for domestic political elites. Revenue generation has been confined to small locales whose prime markets are international. This situation has generally made concern for the general economic health of areas outside the enclave quite secondary, if not irrelevant. Indeed, in such enclave economies, elites gain little from any deep, growing, economic prosperity of the masses of the population – and in fact may be threatened by such development. Although individuals involved in such enclaves may benefit handsomely, the system fundamentally fails to promote broad economic growth and development, and consequently leaves little incentive to try to diversify economies away from this. Interestingly, Carmody argues that the 'resource curse' should be thought of as a mode of governance, despite all of the social and economic problems it necessarily brings with it. In the context of external actors' growing interest in the continent's resources, Carmody provocatively asks whether it is in the interest of external actors to move away from neo-patrimonial regimes in charge of resource enclaves. As he notes, 'perhaps this would not be seen to be in the interests of either the United States or China because these states [African resource enclaves] would then keep their own resources, rather than placing them on the international market' (p. 140).

So, the call for 'good governance' and 'win-win relationships', so favoured by Washington and Beijing respectively, may just be empty slogans: the *last* thing either power wants are well-managed African political economies where the elites have the best interests of the local population, rather than the foreign oil companies, at heart. Thoughtful and original, this well-argued book makes a substantial contribution to our understanding of the new – and not so new – dynamics that are currently being played out in Africa. It has important implications for all observers of Africa's politics and international relations.

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Christianity and Public Culture in Africa edited by H. ENGLUND
Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2011. Pp. 238, £45.50 (hbk).
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In his introduction to this diverse and well-researched volume, Harri Englund valiantly sums up the theoretical antecedents and the historical and contemporary context that have informed the study of religion and Christianity in Africa. His task is no simple one. Conceptualising religion as more than personal reflection and internal experience has led to a tendency for descriptions in terms of political statements and action. Theorists must struggle with secular accusations of fundamentalism, as well as spiritualist demands for religion to be differentiated from other modes of social performance and cognitive frameworks. In this volume contributors from various disciplinary backgrounds set out to explore Christianity in Africa as an integral part of everyday life amongst a range of what are defined as 'publics'. This terminology is employed as a means of bringing religion into the open whilst keeping 'its impact in perspective'. Christianity is seen as being of great importance, but as an aspect of life or everyday discourse rather than 'an all-consuming force' that its opponents might fear.

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Amidst excitement over media-savvy Evangelical performances, Marja Hinfelaar reminds us that traditional or mission churches have not gone away in Zambia. Christianity's historical importance is also highlighted as Nicholas Kamau-Goro describes Ngugi wa Thiongo'o's formative Christian experiences. Barbara Cooper, Ruth Prince and Damaris Parsitau dig down into the riveting evolution of reproductive politics in Niger, Luo widow inheritance in Kenya and, in the same country, the very public scene of domineering female pastors. Birgit Meyer steps back to consider some lessons learned from her work in Ghana, and areas that require further research. Harri Englund then contributes from his own work in Malawi on Evangelical media and Islam. Michael Okyerefo argues the case for Evangelical churches as positive resources for socio-economic development in Ghana. Thus, the sheer ubiquity of religion in Africa is highlighted and addressed, in terms of the everyday importance of particular public contestations of Christianity. This helps to avoid portrayals of exotic exceptionalism.

We are thus provided with fascinating descriptions of communities that continue to be characterised by frictions, negotiations and fluidities as they evolve internally and in response to external conditions. James Pritchett argues this well in his compelling opening chapter, describing early mission stations that 'could easily have been the most complex social aggregates on the African landscape'. Having said this though, individuals are not only located inside looking out. The practicality of religion in Africa means that individuals dip in and out, move around, and negotiate. The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (UCKG) in Durban as described by Ilana van Wyk, for example, strikes me as a 'drive through' church, utilised by some people, some of the time, for particular purposes. Attendees may well find sites of 'community' elsewhere, just not at the UCKG. Therefore, portrayal of African publics in this volume slightly restricts consideration to intra-group actions, when inter-group motion is so important for characterising Christianity in Africa. This point aside, the book is a timely and engaging contribution to an important and growing debate on religion's role in public life, offering a range of fascinating perspectives.

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Season of Rains: Africa in the world by S. ELLIS
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Scholarly attention to African statehood has changed radically over the past two decades. From the institutional determinism of state-building has emerged a literature immersed in historically specific practices of managing power relationships and manipulating political space. Reflecting on this shift, Stephen Ellis cogently takes stock of the present juncture facing both the continent and the academy. *Season of Rains* situates 'Africa in the world' and maps a shrewd course for Western engagement with its challenges.

Writing for an audience at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ellis's immediate concern is to link current development practice to the colonial project that bore it. He argues that the West continues to view Africans as

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