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Security in Africa: A Critical Approach to Western Indicators of Threat by CLAIRE METELITS

Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016. Pp. 141. $85 (hbk).

Claire Metelits' book is an important contribution to the study of security in Africa. It proposes a new approach, Critical Security Study, to correct the weaknesses of Traditional Security Study. The book is well organised, well written and reader-friendly.

Politicians, military analysts and scholars have been debating and reflecting on the nature of the new world order since the collapse of the Soviet Union and its consequences for global and regional security. The security implications of this evolving new world order have been previously analysed in Martin van Creveld's 1991 book *The Transformation of War*, in which he predicted that state-led wars will be replaced by wars fought by non-state actors. Metelits' book is in the same tradition of the search for meaning in the evolving world order and greatly contributes to the reflection on the complexities of international security and its implications for the continent of Africa.

For scholars, military analysts and policymakers, this book presents many advantages. It explains the need to evolve from Traditional Security Study to Critical Security Study: a move from excessive focus on the Westphalian state in order to take into account local conditions. Metelits suggests two important ideas: a process of resolving conflict that ceases to ignore conflict legacies within given states and a method to avoid escalation by recognising that the nature and praxis of statecraft in Africa could be, itself, a source of instability. In this regard, the author emphasises that the political institution doesn't enjoy an equal level of legitimacy throughout the governed space.

Another major contribution of Metelits' book is her assertion that 'securitization' of Africa is based on western perception and perspective. Because there is

a hierarchical relationship between those who assist and those who receive assistance, African voices are absent in policy design and decision-making. 'Let Africans define their own challenges' (p. 113), she concludes.

This conclusion highlights an unresolved dilemma, and a millennia old one: how to alter a hierarchy that is embedded in the structures of the prevailing world order. Hesiod (c. 700 BCE) described the unequal relationship between the hawk and the nightingale in *Works and Days*. As Athenians put it to the people of the island-state of Melos during the Peloponnesian War (416 BCE), 'the strong take what they want and the weak accept what they must'. The Melian leaders did not consult their people before making decisions with dire consequence for the lives of their citizens. Maybe the starting point for African governments is to listen to their own people.

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Cultural Heritage in Mali in the Neoliberal Era by ROSA DE JORIO
Champagne, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2016. Pp. 224. $28 (pbk).

Rosa De Jorio's monograph, *Cultural Heritage in Mali in the Neoliberal Era*, is a much anticipated, fascinating, and timely account of the contested politics of public culture in a time of turbulent and sometimes violent change in Mali. It is anticipated as a summative work, bringing together 15 years of ethnographic and historical scholarship on Mali's (post)colonial cultural heritage, expanded to address the country's current socio-political crossroads. The book fascinates with its dexterous application of social thought and theory, particularly the way De Jorio extracts Foucault's concept of 'governmentality' from the nation-state to analyse popular modes of citizenship fashioned by transnational governance and nongovernmental politics. *Cultural Heritage* is timely for its commentary on the uncertain future of Mali's post-crisis present, examining the possibilities and constraints of politics – cultural or otherwise – in the wake of a March 2012 coup d'état and subsequent internecine conflict, events that have significantly fragmented and greatly diminished the state of the Malian nation.

The book opens with a conceptually rich introductory chapter that triangulates Foucaultian theories of political subjectivity and power with anthropological scholarship on public culture and social memory. Through thoughtful and efficient prose, De Jorio argues that the multifaceted and contested space of public culture, in which state, quasi-state and non-state heritage initiatives figure prominently, represents a key site through which 'neoliberal' modes of governance and identification may be observed, analysed and critiqued. For De Jorio, the neoliberal constitutes a historical moment, emerging alongside the waning years of autocratic rule in Mali and characterised by a politics of decentralisation and radical divestment in the public sector. She then applies this approach to postcolonial memory, culture and power in neoliberal Mali to a series of five ethnographic and historical case studies, each one the subject of a chapter.