



Nostalgia for the Future: West Africa after the Cold War

Charles Piot

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Since the end of the cold war, Africa has seen a dramatic rise in new political and religious phenomena, including an eviscerated privatized state, neoliberal NGOs, Pentecostalism, a resurgence in accusations of witchcraft, a culture of scamming and fraud, and, in some countries, a nearly universal wish to emigrate. Drawing on fieldwork in Togo, Charles Piot suggests that a new biopolitics after state sovereignty is remaking the face of one of the world's poorest regions.

In a country where playing the U.S. Department of State's green card lottery is a national pastime and the preponderance of cybercafés and Western Union branches signals a widespread desire to connect to the rest of the world, *Nostalgia for the Future* makes clear that the cultural and political terrain that underlies postcolonial theory has shifted. In order to map out this new terrain, Piot enters into critical dialogue with a host of important theorists, including Agamben, Hardt and Negri, Deleuze, and Mbembe. The result is a deft interweaving of rich observations of Togolese life with profound insights into the new, globalized world in which that life takes place.

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