

In summary, Pailey's work is detailed, sophisticated and truly insightful – but also accessible, rich and engaging. It is a book that was a pleasure to read (and review), and one that I will use repeatedly both as a resource in my own research and in teaching.

Daniel Hammett

Department of Geography, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK/Department of
 Geography, Environmental Management and Energy Studies, University of
 Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa
 Email: d.hammett@sheffield.ac.uk
 doi: [10.1017/S0001972023000062](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0001972023000062)

Alice Franck, Barbara Casciarri and Idris Salim El-Hassan (eds), *In-Betweenness in Greater Khartoum: Spaces, Temporalities, and Identities from Separation to Revolution*. Space and Place, Volume 20. New York NY and Oxford: Berghahn Books (hb US \$155/£117 – 978 1 80073 058 8). 2021, 368 pp.

Khartoum is one of the biggest metropolises on the African continent. Yet in contrast to its well-studied counterparts, such as Kinshasa, Lagos and Cairo, there are relatively few academic studies on its urban dynamics. An edited volume that starts from empirical research to scrutinize Khartoum's urban transformations thus offers a welcome contribution to current academic knowledge on the city and on urban Africa in general. The book is set during an economically and politically turbulent time of separation between North and South Sudan (2011) and a revolution that overthrew the almost thirty-year authoritarian regime of Omar al-Bashir (2019). With its focus on in-betweenness as an overlapping lens to study processes of spatial and socio-cultural reconfiguration, it provides some useful reflections on current debates on the particularity of African urbanization and the worldwide demand to create more inclusive urban environments.

In-Betweenness in Greater Khartoum begins with a promising prologue that includes an insider reflection on how in-betweenness is continuously (re)negotiated. This prologue is written by Stella Gaitano, a well-known female South Sudanese author living in a city historically divided between North and South (a personal account that is nicely picked up again in the epilogue). Several other chapters delve deeper into the shifting practices of in-betweenness, elaborating how Southern Sudanese negotiated their access to the city at a time when their status changed from internally displaced people (IDPs) to foreigners in a city where many had grown up. The authors thereby show that urban marginality and liminality do not necessarily imply complete exclusion (see Chapters 7 and 8). In contrast to what the political system and state media want people to believe, Southerners are a very diverse group of people who navigate their in-betweenness in fluid and contested ways (see Chapters 5, 6 and 9). However, the edited volume is much more than an empirical reflection on the changing values and positions of Southern/South Sudanese in Khartoum's recent history. Apart from geographical origin and ethnic background,

class, age and gender are also axes along which spatial, temporal and personal manifestations of in-betweenness are analysed, although only sporadically.

By taking the idea of in-betweenness as a guiding narrative throughout the chapters, the edited volume offers coherent insights into the complex and ever changing configurations of Greater Khartoum. It thereby debunks more classical dichotomies that have been used to study African urban environments. Analysing land conflicts and issues of belonging in hybrid spaces, Alice Franck, Barbara Casciarri and Salma Mohamed Abdalmunim Abdalla, for instance, explicitly question the boundaries between rural and urban (Chapters 1 and 2). Katarzyna Grabska's personal visit to the home of the chairwomen of the Dok Nuer Community Association is also emblematic for the way in which centre and periphery intermingle on a day-to-day basis in a city such as Khartoum. In Chapter 8, she describes a visit to a South Sudanese woman in a very central, high-end neighbourhood. Against her own expectations, she ended up in a shack in a part of the city where fancy buildings and villas were supposed to be the norm. These are just a few examples that illustrate how the authors of this edited volume question urban boundaries and make use of a dynamic approach to studying African urban transformations.

Paradoxically, with a majority of chapters on Southern/South Sudanese in Greater Khartoum, one is left with a persistent impression of a city divided into centre and periphery, or North and South. Other crucial lived experiences of in-betweenness, which also shape the everyday lifeworlds of Khartoum's urbanites and which are specific to the city's urbanization process, are overlooked or mentioned only in passing. I think of the struggles of women of different socio-economic backgrounds for greater inclusion in a city that, due to its Islamic political regime, contests access to urban assets in gendered ways. I also think of the large number of Eritreans, Ethiopians and, more recently, Syrians, whose claims to the city are rather absent in the edited volume, although they are also key protagonists when it concerns questions of in-betweenness. Also, connections with the Sudanese diaspora are a crucial factor in how Khartoum's inhabitants negotiate in-betweenness on a day-to-day basis, as became extremely visible during the December 2019 revolution. Had these urban actors also received an explicit voice in the edited volume, it would have given a more encompassing idea of the complex, diverse, fluctuating dynamics of urban inclusion and exclusion in a city undergoing social, economic and political turbulence and friction.

Griet Steel

Former assistant professor, Department of Human Geography and
Spatial Planning, Utrecht University, Utrecht, Netherlands

Email: grietsteel@hotmail.com

doi: [10.1017/S0001972023000074](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0001972023000074)