

Oil and Politics in the Gulf of Guinea

By Ricardo Soares de Oliveira

REVIEWS

"Going beyond the limits of the resource curse thesis, Soares de Oliveira interrogates the structures and interests that make 'state failure' not an aberration but a permanent political condition. [...] this is an impressive, original and insightful book that makes a very valuable contribution to our understanding of African political economy. It deserves to be read and engaged with widely."

– Review of African Political Economy

"A remarkable and extraordinarily ambitious book. ... It is not only clearly but attractively written, and makes absorbing reading ... represents a significant contribution to knowledge, both in the extraordinary amount of material that the author has unearthed, and in his ability to integrate this material into an original and coherent whole."

– Professor Christopher Clapham, University of Cambridge

"A path-breaking study of an important part of the world. It also represents a sophisticated theoretical statement on the phenomenon of states in which massive corruption and the privatization of central functions of governance have become routine. ... [The book] occupies a unique position in the English-language literature. ... its key strengths are theoretical originality and lucidity."

– Dr. Stephen Ellis, University of Leiden

"This volume is the best book written thus far on the political economy of Africa's oil. Anyone remotely interested either in the oil industry in Africa or more broadly the nature of politics on the continent has to read it. The book really is exceptional in its empirical depth, theoretical insights and general eloquence, as well as the honesty that the author reflects in his writing."

–The Round Table

"Soares de Oliveira has written an important study of the impact of oil on the region's politics... [this] study provides a rich political sociology of the oil curse in West Africa."

– Foreign Affairs

"A remarkable study of the evolution of the Gulf of Guinea countries ... Free of any cumbersome 'dependency theory' rhetoric, this is without doubt a milestone in African political analysis."

– The Africa Report

"*Oil and Politics* [is] a book in the best scholarly tradition ... [the author], an academic sensitive to the various dysfunctional aspects of the oil enterprise in Africa, takes an analytic approach intended calmly to suggest how they might be remedied. In so doing, he thoroughly contextualizes and dissects putative solutions."

– Survival

"Few books manage to be theoretically innovative, empirically founded and well-written at the same time. *Oil and Politics in the Gulf of Guinea* is one of them... The book offers interesting insights to scholars working in such different spheres as state formation, African politics and energy security. It is highly recommended."

– The Economics of Peace and Security Journal

"This is an intelligent, well-researched, and elegantly written book... this is an excellent contribution both to the study of the African state and to the study of oil politics."

– Political Science Quarterly

"[A] remarkable study...the solid empirical analysis shines in its scrutiny of oil politics in the Gulf of Guinea from every relevant angle... The book offers significant and thoughtprovoking insights to those interested in areas as diverse as African politics, energy security and state formation. It is a must read."

– Millennium: Journal of International Studies

"[A] groundbreaking tightly argued and extensively researched study of one of the world's richest oil provinces... Unlike many of the books that have sought to expose the dark machinations of the oil industry's operations in Africa, [Soares de Oliveira] offers a welcome, intelligent and precisely argued analysis of the current situation and, if not exactly providing solutions, does at least provide a salutary lesson on how not to chart policies for the way forward."

– African Business

"This is an outstanding publication [...] The book has several merits: it is historically informed and takes structures seriously without falling prey to structural determinism. At the same time, it takes a hard look at the actors involved [...] and the strategies they pursue. The result is a fascinating relationship [...] An excellent book."

– Journal of Modern African Studies