



ISSN 2336-3274 (Print) ISSN 2570-7558 (Online)

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**Bischoff, Paul-Henri, Aning, Kwesi and Acharya, Amitav (eds.). 2016. Africa in Global International Relations: Emerging Approaches to Theory and Practice. London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 180 pages.**

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**Recommended citation:**

Tamene, G. (2016). Bischoff, Paul-Henri, Aning, Kwesi and Acharya, Amitav (eds.). 2016. Africa in Global International Relations: Emerging Approaches to Theory and Practice. London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 180 pages. *Modern Africa: Politics, History and Society*, 4(1), 135–143. Retrieved from <https://edu.uhk.cz/africa/index.php/ModAfr/article/view/88>



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political, economic, legal perception, and social achievement? Why do some countries descend into open civil and military conflict while others avoid major turmoil? What led to revive the metaphor of the new “scramble” for Africa? Why is Africa poor, marginalised, and portrayed by mainstream media as a region unable to meaningfully interact with the rest of the world? The publication under review offers a sophisticated explanation that reflects on all of the issues indicated above.

This publication is a significant contribution to the literature about African studies. Its content represents a heightened interest to students and scholars of African studies in the fields of economics, politics and history as well as to policy makers and researchers of international relations, including inter-regional studies of various scopes. Its attraction and strength emanates from plausible research and reasoning that vigorously challenge a bankrupted vision of purporting prejudice that tries to depict Africa as a “continent with no history and culture,” a “distant abroad,” a “significant other,” and the like, which culminated during the 1990s with the notion that treated Africa’s status in international relations as an irrelevant area of study, a pervasive idea declaring that Africa’s existence depends on the extent of foreign control imposed upon it. Nevertheless, as the author has insightfully challenged this notion, Africa has since become a more recognised subject of the international system. As the author highlights, Africa has become a source of theoretical and conceptual innovation for the contemporary discipline of international relations.

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The publication under review has been authored by a crew of eleven contributors, namely: Paul-Henri Bischoff, Kwesi Aning, Amitav Acharya, Nancy Annan, Lesely Blaauw, Heldi Hudson, Candice Moore, Tim Murithi, Ahmed Ali Salem, Gerrie Swart and Jo-Ansie van Wyk, of whom the first three are its editors. Needless to say, each of the authors

is a renowned scholar, versatile and knowledgeable in the fields of International Relations (IR), Political Science, Sociology, and African Studies. This crew of well equipped authors set out to investigate why Africa has been marginalised in IR research and theory, while contemplating on how to overcome this drawback and addressing the issue in the context of the emergent Global International Relations paradigm.

The authors sought to contribute to the process of producing “a new paradigm of international relations” theory (IRT) that is more global, open, inclusive and able to capture the voices and experiences of both the Western and the non-Western worlds. Nonetheless, they place emphasis on Africa, and its future, given the continent’s uneasy relation with the Western world. They claim that a new IR theory, which is of relevance for Africa, needs to be “more inclusive, intellectually negotiated and holistically steeped in the African context.” In this extraordinarily innovative volume, each of the authors takes a critical look at the existing IR paradigms and offers a unique perspective that relies on the African experience.

The publication represents an advancement of the knowledge production on Africa. It is a significant addition to the literature of non-Western IR theories and to the idea of a Global IR discipline. It exhibits a great departure from the Euro-American-centric, inept field of IR and the theories of heretofore, which do not give a holistic view of the world. To the contrary, the publication employs an approach compatible to the development stage of the human polity in the present century. It claims that the world is in the process of an irreversible awakening from the single Western dominated one-way practice, which is here ever since the Treaty of Westphalia, to the unfolding two-way-street practice, which is in the making to encompass those beyond the West.

The publication under review reflects effectively the high intellectual qualities that crafted it. It is highly rated and can be very much recommended. Consequently, one may confirm it as significant and timely to anyone concerned with the future of global relational politics and the changing status of developing regions. The fact that it embarks on the case of Africa, and the growing representation of Africa’s agency in global international relations makes the publication

unique. While focusing on Africa, the authors herald the readiness of conditions to generate a new paradigm that is able to explain the relevance of the world beyond the West in the field of contemporary global international relations and politics.

The work reflects extraordinary courage; it breaks with traditional approaches. Thus, it confronts the impact of impunity, opportunism, complacency and cowardice of current days. It seizes the opportunity the current moment has offered, rather than unwisely squander it. It is not exaggeration to say that the publication is a critical voice from the non-Western world that contends to reflect on the deficiencies of the contemporary IR discipline and traditional theories that are obsessed solely with great power politics. It conveys a relevant message to those at the top of the world order, or the elites of any country, who are willing to defend a bankrupted paradigm through biased knowledge. So to say, academia and the elite of any country, sitting at the top of intellectually suppressed races, stateless nations and the real misery of the non-West, recognise their own situation in others and will try to stop change elsewhere lest it hit themselves.

The present publication reaffirms what is observable on the ground. It implies how the old order and its corresponding systems refuse to give way to the new one in which power is probably better shared with the rising non-Western actors. The prevalence of the latter would mean the end of the domination of Western-based IR and the emergence of a fairer global political and economic environment, or an order of social justice with corresponding systems, workable to all the actors, West-East or North-South alike.

All its well interplaying nine chapters converge in unison on the rising African agency in global international relations; they so do by invoking a different approach of knowledge production on Africa, which is purportedly contrary to the mainstream approaches. The work envisages a new pathway, a departure from the one-way-street, mainstream orthodoxy towards the all-inclusive direction of genuine multiplicity. One of the outcomes of its approach is that it has shown the deficiencies of contemporary IR theories, such as non-inclusiveness, which is justifiable as related to Africa in particular and to those beyond the West in general. It also makes valuable suggestions that may help to correct the downsides and to revitalise

IR theories and practice to be really global in scope. It is thus timely, critical and relevant.

In chapter 1, the editors reflect on the narrowness of the Euro-American-centric framing of mainstream IR theories that International Relations has seen thus far. In this collective chapter they argue that currently dominant IR theories, namely: realism, liberalism, and partly constructivism deeply associate with the intellectual tradition of the West, therefore they serve the agency claim of the West, while devoting scant attention to the non-Western world. In what they call “Global International Relations” they dare to go beyond the West versus the Rest divide and develop a broader platform that is inclusive to the whole spectrum of IR scholars from around the world. They suggest a world of global international relations that gives centre stage to regions, envision the relevance of an African agency to the study of the marginalisation of Africa in IRT, and indicate how this new approach is important to illustrate the “regional world” perspective. In the rest of their collective chapter, the editors set up a platform for discussion by summarising the consecutive chapters of their fellow contributors.

In the next chapter, Ahmed Ali Salem emphasises the fact that theories and paradigms of international relations that emerge in the non-Western world, including Africa, are not considered a part of mainstream international relation theories, even though regions like Africa can provide original contributions to the discipline. Therefore, the claim that IRT has universal validity falls short of practice when applied to the world beyond the West. He highlights that mainstream IR approaches are not capable to explain a range of events that associate particularly with Africa’s IR. He explains this deficiency by tracing some real examples from North Africa to the realist and constructivist approaches. The author contends that in order for IRT to become truly universal, it needs to enrich itself by African epistemologies and experiences.

In chapter 3, Heidi Hudson examines how Africa’s agential role as a legitimate producer of theory is downplayed. The author contends how Africa in relation to gender has solely become a source of case and political studies in the application of mainstream IRT, unable to come up with a theory of its own. In her view the politics of every-day needs to be theorised in order to be able to provide a truer description

of the world to ordinary people. This would help to get rid of the dual inferiority of Africa and African feminism in the face of conventional IR, thus creating the necessary conditions for IR in Africa to assert its agency. She suggests that “making feminist sense of IR in Africa can serve to reveal latent [...] theoretical contributions and agency.”

In the following chapter, Candice Moore highlights the issue of inclusivity and its centrality for Global IR. She discusses the necessity of incorporating authentic voices from outside the United States (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK), in order to develop an inclusive approach regarding research activities and the process of knowledge production in IR. She contends that this approach would enhance a greater reflectivism of the world beyond the West, while broadening the scope of the discipline further beyond the Westphalian model of states. As she claims, this would contribute towards getting rid of Euro-centrism that has continued to trek deeper into the twenty-first century, while inducing new and compatible theory, worthy of the label Global.

In chapter 5, Lesley Blaauw argues that realist definitions of sovereignty, such as their conception of great powers or high politics, barely account for the agency shown by African states in international relations. According to him, the fact that African states have shown opposition, for instance, to US policies of invoking raw force rather than enhance security through peaceful means, from the enactment of counter terrorism legislation all the way to opposition to the war in Iraq and the conflict in Libya, shows African states challenging the central premise of realism, i.e., that great power politics alone is central to political life in international relations. African states, though relatively weak, have shown a deviance in their international relations, posing challenges that mainly defy the conventional neo-realist security theorem. In the economic domain, too, most African countries have shown a deviance in the face of unfavourable conditions of major international financial institutions in which they are not shareholders. They rather invoke the available alternative centres for trade and aid, which contributes to an increasing agency shown by African states in multilateral and regional negotiations. This implies that “African states are no longer compelled to accept the terms of North-South trade and investment proposed by the industrialized states and their major international lending institutions.” The author

claims that the actions of African states, coloured by deviance, may be better understood by employing the theory of soft balancing.

In the subsequent chapter, Jo-Ansie van Wyk discusses significant contributions that Africa has made to international relations. According to her, to the glaring African contributions belong taking the lead in the international campaign against apartheid, its capacity to act as a balancer between the West and the East during the Cold War period, a capacity which is evident even today since it is doing the same with regard to the interactions between the West and China. Africa is a declared nuclear-free zone, which has huge significance for world peace. Africa refused to host the United States' Africa Command (AFRICOM); this has had some symbolic implication of impeding the US's practice of militarising the globe, which appears to be a major threat in itself to peace. African agency is also discernable in South-South groupings such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) as well as IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa). Moreover, Africa has evolved a powerful slogan, asserting "African solutions for African problems," that resonates around the continent and beyond. This indicates the continent's determination to tackle issues that relate to the continent on its own, without the interference of external powers, for whatever pretext, since the latter possess less experience regarding issues that are specific to Africa. As the author states, Africa's contribution to the study of IR is significant. An area that needs more research and further development is a unique African approach to IR, one that is independent and capable enough to question Western ideas and contribute to broaden the scope of the discipline and its practice.

In chapter 7, Gerrie Swart embarks on the issue of the normative agency of the African Union by tracing the African Union's agency to the recent case of Libya, in order to answer the question whether the AU responded adequately to the Western powers' intervention that downplayed its legitimate normative agency to its natural region. Whatever the pretext for the intervention may be, events on the ground have shown how African agency in the context of African solutions for African problems that feed into a pan-African ontological framework for the study of IR had been blatantly seduced, without any consideration for the regional efforts whatsoever. The author presents the case that the continental body sought to secure a peaceful resolution to the crisis based on its proposed "AU Roadmap

for a political solution to the crisis in Libya,” which informed the core basis of its response to and intervention in Libya. Nevertheless, the West’s disregard of solutions to the conflict proposed by the AU was seen in Africa and in the larger South as overriding the purpose of the UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973, which did not authorise the implementation of a regime change agenda that proceeded with the NATO air strikes. This practice may be seen as a precedent, geared to ascertain Western dominance in the new century. The author claims that this issue was the first major test to be confronted by the agency of the AU ever since its inception in 2002, casting doubt on the continental body’s ability to enforce and uphold its, as the author puts it, “lofty normative values.”

In chapter 8, Kwesi Aning and Nancy Annan analyse how IR perceives Africa currently, that Africa with its weak states are seen as a problem that needs to be resolved, despite the continent’s glaring contributions to the practice of international relations. According to the authors, the deficiency lies in the conception of the discipline itself, since it solely heeds great powers as the only ones that make a difference in the global international environment. They argue that this perception needs to be adjusted. The authors develop this notion by focussing their analysis on Mali. By dissecting the ongoing Malian conflict, the authors present the issue of Africa’s position in IR, the gradual rise of African agency, and the process through which the international community “securitized” the Malian crisis and located it within the “war on terror” narrative that has its own downside. The authors contend that as we progress deeper into the twenty-first century, our expectation about the Africans taking ownership of their continent should ascend. African crises would barely find solutions if the wider international community fails to include the contributions African states and organisations have to offer. In recognising Africa’s role in the international system, IR discourses must give an opportunity for African voices to be heard. In this process, if African scholars from both the diaspora and the mainland convince themselves to give up their complacency with the mainstream, and focus on African audiences, this would contribute, the authors claim, to an understanding of current and future African IR academics that is aided by perceptual change.



In the final chapter, Tim Murithi presents a case for bridging the gap between the pan-African school and the dominant theories of contemporary IR, including: realism, the English school, liberalism and partly constructivism that seeks to bridge the traditional and the reflective theories, all of which draw their intellectual heritage solely from the West. The pan-African school is presented as underpinning the continent's approach to IR as a discipline. The author contends that in terms of bridging the gap between pan-Africanism and the above-mentioned Western IRT, the pan-African school is assumed to contribute to the development of a new paradigm of IRT that is really global, open, inclusive and capable to encompass the voice and experiences of the African geographical landscape. Thus, it is suggested that it is timely to converge on a research agenda investigating the link between pan-Africanism and IRT currently at work. Murithi emphasises that pan-Africanism must find a space through engagement, in which it will render its contribution visible and be able to change the use of the existing inadequate conceptions and approaches of the mainstream IR discipline in the face of Africa and those beyond the West. This implies the creation of a platform for serious intellectual interactions and exchanges leading towards an unbiased knowledge production and dissemination about Africa that reflects the lived realities of its citizenry. A truly Global IR as a discipline can refine itself by the benefits of incorporating the African vantage point of looking at the world out there.

In general, one may conclude that the authors have effectively framed and realised their efforts of inducing a knowledge production that will help to enable the African voice being heard in the context of Global International Relations. The reason why Africa has been and is being marginalised in mainstream IR is a subject too complex to undertake in a book of 180 pages. Nevertheless, the authors have managed to provide an impressive presentation of the topic they set out to explore. The publication is the outcome of a long-term cooperation between the authors that emerged at a conference and went all the way through to produce the present volume. We hope to read similar publications in the near future. In fact, there is no magic bullet, in the book at hand, regarding the realisation of their project that the authors are ready to sell. Nevertheless, the overall perception of the reviewed publication is, in my view, very positive. The publication presents

tremendous progress in explaining the African context of agency in the contemporary study of International Relations.

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**Vlastimil Fiala. 2015. *Politické stranictví v západní Africe (Senegal a Gambie). Political Partisanship in Western Africa (Senegal and Gambia)*. Hradec Králové: University of Hradec Králové, Philosophical Faculty. ISBN 978-80-7405-380-1, 200 pages, Czech language**

Within the series of Vlastimil Fiala's studies analysing African politics the skilled author has done a good deal of work when describing in detail political parties and election results in several African, mainly Lusophone countries. This time he has dedicated his attention to two neighbouring West African countries with different official languages, but a similar geopolitical orientation. As both Senegal and Gambia have gone through complicated and turbulent times recently, it is extremely useful to research their political organisms in order to look for conclusions and solutions concerning the broader West African drift to democracy depending on the demographic, economic and international situation. The monograph is a part of the grant research project No. 407/09/0387 "Political Parties of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Oceania."

The Introduction (pp. 5–9) presents the research scheme referring particularly to recent and contemporary political development in both countries. The first part, titled *The Political Partisanship of Senegal* (pp. 13–116), covers the reasonable majority of the space. This part is divided into two steps. Firstly, the author gives an account of the political evolution of Senegal before independence, in the period of 1960–1966, in the one party state period of 1966–1974, in the multiparty system with one dominant party period of 1974–2000, and in the last multiparty system period after 2000 (pp. 21–66). Secondly, he analyses the evolution of the Senegalese political partisanship in four historical periods from the period before independence to the present times (pp. 70–83). The following Overview of Senegalese Political Parties (pp. 84–114) characterises all features, ideological