



# **Power Transition, China and Africa, Global Health, Genocide, Operation Serval, and the Indian-American Partnership**

Given the meteoric rise of China, the emergence of other important powers, and major redistributions in the global balance of power, Prof. Carsten Rauch argues in “Beyond Peace and War: Towards a Typology of Power Transitions” that power transition theory (PTT) has again become an important intellectual factor. Although highlighting the inherent dangers of power transitions, PTT does acknowledge that they might result in peace as well as war. The spectrum of these transitions—or better situations for them—is even broader. The author believes that PTT should be amended by a variable that captures the willingness of rising powers to commit themselves to change the status quo. In addition, it is necessary not only to focus on the rising power(s) but also to take the dominant power into account. Doing so extends the nonpeaceful/peaceful power transition dichotomy to a more complex and realistic power transition typology that should be employed when one assesses the prospects of current power shifts.

In “China’s Worldview and Representations of Its Engagement with Africa,” Dr. Earl Conteh-Morgan submits that China’s relationship with Africa has generated both positive and negative discourse. He utilizes a select number of sources—articles, official speeches, and policy documents, among others—to compare and contrast representations of China’s role in the continent. Conteh-Morgan observes that discourse on China’s engagement stems from (1) differences between the West’s and China’s worldviews; (2) the perceived threat that China poses to the West’s hegemonic status in Africa; (3) China’s lack of commitment to some international regimes; (4) the fact that China may be providing an alternative development model not grounded in liberal democratic values; and (5) the tangible infrastructure projects that China has completed in Africa.

Prof. Annamarie Bindenagel Šehović’s article “Where Are Rights? Where Is Responsibility? Who Acts for Global Public Health?” contends that an inherent tension exists between rights and responsibility. Whose and which rights are to be protected? Who or which entity bears responsibility for ensuring those rights? Who acts—and how—for (global) public health? Despite decades of advocating for rights and acceptance—promoted and solidified in the public health arena by advances in access to public health services—these questions remain largely unanswered.

In “South African Springtime, Rwandan Winter: Why April 1994 Illuminates the Limitations of Political Analysis in Predicting Genocide,” Dr. Arthur Gilbert and Kristina Hook investigate the aforementioned “springtime” and “winter.” Genocidal criteria must exist alongside leadership and political systems. Did international publicity create antigenocidal momentum in South Africa? Do economic variables encourage reconciliation, given Rwanda’s poor agricultural economy and South Africa’s developed industrial status? What disparities existed under apartheid versus colonial-encouraged ethnic divisions? What role was played by the relative absence or predominance of fears of an outside invasion (South Africa and Rwanda, respectively)? Only by looking beyond personality and politics can one comprehend why April 1994 ushered in two such disparate eras and how this fact informs genocide-prediction frameworks.

Lt Col Stéphane Spet’s piece “Operation Serval: Analyzing the French Strategy against Jihadists in Mali” informs us that Serval fulfilled limited objectives set by the French president to liberate northern Mali. He explains this initial victory against terrorists in the Sahel in terms of adherence to strategic principles: first, a clear political direction shaped at the highest political level, relying on a good understanding of the situation and its causes to avoid political traps; second, a combination of economy of means, initiative, and concentration of forces displayed in the use of special forces in mentoring local military forces, supported by airpower to track and destroy the enemy and weaken his will to fight; third, the full use of “boots on the ground” not only to maintain the initiative by holding territory acquired by the special forces and air campaign but also to focus massive force on the enemy’s weakness during the final assault against the jihadist stronghold; and, finally, the shaping of an exit strategy to avoid a quagmire. France benefited from many contextual advantages, including its knowledge of the area of operation, support from countries neighboring Mali, the enemy’s lack of support within the Malian population, the proximity to French forward bases in Africa, and optimal geography for this kind of military operation.

In “Building a Partnership between the United States and India: Exploring Airpower’s Potential,” Dr. Adam Lowther and Dr. Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan examine current and prospective opportunities for the United States Air Force and the Indian Air Force to collaborate in the development of airpower diplomacy as a means of building partnerships. In suggesting that soft power plays an important role in achieving American and Indian objectives in the Asia-Pacific, the authors offer a number of examples that illustrate how soft power initiatives between the two air forces helped strengthen the larger Indian-American relationship. They also identify additional initiatives as possible options for expanding airpower diplomacy.

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