IPM2930
Protest, Power and Resistance in Africa

Semester Two, 2011-2012

Module Handbook
This module explores African politics and development through forms of protest, based on the premise that it is through the study of specific moments and sites of struggle that broader power relationships can be understood and contested. The module engages with theoretical literature on African politics (ethnicity, neo-patrimonialism, development, democratisation etc) and the politics of resistance (Marx, Gramsci, Foucault, Scott, Tarrow, della Porta etc) through a case study approach, in which specific episodes and struggles are used as the starting point to raise broader questions of Africa’s place within global politics, and the changing nature of the state-society relationship in Africa.

All too often Africa is imagined and represented as an ‘empty space’ of international politics: the recipient of aid, the victim of proxy wars and structural adjustment, and wracked by ethnic conflict and venal corruption. These images tend to ignore or underplay the degree to which African individuals and groups exercise agency in international politics, often through forms of resistance, contestation and protest. Africa is not the passive victim of international politics, but rather a contested site of power relationships, imagination, struggle and movements for development, democracy and security. Africa is a continent of dynamic changes, and economic, political and cultural transformations. This module opens up these understudied aspects of African politics through a number of key case studies, including recent protests in North Africa, as well as historical examples such as Mau Mau in Kenya, Nyerere’s ujamaa in Tanzania, Black Consciousness in South Africa, the civil war in Sierra Leone, trade unions and the pro-democracy movement in Zambia, and the Ogoni in Nigeria. Students are encouraged to research further case studies of other instances of protest and resistance in Africa. Each seminar will be grounded in a detailed exploration of the particular case study, as well as considering broader themes and linking with contemporary African politics.

The central focus of the module is on the relationship between state and society, or between rulers and ruled. The module begins by examining a number of theoretical approaches to these topics – both ‘mainstream’ (Marxist, liberal, social movement studies) and ‘alternative’ (African, anti-colonial, poststructuralist) approaches – before applying them to the case studies and historical examples. The overall aim of the module is to consider the degree to which specific African protest and resistance movements have been able, at various times and in various places, to transform state-society and local-global relationships.
Objectives
On completion of this module, students should be able to:
1) critically evaluate the relevance of the theoretical literature on protest, power and resistance for understanding African politics;
2) explain the development and prevalence of neo-patrimonialism, clientelism and authoritarianism on the continent, and the types of resistance they have produced;
3) analyse and communicate the successes and limitations of various types of resistance movements;
4) critically assess the extent to which recent transitions to democracy have transformed state-society relations;
5) identify, describe and account for instances of conflict, state collapse and warlordism on the continent;
6) analyse some of the ways in which global forces impact on domestic state-society relations;
7) demonstrate grounded empirical knowledge of a range of specific case studies; and
8) develop appropriate research methods to study protest, power and resistance in Africa

Teaching Methods
The module consists of an introduction and 10 two-hour seminars. At the masters level the onus is on students to prepare diligently and thoroughly, and lead seminar discussion. The seminars will involve a range of discussions and activities, and will include student-led oral presentations.

Reading
There is no textbook that covers the entire module, but the books listed below offer a useful and informative introduction to the topics discussed. A STUDYPACK containing a number of the essential readings is available for purchase at the start of term. As far as possible, the journal articles on the reading list are available on the internet.

NOTE: Between the listed sources, the National Library and Hugh Owen collections, the studypack, and internet access to journal articles, there is NO excuse for being unprepared for seminar discussions! Students should also actively seek relevant material beyond the reading list, and the volume of research on all aspects of African politics means you will never be short of something to read.
General textbooks / overview texts on African politics:

Harrison G. *Issues in the Contemporary Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa: The Dynamics of Struggle and Resistance*, (Basingstoke; Palgrave, 2002).
Thomson, A. *An Introduction to African Politics*, (London; Routledge, 2010).

General textbooks / overview texts on social movement studies and protest

McAdam, D., McCarthy, J.D. and Zald, M.N. (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

There are many more in the library – check them out and let me know if you find any that are particularly useful.
The studypack

The studypack contains key readings from books in short supply or not available in the Hugh Owen. It is not intended to provide the essential core reading for the course. It is a supplementary source for when elements of the core reading are unavailable elsewhere. It contains the following pieces:

5. Harrison, G. Issues in the Contemporary Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa: The Dynamics of Struggle and Resistance, (Basingstoke; Palgrave, 2002), chapter 1.
The web:
The internet contains many useful sources of information on contemporary African politics, movements, and news. In order to relieve the pressure on library resources and practice your research skills, you should make the most of the web, which is also much more up-to-date than many books and journal articles. The following websites are good starting points. You will undoubtedly find many more during your research. Use internet resources critically – ask who is writing them and why – and cite any sources fully in your essays.

News and country information:
The Foreign and Commonwealth Office: www.fco.gov.uk
Pambazuka news: www.pambazuka.org
BBC Africa: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/africa/
www.oneworld.net
http://allafrica.com/
Third World Network: http://www.twnside.org.sg/

Organisations and research institutions:
Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa: www.codesria.org
The Royal African Society: www.royalafricansociety.org
Institute of Security Studies: www.iss.co.za
World Development Movement: www.wdm.org.uk
The Nordic Africa Institute: http://www.nai.uu.se/
The Africa Union: www.africa-union.org
NEPAD: www.nepad.org
The Commission for Africa: http://www.commissionforafrica.info/
Afrobarometer survey data: http://www.afrobarometer.org/
International Crisis Group http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1098&l=1

The National Library:
The National Library houses a number of resources not found in the Hugh Owen, including reference works like *Africa South of the Sahara*, *The Africa Review* and *Africa Research Bulletin*. All students can obtain a reader’s ticket, so please make use of this excellent library and wonderful reading room.
NOVELS:
Africa has a rich literary tradition. Often novels can teach us as much about life, politics and society as academic texts can, and you are advised explore this aspect of Africa in your spare time. Below are a few suggestions:

Chinua Achebe (Nigeria)  Things Fall Apart
                   Anthills of the Savannah

Ngugi wa Thiong’o (Kenya)  Petals of Blood
                              The Devil on the Cross

Mariama Ba (Senegal)  So Long a Letter

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Nigeria)  Purple Hibiscus
                              Half of a Yellow Sun

T. Dangarembgra (Zimbabwe)  Nervous Condition

Camara Laye (Guinea)  The African Child

Ayi Kwei Armah (Ghana)  The Beautiful Ones are not Yet Born

Binyavanga Wainaina (Kenya)  One day I will write about this place

Peter Abrahams (South Africa)  A wreath for Udomo

J.M. Coetzee (South Africa)  Waiting for the Barbarians
                              Disgrace

Nadine Gordimer (South Africa)  Get a Life
                              Guest of Honour

Andre Brink (South Africa)  A Dry White Season

Wole Soyinka (Nigeria)  The burden of memory, the muse of forgiveness

J.E. Aqualusa (Angola)  The Book of Chameleons

Other

Ryszard Kapuściński  The Shadow of the Sun: My African Life

ASSESSMENT AND ESSAY QUESTIONS

The module is assessed on the basis of two essays of 4,000 words each. Each essay is worth 50 percent of the overall mark.

The deadline for the first essay is 15 March 2012. The deadline for the second essay is 10 May 2012. For both pieces of work e-mail your electronic copy by 2.30pm, and the hard copy is to be submitted by 4.30pm. Please see further guidelines on blackboard on ‘How to hand in your essay’.

The first essay (deadline: 15 March 2012)
Choose one of the titles listed below. Use examples and the theoretical literature to support your argument.

1. Explain how the power structures implicated in a) British colonialism in Kenya, b) African socialism in Tanzania, or c) Afrikaner nationalism in South Africa, have conditioned the forms of resistance against them.
2. Compare and contrast the successes and failures of any two of the following examples of resistance / protest in Africa: a) Mau Mau in Kenya; b) villagers in Nyerere’s Tanzania; c) Black Consciousness in South Africa; or d) Umkhonto we Sizwe.
3. Assess the usefulness of theories of resistance and protest for comprehending politics in Africa. Focus upon specific authors and empirical cases in your answer.
4. “Protest can itself be an index of change from tradition to modernity” (Mazrui, 1970: 1186). Discuss with reference to Africa.

The second essay (deadline: 10 May 2012)
Choose one of the titles listed below, or present your own title (in writing) to me by 23 April 2012 for approval. Use examples and the theoretical literature to support your argument.

1. Assess the degree to which an African protest or social movement (of your choice) has transformed state-society relations.
2. How useful are the concepts of a) class, b) neo-patrimonialism, c) race OR d) gender in explaining power and resistance in Africa?
3. “The postcolonial relationship is not primarily a relationship of resistance or of collaboration but can best be characterized as convivial” (Mbembe, 2001: 104). Discuss with reference to Africa.
Seminar Programme

1. Introduction [1 hour seminar]
2. Theories of protest, power and resistance I
3. Theories of protest, power and resistance II
4. Colonialism: Mau Mau in Kenya
5. Peasants: Ujamaa in Tanzania
6. Race: Black Consciousness in South Africa
7. Insurgency: The ANC abroad
8. Class: Trade Unions in Zambia
9. Patrimonialism: RUF in Sierra Leone
10. Oil: The Ogoni in Nigeria
11. African Renaissance and the Arab Spring: State-Society Relations Transformed?
Seminar Programme and List of Readings

1. **Introduction** [One hour seminar]

   The first class will be primarily introductory. I will explain how the course will be structured, and what I expect in terms of assessments and class participation.

   We will have a broader discussion of some of the themes and scope of the course through the lens of the North African revolts of 2010-2011. You are encouraged to draw on material about the Arab Spring already covered in semester I modules, as well as looking at the material below.

   Essential reading:


   Further reading:

2. **Theories of protest, power and resistance I**

Seminars two and three will set the theoretical context for the rest of the course. The theorists and approaches discussed here are intended to be enabling rather than restrictive; you are welcome to draw upon other approaches or theorists in class and in your essays should you wish. However, some theoretical engagement and understanding is expected of all students.

In this seminar we will discuss what might be called ‘mainstream’ approaches to protest, power and resistance, broadly conceived. Three particular approaches or frameworks will be discussed: the Marxist tradition; the liberal civil society tradition; and social movement studies. The three items of essential reading correspond to these three approaches or frameworks.

**Essential reading:**


**Further reading:**


McAdam, D., McCarthy, J.D. and Zald, M.N. (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).


3. Theories of protest, power and resistance II

This class builds upon the theoretical approaches discussed in the previous week, and explores three ‘alternative’, postcolonial or more specifically ‘African’ approaches to theorising protest, power and resistance.

We will discuss to what degree these approaches constitute genuine alternatives to more mainstream approaches, and whether the location or voice of the theorist matters when trying to understand African politics.

Essential reading:


Further reading:


Habib, A. and Opoku-Mensah, P. ‘Speaking to global debates through a national and continental

Harrison, G. Issues in the Contemporary Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa: The Dynamics of Struggle and Resistance, (Basingstoke; Palgrave, 2002).


4. Colonialism: Mau Mau in Kenya

In this class we will use the case study of Kenya, and the Mau Mau revolt against British colonialism, to discuss the ways in which colonialism structured power relations in British East Africa. We will consider what implications colonialism has had for subsequent forms of resistance.

The seminar will involve student presentations on the topic. We will also work in small groups addressing questions relating to the set texts. Questions to consider whilst reading include:

- In what ways was Mau Mau a product of British colonialism in Kenya?
- What repertoires of protest did Mau Mau employ?
- Why was Mau Mau demonized by the British colonial state and the white settlers?
- How successful was Mau Mau?

Essential reading:


Further reading:


Kershaw, G. *Mau Mau from below*, (London; James Currey, 1997). See also foreword by John Lonsdale.


Presley, C. A. *Kikuyu women, the Mau Mau rebellion, and social change in Kenya*, (Boulder; Westview, 1992), especially chapters 7 and 8.


Shaw, C.M. *Colonial Inscriptions: Race, Sex and Class in Kenya*, (Minneapolis; University of Minnesota Press, 1995), Chapter 6 ‘Mau Mau Discourses’.


5. Peasants: Ujamaa in Tanzania

In this class we will look at Julius Nyerere’s *ujamaa* policies in Tanzania, with particular focus on the policy of ‘villagization’. We will address the forms of peasant resistance and foot-dragging it inspired, and discuss the applicability of ‘peasant’ frameworks of analysis in Africa, the ‘infrapolitics’ (Scott, 1985; 1990) of small scale resistance to state power, and the rural/urban divide.

The seminar will involve student presentations on the topic. We will also work in small groups addressing questions relating to the set texts. Questions to consider as you read include:

- To what degree was ujamaa’s villagisation “a wild and irrational scheme which was bound to fail both the expectations of its planners and the material and social needs of its hapless victims”?
- What does Hyden mean when he describes Tanzanian peasants as ‘uncaptured’?
- Did ujamaa have an international dimension?
- Which of the theoretical approaches discussed in seminars 2 and 3 are most persuasive for explaining resistance to ujamaa?

Essential reading:

1. Hyden, G. *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and an Uncaptured Peasantry*, (University of California Press; 1980), chapter 4 ‘Small goes into hiding; Peasants and ujamaa’.

Further reading:

Harrison, G. *Issues in the Contemporary Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa: The Dynamics of Struggle and Resistance*, (Basingstoke; Palgrave, 2002), chapter 2.


McHenry, D.E. *Tanzania’s ujamaa villages: The implementation of a rural development strategy*, (Berkley; University of California, 1979).


6. Race: Black Consciousness in South Africa

In this class we will look at racial politics in apartheid South Africa, focussing on the life, trial and death of Steve Biko. This case enables both an initial discussion of the particular context of apartheid, as well as a lens through which to examine broader ideologies of pan-Africanism, negritude, and Black Consciousness.

The seminar will involve student presentations on the topic. We will also work in small groups addressing questions relating to the set texts. Questions to consider as you read include:

- To what degree was Black Consciousness “anti-racist racism”?
- Biko argued that “one cannot be a racist unless he has the power to subjugate.” Do you agree?
- Ahluwalia argues that negritude “was an important part of the development of a black awareness and consciousness which eventually paved the way for the liberation of Africa”. Do you agree?
- Does the achievement of a movement’s stated goals – such as the end of apartheid in South Africa – mean it has succeeded?

Essential reading:


Further reading:

Langley, J.A. *Ideologies of Liberation in Black Africa 1856-1970: Documents on modern African political thought from colonial times to the present*, (London; Rex Collings, 1979), especially section II.

Please see me for further resources on Steve Biko from the Biko Foundation.
7. Insurgency: The ANC abroad

In this class we will look at the ANC in exile in the period following the Soweto Uprising (1976) and the death of Steve Biko (1977). The activities of Umkhonto we Sizwe raise questions about the relationships between mass struggle, social movements, and armed insurgency. The role of violence, secrecy, authority, and guerrilla warfare in popular struggles will also be addressed. The broader international context of the struggle to end apartheid, and the beginning of the transformation, will be discussed.

The seminar will involve student presentations on the topic. We will also work in small groups addressing questions relating to the set texts. Questions to consider as you read include:

- How did the ANC’s experiences of exile affect the organization?
- How important was violence to anti-apartheid resistance, and was it justified?
- What consequences did the experiences of violent struggle and exile have for South Africa’s subsequent political culture?
- In the ANC’s 100th year (1912-2012) how is it presenting the history of South Africa?

Essential reading:


Further reading:

Gumede, W. M. *Thabo Mbeki and the Battle for the Soul of the ANC*, (Cape Town; Zebra Press, 2005), especially chapter 2 ‘Mbeki’s path to power’. 


Sparks, A. *Tomorrow is Another Country: The Inside Story of South Africa's Road to Change*, (Chicago; University of Chicago Press, 1996).


8. **Class: Trade Unions in Zambia**

In this class we will look at the transition to multiparty democracy in Zambia in the 1980s and 1990s, built on the back of the trade union movement (ZCTU) and the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD). This topic combines a focus on the applicability of class analysis to Africa, with an initial assessment of the wave of democratisation which swept the continent in the early 1990s.

The seminar will involve student presentations on the topic. We will also work in small groups addressing questions relating to the set texts. Questions to consider as you read include:

- What is ‘class’ and what constitutes a ‘class perspective’?
- How might we interpret Zambia’s transition to democracy from the 1980s to the 1990s from a class perspective?
- What does a class perspective bring into focus; and what does it leave invisible?
- What did multiparty democracy really change in Zambia?

**Essential reading:**


**Further reading:**


Burnell, P. ‘The party system and party politics in Zambia: Continuities past, present and future’, *African Affairs*, 100(399), (2001), pp. 239-263.


Ferguson, J. Expectations of Modernity: Myths and meanings of urban life on the Zambian Copperbelt, (Berkley; University of California Press, 1999).
Gyimah-Boadi, E. (ed.) Democratic Reform in Africa: The Quality of Progress, (Boulder; Lynne Rienner, 2004).
Nordlund, P. Organising the Political Agora: Domination and democratization in Zambia and Zimbabwe, (Uppsala, Uppsala University Press, 1996).
9. Patrimonialism: RUF in Sierra Leone

In this class we will look at the civil war in Sierra Leone in the 1990s, especially focussing on the rise of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Although this very complex conflict can be interpreted in many ways – most frequently as a ‘collapsed state’ or ‘greed-fuelled’ conflict over diamonds – we will examine Paul Richard’s claim that it was, at least in part, a reaction against patrimonial forms of authority in Sierra Leone.

The seminar will involve student presentations on the topic. We will also work in small groups addressing questions relating to the set texts. Questions to consider as you read include:

- Was the conflict caused by a “crisis of patrimonialism”?
- What role did ‘youth’ play in the conflict?
- What repertoires of protest and resistance were employed by the rebels?
- To what degree was the RUF the “product of the intellectual anger of an excluded educated intellectual elite”?

Essential reading:


Further reading:

Abdullah, I. (ed.) *Between democracy and terror: The Sierra Leone civil war*, (Dakar; CODESRIA, 2004).
Abdullah, I. (ed.), *Youth, Culture and Violence: the Sierra Leone civil war*, (Dakar; CODESRIA, 1998).
Bratton, M. and van de Walle, N. *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime transitions in*
comparative perspective, (Cambridge; CUP, 1997), Chapter 2 ‘Neopatrimonial Rule in Africa’.
Gberie, L. A dirty war in West Africa: The RUF and the destruction of Sierra Leone, (London; Hurst, 2005).
Keen, D. Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone, (Oxford; James Currey, 2005).
10. Oil: The Ogoni in Nigeria

In this class we will look at the struggles which have raged in the Niger Delta (Nigeria) for several decades. The campaigns of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) will provide a focussed case study, from which perspective we will also consider struggles in the delta before and since.

The seminar will involve student presentations on the topic. We will also work in small groups addressing questions relating to the set texts. Questions to consider as you read include:

- What were the advantages and disadvantages for MOSOP and the Ogoni in framing their struggle through the discourses of environmentalism and human rights?
- More recent protests in Nigeria have been far more violent – e.g. MEND and Boko Haram. Have these been more successful than MOSOP?
- Where should the people of the Niger Delta focus their protests: Shell, the Nigerian state, regional elites, international civil society, or elsewhere?

Essential reading:


See also the video and resources at [http://wiwavshell.org/](http://wiwavshell.org/)

Further reading:


Frynas, J.G. *Oil in Nigeria: Conflict and litigation between oil companies and village communities* (New Brunswick; Transaction Publishers, 2000).

Haynes, J. ‘Power, politics and environmental movements in the Third World’, *Environmental*


11. African Renaissance and the Arab Spring: State-Society Relations Transformed?

In this class we will place the struggles and movements we have examined so far in the broader context of the discourses of ‘African Renaissance’ and transformation which have been articulated in the last decade. These discourses are closely linked to the so-called ‘South African miracle’, and their broader applicability both within and beyond South Africa’s borders are debateable. However, one could also link the revolts and revolutions in 2010-2011 in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya to a revival of African protest. This final class will put African protest and social movements into their global context, which arguably includes a rise in transnational protest and the emergence of new social forces.

The seminar will involve a group discussion on the topic. We will also work in small groups addressing questions relating to the entire module. Questions to consider as you read include:

- Are the protests we have examined on this course distinctively ‘African’ in any way?
- Which theoretical perspectives have been most useful to understand them?
- To what extent have these protests transformed state-society relations in their local contexts?

Essential reading:


Further reading:


