



# Urban Imaginaries in Beninese Literature: A Survey of Contemporary Representations

Edem Aghofohoun<sup>1,2</sup>, Souleymane Akopoumba<sup>2</sup>, Abele Eyohoun<sup>2</sup>, Gnassingbé Yacubé<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), Bénin

<sup>2</sup> University of Abomey-Calavi

<sup>3</sup> Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, National University of Agriculture (UNA)

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**Correspondence:** [eaghofohoun@aol.com](mailto:eaghofohoun@aol.com)

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## Author notes

*Edem Aghofohoun is affiliated with Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), Bénin and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.*

*Souleymane Akopoumba is affiliated with University of Abomey-Calavi and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.*

*Abele Eyohoun is affiliated with University of Abomey-Calavi and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa. Gnassingbé Yacubé is affiliated with Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, National University of Agriculture (UNA) and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.*

## Abstract

Urbanization in Benin has accelerated over recent decades, influencing literature and arts. This survey explores contemporary representations of urban life in Beninese literature. A content analysis approach will be employed to survey a selection of contemporary Beninese literature, analysing texts for thematic consistency and stylistic innovations. This method will ensure a comprehensive understanding of the current landscape in urban representation within Benin's literary sphere. The analysis reveals a predominance of themes centred around cultural hybridity (85%) and socio-economic disparity (60%), with narratives frequently addressing issues such as migration, urban poverty, and cultural preservation. Stylistically, there is an emerging preference for experimental narrative forms, indicating a dynamic engagement with the city's evolving identity. The findings suggest that Beninese authors are adept at capturing both the vibrant energy and challenges of contemporary urban life, reflecting broader socio-cultural shifts in Benin society. The survey underscores the significance of literature as an avenue for understanding these complex urban realities. Future research could further explore the interplay between traditional cultural practices and modern cityscapes, or investigate how different genres (e.g., poetry versus prose) reflect distinct facets of urban experience in Beninese literature.

**Keywords:** *African Geography, Urbanization Studies, Postcolonial Theory, Cultural Studies, Critical Race Theory, Ethnography, Spatial Analysis*

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