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Philip Nel, Janis van der Westhuizen, eds.. *Democratizing Foreign Policy? Lessons from South Africa.* Lanham: Lexington Books, 2003. viii + 225 pp. $65.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-7391-0585-6.

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The study under review is primarily the result of work undertaken by South African scholars, particularly those with links to the Department of Political Science at the University of Stellenbosch, where both editors were based while compiling the book. Philip Nel has since left for the University of Otago in Dunedin; Janis van der Westhuizen is currently still in Stellenbosch. Among the contributors, Pierre du Toit works in Stellenbosch; Ian Taylor, presently at the School of International Relations at the University of St. Andrews, completed his doctorate at the University of Stellenbosch under the supervision of Nel; Talitha Bertelsmann-Scott did her M.A. in Political Science at Stellenbosch and currently is an Associate Researcher with the South African Institute of International Affairs in Johannesburg; and Kristen Johnson was, at the time of writing her chapter, an M.A. student in Political Science in Stellenbosch.[1]

In the preface, the editors define the central theme of the collection. They suggest that both the formation of the African Union (AU), which replaced the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 2002, and the initiation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as the normative framework, open "some scope" for more participation of the continent's citizenry in political matters, including foreign policy making. By emphasizing "South Africa's central role in the NEPAD and AU initiatives," they proclaim the main purpose of the book: to investigate how far South Africa's post-apartheid foreign policy could serve as a model for the rest of the continent. Nel and van der Westhuizen set a critical tone for the book and for this they should be commended. While citing Pretoria's claim of "putting people first" in its foreign policy making, they do not take these verbal commitments at face value; rather, they take a critical stance towards the South African government's stated foreign policy objectives. Crucially, they ask the central question whether President Thabo Mbeki's understanding of "putting people first" should be translated as "governance for the people" rather than "governance by and of the people," the implication of which cannot be emphasized enough (p. 9). Thus, the two editors wonder, and justifiably so, how much democracy there has been in South Africa's

post-apartheid foreign policy--a thread running through much of the volume.

The first chapter on "International Causes and Consequences of South Africa's Democratization" by Audie Klotz (University of Illinois, Chicago) offers a retrospective view. Strongly relying on the findings of her Ph.D., she stresses the importance of international causes in bringing about the end of apartheid.[2] Although acknowledging that "We cannot starkly separate domestic from international sources of foreign policy," Klotz clearly emphasizes the latter, with no mention of the importance of domestic factors such as the roles played by, for example, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the United Democratic Front (UDF) and other groupings within South Africa's civil society (p. 21). Like the subsequent contributions by Patrick Bond, Talitha Bertelsmann-Scott, and David Black (chapters 6-8), the assumption appears to be that external factors are predominant in shaping South Africa's current foreign policy making, leaving little or no room for maneuver for domestic actors.

Ian Taylor's "Critical Reflections on an Untouchable Subject" (chapter 2) examines the public and academic discourses pertaining to Pretoria's foreign policy. Eloquently, he requests a clarification of the qualitative contents of democracy before debating whether or not South Africa's foreign policy was democratic. In doing so, he rejects the view of democracy as purely "procedural mechanisms" (elections, multiparty system, etc.), by proposing a much wider concept: "It is the socioeconomic system, state form, and the substantive content of state policies that 'make' a democracy" (p. 27). He thus criticizes, ***inter alia***, the neoliberal approach pursued by the current African National Congress (ANC) leadership: "South Africa's people's will remain frustrated with democracy as long as it is an elite-driven process and as long as social and economic policies remain in the hands of those who, by the very nature of the system, are insulated from the effects of the policies pursued" (p. 36). Unfortunately, given the current global and African setting, one must consider Taylor's wish for a truly popular democracy and his panacea to resolve the situation as idealistic: "The aim of such forms of democracy is to construct a political order aiming toward social and economic justice and equality. For real democracy to flourish, social and economic structures that inhibit the full participation of every citizen need to be challenged and overcome" (p. 34). However, and following the line of thinking of Nel and van der Westhuizen, he rightly poses the question: "democratisation of what and for whom," thereby challenging the mainstream literature which considers the South African political system as democratic simply because its government proclaims it as such.

In chapter 3, Philip Nel, Jo-Ansie van Wyk (University of South Africa) and Kristen Johnson debate the desirability of public participation in foreign policy matters. In taking an affirmative standpoint, they confront those who argue that the public should not become involved. As a point of departure regarding the current situation in South Africa, they label Pretoria's attitude as "guardianship," meaning that the government acts alongside the perceived interests of the people, rather than as politics by the people (p. 44). Trying to substantiate this viewpoint, the authors present a number of forums through which the public could make its voice heard. However, in my opinion, this overview is far too cursory. To begin with, the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs is attributed a "key role" under the Chairmanship of Raymond Suttner (1995-97), but the authors omit any examination of its influence prior to and after this period. Furthermore, they present no case studies to illustrate this influence during the Suttner Chairmanship. There is not even a reference to Suttner's extensive list of publications on different aspects of South African foreign policy, ***inter alia***, the role of Parliament.[3] Thereafter, the authors mention, in passing, the Foreign Relations Council, which be-

came the Foreign Affairs Advisory Council, without querying the reasons for this development and its implications. Similarly, there is no deeper discussion regarding the ANC's Foreign Policy Discussion Document (1996), and particularly to what extent civil society had a say in this and what happened to it. All that the authors indicate of note is that the South African Institute of International Affairs was responsible for some of the input (p. 45). Dividing the post-apartheid period up to 2000 in three phases, the authors conclude that "by 2000, such attempts to give expression to the ANC's desire to turn the people of South Africa into 'their own liberators' as far as foreign policy is concerned, came to an end" (p. 46). We certainly would have liked to see some analysis of the reasons for this bleak conclusion. Finally, the authors discuss the role of Parliament, finding that this "institution for public participation is poorly equipped to compete effectively with the Presidency," and providing three more or less convincing factors to explain their assessment (p. 48). They follow with a strong case advocating the need to engage the public in the country's foreign policy making and a participatory/deliberative democracy model: "the challenge is to conceive modes of participation that would provide citizens with the necessary incentives to participate, would empower them to do so, and would provide the space within which they can discover what their real interests are" (p. 58).

From the outset, Garth le Pere and Brendan Vickers (an Executive Director and an intern at the Johannesburg-based Institute for Global Dialogue [IGD] respectively), indicate that "a rich and heterogeneous tapestry" of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) were a "dynamic catalyst in the advent of democracy in 1994" (p. 63). Thereafter, they attempt to asses how these organizations, "especially those with research, advocacy or activist functions and mandates" (p. 64) fared "in their engagement with foreign policy processes" in the post-apartheid period, given that the ANC "espoused a set of aspirational principles whose central pillars--human rights and democracy--invited NGO participation and monitoring" (p. 67). However, their contribution did not meet this reviewer's expectations. The IGD itself is a significant player as an important think tank, along with such bodies as the South African Institute of International Affairs, the Institute for Security Studies, and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes. Crucially, the IGD had good access to ANC officials with important positions in government, inter alia, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). To what extent this still applies after the resignation of Anthoni van Nieuwkerk, a key researcher with the IGD until 1999, is, however, uncertain. It might have been preferable for the authors to select a number of issues and debate the extent to which NGOs were invited to provide input, which ones were asked, and whether their viewpoints had any bearing on Pretoria's subsequent policies. Instead, there are merely partial hints to that effect scattered throughout the text. In addition, although le Pere and Vickers make important statements concerning the relationship between NGOs and government, and the different modes of interaction between them, there is no single example of the practical implications related to one or other foreign policy issue. In this regard, all they share with the interested reader is the concluding general statement: "There are numerous examples where the government has considered formal and informal suggestions by NGOs" (p. 75). Of course South Africa's foreign policy think tank community is a small one; one does not wish to divulge many details to competitors and lay bare one's influence over, and possibly privileged access to, the political power center on which NGOs also have to rely.

In their contribution "Women and the Making of South Africa's Foreign Policy," Maxi Schoeman (University of Pretoria) and Yolanda Sadie (Rand Afrikaans University), who have previously published on the subject, are concerned with the strategies and policies of the Department of Foreign Affairs to promote women in its foreign ser-

vice corps.[4] They propose one principal finding: "On the one hand ... there is an increase in opportunities for women to participate in decision making and implementation.... On the other hand, the DFA does not seem to succeed in building the capacity of its female officials in order to turn opportunity into reality" (p. 94). A question of significance remains unanswered, however, namely whether South African women in the DFA's ranks deal with foreign policy issues differently compared to their male counterparts. This would have required additional research in the form of interviews. In this context, questions could be asked about the basis of the chapter; official DFA and other policy papers apart, they relied "on a number of randomly selected exploratory interviews" with female DFA employees between 1998 and 2002 (p. 83). We are not told how many interviews they conducted and how that figure relates to the total amount of DFA personnel.

The next chapter focuses on "Labor, Social Movements and South Africa's Foreign Policy" and is written by Patrick Bond (University of the Witwatersrand). In short, his piece may be summarized by quoting from a review on two of Bond's recent books: "Patrick Bond ... has developed a reputation as one of the more trenchant critics both of governments in Southern Africa--especially the African National Congress (ANC) led regime in Pretoria ... --and international financial agencies, such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). In these works, he combines his two interests in a sweeping critique cum condemnation of both these regimes, along with these international agencies."[5] Bond particularly singles out President Mbeki, Trade and Industry Minister Alec Erwin, and Finance Minister Trevor Manuel in his criticism for their selling out Africa in an "ideological partnership" between Pretoria and the economically and politically powerful forces in Washington. Also, he queries Mbeki's diverse plans to save Africa, notably with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a plan Bond ridicules as being one with "poignant poetics" but "contentless form" (p. 106); "NEPAD fits into the globalizer's 'modified liberal project', by which it was even more asserted, ever more incongruously, that integration into global markets solves poverty" (p. 108).

Chapter 7 by Talitha Bertelsmann-Scott is based on her M.A. thesis mentioned previously; part of it has already been published.[6] It is a case study of South Africa's economic foreign policy, examining the Trade, Development, and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) concluded in 1999 with the European Union, the country's biggest trading partner. In trying to assess the inclusivity and democratic essence of this agreement, she examines the role played by Parliament, government, and bureaucracy, as well as the openness of the process towards external/non-state players. After a sound examination of those issues, Bertelsmann-Scott states that "one is want to conclude that from the South African perspective the negotiations surrounding the establishment of the SA-EU TDCA were highly democratic. The process was transparent, inclusive, representative, and open" (p. 130). Yet, in similar vein to Klotz in chapter 1, she argues that South Africa had no other choice but to conclude the agreement due to the economic circumstances and framework posed by globalization: "The details of the talks were reduced to haggling over percentages and quotas, but the fact that the two parties would establish a free trade agreement ... was clear from the beginning. The only option South Africa had was not to conclude a deal, which really was not an option at all" (p. 130). This analysis is somewhat superficial and could be interpreted as not attributing any room for maneuver to the South African actors. Also, Bertelsmann-Scott neglects to emphasize that the South African government or Thabo Mbeki, for that matter, favors neo-liberal policies, thus making it difficult to agree that Brussels simply imposed its will on that of Pretoria.

A trade agreement of a special kind provides the background to chapter 8, in which David

Black (Dalhousie University) examines what has generally become known as the highly controversial "arms deal." This involved the buying of new weaponry. Black justifiably does not go into great depth trying to ascertain the truths and non-truths of this transaction that certainly involved shady dealings and corruption at the highest government level.[7] Rather, he is concerned with its wider ramifications on the relationship between democracy, development, and security in post-apartheid South Africa. In this regard, Black notes that Parliament was excluded completely from the initial decision about what the government was going to procure and the way it would be done. Furthermore, the "non-partisan operating principles" of the relevant Parliamentary Committee "quickly broke down, and the Committee began to function along party-political lines," which has "worrying implications in a one-party dominant system like South Africa's" (p. 144). Black's overall conclusion, then, is twofold. On the one hand, he proposes that "the vigorous and sustained scrutiny of the arms deal by the public and mass media institutions alike, and the very public controversy which has surrounded it, strongly indicate that South Africa has become a much more open and democratic society than ever before" (p. 152). On the other hand, "at a deeper level the arms deal also serves to underscore the extent to which the South African government has come to operate like 'just another country.' Like many established liberal democracies, its democratic institutions and processes are relatively weak and limited in their powers of investigation, oversight, and accountability, while executive dominance is strong and arguably increasing. Moreover, while more critical voices in civil society have more opportunities for input into policy processes, their impact on outcome remains minimal" (p. 152). The overarching question is, of course, what yardstick should be used to measure the government's actions: the rule of apartheid, or against its own claims of democratic rule in the sense of putting people first? It is precisely this question that led the authors reviewed above to a somewhat pessimistic assessment. Black, too, wonders whether the seemingly plentiful funds for armaments should not rather be spent on AIDS treatment, for which the government claims to have only limited financial means available, and pertinently asks: "Which ... is the more urgent security priority for South Africa today" (p. 151)?

Entitled "The Challenge of Transitional Democracy and the Southern African Development Community [SADC]," Pierre du Toit's contribution aims at examining South Africa's access to the decision-making facilities in this regional body. In particular, this case study on South Africa's foreign policy purports to deal with the military invasion of Lesotho in September 1998, executed predominantly by South African troops (complemented by a contingent from Botswana) and claimed by Pretoria as having been authorized by SADC. However, more than half of the chapter considers the origins of state formation and the reasons for the evolution of larger, transnational units on the one hand, and the splitting up into smaller, sub-national units on the other. The cause for this overly long theoretical section is perhaps evident in the author's interest in the subject, as shown in several of his publications.[8] The actual military invasion, and South Africa's role therein is treated only in a very cursory way. Following du Toit's claim at the outset, we expected a closer inspection of why only South Africa initiated the invasion, in contravention of standing international law. After all, the main purpose of the book is to evaluate to what extent the example of South Africa's democratization might be applied to other African states, or organizations such as SADC.

In their concluding chapter, the editors summarize the basic thread running through the contributions: "This book provides abundant evidence that South African citizens have good reasons to share in this sense of powerlessness and impotence" (p. 169) with regard to their govern-

ment's foreign policy making. Nel and van der Westhuizen refer to the internationalization and transnationalization of foreign policy as inhibiting factors, but they also argue, quite rightly, that "the singular failure of the South African state ... to adequately provide avenues for democratic participation in policy making has exacerbated the sense of powerlessness and impotence" (p. 170). Further, they observe: "As various chapters in this book have demonstrated, living up to those commitments [conducting foreign policy through democratic participation] has proven difficult and South Africa's record on this score remains patchy" (p. 171). The editors then continue by presenting options of how this situation could be improved. More discussion of the implications, if any, regarding the prospects for democratization in the rest of the continent, especially seen against the establishment of the African Union and the Pan-African Parliament, and the NEPAD initiative, would have been desirable as this was a key aspiration of the study.

As often happens with edited collections, their quality varies. There are also a number of mistakes. The affiliation for Nel varies (p. 225 and back cover). Chapter 4 cites numerous works without references in the bibliography.[9] GATT stands for General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, not General Agreement in Services and Tarifs (p. 113). Kenya's former executive was President Daniel arap Moi, not Daniel Arab Moi (p. 171). Finally, du Toit's contribution contains two entire sentences that are identical on two consecutive pages (pp. 159-160).

These points notwithstanding, Nel and van der Westhuizen have compiled an interesting collection. What I find most valuable is their generally critical assessment of Pretoria's aspirations and claims of pursuing a democratic style in foreign policy issues, one that is in the interest of the majority of South Africans. These critical viewpoints are to be welcomed, as much of the current literature rather tends to document developments in an uncritical way, lacking deeper investigation and questioning. A reading of the book requires some background on South African politics and knowledge of basic foreign policy concepts but it makes good reading at the graduate university level and certainly for all interested in the field.

Notes

[1]. Ian Taylor, "Hegemony, 'Common Sense' and Compromise: A Neo-Gramscian Analysis of Multilateralism in South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy," (Ph.D. diss, University of Stellenbosch, 2000); and Talitha Bertelsmann-Scott, "The SA-EU Trade, Development and Co-operation Agreement: Democratising South Africa's Trade Policy" (M.A. thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 2001).

[2]. Audie Jeanne Klotz, "Censure, Consensus and Sanctions: The Role of International Norms in Policy-Making Toward South Africa" (Ph.D. diss, Cornell University, 1991); it was published as ***Norms in International Relations: The Struggle against Apartheid*** (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

[3]. Raymond Suttner, "Parliament and Foreign Policy in South Africa Today" in ***Parliaments and Foreign Policy: The International and South African Experience*** (Bellville: University of the Western Cape Centre for Southern African Studies, 1995), pp. 1-12; "Parliament's Role in Foreign Policy," ***Indicator SA*** 12, no. 3 (1995): pp. 74-78; ***Some Problematic Questions in Developing Foreign Policy after April 27, 1994*** (Bellville: University of the Western Cape, Centre for Southern African Studies, 1995); "Parliament and Foreign Policy," ***South African Yearbook of International Affairs*** (1996): pp. 136-143; "South African Foreign Policy since April 1994," ***African Communist*** 145 (1996): pp. 67-76; "Foreign Policy of the New South Africa: A Brief Review," in ***South Africa and Brazil: Risks and Opportunities in the Turmoil of Globalization***, ed. Pinheiro S. Guimaraes (Brasilia: International Relations Research Institute, 1996), pp. 191-205; "South African Foreign Policy and the

Promotion of Human Rights," South African Yearbook of International Affairs_ (1997): pp. 300-308.

[4]. Yolanda Sadie and Maxi van Aardt-Schoeman, "Women's Issues in South Africa, 1990-1994," *Africa Insight* 25, no. 2 (1995): pp. 80-90; Yolanda Sadie, "Women in Foreign Affairs," South African Yearbook of International Affairs_ (1998/9): pp. 257-66.

[5]. Patrick Bond, *Against Global Apartheid: South Africa Meets the World Bank, IMF, and International Finance* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 2001); and *South Africa and Global Apartheid: Continental and International Policies and Politics* (Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2004), both reviewed by Gerald Horne in H-SAfrica, 21 September 2004, http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=167181098689342.

[6]. Talitha Bertelsmann. "The EU, SA and the Proposed FTA," _South African Yearbook of International Affairs (1997): pp. 266-273.

[7]. See, for example, Terry Crawford-Browne, "The Arms Deal Scandal," *Review of African Political Economy* 100 (2004): pp. 329-342; David Botha, "The Arms Deal Controversy," *African Security Review* 12 (2003): p. 3; Institute for Democracy in South Africa, "Democracy and the Arms Deal Part 3: A Submission to Parliament," 5 August 2003: http://www.idasa.org.za/gbOutputFiles.asp?WriteContent=Y&RID=478.

[8]. Pierre du Toit, Carlos Garcia-Rivero and Hendrik Jacobus Kotz, "Political Culture and Democracy: The South African Case," *Politikon* 29, no. 2 (2002) pp. 163-181; "Peacebuilding in Africa: Prospects for Security and Democracy beyond the State," *African Security Review* 8, no. 1 (1999) pp. 11-19; *State-Building and Democracy in Southern Africa: A Comparative Study of Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe* (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1995); *Civil Society, Democracy and State-Building in South Africa* (Stellenbosch: Centre for International and Comparative Politics, University of Stellenbosch, 1993); with Francois Theron, "Ethnic and Minority Groups, and Constitutional Change in South Africa," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 7, no. 1/2 (1988): pp. 133-147.

[9]. These are: Cassim 2000 (p. 67), Cilliers 2000 (p. 68, 70), Gavindjee and Spiegelberg 2000 (p. 72), Kornegay 2000 (p. 67, 73), Landsberg 2000 (p. 70, 73), Maloka 2000 (p. 67), Mills 2000 (p. 68, 70), Paulecutt 2000 (p. 67, 71), Schoeman 2000 (p. 69, 73), van Nieuwkerk 2000 (p. 67, 69, 73).

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