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978-0-521-19112-8 - Democracy in Africa: Successes, Failures, and the Struggle for Political Reform

Nic Cheeseman

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Democracy in Africa

This book provides the first comprehensive overview of the history of democracy in Africa and explains why the continent's democratic experiments have so often failed, as well as how they could succeed. Nic Cheeseman grapples with some of the most important questions facing Africa and democracy today, including whether international actors should try to promote democracy abroad, how to design political systems that manage ethnic diversity, and why democratic governments often make bad policy decisions. Beginning in the colonial period with the introduction of multiparty elections and ending in 2013 with the collapse of democracy in Mali and South Sudan, the book describes the rise of authoritarian states in the 1970s; the attempts of trade unions and some religious groups to check the abuse of power in the 1980s; the remarkable return of multiparty politics in the 1990s; and, finally, the tragic tendency for elections to exacerbate corruption and violence.

Nic Cheeseman is the Associate Professor of African Politics at Oxford University. He is the co-editor of the collections *Our Turn to Eat* (2010) and *The Handbook of African Politics* (2013). He is also the editor of the journal *African Affairs*, a member of the advisory board of the UNICEF Chair on Communication Research (Africa), and an advisor to, and writer for, Kofi Annan's African Progress Panel.

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*Successes, Failures, and the Struggle
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Nic Cheeseman

University of Oxford



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For my parents

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If a [democratic] society displays less brilliance than an aristocracy, there will also be less wretchedness; pleasures will be less outrageous and well-being will be shared by all.

“If a democratic republic similar to that of the United States were ever founded in a country where the power of a single individual had previously subsisted, and the effects of a centralized administration had sunk deep into the habits and the laws of the people, I do not hesitate to assert, that in that country a more insufferable despotism would prevail than any which now exists in the monarchical States of Europe, or indeed than any which could be found on this side of the confines of Asia.”

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 1835

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Acronyms

ABAKO	Alliance of Bakongo
ACFODE	Action for Development
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ANC	African National Congress
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ASP	Afro-Shirazi Party
AU	African Union
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
CAR	Central African Republic
CCM	Chama cha Mapinduzi
CDR	Coalition for the Defence of the Republic
CDRs	Committee for the Defence of the Revolution
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIAT	International Committee in Support of the Transition
CNDD-FDD	National Council for the Defense of Democracy– Forces for the Defense of Democracy
CNPC	Chinese National Petroleum Corporation
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
CONAKAT	Confederation of Tribal Associations of Katanga
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPDM	Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CPP	Convention People’s Party
DfID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo

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ACRONYMS

DTA	Democratic Turnhalle Alliance
EC	European Commission
ECK	Electoral Commission of Kenya
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EIDHR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights
EU	European Union
FEC	Federal Executive Council
FH	Freedom House
FNL	Palipehutu National Liberation Forces
FOCAC	Forum of China-Africa Cooperation
FORD	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy
FPI	Front Populaire Ivoirien
FPTP	First Past the Post
FRELIMO	Liberation Front of Mozambique
FRODEBU	Hutu Front for Democracy in Burundi
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSU	General Service Unit
HDI	Human Development Index
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICG	International Crisis Group
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MMD	Movement for Multi-Party Democracy
MMM	Mauritian Militant Movement
MNC	Congolese National Movement
MNC – K	Congolese National Movement – Kalonji
MNC – L	Congolese National Movement – Lumumba
MONESTO	Togolese National Movement of Students and Trainees
MONUC	United Nations Organization in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament

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ACRONYMS

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MPCI	Mouvement Patriotique pour la Côte d'Ivoire
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
MPR	Popular Movement of the Revolution
MRND	National Revolutionary Movement for Development
MUZ	Mineworker's Union of Zambia
NaRC	National Rainbow Coalition
NCA	National Constitutional Assembly
NCNC	National Council of Nigerian Citizens
NCP	National Congress Party
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NEC	National Electoral Commission
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NP	National Party
NPC	Northern People's Congress
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NRA	National Resistance Army
NRM	National Revolutionary Movement
NURTW	National Union of Road Transport Workers
OAU	Organisation for African Unity
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
ONEL	Observatoire National des Elections
ONUC	United Nations Operation in the Congo
PAC	Pan-African Congress
PAI	African Independence Party
PAIGC	African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde
PCD	Communist Party of Dahomey
PDCI	Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PDS	Senegalese Democratic Party
PF	Patriotic Front
PNU	Party of National Unity
PRC	People's Republic of China
PRPB	People's Revolutionary Party of Benin
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PS	Parti Socialiste du Sénégal

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ACRONYMS

RDR	Rassemblement des Républicains
RENAMO	Mozambican National Resistance
RND	National Democratic Rally
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
RTP	Rally of the Togolese People
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
SMC	Supreme Military Council
SNC	Sovereign National Conference
SNM	Somali National Movement
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
TAA	Tanganyika African Association
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
UDF	United Democratic Front
UGCC	United Gold Coast Convention
UIC	Union of Islamic Courts
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNAVEM	United Nations Angola Verification Mission
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIP	United National Independence Party
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNOB	United Nations Office in Burundi
UPC	Uganda People's Congress
UPRONA	Tutsi Union for National Progress
UPS	Senegalese Progressive Union
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UWONET	Uganda Women's Network
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African Liberation Army
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
ZCTU	Zambia Congress of Trade Unions
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZNA	Zimbabwe National Army

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Acknowledgements

It is difficult, if not impossible, to write a book about the history of a continent on your own. Even the most avid traveller would struggle to amass the knowledge and experience required to tell the many stories that can be found across Africa without a little help from their friends. This is particularly true if you are at the start of your career, when you have no option but to draw on the books and articles you have read, the talks and lectures you have attended, and the arguments and ideas of those around you. In this way, academic work is a form of collective endeavour.

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The task of summarizing 80 years of history in just 80,000 words is not an easy one, and it forced me to look for concise ways of characterizing complex periods and peoples without doing too much violence to life's rich tapestry. I did so by trying out ideas in seminars, lectures, and discussions whenever the opportunity arose. In this regard, I am particularly grateful to the participants of the African Studies

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