New Regionalisms in Africa after the Commodity Boom

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Abstract

Africa grew faster than any other region in the first half of the decade: what prospects for the second half given the decline of emerging markets (Overbeek and Apeldoorn 2012, Utting, Razavi and Varghese 2012) and continuing conflicts, now compounded by climate change? Can the continent contribute to novel formulations of ‘regional development’ and ‘global IR’ (Bergamaschi, Moore and Tickner 2016) by 2020/2025? ‘Development’ is in flux post-2015 as new technologies and new donors disrupt established North-South relations. African regions now connect with China (Forum on China Africa Cooperation - FOCAC), Japan (Tokyo International Conference of Africa’s Development - TICAD), the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), Korea and Turkey as well as the EU (Fioramonti 2012, Modi 2011). But the continent faces a growing range of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) issues including Transnational Organized Crime (TOC), to which the West African Commission on Drugs (WACD) responds (Shaw 2012), as well as global warming. And current ‘disruptive’ leaders in the US and UK make prevailing assumptions about multilateralism more problematic, reinforced by growing inequalities and nationalist forces in many regions from Europe to South America. The article concludes that there are several ‘Africas’ – developmental to fragile states plus myriad diasporas – some with more ‘agency’ than others (Shaw 2018), with which to advance ‘global governance’ beyond 2020/2025 (Bevir 2011, Brown 2012, Hale and Held 2011, Levi-Faur 2012)?

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Global international relations gives center stage to regions. (Bischoff, Aning and Acharya 2016: 3) Regions cut across every dimensions of the study of world politics: for their proponents, they even constitute the study of IR. (Fawn 2009: 5)
For a long period the study of regions and regional orders occupied a small if not insignificant place in international relations theory and scholarship. Now we have . . . books which argue that regions are central to our understanding of world politics. (Acharya 2007: 629)

…the rise of emerging societies is a major turn in globalization and holds significant emancipatory potential. North-South relations have been dominant for 200 years and now an East-South turn is taking shape. The 2008 economic crisis is part of a global rebalancing process. (Pieterse 2011: 22)

The rise of state capitalism constitutes one of the biggest changes in the world economy in recent years…

The defining battle of the 21st century will not be between capitalism and socialism but between different versions of capitalism. (Economist 2012: 13 and 14)

In the middle of the second decade of the twenty-first century, the increasingly multidisciplinary ‘political economy’ of ‘new regionalisms’ (Fanta, Shaw and Tang 2013) is emerging as a salient perspective on the recent ‘global’ crisis then commodity boom and bust (Fioramonti 2012, Van Langenhove 2011). The perpetuation, even contagion, of the turn of the decade financial compression may lead to significant restructuring rather than mere rebalancing, whether the US decline is temporary and reversible rather than exponential and irreversible (Clark and Hoque 2012). Unlike the so-called ‘Asian crisis’ in the last decade of the end of the last century (Robertson 2008), which encouraged Northern distance and arrogance, the latest one has served to unsettle established inter-regional hierarchies (te Velde 2008)—e.g., between rising BRICS (Gu, Shankland and Chenoy 2016) and declining PIIGS (Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain) in the European Union (EU)—reinforced by the subsequent commodity boom and bust.

The mid-decade crisis has since been exacerbated by the elections of Trump in the United States and May in the United Kingdom and the increasing centrality of U. S. and Chinese high-tech behemoths: FAANG (Fang, Alphabet, Apple, Netflix and Google) and BAT (Baidu, Alibaba and Tencent), respectively;
hence the proliferation of attention to ‘emerging’ or ‘rising’ powers to challenge and even supersede the established hegemon(s) (e.g., www.risingpowers.net; www.risingpowersinitiative.org; www.risingpowersproject.com; www.risingpowers.stanleyfoundation.org).

The unfolding ‘crisis’ has had divergent inter-regional incidences and impacts: the ‘old’ North has suffered contraction whereas the ‘new’ South has experienced further expansion. The trans-Atlantic advocates of ‘extreme’ liberalization have endured most ‘shocks’ or contractions, although the European Union of 27, including the PIIGS in the 17 eurozone members, has also declined. By contrast, two of the original four BRICs, the pair in Asia—i.e., China and India—have continued to grow impressively even if not always at historically high rates (Economist 2017).

At the turn of the decade, Goldman Sachs and others began to look away from the BRICs towards Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, and Turkey/Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Turkey (MIST/MINT), then Turkey, Indonesia, China and Korea (TICK) and now the high-tech giants: FAANG and BAT. As we note in the first section on Africa, it has benefitted from the interest and demand from China and India (Cheru and Obi 2010), even if not all countries, communities, and sectors have been unscathed (e.g., Zimbabwe?)

Such rebalancing/restructuring advances welcome revisionism about IR (Waever and Tickner 2009, Bergamaschi, Moore and Tickner 2016) and IPE (Phillips and Weaver 2010) as well as new regionalism(s) (Shaw, Grant and Cornelissen 2011), especially around Africa (Cornelissen, Cheru and Shaw 2012, Hanson, Kararach and Shaw 2012, Hanson, Puplampu and Shaw 2017). Brazilian analyst, Oliver Stuenkel (2017), has come to characterize this as a ‘post-Western world’ (www.postwesternworld.com).

As some states/companies/societies advance (e.g., developmental states like Mauritius, Botswana, Rwanda, or Ghana), others decline (e.g., Somalia, DRC) and others remain in the Third World (Senegal): from Fourth World to Second (Khanna 2009)? In turn, it has reinforced revisionist voices such as those from Alex Warleigh-Lack et al. (2011) and John Ravenhill (2010) inside as well as outside both the EU and Asia. These go beyond the orthodox claims of Acharya and Johnston (2007). Likewise, the Arab Spring has drawn attention to regional social movements (Korany 2012) even if the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is one of the least institutionalized of recognized regions (Harders and Legrenzi 2008).
And recent comparative analyses have juxtaposed regionalisms with emerging regional powers (Flemes 2010, Lobell and Flemes 2014, Nel and Nolte 2010) whose regional ambitions are decreasingly constrained by any global hegemon(s). Do the five BRICS constitute more an alliance of emerging (regional) powers (Cooper 2016) than of emerging markets (EMs) (Cooper and Flemes 2013, Gray and Gills 2016, Murphy and Gray 2013)? Together they bring their heterogeneous regional networks/hubs and supply chains to bear, along with diasporas like those of China in Southeast Asia (Chu 2010) or India’s around the Indian Ocean rim? And their diasporas are increasingly present in the high-tech sector in North America centered on FAANG and in the North American real estate market, from Vancouver to Los Angeles, Toronto to New York City. Nowhere are such trends more apparent than in Africa, which finally has its own BRICS—RSA—to contrast with the four others in their own regions of the global South.

Towards a ‘New’ Africa: from Fragility to Renaissance?

Africa faced an unanticipated ‘second chance’ at the start of the second decade of the twenty-first century (www.mckinsey.com): how many ‘developmental’ (Kyung-Sup, Fine and Weiss 2012) versus ‘fragile’ states by 2020? The interrelated prospects for both BRICs—now BRICS with the inclusion of Africa’s South Africa—and the continent were transformed by the recent global financial crisis: as the South expanded and the North contracted, what of S-N, even E-S (Pieterse 2011), relations in future? The European Union of 27 now includes the PIIGS: a disincentive to African regions to sign let alone implement Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) unlike the Caribbean. And Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) may become increasingly ambivalent about South Africa (RSA) as a regional power (Nel and Nolte 2010) recognized by the original four emerging markets or emerging economies, not all of which are equally ‘emerging societies’ (Christensen and Xing 2016, Pieterse and Rehbein 2009). Interestingly, Goldman Sachs did not recognize RSA to be an emerging market as either a BRIC in 2003 or one of the Next-11 (N-11) in 2005 (www2.goldmansachs.com/ideas/global). And in the post-BRICS era, only China and India have featured in almost all acronyms which seek to highlight a handful of upwardly mobile EMs such as MIST/MINT and now TICK, with the large-scale corporate IT sector—BAT—being exclusively Chinese.
African political economies are now located in the second, third, and fourth worlds: will they identify with the G20 and/or the G192 (G193 with South Sudan ‘independent’ in mid-2011) and/or BRICS, now including RSA? Half of the dozen fastest growing countries identified in the Economist’s “World in 2011” were African (Economist 2010a): from Ghana to Liberia. The Center for Global Development (CGD) in Washington D. C. recently suggested that 17 African countries were ‘leading the way’ (Radelet 2010); McKinsey (2010) lauded the continent’s ‘lion kings’ (www.mckinsey.com); and the Boston Consulting Group (2010) identified forty African corporations as global ‘challengers’ (www.bcg.com).

In addition to dynamic and heterogeneous varieties of private/transnational governance (see below), ‘new regionalisms’ at several levels, whether more formal or informal (see below), serve as catalysts for the continent’s renaissance by advancing its capacity to transcend fragility (ACBF 2011). To maximize its development and security, Africa also needs to advance ‘network’ or ‘public’ rather than traditional ‘club’ diplomacy, involving civil society and private companies as well as states and intergovernmental agencies (Heine 2006). But climate change may yet emerge as the spoiler, hence the importance of the long-awaited agreement at the Conference of the Parties (COP) 21 in Paris before the end of 2015 where the BRICS’ related Brazil, South Africa and China (BASIC) group was very active and influential.

This comparative analysis—both N-S and S-E—has three interrelated parts which stake out paths to a brighter future for the global South especially the African continent centered on its regional innovations (Haar and Ernst 2016), including its myriad diasporas.

First, Africa has generated an innovative range of ‘new regionalisms’ involving non-state actors (Shaw, Grant, and Cornelissen 2012): from the Maputo Corridor and Kgalagadi trans-frontier peace-park to the Nile Basin Initiative/Dialogue; and from the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) to corporate supply chains. Alex Warleigh-Lack et al. (2011) have begun to recognize the relevance of such new regional relationships for comparative studies of the European Union especially as it confronts its own financial crisis around the euro.

Second are ‘new multilateralisms’ (Lesarge and van de Graaf 2016) or ‘transnational governance’ with African dimensions, such as the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), the Ottawa Process, Global Witness (GW) and Kimberley Process (KP), the Diamond Development Initiative (DDI), the
Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), the Forestry Certification Scheme (FCS), and Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) (Cadman 2011, Gale and Haward 2011), and on to the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT); yet coalitions over Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and children/women’s security have made minimal progress due to U. S. vetoes.

And third, what implications of this pair of novel directions and players for our analyses and policies, state and non-state: who are the ‘drivers’, innovators and animators? How to transform vulnerability into resilience? How to transit from dependency and neoliberalism towards a Beijing Consensus? In short, how to maximize regional cooperation and minimize regional conflict?

Reflective of the 2010 McKinsey report, the *Economist* (2011: 73) at the start of the new decade asserted:

Over the next five years…the average African economy will outpace its Asian counterpart . . . Africa’s economy will grow at an average annual rate of 7% over the next 20 years, slightly faster than China’s. . . . Africa’s changing fortunes have largely been driven by China’s surging demand . . . but other factors have also counted . . . Without reforms, Africa will not be able to sustain faster growth. But its lion economies are earning a place alongside Asia’s tigers. (*Economist* 2011: 73)

Informed by contemporary international relations (Bischoff, Aning and Acharya 2016, Cornelissen, Cheru and Shaw 2015, Dunn and Shaw 2013), and development studies perspectives in particular, this comparative analysis identifies emerging opportunities as well as challenges for Africa in the second decade of the twenty-first century. It especially focuses on whether the emergence of the BRICS/’second world’ (Khanna 2009) presents unanticipated possibilities or threats to a heterogeneous continent, one which includes burgeoning ‘developmental’ as well as ‘fragile’ or ‘failed’ states (ACBF 2011).

Now arguably qualifying for the adjective/accolade ‘miracle’ (Dorr, Lund and Roxborough 2010) from the start of its second half-centenary, can Africa grow through the current decade given its quite stellar performance in the first (McKinsey 2010, UNECA 2011)? The *Economist* (2011) asserts that the continent contained more than half the top ten economies from 2001 to 2010—Angola, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Chad, Mozambique and Rwanda—by contrast to the last two decades of the last century when only Uganda so ranked.
And now South Africa is one of the five BRICS, raising questions not only about whether they can become a bloc (Shaw 2010) but also whether the five are better cast as a coalition of emerging powers (Cooper 2016) rather than emerging economies or emerging markets? Certainly for Nel and Nolte (2010) South Africa is a regional power rather than an emerging economy let alone emerging society. But is its recognition and elevation in the BRICS with or without the support of its ‘region,’ whether more narrowly (Southern African Customs Union (SACU)/Southern African Development Community (SADC)) or broadly (SSA) defined? As Pieterse asks as he seeks to privilege his discipline through an emphasis on ‘emerging societies’ emerging powers, emerging markets, emerging economies, emerging companies and/or emerging societies, even emerging universities or think-tanks (Pieterse and Rehbin 2009 1-3)?

As one of the latest UNECA (2011: 2) reports indicates: ‘global developments have significant implications for African countries, though the direction and magnitude of impact naturally vary among countries. On the whole, African economies have recovered from the crisis better than expected.’ Such a welcome prospect poses challenges for public policy/diplomacy: can Africa bring its non-state—civil society and private sector—as well as state resources to bear in focused and sustained/cumulative inclusive ‘new’ ‘network’ rather than traditional exclusive ‘club’ diplomacy (Heine 2006)? As suggested in the final section below, this is the welcome challenge or opportunity facing the continent at the start of its second fifty year period. What has it learned and can it adapt after its first half century given the significantly transformed global context at the turn of the decade: divergent regional incidences of and responses to the ‘global’ financial crisis with the global South being much less negatively impacted than the established trans-Atlantic core in both ‘old’ and ‘new’ worlds (Pieterse 2011)?

Reflective of its more than fifty states, Africa has been the leading region in the South to advance regional innovations and institutions as reflected in the two indexes—the second on authors—to Shaw, Grant and Cornelissen (2012). As Bischoff, Aning and Acharya (2016: 2) assert, ‘global IR’ recognizes ‘the importance of regions, regionalisms and regional orders in theorizing IR.’ In the initial, one-party nationalist period, reflective of jealousy surrounding newly realized independence, these were typically ‘old’ inter-governmental arrangements. But in the post-bipolar era, such regionalisms became less exclusively state and economic and more inclusive around emerging issues like ecology, energy, security, water, etc. (Shaw, Grant and Cornelissen 2012). However, because of overlapping memberships and mandates and insufficient
resources, macro- to micro-regionalisms have insufficient capacity particularly in terms of information and communications technology (ICT) (ACBF 2008).

Nevertheless, first, the revived, redefined East African Community (EAC) of over 160 million people is emblematic: six rather than the initial trio of members (now a half-dozen with South Sudan being admitted in March 2016) (www.eac.int), with innovative civil society, parliamentary and security dimensions, qualifying as an instance of ‘new regionalisms’ (Shaw, Grant and Cornelissen 2012). Given the scale and resilience of regional conflict on the continent, several attempts have been made at regional peace-building by Regional Economic Communities (RECs), from Darfur to Cote d’Ivoire, especially around (ECOWAS), Great Lakes Region (GLR), Horn, etc., such as the ongoing process around the ICGLR (www.grandlacs.net). These increasingly involve a range of actors in a heterogeneous coalition, from International NGOs (INGOs) to multinational corporations (MNCs), as such conflicts are always about ‘greed’ as well as ‘grief;’ so resource extraction and accumulation proceeding in tandem with violence, all too often targeting women and children as successive UN reports on the Congo have revealed. And as security is increasingly privatized, such coalitions become ever more problematic. This is particularly so around energy and mineral extraction and supply chains as their products attract the attention of transnational as well as local criminal networks. Shorter-term peace-making is typically tied to longer-term norm-creation to advance sustainable development by regulating the flow of conflict minerals like coltan, diamonds (www.ddiglobal.org), and gold as indicated in the next section (e.g., Canadian-based but Afro-centric Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development (IGFMMMSD) (www.globaldialogue.info)).

Second, in the new century, regionalisms on the continent have come to cover the spectrum of levels—macro/meso/micro (Soderbaum and Taylor 2008)—and sectors—civil society, corporate networks, ecology, energy, security, etc. While Export-Processing Zones (EPZs) are associated with Asia and gas pipelines with Central Europe, development corridors and peace-parks are largely a function of Southern Africa’s distinctive political economy/ecology. Similarly, Africa has its share of river valley organizations and other cross-border more-or-less formal micro-regions. The Maputo Corridor has advanced growth in southern Mozambique as well as the eastern Witwatersrand, reinforcing the cross-border dimensions of the Lesotho highlands water project for electricity and water (www.lhwp.org.ls); the latter was informed by the only global commission to be based outside the North—in Cape Town—which also included MNCs as well as
INGOs and states in its membership (Dingwerth 2008, Khagram 2004): the World Commission on Dams (www.dams.org). Reflective of growing concern for the environment, Southern Africa is the center of the trans-frontier peace-parks movement which has led to the recognition of several such cross-border parks in the region (www.peaceparks.org).

Third, encouraged by growing recognition of climate change—for instance, the development of India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) into BASIC around COP15 in Copenhagen at the end of 2009 and subsequent annual gatherings until COP21 in Paris at the end of 2015—the continent’s river basins are beginning to receive exponential attention as centers of biodiversity, energy, food, and water, as well as conflict: Congo (www.fauna-flora.org), Zambezi, etc.; the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) (www.nilebasin.org) and Dialogue are arguably the most advanced to date. Symptomatic of emerging tensions is the discovery of oil around the rift valley lakes in northwest Uganda along the border with Congo as well as northern Kenya; such oil production may propel Uganda into the ranks of the developmental states but it may also endanger some of its environment and wildlife, let alone local communities, as well as exacerbate regime corruption.

Fourth, the continent’s pattern of inter-regional relationships (Fawn 2009) is in flux, from classic, inherited North-South dependencies towards a novel South-East axis around China and India but also Japan and Korea. Symbolically, Africa’s regions’ reluctance to sign EPAs with the European Union at the turn of the decade, despite a mix of pressures and incentives, may mark a turning point as global rebalancing continues: together, Europe of the Eurozone crisis around the PIIGS and Asia of the BRICS transform policy options and calculations for the continent as suggested in Cheru and Obi (2010). The tone of annual African-China FOCAC palavers, most recently in December 2015 in Johannesburg (www.focac.org), can be contrasted to that at the fourth EU-Africa summit in Brussels in 2014; and, for the first time, TICAD was in Africa not Japan: in Nairobi in April 2016.

Fifth, given its numerous land-locked states, Africa has always experienced informal cross-border migration and trade, some now in illegal goods like drugs and small arms. And as MNCs, now from China and India as well as South Africa (hence the transition from IBSA to BRICS), have increased their investments in energy and minerals, franchises and shopping malls, so their logistics and supply chains have come to define their own regional networks. Exponential infrastructural development will further new regionalisms on the continent in the second decade of the twenty-first century, symbolized by the mobile-phone
revolution and the roles of MTN and Bharti Airtel, including the Mo Ibrahim Foundation (www.moibrahimfoundation.org).

Finally, Nollywood has begun to redefine the continent as its overwhelming production of DVDs reaches remote villages and myriad diasporas, just as soccer’s African Cup now plays on mainstream TV in the global North. As the Economist indicated at the end of 2010: “Film is now Africa’s dominant medium, replacing music and dance. It links distant societies, fosters the exchange of ideas and drives fashion trends . . . Film also profoundly shapes how Africans see their own continent” (2010b: 88).

Varieties of ‘Transnational’ Governance

In a post-bipolar era, the mix of fragile/failed states (ACBF 2011), proliferating ‘global’ issues, and pressures for democratization has generated some innovative forms of ‘transnational’ (Brown 2012) or ‘private’ (Dingwerth 2008) governance around the continent, symbolized by the early Ottawa and Kimberley Processes, now augmented by the Forestry and Marine Certification Schemes (FCS/MCS) (Cadman 2011, Gale and Haward 2011), UN Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD), and EITI, and by sectoral case studies like cotton (Sneyd 2010) and sugar (Richardson 2009). These may not yet be authoritative and their scope still fails to reach continuing scourges like SALW but they are changing the governance landscape (Bevir 2011, Hale and Held 2011, Levi-Faur 2012). When combined with innovative sources of finance, they begin to transform the regional policy terrain. They have served to encourage inter-state international law towards the recognition of varieties of global governance, which may reflect varieties of sources of pressures.

Part of the unwelcome legacy of the Cold War was fields of landmines. The comprehensive, heterogeneous International Campaign to Ban Landmines (www.icbl.org) led to the Ottawa Process (OP), advanced by the ‘celebrity diplomacy’ of Princess Diana. By contrast, the subsequent Kimberley Process (KP) on conflict diamonds (www.kimberleyprocess.com) resulted from animation by a major and minor NGO: Global Witness (London) and Partnership Africa Canada, now INTERACT (Ottawa), respectively. It has since spawned the Diamond Development Initiative to improve artisanal working conditions in the mines through incremental formalization of labor (www.ddiglobal.org), a process which the World Bank has also encouraged through its network for Communities, Artisanal and Small-scale Mining Initiative (CASM) (www.artisanalmining.org).
And the ICGLR animated by Partnership Africa-Canada (PAC) plus the 2010 US Dodd-Frank banking act against conflict minerals along with its EU counterpart, encouraged by the Enough Project and its support from celebrity diplomacy, have begun to transform the global market for artisanal mining in eastern Congo, especially coltan.

Finally, the continent might follow Central America in advancing beyond not only national security but also human security, towards ‘citizen security.’ This contemporary notion seeks to combine freedom from needs/want with issues around SALW: how to keep citizens both alive and developing in sustainable ways? UNDP (2012) in the Caribbean and Central America at the turn of the decade began to explore such prospects in its regional human development research and reporting.

Onto Varieties of Innovative Analyses/Policies?

Burgeoning varieties of finance, governance and regionalisms pose challenges to public policy in and around the continent (Hanson, Kararach and Shaw 2012) and the global South; they also present challenges to African and related analyses (Cornelissen, Cheru and Shaw 2015) as they demand ‘innovative’ perspectives and policies, both state and non-state; i.e., civil societies, private companies, consultants, media, think-tanks, etc. Hence the differences among ‘emerging’ economies/donors/societies/powers/companies/etc. (Christensen and Xing 2016, Pieterse and Rehbein 2009, especially 1-3): more/less business, economics, political science, sociology, etc.; and also more/less orthodoxy, radicalism, realism, revisionism, etc.? Similarly, as recognized, however reluctantly, by the Economist, varieties of capitalisms, etc., already alluded to, do challenge orthodox political economy:

the new state capitalism of the emerging world . . . rather than the old state capitalism in Europe . . . reflects the future rather than the past . . . state capitalism is the most formidable foe that liberal capitalism has faced so far. (2012: 2)

It thus concurs with Pieterse, albeit from different perspectives:

In treating capitalism in the singular, unilinear theories of capitalism, from Marx to world-system theory, view variation mainly as variation over time
... Capitalism survives thanks to the diversity of capitalisms: ‘the flexibility of capitalism derives from capitalisms and regional variation.’ (2011: 43)

Conclusion

Like much of the global South at the turn of the second decade of the twenty-first century, Africa is at a crossroads in terms of growth, development, governance, regionalisms, sustainability, etc.: can it seize its second chance and transcend its somewhat lackluster first half-century? In turn, can African regions advance inclusive public or network diplomacy of non-state as well as state actors for the most marginalized continent in the global South? Africa’s place at the center of innovative sources of finance and styles of governance leads to optimism while the number of conflicts and fragile/failed states leads to skepticism, even pessimism: what will the balance be by 2020, 2025, or 2030 (Cheru and Obi 2010, Modi 2011)?

New regionalisms and other innovative forms of governance out of Africa and the rest of the global South inform not only academic and policy debates on regional development (Shaw, Grant and Cornelissen 2011), they also contribute to the redefinition of established disciplines or genres (Bergamaschi, Moore and Tickner 2016, Phillips and Weaver 2010, Tickner and Waever 2009). In particular, they necessitate the rethinking of state-civil and society-private sector relations at all levels in part because these are increasingly impacted by the exponential spread of transnational ‘global’ governance (Bevir 2011, Brown 2012, Held and Hale 2011) and in part because state capitalism of SOEs is becoming so ubiquitous (Economist 2012, Xu 2012):

State capitalism can also claim some of the world’s most powerful companies. The 13 biggest oil firms, which between them have a grip on more than three-quarters of the world’s oil reserves, are all state-backed. So is the world’s biggest natural gas company, Russia’s Gazprom . . .

State capitalism is on the march, overflowing with cash and emboldened by the crisis in the West. State companies make up 80% of the stock market in China, 62% in Russia and 38% in Brazil. (Economist 2012: 2)

Just as international law/organization have been superseded by global governance, so international relations, even development studies, is being
challenged by the timely, promising articulation of ‘global studies’ if no longer the somewhat dated or tarnished ‘globalization studies’: *ex Africa aliquid novi* indeed.

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