

successfully resisted having a foreign operator but the result has been political capture. Formed out of existing *daladala* operators, the company chosen by the government to operate the BRT appears to be linked to powerful figures. Without proper accountability over revenues, service has declined, triggering recent protests by residents who initially benefited from better services. This constant repressive extraction and negotiation by political actors is a problem for change that might have been addressed more in both books.

Overall, it is hardly surprising to see both political capture and bottom-up resistance to top-down foreign projects such as the BRT. Popular transport has deep roots and involves many sunk costs by owners. The sector provides large numbers of jobs for artists, mechanics, sign painters, cleaners, vendors, terminal managers, touts and drivers, as aptly described by Rizzo and Mutongi, people who might be among those left out of the benefits of this approach to needed change. There remains an open and important question for further research: how and with what impacts will transport users, labour, minibus owners and national and city governments in Africa negotiate both among themselves and with the diverse global forces coalescing around public transport reform on the continent? Internal societal demands are growing for better, safer services, especially for women and children and people with disabilities, and international concern is mounting with regard to the kind of cities Africa will build and their human and environmental impacts. Change is needed. Key questions are: who should lead this change? How should it happen? And what might it look like in different places? Both books contribute to pushing forward much-needed critical debate by helping us rethink and reimagine alternative public transport futures for African cities, futures that should start with the lived realities and aspirations of the majority of citizens, including the poor and middle classes, who currently – for better or worse – rely fundamentally on these deeply rooted and complex minibus systems.

Jacqueline M. Klopp
Columbia University
jk2002@columbia.edu
doi:10.1017/S0001972019000767

Lindsey B. Green-Simms, *Postcolonial Automobility: car culture in West Africa*. Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota Press (pb US\$28 – 978 1 5179 0114 1). 2017, 280 pp.

In *Postcolonial Automobility*, Lindsey Green-Simms wades into the growing literature on motor transportation and road culture in Africa. Motivated in part by the ‘mobility turn’ in social science literature, this growing body of scholarship is raising important questions about African economic history, informality, entrepreneurialism, infrastructure and technological modernity. *Postcolonial Automobility* seeks to shed new light on the enduring tensions of automobility – the promise of autonomy and mobility for users, which exists simultaneously as a fantasy and a frustration – through an examination of cultural texts.

Green-Simms argues that cultural texts such as novels, plays, poems, videos and films do more than represent cars or reflect their meaning within the cultures and societies of West Africa. Rather, these cultural texts ‘provide a canvas on which the complexities of what Daniel Miller calls the “intimate relationship between cars and people” play out’ (p. 8). By tracing the symbolic and existential significance of the automobile in West African cultural texts, Green-Simms seeks to illuminate

the overlapping and often contradictory meanings and functions of automobiles in the lived experiences of the everyday.

Those contradictions are, on one level, uniquely West African, shaped by the particular histories and cultures of the region. As Green-Simms notes, automobiles have a long history in West Africa, and Africans in the region embraced the potential of the technology early in the twentieth century. Entrepreneurial Africans across the region used motor transport technology to create new infrastructures of economic and social possibility for themselves and their passengers in the first half of the twentieth century. However, the emancipatory symbolism of the automobile, which promised both autonomy and mobility for its users, was complicated and constrained within the context of European colonial rule. Cars figured large in European imaginations of industrialists including Citroën, who saw the technology as a vital tool in the exploration and colonization of the continent. As Green-Simms notes, these contradictions extended into the postcolony. For leaders of newly independent African nations, cars symbolized the modernist promise and development potential of a new age. And yet for many Africans, automobility remained illusive. Today, car ownership is defined more often by immobility, danger and uncertainty than it is by freedom and agency, constrained by inadequate infrastructure and unequal access to advanced technologies.

The broader themes that characterize experiences of African automobility are, however, also quintessentially global. In the West, automobility is often cast as the ultimate incarnation of modernity – a technological object that frees the modern, mobile subject to pursue the liberal ideal of autonomy. And yet, Green-Simms argues, even in America and Western Europe, the automobile and its driver are never completely autonomous. They are constrained by their dependency on producers, regulators, policymakers, police and oil companies, as well as the limits of infrastructure and the availability and accessibility of technology. In West Africa, where ‘modernity is just as often a status one hopes to achieve as it is a given state’ (pp. 13–14), these contradictions are magnified in both a symbolic and an experiential sense, but they are not unique. As a ‘misplaced idea’ (p. 14), West African automobility has the power to shed light on the latent contradictions in the concept of automobility itself.

In particular, Green-Simms argues that African automobility highlights the profound unevenness of globalization – an unevenness that is at the heart of modernity and automobility as global phenomena. She traces these themes through five chapters, organized around genre, geography and sub-theme. Moving through these chapters, Green-Simms explores the cultural affinities and economic networks that connect practices of automobility throughout the region. In the first chapter, she traces a broad history of both statist, infrastructural automobility and the entrepreneurial automobility of Africans through much of the first half of the twentieth century. In the second chapter, she contrasts this narrative of self-stylization and progress with a more ambivalent history of danger and the perils of driving, most notably through an analysis of Wole Soyinka’s 1965 play *The Road*. However, particularly in Chapters 3 (on francophone African cinema) and 4 (Nigerian video film), she is also careful to acknowledge the significant variations in popular culture and technological practice in the region’s anglophone and francophone zones – variations that shape both the aesthetic forms and the lived experience of automobility. Similarly, Chapter 5 explores the gendered nature of automobility, using Ama Ata Aidoo’s novel *Changes: a love story* and Ousmane Sembène’s film *Faat Kiné* to articulate a woman-centred version of automobility that is less about upward mobility than maintenance or survival within otherwise oppressive or difficult social and economic systems.

Green-Simms' analysis is far from simple, but that complexity is necessary. Cars, as she notes, are productive sites of inquiry precisely because they are paradoxes that challenge the oversimplified narratives about the continent and its place within global modernity. She embraces that complexity with theoretical rigour and analytical clarity. As such, *Postcolonial Automobility* makes an important contribution to our understanding of automobility in Africa, but it also deserves a much wider reading within and beyond African studies.

Jennifer Hart

Wayne State University

Jennifer.hart4@wayne.edu

doi:10.1017/S0001972019000780

Jörg Wiegratz, *Neoliberal Moral Economy: capitalism, socio-cultural change and fraud in Uganda*. London: Rowman & Littlefield International (hb £100 – 978 1 7834 8853 7; pb £32.95 – 978 1 7834 8854 4). 2016, 375 pp.

A Marxian understanding of capitalist accumulation acknowledges that conflictual and unequal processes are intrinsic to development and yet that such processes have to be justified – through coercion and by transforming the existing moral order – for capitalist accumulation to be sustained. In this book, Jörg Wiegratz examines the impacts that President Yoweri Museveni's government's embrace of neoliberalism has had on Uganda's moral order. Wiegratz argues that increasing acceptability of economic dishonesty or fraud is the product of the dominance of neoliberal policies across the world. He argues that liberalization and market-led reforms have reoriented Uganda's moral order towards more individualistic ideals that prioritize the maximization of one's wealth above all else. This transformation, he argues, has ruptured Uganda's pre-liberal order and plunged its society into a moral crisis.

Neoliberal Moral Economy criticizes the moral orders that have emerged as by-products of the spread of neoliberalism. Uganda has a reputation for having adopted 'neoliberal reforms most extensively' (p. 3) among African countries, but the influence of neoliberalism is prevalent across most of Africa, suggesting a wider relevance for this book. Wiegratz provides detailed evidence of the detrimental effects of neoliberal policies, highlighting how inequitable power relationships in market exchanges have been governed by individual self-maximization and a tendency to cheat weaker and vulnerable members of society. Wiegratz's evidence emerges from research and consultancy work in Uganda since 2004 and is largely based on interviews with farmers, traders, brokers and elites through fieldwork in Kampala and Bugisu.

The introduction and Chapter 1 illustrate why morality and moral economics are useful subjects of global capitalism while Chapter 2 provides historical background to Uganda's political economy. From the very start, Wiegratz develops his argument that 'economic deception has become a structural feature of the global economy' (p. 2). He claims that 'neoliberalism is likely to undermine certain pro-social morals and replace them with pro-self-oriented morals', illustrating this point in subsequent chapters (p. 26). Chapter 3 describes changes in Uganda's political economy that have resulted in 'moral restructuring' across society. It points to the Museveni government's adoption of privatization programmes as a 'decisive moment in the process of changing the country's political-economic structure and moral fibre' (p. 102). Chapter 4 explores how liberalization affected market exchanges in the agricultural sector and describes increasing incidences of