

and firearms shaped one another between 1900 and 1960. In this reviewer's opinion, Chapters Four and Six, which speak to some of Aderinto's earlier research concerns, are especially noteworthy. Focusing on Nigeria's European population, the former examines the relationship between race and gun use, arguing that both recreational hunting and rifle-range shooting — a leisure activity from which Africans were barred — worked towards consolidating hierarchies of race and masculinity in the colony. For its part, Chapter Six explores anxieties about the perceived relationship between the proliferation of firearms and armed robbery. The reintroduction of the so-called 'hunter guard system', a form of pre-colonial policing, was one of the countermeasures adopted by many Nigerian communities and their leaders to deal with what was understood to be an unprecedented crime wave (203). The contemporary echoes of these developments (a subject also pursued in the book's Epilogue) will not be lost on readers. Other themes addressed in this rich social history are the politics and economics of the gunpowder trade between the 1920s and 1960 (Chapter Three); the modus operandi of the Nigeria Police Force and the role of firearms in public unrest and, specifically, the political and ethnic violence that accompanied Nigeria's decolonization (Chapter Five); and the tightening of the regulations pertaining to the possession of precision weapons that this violence brought about in the 1950s (Chapter Seven).

Despite its limitations, which are a product of its concentration on colonial circumstances, *Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria* remains an important book and a welcome addition to the scholarship on firearms in Africa. Engagingly written and underpinned by meticulous research, it serves as a well-documented demonstration of the benefits that accrue from studying processes of technology transfer from a socio-cultural perspective and of the inventiveness with which, throughout their history, Africans have appropriated externally-introduced commodities for their own purposes.

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AFRICAN MOBILITY AND MOTOR TRANSPORT IN GHANA

Ghana on the Go: African Mobility in the Age of Motor Transportation.

By Jennifer Hart.

Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2016. Pp. xi + 250. \$85.00, hardback (ISBN: 978-0-253-02277-6); \$35.00, paperback (ISBN: 978-0-253-02307-0); \$9.99 e-book (ISBN: 978-0-253-02325-4).

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Key Words: Ghana, transport, social, urban.

Until fairly recently, Igor Kopytoff's call for paying attention to the social life of the motorcar in Africa remained unanswered.¹ Only in the last decade have social scientists

1 I. Kopytoff, 'The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process', in A. Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge, 1986).

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began to examine the enormous transformative impact the car had and is having on African societies. Jennifer Hart's book is an important contribution to this now growing literature on automobile lives in Africa. Hart traces the history of motor transportation in twentieth-century Ghana through the lens of its central actors, the commercial lorry drivers. Drawing on archival documents and oral histories combined with interviews with active and retired drivers, Hart's well-crafted study provides a compelling analysis of the shifting practices, values, and aspirations associated with automobility in a context of rapid social change — of which the motorcar was both a symptom and a cause.

At its heart, this book is a social history of drivers in southern Ghana, and it portrays the work practices, culture, and status of drivers from the earliest years of motorization in the early 1900s to the state-mandated reorganization of urban transport at the turn of the millennium. This history was a turbulent one. It mainly unfolded within the tension-laden relationship between profit sought by small-scale private transport entrepreneurs and the necessities, constraints, and possibilities of providing a public service which the state was largely incapable of performing. Adopting a chronological approach, Hart describes the main developments of this relationship in five substantive chapters, which are framed by a highly readable Introduction and a brief Epilogue.

The first three chapters attend to the emergence, consolidation, and gradual professionalization of the local road transport industry in the then-British colony of the Gold Coast. These chapters offer a nuanced account of the ways in which automobile technologies shaped colonial social and economic structures. It is also notable that Hart pays due attention to the continuities of indigenous mobility systems that preceded the 'lorry age'. These had a formative effect on the ways the 'alien object' of the motorcar was adopted and put to use by diverse groups of African entrepreneurs. Advanced by lorry owners, drivers, chiefs, farmers, and traders, the early appropriations of automobility by Gold Coast Africans contested and complemented the transport infrastructures of the colonial state, which, until the 1930s, gave precedence to railways.

The success by which African automobility enhanced exchanges over distance, connecting communities to each other and to the flows of global capitalism, generated struggles over the control and regulation of the driving business. Hart ably works out the ambivalences that the increasing 'power of automobility' engendered in these struggles (63). As drivers saw their commercial autonomy curbed by colonial laws, they reacted by formalizing their work through unionization. Those unions set out to protect drivers' interests and opportunities for profit, but the institutionalization of this trade also solidified the role and responsibility of drivers in providing an essential public service, which complicated the pursuit of purely economic goals.

The tensions among the profitability, responsibility, and respectability of the driving occupation were further aggravated in the decades after independence, which are explored in the last two chapters. During the 'era of decline', which extended from the late 1950s through the 1980s, when economic strictures and political authoritarianism worsened general livelihood conditions in Ghana, drivers' continued ability to 'make money' sparked public debates about the legitimacy and legality of their practice (Chapter Four). Castigated as cheats and criminalized for allegedly 'profiteering', the social status of drivers

changed from 'modern men' to a public menace (95). The neoliberal reforms of the 1980s and 1990s revalorized entrepreneurialism, casting private commercial drivers as 'agents of development' (172). However, increasing competitive pressures resulting from market liberalization and the reorganization of urban labor relations, Hart suggests, simultaneously transformed the once lucrative and specialized profession of transport work into an occupation of last resort and survival.

The Epilogue reflects on the changing significance of automobility in twenty-first-century Ghana in light of the increase in private car ownership and new infrastructural development policies, such as the implementation of a Bus Rapid Transit system in Accra. By assessing these changes against the backdrop of longer historical developments, Hart moves beyond common analyses fixated on Ghana's 'transport crisis' to emphasize the continuities of conflict that shaped commercial road transport over the last one hundred years.

Ghana on the Go marks a major step in the understanding of automobile lives in Africa. Its primary focus on drivers tends to sideline the importance of other groups in the negotiation and organization of commercial transport. The central roles of passengers, market women in particular, and of lorry park personnel are only cursorily addressed. But this neglect does not diminish the book's overall achievement of revealing how an African society captured the motorcar and, in the process, transformed the social and economic possibilities associated with mobility.

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THE AHMADIYYA IN THE GOLD COAST

The Ahmadiyya in the Gold Coast: Muslim Cosmopolitans in the British Empire.

By John H. Hanson.

Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2017. Pp. xv + 287. \$35.00, paperback (ISBN: 978-0-253-02933-1);

\$34.99, e-book (ISBN: 978-0253-02951-5); \$85.00, hardback (ISBN: 978-0253-026194-4).

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Key Words: Islam, West Africa, Ghana, religion.

The Ahmadiyya is regarded as being a highly controversial religious movement in many parts of the Islamic world and is, in fact, not even regarded as being 'Islamic' by states such as Pakistan and Saudi Arabia (which ban adherents from taking the pilgrimage to Mecca). Despite that, not much research has been done about the Ahmadiyya. This gap in research is aggravated by the fact that the Ahmadiyya has been and is a highly active and successful missionary movement in many parts of the world, even in many Western countries. The Ahmadiyya has become known, for example, for its numerous translations of the Qur'an into vernacular languages; those translations have often triggered 'counter-translations', as for instance, in Tanzania, by both Sufi- and Salafi-oriented Muslim scholars. In effect, the Ahmadiyya has been at the center of Muslim attention for at least one