

## Bus Station Hustle

Bus stations are among the most prominent sites of social and economic activity in Africa. Integral to transport, trade, and exchange over distance, they provide livelihoods for large numbers of people. Through a detailed ethnography of one of Ghana's busiest long-distance bus stations, Michael Stasik explores the dialectical relationship between the ways in which people make the station work and how the station shapes popular economic engagement and social life. Drawing on a dual understanding of 'hustle' as a distinct mode of economic activity and organisation, and as a marker of complex and sometimes bewildering situations, Stasik challenges dominant views of transport work in urban Africa, especially those wedded to generic notions of 'informality'. *Bus Station Hustle* offers a nuanced anthropological perspective on the hands-on work in and the institutional workings of an infrastructural hub of mobility and exchange.

This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

Michael Stasik is a lecturer at the Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Basel. He is an anthropologist working on the intersection of urban cultures, economies, and mobilities in West Africa and author of *DISCOnnections: Popular Music Audiences in Freetown, Sierra Leone* (Langaa, 2012).

## THE INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN LIBRARY

### **General Editors**

LESLIE BANK, *Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa*

HARRI ENGLUND, *University of Cambridge*

DEBORAH JAMES, *London School of Economics and Political Science*

ADELINE MASQUELIER, *Tulane University, Louisiana*

HELENE NEVEU-KRINGELBACH, *University College London*

DAVID PRATTEN, *University of Oxford*

### *Managing Editor*

STEPHANIE KITCHEN, *International African Institute, London*

---

The International African Library is a major monograph series from the International African Institute. Theoretically informed ethnographies, and studies of social relations 'on the ground' which are sensitive to local cultural forms, have long been central to the Institute's publications programme. The IAL maintains this strength and extends it into new areas of contemporary concern, both practical and intellectual. It includes works focused on the linkages between local, national, and global levels of society; writings on political economy and power; studies at the interface of the socio-cultural and the environmental; analyses of the roles of religion, cosmology, and ritual in social organisation; and historical studies, especially those of a social, cultural, or interdisciplinary character.

*For a list of titles published in the series, please see the end of the book.*

# Bus Station Hustle

## *Transport Work in Urban Ghana*

---

Michael Stasik

*University of Basel*



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,  
a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of  
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781009486620](http://www.cambridge.org/9781009486620)

DOI: [10.1017/9781009486651](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009486651)

© Michael Stasik 2025

Published with the support of the Swiss National Science Foundation.

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of  
relevant collective licensing agreements, with the exception of the Creative Commons  
version, the link for which is provided below, no reproduction of any part may take  
place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

An online version of this work is published at [doi.org/10.1017/9781009486651](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009486651) under  
a Creative Commons Open Access license CC-BY-NC 4.0 which permits re-use,  
distribution and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial purposes providing  
appropriate credit to the original work is given and any changes made are indicated.  
To view a copy of this license visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0>

When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI [10.1017/9781009486651](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009486651)

First published 2025

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Names: Stasik, Michael, author.

Title: Bus station hustle : transport and mobility in urban Ghana / Michael

Stasik, Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity.

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge

University Press, 2024. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2024014065 (print) | LCCN 2024014066 (ebook) |

ISBN 9781009486620 (hardback) | ISBN 9781009486675 (paperback) |

ISBN 9781009486651 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Ghana | Bus terminals—Economic aspects—Ghana. |

Bus terminals—Social aspects—Ghana. | Bus lines—Ghana. | Informal sector

(Economics)—Ghana. | Urban transportation—Ghana.

Classification: LCC HE5707.8.A6 S73 2024 (print) | LCC HE5707.8.A6

(ebook) | DDC 388.4/73—dc23/eng/20240411

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2024014065>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2024014066>

ISBN 978-1-009-48662-0 Hardback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence  
or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this  
publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will  
remain, accurate or appropriate.