

EDITOR'S NOTE

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The end of the Cold War presented a set of overlapping and multifaceted crises, the epicenter of which we are currently experiencing. The current crisis is quite peculiar, mainly due to the simultaneity of various events that converge towards conflicts and wars – a deep economic crisis (intensified by the pandemic); the progressive deterioration of international political systems, regimes and organizations; the decline of the West as a civilizational model; the rapid decline in international political and strategic stability. The emerging multipolarity is still unstable. However, new alignments are quickly emerging, revealing a new balance of international power. In this sense, the West has contributed with its internal crises and destructive international politics.

Africa, in turn, is no longer merely a space for the supply of raw materials. The continent's economic growth has expanded its role in the global economy. The African economy has become an increasingly organic and significant component of the world economy, connected to its dynamics, but also to scientific and technological progress. The systemic changes in the position of the African continent, as a geopolitical and geoeconomic space, followed the development of African partnerships within the framework of South-South Cooperation, in parallel with the gradual weakening of the West's five-century political and economic monopoly.

Undoubtedly, Africa is moving towards the defense of the adequation of the international order to the realities of the 21st century. However, it was up to the so-called “emerging” countries to identify the changes and promote a new pattern of international relations. Brazil quickly and intensely revived its African policy in the early 2000s, but given the peculiarities of Brazilian politics, this project was not sustainable in subsequent governments. Russia, with less visibility and more firmness, has discreetly and progressively resumed and consolidated its African policy, and today it is a strategic partner for African states. China and India have maintained stable patterns of relations with Africa, although with particular characteristics. However, the position

and development conditions of African countries will still be conditioned by the level of awareness of the ongoing international changes and by a more assertive behavior in controlling and using their power resources.

The BJAS' 17th issue presents eight articles and a review. The authors, in addition to national institutions, are affiliated to academic institutions in Angola, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria and Portugal. Rômulo Neves and Paulo Visentini, in the article *Crisis and integration: Regional Economic Communities and African integration*, argue that, after the entry into force in 2019 of the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement, African integration would have entered its final stage. The initial assumption is that the reality is more complex, with significant challenges to the implementation of the agreement, such as the different stages of development of the various state bureaucracies and the definitions of the scope of integration.

In *State-building in post-1991 Ethiopia: EPRDF's pseudo federalism and reincarnating authoritarian centralisation, an overview and critique*, Habtamu Wondimu Hibiso and Solomon Gebre Weldeananiya analyze the post-1991 state-building in Ethiopia, carried out by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). According to the authors, the results indicate that the EPRDF implemented a combination of pragmatic and ideologically oriented policies to build Ethiopia. However, for the authors, the EPRDF repeated war strategies and disciplines for state building and contributed to the authoritarian reincarnation and new centralization of power. In *Mediation dynamics and commitments for peace in Mozambique (1989-2019)*, Cremildo de Abreu Coutinho and Eduardo Munhoz Svartman assess the negotiation that culminated in the signing of the 1992 peace agreement, preceded by a 16-year civil war between the government of the Mozambique Liberation Front and the former rebel movement, the National Resistance of Mozambique. However, despite significant advances in the democratization of the country, the authors observe setbacks motivated by exclusion and the absence of effective national reconciliation.

Still on Mozambique, Robson Dias da Silva and Thaysa Cunha, in the article *Sino-Mozambican relationship and the role of megaprojects in Mozambique's territorial development*, discuss China-Mozambique cooperation and the role of megaprojects in Mozambique's territorial development plan during the 2000s. The authors seek to identify the main social and economic effects related to the implementation of Chinese infrastructure megaprojects in the country to understand whether it is possible to point to the strategy adopted by Mozambique as a true form of transformation and socioeconomic development. Next, there are three articles on Nigeria. Abimbola Oyarinu analyzes

the role of British and Nigerian political elites in shaping Nigeria's destiny. Based on the eventuality of the Nigerian civil war and using the historical analytical method of qualitative research, the article *The amalgamation of 1914 and the Nigerian Civil War: the burden of blame* traces the origin of Nigeria's socioeconomic problems to the British pronouncement of 1914.

In *Nigeria's Oil Complex: the tragedy of the commons*, Ekpotuatin Charles Ariye and Green Kevwe Abenabe examine how Nigeria's abundant oil reserves have positioned the nation as a major player in the global energy arena. However, according to the authors, beneath the surface of this wealth of resources lies a complex web of challenges that have attracted international attention. Thus, they explore the multifaceted dynamics of Nigeria's oil industry through the lens of the "tragedy of the commons". Finally, in *The challenges of transhumance and internal security in Nigeria: implications for food security in the South-South geopolitical zone*, Endurance Nogiomwan Aigbe and Joseph Aihie analyze the nature of transhumance and the level of humanitarian damage, along with its impact on food security in the South-South geopolitical zone. According to the authors, the government must create an effective mechanism by mapping out a holistic security architecture and adopt alternative dispute resolution methods through dialogue with herders and farmers in the communities.

Furthermore, Serge Noel Ouedraogo and Boubacar Sambare, in the article *To stay or to go back: the cornelian dilemma of the burkinabe diaspora in Ghana*, discuss the dilemma faced by migrants from Burkina Faso living in Ghana. According to the authors, in contrast to the return flows of migrants and descendants of migrants from Burkina Faso living in Côte d'Ivoire, there are few reverse migration flows between Ghana and Burkina Faso. In this sense, to identify the aspirations and decisions of migrants and their descendants, the study relies on bibliographic resources and empirical data. Primarily, qualitative research was conducted with skilled individuals in Ghana and Burkina Faso. As a conclusion to this issue, Gilson Lázaro presents a review of the work *Governing in the shadows: Angola's Securitised State*, by Paula Cristina Roque.

The BJAS publishes a bilingual electronic version (Portuguese and English). Thus, we welcome contributions from colleagues in Brazil and abroad, with whom we seek to establish connections to deepen knowledge and build a Southern perspective on the African continent and its relations.

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