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
Oxford: James Currey, 2008. Pp. 268, £24.95 (pb).
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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

factors like primordial hatred, ecological scarcity and greed. While she is not the first to argue for multi-dimensional and contextual interpretations of African conflicts, this case study of Burundi convincingly illustrates the necessity of such a paradigmatic shift. Grounded in a feminist, geographical tradition, Daley analyses the historical intersection of ethnicity, state formation, masculinity and militarism, contributing to exclusion and genocidal politics in Burundi. She places her analysis in the context of the colonial past, international diplomatic and military intervention, and humanitarian assistance. Daley argues that genocidal violence is explained not by ethnic strife but by the exclusive character of the state. The colonial powers played a key role in institutionalising social and ethnic differences. In the post-colonial period – when Burundi was governed by a sequence of military dictatorships – and during the democratisation process of the 1990s, this militarist and exclusionist character of the state was reinforced.

Daley manages to bring a multitude of important debates on Burundi history and politics to the attention of the reader, illustrated with many anecdotes. The book also makes a significant contribution to understanding genocidal violence, demonstrating how images of masculinity and femininity are reflected in oppressive and exclusionist politics. Daley points out how programmes for DDR, democratisation and peacebuilding can only be effective if they contribute to the structural transformations of state and society, in particular the meanings of masculinity. She shows how Western support to militarisation and African 'strong men' has been contra-productive in this respect.

A limitation is Daley's focus on the political elite and its motivations. A more profound analysis of what her argument implies for 'normal' Burundians is lacking. Little attention is given to how masculinity and militarisation work out among local community members. How is masculinity constructed in everyday life, and what does this imply for the participation of local young men in army or rebel movements? In what ways are traditional institutions masculinised? How do disputes about land, which often involve disputes about the rights of women, get interwoven with the militarisation of society? Daley's work is mainly based on a review of literature and interviews with political actors and NGOs, rather than on extended fieldwork in local communities. As such, it is a call to sociologists and anthropologists to do field research from a similar theoretical framework.

Daley is very critical of the interventions of regional bodies, the international community and humanitarian agencies, which she sees acting mostly out of their own interests, and contributing to the disempowerment and dehumanisation of Burundian citizens. Unfortunately, she is often unspecific about the aid interventions she is referring to, and fails to distinguish between humanitarian agencies, Western governments and the UN. Finally, her analysis provides little in terms of alternatives for those actors. She emphasises that peace requires a change of mindset in the region, and that better analyses are necessary. How this should be shaped in practice she does not discuss. A practical question like 'how can women be included in making peace', posed on the back cover, remains unanswered.

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