

# EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to introduce Volume 58, Number 2, of the *African Studies Review* of 2015. This issue features the 2014 *African Studies Review* Distinguished Lecture delivered by Léonce Ndikumana at last year's Annual Meetings of the African Studies Association, as well as an "ASR Focus on Volunteer Labor in East Africa" consisting of four articles plus an introductory essay. Rounding out the issue, several articles engage with diverse topics ranging from authoritarian regimes to intimate relationships and investigating the impact of global economics, development policies, and culture on state policies and individual choices.

The issue begins with Léonce Ndikumana's, "Integrated Yet Marginalized: Implications of Globalization for African Development." This lecture stimulated some heated discussion at the meetings of the ASA, and we hope that readers will find the article equally provocative. Drawing on his experiences as a professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst as well as the former Director of Research and Operational Policy at the African Development Bank, Ndikumana explores the causes of many of the economic challenges that African countries face, while also exploding some of the myths. Some of the challenges have emerged from the history of Africa's incorporation into the global economy in the context of coercive and exploitative colonial relationships, and Ndikumana sees the persistence of these problems as a function of ongoing political marginalization, growing international income inequality, and the increasing environmental problems faced by many African countries. He notes that a number of policy changes may be required at the international level to alter existing patterns of globalization that have entrenched the relative powerlessness of most African countries.

The next five articles compose the special "ASR Focus on Volunteer Labor in East Africa." The articles look primarily at Kenya and Tanzania, and mostly at the Africans who provide voluntary labor either as part of a larger social commitment or (as in the global North) as a way to gain entry to career opportunities. The burgeoning popularity of volunteerism in the global North tends to obscure the long history of volunteering in Africa as

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a means of achieving various political and social goals. The introductory article for this section, written by the guest editors Hannah Brown and Ruth Prince, charts the recent literature on volunteerism and notes that the distinction between paid labor and volunteering is historically and socially contingent, particularly in the current era when highly educated volunteers often provide professional-level labor and services for no pay. The introduction then discusses the multiple meanings and inherent tensions in the humanitarian economies driven by volunteer labor in Africa, and highlights a number of the insights provided by the subsequent Focus articles.

The next article within the Focus section is Emma Hunter's "Voluntarism, Virtuous Citizenship, and Nation-Building in Late Colonial and Early Postcolonial Tanzania." Hunter traces the use of Africans as volunteer laborers during the colonial period to the modification of certain types of precolonial labor by a colonial administration that wanted to promote particular forms of labor as altruistic community service but that also did not want to pay for that labor. She notes the complex legacy that colonial volunteerism left for the postcolonial state: the twinned aspects of service and parsimony that informed many of the self-help policies initiated by Nyerere's administration. Many scholars have seen the government's adoption of these policies as essentially a way for the state to extend its power over the population, but Hunter goes beyond that analysis by scrutinizing the extensive debates among Tanzanians in the early 1960s about *kazi ya kujitolea*, or "voluntary work in nation building," as represented in the local press. Letters from readers published in the press, as Hunter discovered, "bring to light divisions in society that many would have preferred to keep hidden" (43).

The second Focus article, "At the Service of Community Development: The Professionalization of Volunteer Work in Kenya and Tanzania," by Hannah Brown and Maia Green, explores some of the contemporary tensions inherent in volunteer work in Tanzania and Kenya, particularly in civil society organizations and health care. In the context of high unemployment and underemployment, volunteers are frequently professionals who perform valuable, if unpaid, services both to their communities and to the larger organizations for which they work. Beyond the importance of volunteers to the economic and social infrastructure, however, Brown and Green find that volunteering has become a form of "'work' on the self. Professionalized volunteering becomes a means through which educated East African youth and members of the rural professional middle classes fashion themselves as good citizens and as self-directed agents of community transformation" (65–66). Volunteering has thus become a marker of elite social status.

Ruth Prince's article, "Seeking Incorporation? Voluntary Labor and the Ambiguities of Work, Identity, and Social Value in Contemporary Kenya," looks at the role of volunteerism in a country with an official unemployment rate of nearly 40 percent. Commenting on the bleak financial prospects of much of the population, Prince makes the thought-provoking

statement that “volunteering as it takes shape in contemporary Kenya can be similarly understood as a ‘declaration of dependence’” (87). Prince’s findings are consonant with those of Brown and Green: Many Kenyans, earning a living in the informal sector and faced with persistent economic insecurity, find that volunteering provides them with a defined social identity and status, as well as a link to the otherwise inaccessible government, to NGOs, and to the broader communities that they create. Prince’s analysis is also sensitive to some of the issues raised by Ndikumana in his article, particularly the problem of African development priorities being set largely by international organizations. Drawing on extensive interviews and observations of volunteers in various NGOs, she investigates the aspirations and frustrations they face as they try to devise a professional future for themselves in a globally marginalized Kenya.

The final article in this Focus section is Felicitas Becker’s “Obscuring and Revealing: Muslim Engagement with Volunteering and the Aid Sector in Tanzania.” Becker returns to the idea of work, wage employment, and volunteering as they exist on a spectrum of culturally specific notions about labor. In Tanzania, as Becker discovered, externally based NGOs that employ volunteers often determine which projects receive funding and broader recognition, while local organizations, particularly Muslim ones, that perform similar types of community-based work rarely become as socially and politically visible. Becker sees a significant break with the past in the framing of the category of volunteer work. In the early independence period, voluntary work was directed by and aligned with state projects—a way of building infrastructure while also building nationalist feeling. But she notes that now the NGOs that employ volunteers are typically seen as civil society counterweights to the state. In this context Christian churches and aid organizations tend to be more strongly connected to external donors, and their work tends to fit more easily into Western notions of “volunteer programs”; Muslim organizations, however, tend to be more locally based and therefore less visible either to the Tanzanian state or to external funders. Becker goes on to discuss the ways in which the various levels of visibility of these organizations have been problematic in the creation and development of programs to cope with HIV-AIDS, particularly with the massive amounts of aid money that entered the country via the PEPFAR program. She concludes that “the ‘working misunderstandings’ surrounding volunteering [in Tanzania] form part of a long tradition of Africans’ adopting particular public personas so as to link up to foreigners with resources and power. They establish a faint yet suggestive resemblance between today’s aid officials and colonial administrators of yore, ever seeking to identify legitimate leaders (then, of ‘tribes,’ as now of ‘civil society’)” (130).

The next article in the issue, Harrison Esam Awuh’s “Adaptive Livelihood Strategies in Conservation-Induced Displacement: The Case of the Baka of East Cameroon,” looks at another topic that often draws the attention of international actors: conservation. The article focuses on theories about the impact of displacement and the loss of land and livelihood

on the culture and autonomy of a hunting and gathering community. The idea that conservation efforts have typically had the greatest negative impacts on hunter-gatherer populations who are politically marginal is one that has been discussed broadly in the literature on conservation in Africa in both the colonial and postcolonial periods. What much of that literature has shown is that when states set out to create parks or conservation areas, one of the first things they do is remove the local populations. States have justified this practice by suggesting either that local populations living as hunter-gatherers or nomadic livestock herders are “uncivilized” and therefore of no account (a justification that was more common in the colonial period but not unheard of in the postcolonial period), or that moving them would make it easier to provide them with various kinds of social services (although often those services never materialized once the populations were moved). The broader literature also discusses the various social and cultural losses that accrue to these moved populations: they have to give up the hunter-gatherer lifestyle; their culture is no longer connected to the way in which they live; and old social networks are typically destroyed. Awuh’s work intervenes in this discussion and concludes by calling for a deeper investigation of the long-term consequences of displacement and conservation for hunter-gatherers.

Turning to a more troubled region, the next article, “From Autochthony to Violence? Discursive and Coercive Social Practices of the Mai-Mai in Fizi, Eastern DR Congo,” by Judith Verweijen, explores how autochthony discourses have become bound up with civil war in the eastern DR Congo. Verweijen takes as her case study the Mai-Mai insurgency and notes that the inherent ambiguity of the idea of autochthony has made it a versatile tool for waging war against the perceived “other” in the region: the Banyamulenge. In the post-2002 period Mai-Mai insurgents have mobilized feelings of resentment and victimization to frame continued aggression against the Banyamulenge as a war of self-protection, and this framing allows the militia group to collect revenue from the civilian population and expand its area of control. But, as Verweijen notes, members of the militia also use a good deal of coercion against the civilian population and are often described as bandits by civilians, suggesting that the rhetoric of autochthony does not inspire automatic allegiance. Verweijen finds that “claims about the relations between the autochthony discourse and violence must be analyzed carefully, lest they obscure either the wider political-economic processes or the narrower particularistic projects that inform violence” (177).

The next article in this issue looks at two countries that have emerged from relatively recent civil conflicts to become new regional powers. Hilary Matfess, in “Rwanda and Ethiopia: Developmental Authoritarianism and the New Politics of African Strong Men,” analyzes the seemingly paradoxical rise of states that claim to have developmental and democratic agendas while embracing authoritarian methods. Matfess traces the similarities between the two regimes, and notes their attractiveness to international

donors, particularly the U.S. government: Rwanda and Ethiopia “have leveraged their geopolitical importance as stable nations geographically close to failed states into friendly relations with Western governments, though regionally they are frequently viewed with suspicion. Though diplomats and NGOs have expressed reservations about the tactics of the governments, both Rwanda and Ethiopia receive significant amounts of development aid from the United States” (187). These regimes have stifled criticism and dissent, internal and external, and labeled such criticisms as neocolonial rhetoric, thus mobilizing nationalist discourses to consolidate their control while continuing to gain access to foreign aid and development assistance. Matfess proposes a new analytic category of “developmental authoritarianism” to describe the policies of the two regimes. She suggests that this new type of authoritarianism will prove more durable than earlier authoritarian regimes because of the developmental component that encourages buy-in by international donors.

The final article in this issue is by Dinah Hannaford and Ellen E. Foley: “Negotiating Love and Marriage in Contemporary Senegal: A Good Man Is Hard to Find.” Drawing on ethnographic research among women living in Dakar, Hannaford and Foley explore the changes in ideas about marriage and sexual relationships that have resulted from global influences and economic insecurity. They find that many women no longer see marriage primarily as a source of love and companionship or even as a form of incorporation into broader family networks; instead they tend to opt for strategic marriages and nonmarital sexual exchanges that provide some immediate financial security. These women often lament the ways in which their relationships do not conform to older social norms, but feel that these novel sexual relationships offer some of the few alternatives open to them to achieve a stable source of income. Hannaford and Foley suggest that this emerging pattern of relationships initiated for short-term economic security “may reflect a particular moment in advanced neoliberal capitalism in which economic dimensions of relationships surpass the desire for love and intimacy” (222).

The issue concludes with a number of book and film reviews to keep ASA members up-to-date on the latest publications and cinema offerings. We hope you enjoy reading these as much as we did.

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