participation, ownership, and buy-in. These factors take time, and the U.S. military's in-and-out approach misses much of this community engagement. The case studies conclude that African governments are more interested in state and regime security than in human security. AFRICOM's security sector assistance approach risks creating highly trained security forces that are stronger than the civilian governments that are supposed to control them. This situation can easily lead to corruption, lack of accountability, and, ultimately, an "impunity state." The Obama administration has requested significant additional annual funding for AFRICOM's Counterterrorism Partnership Fund, but most of this money will go to military initiatives, rather than interagency initiatives. Thus the overall picture is one of increasing reliance on the military and on programs targeting security force capacity-building, rather than the interagency approach and the "whole of government" objectives undergirding the policy decisions that led to the formation of AFRICOM.

The contributors' sources are largely primary documents, including policy statements and performance reviews from the DoD and from civilian agencies, including the DoS, USAID, and various NGOs. Academic sources, including military, policy, and development journals, as well as anthologies, and relevant scholarly monographs are also consulted. The selections are for the most part well researched, effectively argued, and authoritative. The book is recommended to specialists and policymakers with military, civilian, and nongovernmental agencies.

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ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY

Marc Sommers. *The Outcast Majority: War, Development, and Youth in Africa.* Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015. xviii + 259 pp. Map. Figures. Tables. Photographs. Index. $74.95. Cloth. ISBN 978-0-8203-4884-1. $26.95. Paper. ISBN 978-08203-4884-8.

The study of youth in Africa focuses our attention on a number of converging themes: state fragility, economic problems, demographic imbalances, exclusionary mechanisms, precarious or degrading survival strategies, and "youth cultures" as marginal or alternative ways of expression and existence. Over the past decade or so there has been a spate of new studies on youth in Africa, but few have the coverage and original scope that Marc Sommers's study has, bringing these lines together. It is a really original contribution to both scholarship and policy thinking, drawing on the author's extensive travels and fieldwork as a researcher-consultant in Africa, as well

as on earlier academic and NGO-based studies. This is a great book that deserves a wide readership and serious attention, especially in view of the staggering challenges ahead.

In six very readable chapters the author summarizes the enormous problems faced by youth and examines some critical aspects of well-meaning but often ill-directed "development policies" by donors, INGOs, and governments in regard to excluded youth in Africa. It is tempting to cite many passages of this engaging and well-written book, but I'll mention three core concepts: exclusion, war (conflict), and (of course) "development." Their interrelations as applied to youth are deeply problematic in today's Africa, despite the stories of a booming continent with economic upsurge and political reform. African youth in war-affected settings suffer from educational and economic exclusion (the lack of schooling beyond the primary level, lack of access to decent jobs, etc.) and cultural exclusion (the inability to attain adulthood in culturally prescribed ways and their consequent experiences of condemnation or rejection).

Chapter 1, "Demography and Alienation," describes the often shocking problems of excluded youth in war-affected African settings. While some of these problems also exist (although of very different magnitude) in developed industrial states, the book presents an excellent diagnosis of Africa's specific problems, not sparing the policies of either the U.N. and big donor countries or those of African governments.

In chapter 2, "The Wartime Template," Sommers graphically describes the unimaginable problems youth have to face in war situations and in postwar settings. The effects of violent conflict continue to be felt at the basic levels of food and job scarcity, and young people find that the initiative, resilience, and enterprise they acquired when they were with rebels or on the run are underestimated. They are scarred not only by the past, but also by their exclusion in the present, and the scars themselves keep them vulnerable and marginalized. While taking care not to idealize the "resilience" of these excluded youth, Sommers pleads for a reassessment and recognition of their skills and capacities and calls upon governments and development agents to put them to use.

In the third chapter, "The Development Response," Sommers calls for a revising of the common "business-as-usual" approach of the development industry and the policy of many Western donor nations (and of course China or Russia) in supporting undemocratic, oppressive African regimes that ignore he problems of youth and conceive of development only in terms of "economic growth." But Sommers's account is not a cheap shot at how poorly developmental agencies and donor country organizations (like USAID or DfID) are doing; rather, he offers thoughtful and constructive suggestions that they rethink current strategies, including the excessive emphasis on "measuring" everything (which he traces back to the destructive impact of Robert McNamara), an approach that gives only partial results and provides a misleading view of reality. He argues for integrating context-sensitive qualitative information, and also for remedying the lack of

donors' real, experiential contact with the so-called target group—excluded and outcast youths. Sommers makes the simple observation that these young people—the objects of all these policies—are never asked how programs have benefited them or how they could be designed differently, a neglect that reveals an underestimation of their agency, independence, and even skills. Sommers also pleads for abandoning the word *beneficiary* because often youths (or other "target groups") are not beneficiaries and have no chance to evaluate these so-called benefits.

Chapter 6 offers a comprehensive and nuanced scenario for an alternative youth policy. This chapter, and the book as a whole, should be of great help to those active in the field of international development and relations.

Two critical points should be mentioned, however. The first is that Sommers underestimates (although he does acknowledge at various points in the book) the "objective" phenomenon of very rapid demographic growth in Africa. There simply *is* a Malthusian problem in Africa—the population growth is staggering and historically unprecedented, if not seriously unsustainable. And people know this. When I was doing my field research in the Ethiopian countryside I often heard comments like "We just have too many children," implying that previous sociocultural systems of regulation have been undermined (e.g., by new religious ideologies and state campaigns against "traditional culture"). The resources to feed, house, educate, and employ the population are simply not there, and it will take a Herculean effort to remediate this situation. So it seems that more population control (or "family guidance") policies are simply inevitable—if only for the sake of women's health and public health. A sensitive point, but it has to be faced. Declining birth rates often occur as countries develop and urbanize, but in the case of Africa one cannot count on this outcome because of pervasive patriarchal social control.

Second, Sommers speaks too mildly about the disastrous and callous policies of African governments, across the board. Although they have their rhetoric in place about the existence of youth policies, no country sees youth as a priority. None has a proper youth policy. Young people for them are an amorphous, often "dangerous" group who simply do not (yet) count, or cannot be used for their political purposes. The tragic costs of this have been evident at least for the past forty years.

To sum up: I'd urge youth researchers, development policymakers, and, if it's not too much to ask, African political leaders and civil servants to read this book (not once but twice) and take its analysis and suggestions seriously. If they do so they will benefit enormously from its original thinking and excellent suggestions about how to turn around youth policy, remedy the problem of the "outcast majority," and move young people toward inclusion and progress.

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