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Regime Change and Succession Politics in Africa

Five Decades of Misrule

Edited by
Maurice Nyamanga Amutabi and
Shadrack Wanjala Nasong'o



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Abbreviations

ABC	All Basotho Convention
ABN	Association for a Better Nigeria
ACP	Alliance of Congress Parties
AFDL	Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaire
ANC	African National Congress
ANY	Amalgamated Nigerian Youth
AU	African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BCP	Basutoland/Botswana Congress Party
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BLP	Botswana Labour Party
BNF	Botswana National Front
BNP	Basotho National Party
BOCONGO	Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organizations
BOFEPUSU	Botswana Federation of Public Sector Unions
BPP	Botswana Peoples Party
BWP	Botswana Workers' Party
CCM	Chama Cha Mapinduzi
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIO	Central Intelligence Organization
CNC	Committee for National Consensus
COTU	Central Organization of Trade Unions
DCEC	Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crimes
DIS	Directorate of Intelligence and Security
DP	Democratic Party
DPP	Director of Public Prosecution
DPN	Democratic Party of Nigeria

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DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECK	Electoral Commission of Kenya
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDU	Ethiopian Democratic Union
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
EISA	Electoral Institute of South Africa
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
EPRP	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party
ERP	Economic Recovery Program
EU	European Union
FDC	Forum for Democratic Change
FNLC	National Front for the Liberation of Congo
FORD-K	Forum for Restoration of Democracy in Kenya
FPTP	First Past the Post
FRELIMO	National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique
GDM	Grassroots Democratic Movement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEMA	Gikuyu, Embu, Meru Association
GNP	Gross National Product
GNU	Government of National Unity
HDI	Human Development Index
HPI	Human Poverty Index
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICPC	Independent Corrupt Practices Commission
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IFI	International Financial Institutions
IG	Inspectorate of Government
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
IPA	Interim Political Authority
IPPG	Inter-Parties Parliamentary Group
IPU	International Parliamentary Union
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KCGA	Kenya Coffee Growers Association
KFA	Kenya Farmers Association
KGGCU	Kenya Grain Growers Cooperative Union
KPCU	Kenya Planters Cooperative Union
KPU	Kenya People's Union
KY	Kabaka Yekka Party
LCD	Lesotho Congress for Democracy

LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
LPC	Lesotho People's Congress
LWP	Lesotho Workers Party
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MFP	Marema-Tlou Freedom Party
MLC	Movement for the Liberation of Congo
MMD	Movement for Multiparty Democracy
MMP	Mixed Member Proportional (electoral system)
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPR	Popular Movement for the Revolution
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NAC	National Alliance for Change
NACYAN	National Council of Youth Associations in Nigeria
NADECO	National Democratic Coalition
NAK	National Alliance Party of Kenya
NANS	National Association of Nigerian Students
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
NCC	National Consultative Council
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NDF	National Democratic Front
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NDP	National Democratic Party/National Development Party
NIP	National Independent Party
NLC	National Liberation Council
NPC	Northern People's Congress
NPK	National Party of Kenya
NPN	National Party of Nigeria
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NRA	National Resistance Army
NRC	National Republican Convention
NRM/A	National Resistance Movement/Army
NTC	National Transitional Council
NUPENG	National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers
NYO	Nigerian Youth Organization
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
PALU	Unified Lumumbist Party (Parti Lumumbiste Unifié)
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PF	Patriotic Front
PPRD	People's Party for Reconstruction and Development

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PR	Proportional Representation
PRP	People's Redemption Party
PUSO	United Socialist Party
RC	Resistance Council
RCD	Congolese Rally for Democracy
RPF	Rwanda Patriotic Front
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDP	Social Democratic Party
SGDG	SADC Declaration on Gender and Development
SID	Society for International Development
SRC	Student Representative Council
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SWAPO	South-West Africa People's Organization
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
UANC	United African National Congress
UDF	Uganda Defense Forces
UDPS	Union for Democracy and Social Progress (Union pour la Democratie et le Progrès Social)
UNCP	United Nigeria Congress Party
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIP	United National Independence Party
UNLF	Uganda National Liberation Front
UPC	Uganda People's Congress
UPM	Uganda Patriotic Movement
USA	United States of Africa
YEAA	Youths Earnestly Ask for Abacha
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement

Preface

Every year, elections take place in many countries in Africa, ushering in new regimes and administrations. Besides democratic elections, there are regime changes brought about by revolutions, coups, and other factors. Therefore, the continent needs constant appraisal on regime change and succession politics. For that reason, this book comes out at a very appropriate time in African democratic transition. Many changes have taken place in Africa in the last decade that require scholarly analysis and interpretation. Because some of the changes are so rapid, Africa may need a book such as this every few years. The book is a useful addition for teachers of social sciences and humanities on Africa. We know that teaching Africa-related topics on regime and succession politics can be a huge challenge.

Teaching political science, history, sociology, and other social sciences and humanities can be a challenge because there are not many books on the subject of regimes and succession politics on the market, and the available few are in dire need of updating. We are aware that regime and succession politics in Africa remain volatile almost 20 years after the return of multiparty politics on the continent, which makes this book useful. Tension, violence, and death accompany elections throughout the continent. Although there have been exceptional cases where there has been smooth transition, all these events need to be recorded and analyzed by scholars. Because Africa is not homogenous, there is a need to address each country on its own merit, an approach that this book pursues.

Transition remains controversial and difficult in many parts of Africa. There was bloodshed in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Ivory Coast following disputed presidential elections in 2007, 2008, and 2010, respectively. Incumbents came out fighting in these three countries, seeking to hold on to power and demonize the opposition. In Kenya, sanity was restored through a power-sharing deal in which incumbent President Mwai Kibaki agreed to share power with the popular opposition leader, Raila Odinga, after a peaceful agreement brokered by the international community through former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Mwai Kibaki retained the presidency and Raila Odinga accepted the position of prime minister in a coalition government. The coalition remained shaky due to mutual suspicion,

and everyone wished that this would mark an end to such arrangements in Africa's quest for democracy.

In Zimbabwe, a power-sharing deal brokered by South Africa with the backing of the international community saw a reluctant dictator, Robert Mugabe, agreeing to share power with his more popular opposition leader, Morgan Tsvangirai. Tsvangirai accepted the position of prime minister, but Mugabe and his party, Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), remained recalcitrant and undermined the prime minister and his Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) at every opportunity. Several attempts have been made on the life of Tsvangirai; in one attempt his wife perished. It was unanimous to many observers of Africa's political scene that the Kenyan and Zimbabwean experiments were bad for Africa, because they meant that incumbents could hold on to power even after losing elections in the hope that there would be a power-sharing deal brokered by some outside force or authority.

Coalition government experiments in Kenya and Zimbabwe attracted a lot of criticism because many felt that if this practice became widespread, it would undermine democracy in Africa. There was no doubt that the power-sharing arrangements in Kenya and Zimbabwe gave some dictators in Africa hope that they could share power even when they lost elections. But there are those who thought the coalitions were only temporary solutions to stop escalation of violence to prevent Kenya and Zimbabwe from degenerating into failed states. As some of the chapters in this book demonstrate, all states in Africa suffer from certain structural and institutional instabilities than can only improve with time. Many of the weaknesses need protracted and thorough reforms and call for patience and understanding, especially electoral bodies. The electoral bodies and courts are never independent and nonpartisan. They pander to internal and external interests, highly influenced by local political and economic elites as well as social, cultural, and ethnic jingoists and extremists. Many of the leaders are captive to these interests and cling on to power on behalf of them. The case of Cote d'Ivoire in 2010 demonstrates this issue most adroitly.

In the 2010 presidential elections in Cote d'Ivoire, President Laurent Gbagbo clearly lost the election but refused to concede defeat and hand over power to his political nemesis, Alassane Ouattara, who was declared the winner. Laurent Gbagbo was captive to ethnic and regional interests of the south of the country who regarded Alassane Ouattara as an outsider and nonindigenous because his parents were immigrants from a neighboring country. Cote d'Ivoire had come from a bloody civil war on the same grounds of contestation between indigenous and nonindigenous. The wounds opened up once more in 2010. Both Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara claimed victory and started digging in and forming parallel governments amid great tensions and hostility.

Not surprisingly, mediators pointed to Kenyan and Zimbabwean experiments as a possible solution to the political stalemate in Cote D'Ivoire. The

odds were clearly against Gbagbo because Ouattara's victory was recognized by a majority of election observers, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU), and many heads of state from West Africa. Even as fighting broke out in the capital Abidjan, disrupting services and even the export of cocoa, Gbagbo remained obstinate and refused to hand over power to victorious Ouattara. Like other dictators elsewhere Gbagbo challenged the vote count, alleging that there was massive fraud in Ouattara's strongholds in the north and parts of Abidjan. He called for the cancellation of results in Ouattara's strongholds and corrupted the Constitutional Council, which declared him the winner on a technicality. Unfortunately, it was only Gbagbo and the Constitutional Council who seemed to know what the technicality was.

If structures and institutions in Cote d'Ivoire were in place, the bloodbath would have been avoided. If the Constitutional Council had been neutral and nonpartisan, there is no doubt that the outcome would have been different and the opinion of the majority would have been respected. Although the bloodbath and ethnic cleansing that took place in Abidjan and other parts of the country have been blamed on former president Gbagbo, the problem lies squarely in weak structures and institutions. Abidjan was under siege from competing militias and in a state of civil unrest that needed to be arrested by security forces. Of course, Gbagbo is partly to blame for barricading himself in the presidential residence, in a bunker with his wife, while the country burned. Nevertheless, Cote d'Ivoire was rescued from becoming a failed state when Gbagbo was arrested by the Republican Army of Cote d'Ivoire, which shifted allegiance to Ouattara, who was sworn in as president at the hotel where he had sought refuge under UN and French forces. Gbagbo was detained in the north of the country until November 2011, when he was extradited to face trial at the International Criminal Court at The Hague.

Largely due to weak structures and institutions in many countries on the continent, the role of external forces in bringing about order cannot be ignored or wished away. The response to the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire by ECOWAS and the international community was remarkably swift and impressive, and it was responsible for saving the country from collapse. It was concerted and unanimous and may have partly contributed to the change of fortunes for Alassane Ouattara's forces and the military. The UN and French forces protected Alassane Ouattara throughout the ordeal. They also helped in pulling Gbagbo and his wife out of the bunker in the presidential fortress where they had taken refuge when everything else was falling apart.

The removal of Laurent Gbagbo emboldened many groups fighting against dictators on the continent. His humiliation as he was pulled out of the bunker in his pajamas should have been a warning to dictators on the continent to shape up or ship out. Unfortunately, dictators did not heed the warning, and this was the reason for the uprisings in North Africa, known

as cyber or e-Revolutions because they were engineered by social media and young people. The e-Revolutions were remarkable for three reasons. First, they emerged by surprise and were never anticipated by even the keenest observers of politics in Africa. Second, they were led by mainly young people in universities and high schools who called for action through Facebook and Twitter accounts. Third, they raised genuine grievances, were well organized and coordinated, and determined to achieve their objectives.

In one of the most dramatic revolutions by the people on the African continent in the recent past, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia was removed through popular protest following month long demonstrations and violent riots by students and the *hoi polloi* in Tunisia. The demonstrators used social media to organize and call for meetings. There followed riots, demonstrations, and confrontation with the police and military in which many were killed. Soon it became clear to Ben Ali that the police and military could not quell the riots. The removal of Ben Ali from power on January 14, 2011, brought wonderful New Year's news to many African lovers of democracy. His removal heralded a new beginning for the importance of social media in Africa because Facebook and other social media sites were instrumental in calling out people to street protests and announcing progress. The dictator was forced to run away into exile in Saudi Arabia, together with his wife, Leila Ben Ali, as well as their three children. The removal of Ben Ali in Tunisia heralded events elsewhere in Africa, especially in Egypt and Libya.

In Egypt, youths organized peaceful protests in Cairo, asking for Hosni Mubarak to step down as president after over 30 years in power. Many observers laughed the demands off. Soon after, Tahrir Square became the center of protests. The square soon drew thousands of people who joined the vast plaza area that became the headquarters of the protests. Soon other cities, such as Alexandria, followed in the protests. As expected, Hosni Mubarak responded by unleashing police and the military on the people with truncheons and live bullets, following which many were maimed and killed. Mubarak labeled the protestors as agents of Al-Qaeda and the opposition and made impassioned speeches and pleas with the people, which were all simply ignored. The crowds at Tahrir Square became even bigger and more determined. Mubarak was forced to step down. The stepping down of Hosni Mubarak as president of Egypt in 2011 marked another high point in the e-Revolutions in Africa. He had been one of the enduring dictators, and when he left office, there was a feeling that there was no dictator in Africa who could defy the new democratic wave, led by mainly young people. Unfortunately for Egypt, the military hijacked the revolution and did not overhaul the dictatorial structures that Mubarak had created over the years. Even his trial for abuse of office and for unleashing violence on demonstrators during the protests at Tahrir Square has been seen largely as symbolic and a sham, because the trial is handled by Mubarak's loyalists.

Removal of dictators is never easy, as the people of Libya realized. The dictators will always come out fighting, as Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe

has shown. Gadaffi's flight from his palace in Tripoli to his hometown of Sirte, from where he mounted an orchestrated fight to reclaim his position, only made the resolve of the rebels and international community even more determined. Gadaffi's last stand when the whole world knew that he had no hope of reclaiming Tripoli was bizarre and accompanied by false optimism, arrogance, and dictatorial fatalism. It was clear that the former dictator was committing mass suicide with people from his hometown of Sirte. His story was even more bizarre and comical when he was caught by the rebel forces hiding in a drainage culvert waving a golden gun and imagining that he was still president. His story had a lot of similarities with that of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, found by American forces hiding in a hole. Saddam Hussein is reported to have come out from the hole shouting that he was the president of Iraq and was ready to negotiate. Gadaffi reportedly extended a similar opportunity to the rebels even as he bled from wounds inflicted by NATO air raids on his convoy. Dictators never cease to amaze!

There are many significant lessons to learn from the dislodging and death of Muamar Gadaffi in 2011 after 42 years in power. The first lesson is that dictators will do everything imaginable and unimaginable to retain power. Even as Sirte was falling and was surrounded, it is surprising that Gadaffi still demanded more shelling of rebel positions and fighting when the most logical thing to do would have been to surrender or go into exile. During the early parts of the uprising, he sent out sorties to bomb Libya's refineries in Benghazi and other cities to keep the oil resources away from rebels. The second lesson is that no dictator is invincible to the people. Gadaffi took the resolve of the protesters for granted and insisted that he would crush them like rats and cockroaches. The reverse of fortunes was so ironic because it was Gadaffi who found himself in a sewage culvert where cockroaches and rats often lurk. Third, Gadaffi's fall was a lesson to benevolent dictators that economic development and sharing resources with the people without commensurate democratic space would not do. Gadaffi had created some welfare structures in Libya that allowed some resources to reach the people, but the structures were amorphous and unclear in many ways. It all depended on his whims and patronage. The people wanted more freedom. They wanted more say on how national resources were allocated and spent. They got tired of Gadaffi's pretended benefaction and patronage and his attempts to create a dynasty in Libya.

Surprisingly, over a dozen states in Africa have not had regime changes for over two decades. Some scholars have argued that with so many dictators on the continent, why should we even talk of regime change. In Equatorial Guinea, Teodoro Obiang Nguema has been in power since 1979, when he took power in a bloody coup. He has since instituted a dictatorship that has attracted attention due to human rights violations and corruption and wastage of funds emanating from oil. Another long-serving leader is José Eduardo dos Santos of Angola, who has been in power since

1979. Eduardo dos Santos has instituted a dictatorship in which his word is law. He has consolidated power and controls a lot of money from oil in Cabinda. He is accused of making deals with all kinds of wheeler-dealers. Robert Gabriel Mugabe of Zimbabwe has been in power since 1980, when Zimbabwe became independent. He has survived through the rigging of elections and continues to hold on to power using all manner of underhand tactics against the opposition. He is almost 90 years old and vows that he will contest the next election. Mugabe is perhaps the most famous and most loathed dictator on the African continent today.

The list of African strongmen and dictators would not be complete without the mention of Paul Biya of Cameroon, who has been in power since 1982. Biya is the only president in the world who spends more time outside his country than inside it each year, on overseas trips and at the French Riviera and elsewhere in Europe. He has consolidated power to a point that he is always able to manipulate the opposition during every election cycle, making it possible for him to be reelected. Like Paul Biya, Yoweri Museveni has also denied Ugandans a chance for regime change by changing the constitution many times to suit his interests, including choosing those to run against him in presidential elections. In power since 1986 in Uganda, he has created a police state in which his party—National Revolutionary Movement (NRM)—remains dominant using deceitful means. A former revolutionary and strong admirer of Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Museveni is today regarded as one of the worst dictators on the African continent. His security forces have visited untold violence on the opposition leader, Kizza Besigye, and his supporters. His government has also pushed for some forms of legislation that are regarded by many as draconian and against the principles of human rights. Gadaffi's death was not received well by Ugandan dictator Yoweri Museveni, who remarked that those who killed Gadaffi were cowards. In Zimbabwe, dictator Robert Mugabe expelled the Libyan ambassador to Zimbabwe for recognizing the National Transitional Council (NTC) in Tripoli. Dictators on the continent were clearly nervous, and many of them knew that their days were numbered.

The president of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, is also regarded as a dictator. Yoweri Museveni helped Kagame to ascend to power in Rwanda by supporting the forces of Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) to storm into Kigali. As a political student of Museveni, Paul Kagame has taken to harassing opponents and scaring others into exile. Like Museveni, he has focused his attention on improving the economy while at the same time endearing himself to external powers. The other strongmen in Africa who have been around for a long time include Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, Isaias Aferworki of Eritrea, Omar Al-Bashir of Sudan, Idris Derby of Chad, Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, and Yahya Jammeh of Gambia. But despite the negative narratives about unsuccessful regime changes in Africa, there have been a few brilliant examples. Ghana is one of the leading examples from Africa, with three successful transitions from Jerry Rawlings to John

Kufuor and then to John Atta Mills. Zambia is the other success story in political transition.

The election of Michael Chilufya Sata as president in Zambia on September 23, 2011, was one of the many political tsunamis that Africa witnessed in 2011. The year marked a high point in Africa's democracy and issues of regime change and succession politics. As Zambia's fifth president (after Kenneth Kaunda, Frederick Chiluba, Levy Mwanawasa, and Rupiah Banda), Zambia clearly demonstrated that Africa could undergo successful democratic transition. Sata's political party, the Patriotic Front (PF), is the third party to rule Zambia after Kenneth Kaunda's United National Independence Party (UNIP) and Frederick Chiluba's MMD. The remarkable thing about the presidential election in Zambia is that former president Rupiah Banda conceded defeat, handed power to his rival, and moved on. The peaceful transition in Zambia seems to have provided a good background for Senegal, where elections were held in March 2012.

In March 2012, Dakar and other Senegalese cities broke into celebration when 85-year-old President Abdoulaye Wade was defeated in the second round of voting by his former protégé, Macky Sall. Wade was running for a controversial third term, beyond the two allowed in Senegal's constitution. The concession of defeat by President Abdoulaye Wade indicated to the world that politics was changing in Africa. The concession was regarded as a major milestone in Africa's democracy. Some analysts have argued that the two are friends because Macky Sall once served as prime minister under Abdoulaye Wade, and the election simply exchanged a privileged individual by another. Many had feared that Wade would try to stay in office by challenging the results of the runoff. In office since 2000, Wade fell to the temptation that many African incumbent heads of state fall into by trying to stay beyond their allowed mandate by changing the constitution or using all manner of tactics to stay in power. Pundits were worried that Wade was creating a dynasty when he had started to prepare his son Karim to succeed him. Karim was head of two important ministries—infrastructure and energy—and was one of the most powerful people in Senegal outside the presidency. Democracy triumphed in Senegal, and Abdoulaye Wade's aristocratic hereditary ambitions were thwarted.

Despite the good news from Ghana, Zambia, and Senegal, there is no doubt that the fall of Gadaffi marked one of the most important epochs for the 'Big Man' syndrome in Africa. The removal and death of Muammar Gaddafi in Libya in 2011 and the arrest of former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo and opening of his trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) at The Hague in 2012 are indications that there have been great changes in terms of regime and succession politics in Africa.

Maurice Nyamanga Amutabi, Nairobi, Kenya, March 30, 2012

Shadrack Wanjala Nasong'o, Memphis, Tennessee, U.S., March 30, 2012

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We know that Africa's democratic transition has been wobbly and tumultuous, and it is our sincere hope that this volume meaningfully contributes to the debate on democracy in Africa.

Maurice Nyamanga Amutabi, Nairobi, March 30, 2012

Shadrack Wanjala Nasong'o, Memphis, Tennessee, March 30, 2012

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