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Adekeye Adebajo, Adebayo Adedeji, Chris Landsberg, eds. *South Africa in Africa: The Post-Apartheid Era.* Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2007. 339 pp. $39.95 (paper), ISBN 978-1-86914-134-9.

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Post-Apartheid South Africa and Africa

The volume under review is a collection of revised and updated papers presented at a seminar on the above topic in Stellenbosch, South Africa, in mid-2004, organized by the South Africa-based Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) and Centre for Policy Studies (CPS), and the Nigeria-based African Centre for Development and Strategic Studies (ACDESS). The editors are from these institutions; almost all contributors are, equally, pan-African scholars. The fifteen chapters are grouped into three sections dealing with aspects of the socioeconomic and political context, the regional dimension, and presenting case studies of relations with countries/regions and the African Union (AU).

In discussing the first group of chapters, Adebayo Adedeji (ACDESS) begins by considering the political economy framework. He mainly argues that development strategies for Africa have not significantly taken into account the human component. For that reason, Adedeji hopes that South Africa could provide a good example for a "truly developmental state … a shared or common project between the state, the political elite and the people" (p. 56). However, in taking on the country's neoliberal Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy introduced in 1996, he concludes pessimistically: "just as the rest of black Africa has failed to deconstruct its inherited political economy, so post-apartheid South Africa … has not chosen the path of fundamental socio-economic transformation" (p. 55). In his chapter on South Africa's Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), Khehla Shubane (BusinessMap Foundation, South Africa) refutes the various criticisms raised against this economic redistribution approach, arguing that it was not simply about swapping shares and capital from one company to another, and highlighting the participation of black staff in these businesses. The relevance, however, of this chapter to the volume remains entirely unclear. This applies even more so to Yasmin Sooka's (Foundation for Human Rights, South Africa) examination of South Africa's reconciliation process post-1994, and especially the work of its Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

In turning to the second group of contributions, Maxi Schoeman (Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria) examines the role Africa expected post-apartheid South Africa to play, and Pretoria's conception thereof. For this purpose, she introduces the categories "behemoth," "hegemon," "partner," and "just another kid on the block," but the characteristics attributed to each of these options deviate from the usual termination used by foreign policy and international relations scholars. This redefinition appears all the more curious, as the labels mentioned are used the usual way in some of the following chapters. After cursorily touching on some political and economic aspects of South Africa's interaction with African states beyond the region, the rather banal conclusion is made that South Africa's role did not correlate with one model only, but that it could, depending on the issue at stake, be seen as a "behemoth," a "partner," or "just another kid on the block"; why Schoeman refutes the "hegemon" option–understood by her as "a country that plays a firm, strong, and credible leadership role" (p. 93)–remains unclear. It would have been more helpful to judge Pretoria's foreign policy performance against its proclaimed aims and objectives.

In his contribution, Khabele Matlosa (Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), South Africa) examines South Africa's behavior in the regional security context. We fully concur that, in the foreseeable future, although Pretoria will retain a predominant role in its immediate neighborhood, it will quite likely continue to manage violent conflicts through bi- and multilateral arrangements and that it will try to avoid unilateral interventions. We equally agree with Matlosa's assessment "that there will always be variations in South Africa's approaches" (p.

121), citing the examples of Lesotho, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Angola, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe. Yet, he does not present us with any reflections on the reasons for the difference in the respective approaches. It would have been both important and helpful to discuss their motives and purposes, and what state actors had shaped them.

Quite rightly, Judi Hudson (independent consultant), in chapter 6 on South Africa's economic interaction with the continent, states that "little strong research-based evidence" (p. 129) has been produced on the issue to date, a gap, however, which her contribution does not fill. Rather, it is a patchwork of facts about the trading of South African companies with and their investment in different African countries. No deeper analysis is provided, for example, whether any preference for or emphasis on certain countries or regions can be discerned; there is only a hint that Francophone Africa is less accessible given the French influence there. It might have been worthwhile to conduct interviews with South African Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) officials and representatives of the South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SACCI), or to consult annual reports produced by important companies with African engagements. However, Hudson touches on important aspects not often considered in this context, namely the implications of South Africa's trade and investment for the economy of a given country, or even an entire region. She mentions, for instance, that Kenya's export to Tanzania suffered from South Africa's trade with cheaper goods to the latter. Another important aspect discussed are examples of labor conditions prevailing in branches of South African companies, presenting a more nuanced image of these businesses, often simply considered as being purely greedy.

Unlike what is suggested by the title of their chapter, Sam Moyo (African Institute for Agrarian Studies, Zimbabwe) and Ruth Hall (Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies, University of the Western Cape, South Africa) discuss the issue of land reform and redistribution not only in South and southern Africa, but also beyond the region. But, here again, the pertinence and relevance to the book's overall theme is entirely absent. There is no debate, for example, to what extent the land reform strategies in Namibia and Zimbabwe had repercussions on Pretoria's activities in this regard. The subsequent chapter, by Angela Ndinga-Muvumba (CCR) and Shauna Mottiar (CPS), does not fall short of providing a link between developments in South Africa and the rest of the continent. In particular, they relate Pretoria's strategy against HIV/AIDS to Thabo Mbeki's concept of African Renaissance. They take the stance that "unless South Africa comes to terms with HIV/AIDS, its role in realising an African Renaissance will prove elusive" (p. 178), arguing that a growing pandemic will also negatively affect the South African economy, which, in turn, would "undermine the peace and prosperity of Africa" (p. 188). They somehow excuse post-apartheid Pretoria's hesitation and unwillingness, at least initially, to undertake decisive measures to combat HIV/AIDS, especially by referring to the legacy of colonial and racist views on black sexuality. Yet, their overall assessment does not lack any clarity: "South Africa has failed decisively to halt its own HIV/AIDS epidemic" (p. 194). The inclusion of this chapter was worthwhile, as it raises an issue perhaps too often neglected in the literature.

The remaining five contributions are case studies of South Africa's continental relations. Chris Landsberg (CPS) first discusses South Africa's important role in setting up the AU and in drafting the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). His key argument is that NEPAD's neo-liberal underpinning, basically the "Africanization" of South Africa's GEAR policy, is "seriously unpopular in some African quarters, and this has in turn created many legitimacy problems for NEPAD and other South African-inspired continental initiatives" (p. 197). He therefore strongly argues for Pretoria "to play a leading role in reshaping NEPAD's economic provisions to that of a developmental model" (p. 205). Landsberg also touches on the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). As this was another Mbeki-driven initiative, he rightly proposes that its very success and credibility largely depend on the APRM's examination of South Africa, which Landsberg subsequently considers. But he unfortunately shies away from taking a clear stance on whether this exercise had in any way bolstered the APRM's acceptance on the continent.

In his contribution, Adekeye Adebajo (CCR) then proposes to examine the often-heard argument whereby South Africa and Nigeria were the only two African states with the capacity to further both Africa's economic development and political stability, forming an "axis of virtue" for this reason. Yet, what follows is not much more than a chronological description of the ups and downs in the relationship between the two countries from 1960 to 2006. As the information provided lacks any deeper analysis, but also given the frequent changes at the top of Nigeria's political hierarchy, it comes as no surprise that the conclusion does not and cannot offer any groundbreaking insights regarding the prospect for the "axis of virtue" as upheld between Mbeki and his friend and former Nigerian president, Olusegun Obasanjo, to be

maintained. In rather a banal manner, Adebajo concludes that its longevity and sustainability are by far uncertain. Even more doubtful is the policy relevance of the chapter by journalist Augusta Conchiglia on South Africa's relations with the Lusophone countries Angola and Mozambique. The principal message put across in this chapter is that post-apartheid Pretoria's contacts with Luanda have mostly been tenuous, while those with Maputo have seen intensification, especially in the economic sector. We are left wondering why the two countries were considered together, as the author does not provide any argument, expect for their obviously common heritage. In fact, and in contrast to Mozambique, Angola is not even a neighbor of South Africa, such as the chapter's title claims.

Devon Curtis (Department of Politics, University of Cambridge) concentrates on South Africa's involvement in the post-conflict situations in Burundi and in the DRC, *inter alia* by assisting them in preparing elections in 2005 and 2006 respectively. He rightly stresses that the assumption of the successful South African model being exportable to any other African country has been wishful thinking and even misleading, given the sometimes vast differences in the nature of the conflicts experienced by the countries concerned. Nevertheless, Curtis finds that "some aspects of the transitional strategies have had positive effects in Burundi and the DRC" (p. 255), while, at the same time, conceding that it is "still too early to assess whether or not the process in Burundi and the DRC will lead to durable post-election peace" (p. 266). Thus, South Africa's democracy-export drive into Africa remains volatile due to the generally complex and unpredictable political conditions prevailing on the ground.

The final chapter by Iqbal Jhazbhay (Department of Religious Studies and Arabic, University of South Africa) focuses on South Africa's relations with North Africa and the Horn of Africa. Yet, disappointingly little more is offered than a rather superficial presentation of facts. Other than citing Algeria's support to the African National Congress (ANC) whilst in exile during the 1960s, as well as statements by both Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki at official AU and United Nations (UN) meetings, no real substance is given to the proposition and claim whereby these relations would effectively bridge the continent. The slightly more detailed discussion of South Africa's mediation with Libya over the Lockerbie affair aside, there is no indication regarding a possible foreign policy strategy towards this region. Other important questions remain unanswered, too, such as: Why is North Africa taken together with the Horn of Africa? The geographical proximity alone is no sufficient justification. And why was Jakes Gerwel, director-general in the office of President Mandela, the principal person involved in the Lockerbie mediation, and not foreign affairs minister Alfred Nzo, whom Mandela had chosen for his aptitude in diplomacy, according to Jhazbhay?

Overall, we unfortunately cannot agree with the editors' claim that their work is a "unique volume" and "the first in-depth study of South Africa's critical role over the last ten years" (back cover). Neither do the contributions live up to the equally raised expectation of being "academically rigorous and policy-relevant" (pp. 38-39). In addition, a most striking feature of most chapters is their missing relevance to the overall topic of South Africa's post-apartheid relations with Africa. Some typographical and writing mistakes have also found their way into the book, the most serious of which is probably the denomination of the JSE as the Johannesburg Securities Exchange (p. 129), rather than the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

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