Dear colleagues and friends,

Let me begin by assuring you that, thanks to your support and the hard work of the officers, the state of our organization is strong. In 2015, the main focus of the steering committee has been our status as an APSA section. We have devoted considerable efforts to making sure that we maintain the 250 APCG-APSA members required in order to maintain our APSA affiliation. I would like to address my special thanks to our Treasurer, Adrienne LeBas, who has been the driving force behind the success we have achieved. I also express my gratitude to our former Vice-Chair Lauren MacLean and former Secretary Jennifer Brass for their contribution to this success as well as to Andrew Stinson who is a true and tireless APCG advocate inside APSA. However, we must remain vigilant until we find ways of settling this once and for all (see the letter from the Treasurer below).

The other major issue we dealt with successfully in 2015 is related to the annual conferences. We managed to secure several panels at APSA as well as our sponsored

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Symposium: Conflict and Political Violence: Emerging Voices from the 2015 APSA Africa Workshop

The 2015 American Political Science Association (APSA) Africa Workshop was hosted by United States International University-Africa (USIU-Africa) in Nairobi from July 20-31. Focused on “Conflict and Political Violence,” this was the first APSA Africa Workshop to draw heavily on literature from the sub-fields of both international relations and comparative politics. The selection of Kenya, which has experienced both internal and regional conflicts and has participated in various peacekeeping operations, provided a first-hand look at interconnections among actors and issues in conflict areas. The workshop was led by John F. Clark (Florida International University, USA), Pamela Mbabazi (Mbarara University of Science & Technology, Uganda), Kennedy Mkutu (USIU-Africa), and Beth Elise Whitaker (University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA). It brought together 26 participants from 12 countries.

The aims of the workshop were to deepen participants’ knowledge of the theoretical debates about the sources of conflict, to improve their awareness of existing academic research relating to the range of strategies for managing, resolving and transforming conflict, and to advance methodological skills in studying both. The workshop embedded the research on African conflicts within the broader political science literature on peace and conflict. Both case-based and cross-national empirical studies were used. Throughout the workshop, the co-leaders used different teaching methodologies including practical cases across the literature. Participants were given the opportunity to share their work and to receive comments on their research projects. The two-week program consisted of four types of structured sessions: thematic seminars, methods workshops, research panels, and career development sessions.

The academic portion of the workshop was divided into three parts. The first examined why political actors are sometimes unable to resolve their conflicts peacefully. It explored contending theoretical explanations of conflict in Africa and other regions, and considered how different research methods and conceptual paradigms shape findings in the academic literature. Drawing on theories about grievance and greed as sources of conflict, the discussion centered around the emergence of conflict along ethnic and communal lines, the relationship between resources and conflict, and the role of political competition and elections in triggering violence.

The second part of the workshop explored the dynamics of conflicts. We analyzed how rebel organizations overcome collective action problems to recruit members, how they finance their activities, and how these internal characteristics influence their treatment of civilians and willingness to engage in negotiations. We discussed the decision of some groups to engage in terrorism and the counter-terrorism activities of governments. The section also looked at factors influencing the regionalization of domestic conflicts, including cross-border refugee flows, small arms trade, and external support of rebel movements.

In the final section, the facilitators explored mechanisms for resolving conflict. Participants examined how international military intervention affects the duration and intensity of conflicts and discussed the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. We explored the potential for mediation and power-sharing arrangements, such as those developed in Kenya (during the post-election violence) and Zimbabwe. Lastly, participants discussed how the pursuit of justice and reconstruction in the post-conflict phase affect long-term prospects for sustained peace.

A key goal of the workshop was to place African conflicts within broader theoretical context by facilitating a dialogue between case-based and cross-national studies. The required readings for each topic included several articles...
addressed a similar research question but used different evidence and/or methods (large-n quantitative studies, comparative case analyses, case studies, etc.). This approach allowed participants to compare different research methodologies and discuss how to develop appropriate research designs depending on the question being asked. In addition, through these carefully-selected readings, participants explored the ways in which the nuances of case-based research can enhance the findings of quantitative analyses and, conversely, how the systematic approach of large studies can contribute to our understanding of individual cases. Thus, the workshop addressed both substantive and methodological issues in the study of conflict and political violence as we sought to increase the visibility of Africa-focused scholarship in the broader political science literature.

The workshop provided an opportunity for participants to present their work to a panel and to receive feedback from co-leaders and peers on how to strengthen their research design and analysis. Participants also met individually with the co-leaders to discuss their research. In a career development session, participants were encouraged to further develop their professional skills and career plans, focusing on writing professional development plans, publishing scholarly articles and books, applying for research grants, and expanding one’s academic networks.

The symposium presented here provides just a sample of the range of research that is being done by the 26 emerging scholars who participated in the 2015 APSA Africa Workshop. The first two contributions relate to the first part of the workshop on the sources of conflict. Jacob Chol writes on the role of spiritual mythology and prophetic leadership in the mobilization of large numbers of Nuer to fight with the White Army against the Dinka in South Sudan’s ongoing civil war. Lucy Massoi challenges us to put climate change in its rightful place amongst a host of other factors that contribute to pastoralist-farmer conflicts in Tanzania, including decisions by the state to favor large-scale agricultural investment. The third contribution relates to the second part of the workshop on the dynamics of conflict. Ahmed Sh. Ibrahim considers the emergence of the Shari’a courts of Mogadishu, from the chaos of the failed state of Somalia to the resonance of Shari’a morality among Somali people which led to a reformist/revolutionary movement. The last two symposium contributions explore mechanisms for resolving conflict. Looking for explanations as to why Burundi has not yet been able to establish any transitional justice mechanisms, Cori Wielenga argues that timing and the contestation of meaning are even more important than the lack of political will. Tarila Ebiede contributes to our understanding of demobilization, disarmament, and re-integration by looking at ex-combatants in the Niger Delta, their relationships with surrounding communities, and how recent amnesty programs have perpetuated patronage networks. The research projects of these participants are timely, relevant, and fresh, and they enrich our understanding of conflict and its resolution.

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The White Army and Spiritual Mythology in South Sudan Political Violence

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One of the main drivers of political violence in South Sudan is the local belief in traditional magical powers. Notably, the White Army, a communal Nuer ethnic-based militia known locally as Jiech Mabor, emerged in the early 1990s with empirical links to the spiritual mythology prevalent in South Sudan politics. A major aspect of this spiritual mythology was the notion that Dr. Riek Machar, South Sudan’s erstwhile vice president, was a messiah who could bring spiritual and political liberation to the Nuer. Although empirical demonstrated it to be false, this belief has animated Nuer participation in South Sudan’s recent civil conflict. Unfortunately, outside analysts have largely ignored this element of the conflict.

The literature on communal militias argues that the existence of White Army dates to as early as the late 1980s. The White Army is a predominantly Nuer youth outfit. This traditional militia is drawn from three sub-groups of Nuer ethnic people, namely the Lou in the south, the Jikany and Gawaar in the east, and the Bul in the north. These three Nuer sub-groups reside in the northern part of the Unity State, Upper Nile State, and eastern part of Jonglei State in South Sudan. Like other non-state armed actors in South Sudan, the White Army’s primary purpose is to protect the community against external threats and to defend property and livestock (Adeba 2015). In fact, the White Army first emerged as the protectors of cattle. Cattle play an extremely important role in the life of the agro-pastoralist Nuer. Cattle ownership is a source of status, fertility, health, and general prosperity. Cattle are also the principal medium through which social ties are created and conduit through which new alliances with outsiders are forged (Hutchinson 2012).

Groups akin to the White Army have long been common in many African pastoralist societies. For example, among the Dinka, the traditional militia group is called Gelweng; among the Otuho in Eastern Equatoria, the defense youth group is called the Monyimiji; and amongst the Cholo, the youth vigilante group is known as Akwele Grassroots Defense Force. In response to the South Sudan state’s inability to provide security, however, new groups have emerged. For instance, Azande militants created the Arrow Boys in response to the activities of the Ugandan Lord’s Resistance Army in Western Equatoria State (Adeba 2015) in 2014. Amongst the Bor Dinka, an armed group called the Bor Panda Youth has emerged and was implicated in the killing of Nuer internally displaced persons (IDPs) under United Nations protection in April 2014 (Ibid). Moreover, a notorious group called the Maaban Defense Force became known to the world in August 2014 when it killed six Nuer aid workers, forcing aid organizations to halt activities in Maaban County of Upper Nile State.

These groups are typically transitory in nature, tribally-based, defensive in orientation, and lacking any ideology or long-term objectives. The White Army is an exception, however, having played an active part in Sudan’s second civil war in 1983-2005. While similar armed groups remained under community control, the White Army became an independent entity that was sometimes destructive to the community from which it originated (Young 2007). Smearing their faces with white ash to protect themselves from bugs, members of the group presented a fearsome aspect to both their enemies and their fellow Nuer.

The 1991 split of Machar from the Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM), led by Dr. John Garang, saw an estimated 30,000 Nuer youth mobilized and ordered to attack the Dinka of Bor, the area from which Garang hailed. The aim of the attack may have been to expose Garang as a “weak leader,” one who could not protect his own backyard. The attack on Bor was devastating in scope and ferocity: villages were razed; male captives were disemboweled; and women were raped, shot, or burned alive (Peterson 2001). Human rights organizations estimated that 5,000 people were massacred.
This fratricide cost Machar his credibility among South Sudanese, in addition to cementing the reputation of the White Army as merciless killers (Hutchinson 2012). Machar’s White Army attack was met with fierce vengeance, as Garang’s Dinka soldiers executed many Nuer of Gajaak. Garang’s faction retaliated with force and summarily executed all Nuer they captured (Peterson 2001). Near Bor, one group of 19 Nuer men were tied up in a cattle shed and speared to death (Amnesty International 2000).

Yet the interesting question is what motivated a large number of young Nuer militants, originally defenders of cattle, to fight for a political cause on behalf of leading politicians. Long before the current civil war, studies demonstrated that the White Army relied on the interpretation of prophets and medicine men in their sojourns of both bravery and looting. These Nuer prophets were revered for their role in blessing barren women, healing, and settling disputes. While preaching peace, however, the “main social function of the leading [Nuer] prophets in the past was to direct cattle raids on the Dinka and fighting against various foreigners who troubled the Nuer” (Mbiti 1990: 185). Evans-Pritchard described the prophets as individuals possessed by spirits and having charismatic powers. When these prophets spoke, they spoke in the name of the divinities that possessed them. As such, “what the prophet says and what the spirit says are all mixed up together, the two being interspersed together in such a manner that they cannot be separated” (Evans-Pritchard 1956: 45). Hutchinson (1996) argues that the White Army united under the powerful prophet, Wuornyang Gatakek, who drew heavily on the legacy of an earlier prophet, Ngundeng Bong. Bong lived between 1830 and 1906, and prophesied a fierce battle between the Nuer and the Dinka, in which the latter would be conquered. According to the prophecy, drums would sound, spears would be sharpened, and the Nuer would be mobilized for the battle by a messiah from the village of Nasir (Scroggins 2002). Other accounts of the prophecy describe the messiah as being left-handed, unmarked by tribal scars (Ibid), and gap-toothed; the prophecy also indicated that he would marry a white woman (Adeba 2015).

With his headquarters in Nasir, Machar perfectly fit the profile of the messiah to be: he was left-handed, unmarked, gap-toothed, and married to a white British aid worker, Emma McCune. Although Machar eschewed the messiah label, he did nothing to dispel the ancient fable. Machar’s calls for President Salva Kiir to step down confirmed his answer to prophetic calls (Aher 2014). Machar received prophetic Dang, the magical stick once carried and, with disputations, used positively by prophet Ngundeng Bong against the British, from the British government in 2009. The Dang was later taken away by the same British when the prophet’s son commandeered powers after the death of his father (Ibid). Taking over Ngundeng’s role, Wuornyang prepared and blessed Jiech Mabor, or the White Army, for the battle, buttressed by the use of Nuer religious symbolism (Adeba 2015).

Guided by a new prophet, Dak Kueth, in the political conflicts of December 2013, the White Army of approximately 25,000 young people marched from their base in Lou Nuer and captured Bor en route to Juba. Their motivation for attacking Bor was linked to the alleged target killing of Nuer in Juba during December 16-17, 2013. Although the vengeance of the White Army hit hard at Bor and Akobo, targeting members of the Dinka ethnic group, the belligerent group also attacked Dinka members in Malakal and Bentiu. The affair has been motivated by spiritual mythology in South Sudanese political violence. If outsiders are going to play a role in halting this fighting, they must recognize this aspect of the motivation for conflict.

Selected References


Rethinking Climate Change and Pastoralist-Farmer Conflict in Tanzania

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As the international conference on climate change in Paris recently ended, Tanzania continues to experience complex land conflicts between farmers and pastoralists. Policy makers and members of the media often suggest climate change as an important cause (United Republic of Tanzania 2007). On December 15, 2015, one person was killed and 71 head of cattle slaughtered after clashes erupted between pastoralists and farmers in Dihimba village in Tanzania’s Mvomero district (Daily News 2015). A day later, another row emerged between pastoralists and farmers at Tindiga B village, also in Mvomero district, resulting in 16 people being injured, and several others being displaced or suffering loss of property (Lucas 2015). What is the evidence that climate change may be driving these conflicts?

Two competing perspectives dominate the discourse about climate change and conflict. The first perspective argues that climate change directly leads to conflicts by worsening resource scarcity and generating new conflicts around land (Diamond 2005; Moon 2007). The second perspective suggests that climatic change is an insufficient factor to directly instigate or cause conflicts (Hoste and Vlassenroot 2010). The likelihood of conflicts depends on the manner in which the government, policies, and institutions are effective in responding to climatic shocks and variability (de Waal 2007). My research on pastoralist-farmer conflicts in Kilosa, Tanzania, suggests that climate change was just one of many factors contributing to conflict (Massoi 2015). This finding highlights the necessity of looking at policy and associated issues that combine with climate change to drive conflict.

The data that I gathered in Kilosa, through interviews and other sources, suggest that the climate has indeed changed over recent decades, resulting in prolonged droughts, unpredictable rainfall, floods, and new outbreaks of animal and human disease. The findings corroborate existing scholarly work in Kilosa (Mushi 2013) and government reports (United Republic of Tanzania 2007, 2012). The government has not been able to mitigate these impacts effectively, especially with reference to recurrent floods, and thus policy failures in the management of drainage and water systems are an important factor in the problem. When disasters are blamed on climate change, as often is the case, government officials sometimes use climate change as an excuse for inaction.

Drought-induced migration (which may be coerced, arranged between communities, or the result of bribery of officials) is linked to land-use conflicts. However, despite drought being one of the most serious challenges for pastoralists, the relationship with conflict is not consistent. Conflicts have also been evident in the absence of prolonged drought, suggesting that other factors are involved in conflict. It is thus evident that policies and official decisions are part of the problem.

Pastoralists are migrating from different parts of Tanzania to Kilosa, while at the same time the government is moving them elsewhere, especially to Rufiji and Ikwiriri districts, without due consideration of their settlement strategies. Deforestation and land degradation are indeed caused by climate change, but only as a result of poor policy decisions and legal processes that value large-scale commercial farming and conservation at the expense of pastoralism. Thus, some of the laws and decisions that have been propagated by government to solve conflicts are exacerbating conflicts in Kilosa. This challenges the theoretical argument that there is a direct link between climate change and conflicts. The longstanding and recurrent conflicts in Kilosa multiply with climate change due to already existing conflicts around land, environmentally-induced migrations, and border disputes.

A major impasse of the current analysis of conflicts in Tanzania is its very framing of conflicts in pastoral areas as induced by climate change. This directs attention away from the wider structural and deeper historical context in which the causes of both vulnerability and conflict lie. The reality of climate change certainly increases the challenges of effective government policy, but it does not make conflict inevitable.

As noted, government officials manage the cattle by asking pastoralists to move them to peaceful areas with insufficient planning and strategy. It is important to move beyond existing debates to see that both policy and resource governance contribute to conflict in the presence of prolonged drought and erratic rainfalls.

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A key flaw in the current mechanism to manage conflict is the treatment of vulnerability to climate change as something new and only just emerging in relation to future adversities, rather than a state created over time by multiple and overlapping processes of change in laws, strategies, and policies governing land use which favor large-scale crop farming at the expense of pastoralism. Such policies include the Tanzania Investment Act (1997), the Rural Development Strategy (2001), and the Agriculture First Policy (2009).

Equally, stakeholders’ involvement in reform processes concerning acquisition and use of land is significant. A recent study in Kilosa revealed that a close relationship exists between land policy reform processes and decisions, such as pastoral evictions in Kilosa and Kilombero, and pastoral vulnerabilities to climate change and conflicts (Massoi 2015). There is a need to embrace pastoralism as an economic livelihood that is viable, rather than pursuing policies based on the notion that it cannot withstand climate change. Indeed, pastoralism is the proven survivor of all harsh climatic conditions throughout the continent. Climate change is therefore best considered as one of several factors that aggravate existing conflicts that are partly triggered by poor policies governing water, land access, and resource distribution.

References
The Shari’a Courts of Mogadishu: Shari’a Morality and Social Mobilization

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In a number of articles, William Reno reflects on the general absence of mass-based reformist or revolutionary movements in many African contexts where one would expect such movements to emerge given the societal problems in collapsing or collapsed states (Reno 2002, 2003). Reno contends that part of the reason failing African states do not generate such movements is due to the consequences of pre-conflict regime patronage politics. He explains that the existence of networks of control over economic opportunities left behind by the patronage politics of the pre-conflict regime and controlled by former regime elites enables these elites to buy influence and coopt the character of anti-regime mobilization, thus undermining the social base and control over the rebellion. Led by these former regime elites, Reno concludes, the rebellion leads to the formation of predatory armed groups and the emergence of war economies.

These observations have a direct bearing on the way the Somali conflict played out and opened an entry for my contribution to the 2015 APSA Africa Workshop based on my Ph.D. dissertation research on the genesis and evolution of the Shari’a courts of Mogadishu. The central questions of my Ph.D. project are: What are the historical origins of the Shari’a courts? What is it about the Shari’a which enabled it to serve as a platform for mass-based socio-political mobilization? What were the temporalities and political imaginaries of the movement? What dilemmas and contradictions did the movement encounter?

The complete collapse of the central state of Somalia in 1991 was followed by a struggle for power which threw the country into a long period of chaos and lawlessness. Mogadishu, the capital city, was one of the worst affected areas as it was divided into racketeering fiefdoms run by militias, warlords, and criminal syndicates. Predictably, this led to the formation of a war economy and the perpetuation of the conflict. In response, self-defense initiatives began to emerge in various neighborhoods in Mogadishu under the name of Shari’a courts. After going through various phases, these Shari’a courts eventually unified under the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) and managed to bring the city under their single authority in mid-2006 (Menkhaus 2002; International Crisis Group 2005; Barnes and Harun 2007).

The emergence and success of the ICU movement is often explained in terms of their ability to provide security in the extremely insecure environment of Mogadishu (Mwangi 2010; Ahmad 2015). The argument is that insecurity created societal demand for harsh punishments to deter crime, which in turn allowed fundamentalist clerics to impose Shari’a law on the promise of security. Central to this approach is a conception, unstated because it is taken for granted, of the Shari’a understood simply as “Islamic law.” This project proposes a different approach to the analysis of the Shari’a courts by engaging with and building on the work of Shari’a scholars, such as Wael B. Hallaq. Hallaq argues that the scholarly and popular understanding of the Shari’a as “Islamic law” is problematic because such a designation imposes on the Islamic tradition modern concepts derived from Euro-American history (Hallaq 2009a, 2009b). Implicit in such a designation is a separation of “law” from “morality,” a modern distinction which is intimately related to the history of the modern state.

Contrary to this, contends Hallaq, the Shari’a, outside of the confines of the modern and modernizing state, doesn’t make a distinction between law and morality and should be viewed as a “moral law” that pervades the lived experience of Muslim societies.

My research project utilizes Hallaq’s contention that the Shari’a, outside of the confines of the modern state, should be viewed as a “moral law” to argue that the Shari’a court movement of Mogadishu owed its mobilizing energy to the ethical teachings and moral outlook of a Shari’a tradition which is historically and socially embedded in Somali society. This Shari’a tradition taught and cultivated the ethical dispositions to recognize injustice and to be stirred into action to correct it. In the absence of the modern state’s monopoly over social life, the Shari’a tradition of ethical duty and social responsibility was what enabled the social mobilization to correct injustices and overcome rampant criminality. The Shari’a court movement wasn’t
the result of some fundamentalist clerics imposing sharia law on society; it was a “moral” movement emerging from the teachings of a living tradition.

It should be noted, however, that morality here isn’t the morality of modern times, discursively located in the “conscience” of the autonomous individual. The morality of the Shari’a is embedded in the normative discourses and practices of Islamic tradition and its ethical sensibilities and dispositions must be cultivated and taught by the institutions and authorities of that tradition, hence the central role of the ulama (religious scholars) in the Shari’a court movement. This approach promises a far more interesting discussion on the temporality and political imaginings of the Shari’a court movement as well as the contradictions of a Shari’a-based socio-political movement in the contemporary world.

Through the discourse and practice of its ethical teachings, the Shari’a enabled the formation of a mass-based movement that aimed at a socio-political transformation. In so doing, the Shari’a informed the moral and political ideals that generated the reform/revolutionary agenda of the Shari’a court movement. In other words, the Shari’a court movement proved that a mass-based social movement aiming at revolutionary social transformation could indeed emerge in the wake of Africa’s collapsing or collapsed states. The Shari’a courts became such a socio-political movement by overcoming the obstacle which Reno pointed to as the primary hindrance to the formation of reformist/revolutionary movements in Africa: predatory armed groups and their war economies.

The formation and evolution of the Shari’a court movement was simultaneously the dismantling of Mogadishu’s war economy. The various factors that converged to bring about the dismantling of the war economy were in large part motivated by a desire to live a life in accordance with the moral teachings of the Shari‘a. The formation of urban Muslim communities that strive to live in accordance with what they consider to be the teachings of the Shari’a, thereby creating a parallel system of governance and economic structure, has been witnessed in a number of Muslim countries (Wickham 2013). What was unique about the case of the Shari’a courts of Mogadishu was that because of the absence of the state, this movement of urban moral community could and did aspire to a socio-political transformation at the national level.

References


Burundi’s Peace and Reconciliation Agreement that was signed in Arusha in 2000 included the resolution for a national Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), an International Judicial Commission of Inquiry (IJCI), and the possibility of an international criminal tribunal. To date, none of these transitional justice mechanisms has been implemented, although prior to the most recent outbreak of violence, TRC commissioners were elected with a view toward establishing the commission in 2016. Recent events would suggest, however, that Burundi has simply been too fragile to support the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms. Not only this, my own research in Burundi shows that there are other ways in which Burundian communities may want to deal with the past.

The current conflict in Burundi centers around the decision by President Pierre Nkurunziza to stand for a third term. Technically, proponents of the president argue it is not a third term because he was elected to his first term by the two houses of parliament, not through a popular election. Opponents took to the streets in protest in May 2015, when the third term was announced, and conflict has erupted between opposition leaders and the government. Despite this recent escalation, there has been low level conflict in Burundi ever since the civil war, regardless of the various agreements signed and attempts at strengthening political institutions. This has been one of the reasons the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms has been delayed, and it seems unlikely that the situation in 2016 will be in any way more conducive to transitional justice processes than the past fifteen years have been.

Lack of political will is perhaps the easiest reason to offer for the delay in the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms, coupled with the allegation that those in power simply do not want to be held accountable for crimes committed. In the case of Burundi, these have been the reasons offered by international NGOs in their press releases.

Although there may be some truth to this, the term “political will” is used too easily as an explanation for the behavior of governments, without carefully scrutinizing what this term refers to in a given context (as Brinkerhoff, 2000, describes in relation to anti-corruption efforts). In my research, I find that although lack of political will may be one of the factors at play here, the issues of timing and the contestation of meaning have more explanatory power.

If we follow Burundi’s trajectory since the signing of the initial ceasefire agreement in 2000, it could be argued that Burundi has not yet entered its transitional phase but is still in the conflict phase. Although the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi was signed in 2000, two of the major actors in the conflict, the National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) and the National Forces of Liberation (FNL), only signed the agreement later. Major Pierre Buyoya, a Tutsi who had been in power intermittently since 1987, gave over power to Domitien Ndayizeye in 2003. Pierre Nkurunziza was elected by parliament in 2005, and the FNL signed the ceasefire agreement in 2006. In September of 2007, there were violent clashes between FNL and the government, which erupted again in April and May of 2008, leaving at least a hundred dead (making it an “active armed conflict” under the Uppsala Conflict Data Program definition). FNL only officially laid down arms and became a recognized political party in 2009. The first presidential elections were boycotted by opposition leaders, leaving Nkurunziza to be elected in an uncontested poll. In 2011, human rights groups reported some 500 deaths, mostly of opposition party members. And in the years running up to the 2015 elections, media freedoms began to be restricted, and journalists and opposition leaders imprisoned and intimidated. This is a very fragile environment in which to establish transitional justice mechanisms, which are contentious even in the best of circumstances.

In addition to timing, there is evidence that the competition for meaning (Curtis and Dzinesa 2013) has contributed to the delay. As several scholars have argued (Rubli 2013; Lambourne 2009), transitional justice tends to be understood in narrow terms by the international community, and is confined to a liberal peace-building model which emphasizes humanitarian law, international criminal law, and human...
rights law. In contrast, the political party leaders that Rubli (2013: 15) interviewed in Burundi argued for a more “reconciliatory” interpretation of justice. Similarly, in my own engagements with civil society leaders in Bujumbura over the past few years, it has been evident that there are major disagreements about what transitional justice might look like in Burundi and whether a legal, human rights approach would have any meaning for local communities.

In extensive fieldwork in rural Burundi, Ingelaere and Kohl hagen (2012: 52) found that many community members were not interested in truth-seeking (in the form of a truth commission) or perpetrators being held accountable for their crimes (in the form of a tribunal), with several saying that they should “not dig up what has been buried.” My own research has shown that local community members are interested in engaging in more traditional healing processes, including those mediated by the Bushingantahe (traditional community mediators), controversial as their role is in Burundi. Local grassroots NGOs, that often have very large constituencies (for example, the Organization for Reconciliation and Forgiveness reports 80,000 members across Burundi), work successfully to reintegrate ex-combatants and facilitate healing and reconciliation.

Although it has been assumed by some that the resistance to implementing transitional justice mechanisms in Burundi is a result of political actors not wanting to take responsibility for the crimes they have committed, several other reasons have emerged. These include the fragile political environment, the fragile relationship between political actors, and a competition for meaning. Recent events confirm that the context of Burundi is simply too fragile to support the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms.

References


Reintegration of Ex-Militants in Nigeria’s Niger Delta

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There is a growing body of literature that focuses on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs as part of post-conflict peacebuilding efforts (Brown and Langer 2012). These studies have focused on the reintegration of ex-combatants as a crucial factor that ensures ex-combatants do not return to violence and are able to pursue their goals in post-conflict society through civil means. Surveys have been conducted among ex-combatants to identify and explain the factors that determine their reintegration in Sierra Leone (Humphreys and Weinstein 2007), Liberia (Pugel 2007), and Uganda (Annan et al 2011). The focus of much of this work is explaining factors as identified by the ex-combatants themselves. But reintegration is not a linear process determined by ex-combatants alone. It involves other members of the communities who are expected to interact with ex-combatants after conflicts come to an end. Focusing on amnestied ex-militants in Nigeria’s Niger Delta region, my doctoral dissertation seeks to identify and explain factors that are embedded in communities that influence the reintegration of ex-combatants.

Deviating from previous approaches that focus on ex-combatants alone in explaining reintegration, I sought to identify and explain how communities’ experiences with past conflicts in the Niger Delta influence the acceptance of ex-militants in different communities. In addition, my dissertation seeks to identify and explain the roles ex-militants assume in their communities during and after conflicts. The central finding of my research is that ex-militants’ reintegration in communities in the creeks of the Niger Delta is influenced by the roles they seek to play in the socio-political process of their communities. This argument was central to the discussions at the 2015 APSA Africa Workshop on “Conflict and Political Violence” in Nairobi, Kenya. At the workshop, participants and workshop leaders extensively discussed factors that lead to violent conflicts and processes of reconciliation, stabilization, and post-conflict peacebuilding. Studying the reintegration of ex-combatants from a conflict and post-conflict perspective contributes to the understanding of both violent conflicts and post-conflict processes in Africa, which was a central aim of the 2015 workshop.

My dissertation is based on qualitative ethnographic fieldwork in communities in the Niger Delta. The fieldwork was conducted in three phases between December 2013 and September 2015. The first phase from December 2013 to March 2014 was conducted in four rural communities in the creeks of the Niger Delta. I interviewed ordinary members of the communities, ex-militants who belonged to armed groups, traditional chiefs, civil society members, local politicians and members of the Post Amnesty Programme (PAP) that implements the DDR program. This first phase of research enabled me to identify the issues that have shaped the interactions of ex-militants and other members of their communities. I also identified the broad structure of the DDR program in the Niger Delta. Based on this first phase, I reduced my focus to two communities in the creeks of the Niger Delta: Peremabiri and Ologbobiri in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. I embarked on a second phase of fieldwork in these two communities from August 2014 to February 2015. In this phase, I focused on interviewing ex-militants and ordinary members of the communities. I supplemented these interviews with historical records of conflicts in the communities. Finally, I conducted one month of field work in September 2015 to follow up on some key findings. In particular, I interviewed senior management officials of the PAP to understand whether my preliminary findings are captured in the DDR program. I also sought to identify other challenges in the DDR program that I may not have identified previously.

Armed groups had dominated traditional community governance during the period of the violent conflicts in the Niger Delta. Following the proclamation of amnesty for armed groups in the Niger Delta, ordinary community members sought to reclaim the traditional governance of their communities from ex-militants. However, ex-militants, particularly their leaders and mid-level commanders, continue to lay claim to ernance of communities. To achieve this, they maintain
Traditional governance of their communities from ex-militants. However, ex-militants, particularly their leaders and mid-level commanders, continue to lay claim to traditional governance of communities. To achieve this, they maintain and mobilize their ex-fighters to carry out their agenda in the communities. The research shows that ordinary members of the communities are more likely to accept and integrate ex-militants into their socio-political networks if ex-militants support ordinary community members and turn away from the agenda of their former armed groups.

The study further shows that ex-militant leaders use the resources made available through the DDR program to maintain their loyalist base in the communities. In turn, ordinary civilians and ex-militant fighters who seek the support of ex-militant leaders in meeting their needs continue to remain loyal to ex-militant leaders in their communities.

These findings highlight how DDR funding meant to facilitate a peacebuilding process can easily become a reflection of a system of patronage embedded in post-conflict communities. This pattern is not just embedded in the communities alone. It is part of the approach the Nigerian government adopted to address the conflicts in the Niger Delta region. Apart from the use of state force to suppress armed militants, the government relied also on patronizing local leaders who could influence armed groups to cease hostilities. This patronage also extended directly to armed militant leaders through different forms of government and oil company contracts awarded to militant leaders or their proxies.

I contribute to the understanding of the peace building process in the Niger Delta by identifying current challenges in the local communities. The research also enables observers and policymakers that are focused on the region to forecast the outcome of the DDR as the PAP comes to an end. This is important for policy makers, NGOs, and international donors focused on the Niger Delta, as it will support the design of peacebuilding programs that will seek to positively transform dynamics of conflict in local communities.

Although my focus is on the Niger Delta, the implications of these findings extend to other post-conflict societies where DDR is applied in the management of ex-combatants. It shows that familiar narratives of patronage politics that characterize most societies in Africa could impact DDR and other peace-building initiatives that involve the distribution of resources. It also shows that there is need to pay more attention to the demobilization strand of DDR, as group networks do not simply dissolve. Instead, these networks are redirected to serve different purposes. Sometimes these networks could serve peaceful purposes. But as we see in the Niger Delta, remobilization of these networks to serve the interest of group leaders in community politics could lead to violence even after DDR has been implemented. This constitutes a challenge to the reintegration of ex-combatants and should be taken into account in the design of DDR in societies emerging from violent conflicts.
A Tribute to Göran Hydén

Stephen Marr
Malmö University

It isn’t often that one of your mentors, professional heroes and friends is awarded one of the highest honors in the discipline. So when Professor Göran Hydén was recently bestowed with the African Studies Association’s Distinguished Africanist Award it seemed a perfect opportunity to celebrate his career. We are all familiar with his academic and intellectual achievements. Less mentioned, but equally noteworthy however, is his legacy and influence on the students whom he has taught and advised. We have therefore rounded up a few of his former students to share their recollections of working with Göran and to highlight the impact he has had on their lives.

When I first arrived in Gainesville as a first-year Ph.D. student in 1999 I was equal parts naïve and overwhelmed by the transition from undergraduate life. I saw Dr. Hydén around Grinter Hall now and again, and apart from an occasional hello that was the extent of things. It wasn’t until the following year, when the Political Science Department announced it wouldn’t offer African Politics seminars for a couple years that someone suggested I ask Dr. Hydén if he would be willing to supervise a directed readings course. Twice a month for a semester I sat in his office attempting to pretend I knew what I was talking about. Even so, he was always gracious, kind, and patient. By the end of the semester, I knew better to listen than to talk.

It wasn’t long afterwards that “Papa Hydén” was my primary dissertation supervisor. After some back and forth about possible dissertation topics, he finally signed off on a project in which Gaborone shopping malls would prominently feature. Despite the project’s eccentricities, Dr. Hydén was the model of a good adviser in that he was willing to let me explore and make mistakes, yet also knew when to gently intervene and rein me back in when I wandered too far off track. His guidance wasn’t strictly limited to matters of theory and methodological technique. He exuded a joyful enthusiasm and exuberance for both research and family that I tried to imbue into my dissertation work then and that has stayed front and center in the years since. At the time though, he encouraged me not to lose sight of the fact that fieldwork (like life) should be, could be, fun! Indeed, I’m not sure who was more delighted – he or I – by the fact that I served as a speech-writing consultant to the contestant who would go on to win 2005’s Miss Botswana pageant.

In the intervening years, I have had the good fortune to remain in close contact with Göran, and his wonderful wife Melania. For the past seven autumns I have made an annual October visit to their summer house in Båstad, Sweden, where we enjoy a bit too much wine and stay up far too late in order to watch the Gators play an SEC rival in football. And this past June, Göran traveled all the way from Tanzania to Sweden to attend my wedding. During the reception he gave a speech that concluded with an extended riff extolling the virtues and global reach of the Gator Nation. Given that performance, when he tires of his current career, I foresee another one: alumni relations.

It boggles my mind that someone of such intellectual distinction and professional stature can remain so humble, generous and down to earth. Thank you, Göran. I am grateful.
A Tribute to Göran Hydén, continued from p. 14

Richard R. Marcus
California State University, Long Beach

Göran Hydén is a towering figure intellectually and physically but is modest and soft-spoken. He has unmatched patience for intellectual exploration but has a short wick for intellectual crap. I chose the University of Florida in 1993 because of him. A political scientist with an anthropologist flare, he presented an unusual opportunity to work on the political culture side of Africa’s democratic opening. Göran - Papa Hydén as his graduate students call him - traveled internationally at least monthly and had so many doctoral students in those years that we called him our “sofa” instead of our “chair.” Yet he was always present to kindly but firmly straighten me out, an iron hand in an occasionally frayed velvet glove.

Göran is a gentleman in the greatest sense of the word and an earnestly kind human being. He has spent his career cultivating a highly collaborative atmosphere amongst his bevy of doctoral students leading to a close-knit group of scholars and practitioners today. He actively eschews the “doctoral stamp” so common to many chairs, treating everyone as an independent intellectual first and supporting an answer to the research question above the norms of the field itself.

As I expressed interest in branching out of academe into the world of international development he invited me onto my first project. He not only modeled how to complement consulting and advising outside of the ivory tower with primary faculty duties, he opened the door to my pursuing such a path. This came with clear Papa Hydén warnings: make the hard choices, don’t ignore your family, follow only those opportunities that serve your passion. Even my wife quotes things Göran said to her years ago (usually after too much travel or too many late nights).

The debt I owe Göran cannot possibly be overstated. It is a doctoral chair’s job to oversee the intellectual development of his students. He did this with aplomb. However, he also gave me my career by teaching me how to balance teaching, research, service, administration, and consulting while contributing to who I am as a person by modeling the ethical path and extending sage advice on the work-life balance.

I graduated 15 years ago and still consider Göran my most important mentor, seeking his input more times than I can count. You know those conversations you walk away from thinking “How could we possibly cover so much ground? The ramifications of changes in the CCM, decision-making of farmers in Southern Madagascar, the future of Africa in the world, Gator Football prospects next year - all at once?” That is every conversation with Göran Hydén. Personable and kind, strong without dogma, and always generous with his soaring intellect, Göran is more than a Distinguished Scholar. He is a distinguished mentor and lifelong friend.

Join the APCG Discussion Forum!
http://groups.google.com/group/discussionAPCG

A public/open forum for APCG members. APCG members who sign up can communicate with each other in an open format. Want to discuss this issue’s symposium, advertise a new book, talk about an Africa-related issue, find a conference roommate, or get info on a research location? You can do that here!
A Tribute to Göran Hydén, Continued

Steve Snook
Senior Associate, Democracy and Governance, Tetra Tech Solutions

In the mid-1980s I was working in what was then the country of Zaire building rural health centers along the Zambian border. Previously I had worked in Gabon building rural primary schools. By my second year working in Mobutu’s Zaire, after years working in Bongo’s Gabon, two sets of questions were beginning to bother me. The first was about my career. As much fun as it was banging around in 4X4 pickup trucks on the dirt roads that connected remote African villages, dealing on a daily basis with issues of trucks and fuel and spare parts, problems with workers who never thought they were getting paid enough, ensuring shipments of cement and rebar and roofing sheets reached their destination on time, hassling with government officials and navigating through roadblocks manned by generally hostile gendarmes and soldiers, I was beginning to wonder if this was what I would be doing for the rest of my life. Or was there more?

People I trusted began advising me that the sort of job I was doing, fun though it was, was being phased out. There was no future in what I was doing, and that meant I needed to get a Master’s degree. The business of going to get a master’s degree was percolating in my mind when my wife Rosine and I went to Zimbabwe for the birth of our daughter, Jessica. There by happenstance we met two graduate students and Professor Haig Der-Houssikian. All three of them were in Harare independently of each other, and as it happened all three were from the University of Florida. They all encouraged me to consider applying to graduate school at the University of Florida. And they all spoke glowingly of a professor named Göran Hydén.

I wrote a letter to Professor Göran Hydén. This being the 1980s, there was no email. I typed my letter on A4 paper and sent it via airmail in an envelope festooned with colorful stamps. And Göran Hydén actually wrote back. His reply reached me about three months later. In his reply he encouraged me to apply to the University of Florida. Later, Göran would confess to me he did not recall this correspondence. But that exchange of two letters changed the trajectory of my life.

At the University of Florida I learned that I was not the first person in the world ever to ponder the questions I had been wondering about. In fact there were shelves of books in the library about the subject of international development. It was there that I learned Göran’s most advanced graduate students were working with him on operationalizing a term he was busy introducing into the development lexicon: governance.

It’s hard to believe that in the early 1990s the term “governance” was controversial. I was among the graduate students of Göran Hydén who contributed, modestly, I expect, to the separation of the concepts of governance and democracy, making it possible to talk of governance in Saudi Arabia and in North Korea which are not democracies, and making it possible to talk about democracies that are badly governed. I was among the graduate students of Göran Hydén who helped shift the concept of governance from a binary variable to a variable with a range from good to bad. And I was at the University of Florida and under the wing of Göran Hydén when the Soviet Union dissolved and the United States government launched an ambitious program of promoting the spread of democracy and good governance in the world, opening up a new field in applied political science, a field which hadn’t existed before and in which I have been gainfully employed ever since I received my doctorate in political science from the University of Florida in a ceremony at which Dr. Göran Hydén hooded me.

And so I send this reminiscence to Dr. Göran Hydén with great love and affection, with infinite thanks and profound gratitude for his patience in educating and mentoring a young man who pitched up one year, stubborn and willful and rather arrogant, a rural development worker from a continent Göran has loved all his life: Africa, a person who had much to learn, and who Göran helped transform.
Fredline M’Cormack
Seton Hall University

I first met Dr Hydén around 1997, when I was pursuing a Masters in Mass Communication at the University of Florida. I was working in Grinter Hall, at the Center for African Studies, where he also had an office at the time. We would talk on occasion, and then one day, I found out that he had lived in Kenya for some time, and that his son and I had been in the same class when we were eight years old. Our occasional conversations became more frequent, and soon after that, I began to see Dr. Hydén as a mentor. I would talk with him about my desire to work in the international arena, and to be active in development, although I wasn’t quite sure where or how to begin. He put up with my long ramblings, as I would sketch out different scenarios, although one thing of which I was sure – this future would not be in academia.

Dr. Hydén and I kept in contact when I left for the UK to pursue a Masters in Development, against his advice, with no intention of returning to Florida. However, even from a distance, he continued to assist me, and provide suggestions on my academic future, including encouraging me to return to Florida for a Ph.D. in Political Science. Such is the power of his tools of gentle suasion, that somehow I found myself heading back to Florida, and committing myself to many more years of schooling in an unfamiliar field. I found myself floundering in the Political Science program. Dr. Hydén always had his door open however, and would patiently listen as I tried to work out some complex political thought or understand a particularly obtuse reading. He assisted me during my comps, grading practice questions during his summers off and directing me to readings that would help to broaden my understanding.

From Dr. Hydén, I learned (even though I do not necessarily practice!) amazing efficiency – you could send an email to him, and receive a response within minutes, seemingly at any time. Even last minute requests for recommendation letters would invariably result in a completed letter, latest, by the end of that same day. Thanks to Dr. Hydén I now teach in a profession I didn’t think I wanted or would enjoy. Lastly, to a note about Dr. Hydén would not be complete without mention of his wonderful wife, Melania Hydén and the student gatherings they would host each term. Mama Melania was always the gracious host, taking time to speak with us, and make us feel welcome and at home. Now working in academia, I see how rare it is to have professors who take the time to interact with students beyond the classroom, and who invest so much into the lives of their students. I count myself privileged to have been one of his student and to have had the opportunity to study under his teaching. This award was long in coming, but so very well deserved. Thank you, Dr. Hydén.

Papa Hyden, Mama Melania, Stephen Marr and Staffan Lindberg, photo credit Johanna Korsell Marr.
A Tribute to Göran Hydén, Continued

Ken Mease
Northwestern University

I met Göran through a couple of his students in 1994. I was close to defending my PhD on Feminist Consciousness in American Politics. During this time I was also working with several African students and visiting faculty on their surveys and statistics. It didn’t take long before I realized that African politics and international development were a whole lot more interesting than American politics. Göran and I hit it off and soon I was asked to work on the book Agencies in Foreign Aid (1999). My work on the book was pretty basic until Göran asked me to co-author the conclusion. Working on that chapter with Göran, as a partner, changed my life. Shortly thereafter Göran and Rwekaza Mukandala cornered me one night at a party and suggested that rather than waiting for the students to come to UF, I should go to the students. In the fall of 1997, I found myself at the University of Dar Es Salaam teaching research methods on a Fulbright. Göran was on sabbatical that year and while he was in Dar, I received my graduate training in African politics and international development at various watering holes over Safari beer.

A few years later Göran invited me to have a look at the World Governance Survey. That look led to becoming a partner in the project with Göran and Julius Court. By the time Making Sense of Governance (2004) was published, my new new career as an international governance expert was well underway. My work, training local stakeholders how to measure governance, democracy and human rights, has taken me to all over Africa, to Europe, the Middle East and South America. With Göran’s help, I am living a life that I never dreamed possible. Thank you Göran for your friendship the past 20 years, generosity and for “liking the way I think.”

Kimberly Lanegran
Coe College

A spirit of generosity and encouragement permeates Göran Hydén’s teaching and mentoring. This enables his legacy to be vast and regenerating. Alongside fellow graduate students at the University of Florida, I benefitted profoundly from the supportive guidance he gives. Now, as a teacher I strive to emulate him and encourage my students to believe that their own questions are worth asking, their intellectual skills are worth honing, and their ideas are worth sharing.

My cohort in African Studies was an eclectic group; students from many disciplines took Göran’s classes and sought his guidance of their fieldwork. He nurtured creative rigorous inquiry from all. He did not corral our pursuits into a research agenda of his design or preference. Rather than create disciples who continued his own work, Göran nurtured researchers who could generate worthy scholarship of their own.

He pushed us to do it, and he convinced us that he believed we could. Most of my early questions and ideas were not new or particularly interesting. So I was told. However, it was clear that Göran thought nurturing our potential was worth his investment of time and effort. He was notably generous with his advice, support, and hospitality. Consequently, when he wrote in the margin of a draft dissertation chapter simply, “THINK MORE,” I believed that I could and that if I did, I would have insights to share.

Now, occasionally, I too simply write, “THINK MORE” on a student’s paper as I try to be a supportive generous mentor/teacher – in that way, a disciple of Göran Hydén.
Kevin Fridy
University of Tampa

When I was deciding on graduate schools, I received a letter in the mail from Professor Hydén, which I still have. He was inviting me to come to study at the University of Florida and assuring me that my fees would be taken care of. Scrambling to finish my Master’s Thesis and already reeling from a few rejection letters, I showed my future wife and said something to the effect of “Look what Dr. Hydén sent me. He’s a big-wig!” She noted that it was the first time I had smiled in weeks.

So often in life, joys of this type are dashed on the shores of unrealistic expectations, but not this time. Under Hydén’s tutelage I managed to accomplish everything I set my mind to in my field: passing comprehensives, receiving funding for field work, finishing my dissertation, and actually getting a job and tenure at a place I like working. Throughout this process my respect for Hydén grew. Having gained the “ever critical” eye of a Ph.D. I might be able to find a few more things in Beyond Ujamaa or No Shortcuts to quibble with than I would have when he mailed me my acceptance letter, but the starry-eyed awe of Dr. Hydén as a person has not diminished.

Upon hearing that I was one of Hydén’s students it is not uncommon for would-be PhDs to ask about the experience. I have heard others answer a similar question countless times with regards to their chairs so I know what answer is expected. But instead of an answer sopping with respectful distance I told these inquirers “you’ll never meet a nicer guy.” Then I say something about the great parties he and Melania like to throw with a Tequila-soaked worm as the capper.

Peter von Doepp
University of Vermont

It’s an absolute honor for me to offer a few words in recognition of Göran Hydén. In my academic and professional life, he has been my teacher, dissertation adviser, and mentor. On top of this, Göran’s been a good friend. I am delighted that he won the Distinguished Africanist Award from the ASA, and regret that I could not be there to witness this and congratulate him in person.

Through his scholarship, teaching and advising, Göran molded my professional development in deep and profound ways. From him, I learned the value of patient fieldwork, especially as a means to hear the voices of those who quietly and subtly challenged dominant narratives from above. In my own dissertation research, I spent fourteen months in Malawi (on a project that surely could have been completed in less time). And while Göran always wanted me to complete my degree in a timely fashion, never once did he suggest that I “just finish” my research. He modelled and encouraged my spending extended time in the field. This ultimately allowed me to produce a dissertation that I remain proud of.

Göran’s approach to mentorship was one that prioritized my own intellectual journey. When I selected a topic for my dissertation, Göran encouraged me to focus on an issue that was central to my own interests. And in the process of writing, he allowed me the space to find my own answers to questions that emerged in my research. At every step of the way, he provided guidance and support, but never pressured me to adopt specific analytical foci or theoretical perspectives. The wonderful outcome of this is that my dissertation bears Göran’s hand in so far as I can truly call it my own.

In the preface to my dissertation, I wrote that Göran had provided a model of patience, generosity, and gentility that I hoped to carry with me throughout my career. When I reflect on that, I remember the wide welcoming smile that almost always greeted me when I visited his office. I remember as well how many students Göran served, from undergraduates completing class research papers to PhD students working on dissertations. “Papa Hydén” took them all in, giving them each individualized attention, meeting them at whatever juncture on their respective journey, and helping them reach the upper ends of their capabilities, whatever their starting points.

Finally, let it be said that there are few others that I enjoy seeing more than Göran, especially after the last panel has concluded for the day at the ASA. It never fails; we, friends and former students, gather with Göran to catch-up, laugh, drink, and most importantly, celebrate our reunion. For me, so much of what distinguishes Göran lies here: he’s a person we admire, but also adore; he’s a mentor, but also a dear friend; he raised many of us up, but now he brings us together.
panel at ASA. Also, thanks to the proactive efforts of the ISA committee, the APCG has a sponsored panel this year at ISA (TD 80, Security in Africa, page 120 on the program). Our panel will take place on Thursday, March 17 from 4:00 PM to 5:45 PM. I urge all the colleagues who will be in Atlanta to attend the panel and encourage the panelists (Steve Burgess, John F. Clark, Antoinette Handley, Susan Jackson, and Stephen D. Marr).

I would also like to remind you that the 74th annual MPSA conference will be held April 7-10, 2016 in Chicago. As MPSA has its own African politics section, we do not have sponsored panels there. Nonetheless, many colleagues usually attend the conference on an individual basis. Our Secretary, Cara E. Jones will send a message to the group in due time regarding a possible social event at MPSA.

Looking forward, we have already set up most of the new committees (ASA, APSA, ISA, Nominations and Awards) and appointed their chairs. Thanks to the colleagues who have volunteered, we will be able, as usual, to organize panels and give Awards in 2016 and 2017. We will also be able to conduct this year’s elections. As you know, Adrienne LeBas, our Treasurer, and myself, are stepping down in November. The Nominations committee will begin the nominations process this fall.

We have also found a new Newsletter editor, Keith Weghorst, who courageously volunteered. After two years of service, Cara E. Jones and Stephen Marr are stepping down. I am sure you all join me to thank them wholeheartedly for the extraordinary dedication to the Group they have shown. Cara continues as our Secretary since November, and Stephen will be one of our panelists at ISA. Both of them remain very active members of our group.

Finally, we are still trying to fix the Website issue, which appears more complicated and time-consuming than anticipated. But we are determined to set it up as soon as possible.

All the best,
Mamoudou Gazibo
From the Editors

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Welcome to the spring edition of the APCG newsletter. Enclosed within the issue’s pages is the usual array of member news, recent book and publication announcements, and an illuminating symposium on conflict and political violence drawing on contributions from participants in last summer’s APSA Africa Workshop. In addition, the editors are pleased to present a tribute honoring Professor Göran Hydén in recognition of his receipt of the African Studies Association’s Distinguished Africanist Award in November. As students we had the good fortune to study under Göran and wanted to call attention to the fact that his legacy as a “Distinguished Africanist” goes well beyond the realm of academic achievements. We therefore invoked our editorial prerogative and drafted former students from across his three-plus decades at the University of Florida to share their thoughts on Göran’s lasting influence as a teacher, mentor, and friend.

We also want to announce that this will be the final issue published under our co-editorship. We thank the previous APCG Chair, Anne Pitcher, former newsletter editor, Mike Nelson, and current Chair, Mamoudou Gazibo, for giving us the opportunity to serve the APCG community as newsletter co-editors. We are grateful for the privilege, and although at times we wondered what we were doing, were happy for the experience. Beginning with the next issue published in late summer, the editorial baton will be passed to Keith Weghorst. Good luck going forward, Keith (and as always, go Gators)!

To the rest of our readers, we wish you a happy and healthy spring and hope to see you at ISA or MPSA.

Steve Marr, Malmö University
Cara Jones, Mary Baldwin College

A Note from the Treasurer

We currently have the 250 APSA members required to maintain our status as an organized section of the American Political Science Association. But this does not mean that dues payment does not remain as critically important as it was this past fall. We have a number of APSA members whose memberships will be expiring. For those of you who are APSA members, please make sure that you are also an APCG (Section 44) member. In order to add the section, please log into your APSA account and navigate to the main account screen. Then click on the “add a section” link on the right. For those who are not APSA members, we continue to accept donations that stand in place of dues via our Paypal account. Please sign into your Paypal account and send a payment to apcgpayment@gmail.com. Remember to include your full name in the “notes” section so that we can credit you for your donation! Donations may be used in future to subsidize APSA memberships for Africa-based scholars or for other APCG initiatives, so they remain an important source of revenue for APCG.

Thanks again to all of you for your support of the section!

Adrienne LeBas
American University
Award Winners, 2014-2015

APCG Award for Best Book in 2015

Honorable Mention


Frederick Cooper’s book on the nature of citizenship in late-colonial France and its empire is a tour de force, the product of his more than forty years of outstanding scholarship on the continent. While Cooper is a distinguished historian, he sets the tone for this book as a work of political history from the first sentence, which reads, “This is a book about politics, in two senses:” These two senses – the actual art of politics in the rapidly changing social and cultural spheres, and the use of concepts like citizenship, sovereignty, nation, empire, and state as tools of political craft – frame Cooper’s analysis of the fifteen years after World War II in France and what would soon be the newly independent states of Francophone Africa. Drawing on hundreds of primary and secondary sources from archives in Paris and Dakar, Cooper builds a case for understanding the end of French empire as a period of evolving understanding about what citizenship, nationality, and sovereignty actually meant in practice in both the metropole and the decolonizing nation-state.

Arguing that the retrospective tendency to depict the period between 1945 and 1960 as a clash between advocates of independence and defenders of colonialism is not historically accurate, Cooper contends that for most of the era, French West African leaders and French politicians sought to fashion some sort of middle ground combining increased autonomy for French overseas territories with ongoing ties with France. Efforts to make some sort of partnership work continued into the early 1960 and were abandoned, reluctantly, only in the face of undeniable failure. Tracing a path through the post-World War II landscape of a greatly weakened France and the recognition as equals Africans sought after fighting for France during the war, Cooper notes that African politicians were very much aware that their territories were small and, for the most part, poor, and therefore likely to be highly dependent on France even if they became independent. Thus, as much as Africans wanted more autonomy and less discrimination, they also wanted access to the resources and opportunities available through an ongoing relationship with France.

Cooper describes in great detail how the Constitution of 1946 set in motion a process of renegotiation of the relations between the various parts of the former French empire, which included overseas departments, colonies, protectorates, and UN mandate territories. He contends that while African leaders were weaker than their French counterparts, they still had significant influence on the building of various federal and confederal bodies in African colonial territories.

While the 1946 Lamine Guèye law extended French citizenship to residents of all French territories, regardless of their personal status, not all citizens had equal rights. In particular, universal suffrage was only extended to all residents of all French territories in 1956, with the adoption of the loi-cadre. Nonetheless, Africans appealed to the language of citizenship to push for legal changes such as the elimination of forced labor, rights to freedom of movement and employment throughout the French union, and non-discrimination in wages. The creation of territorial assemblies in 1956 further decentralized power from Paris and strengthened African autonomy. With increased power, however, grew increasing dissatisfaction with France and disagreements among African leaders about the direction they should pursue.

Cooper’s book is a must-read for scholars of Francophone Africa, France, and for anyone seeking a history of Africa’s independence period that goes beyond simplistic narratives to explore the agency, power, and desire for collaboration exerted by African leaders who were not simply nationalistic, but also quite pragmatic. For these reasons, we are pleased to present an honorable mention for best book 2015 to Frederick Cooper for Citizenship Between Empire and Nation.

continued on page 23
Honorable Mention

Claire Adida, Immigrant Exclusion and Insecurity in Africa: Coethnic Strangers (Cambridge University Press, 2014)

Claire Adida’s methodologically and empirically sophisticated book, Immigrant Exclusion and Insecurity in Africa: Coethnic Strangers, argues that, in urban African settings where formal controls over immigration are weak and the local police have considerable discretion, the probability that immigrants identify with their ethnic identity of origin increases, the probability that they assimilate decreases, and the probability that they face ethnic exclusion increases as cultural overlap with the host community increases. Using data collected in a study of Hausa and Yoruba immigrants in Accra, Cotonou, and Niamey, Adida contends that cultural overlap, whether in terms of shared religion, language, or ethnicity, creates opportunities for immigrants to build networks outside the community of immigrants with common origins that convey important social and economic opportunities. The enhanced opportunities to assimilate, however, threaten both the host communities and the ethnic leaders for the source community. Those leaders seek to reinforce ethnic distinctiveness by controlling economic resources and access to protection and making access to these benefits contingent on active identification with the source community. Host communities also view immigrants with high cultural overlap with greater wariness than other immigrants because they are seen as presenting greater competition for scarce economic opportunities.

The committee was particularly impressed by Adida’s methodology and fieldwork, which employed a sophisticated approach to the study of cultural overlap in Yoruba and Hausa immigrant communities across three countries. Because Accra, Cotonou, and Niamey’s populations overlap on religious identity with Yoruba and Hausa immigrants in different ways, Adida’s research design allows comparisons of the same two ethnic groups in different contexts. In Accra and Cotonou, Yorubas have higher cultural overlap with the host population than do Hausas; in Niamey, Hausas have greater cultural overlap. The mix of Christian and Muslim Yorubas in Accra allows further comparisons of higher and lower levels of cultural overlap within the same ethnic group. Adida’s work is a good model for young scholars seeking to do mixed-methods research that answers both the “what” and the “how” of their questions; she employed surveys, experiments, semi-structured interviews, and the use of a dataset of mass expulsions in sub-Saharan Africa between 1956 and 1999 to construct the argument.

The committee greatly appreciated the timeliness of Adida’s work given such issues as the outbreak of xenophobia in South Africa in 2015 as well as the focus on population movements across West African borders during the 2014 Ebola outbreak. The argument is counterintuitive and Adida presents persuasive evidence that groups described as having high cultural overlap with host communities identify more with their ethnic community and that host communities are less receptive to voting for a member of such groups for the presidency. The analysis also presents evidence that leaders of immigrant community members are aware of opportunities to assimilate and they often actively work to encourage identification with the ethnic community of origin.

For its methodological and empirical strengths, timeliness, and unique research design, the committee is pleased to present an honorable mention for best book 2015 to Claire Adida for Immigrant Exclusion and Insecurity in Africa.
Award Winners, 2014-2015

APCG Award for Best Book in 2015


In Property and Political Order in Africa, Boone uses an astonishingly broad scope of case studies to build a brilliant and compelling argument to examine the relationship between land tenure systems, ethnic and political mobilization, elections, and violence. Boone argues that states fashion property rights in an effort to control their citizens and consolidate their authority.

Boone’s theoretical framework defines land tenure regimes on the basis of three features: the locus of authority, the basis for property rights claims (the citizenship principle), and the territorial scale of jurisdiction. Most important of these is whether authority over land is decentralized to localities or centralized by the state. When authority is held locally, access to land depends on membership in a local community. When authority is held at the center, access to land depends on national citizenship. The different dimensions account for differences in how land tenure regimes structure ethnic mobilization, the scale of land politics, and the electoral salience of land issues.

Boone’s theoretical framework is convincingly argued and her points are enhanced by a broad range of historically and spatially delimited case studies that allow several types of comparisons: cross-country comparisons of similar and different land tenure regimes, within-country comparisons across land tenure regimes, and over time comparisons of non-competitive and competitive political systems. Detailed case studies include south-western Cote d’Ivoire (pre- and post elections), western Burkina Faso, western Ghana, peri-urban Ghana, northern Cameroon, the Kenyan Rift Valley (pre- and post elections), Rwanda, eastern D.R. Congo (pre- and post-elections), and Zimbabwe.

Perhaps the most important of Boone’s findings relate to when and how violence over land erupts. Boone contends that African land conflicts typically pit ethnic insiders - usually depicted as indigenes or autochthones - against ethnic strangers (settlers or non-indigenes). Neo-customary land tenure regimes tend to favor those ethnic outsiders who have been granted land rights by the current regime. In the event of a regime change, ethnic outsiders may lose their sponsor. In neo-customary land tenure regimes where family heads control land rights, however, land conflicts play out within families, usually involving generational and gender divisions; ethnic mobilization is limited to non-existent.

The territorial scale of a land tenure regime also structures the salience of land issues in electoral politics. In neo-customary regimes, land conflicts do not become campaign issues because elected officials have no jurisdiction over land access and administration. Not only are land conflicts “bottled up” at the sub-national level, but they are also de-politicized, or at least kept out of the electoral arena; that is, if they are politically salient, they are not salient within the framework of partisan politics. In state land tenure regimes, land conflicts feature prominently in electoral politics, influencing the lines of competition. Because rights to state allocated land depend on the continued patronage of the state, current rights holders fear that electoral turnover might mean dispossession. Indigenes or autochthones, on the other hand, may hope that an electoral turnover will bring restitution. Given the very high stakes, people on both sides of the divide can be persuaded to engage in electoral violence if electoral competition is tight enough to create uncertainty about the outcome.

Boone’s findings in this regard are somewhat unsettling in that, in every case, electoral mobilization around land conflicts involves serious violence. It is associated with civil war in Cote d’Ivoire, civil war and genocide in Rwanda, spatially limited civil conflict in the DRC, widespread violence and repression in Zimbabwe, and electoral violence and large-scale displacement in Kenya. There is no example of land becoming a salient campaign issue without stimulating violence, and Boone’s findings suggest that political conflict over land in countries with multiparty elections will either be bottled up at the local level and depoliticized or scaled up to the national level, where it becomes a potentially violent threat to political stability.

For its theoretical brilliance, empirical scope, and challenging findings, the committee is pleased to award APCG Best Book 2015 to Catherine Boone.
Recent and Continuing Committee Members and Chairs

**Best Book in 2015 Award**

*Landry Signé  
University of Alaska Anchorage  
Kathleen Hancock  
Colorado School of Mines  
Kate Baldwin  
Yale University

**Best Article in 2015 Award**

*Jessica Piombo  
Naval Postgraduate School  
Kevin Fridy  
University of Tampa  
Frank Ohemeng  
University of Ottawa

**APCG-African Affairs Best Student Paper in 2015 Award**

*Rachel Ellett  
Beloit College  
Yonathan Morse  
Georgetown University  
Carrie Manning  
Georgia State University

**APCG-Lynne Rienner Best Dissertation in 2015 Award**

*Milli Lake  
Arizona State University  
Adam Sandor  
University of Ottawa  
Alice Kang  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**APSA 2017 Committee**

* Claire Adida  
University of California San Diego  
*Cédric Jourde  
University of Ottawa

**Nominations Committee**

*John Harbeson  
City University of New York  
Rachel Beatty Riedl  
Northwestern University  
Dominika Koter  
Colgate University

**ISA 2017 Committee**

*Kevin Fridy  
University of Tampa  
Milli Lake  
Arizona State University  
James Hentz  
Virginia Military Institute

**ASA 2016 Committee**

*Martha Johnson  
Mills College  
Carl Levan  
American University  
Brandon Kendhammer  
Ohio University  
*committee chair
2016 Awards
Call for Nominations

The African Politics Conference Group (APCG) calls for nominations for four awards honoring outstanding achievements in the study of African politics in 2015/16. Details of the four awards are below. All nominations must be submitted to the chair of each award committee by April 30, 2016.

The APCG-Lynne Rienner Best Dissertation Award Committee invites submissions for the best dissertation in African politics 2015. The award carries a prize and is intended to recognize outstanding scholarship in African politics. Only one dissertation may be nominated per department. Dissertations that were completed and accepted in calendar year 2015 are eligible for this award.

This year’s committee members are Milli Lake (Arizona State University), Adam Sandor (University of Ottawa), and Alice Kang (University of Nebraska-Lincoln).

Departments are requested to submit a letter of nomination and an electronic copy of the dissertation to committee chair Milli Lake at millilake@gmail.com. The deadline for nominations is April 30, 2016.

The APCG-African Affairs Best Graduate Student Paper Award Committee seeks nominations for the 2015/16 award. The award carries a cash prize and is intended to recognize outstanding scholarship in African politics. Eligible papers must be:

• nominated by a member of the APCG (self nominations are not allowed),
• written by a graduate student,
• presented at the 2015 APSA, 2015 ASA, 2016 ISA, or 2016 MPSA annual meetings, and
• NOT have a co-author who holds a Ph.D.

This year’s committee members are Rachel Ellett (Beloit College), Yonatan Morse (Georgetown University), and Carrie Manning (Georgia State University).

To nominate a paper, please send an email with the paper’s author, title, and the conference name to the committee chair, Rachel Ellett at: elletr@beloit.edu. The deadline for nominations is April 30, 2016.

The APCG Best Article Committee seeks nominations for the 2015 award. All articles published in peer-reviewed journals in 2015 are eligible.

This year’s committee members are Jessica Piombo (Naval Postgraduate School), Kevin Fridy (University of Tampa), and Frank Ohemeng (University of Ottawa).

Please send the full abstract and, if possible, a copy of the article itself to the committee chair, Jessica Piombo, at jrpjombo@nps.edu. The deadline for nominations is April 30, 2016.

The APCG Best Book Award Committee invites nominations for the 2015 award. To be eligible, books must have been published (i.e., with a copyright date) in English in 2015. Books should analyze an issue related to political science or international relations with special reference to Africa. The book should employ methodological techniques regarded as appropriate by any subgroup of contemporary political scientists. Edited volumes are not eligible. Translations of books written in a foreign language qualify if the translation was published in 2015.

This year’s committee members are Landry Signé (University of Alaska-Anchorage), Kathleen Hancock (Colorado School of Mines), and Kate Baldwin (Yale University).

Please send nominations to the committee chair, Landry Signé, at landrysigne@gmail.com.

Publishers should send copies of nominated books to each committee member at the addresses listed below no later than April 30, 2016.

Landry Signé
Department of Political Science
University of Alaska Anchorage
Social Sciences Building Room 362
3211 Providence Drive,
Anchorage, AK 99508

Kathleen Hancock
Winterfeldstr. 97
10777 Berlin, Germany

Kate Baldwin
Department of Political Science
Yale University
P.O. Box 208301
New Haven, CT 06520-8301
General Announcements

Workshop and Conference Announcements

The LSE – University of Cape Town July School will be held in Cape Town from June 27th – July 8th. Please check the website (http://www.lse.ac.uk/study/summer-Schools/LSEUCTJulySchool/Home.aspx) or contact Elliott Green at e.d.green@lse.ac.uk for further information.

The University of Edinburgh Centre of African Studies and Global Development Academy invite all members of the APCG to attend a two-day conference on Decolonizing the Academy - a convergence of critical and creative scholarship, theory, conversation, and empirical research committed to questioning and undoing the foundations of inequality in Africa and African Studies.

For whom do we research Africa and for what purpose? How do our institutions – be they universities, professional networks, or publishing forums – reinforce unequal access to power, opportunities, and knowledge? How do we connect critical theoretical debates around decolonization with applied best practices and new practices?

In convening the conference, we seek to affirm the urgency of these debates and to generate accountable, creative, and critical dialogue within our disciplines. ‘Decolonizing the Academy’ calls for a collective examination of how knowledge and power are defined, distributed, and denied through the Academy, broadly defined. How do we as researchers and teachers disrupt or perpetuate existing patterns and power structures?

Further details are available on the conference website: https://decolonizingtheacademy.wordpress.com and http://www.cas.ed.ac.uk

Recently Published

Carl LeVan published “Parallel Institutionalism and the Future of Representation in Nigeria” in the Journal of Contemporary African Studies. The article identifies political conditions that hold the country together, and explores structural drivers such as demographic shifts and economic trends re-shaping representative institutions.

John James Quinn (Truman State University) published a book: Global Geopolitical Power and African Political and Economic Institutions: When Elephants Fight (Lexington Books, 2016). It seeks to examine and explain two periods of significant and region-wide changes of African political and economic institutions and practices. These two regional shifts can be linked to two prior geopolitical shifts in power: the end of WWII with the resulting bipolar struggle, and the immediate post-Cold War period, with American primacy. In the first period, the preference of African elites, the push for prevailing ideas of the time, and their relative autonomy vis-à-vis the international system led to a concentration of economic and political power in the hands of political elites. In the second period, the unchanged preferences of most African elites in consolidated power, but changed international pressures for political and economic liberalization, as well as ideas supporting these latter preferences, led to a partial fragmentation of political and economic power in the region. The economic and political institutions of Africa that emerged in each period did so as a result of a complex mix of contending domestic, regional, and international forces (material, ideological, and intellectual)—all which were themselves greatly impacted in the wake of these two global geopolitical realignments.

Aili Mari Tripp’s (University of Wisconsin-Madison) book, Women and Power in Post-conflict Africa was published by Cambridge University Press. She taught and is conducting research with a Fulbright Award in Morocco during the 2015-16 academic year on women’s rights legal and constitutional reform. She is based at the Center for Women’s Empowerment at Al Akhawayn University. She published several articles, including “The Difference that Difference Makes: Comparative Perspectives on Concepts of Gender, Ethnicity and Race in Africa and the Diaspora,” Politics, Groups, and Identities (Dialogues) 2015; and, with Melanie Hughes, “Civil War and Trajectories of Change in Women’s Political Representation in Africa, 1985-2010” Social Forces 93, no. 4: 1513-1540.

Wale Adebanwi and Ebenezer Obadare announce their new book, Governance and the Crisis of Rule in Contemporary Africa: Leadership in Transformation. This volume advances a slowly coalescing consensus around the imperative to ground discussions of leadership in Africa in the longue durée of the continent’s specific history, culture, economy, and politics. It illuminates the conditions under which
political leadership in postcolonial Africa has been produced, and the extent to which those conditions have shaped the kind of leaders and leadership paths which have consistently emerged across the continent. More often than not, popular rhetoric on leadership in African politics has tended to swing between the extremes of absolute condemnation or unqualified approval, with leaders themselves little more than a convenient lightning rod, victims of a tedious routine in which snap judgment tends to precede, or at times displace, academic deliberation. In a long-overdue departure, this volume approaches leadership as an intersecting variable, one that influences and is at the same time determined and influenced by the constraints and opportunities of its immediate ecology. In this approach, leadership is as much an analytic model that explains, as it is a conundrum that is presented for elucidation.

The volume includes chapters on Nelson Mandela, Jomo Kenyatta, Obafemi Awolowo, Julius Nyerere, Paul Biya and Robert Mugabe. Contributors include William Reno, Northwestern University, Simeon O. Ilesanmi, Wake Forrest University, Enocent Msindo Rhodes University, Basile Ndjio, University of Douala and Olufemi Taiwo, Cornell University.

Mamoudou Gazibo and Muna Ndulo have edited a new volume, Growing Democracy in Africa: Elections, Accountable Governance, and Political Economy (Cambridge Scholars 2016). Several APCG members have contributed to the volume. The contributors are: Kate Baldwin, Jeffrey Conroy-Crutz, Cyril Daddieh, Antoinette Handley, Göran Hyden, Coel Kirkby & Christina Murray, Charles Fombad, Mamoudou Gazibo, Muna Ndulo, Rachel Beatty Riedl & Tyler Dickovick, Jennifer Riggan, Jan Amilcar Schmidt, Nicolas van de Walle.

Antoinette Handley will be Visiting Fellow in World Politics at Princeton University in 2016-2017.


Announcement: John Harbeson Award

The APCG Inaugural John Harbeson Distinguished Africanist Award has been presented at the 2015 Meeting of the African Studies Association, San Diego, CA, to John W. Harbeson, Professor Emeritus, City University of New York, in recognition of outstanding scholarship, teaching, and leadership in our field.

The John Harbeson Distinguished Africanist award honors John W. Harbeson’s contributions through his scholarship, teaching, mentoring, leadership, and institution-building as a founder of the African Politics Conference Group. The award is presented annually at the African Studies Association meeting to a senior scholar to recognize distinction in publications, undergraduate and/or graduate teaching, mentoring, leadership, and institution-building in the area of African politics.
*denotes items submitted directly by members. All other references were discovered by the editors. We only include items that have already been published.

Books


Cloward, Karisa. 2016. When Norms Collide: Local Responses to Activism against Female Genital Mutilation and Early Marriage. New York: Oxford University Press.


Edited Books


Journals

African Affairs


African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review


Riggan, Jennifer. 2015. “Prison state, pariah, and proxy war: Human rights narratives and the sover-


African Studies Quarterly


African Studies Review


American Political Science Review

Avdeenko, Alexandra and Michael J. Gilligan. 2015. “International interventions to build social capital: Evidence from a field experiment continued on page 31
Recent Publications, continued from page 30

in Sudan” American Political Science Review 109, no. 3: 427-449.

British Journal of Political Science

Commonwealth and Comparative Politics


Comparative Politics

Development and Change

Human Rights Quarterly

International Studies Quarterly

Journal of African Law
Jonas, Obonye. 2015. “The participation of the Amicus Curiae institu- continued on page 32
Recent Publications, continued from page 31


Journal of Democracy


Journal of Modern African Studies


Journal of Peace Research


Journal of Southern African Studies

Fombad, Madeleine C. 2015.


Review of African Political Economy


Security Dialogue


South African Journal of International Affairs


Third World Quarterly


World Politics


Other Publications, Book Chapters and Papers


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