

BOOK REVIEW

USA, INDIA, AFRICA DURING AND AFTER THE COLD WAR

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G.P. OKOTH

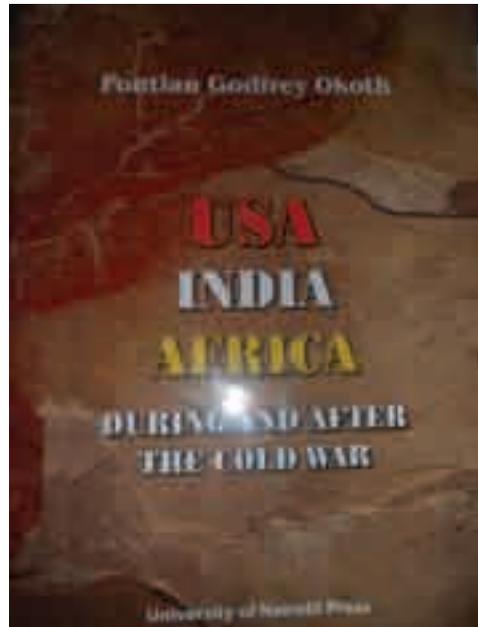
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The author of this book, Professor Pontian Godfrey Okoth, was the Vice Chancellor of Lugazi University in Uganda. He is a professor of History and International Relations and taught in Maseno University, Kenya and currently teaching at Masinde Muliro University Kakamega, Kenya. The book reviews history during and after the cold war and looks at how that period affected the United States of America (USA), India and Africa. It has three distinct parts.

Part I, has four chapters dedicated to foreign policies;

Chapter one introduces the nature of foreign policy by stating there is no concensus on a single definition. Foreign policy is examined at the frame of socio-economic and political interactions between states. It clearly elucidates efforts by different states to preserve their national interest. Foreign policy works concurrently with domestic policy. Foreign policy is complex in nature and difficult conducting. States changes their foreign policy to suit their objectives depending on the circumstances, this is illustrated by examples. The distinction between foreign policy and diplomacy is expounded on.

Chapter two discusses United States of America foreign policy and how it was developed by the nation founders. The United States of America foreign policy has been influenced by its self proclaimed role of “world police”. The Different schools of thought have been fronted to explain United States of

America actions globally. The foreign policy of America aims at expanding its influence in the world. Former presidents and nationalists are cited to show how they contributed to United States of America foreign policy. The United States of America foreign policy is aimed at furthering its interest and hence not consistent in all other world states. This has led to other states equating United States of America as neo-colonizer in the Post-Cold war and not liberator as it claim to be even after containing Russia during the Cold war.

Chapter three focusses on India foreign policy and its first growth rate. Indian policy of non-alignment development is discussed. India is shown as a devoping power in the middle, helping developed powers. The history of India foreign policy is traced to the India National Congress before independence in 1947. The independent India foreign policy is attributed to Nehru and shows how the foreign policy of India does not supercede its national interest. The foreign policy of India is anchored on three pillars namely: non-alignment, friendship and peace. Scholars' criticism of non-alignment is presented. Indian foreign policy in relation to the United Nations (UN) is discussed. Nehru foreign policy of India on non-alignment is shown and how it has influenced and only been adjusted by those after him.

Chapter four concludes part one of the book. Factors and principles in African foreign policy and diplomacy are delt with for example factors which contributes to the growing role of African nations in the international sphere. Anti-colonialism, unity and non-alignment are explained as the social roots of African foreign policy. The positive and negative effect of nationalism and its role and impact on African foreign policy is discussed. A brief history of African diplomacy which is not old in comparison to other continents is given. It alludes to the fact that African democracy existed before colonialism. African diplomacy is based on peaceful means to foreign policy. It is crystal evident that the existence of African diplomacy does not entail the need for individual country to find its own ways to deal with issues that beset it both domestically and internationally. The formation of Organization of Africa Union (OAU) later renamed African Union (AU) shows the intent of different states of working together. The major objective of Africa Union is nto propagate the foreign policy of Africa. Professor Okoth is abreast with to the fact that Organization of Africa Union has been faced with conflict. The principle of non-alignment did not yield the desired results for most African nations. But Africa states oneness helped during the struggle for independence. Individual state self-determination is a key component in African policy and diplomacy.

Part II, has three chapters discussing bilateral relations.

Chapter five discusses bilateral relations between United States of America and India. Both countries have some similar and divergence aspect of their foreign policy but their relationship has not been cordial for different reasons. Instances when the United States of America and India had the same thinking over foreign policy issues and where they differed and why are explained. As a super power United States of America wanted India to be its ally but India had non-alignment principle. This resulted in the sour relationship as evident in 1971 during the war between India and Pakistan. The author shows

that United States of America -India relationship is not at its best and that the two countries needs each other hence a need to work towards a micable understanding in differing view point.

Chapter six discusses the relationship between United States of America and Africa under four main sub-titles: historical, political, racial and economic between two periods, 1776-1959 and 1960s as the foundation for looking at their relationship. Africa was strategic to US interest and hence they had mutual relationship in the first period. This section also details with how the United States of America related with Africa in the 1960s with several challenges which are well articulated with examples. To illustrate the relationship between United States of America and Africa, the author picks four Presidents viz: Nixon, Kissinger, Carter and Reagan and analyze their policies towards Africa. The United States of America policy towards Africa keeps changing depending on its interest and circumstances in different countries. The four Presidents; Nixon, Kissinger, Carter and Reagan merits and demerits on their policy towards Africa are discussed. The chapter also shed light at how the end of the Cold War impacted on United States of America -Africa relations and how under the leadership of President Bush and Clinton new policy for Africa was enacted with core emphasis being on human rights.

In between at the end of chapter six and before chapter seven, are pictoral portraits from pages 217-225 of key personalities whose contribution was significant in Africa, India and the United States of America after the cold war.

Chapter seven focusses on the periods-during the decolonization and post-colonial period and the Indo-African relations. This chapter asserts that Africa and India have had cordial relations for many centuries this permitted their citizens to visit each others' countries even before the advent of colonial rule. The nature of this relationship with several examples to backup this arguement is given in great details in this section and it covers diffreent sectors like social, economic and political. The chapter closes by suggesting that there is opportunity for trade improvement between India and Africa.

Part III has two chapters dealing with relations in the Post-Cold war world order.

Chapter eight discusses Africa and the Post-Cold War world order.

This chapter introduces a new world order it calls 'global apartheid' where Countries were looked at as affluent or poor. The political impact of global apartheid and how it impacted on Africa is discussed. Because of this changing snarios, Africa had to make a hard choice between despair and nationalism. Most Africa leaders chose nationalism and worked towards solidarity. The chapter closes on positive conotations that despair was not the way Africa was to go but nationalism was and is the way the continent was headed to.

Chapter nine is the final part of the third section with a detailed discussion of how ideology, policy and politics of the Post-Cold War world order impacted India. There were several ideological, political and policy questions during this period. The thinking of different scholars and thinkers are given in this chapter where the author argues that India should rethink its policies so that it can be relevant in this era. It is shown in this section that, while the East

is blossoming the West is on the decline. The position of the United Nation (UN) and the merits of the Cold War are elaborated on in this chapter which also discusses globalization, liberalization and structural adjustment. These three terminologies; globalization, liberalization and structural adjustment are explained with relevant examples cited. Five monopolies by the West are identified and discussed on how Africa is being polarized. An elaborate discussion is given on nuclear weapons and how their presence and possible use has impacted relations between nations. The invention of these weapons of mass destruction gave rise to nuclear diplomacy. The new world order has advantages and the disadvantages to the United States of America and India and is the conclusion of the book.

The weakness of the book from the first chapter is that there is no single agreed upon definition of the nature of foreign policy. One would expect the author to operationalize the term for easy comprehension of his thoughts. Though the author seems to be very objective in his articulation on issues, to the Americans it looks like subjective in the sense that they are depicted as over ambitious and bossy when dealing with other nations. Another weakness is the long sentences in some portions which makes the narratives hard to follow.

The strength of this book is its detailed discussion on the relations between countries. This is elucidated by citation of several and relevant examples. This makes it interesting to those who want varified facts. Pictorial section in the book adds flavour to the reader in the sence that it encourages the reader to either identify with the said personality or dissagree with his thinking. The book is well researched and written in understandable English, and arranged thematically. This is a must read book for all persons interested or already involved in International relations, Diplomacy, history, political Science and Military Science and should be a reference book to scholars, lecturers and students of undergraduate and graduate of the above named areas of specializations.