

# POLC42

## Topics in Comparative Politics

### African Politics

Week 9: African militaries, coups d'état, and political instability

# Coup in Amhara?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uwo5kpYBejA>

# Coup in Amhara?



# Coup in Zimbabwe?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ySSAbOMyjA>

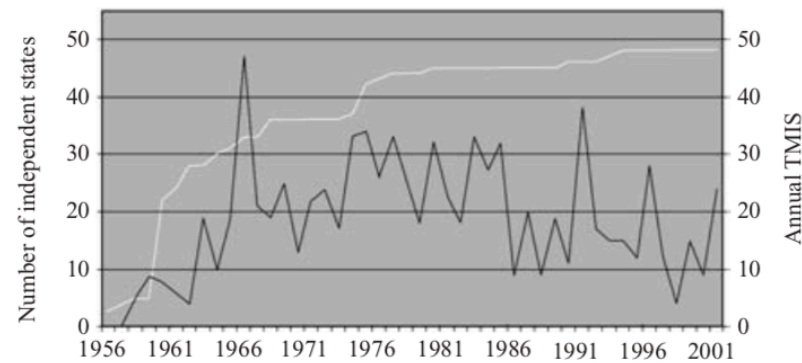
What is a coup d'état?

# Coups d'état in Africa

Successful and failed coups by five-year periods, 1956–2001

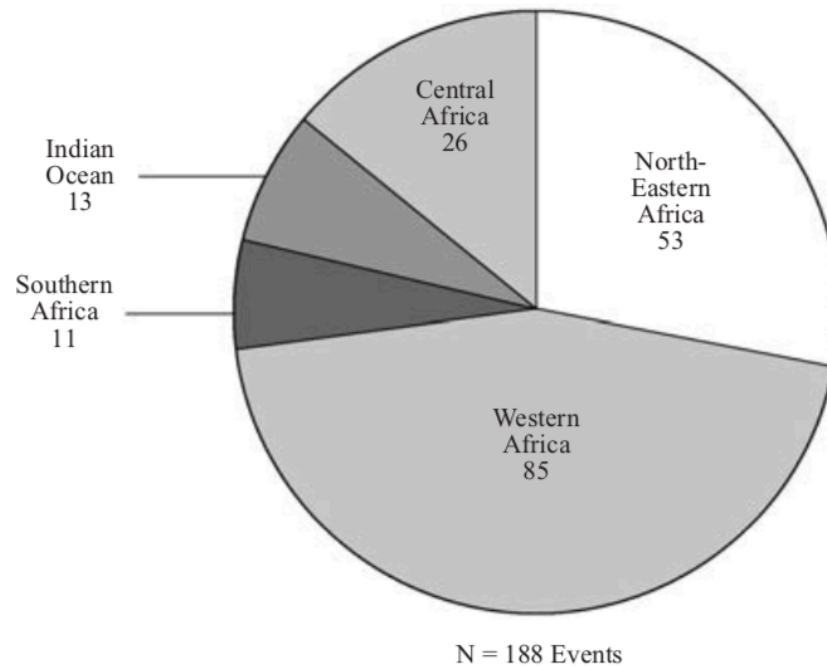
Period	Successful coups	Failed coups	Total	Success rate (%)
1956–60	2	4	6	33.3
1961–65	6	7	13	46.2
1966–70	17	6	23	73.9
1971–75	12	15	27	44.4
1976–80	15	15	30	50.0
1981–85	10	19	29	34.5
1986–90	5	8	13	38.5
1991–95	5	21	26	19.2
1996–2001	8	13	21	38.1

Successful and failed military *coups d'état* in sub-Saharan Africa, 1956–2001 (by year).



# Geographic distribution of coups d'état in Africa

Geographical distribution of failed and successful African military *coups d'état*, 1956–2001



# Varieties of military rule according to Nugent

- Caretakers:
  - Togo 1963
  - Benin 1963
  - Ghana 1966
- Reformers and redeemers:
  - Ghana 1972
  - Nigeria 1966



# Varieties of military rule according to Nugent

- Usurpers:
  - CAR 1966
  - Uganda 1971
  - Togo 1967
- Praetorian Marxists:
  - Congo-Brazzaville 1968
  - Benin 1972
  - Ethiopia 1974

# Caretaker military rule: the case of Togo

- Assassination of President Sylvanus Olympio by Gnassingbé Eyadéma and colleagues
- Installation of Nicolas Grunitzky and Antoine Meatchi in power



# Corrective military rule: the case of Ghana

- Coup led by Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong
- Economic nationalism and 'war on the economy'



# Usurper military rule: the case of CAR

- The Saint-Sylvestre coup of Jean-Bédél Bokassa
- Proclamation of empire



# Praetorian Marxist military rule: the case of Ethiopia

- Nagelle rebellion and mass protests against Haile Selassie
- Derg regime, led by Mengistu Haile Mariam
- Ethiopian Civil War, Red Terror (up to 0.75 million dead), and the 1983-1985 famine (~1.2 million dead)



# Performance of military regimes

- Increased military budgets, and army salaries
- Human rights abuses
- Political freedoms
- Economic growth

**Appendix 6.1** Economic performance of selected countries with a history of military governance, 1960–87

Country	1960–70	1970–79	1980–87
Ethiopia	4.4**	1.9	0.9
Somalia	1.0**	2.7	2.2
Ghana	2.1**	-0.1	1.4
Upper Volta/Burkina Faso	3.0**	-0.1	5.6
Benin	2.6	3.3	2.8
Zaire	3.6	-0.7	1.6
Central African Republic/Empire	1.9	3.3	2.0
Congo-Brazzaville*	2.7	2.9	5.5
Uganda	5.9**	-0.4	0.4
Togo	8.5	3.6	-0.5
Nigeria*	3.1**	7.5	-1.7

Note: \* includes oil \*\* civilian or mostly civilian

Source: Tables from World Bank, *World Development Report, 1981* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1981), pp. 136–7; World Bank, *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1989), pp. 222–3.

# Causes of coups according to Decalo

- Personal interests of putchists

# Causes of coups according to Nugent

- Soldiers' corporate and individual interests
- Africanization and rapid military expansion
- Professionalization and expectation of remuneration
- Political tampering in internal military matters, including (perceived) ethnic favouritism
- Use of the military of partisan ends
- Lack of institutional coherence and internal ethnic politics



What is the relationship between the incidence of coups and the nature of Africa's states and states-system?

What is the relationship between the incidence of coups and neopatrimonialism?

What is the relationship between the incidence of coups and the politics of identity?

Kahoot!