

EDITOR'S NOTE

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The Brazilian Journal of African Studies (BJAS), in this issue, reaffirms its purpose of academic and intellectual cooperation among Africanists around the world and reinforces the perspective of analysis of the Geopolitical South. Thus, we present articles authored by scholars from Brazil, China, Canada, Cuba, South Africa, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, New Zealand and Mexico on different themes that assess the potentialities, but also the challenges produced by international and regional crises.

During the Cold War, Africa was a predominantly European area of influence, with France playing the role of gendarme. With the negotiated settlement of regional conflicts at the turn of the 1980s to the 1990s, ironically, the former African Marxist states, formerly allied with the USSR and enemies of France, turned to the U.S., that opened a space of direct influence on the continent. This attitude revealed the depth of regional rivalries between the Marxist and pro-French regimes.

However, the constitution of African capitalism, in the wake of the collapse of leftist movements and governments, has produced the emergence of new contradictions and political realities, generating conditions for the articulation of new social actors. Thus, the continent began to reassert itself on the international scene at the same time that the world was going through a transition and a structural reorganization. Recently, the resolution condemning the Russian invasion against Ukraine was approved by the United Nations General Assembly. Among the 181 countries that voted at the meeting for or against the measure, a large part of the abstentions were from African countries. One can deduce that, despite strong Western pressure, a significant part of the African states opted for diplomatic autonomy, under the argument that “the resolution did not create an environment conducive to diplomacy, dialogue, and mediation”.

Issue 13 of the BJAS features nine articles. Mamoudou Gazibo analyzes the Belt and Road Initiative, Africa's infrastructure policies, and their impacts in the article entitled "Learning from each other: the *Belt and Road* Initiative and infrastructure policy in Africa". Li Anshan's analysis, meanwhile, deals with China-Africa cooperation in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, proposed by Xi Jinping in 2013, and the Build Back Better World (B3W), proposed by Joe Biden in 2021 in "China-Africa in the context of BRI-B3W."

David Mouzo Williams, in the article "Neoextractivism in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola. Between neoliberal globalization, regional trends and local particularities", addresses the formation of extractivist enclaves in the Democratic Republic of Congo, making a comparative study with the Republic of Angola, in order to account for the regional trends that make them similar and the local particularities that distinguish the characteristics of neoliberal insertions. Following this, Ibrahim Bangura, Temitope Oriola, and Henry Mbawa deal with "Corruption, Underdevelopment and the Masses in Africa".

The debate on how the civil-military relationship has been constructed in the context of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is presented in the article by Guilherme de Araujo Grigoli. Based on the theoretical construction of civil-military relations, the author discusses the effectiveness of the relationship between military and civil components in all its multiplicity. Yoslán Silverio González, in "Political crisis and terrorism in Somalia: from 'disintegration' to 'institutionalization'", analyzes how a gradual and weak process of restructuring political institutions in Somalia was achieved, based on a relative balance of power and political stabilization, despite security problems such as terrorism and inter-clan contradictions.

The process of the conquest of Cuban and Angolan air supremacy over the South African air force is analyzed by Johnny Santana de Araújo in the article "The Cuban air campaign in Angola 1988-1989". According to the author, DAAFAR, by denying the SAAF's action, took away from the SAAF the historical air superiority enjoyed for years, and states that the action of Cuban air power in conjunction with Angola was a determining condition for the success of the ground offensive of the Angolan and Cuban armies on the border with Namibia.

In the text "COVID-19 and securitization of its threats in sub-Saharan Africa", Francis N. Okpaleke, Al Chukwuma Okoli, and Magnus C. Abraham-Dukuma propose an approach based on the critical exploration of securitization theory in examining SSA responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. We

argue that the securitization of COVID-19 in Africa is overstated, with pessimistic generalizations that do not consider the local conditions and efforts of governments and the African Center for Disease Control in managing the pandemic. Finally, Monika dos Santos analyzes "Climate change and COVID-19 in the Kruger to Canyons biosphere region, South Africa and Amazonas, Brazil". For the author, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated many of the economic and social difficulties that South Africa and Brazil already face; in comparison to Brazil, South Africa's overall response to the pandemic can be considered a highlight.

The BJAS publishes a bilingual electronic version (Portuguese and English). Thus, we expect the contribution of colleagues from Brazil and abroad, with whom we intend to establish links for the deepening of knowledge and the construction of a vision of the South about the African continent and its relations with them.

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