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Editorial

Ngenge Ransom Tanyu[1] | ngengetanyu@africaopl.org | ORCID | Centre for Advanced Sustainability Studies & Centre for Foreign Law Schools, Faculty of Law and Administration, Jagiellonian University, Poland.

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This edition of the *e_AOPL Journal of Social Sciences* brings together a diverse array of scholarly contributions examining the evolving political, cultural and geopolitical dynamics across Africa and beyond. From the historic entanglements of Türkiye's engagement with Africa to the transformative role of international institutions and the sociopolitical intricacies of contemporary Cameroon, the articles provide perspectives that are rooted in empirical data and critical analysis. Some interrogate the intersection of global diplomacy with local realities, while others touch on conflict resolution, foreign aid and identity formation in postcolonial contexts. Together, they underscore the importance of multidisciplinary approaches in understanding the shifting contours of governance, regionalism and international cooperation. This issue serves as both an intellectual archive and a timely reflection on the forces shaping the Global South in a multipolar world. We are pleased to present these contributions as part of our commitment to advancing knowledge and scholarly dialogue.

The first article in the series *"Ethical Challenges within the Public Administration in Lesotho"* offers a timely and incisive analysis of the persistent ethical issues that continue to hinder effective governance in the country. Ramonate exposes a system where unethical behaviour, especially political intervention and corruption, is profoundly ingrained, despite the presence of structures designed to foster integrity. A primary focus of the research is the disparity between law and its enforcement. The author notes that corruption remains pervasive, even with the existence of anti-corruption institutions such as the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO). This reflects a wider difficulty in African government, where institutional improvements often lack the political will for execution. A significant finding of the paper is the prevalence of political involvement in administrative procedures. The research indicates that political elites persist in influencing recruitment and promotion processes, so eroding meritocracy and institutional autonomy. This is not only a structural problem; it constitutes an ethical dilemma that undermines public trust and institutional efficacy. The author emphasises the deterioration of public trust resulting from systematic ethical failures: the unethical behaviour has compromised good governance, diminished transparency, and resulted in the misappropriation of public resources. Such consequences do not arise in isolation; they reflect wider sociopolitical dysfunctions that must be addressed for Lesotho to achieve significant advancements in accountable government. The essay extends beyond diagnosis to promote remedial actions. Included is a suggestion for regular

monitoring and assessment of public service behavior, in conjunction with demands for stringent enforcement of ethical standards. These are practical measures aimed at reconstructing a public sector that embodies the principles of equity, professionalism and accountability. This study reveals a clear call to action. Ethical governance should be seen not as a mere desire but as an essential practical need. In its absence, changes lack substance and progress is impeded. The study argues convincingly that public administration ethics in Lesotho require immediate revitalisation through training, institutional enhancement, and leadership dedication. This piece ought to reverberate beyond the confines of Lesotho. This prompts critical enquiries into the ethical obligations of public officials in post-colonial African nations and encourages more investigation into the effectiveness of ethics-oriented reforms in politically unstable contexts.

The evolving dynamics of conflict have increasingly shifted into digital spaces, and Tegomoh's article, *"The Anglophone Crisis in Cameroon and the Entrappings of Social Media,"* demonstrates this phenomenon with striking clarity. In the Anglophone region of Cameroon, social media has evolved from a mere communication tool to a platform and instrument in a persistent conflict of narratives, trauma and identity. Tegomoh emphasises the pivotal role of digital platforms, contending that social media has profoundly influenced popular perception of rights and the legal system in the nation. The Anglophone Crisis, deeply entrenched in historical grievances, has evolved into a twin conflict: one tangible, the other virtual. She argues that the Anglophone Crisis in Cameroon has manifested on two fronts: the physical battleground and the social media front. Tegomoh notably refrains from idealising the function of social media. Instead, she presents a balanced viewpoint on its capacity to educate and deceive. The author's anthropological perspective and firsthand accounts make the fears of Cameroonians tangible. Nancy, a university instructor, describes an incident in which she discarded her phone into adjacent bushes during an encounter with armed combatants, apprehensive that its contents may disclose her occupation or political beliefs. This action underscores the vulnerability of digital footprints in war areas. This essay is distinguished for its comprehensive examination of the paradox of social media. Platforms like as Facebook and WhatsApp serve as vital resources for those seeking information under government control and mainstream media persecution. Tegomoh believes that social media has been particularly effective in disseminating information on the atrocities committed by

both warring factions. Conversely, these venues are saturated with disinformation, manipulation, and falsehoods. One instance has three competing groups instituting concurrent lockdowns, prompting the author to describe the endeavour as a formidable challenge to ascertain the veracity of these commands. The article's primary merit is in its anthropological profundity. Direct testimonies of extortion, psychological distress, and the dissolution of journalistic boundaries illuminate the numbers and underscore the societal repercussions of the crisis. A poignant insight emerges from Officer Michael, who relates the imprisonment of two famished boys only for seeking assistance from the police, a distressing narrative that underscores the profound erosion of trust and safety within civic life. The paper furthermore has significant policy consequences. Tegomoh advocates for the reinstatement of press liberties, contending that the enhancement of professional journalism may mitigate the perilous void now occupied by unverified digital material. This is not only an examination of media consumption; it is also a narrative of a culture striving to negotiate survival, truth and identity under the turmoil of battle. The article highlights the digital aspects of the Anglophone Crisis, urging policymakers, journalists, and international observers to reconceptualise communication technologies in fragile states as instruments of mobilisation and arenas of control and resistance.

In his relevant and insightful study, Ngounou examines a critical question in global commerce and development: whether the World commerce Organisation’s TRIPS Agreement fosters or hinders innovation in Africa. This concern is not only academic; it fundamentally challenges Africa’s developmental sovereignty within a global framework of intellectual property (IP) laws that have been mostly established without consideration for its interests. Ngounou offers a compelling inquiry: Does the TRIPS Agreement ratified by WTO members deprive its African members from leaping forward in terms of innovation? His response is tentatively positive. He argues that the pact establishes power imbalances and excessive reliance on foreign technology, positioning the pact on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) as a remnant of global economic structuring that perpetuates the marginalisation of African innovation. The author notably rejects simplifications. He recognises that intellectual property rights may stimulate innovation, however asserts that they must be anchored in strong National Innovation Systems (NIS). He observes that a deficient or absent National Innovation System complicates the establishment of robust intellectual property rights or the effective utilisation of minimal intellectual property rights for reverse engineering and

knowledge transfer. This editorial emphasises the article's role in underscoring the vital significance of local capacity-building in conjunction with any worldwide legislative alignment. Ngounou's argument requires immediate consideration from policymakers. African nations should not see TRIPS compliance as an unavoidable aspect of development, but rather exercise the freedom to tailor these frameworks to their unique contexts. The article, by explicitly referencing the TRIPS framework, WTO rules, and empirical case studies, is both scientifically rigorous and politically contentious.

In recent decades, China's global rise has been both rapid and far-reaching, with its influence particularly visible across Africa. Neba's (2025) article, *"China's Ascendancy in Cameroon: A Systematic Review of the Political and Economic Landscape,"* provides us with a meticulously structured and richly sourced account of how this global power is reshaping the political economy of Cameroon. The study employs a systematic review technique to explore the reasons, causes and repercussions of China's participation, highlighting both its potential benefits and risks. Neba's article fundamentally acknowledges the duality of China's position. The author states that China's engagement in Cameroon is motivated by a blend of strategic, economic, and cooperative factors, highlighting natural resource acquisition and infrastructural development as primary objectives. This perspective aligns with extensive studies characterising China's involvement in Africa as both developmental and extractive. The essay significantly contributes by emphasising specifics. Neba focusses on the specific setting of Cameroon, stating, Cameroon, with its abundance of minerals, timber and other natural resources, emerges as a highly attractive destination for Chinese investment, amidst the broader discourse on China's impact in Africa. The piece candidly addresses the controversies. China's operations in the mining industry have raised apprehensions about exploitation, often imposing burdens on local communities and workers. The author's tone is notably balanced. Infrastructure development, such as the Kribi Seaport and Memve'ele Hydroelectric Dam, is acknowledged as revolutionary. Neba critiques China's non-interference policy, suggesting it may worsen governance and accountability difficulties. The research cautions against debt dependency, environmental degradation, and sovereignty concerns, displaying a sophisticated perspective that avoids categorising China's position as just villainous or heroic. A significant insight arises from the recognition that popular views of China are notably heterogeneous. Although Chinese products and services are often embraced by

customers, especially in low-income regions, issues remain about labour methods, environmental impact, and cultural integration. The examination of Confucius Institutes, Traditional Chinese Medicine clinics, and gastronomic interactions elucidates the soft power dynamics influencing societal transformation. The essay serves as a pertinent reminder to policymakers and researchers of the need for strategic agency. Neba accurately contends that Cameroon must implement a more strategic approach to managing its relations with China, emphasising fairness, transparency and sustainability. I commend the author for integrating factual rigour with analytical clarity, providing a framework for African academics to assert control over the China-Africa narrative.

Kwachuh's article, *"Mapping the Historicity of Turkish Footprints in Africa in a Post Neo-Ottomanism Era,"* is a timely and meticulously crafted piece that probes Türkiye's evolving engagement with the African continent through historical, diplomatic and ideological lenses. This research offers a crucial chance to examine the causes and consequences of Türkiye's pan-African revival amid constantly changing global geopolitical alliances. This article is distinguished by its systematic division of Turkish-African ties into three distinct historical periods: the Ottoman era, the republican and Cold War period, and the modern post-neo-Ottomanist phase. The author convincingly asserts that contemporary Türkiye's re-engagement with Africa is not a novel endeavour, but rather one profoundly anchored in Ottoman legacies and revitalised by a deliberate state policy of 'opening to Africa' in the late 1990s. The author elucidates the causes for this increased involvement, characterising it as a multifaceted approach that utilises common religious identities, soft power diplomacy, and increasing commerce. Kwachuh observes that Türkiye has effectively cultivated an image of a benevolent and culturally relatable actor, distinguishing its strategy from the more transactional or hegemonic interactions of global powers such as China and the United States. However, the piece does not idealise Ankara's aspirations. Rather, it offers a sophisticated analysis of Türkiye's constraints, especially its difficulty in translating historical goodwill into a consistent and expansive soft power influence. Kwachuh's examination of the intellectual foundations of Türkiye's foreign policy is of significant relevance. He examines how neo-Ottomanism, sometimes seen as mere jargon, offers a symbolic framework through which Türkiye positions itself as a conduit between Africa and the Islamic world. This framework, albeit not dominant, influences the perception of its African approach. Furthermore, the article's factual foundation is commendable. It

outlines Türkiye's expansion of diplomatic missions from a mere 12 in 2002 to over 40 by 2025, emphasising the institutional magnitude of the involvement. This growth is accompanied by an unparalleled frequency of bilateral visits, trade conferences, and cultural exchanges, demonstrating a commitment that is both strategic and enduring. The essay makes a substantial contribution to the academic and policy-focused literature of Afro-Asian ties and Middle Power diplomacy. It should act as a benchmark for experts in international relations, African studies, and Turkish foreign policy. Kwachuh provides a historical account while urging critical reflection on the modern ramifications of historical connections, emphasising that curated memory may serve as a powerful instrument of foreign policy.The study emphasises that Türkiye's African strategy is neither a reinvention or a relic; rather, it is a recalibrated trajectory that balances history and practicality equally.

The extensive research shown in the five articles of this volume and series reinforces our journal's dedication to promoting critical and interdisciplinary study. The writers have examined underexplored aspects of African political, social and international affairs, uncovering patterns of continuity and change in governance, identity and collaboration. The examination of narratives about foreign players, whether in assistance, diplomacy or influence, underscores the increasing complexity of global interactions in Africa. Similarly, considerations of internal governance, civic identity, and resilience provide valuable insights for researchers, policymakers and practitioners. The many investigations enhance academic understanding and provide insights for practical treatments and reevaluating established paradigms. We express gratitude to our writers and reviewers for their diligent efforts and encourage our readers to persist in participating in these discussions via forthcoming submissions and dialogues.

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