This volume is a masterful contribution to the study of Nigerian foreign policy. It is dedicated to two distinguished Nigeria specialists, Anthony Kirk-Greene and Gavin Williams, and comprises seventeen chapters structured into five thematic parts. Eight of the contributors were former students of the dedicatees. As Adebayo Adedeji (the former executive secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa) accurately puts it in his foreword, this volume is a significant contribution to the development of a long overdue ‘foreign policy architecture capable of meeting the challenges posed by contemporary international realities’.

In Part One, Adekeye Adebajo sets out the ambitions and central argument of the book in a stimulating discussion that also explains the reference to Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726) in the title. In Swift’s tale, Gulliver encounters a community of tiny and treacherous Lilliputians who Humiliate and incapacitate him by staking him out with ropes as he lies spreadeagled and exhausted on the beach where he has been shipwrecked. Adebajo argues that ‘Nigeria, the most populous and one of the most powerful states in Africa is a Gulliver; and the Lilliputians have been Nigeria’s leaders whose petty ambitions and often inhumane greed – like the creatures in Swift’s tale – have prevented a country of enormous potential from fulfilling its leadership aspiration and development potential’ (p. 2). The ‘big men’ of post-colonial Nigerian politics come out of this account looking pretty small.

The entire book critically explores the concept of a *pax-Nigeriana* – a regional hegemonic ideology based on a combination of hard and soft power akin to the *pax-Americana* and *pax-Britannica*. This is intended to epitomize Nigeria’s self-declared international leadership ambitions in Africa since independence. It further employs the concept of ‘concentric circles of national interests’ to assess the different influences (domestic, regional, external) that have shaped Nigeria’s foreign policy. As the study demonstrates, the establishment of a *pax-Nigeriana* has been frustrated, largely by the effects of Lilliputian domestic politics. The litany of contradictions on the domestic front (prebendal corruption, impoverishment of the masses, tyranny, crumbling infrastructures, highly politicized communal/resource conflicts, economic regression, disorder, and a culture of impunity) has undermined the plausibility and reputation of Nigeria’s claim to be a regional policeman. Several chapters in the second section (by Raufu Mustapha, Ibrahim Gambari, Oladapo Fafowora, Alade Fawole, and Ike Okonta) illustrate the crippling setback inflicted on an emerging *pax-Nigeriana* by such Lilliputian domestic politics.

According to these authors Nigeria’s ambition to lead the African continent has had mixed results. On the one hand there are some impressive achievements, such as contributing to the liberation and anti-apartheid struggles in Southern Africa in the 1970s and 1980s; offering leadership to promote regional cooperation, peacekeeping, and democratic governance, especially in the West African sub-region; and exerting leadership at the UN and other inter-governmental bodies on issues that concern Africa. On the other hand, Lilliputian misgovernance has so dramatically damaged the country’s external image that it lacks the moral authority needed to lead the rest of Africa in foreign affairs. The situation is compounded by the frequent suspicion of domination and sub-imperialism that Nigeria’s leadership ambitions stir in Francophone West Africa. France makes no pretence about its disenchantment with what it perceives as Nigeria’s encroachment on its traditional...
sphere of influence. The various contributions in Parts Three and Four on the regional and external contexts amply analyse the ramifications of Nigeria’s foreign policy towards Africa and beyond, including relations with La Francophonie, and the damage caused by Lilliputianism.

The volume is concluded in Part Five where Raufu Mustapha argues that, weakened by the absence of domestic cohesion and a lack of professionalism in the foreign service, ‘Nigeria’s diplomacy is punching below its rightful weight’ (p. 369). A number of recommendations are made to address the key challenges of Nigeria’s foreign policy at various levels of the concentric circles. Prominent among the recommendations are the need for a legitimate constitutional settlement of the triggers of domestic instability; strategies to accelerate and expand regional integration and democratization in West Africa; plans to reduce over-reliance on Nigeria’s military capability as the chief regional peacekeeper; and the construction of a continent-wide multilateralism in which Nigeria and South Africa would play important but not domineering roles.

One important issue that is not sufficiently explored in the book is the question of Nigerian national interest. To what extent should Nigeria’s foreign policy be predicated on the country’s strategic interests? Several contributors asserted that Nigeria’s foreign policies are determined by its national interests, but in whose interests are the presumed national interests? How many Nigerian foreign policy initiatives during and after the Cold War really pass the strategic interest test? Do they not more often reflect the interest of the governing elites alone? Confusingly, a few contributors in the volume use the metaphor of Lilliput to describe the attitude of Nigeria’s smaller neighbours to their ‘big brother’ (for example on p. 142) – a move that Adekeye Adebajo specifically avoided in his well-crafted introduction. Not only is this use of the metaphor inconsistent within the argument of the book as a whole, but it justifies the accusations of arrogance, which are often applied to Nigeria’s self-appointed foreign policy role by other African states.

Notwithstanding these limitations, there is no doubt that Gulliver’s Troubles is the best-researched and most comprehensive work ever published on Nigeria’s foreign policy. The book is an invaluable read for all students and practitioners of foreign policy, regional institutions, security, conflict resolution, and peace-building in Africa.

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doi: 10.1093/afraf/adq013
Advance Access Publication 25 February 2010


Tabitha Kanogo’s book demonstrates the centrality of debates over African womanhood for understanding the colonial period in Kenya during the first half of the twentieth century. Focusing on key socio-cultural institutions and practices around which women’s lives were organized, Kanogo explores the interactions of indigenous, mission, and colonial authorities as they sought to control and define Kenyan womanhood through legal and cultural practices, particularly regarding control over sexuality, reproduction, and access to formal education. The study investigates the diverse ways in which a woman’s personhood was enhanced, diminished, or placed in