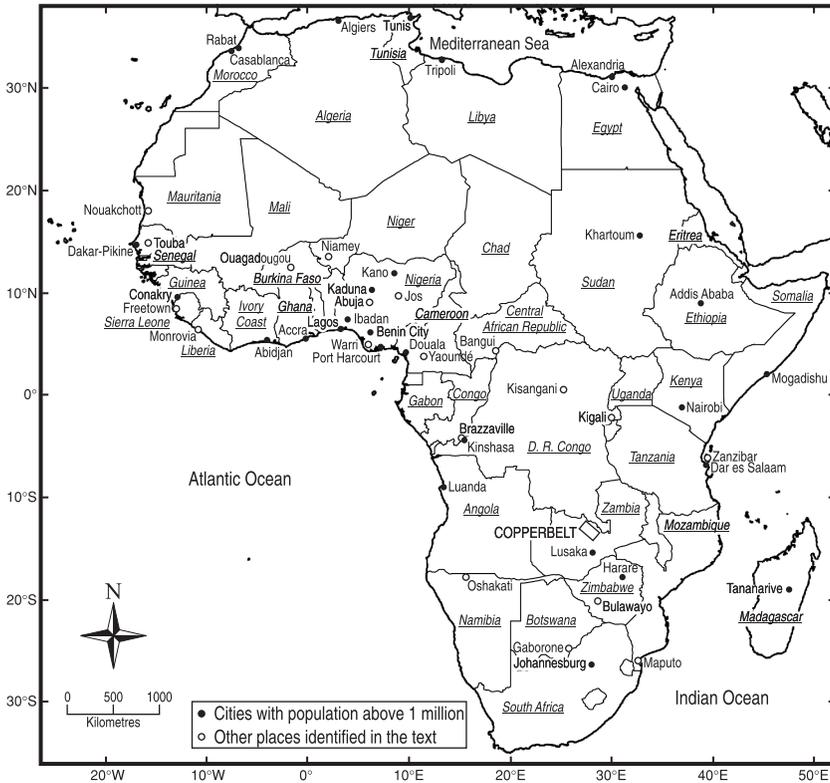


CHAPTER 5

The Post-Colonial African City

In this chapter, we shall consider how African cities seem to be shaping up as colonial rule passes out of memory. Urban growth now has proceeded at such a pace that a large percentage of all Africans today are town dwellers. This places them in a pattern which is discernable on every continent. However, major issues unfold in examining the post-colonial city in Africa which are not exactly universal. If African society is shaped by rural survival strategies and rural identities, what impact does life in big cities especially have? How can cities in Africa cope with their burgeoning populations when rapid industrialisation and economic development have failed to take place? Current world economic trends, bunched together in many accounts as “globalisation,” marginalise Africa and with it, make the management of cities that work effectively for their inhabitants in Africa impossible to support financially in particularly bleak scenarios. There is no lack of literature that sees African cities as essentially dysfunctional and dangerous places. Contemporary Africa certainly has examples of city life that are nightmarish. However, there is also a counter-trend which highlights the economic rationality of much activity in African cities and sees them as well as the fount of cultural creativity as older rural-based ways of life fade or contain radically new elements. In this sense, the seed of a new Africa that can overcome present dilemmas lies there.

The dream of the successful city which certainly accompanied independence for African nationalists can be characterised as a modernist dream. The term “cosmopolitan” is used here also, as well as “modern.” It is a dream which has faded painfully. Much of the literature



MAP 5. Contemporary African cities.

which honours new African urban social forms can be defined as post-modern by contrast. This chapter tries to avoid taking sides in the clash between modernist and postmodern visions while trying to make discernable what is attractive and contradictory in both. Let us begin by laying out the factual basis for looking at contemporary African cities.

The very rapid growth of postwar African cities continued and even increased with the coming of independence. Population growth of five to 10 percent per annum became typical for larger African cities in the 1960s and 1970s, much faster yet than the general population increase. By the end of the millennium, the urban population constituted a majority in South Africa and in the five Mediterranean African countries. In a number of other countries, notably Zambia, Angola, the Congo, the Ivory Coast, and Senegal, the percentage had reached 40 percent according to all estimates and 50 percent according to some. Large African cities embraced one million and more people.

The accompanying Table 2 indicates those cities according to relatively recent figures. Nonetheless, some differentiating patterns still can be identified. To begin with, the independence era passed through a phase of a more than a quarter-century. Independence year in Africa is often taken as 1960; this is when Nigeria, the Belgian Congo, and sub-Saharan French colonial Africa attained independence. They were preceded by the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and Sudan, as well as North Africa with the exception of Algeria. Within the next few years, Algeria and the remaining British colonies of East and West Africa followed this path. After 1965 there remained Southern Rhodesia, where the local settlers had become independent, the Portuguese colonies, and some remaining enclaves and islands. Apart from the special case of South Africa, the last decolonisation took place in South-West Africa, the present-day Namibia, in 1990. Thus the “independence era” does straddle a period of global change that had its impact on the character of urbanisation.

In certain cases, independence marked the break-up of larger colonial units with some effect on urban growth. The importance of Dakar and Brazzaville, capitals of French West and Equatorial Africa, diminished. In some cases, the “need” for a national capital led to virtually new towns called into being such as Gaborone in Botswana, Kigali in Rwanda, and Nouakchott in Mauritania. In others, a new national vision created new capitals in centrally located cities such as Abuja in Nigeria, Dodoma in Tanzania, and Lilongwe in Malawi.

The question of capital cities is of real importance. It is not only that the primacy of the primate cities became even more marked. A noticeable feature of post-colonial Africa has been the particularly steep growth of administrative centres. Thus Lagos, for long the Nigerian capital, surpassed Ibadan to become the largest Nigerian city and indeed, the largest by far in Africa south of the Sahara. A remarkable feature has been one of reversal in the relatively few cases where colonial economic structures had made a commercial transport focal point larger than the capital before independence. Bulawayo, the main industrial centre of colonial Southern Rhodesia, has been overtaken by Salisbury, capital of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in the 1950s and early 1960s and then of Rhodesia, and subsequently renamed Harare after black majority rule was established in 1980 – in likewise-renamed Zimbabwe. Recently Yaoundé, the Camerounian capital, has almost caught up with the port city of Douala in size,

TABLE 2. *African Cities with Populations in Excess of One Million*

City	Population	Date and Source
Cairo, Egypt	12 million (est.)	1994 (Yousay/Atta)
Lagos, Nigeria	10.5 million (est.)	2002 (Ahonsi)
Kinshasa, DR Congo	5–7 million (est.)	2002 (Nlandu)
Casablanca, Morocco	3.535 million	2000 estimate
Kano, Nigeria	3.329 million	2003 World Gazetteer
Alexandria, Egypt	3.328 million	1996
Johannesburg, S. Africa	3.226 million (2001) ^a	S A Cities Network, State of Cities Report 2004
Ibadan, Nigeria	3.140 million	2003 World Gazetteer
Ethekwini (Durban) S. Africa	3.090 million (2001)	State of Cities Report 2004
Luanda, Angola	3 million	2003 (Steinberg/ Bowen)
Cape Town, S. Africa	2.893 million (2001)	State of Cities Report 2004
Abidjan, Ivory Coast	2.878 million	1997
Khartoum, Sudan	2.7 million ^b	
Algiers, Algeria	2.562 million	1998 Hadjedj
Ekurhuleni (East Rand), South Africa	2.480 million	
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	2.3 million	1994 census
Pretoria (Tshwane) S. Africa	1.986 million	State of Cities Report 2004
Accra, Ghana	1.781 million ^c	1990
Conakry, Guinea	1.767 million	2003 World Gazetteer
Dakar, Senegal	1.659 million	1996 census
Kaduna, Nigeria	1.510 million	2003 World Gazetteer
Nairobi, Kenya	1.5 million	1994
Douala, Cameroun	1.448 million	1999
Harare, Zimbabwe	1.42 million	1992
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania	1.4 million	1996 Tripp
Rabat, Morocco	1.386 million	1994
Tananarive, Malagasy Republic	1.359 million	2001
Lusaka, Zambia	1.327 million	1995
Tunis, Tunisia	1.2 million	Stambouli
Port Harcourt, Nigeria	1.093 million	World Gazetteer 2003
Tripoli, Libya	1.083 million	
Benin, Nigeria	1.082 million	World Gazetteer 2003
Port Elizabeth (Nelson Mandela Metro)	1.006 million	State of Cities Report 2004
Mogadishu, Somalia	1 million	2000 estimate

^a This and other South African figures refer to the large new metropolitan local government regions, some of which also have new names.

^b Estimates for Greater Khartoum range up to 4.8 million.

^c Greater Accra.

one of the last cases in Africa where a capital is not the primate city demographically. In the Congo, Kinshasa, the former Léopoldville, has become enormous, a city teeming with five million or more people. It was from early days the largest urban settlement in the Belgian Congo, but before independence, there was an important string of administrative, port, and mining towns in the provinces. After independence, many of the once-thriving provincial centres of Belgian times have stagnated or declined as the localised colonial economy of commerce and extraction has decayed or vanished.

This obviously reflects the enormous importance of government as a source of income and opportunity far beyond colonial times. It is in the cities that a new kind of modernity – typified by the presence of institutions of higher education, of significant health facilities, of development agency headquarters, and of such prestige structures as sports stadia and international grade hotels – has sprung up on an unprecedented scale. After independence, the Ivory Coast, with an economy based on cocoa and coffee, became the site of Abidjan *des tours*, as relatively high-rise structures arose above the Ebrié Lagoon. Prestige office towers marked the burgeoning centres of Nairobi and Harare as well as the oceanside Marina in Lagos. These structures were imitated on a more modest scale in provincial towns and poorer and smaller countries. Not only did government employment expand dramatically after independence, the government workers attracted services and commercial activity and acted as role models for friends and relatives in rural areas to come to the cities. The state itself formed the largest single element in the formal labour market in virtually every territory. Urban life became the stage for a desired and increasingly Africanised modernity – not of course necessarily defined as Westerners might define it – the place where Africans could become “cosmopolitan,” as Jim Ferguson has poignantly captured for the Copperbelt cities of Zambia. For the good life was now theoretically open to all – the racial restrictions of colonial planning were everywhere eliminated. And the patron was in general central government; municipal or local authorities were usually usurped by appointees from headquarters. In Francophone countries, national ministries typically controlled the cities. On their largesse depended the smooth administration of towns.

Beyond deracialisation – and that was not everywhere necessarily of great importance – independence was not in fact a remarkable break in African cities. Generally speaking in the first years, the character of planning and the structures of the late colonial economy remained in

place even if white managers became transients rather than settlers and modernism was harnessed to suit the self-image of a new elite. Indeed in many places the old elite did not disappear at first; thus in Abidjan the size of the white population rose quite rapidly after independence. Most bureaucracies leaned towards continuity in practice.

There were some striking exceptions, however, which pointed the way to the future. In Algiers, independence in 1962 was followed by the rapid, virtually immediate departure of half the population of the largest city west of Alexandria in North Africa. The new Algerian government had few bourgeois elements and a strong radical orientation. At the same time, the oil wealth of the Sahara gave it a reasonable resource base. The old European neighbourhoods quickly filled up with Arabic-speaking Algerians, sometimes from the old Casbah, while the Casbah itself attracted new and impoverished rural migrants, often Berber-speaking peasants from Kabylia. Much of older Algiers deteriorated physically. At the same time, emphasis lay in the creation of new industrial zones, certain prestige projects that celebrated the emergence of an Arab nation and in the construction of large housing projects intended for an urban working class. This was already foreseen in the last French reform Plan of Constantine of 1958 but greatly extended after independence. In Algeria, the arrival of poor country people who established squatter settlements on the periphery in defiance of modernist planning was met with hostility. Forced removals took place in the first years of independence. Turning to Egypt, the foreign character of Alexandria and Cairo was beginning to fade when the spectacular Black Saturday riots in Cairo marked a dramatic shift in 1952 that ended the monarchy. In these riots, perhaps one hundred people were killed, some of them lynched, and the very symbols of the typical urbanism of the prewar decades in Cairo, the Turf Club and Sheppard's Hotel, were destroyed. In fact perhaps seven thousand buildings were levelled. The radical government in Egypt under Gamal Abdel Nasser thereafter assaulted or eliminated the comfortable world of a cosmopolitan bourgeoisie while trying to plan the future of a modern city for a working class.

There are also a few sub-Saharan African cities, such as Zanzibar, where this kind of radical urban approach, concerned with social levelling and deeply influenced by the emergence of nationalism, was taken. Once independent, the former Portuguese colonial towns such as Lourenço Marques (now Maputo) and Luanda, after 1975 the respective national capitals of Mozambique and Angola, also experienced

dramatic depopulation by colonists and settlers and a corresponding degradation of the dense urban built environment which they had designed for themselves modelled on Europe.

A more extreme case yet was the Congo. Independence in the former Belgian Congo was followed by waves of political instability, rebellion, and conflict. Belgian intentions to promote a fairly nominal independence, where little would alter, collapsed; after some years a new model began to emerge under Mobutu sese Seko's regime. If the new "authentic" Congo would live off what remained of mineral wealth still being harvested, most of this wealth that remained in Africa at all would rest in the capital. As the infrastructure decayed and with it many features of the Belgian colonial economy, the city of Kinshasa grew to massive proportions, becoming by far the biggest between Lagos and Johannesburg. In general, the draw of an older Africa was loosening; Africans in the countryside often wished to escape patriarchy and aspects of custom that oppressed them; they defined their goals in terms of cash more accessible in the urban environment. But in the Congo – renamed Zaire under Mobutu – the countryside also became deeply disrupted by warfare and the breakdown of conventional economic networks in the early 1960s; urbanisation under conditions of fear of violence and rural catastrophe, which we have since seen repeated so dramatically in Khartoum, Luanda, Freetown, Monrovia, and elsewhere, already ensued in the early 1960s.

A disturbing feature of rapid urbanisation in Africa has certainly been the failure of the urban economy to offer jobs to the flood of new urbanites. It would be difficult to say, outside the far north and south of Africa, that industrialisation itself attracted people to real and existing employment on any scale. The urban populations of Africa expanded by the beginning of the 1970s to levels that the local business worlds could not absorb, and commentators began to refer to "overurbanisation." The colonial call of panic at the presence of impoverished, semi-educated concentrated masses of people was taken up in new forms. Such people were seen as social parasites, absenting themselves from the export-producing agrarian and mineral zones of rural Africa to settle in seething slum quarters where access to incendiary literature and ideas was easy. In the 1960s and 1970s, most African countries, wherever they belonged on the political spectrum, took up systematic round-ups and expulsions of urban dwellers living in self-constructed shacks. This was even the case in a city such as Abidjan where a rapidly growing economy was making use of this labour but was unable to

catch up with the demand that existed for urban housing. One of the last such round-ups has been detailed by Aili Mari Tripp with reference to the *Nguvu Kazi* campaign in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania as late as 1983. The state attempted to define large numbers of urban dwellers as “unproductive,” including twenty-two shiners of shoes and, more significantly, women who could not be categorised as officially married. This perspective was not really accepted by the population as legitimate and merely tended to drive more economic activity into the realm of illegality until, as was typical, the authorities tired and abandoned the campaign.¹

But did all this make urban Africa genuinely urban? Didn't urban Africans continue to organise around ethnic associations? Didn't they continue to hold with belief systems created in rural areas? Didn't they react with indifference or hostility to key urban institutions? Did they not continue to retire to the countryside or allow their children to be brought up there?

In a sense, the numbers talk. They reveal a growing proportion of the population living at any point in cities, whatever the perambulations of individual trajectories. As we have already observed for colonial cities, a new culture was emerging characterised by festivities, music, cinema (now giving way to video programming), availability of print culture, associational activity, sport, and other activities that emanated from and took place largely on the urban terrain. “It was during [the late 1990s] where we have the development of ‘reality’ rap or ‘Bongo’ rap. ‘Bongo’ (Swahili for smart or clever) was the slang name for Dar es Salaam – the implication being that individuals have to be smart to survive in the city.”²

Dorier-Aprill et al., looking at Brazzaville, point to these kinds of indicators – the importance of a Brazzaville Christmas and a Brazzaville New Year's Eve – and also emphasise that, while Brazzaville people may continue to believe in the supernatural and witchcraft, they live a life in which the ancestors who dominate rural ideology and legitimate rural life have faded in importance. In Brazzaville rather, it is a vast array of urban churches which provide forms of networking, sociability, and

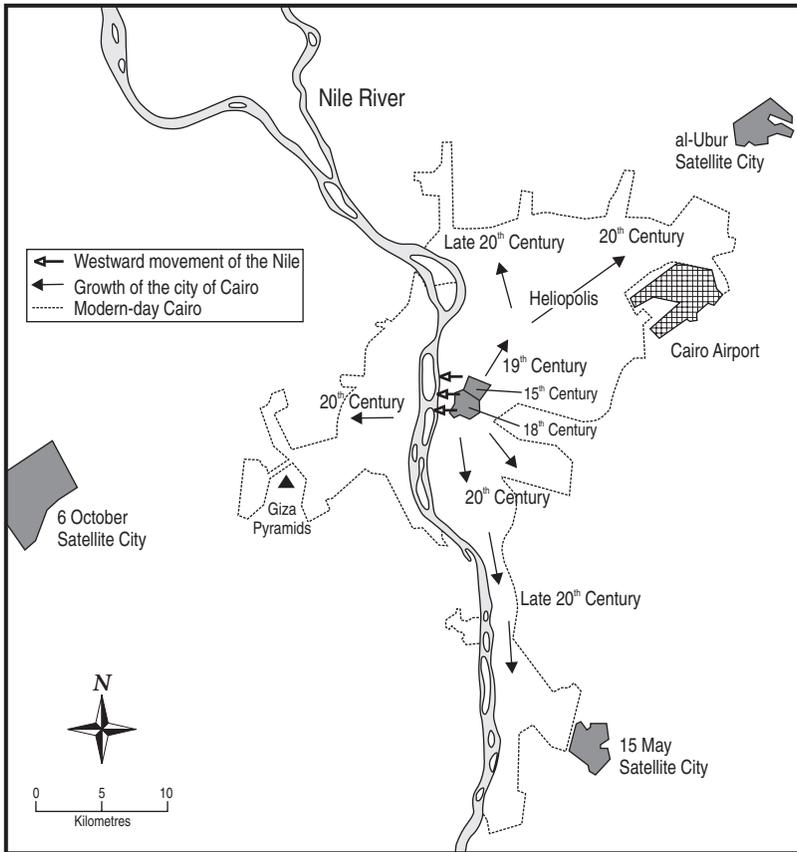
¹ Tripp, *Changing the Rules: The Politics of Liberalization and the Urban Informal Economy in Tanzania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 140ff.

² Sid Lemelle, “‘Ni Wapi Tunakwenda?’ Hip Hop Culture and the Children of Arusha” in Lemelle & Dipa Basu, eds., *The Vinyl Ain't Final: Hip Hop and the Globalization of Black Culture* (London: Pluto Press, forthcoming).

succour in times of need. The cities were filled with their own distinctive languages and idioms (in Brazzaville, Lingala, KiKongo/Lari, and the local inflections of French) and from them emanated a new sort of life. Particularly for the second and third generation, urban identification becomes of primary significance. It was true for Brazzaville even in the 1990s that a disproportionately small percentage of the population was elderly, but surely that too is apt to change with time. Even where ethnicity remained important, it often was defined in new ways that reflected urban competition and urban space. Thus those from the northern and western parts of the Congo became Niboleks, an amalgam that had no historic reality whatsoever.

In the middle to late 1970s, modernist Africa, where it had at first thrived after independence, for the most part became mired in crisis. The economic possibility of continuing to build up a prestige economy in the cities, to sustain import-substitution industries that brought in no profit, to build public housing that largely served the interest of relatively affluent civil servants – or alternatively was of a very low standard – declined as the value of African export goods diminished and debts to Western banks and governments accrued rapidly. The cosmopolitan dream that one could eliminate the unseemly and unsightly through government action turned into a nightmare. Big cities – with Lagos and Kinshasa in the lead – were vectors that triangulated the combined effect of several disastrous circumstances. They began to be seen as the problematic representatives of a new and troubled urbanism. They were great cities with little public transport, chaotic land tenure policies, poor access to remunerative structured employment, lacking in the public spaces that give the citizens of a city – at least in conventional modernist parlance – a sense of belonging and pride. As uncontrolled settlements spread on a far bigger scale, they threatened to overwhelm the functional urbanism inherited from colonial times when shack building was largely held in check.

Even in North Africa, where economic circumstances remained relatively more favourable, the decline, albeit not collapse, of the modern was notable. In Algiers, intensive state investment lost its grip and squatter settlements blossomed. Algiers and the far larger North African metropolis, Cairo, aspire to expand rationally through the creation of large satellite cities (15 May; 6 October) with at least some measure of planning, but certainly the Cairene experience has been viewed skeptically by experts who have instead seen city growth taking place in this incredibly densely peopled conurbation – 100,000 people



MAP 6. Great African cities: the growth of Cairo.

per square kilometre with figures of as much as four times that for some congested central areas – through the use of the historic city of the dead, through moving housing upwards to taller buildings, through crowding of the existing built environment and, on the periphery, through peasants selling precious green land suitable for cultivation in exchange for the purchase of better-situated bits of urban property nearer the centre. In one account, the average land available to citizens in the forms of parks is no more than five square inches.³ In old cities, picturesque centres decayed as the affluent moved to suburbia, leaving slum conditions in the Algiers Casbah, the Tunis *Medina* and elsewhere. In stark contrast, “for dozens of kilometres the Nile now

³ Max Rodenbeck, *Cairo: The City Victorious* (London: Picador, 1998), 20.

flows between a double wall of high-rise buildings, giving an indication of the changes Egypt has undergone in the last forty years.”⁴

Casablanca also makes an interesting study. The 1952 nationalist riots led to a significant effort to replan the city, taken up again after 1980. There has been a willingness to create urban infrastructure away from the historic centre and to create viable public housing, although it is still difficult to argue that a new civic culture, equivalent to that in the pre-colonial Moroccan cities, is being successfully fostered and including poor migrants from the countryside.

James Ferguson in *Expectations of Modernity* has recently provided us with a disturbing and dysfunctional sense of this process where it has hurt almost the most, in the Copperbelt of Zambia, which was once infused with a sense of optimism and movement towards participation in a changing world. Since the 1970s, copper has suffered from declining world prices; the mines have not been very successful in creating a labour structure that makes them efficient and competitive. The once-extensive range of service and commercial activities in the bigger towns has shrunk enormously with the disappearance of most of the formerly large white minority, many of whom were entrepreneurs or skilled workers. And the informal sector provides very little secure income; it is underdeveloped compared to West Africa. Most African copper miners spend their working lives dwelling in company property; they have little to resort to when they become too old for work. The answer would seem to lie in a return to the countryside but the patrimonial ties that once bound lives together don't work easily for them and the return often becomes a disastrous end to life. Many have wives from other “tribes” unacceptable in rural areas. If making ends meet while working has become hard, surviving afterwards has become even more difficult. There is more despair than skilful opportunism in straddling between town and countryside today. Unsurprisingly this may be one urban zone where the population is stagnant, if not actually declining, according to geographer Deborah Potts.

Anne Schlyter, in her studies covering almost the whole period of independence of Zambia in the capital of Lusaka, does not provide a very different picture. The area she has chosen, George, was a squatter settlement once, saved from destruction by changing policies in the 1970s when the emphasis shifted to upgrading. But Lusaka has also, almost equally, suffered from economic degradation alongside the

⁴ Raymond, 368.

Copperbelt towns. Far fewer households in George now are headed by men in wage employment. Consequently the informal sector, which mainly consists of petty commerce, has had to expand substantially. Where once an optimism about the future flowed out of assumptions about overcoming colonialism and racism and attaining an attractive modern identity, now there is growing social dislocation while younger people are terrified by the spectre of the AIDS virus. The small minority of families with successful accumulation strategies are apt to isolate themselves more from the whole, and of course few can hope to repeat the opportunities that were involved when the housing in George first opened up; indeed rent from tenants are now a major source of income for those who do own houses. The disappearance of UNIP, the single party, as an effective patrimonial source of potential jobs and income, is another negative which has not been countered.

At least the cities of Zambia have never suffered from serious political violence and collapse. A recent (ca. 2004) portrait of Kisangani, once Stanleyville, the third largest town in the Belgian Congo on the great bend of the Congo River, reveals a city where virtually no “modern” activity functions anymore. Local “warlords” have controlled the town whose industry has been reduced to a limited amount of beer brewing. There is little vehicular traffic, electricity, or even pavement left of its once relatively developed urban infrastructure. The only material reason for its inhabitants to remain in this city really is security. Kinshasa, the huge Congolese capital city, retains a typical city centre but its inhabitants very largely live in *les annexes*, the outskirts, that have been created through negotiations with local chiefs and contain a life of their own that connects very little with that centre and have few of the amenities one associates with urbanity. It is in the *annexes*, however, that the music and art for which the *Kinois* are famous gets produced. An even more extreme case is Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, described by Sierra Leonean historian Ibrahim Abdullah as a place “where every space in the city is under siege from subalterns.”⁵ War-wrought devastation here follows on a gradual process of decay in a city which in essence was probably most dynamic in the late nineteenth century.

No doubt many rural refugees in Freetown will return to their homes when they feel that safer conditions prevail. However, in general, for all the important linkages many urban Africans keep with

⁵ In *Under Siege: Four African Cities; Freetown, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Lagos*, Documenta 11, Platform 4, Kassel Art Festival, (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Kantz, 2002), 208.



FIGURE 11. Lagos 1960. Street scene on Lagos Island scheduled for demolition. *Source:* Peter Marris; used by permission.

the countryside, returning there is not an attractive option in phases of economic decline. In broad terms, what has happened has been a gradually declining *rate* in the growth of most African cities. Nowadays population increases consist far more of natural growth within the city than new migration from the countryside. There is a somewhat less straightforward tendency for smaller cities to experience a larger percentage of the growth rate. Such cities are sometimes centres of new commercial activities, including those that transcend boundaries more or less illegally. A good example of the latter would be the northern border town of Oshakati in Namibia, predicted to be the second city of the country in coming years. Trade with Angola passes through Oshakati which, due to the South African military activities of the 1980s, has excellent road links further south. In the next chapter we shall explore the Senegalese provincial city of Touba, growing very rapidly indeed, in part because of engagement in trade outside the control of the state.

This catastrophist view, however, is not shared by all specialists on urban development in Africa. At a remarkably early juncture on the eve of independence, Peter Marris produced a very critical and insightful study of urban removal in Lagos; he defended the way of life of

the Lagosian slum-dwellers whose intricately linked if poorly serviced built environment served their needs, emotionally and sociologically, as well as economically. Only a relatively small percentage of the well-off would benefit from the proposed removal to distant purpose-built state housing far from Lagos Island.

This kind of voice gradually began to be heard more. With the crisis blocking modernist development, development experts, so often the main critical observers of African cities, began to propose a whole new take on African cities. The parasites, the shack-dwellers, the unemployed women instead of being seen as dragging down healthy forms of development in the city, began to be looked at as the authentic builders of African cities, as part of a process of development from below. Andrew Hake's classic study of Nairobi – the "self-help" city – as he called it, published in 1974, still makes an impressive case for this process. Far from being parasites, such poor dwellers in the city are there for a reason, to make themselves and their families a better life; they perform important services, create their own employment and make useful contributions to the economy. Such people, far from dragging down the economy, are actually engaged in building it up. The



FIGURE 12. Lagos 1960. Modernist reconstruction. New state-built housing on the mainland as part of urban renewal. *Source:* Peter Marris; used by permission.

large extensions of old townships, notably the Mathare Valley, have been pioneered here by landlords who provide limited rental space to tenants and permit Nairobi to extend itself further.

From this perspective, the city merely illustrated the general proposition rapidly gaining ground amongst aid donors and Western observers of Africa that the African state had turned swollen and corrupt and was more of a nuisance and a bully than a genuine contributor to development of any sort. The state provided planning ordinances and decrees that showed little real variation from colonial patterns except that the capacity to carry out such plans was no longer there. These plans were in some respects nefarious in the way they privileged some social groups and in other ways irrelevant to the real social processes at work in the city.

This sounds rather like the kind of excuse for colonial conquest a century earlier. But the appetite for colonialism has died in the West. Instead, the question was how to increase the burden of development for those who would be its beneficiaries. Thus the crisis in urban planning regimes was not entirely seen as a catastrophe – the poor “were doing it for themselves.” Who needed the state? If they chose to live in urban areas, it must be because that was where market forces decreed them to go. Moreover, the impact of the World Bank–influenced policies of the 1980s and 1990s aimed at reducing what became known as urban bias through cutting out anything that smacked of state subsidisation, effectively making life in town more difficult than in the countryside according to many criteria.

According to this new received wisdom, development experts were urged to reject actual urban removals. By the late 1970s, such removals fell out of favour entirely unless they were grossly in the way of expanding elite needs. Instead, on the edge of cities, preparing site-and-service schemes was seen as the inexpensive and appropriate way to allow for urban growth. These schemes laid out greenfield sites and planned the “serviced” ground infrastructure with a minimum of services while assuming new residents would build the housing they wanted as and when they could. It fitted a self-help ideology well. This in turn gave way, as it proved too expensive and as the required infrastructure did not materialise or was very poorly maintained, to complete laissez-faire urban policy. After all, in the perfect market, prices would clear matters and naturalise suitable urban growth. Yet Deborah Potts, a sceptic about the merely market advantage of urban life, has written that

“the savagery of the anti-urban politics of the Structural Adjustment Programmes has largely been misplaced,”⁶ directed at people already impoverished and under siege. Whether urban bias had ever existed is questionable. Nonetheless Africans stay in cities. In practice, African cities continue to grow spatially through complex forms of negotiation that mix up the administratively regulatory with the realities of local legitimacy and power.

Following through from the eloquent work of Hake, there are two major propositions that can be taken up along the lines of “development from below.” The first is essentially practical: how to make cities of the poor more liveable on the cheap. One element here is governmental reform, with the invention of the concept of *good governance* transcending conventional state forms and heavily promoted by international agencies. The state itself is meant to generate autonomous agencies closer to the ground and more sensitive to the people. A classic manoeuvre here was the imitation from France in Francophone countries of a local government system that broke up large municipalities into more people-friendly smaller units, sometimes directly elected by the populace. In other cases, cities experiment with distinct development agencies intended for particular purposes to uplift areas and find particular activities on which to concentrate. Local Economic Development, focussing integrated development on targeted localities, is a development buzzword for the first years of the twenty-first century.

Yet despite the insults flung at it over decades from the West, the role of the central government remains very prominent. The tendency to pull the patrimonial purse strings is great; the capacity of local authority to raise its own funds very poor. This creates space for fundraising Non-Governmental Organisations. Charity *cum* developmental organisations generate, and come to liaise here with, locally created outfits run by consultants and politicians, in part to net income and support. Such NGOs are able to do impressive work on an experimental basis through example and to alert outsiders to major problems; they are not very suitable for creating long-term systems run by local people that provide basic services, however.

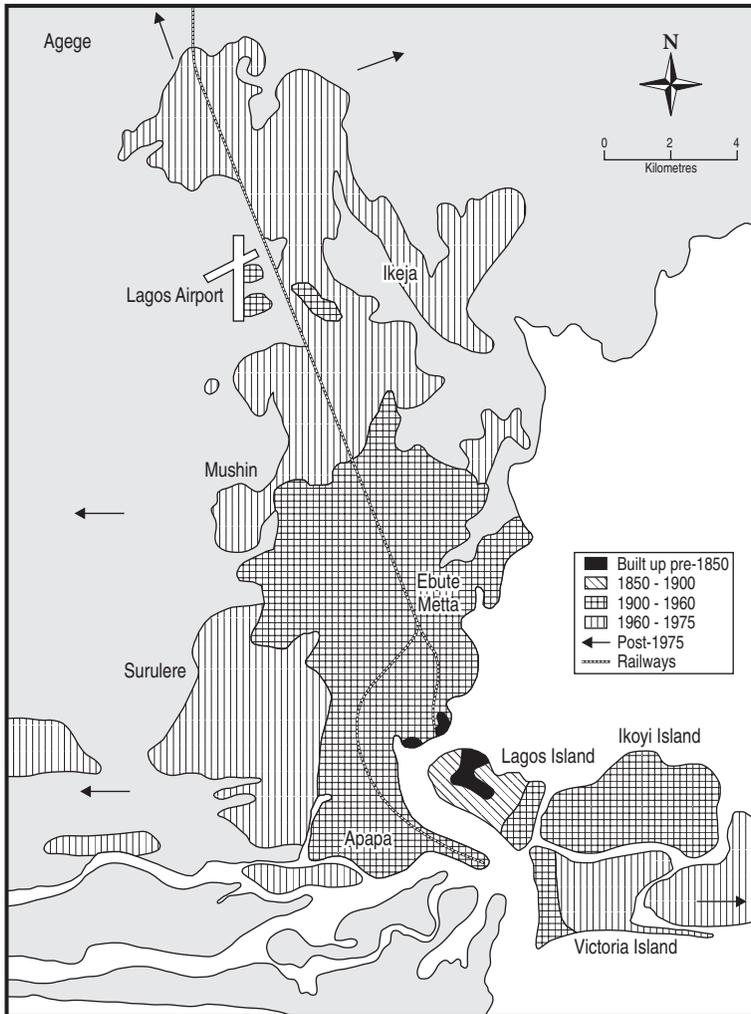
⁶ Deborah Potts, “Urban Strategies: Adopting New Strategies and Adapting Rural Links” in Carole Rakodi, ed., *The Urban Challenge in Africa; Growth and Management of Its Large Cities* (London/Tokyo/New York: United Nations University Press, 1997), 452.

Here it is possible to look as well at the CBOs, the community-based organisations that can potentially mobilise the masses effectively to pull the African city up by its bootstraps. As we have seen, cities with pre-colonial roots contain such organisations with old histories and symbolic meanings. However, they are joined today by innumerable new kinds of structure. Africans not only bring association into the city from the countryside, they create many novel forms of organisation, ethnic, religious, and based on other common interests. Networks are vital and they are created out of old and new material. Women in particular, freed from tradition-laden prohibitions on autonomous activity, are sometimes able to create very effective structures in African cities of a kind completely different than the patriarchal forms of rural societies.⁷

It has been argued that such associations can form the basis for forging a more civilised and acceptable urban life in Africa. The decline of industrial development from the 1970s has meant that classic working-class neighbourhoods are very atypical of African cities and with them, classic forms of proletarian organisation. But other forms of organisation more suitable to the diverse ways neighbourhood people make a living serve for some as a substitute. Urban politics responds in complex ways in Africa to more liberal policy shifts so long as they free people from unwanted restrictions and open up economic spaces. As private individual property ownership gets more deeply entrenched, most African cities are the sites of more and more accumulation projects based on house ownership. Landlordism can create apparent religious and ethnic loyalties and fissions and, where democratic contestation is significant, often determines how people will vote.

An impressive study of neighbourhood-based association has recently been recorded by Babatunde Ahonsi with regard to Nigeria's megalopolis, Lagos. Ahonsi believes that many sections of mainland Lagos have evolved from desolate stands of housing into liveable neighbourhoods characterised by varied forms of micro-enterprise and gradually acquiring basic amenities thanks to the collective capacities of Nigerians to organise and regulate their lives "from below." Community Development Associations, as they are known, "successfully paved streets, constructed security gates, routinely cleared and cleaned their surroundings (including dealing with the aftermath of flooding),

⁷ Of course, in West Africa particularly, strong autonomous women's organisations have deep roots in many societies.



MAP 7. Great African cities: the growth of Lagos.

maintained public water pipes and taps and devised vigilante security arrangements for dealing with the problem of armed robbery,”⁸ fending off the depredations of the notorious “area boys” who prey on the less organised. By contrast to J. Y. Peel’s classic study of Ilesha, where urban organisation seems to revolve mostly around successful professionals sending support money to provide prestigious amenities

⁸ In *Under Siege*, *op. cit.*, 283.

in their home towns while being oblivious to the urban environment around themselves, Ahonsi suggests a new civic identification and pride amongst very diverse Nigerians in the areas he considers.

In many African countries such organisations seem to point the way to the provision of basic services, such as the clearing of waste, where the state has entirely broken down. Gabriel Tati has explored for example the self-regulation of markets in the Congo, the construction of a bridge, also in the Congo, and the means by which waste is collected in one neighbourhood in Yaoundé in Cameroun.

For some observers, an answer lies also in promoting economic activities normally associated with village life in the urban setting. Undoubtedly, especially in small cities and indeed wherever there is substantial spare land, it makes sense for families to feed themselves to some extent through cultivation, not, as we have seen, anything new or unusual in African urban living patterns. There may also be some justification in setting aside appropriate, well-watered areas for market gardening activities that can improve the food intake of the city. Many African cities were planned in the colonial area with truly vast empty spaces that fitted the aesthetics of the would-be settler gentry – massive gardens that could hardly be sustained without plentiful inexpensive gardening help – and the desire for racial segregation. This emptiness really does fit very little beyond recreational needs today. Certainly it makes no sense for urban administrations to use their remaining capacity to destroy food plantations ruthlessly – as periodically happens in Harare or Nairobi on what are termed to be “raids” – in order to sustain questionable urban ordinances belonging to the colonial period. This argument can hold even if one realises that many of the denser African cities genuinely have little scope for urban agriculture and the more utopian green prospects urban agriculture has held out for a few are probably pipe dreams.

Lying behind such studies hovers the idea that this perhaps is how to construct real democracy in Africa. In Cairo, the traditional waste collectors have been Coptic Christians, poor and downtrodden and shunned by polite society (much of their work involved keeping pigs) but bound into a distinct community with links back to farming villages. Through the intervention of the church and of NGOs, the *zabaleen* have acquired elements of a much more advanced recycling operation where clean rags are woven into rugs and soil compost is manufactured in land-hungry Egypt. For Susanna Myllylä, the promise lies in the stimulation to self-help, although Cairo municipality

continues to have its collective mind set rather on the creation of a “modern” state-run and capital-intensive waste disposal system that correlates with its world vision and with systematic bureaucratic processes.⁹ In an influential recent monograph, Diane Sugarman has painted the portrait of a typical Cairene neighbourhood in which informal networks, patronage relationships, and political ties are critical in residents functioning effectively, by contrast to this official picture.

In contrast to the gloomy perspective on Zambia held by Schlyter or Ferguson, Aili Tripp, writing on Dar es Salaam in the new spirit, has tended to celebrate the decline of the state and the triumph of the market, releasing the people’s energies in Tanzania, as socialist policies began to be abandoned. Tripp’s studies of Dar es Salaam and Kampala suggest a lugubrious, incompetent, and still oppressive central state being effectively challenged by residents anxious to get on with their lives. In particular, she emphasises the capacity of women to organise themselves effectively. With the dramatic decline in the formal economy and the ability of the state to offer men decent employment, women’s need to expand their range of activities and struggle for suitable conditions to facilitate these activities has grown dramatically.

Sylvy Jaglin has followed in depth the attempts by the radical Sankora regime in Burkina Faso from 1984 to restructure state-society relations in the urban context. In part, this was to break through the patrimonial web, which connected local initiative to the Mossi monarchy in the capital, Ouagadougou, expressed especially through the rights of the landlords who had the correct ties to the system. At this point, Ouagadougou, the ancient seat of the Mossi, had been growing fast for twenty years. The patronage system and the French-created planning regimen were not very helpful in integrating rural migrants into the urban fabric. With the slogan of “one family, one roof,” the regime hoped to engage poor urban residents to become involved in civic loyalty and improvements. *Comités révolutionnaires* were created as local developmental partners to the national state. Abolished in 1991, these *comités* were not ineffective. Jaglin argues that they introduced the vital concept of shared management to Burkina Faso. There was a joint recognition of the need for local initiative and central state intervention. The greatest successes were reached in terms of construction of clinics and schools and sports fields. There was less success, given

⁹ Both Myllylä and Tati are to be found in Arne Tostensen, Inge Tvedten & Mariken Vaa., eds., *Associational Life in African Cities* (Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2001).

the poverty of the country, in equipping these facilities properly. The availability of water was substantially improved, whereas electricity remained too expensive for most poor residents. Nonetheless she argues that this was the route towards integrating peripheral urbanites into some kind of citizenship.

Of course, it is not so clear that CBOs, politically self-conscious agencies from below, and other beneficent activities on the ground are everywhere prevalent. If we return to Zambia, research does not really suggest much of a sense of effective local organisation. There is a striking monograph by Benetta Jules-Rosette (1981) on a particular Lusaka community with special potential in this regard, but it is a migrant community with a unique and remarkable religious history. Moreover, with regard to basic needs of the poor, as Jean-Luc Piermay reminds us in his analysis of Kinshasa, survivalism is not the same as building a real urban social fabric.

Nor are “communities” in Africa necessarily so welcoming or egalitarian as the concept usually implies. In the bosom of self-help there lies also exploitation and growing forms of differentiation. It is, moreover, not only the poor who help themselves in situations where the state weakens. Particularly in those African cities with more substantial middle classes, the possibilities are greater both for new forms of accumulation through uncontrolled urban expansion and for yet greater problems in terms of achieving some kind of sustainable urban planning, as the North African literature indicates. The rich are far more unsustainable than the poor in a world of limited resources. Landlordism is an ideal means for the slightly better-off to accumulate and stabilise their lives, but it can evolve into more unequal and exploitative relationships when absentees begin to own multiple properties. A fine study based on Rabat, Morocco by Allain-el Mansouri demonstrates how an ancient culture based on providing water for citizens as a common good (public fountains, baths) synonymous with urbanity has recently given way to the idea of water as a market good in which access depends for quality and quantity on wealth.

The *laissez-faire* city may also help breed hostility to foreigners and those from distant regions. The major countries of West Africa – Nigeria, Senegal, the Ivory Coast, and Ghana – have all notably been the scene of large-scale expulsions of “outsiders” from neighbouring countries since independence, despite the obvious fact that such “outsiders” have been major contributors to wealth and prosperity in the past. Such expulsions are often tangled with the rivalries of neighbouring states. Urban Nigeria in particular continues to experience very

bloody ethnic conflict in such varied urban communities as Kaduna, Jos, Warri, and Lagos. The “supertribal” identities that have been explored a bit in the previous chapter on the colonial city are traced in Brazzaville where politics became dominated, with the collapse of an authoritarian and superficially Marxist system, by regional loyalties. While the centre of Brazzaville lost much of its significance except to the large firms, the national professional elite, and foreigners, the east and west sections of the city became fortresses sustained by ethnic militias, and both have experienced devastating destruction in two major waves of violence in the 1990s. This has been a vicious fight in a zero-sum game over a fixed amount of wealth, and it obviates the construction of an economy that can grow with the aid of a supportive state.

Turning from the developmental to the cultural, the recent collection *Under Siege: Four African Cities* (2002) proposes, however, a counterpart to the post-modern approach of some development studies of African cities. For some of the contributors, the collapse of many features of urban life as developed over decades represents a cultural renaissance, the genuine *Africanisation* of the African city. What has collapsed can be represented as a cultural Eurocentric imposition that is being, perhaps in some respects painfully, discarded. Over time many a proud but, for the mass of black Africans, forbidding and hostile urban core towards whose sustenance his or her labour had to be directed, has now fallen into neglect or decay.

The Francophone literature particularly – especially since Marc Vernière’s influential work on Dakar and its now equivalently large “double,” Pikine – is especially emphatic here. Dakar’s official, planned world which does not serve the mass of people and its elite areas which use up massive resources are contrasted to Pikine, where the majority now live and interact and try to build a new life for themselves. This kind of contrast has been drawn by others for such cities as the Centrafrican capital of Bangui, the Nigerien capital of Niamey, and the great conurbation of Kinshasa. Making a living and securing a bit of land in Kinshasa is tough, but nonetheless statistics suggest a child born in Kinshasa still has a better chance for a longer life; the city has higher birth rates and lower death rates than elsewhere. This is why people stay here, not the links to the industrial and communications core of wealth to which they have very little access.

New forms of organisation are matched with new cultural forms; this is where new African music and art is coming from. In book-stalls in African cities, school texts have given way to themes dealing with the ideals and dilemmas of an urban reading public. *Kwani?*, a



FIGURE 13. Lagos 2000. Highway bridge and a world of small-scale production and commerce. *Source:* Edgar Cleijne; used by permission.

journal established by Kenyan intellectuals, aims at tapping into popular language and the tropes of everyday life: it highlights language that mixes Kiswahili, English, and other languages spoken in Kenya as the *sheng* argot spoken in Nairobi. As the *Under Siege* collection comes from the inspiration of the art world, it reflects the changing interest from a static and ethnographic African art based on tradition and the countryside to one looking for innovation, assertive protest, juxtaposition, and situation within a globalised world. The distinguished Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas, in getting to know Lagos, has come to know the city not (merely?) as a welter of disaster, chaos and crime but also as a place where massive traffic jams inspire equally massive numbers of informal sector traders to find their customers, and where the complex processes of waste disposal lead to the creation of vast numbers of jobs and to ingenious forms of recycling. Lagos “is a patchwork of self-organisation that has evaded the rigorous organisation of ’70s planners.”¹⁰

The condition of African cities today varies. Cities do not entirely change from one era to another. This book proposes that they have longer-term trajectories in Africa as elsewhere. The post-colonial

¹⁰ Rem Koolhaas in *Under Siege*, 183.

decades have added another important layer to an existing and expanding history. Catastrophe and creativity, good governance versus effective government, these paradoxical approaches are part of a clash of ideas about where African cities are heading today. African cities generally are unable to progress according to the strictures of colonial planning and colonial values. Whether they are now moving in the direction of new and more realistic governance regimes is the question. Considering various trends alongside each other seems more useful than merely subjecting them to an all-purpose “Afropessimism” that obscures the variety of often contradictory movement and prevents us from grasping any sense of a way forward. In the following chapter, we shall conclude by looking at these issues in more detail.

Selected Readings

This chapter is almost entirely dependent on the work of social scientists rather than historians, albeit social scientists with a bent for interdisciplinary work. Historians are only beginning to look at the postindependence years as history. A good summary of the state of the art as it was understood in the first years of African independence



FIGURE 14. Lagos 2000. The traffic jam on the bridge and repair shops beneath. *Source:* Edgar Cleijne; used by permission.

can be found in W. J. & J. L. Hanna, *Urban Dynamics in Black Africa* (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 2nd edition, 1981). For a general perspective on the material in this topic, R. E. Stren and R. R. White, eds., *African Cities in Crisis: Managing Rapid Urban Growth* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989) was a volume that changed the approach of many readers. The overview in Akin Mabogunje, "Urban Planning and the Post-colonial State in Africa," *African Studies Review*, XXXIII, 1990, 121–203, is very useful. An excellent large reader, Carole Rakodi, ed., *The Urban Challenge in Africa: Growth and Management of its Large Cities* (New York/London/Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1997) contains many outstanding contributions. For a single volume study, Margaret Peil, *African Urban Society* (Chichester: Wiley, 1984) is very handy.

Apart from Hake, *op. cit.*, there are a number of observant sources that traced the irrelevance and collapse of late colonial planning models: outstanding and early was Peter Marris, *Family and Social Change in an African City: A Study of Rehousing in Lagos* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1961). But see also Janet Bujra, "Proletarianization and the Informal Sector: A Case Study from Nairobi," *African Urban Studies*, III, 1978/79, 47–66. Richard Stren, "Urban Research in Africa 1960–92," *Urban Studies*, XXXI, 4/5, 1994, 729–43; and Jaap van Velsen, "Urban Squatters-Problems or Solution" in David Parkin, ed., *Town and Countryside in Central and Eastern Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 294–307. A French equivalent can be found in Marc Vernière, "A propos de la marginalité: réflexions illustrées par quelques enquêtes en milieu urbain et suburbain africain," *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 51, 1973, 587–605. A special issue of *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 81–83, published in 1981, as well as *Politique africaine*, 17, published in 1985, were also important markers of change.

For housing issues specifically, see P. Amis & P. Lloyd., eds., *Housing Africa's Poor* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990). Also recommended are Philip Amis, "Squatters or Tenants? The Commercialisation of Unauthorised Housing in Nairobi," *World Development*, XII, 1984, 87–96; Seltene Seyoum, "Land Alienation and the Urban Growth of Bahir Dar 1935–74" in Anderson & Rathbone's previously cited historical volume; Carole Rakodi, "From a Settler History to an African Present: Housing Markets in Harare, Zimbabwe," *Society and Space*, XIII(1), 1995, 91–115; and M. Chebbi, "The Pirate Developer; A New Form of Development in Tunis," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, XII, 1988. For inequality in water access, see

Béatrice Allain-El Mansouri, *L'eau et la ville au Maroc: Rabat-Salé et son périphérie* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001).

The political issues engaged were addressed in a striking way by Peter Gutkind in such articles as "From the Energy of Despair to the Anger of Despair: The Transition from Social Circulation to Political Consciousness among the Urban Poor," *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, VII, 1973. For an economist's perspective, see Vali Jamal & John Weeks, "The Vanishing Rural-Urban Gap in Sub-Saharan Africa," *International Labour Review*, CXXVII (3), 1988. On different aspects of urban politics, see Michael Chege, "A Tale of Two Slums; Electoral Politics in Mathare and Dagoretti," *Review of African Political Economy*, 20, 1981, 74–88 with reference to Kenya; Richard Jeffries, "Urban Popular Attitudes towards the Economic Recovery Programme," XCI, *African Affairs*, 1992, 207–26 on Ghana; and Jeremy Grest, "Urban Management, Local Government Reform and the Democratization Process in Mozambique: Maputo City 1975–90," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, XXI(1), 1995, 147–64 on Mozambique. How a city really works from the perspective of ordinary residents is the subject of Diane Sugarman, *Avenues of Participation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). As with other subjects, titles from the previous chapter can be used very profitably here.

A partially postmodern collection with some striking illustrations of contemporary African cities can be found in *Under Siege: Four African Cities: Freetown, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Lagos*, Documenta 11, Platform 4, Kassel Art Festival (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Kantz, 2002) (managing editor Gerti Fietzek). On attempts to explore new ways of understanding and planning African cities, see Arne Tostensen, Inge Tvedten & Mariken Vaa, eds., *Associational Life in African Cities* (Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2001) and Karen Hansen & Mariken Vaa, eds., *Reconsidering Informality: Perspectives from Urban Africa* (Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2004). Mark Swilling, ed., *Governing Africa's Cities* (Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand Press, 1996) is also recommended.

On particular cities, there are a number of very substantial studies in French. For some important examples see Marc Pain, *Kinshasa: écologie et organisation urbaines* (Toulouse: Université le Mirail, 1979); Guy Mainet, *Douala: croissance et servitudes* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1985); M. Samkale, L. V. Thomas & P. Fougeyrollas, *Dakar en devenîr* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1968); Marc Vernière, *Dakar et son Double: Dagoudane Pikine* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1977) for Dakar

and Pikine; Elisabeth Dorier-Aprill, Abel Kouvonama & Christophe Aprill, eds., *Vivre à Brazzaville: modernité et crise au quotidien* (Paris: Karthala, 1998) for Brazzaville; and Ali Hadjiedj, Claude Chaline & Jocelyne Dubois-Maury, eds., *Alger: les nouveaux défis de l'urbanisation* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003) for Algiers (also Benatia, *op. cit* in Chapter Three). The North African picture is briefly summarised in Janet Abu Lughod, "Developments in North African Urbanism: The Process of Decolonization" in B. J. L. Berry, ed., *Urbanization and Counter-urbanization* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1976), 191–211; and one type of development is captured in Justin McGuinness, "Neighbourhood Notes: Texture and Streetscape in the Tunis Medina" in Susan Slyomovics, ed., *The Walled Arab City in Literature, Architecture and History* (London: Frank Cass, 2001), 97–120. Margaret Peil, *The City is the People* (Chichester: Wiley, 1991) provides a good description of Lagos. There is a good recent French work on Maputo and other Mozambican cities: Brigitte Lachartre, *Enjeux urbains au Mozambique* (Paris: Karthala, 2000). For Addis Ababa, Girma Kebede, *Living with Urban Environmental Health Risks: The Case of Ethiopia* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004) provides a grim but valuable introduction.

James Ferguson's important study of the Copperbelt, *Expectations of Modernity*, was cited in the previous chapter; recommended also are Benetta Jules-Rosette, *Symbols of Change: Urban Transition in a Zambian Community* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1981); Ann Schlyter, *Recycled Inequalities: Youth and Gender in George Compound, Zambia*, Nordic Africa Institute Research Report #114, Uppsala, 1999; and Karen Hansen, *Keeping House in Lusaka* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997) and *Salaula* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). Aili Tripp's perspective on Dar es Salaam can be found in her article "Women and the Changing Urban Household in Tanzania," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, XXVII, 1989, 601–23 and in *Changing the Rules: The Politics of Liberalization and the Urban Informal Economy in Tanzania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). The Burkinabe experiment in urban residential development is detailed in Sylvie Jaglin, *Gestion urbaine partagée à Ouagadougou: pouvoirs et périphéries* (Paris: Karthala/ORSTOM, 1995). There is a short version of her ideas in Sylvie Jaglin, "Why Mobilise Town Dwellers?," *Environment and Urbanization*, VI (2), 1994, 11–32.

Finally, some scattered drives: on the effort to plan the expansion of Cairo, Bénédicte Florin, "Six-October; ville secondaire ou banlieue de Caire?," *Villes en parallèle*, 22, 1995, 179–200; and Henk

Knaupe & Ulrich Wurzel, *Aufbruch in der Wüste: Die Neuen Städte in Ägypten* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1995). Cairo and its many problems and opportunities feature in an excellent series, *Cairo Papers in Social Science*, published by the American University in Cairo. The city comes to life in many of the novels of Egypt's Nobel Prize-winning novelist, Naguib Mahfouz. For urban agriculture, see Donald Freeman, *City of Farmers: Informal Urban Agriculture in the Open Spaces of Nairobi, Kenya* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1991); Carole Rakodi, "Urban Agriculture: Research Questions and Zambian Evidence," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, XXVI, 1988; and Beacon Mbiba, *Urban Agriculture in Zimbabwe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1995). On popular culture, an interesting exploration can be found in Sidney Lemelle, "Ni Wapi Tunakwenda? Hip Hop Culture and the Children of Arusha" in Dipa Basu & Sidney Lemelle, eds., *The Vinyl Ain't Final: Hip Hop and the Globalization of Black Culture* (London: Pluto Press, forthcoming). For *Kwani?* as well as other manifestations of East African popular culture, see *Africa Insight*, XXXV(2), [Pretoria], 2005.