

Editorial

An Interface of Governance, Development, and Politics

The intersection amongst questions of governance, economic development and politics is what joins the articles in this edition together. As part of the rethinking of the idea of strategic studies away from its roots in Eurocentric war studies or military science, it is crucial to open the conversations up about strategic considerations that emanate from the dynamic interface between the economy, governance and politics as these have a bearing on how we understand the state of Africa and southern Africa today as well as on how we think about the future we want.

For instance, it is clear that failures and successes in governance have implications for economic and political development of the still-developing African states/societies. This is because the organisation of life, the deployment of societal systems and the harnessing of opportunities in political structures can lead to economic successes of the nature seen by East Asian states in the latter part of the 20th century, for instance. These are successes previously seen in the Scandinavian part of Europe and elsewhere. Such experiences have led to discussions of developmental statehood.

Therefore, research into how governance at all levels evolves in relation to solving the practical challenges to economic development is helpful for us to understand how politics is evolving. This helps us interpret the patterns of decisions that political leaders and governmental authorities are making that predispose areas to poor services or weak economic outcomes as the papers on governance and urban service delivery in Zimbabwe and infrastructure provision for LED in South Africa show. Both papers demonstrate the impact of the interface mentioned above on service delivery on the ground.

The paper on fiscal changes in Namibia is concerned with macro-economic instruments governments use to enable economic development, which is about how governance tools catalyse economic development, and how that is linked to the nature of politics in Namibia. Similarly, the paper on ingredients of a development state in southern Africa opens up a terrain of discussion that casts a critical eye on what it would take for a southern African country like South Africa to have the abilities of a developmental state to drive economic development and

social wellbeing through compacts with partners like the private sector and the fourth estate. The conditions that give rise to a developmental state are found to be insufficiently present in the region's most sophisticated state, South Africa, suggesting that the dream of a developmental state is a long way further down the proverbial road.

As the article on flags and political symbolism in Zimbabwe shows, the state we currently have in the region is one that is Westphalian in the original sense, which means it is obsessed with regime security over human well-being and social stability. It is one for which the flag symbolises its monopoly over the meaning of nationhood, statehood and freedom. This engenders conditions where freedoms of people are trampled upon and rights are limited in draconian measures informed by regime preservation at the expense of liberated nation-building.

The social attitudes of the people to conditions created by state neglect including socio-economic inequality is the focus of another paper. In this, the subject of restitution as an idea of what I could call atoning for the sins of periods of oppression is placed at the centre of an opinion survey that reveals the complexity of citizen's attitude to redress and the conditions that impinge on this ideal after oppression, in this case after apartheid.

Parliament receives some added attention in this edition. In one paper, the role of the legislature in the transformation of post-apartheid South Africa using instruments of oversight, deliberation, law and policymaking is examined and major challenges are identified. In another, the ways and means used by the South African parliament to build relations with other parliaments in order to advance agendas that are broadly in sync with those of the national foreign policy are explored. This is a subject deserving of greater attention as we discuss the perforation of the conceptual lines of international relations as national governments (executives) compete with other actors for the meaning of what international relations and internationalism are.

Much more needs to be done to discuss coherently, perhaps in the form of edited book volumes, the interface of economic development, governance and politics in Africa, given abundance of data today from the Afrobarometer, Afrimap and other African databases about all manner of subjects in this debate, from budget and planning, public administration, policy coordination to local leadership. It is hoped that this edition stimulates such initiatives as will help us

use these new data sets in a coherent manner.

About the Journal

The editorial group/committee continues to refine the look and feel of this journal in line with the requirements for online publishing with accredited portals as AJOL as well as best practice. For instance, in this edition, we indicate that we publish under a creative commons licence that promotes open access to publicly funded knowledge cultivation. The process to get the DOI identities for articles published has started. A full open-access online publication system has been set up. We trust that the external review of the journal currently underway will also give us further ideas to implement as we continue to improve this journal.

The Editorial Team

This journal is the work of several very competent and dedicated scholars, all of whom deserve thanks. I wish to express my gratitude to first to members of the editorial group, especially the two editors I work with –Kgothatso Shai of University of Limpopo and Everisto Benyera of University of South Africa. Sandy Africa, Roland Henwood, and Mabutho Shangase of University of Pretoria, plus Eugenio Njoloma of Mzuzu University and Mu'uz Alemu of Mekelle University provide essential editorial support.

Editorial assistants doing laudable work behind the scene are: Ms Nomzamo Malindisa, Ms Mmadikgomo More and Mr Chido Nyere of University of Pretoria, and Mr Frank Lekaba of North West University.

Siphamandla Zondi

Editor-in-Chief

April 2020