

Solidaritätsbewusstseins. Christaens' Betrachtung, die auf der Synthese von Sekundärliteratur in acht Sprachen beruht, gelingt es im Hinblick auf die komplexen Beziehungsgeflechte zwischen „erster“, „zweiter“ und „dritter“ Welt das westliche „Narrativ eines einheitlichen, globalen anti-totalitären Kampfs, inspiriert und unterstützt durch den Westen“ (S. 261) als Chimäre zu entlarven.

Mit der vergleichenden Perspektive, dem in-den-Blick-Nehmen von Gruppen und einzelnen personalen Akteur:innen – z. B. die lokalen, nationalen und internationalen Bezüge des westdeutschen Pfarrers Helmut Frenz in der Solidaritätsbewegung mit Chile in Caroline Moines Beitrag – sowie einer globalgeschichtlichen Ausrichtung auf Transfers und Beziehungsgeflechte zwischen den drei Welten bzw. anhand der Nord-Süd-Achse gelingt es den Autor:innen, komplexe Geschichten der internationalen Solidarität mit Bezügen zur Bundesrepublik und der DDR in einer hohen Qualität zu Tage zu fördern; Geschichten, anhand derer uns die Autor:innen in Erinnerung rufen, dass internationale Solidarität eine bedeutende Triebfeder in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts symbolisierte.

#### Anmerkung

- 1 W. Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Washington 1981 [1972], vii.

**Stephen A. Emerson / Hussein Solomon: African Security in the Twenty-First Century. Challenges and Opportunities, Manchester: Manchester University Press 2018, xii & 291 pp.**

Reviewed by  
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The understanding of what “security” means in an African context has evolved over time and, as many other key terms, is changing every 20 years or so. One of the major recent shifts in this respect was the change from a notion of “regime security” to one of “human security” in the 1990s. In their monograph on “African security in the twenty-first century” Stephen A. Emerson and Hussein Solomon stay within the human security paradigm, but try to sketch the shifting dimensions of “African security” at a time when conflict increasingly transcends national and sub-regional borders between parts of the continent which traditionally are addressed separately by African Studies and Middle East Studies, i.e. North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. Accordingly, the new quality of African security lies in the increasing entanglements between different zones of conflict and emerging transregional conflicts theatres on the one hand, and the emergence of “non-traditional” security threats on the other. In this sense, the author’s analysis reflects perceptions of African futures as described by the US National

Intelligence Council (NIC) in its *Global Trends 2025* scenario report (2018).

The authors are extremely well-placed to address the topic. Emerson is the former chair of Security Studies at the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies in Washington DC, United States; he has been a political-military analyst with the US Department of Defense, Security, and also headed the Africa regional studies programme at the US Naval War College. His regional field of expertise is Southern Africa. Among others, he authored *The Battle for Mozambique* (Helion & Company 2014), a thorough military history of the fight between Frelimo and Renamo. Solomon is senior professor in the Department of Political Studies and Governance at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa. Among his publications is *Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Africa* (Palgrave Macmillan 2015). Within the research community on African security they represent the geo-strategic, “neo-neo-realist” faction. Both share a strong interest in terrorism and counter-terrorism.

The book is divided into eleven chapters, from “Understanding the security environment” (chapter 1) and “Thinking about security” (chapter 2) to a discussion of the causes of violent conflict (“identity conflicts” with examples from Nigeria, Chad and Somalia, and “failing states” with a case study on Somalia, chapters 3–4). The authors then zoom in into different types of conflict, including “Terrorism and extremism” (chapter 5), “Trafficking in drugs and small arms” (chapter 6), “Health and disease” (chapter 7) as well as “Resource conflict and the environment” (chapter 8). The remaining chapters are dedicated to discussing responses to vio-

lent conflict (Africa in chapter 9, and the international community in chapter 10).

This is followed by reflections on the future of African security (chapter 11).

At the heart of this book is what the African Union and other actors have described as a proliferation of “non-traditional security threats” on the continent. This includes increasingly internationalised forms of “terrorism”. Here the authors focus on Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin, splinter groups of al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in the Sahelo-Saharan space as well as al-Shabaab in Somalia. In addition, the trafficking of drugs, weapons, counterfeit medicine, people etc. has become of one the major threats to human security in Africa, affecting not only West Africa and the Sahelo-Saharan region, but also Southern Africa (though this region is less covered in this book). Since the Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2013–2016, epidemics and pandemics are treated as severe challenges to human security (the current Covid-19 pandemic only proves this point). The authors focus on HIV/Aids, malaria and tuberculosis. Finally, they highlight “demographic and environmental pressures” which lead to increasing numbers of internally displaced persons and refugee movements across regions. In combination these non-traditional security threats add tremendously to the complexity and diversity of conflict on the African continent.

In terms of conflict management and resolution the authors are critical of state-centric approaches which in the past heavily depended on centralised traditional security organs such as the military. Rather they call for “a broader based, bottom-up approach with an emphasis on improving governance, development and strength-

ening civil society” (p. 9). While this is convincing in terms of substance, in this respect the author’s argument seems to be slightly flawed with conceptual Eurocentrism. Because on the one hand they buy into debates about “failed” or “failing” states in Africa (although they claim to be more interested in the consequences of this phenomenon, and not so much in the nuances of the theoretical debate, see p. 63). This debate is based on normative assumptions about the state, it refers to universalist conceptions which historically are grounded in European experiences of the 18th and 19th century which later on got universalised (e.g. states should provide public goods such as security). They are convinced that “the state” is in decline, yet at the same time it will remain the dominant power on the continent. And on the other hand, the authors suggest bottom-up peace-building initiatives which will still require some form of stateness. The very notion of “civil society” is another of these concepts that carry lots of normative load. With a view to the practical dimension of the author’s suggestions it is at least debatable whether this particular conceptual apparatus is really needed (see, for instance, p. 195 where a fairly pragmatic notion of “state” is discussed).

In the final part of the book conflict interventions are at the fore. In this context the policies of the African Union (AU) and the regional economic communities (RECs) – the “AU’s workhorse” (p. 202) – are assessed quite positively, however briefly. In terms of conflict management and resolution emphasis, again, is on local grassroots security initiatives with examples coming from the areas of conflict mediation and peacebuilding, small arms

proliferation, health care and food security, respectively. The highly problematic disconnect between these layers, however, is not addressed and it remains an open question how the Union, the RECs or member states in practice can support bottom-up initiatives, and how the latter could relate more meaningfully to the former. And with regard to international responses to violent conflict in Africa, this book still banks on the existence of a system of collective global security and the fruits of multilateral arrangements materialising across many fields – though already sensing that with the election of a new US President in 2016 dark clouds were gathering on the horizon.

Despite these few critical remarks, this is a comprehensive and important analysis of the African continent’s security predicament during the first two decades of the 21st century. The authors proffer a well-written account, often based on in-depth empirical research. Their engagement, though, with the academic debate is selective at times. In any case, this is a welcome overview which introduces a number of fresh insights and arguments to the debate. The volume adds considerable knowledge to and goes beyond the sated accounts produced in recent years by Paul D. Williams (*War & Conflict in Africa*, Polity Press 2011), William Reno (*Warfare in Independent Africa*, Cambridge University Press 2011) or Scott Straus (*Making and Unmaking Nations*, Cornell University Press 2015), to name but a few.