

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to present Volume 59, Number 3, of the *African Studies Review*. This issue provides a collection of reflections on the life and works of Joel Barkan, the political scientist whose scholarship strongly influenced an entire generation of work on East African politics. Also featured is a Commentary on the refugee crisis in the Horn of Africa, and a stimulating scholarly conversation on the film *Timbuktu* in the Film Review section. But we start the issue with four individual articles that broaden the disciplinary and topical scope of this issue.

The issue begins with “Understanding Social Resistance to the Ebola Response in the Forest Region of Guinea: An Anthropological Perspective,” by James Fairhead (7–31). Fairhead investigates why initiatives to combat Ebola often encountered violent resistance in Guinea, one of the countries hardest hit by the Ebola outbreak in 2014–15. Resistance among the Kissi people in the Forest Region ranged from one village cutting off all roads and bridges that linked the village to the outside world, to youths attacking an Ebola Treatment Centre erected by Médecins sans Frontières. Local people who complied with health workers’ initiatives and NGOs often faced violence as well. Fairhead’s work moves the analysis of this violence beyond the two dominant explanations: one that emphasizes cultural rejection of practices surrounding humanitarian interventions, and the other that emphasizes the history of structural violence in the region that has rendered local people wary of such intervention. Instead, Fairhead shows how the Kissi had historically developed a number of coping techniques to accommodate the presence and actions of outsiders, thus allowing outsiders to work in the region while the Kissi maintained some cultural distance and secrecy. But the Ebola outbreak was a crisis not only because of the effects of the disease itself, but also because the interventions of the Ebola Treatment Centres and of NGO personnel breached these carefully constructed accommodations.

David Pier’s “Dance, Discipline, and the Liberal Self at a Ugandan Catholic Boarding School” (33–59) traces the cultural impact of the modern dance program at the elite Namasagali boarding school in Uganda

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during the 1980s. Modern dance was part of the white headmaster's project of "modernizing" and "liberalizing" the cultural forms taught to African students. But paradoxically, it was also part of the headmaster's project of supervising and disciplining African students. Pier shows that the teaching of modern dance in this context was rife with contradictions and complexities, with a white headmaster critiquing the paternalism of the old colonial order and of African traditions while seemingly untroubled by the paternalism implied by his own determination of the modernist futures of his African students. Despite these contradictions, however, Pier suggests that students who attended the boarding school have proved a dynamic force in Ugandan society, even though former students have mixed feelings about their experiences at the school. More broadly, the article illustrates the tensions between liberal discourses of modernism and modernization, particularly in the cultural realm, and the postcolonial project of establishing African cultural forms that are limited neither by African traditions nor by Eurocentric assumptions.

Leila Demarest investigates the causes of recent political protests in Senegal in her article, "Staging a 'Revolution': The 2011–2012 Electoral Protests in Senegal" (61–82). Demarest's research and analysis go beyond the idea of seemingly spontaneous popular rejection of the electoral outcome, and instead plumb the significance of organizations and social movements in the staging of protests. She thereby reveals the nuts-and-bolts logistical realities of shaping, promoting, and energizing widespread, high-stakes protests. Her account focuses less on the grievances that led to the protests and more on the ways in which protesting organizations mobilized their resources. The nature of the mobilization, however, has meant that in the aftermath of the protests' success in preventing President Wade from enjoying another term, they have fallen short of the political "revolution" that they seemed to promise.

Broadening the discussion of political protest in Africa, Moisés Arce and Rebecca Miller look at the relationship between political unrest and mineral resources in their article, "Mineral Wealth and Protest in Sub-Saharan Africa" (83–105). Arce and Miller draw on a dataset that includes information on protests in thirty-nine African countries between 1990 and 2006 to uncover patterns of political mobilization. Their analysis of the data challenges the rentier-state theory that the relative prosperity derived from the exploitation of mineral resources should generate political quiescence. Instead, they suggest that political protests are often stimulated by mineral exploitation, and that these protests usually fall into one of two categories: service-based protests that "seek a more equitable distribution of the revenues generated" from extraction (91) or rights-based protests that "seek to protect the water supply and lands from the perceived threats that are typically associated with mining" (99).

While remaining in the universe of politics, protests, and liberalization, the subsequent "ASR Forum: The Life and Work of Joel Barkan" presents several shorter articles by noted scholars influenced by Barkan's

scholarship and development work. It begins with David Throup's contribution, "Joel Barkan and Kenya" (115–27), a biographical piece that outlines Barkan's longstanding engagement with the history and politics of Kenya (and also Uganda and Tanzania). Throup shows how Barkan's work helped to create the field of the scholarly study of East African politics, both through his research and writing and through his institutional engagement in the U.S. to establish programs in African studies.

John Harbeson's "Putting the Third Wave into Practice: Democracy Promotion in Kenya" (129–37), looks at Barkan's work for USAID as a Regional Democracy and Governance Advisor based in Kenya in the early 1990s. In the immediate aftermath of the end of the Cold War, there were tremendous pressures—both internal and external—on African regimes to liberalize their political processes. Daniel arap Moi's regime in Kenya was a particular focus of this pressure. Barkan made, in Harbeson's estimation, critically important and enduring contributions to the establishment of Kenyan democracy in this moment by engaging with his vast network of Kenyan friends and colleagues to bring civil society into the political process.

The forum then moves to a piece by Nelson Kasfir: "Applying a Counterfactual: Would 1966 Ugandan University Students Be Surprised by Ugandan Governance Today?" (139–53). Kasfir takes as his starting point Barkan's 1966 survey of Ugandan University students regarding their political and social attitudes and then juxtaposes it with reports written by Barkan in 2004 and 2011 that detailed the patronage and corruption of the Museveni regime. Kasfir concludes that "a surprising number of basic features in current Ugandan governance would strike these [1966] students as entirely familiar" (149).

Karuti Kanyinga pushes beyond the particulars of Barkan's own work to discuss the reframing of Kenyan politics in recent years. "Devolution and the New Politics of Development in Kenya" (155–67) looks at the impact on Kenyan politics of the 2010 Constitution, which attempts to decentralize power and to foster the development local autonomy in governance. He suggests that these reforms have the potential to erode the old political patronage networks that have effectively dominated Kenyan politics since Jomo Kenyatta's time.

"Beyond the Liberal Democracy Paradigm: A Fresh Look at Power and Institutions" (169–80) is Goran Hyden's reflection on Barkan's career. Hyden notes that "Joel Barkan believed in liberal democracy, but he was also a realist who recognized that power is important and that institutions take time to develop" (170). Hyden then traces the development of liberal democratic institutions in a number of African states in the postcolonial, post-Cold War period, and concludes that there are two significant lessons that scholars should learn from a comparative politics analysis. One is that power matters—whether that power is located within governing structures or outside of them. The second is that imposing external ideas of "liberal" institutions on African realities tends to limit our understanding of the realities we may be trying to alter.

Nic Cheeseman highlights the significance of Joel Barkan's insights into some of the democratic characteristics of authoritarian African regimes in "Patrons, Parties, Political Linkage, and the Birth of Competitive-Authoritarianism in Africa" (181–200). In looking at Barkan's research, Cheeseman notes how much apparently democratic contestation occurred in authoritarian regimes, especially at the local and regional levels. This political competition within the party framework created links between the broader population and their government representatives that Barkan saw as a potential forerunner to the establishment of a more openly democratic, more-than-one-party system. Barkan's work thus took legislatures and political systems under the authoritarian regimes seriously, and understood the deep roots they often had in the broader population. This insight allowed him to have relatively optimistic expectations about the trajectory of African political systems, particularly in Kenya. Cheeseman writes that "it was precisely because he [Barkan] conceived of voters and legislators as rational actors whose decisions were shaped by political and incentive structures that he asked so many questions that remain at the heart of African studies, and stayed cautiously optimistic about the possibility for democratic changes throughout his life" (196).

The final contribution to this forum is by Robert Mattes and Shaheen Mozaffar, "Legislatures and Democratic Development in Africa" (201–15). Mattes and Mozaffar drill down into more recent data showing linkages between legislatures in several African countries and the populations they represent to demonstrate the continuing relevance of Barkan's work on the subject. Afrobarometer data allows them to conclude that there is a great deal of variation across African countries on the level of engagement of legislators with their constituents' problems, and on the expectations that constituents have of their legislators. Some of their data tend to confirm Barkan's hypothesis that African MPs, even in authoritarian systems, are responsive to constituents' needs because that is the most rational way to build the linkages that will insure their reelection. But Mattes and Mozaffar also find somewhat contradictory data that suggest that MPs sometimes misinterpret what their constituents say they want "as a demand for material goods and development and systematically underappreciate the public's demand for representation" (212).

Following the forum on Barkan's work is a stimulating Commentary by Dan Connell: "Refugees, Migrations, and Gated Nations: The Eritrean Experience" (217–25). Drawing on personal observations in Eritrea, Ethiopia, and many other African and European countries, Connell digs "deeper into who the refugees are, why they fled, how they got out and what they experienced on their journeys" (218). This is truly a timely commentary that offers our readers insights into an ongoing crisis of human rights and human tragedies.

This *ASR* issue ends with several stimulating book reviews and film reviews, two review essays, and an engaging "conversation" among film scholars (267–93) on the widely acclaimed movie *Timbuktu*.

We hope readers of the *African Studies Review* enjoy the variety of articles, commentaries, and reviews in this issue.

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