

## Editor's Note

With the publication of this issue we are concluding volume 4 of *Modern Africa: Politics, History and Society*. Not a reason for celebrating abundantly but we are slowly coming of age. The Scopus recognition is not yet in, apparently because the journal is not well-known enough and our articles are cited less than they would deserve. But let us express the firm belief that we will sooner or later successfully enter the family of recognised journals dealing with Africa.

The issue is dedicated to the memory of Patrick Harries, an eminent South African historian who educated a large cohort of specialists on Africa while teaching in Cape Town and Basel, Switzerland. I would like to thank Nigel Penn for his detailed and humane obituary of Patrick whose premature passing away last June has shocked so many.

We continue to introduce authors who come from less advantaged parts of the world. As before, this never goes at the cost of quality and double blind reviewing is adhered to scrupulously. One of our tasks is to encourage knowledge production about Africa from a Central European perspective. We believe this is a legitimate endeavour, especially when steering free from the post-colonial ballast sometimes displayed by metropolitan scholarship. Thus, we publish the best from Africanist research coming from the post-communist countries of Europe.

Another task of *Modern Africa* is to encourage research about Africa from an African perspective. We select from submissions by African authors those that address unusual and pertinent topics concerning recent and present-day Africa. Thus, we are happy to publish the best studies from Africanist research in both the post-communist countries of Europe and of Africa. Of course, other European and non-European studies on present-day Africa are also welcome in our journal.

Meanwhile, both the Executive Editor Iveta Ptáčnicková and Assistant Executive Editor Aneta Kříčková are moving to other pastures and I take great pleasure in thanking them for the responsible way in which they fulfilled their functions with devotion and a sense of duty during the past four years. Let us wish Iveta and Aneta lots of happiness and

success in their future careers. Martin Schmiedl has kindly agreed to step into their roles, at least temporarily, and he will also continue to ensure that our website is up to date.

This issue carries another two revised papers presented during a special panel convened by the present editor at the 6th European Conference on African Studies (ECAS) held at Paris in 2015. They discuss the comparison of the political culture in post-colonial Africa with that in post-communist Europe. Pekka Virtanen skilfully deconstructs Mozambique's problematic transition to democracy while referring to a sample of data from European post-communist countries. Diána Szántó concentrates on a comparison of political culture in Sierra Leone, where she carried out a long-term fieldwork, and her native Hungary. She discusses the rise of "illiberal democracy" regimes in both countries and worldwide and warns against the spread of such regimes. Both conclude that the comparison is meaningful and leads to striking parallels.

Vilém Řehák presents crucial findings reached while working on his PhD thesis. Basing himself on Kenyan media he evaluates the relations between China and Kenya, concluding that readers and commentators are more sensitive to Chinese engagement in Kenya than Kenyan leadership. The Cameroonian authors Walter Gam Nkwi, Henry Kam Kah, Martin Sango Ndeh analyse historical records about the brutal activities of the Gendarmerie in the western part of the Federal Republic of Cameroon during the first years of independence. West Cameroon had formerly been part of the British Empire and the population felt terrorised and exploited by the Gendarmes from the former French Cameroun after reunification. Solomon Tai Okajare brings in the sensitive issue of technology and knowledge expansion in today's Africa. He reveals far-reaching negative implications for the socialisation, psychological satisfaction and potential of African youths to effectively contribute to nation building.

The issue also prints three reports on recent Africanist conferences, including the ECAS in Paris, and seven reviews of new books.

On behalf of the editorial board let me express the hope that the fifth volume will bring further evidence that by publishing *Modern Africa* we succeed in combining the quest for quality with a search for

new talents in African studies. We are confident about the growing authority of African scholarly output and are proud to publish the best coming out of Africa.

18 November 2016

Petr Skalník