



A Mouth Sweeter Than Salt: An African Memoir

Toyin Falola

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A Mouth Sweeter than Salt gathers the stories and reflections of the early years of Toyin Falola, the grand historian of Africa and one of the greatest sons of Ibadan, the notable Yoruba city-state in Nigeria. Redefining the autobiographical genre altogether, Falola miraculously weaves together personal, historical, and communal stories, along with political and cultural developments in the period immediately preceding and following Nigeria's independence, to give us a unique and enduring picture of the Yoruba in the mid-twentieth century. This is truly a literary memoir, told in language rich with proverbs, poetry, song, and humour.

The reader is irresistibly drawn into Falola's world. The prose is lucid. There is humour. This work is sweet. Period.

-Ngugi wa Thiong'o

This is Ibadan as only a true indigene can write or remember her, in all her voluptuous turbulence and ebullient eloquence. Truly, with this achievement, Toyin proves that the mouth can indeed be sweeter than salt.

-Femi Osofisan

A splendid coming-of-age story so full of vivid colour and emotion, the words seem to dance off the page. But this is not only Falola's memoir; it is an account of a new nation coming into being and the tensions and negotiations that invariably occur between city and country, tradition and modernity, men and women, rich and poor. A truly beautiful book.

-Robin D. G. Kelley

It is difficult not to read A Mouth Sweeter than Salt as another IBADAN, but a more nuanced imaginative village, in the throes of creation. The reader, aware of that other masterly history book, salivates at this story book.

-Kole Omotoso

Winner of the 2004 Association of Third World Studies President's Distinguished Award, the West African Oral History Association Award, and the 2005 Herskovits Finalist Award by the Association of African Studies.

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