

Urbanization, Urbanism, and Urbanity in an African City: Home Spaces and House Cultures (Africa Connects)

Paul Jenkins



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Sub-Saharan Africa is often considered to be the last global macro-region in the world to go through a rapid urbanization process, leading to the majority of the population living in cities and towns. Despite common misunderstandings to the contrary, the urbanization process in this region has historic roots, and although this has accelerated in the post-colonial era, it continues to display distinctive spaces and forms due to particular political, economic, social, and cultural contexts. This book explores the features of recent urbanization in sub-Saharan Africa through a remarkably detailed and wide-ranging case study of Mozambique's capital city Maputo, including longitudinal physical and socio-economic factors as well as an ethnographic inquiry into cultural attitudes. The findings of this study reflect not only the weakness of state capacity in the region in urban intervention, but also the continued basis for urban development activity by residents, in social and economic terms as well as the importance of culturally constructed identities and social relations. Maputo and cities like it are very much a collective "urban" in the making - and the final form that they take remains to be seen in terms of urbanism and urbanity.

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