the chapter does not provide an in-depth analysis of the underlying politics of this complexity, including issues around competition for power and the deeper meanings of the central role of violence, youth and identity that crop up in the descriptions of policing groups. The same applies to Chapters 6 and 7, where Baker addresses policing in Uganda and Sierra Leone. While he makes the important point that different national histories and government policies on the role of non-state actors shape the particular characteristics of multi-choice policing in each context, the case presentations remain primarily descriptive.

Chapter 8 goes deeper into the structural determinants (the state, internal conflicts, development programmes and commercial opportunities) of different patterns of policing, and the unpredictable role of agency (i.e. different providers and authorisers of policing). Chapter 9 discusses the social implications of multi-choice policing. It argues that this provides a broad social safety net and can deepen local democracy, but because alternative policing is seldom nationally regulated, it can also accentuate unequal access to security and justice, intolerance of outsiders, violence, illegality and unaccountability. The chapter concludes by discussing available policy options. It supports a national strategy on multi-choice policing that promotes state/non-state alliances and publicly accountable policing agencies.

This book correctly argues that policing in Africa is a mode of governance, shaped by politics and economic interests, rather than simply a technical activity confined to the realm of criminology. The reader is left with an interesting paradox: failures of state policing, and weak state sovereignty more generally, condition the reinvigoration of alternative policing, but the success of the latter depends on favourable state responses. What does this imply for conceptions of state sovereignty and the apparent links between politics and policing? More broadly, what does it tell us about the influence of different conceptions of social order and justice (which may conflict with state-legal notions)? These structural factors could have been addressed more robustly in the book, and in its two case studies. This would require moving from the larger picture of the sub-continent to more detailed ethnographic studies of everyday policing practices and vernacular conceptions of order, security and justice. Overall, this is an important piece of work. Its overview of African policing patterns will most certainly inspire future empirical studies, theoretical discussions and policy debates on policing in different corners of Africa.

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Privatization and Alternative Public Sector Reform in Sub-Saharan Africa: delivering on electricity and water by KATE BAYLISS and BEN FINE Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Pp. 288, £55.00 (hb).
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Over the last twenty years, private sector participation in water and electricity provision has come to be accepted as necessary for the delivery of an efficient and effective service. Perversely, there is neither empirical nor theoretical evidence to support the claim that privatisation improves a utility's performance. This paradox strikes me as utterly outrageous. Nevertheless, this book is careful to avoid

polemics as it carefully dismantles arguments for privatisation through its analysis of the experience in sub-Saharan Africa.

The book weaves together a theoretical framework with a series of case studies. At its heart is an exposition of the naïve assumptions made by exponents of privatisation. A change in ownership was assumed to perform miracles and yet, in reality, has very little overall effect. In spite of a lack of theoretical and practical evidence in favour of privatisation, key World Bank policymakers sensed a window of opportunity to experiment in the early 1990s. Cash-strapped governments in sub-Saharan Africa were encouraged to break up utilities and sell-off any potentially profit-making branches of a service to the private sector. Recently, the World Bank has undergone something of a rethink. However, as the book demonstrates, the Bank's 'rethink' following its 'unthink' needs to be approached with caution. Rather than focusing on how best to provide services, it merely clears the way for different forms of private sector involvement.

The case studies – in Ghana, Tanzania, Zambia and Namibia – comprise the most balanced and thorough analyses of water and electricity privatisation in sub-Saharan Africa available. Often, what emerges is not an unmitigated disaster. Instead, an expensive and futile experiment has been stalled, as private investors have been unwilling to take on long-term risk. Nevertheless, the pro-privatisation mentality persists. In a concluding chapter, Bayliss and Fine put forward their own suggestions for public utility reform. Crucially, the role of the state needs to be reconsidered and public services better understood in their economic, political, social and ideological contexts.

Overall, the book is clear, coherent, and an invaluable contribution to debates about service provision in sub-Saharan Africa. If I have any slight criticism, it would be that I want to hear much more from the users of these services. Important arguments about the inability of poor people to pay for services could be grounded within their own perspectives. Indeed the claim that some are unwilling to pay for services is, I suspect, as much a myth of policy makers and bureaucrats as the assumption that a change in ownership will transform services. Invariably, people simply cannot afford to pay for water and electricity. Perhaps more could be said about how privatisation became orthodoxy and in whose interests: I am not convinced this is all down to Nellis and Shirley at the Bank. And finally, in the book's calm dissection of policy and its explicit avoidance of invective, I wonder if something is lost. If private sector participation has become orthodoxy against *any* theoretical and empirical evidence, this is surely madness. Should we not be saying so?

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Gender & Genocide in Burundi: the search for spaces of peace in the Great Lakes region by PATRICIA O. DALEY
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In this insightful and well-documented book, Daley promotes a more shaded vision on genocidal violence in Africa that moves beyond single explanatory