

Abu Bakarr Bah. 2024. *African Security: Local Issues and Global Connections*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 245 pp.

Abu Bakarr Bah's *African Security: Local Issues and Global Connections* provides an in-depth analysis of African security from a unique perspective that fuses localized African issues with the broader context of global interconnections. Bah links the continent's security problems to the effects of colonialism, global political economies, and international security dynamics. He argues that these factors are intertwined, making African security inseparable from international security and challenging both traditional and neo-imperialist views on African security. Bah advocates for a view that prioritizes African agency and internal complexities. He structures his analysis around several critical security threats, such as terrorism, armed conflicts, and environmental challenges to political instability and migration. He shows how internal and external influences shape African security and argues that security concerns cannot be addressed or understood without acknowledging the role of global factors influencing local realities, factors which oversimplify narratives and paint African states as inherently fragile and unstable. The author insists on a nuanced view that accepts Africa's colonial history, the long-term impacts of global economic dependencies, and the influence of foreign interventions based on the UN Norms on the Responsibility of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with regard to Human Rights that results in humanitarian intervention by Western powers that often prioritizes external over African interests.

Bah explores the myriads of problems associated with the militarization of several African countries during the global war on terror and how violent domestic groups with genuine grievances were labeled terrorist organizations, which received international attention and affected African security instead of addressing the root causes. The author explains the securitization of the continent by Western nations without considering the local and domestic causes of extreme political violence exacerbated by African security problems. He argues that "African security has been affected because local conflicts and security threats have been internationalized" (p. 114). He cites Nigeria and Uganda's violent extremist groups, whose conflicts are rooted in ethnicity and marginalization, and how counterterrorism operations affect African security.

African Security critiques interventionist policies that impose external models, often exacerbating rather than resolving the conflicts in the continent. Its author views foreign intervention, whether based on "humanitarianism or Responsibility to Protect, as a form of neo-colonization and promotion of global liberal governance instead of addressing problems impacting African security." (p. 153). Bah sees complex counterterrorism measures as counterproductive because they abuse people's human rights. Instead, he calls for a decolonized perspective in understanding and addressing Africa's security concerns, urging a shift from a Western-centric approach to one that reflects the continent's unique contexts. He believes foreign interventions in Africa are cosmetic ethical efforts rather than addressing the challenges contributing to them. Despite this, civil wars have not prevented or improved democracy and human rights abuses. Instead, they worsen domestic problems and undermine proper solutions to African problems. Western powers are concerned about elections instead of security and embrace global liberal governance and global security (p. 164). One of the book's

strengths is that Bah uses many theories to explain the effects of external influence on African security. It provides a rich empirical analysis of the failures of foreign interventions to address or improve African security. The range of chapters indicates the broad scope of challenges presented by global liberal governance regarding African security architecture. The manuscript's case studies offer a better understanding of how external influences affect African security. Bah draws on various scholarly sources, combining international relations theory, security studies, and African political thought. He engages with both classical security scholars and Africanist scholars. This interdisciplinary approach enriches the book's analysis and gives Bah a more comprehensive critique of global liberal governance.

That said, Bah could have included more empirical data or fieldwork to support his claims, especially when discussing the increased engagement of African militaries in international peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and humanitarian assistance missions. Incorporating more primary sources or interviews with key leaders of case studies countries and members of regional organizations would offer a more grounded understanding of the challenges of African security. The book is well-organized, with each chapter building logically on the previous one. Bah's writing is clear and accessible, making complex security concepts understandable to scholars and practitioners. The book focuses on African security and foreign interventions. This manuscript contains invaluable information and deserves to be read by students, policymakers, international relations, security studies, and African studies scholars. It offers a compelling argument for a decolonized perspective on African security and underscores the importance of collaboration between African and global institutions in addressing local and international threats.

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