



Africa: The Politics of Suffering and Smiling (World Political Theories)

Patrick Chabal

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The question usually asked about Africa is: 'why is it going wrong?' Is the continent still suffering from the ravages of colonialism? Or is it the victim of postcolonial economic exploitation, poor governance and lack of aid? Whatever the answer, increasingly the result is poverty and violence.

In *Africa: the Politics of Suffering and Smiling* Patrick Chabal approaches this question differently by reconsidering the role of theory in African politics. Chabal discusses the limitations of existing political theories of Africa and proposes a different starting point; arguing that political thinking ought to be driven by the need to address the immediacy of everyday life and death. How do people define who they are? Where do they belong? What do they believe? How do they struggle to survive and improve their lives? What is the impact of illness and poverty? In doing so, Chabal proposes a radically different way of looking at politics in Africa and illuminates the ways ordinary people 'suffer and smile'.

This is a highly original addition to Zed's groundbreaking World Political Theories series.

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