

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Analúcia Danilevicz Pereira

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Cooperation efforts amongst several Africanist and African institutions have progressively, and in a large extent, helped to increase African studies in Brazil. The specificities and, above all, the continent's new strategic role need to be understood through the lenses of a new geopolitical reality in a transitional world. If, on one hand, African countries' weaknesses are part of the nation-State building process, in which political and economic survivals are basic elements, on the other hand, despite internal rivalries and divergent external alliances, a common agenda among African countries already exists. Therefore, when analyzing the relations with the greatest international powers, the African continent does not constitute a passive pole.

After a brief period in which occurred the loss of its strategic importance due to the end of the Cold War and to the weakening of the Non-Alignment, Africa started to occupy once again an important role through the presence of new actors, what enables the continent to achieve greater autonomy and development. New correlations of forces are defined and regional African powers emerge. In the next few years, there will be a rising global dispute towards continent, surrounding both the security and the natural resources agendas. Alongside this perspective, it is crucial to analyze the Brazilian projection and its cooperation efforts (including in the field of Defense) with African countries within the perimeter of the South Atlantic in a scenario in which the Ocean is given new geopolitical importance. Through the cooperation used by Brazil in order to promote the construction of a regional identity in the South Atlantic, it has been possible to reshape power relations in the area and to generate new, more complex presence of the traditional powers. This recent central role, marked by interventions or by the promotion of internal (and regional) instability, represents a challenge not only to African countries, but also to the entire developing world.

In this sense, the second edition of the *Brazilian Journal of African Studies* aims at analyzing these new challenges. Vladimir Shubin's paper establishes a debate concerning the dilemmas faced by the last South African electoral process, observed *in loco*, whilst John Akokpari analyzes the establishment of the African Union Peace and Security Architecture to prevent and to solve conflicts that have endemically remained in the continent. By discussing the African studies in China, Li Anshan considers that the academic production is a reflex of the fast development of China-Africa relations: Africanists outside of China have been expressing great interest in the Sino-African academic engagement. Sylvio de Souza Ferreira and Eduardo Migon bring a debate on the Brazilian technical cooperation in Security and Defense with Africa. The authors affirm that, as part of the Brazilian strategic surroundings, the African continent attracts Brazilian attention, since the continent is obtaining greater insertion in the national research agenda, especially in the fields of Security and Defense. Analúcia Danilevicz Pereira analyzes the Cuba-Africa relations and their traces of exceptionality. Since the first years of the Revolution, Cuba has defined its line of action in the African continent, marked by multiple forms of cooperation.

Diego Pautasso analyzes the role of Africa in the construction of the new Maritime Silk Road. This is one of the facets of the ambitious Chinese integration process in Asia, Europe and Africa, released in 2013 under the title *OBOR Initiative* (One Belt, One Road). The security dynamics in the Horn of Africa in the post-independences period is discussed by Nilton Cardoso, who identifies the actors, the agendas and the challenges, as well as the "new" threats and regional, international responses. The author also analyzes the region's strategic importance to the traditional superpowers after the post-9/11 2001, matured in the process of securitization. Fidel Terenciano, Maria do Socorro Souza Braga e Carlos Augusto da Silva Souza analyze the democratization processes and political competition in Africa through two studies of case: Mozambique and Zambia. The paper is written upon the evidence that democracy is a system which must allow the confrontation of several social and political forces, and its legitimacy is acquired from the recognition of the actors involved in its political and electoral processes as a whole. Simone Gibran Nogueira e Raquel Souza Lobo Guzzo aim at locating and establishing a dialogue on the production of the African Psychology itself within the context of scientific-cultural productions of the Global South. At last, but not least, the Cameroonian Kingsly Awang Ollong proposes a study of case on one of the main products cultivated in the developing countries, the banana, whose profits from its crops are an important source of wealth via exports. However, for decades,

the banana's economy has been a clear example of trade injustice.

The BJAS publishes an electronic bilingual version (Portuguese and English), as well as a printed one in English. In this sense, we expect the contribution of colleagues from Brazil and from abroad, with whom we aim at establishing ties in order to further deepen the knowledge and the construction of a South vision regarding the African continent and the relations with it.

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