

said, for instance, about the Seleka, or governance under the transitional president Catherine Samba-Panza (apart from the suggestion that it may have been little different from her predecessors). Hopefully this work can now help in future research on these events.

While CAR just underwent the second democratic elections of its history, this hardly means that its troubles are over. Almost half a million Central Africans are displaced following the recent violence. Almost half of them remain outside the borders of the country, which in turn is the third-poorest in terms of GDP per capita. As much as I would have found this volume useful close to a decade ago, I hope it will now contribute to improving the lives of Central Africans.

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Preaching Prevention: Born-Again Christianity and the Moral Politics of AIDS in Uganda by LYDIA BOYD

Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2015. Pp. 250. \$32.95 (pbk).

doi:10.1017/S0022278X16000501

Lydia Boyd provides a detailed account of how the changes in United States policy-making on HIV prevention over the past decade, from George W. Bush through to Barack Obama, have been received and understood by a group of Ugandan born-again Christian HIV activists at a church in Kampala. But, this book is much more than an account of the implementation of a policy ‘on the ground’; it provides carefully argued insights into understandings of self, the management of social change and the interface between different cultural and moral constructs. She describes how a central message of the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) approach to prevention, the message ‘to be faithful’ and to ‘abstain’ from sex before marriage, took on meaning within the lives of young Christians at one church in Kampala; how the local interpretation of this message provided a way for young Christians in the church to think of themselves as accountable, self-controlled individuals, setting themselves apart. This interpretation of this moral message ran counter to the social structures in which these same young people remained embedded, the kin groups and communities where parents and elders expected respect for ‘tradition’. These were traditional codes of conduct that provided an alternative moral compass. This resulted in what Boyd describes in her epilogue as ‘conflicts about how people imagined health, proper behaviour, and moral obligation’ (p. 181). Boyd demonstrates a remarkable ability to bring together a detailed understanding of changes in HIV prevention policy, and an ethnographically informed understanding of Christian-activism in one particular setting while demonstrating a sensitivity to local understandings of ‘traditional’ concepts of behaviour and obligation.

The resulting book is a nuanced and thoughtful ethnographic account which provides detailed insights into the effects of HIV-prevention funding on people’s lives and actions across 10 years in Uganda, as she came and went for prolonged periods of fieldwork. The various aspects of PEPFAR, introduced

in 2003 under President Bush, have been discussed and critiqued in numerous articles, often looking at the impact such a large amount of money (and associated accountability structures) have had on receiving countries and organisations. However, to date to my knowledge, no one else has provided such a rich and detailed account not only of how certain organisations used the funding to benefit their own moral approach to sexual behaviour, but also to provide detailed ethnographic insights into the ways in which messages, such as 'abstain and be faithful' were recrafted to draw upon local understandings of accountability, self-control and moral behaviour.

This book deserves to be widely read, not least by those engaged in public health policy-making, in order to gain an understanding of how an external intervention is both received, shaped and used, taking on a life very different from the understanding of what it means, held by those who designed it. In this particular case, that policy is one with a very strong moral message about individual accountability and 'proper' behaviour. Boyd shows how Ugandan Christian groups eligible for PEPFAR funding to support programmes to roll out the messages and approaches to prevention, including 'abstain and be faithful', were not mere recipients of a foreign moral agenda; they used this funding and messaging to support a focus on personal success and moral uprightness in a rapidly changing urban environment. PEPFAR served such groups well, for some time. It is not surprising that the changes that PEPFAR underwent when Obama took over as President, which saw dedicated funding for abstinence programmes disappear, were seen as a betrayal by such groups. Indeed, according to Boyd, it suggested to some that the American funders (and Ugandan politicians who had been supporting the funders' messages) were now disinterested in a moral agenda which preached abstinence and faithfulness and were more interested in 'freedom', which some in the church interpreted to be an encouragement of immoral behaviour. They had, in the words of the Pastor who led the church that Boyd attended and studies, lost their way.

An additional strength of this book is the way in which Boyd makes use of the timing of this shift in policy to reflect on the passage of anti-homosexuality legislation in Uganda, and the way in which the Christian activists embraced this new cause as they remained 'active proponents for "sexual morality"'. Much has been written in the popular press and elsewhere about the support of the American Christian right-wing groups for this bill, but Boyd describes how Ugandan Christians in Kampala saw their own rejection of 'gay rights' as being at the heart of their upholding local understandings of personhood, justice and inequality. To support such sexual rights would be to undermine the family and social structure which provides structure and support for individuals' sense of self and their place in the world. These Ugandan Christians did not see themselves as passive recipients of foreign agendas, be they shaped around abstinence or anti-homosexuality, but as people taking opportunities to demonstrate 'self-control' shaped by a particular cultural understanding of the self, albeit an understanding played out within a setting shaped by deeply embedded structural inequalities.

This very readable and accessible book is an excellent addition to the literature on HIV, contemporary religion and global health. It is more than an

addition; Boyd provides an excellent example of insightful ethnographic research at its best.

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Informal Transport in Practice: Matatu Entrepreneurship by MELECKIDZEDECK

KHAYESI, FREDRICK MUYIA NAFUKHO and JOYCE KEMUA

London: Routledge, 2015. Pp. 164. £60 (hbk).

doi:10.1017/S0022278X16000513

Informal transport is increasingly recognised as an important topic for development studies and social science more broadly. Currently, however, it is treated in a rather fragmentary way, with sporadic policy reports and occasional academic papers but few holistic studies. This book is therefore a welcome addition to the field, taking an interdisciplinary perspective to explore one particular informal transport system – matatu minibuses in Kenya – in some detail and across a range of dimensions. It brings together authors with backgrounds in transport, educational administration and knowledge acquisition to focus on issues from entrepreneurship to violence and crime.

There is much of interest in this book for those concerned with how informal transport systems work, both generally and in Kenya specifically. Boxes scattered throughout the text add colour to particular aspects of the discussion, sometimes in refreshingly informal or unexpected ways; for example, a box listing slogans plastered on stickers over matatus implicitly suggests deeper dynamics within Kenyan society. Descriptive snapshots and historical context are complemented by periodic engagement with the theoretical ideas of Pierre Bourdieu. Chapter 6, which expands upon this theme to explore the ‘logic of practice’ in the matatu industry, is a highlight in this regard. Despite the complexity of Bourdieu’s ideas and the fairly brief introduction to them in the book, the use of the habitus concept to explore dynamics in the sector is a welcome change, given the usual tendency for informal economy studies to be couched in terms of informal institutions or norms. Thinking instead about informal practices as systems of ‘durable, transposable dispositions’ (p. 70), rooted in the history of the sector and its initial marginalisation under colonial and post-colonial regimes, feels fresh in this particular scholarly context. The authors thus highlight how the history of matatu operation as a ‘beleaguered’ mode of transport, which initially ‘operated from marginal spaces in a secretive manner in order to survive’ (p. 74), influences dynamics and practices in the sector today.

Despite these various points of interest, the diversity of perspectives embodied in this co-authored book is also one of its weaknesses. The whole feels distinctly less than the sum of its parts and the flow between chapters, as well as within chapters, is sometimes far from smooth. Patchy discussions of entrepreneurship jostle uncomfortably with the ideas of Bourdieu, and various theoretical and analytical frameworks are tantalisingly introduced – regarding the dynamics of ‘self-organising sectors’ (p. 17), for example – without being adequately followed through. One is left wanting rather more by way of a