

Gender, Development and Social Change

Series Editor

Wendy Harcourt

The International Institute of Social Studies

Erasmus University

The Hague, The Netherlands

The *Gender, Development and Social Change* series brings together path-breaking writing from gender scholars and activist researchers who are engaged in development as a process of transformation and change. The series pinpoints where gender and development analysis and practice are creating major 'change moments'. Multidisciplinary in scope, it features some of the most important and innovative gender perspectives on development knowledge, policy and social change. The distinctive feature of the series is its dual nature: to publish both scholarly research on key issues informing the gender and development agenda as well as featuring young scholars and activists' accounts of how gender analysis and practice is shaping political and social development processes. The authors aim to capture innovative thinking on a range of hot spot gender and development debates from women's lives on the margins to high level global politics. Each book pivots around a key 'social change' moment or process conceptually envisaged from an intersectional, gender and rights based approach to development.

More information about this series at
<http://www.palgrave.com/gp/series/14999>

Awino Okech
Editor

Gender, Protests
and Political Change
in Africa

palgrave
macmillan

Editor

Awino Okech
Centre for Gender Studies
SOAS, University of London
London, UK

Gender, Development and Social Change

ISBN 978-3-030-46342-7

ISBN 978-3-030-46343-4 (eBook)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-46343-4>

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer
Nature Switzerland AG 2020

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

FOREWORD

Non-violent uprising—through which citizens challenge oppression and promote social and political change—has been a recurrent theme throughout history. In the last decade of the twentieth century, while mass protests and people power toppled many tyrannical regimes in Eastern Europe following the end of the Cold War, a different dynamic obtained in some other parts of the world. With few exceptions, most noticeably in South Africa, which witnessed the end of apartheid, the end of bipolar rivalry opened the gateway to armed insurrection against erstwhile authoritarian states in Africa. The continent drew the world's attention to a scale of humanitarian tragedy not seen in the previous era, at the core of which was the abuse of young women and men in war. The recruitment of young people under the age of 18 years as soldiers in war and the impunity that accompanied the astronomical rise in sex and gender-based violence in war presented an important challenge for the international community at the turn of the century.

Gender, Protests and Political Change in Africa brings into focus, the transformations that are occurring in a continent where generalised state of armed conflict has steadily given way to a different kind of state-society relationship. From an initial marker of democratic transition, in which organised civil society was the space in which governments were held to account, we have seen a shrinking of civil society space due to either co-optation or a reclaiming of that space by a new authoritarian drift. This is, however, not limited to Africa, but also an emerging trend in other

regions of the world. In place of organised civil society, young men and women, that were easy prey to government and political opposition at war only a few decades ago, have reclaimed their agency. No longer are they pawns in political fights that destroyed their future and offer them no societal recognition in the present day. This book aptly captures the turning of the tide in places like Tunisia, Ethiopia, South Africa and Sudan. African youth, including student movements, with no assigned or formal roles in society take to the streets to protest the injustices of their time. This new generation social movement and its dynamic engagement with technology and the social media space gives it an edge not seen in the previous era.

To be sure, the experiences brought to the fore in this book neither glorify nor underestimate youth protests aimed at political change. Rather, it shows how youth protests led to a changing of the guards in some places while they were reined-in elsewhere. Such outcomes are interesting in and of themselves. But this book opens the door to much more. It is one of the first to connect two previously separated areas of debate—youth and gender—in discourses of societal transformation. It runs a conceptual thread through the impacts of youth-hood and gender on the question of nation and state building. And in so doing, it unearths the points of convergence and divergence between these two arenas across time—conceptually and practically. The convergence is found in the collective aspiration of youth and their pursuit of freedoms and social justice regardless of their genders. However, the persistence of patriarchy reinforces age-old structures of gender inequality that relegate young women and gender non-conforming people to periphery of leadership spaces once the revolution has been won or lost.

Another factor sets *Gender, Protests and Political Change in Africa* apart. It demonstrates a new approach to scholarship and academic leadership in which emerging scholars are mentored and enabled to contribute their knowledge through continuous accompaniment, from research to publication. The capacity gap evident in the dearth of research and publishing opportunities for early career researchers and academics has remained a persistent challenge among a young generation of Africans. By giving space and voice to young Africans to research and write their own experiences, this book marks the arrival of a new generation of leading African academics. It is a record of emerging practice. I commend the individual authors in this book—mostly earlier career researchers located in Africa—for undertaking this valuable study. And I congratulate the

editor, Awino Okech, for being brave enough to undertake this important study, choosing to work with new but no less credible young African authors when many of her peers opt to publish with well-established authors located in the West. This makes an important statement and it is a sign of a changing mood among a new generation of African scholars.

London, England

Professor 'Funmi Olonisakin
Professor of Security, Leadership &
Development; Vice President &
Vice-Principal International, King's
College London

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is a labour of love that has been in the making for over three years. The impetus for this work started in 2016 when I hosted a panel of young South Africans based in London who had been part of the Fees Must Fall protests in South Africa. This conversation was part of the Centre for Gender Studies at SOAS bi-weekly seminar series. I was struck then, as I had been when the protests unfolded in 2015, by the limited conversations across African contexts on the historical role of student movements and academics in driving academic freedom and Africanisation of universities. I thought it would be a good moment to revisit and re-engage contemporary struggles in Africa as they manifested through student movements and protests generally. I was clear that I wanted to centre young people's voices, early career academics who were thinking through their role and the utility of direct action in social transformation across Africa.

As most curated projects go, deadlines are not met, people fall off by the wayside, previously "hot" protests such as the Oromo protests dissipate and more importantly the task of finding people who can do the diligent work of linking gender or feminist analysis to conversations on protests and social transformation was not always easy. Consequently, I received great submissions with wonderful political analysis but not necessarily a gendered take on what it meant for the construction of our societies. I have nonetheless retained two such chapters in this volume because they offer interesting insights on youth-hood, social movements

and dissent in two African countries that I consider important to keep an eye on. This book is therefore a culmination of starts and stops and a curation of material that speaks in varying ways to the title of this book.

I would therefore like to begin by thanking all the initial contributing authors Felogene, Awuor, Radwa, Sara, Zoneziwoh and Patrick for their patience. The book is finally here. I also want to say a special thank you to Sarah Nugdalla, Princess, Moses and Wadeisor who I put pressure on to turn around existing work or develop new work within what were punishing time frames. A special thanks to the anonymous peer reviewers who offered insightful and thoughtful feedback on the book proposal. I take full responsibility for the final product presented here.

Aspects of this book have been discussed in various workshops and conferences as part of testing the value of its contribution and engaging with potential end users. I would like to thank the African Leadership Centre and Shuvai Nyoni for inviting some of our contributors to participate in meetings and discuss their chapters.

I hope you enjoy this book as much as we have enjoyed putting it together.

Awino Okech

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Awino Okech	
Youth-Hood, Gender and Feminist Dissent	13
Awino Okech	
Student Movements and Autocracies in Africa	35
Wadeisor Rukato	
Fallist Feminist Futures in South Africa	61
Princess Mpelo Malebye	
A Revolution Deferred: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Egypt	81
Radwa Saad and Sara Soumaya Abed	
The Revolution Continues: Sudanese Women's Activism	107
Sarah O. Nugdalla	
Women and the Anglophone Struggle in Cameroon	131
Zoneziwoh Mbongulo-Wondieh	

Democratic Reversals in Burundi	149
Patrick Hajayandi	
The Rise and Demise of the “New Dispensation” in Zimbabwe	173
Moses Tofa	
Embodying Protest: Feminist Organizing in Kenya	201
Felogene Anumo and Awuor Onyango	
Conclusion	225
Index	231

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Sara Soumaya Abed is an Egyptian feminist and human rights researcher based in Cairo; she holds an M.A. in Human Rights from UCL, University of London. Sara Soumaya is a member of Operation Anti-Sexual Harassment & Assault (OpAntiSH). She has worked with HarassMap and is a former Teaching Assistant at the British University in Egypt (BUE). She was also involved in a rights-based approach—project for refugee survivors of SGBV at CARE International in Egypt. Her work has been published in Kohl: a *Journal for Body and Gender Research*. Her research interests include but are not limited to: anthropology of body and performance, gender, state and resistance, gender and sexual-based violence, sexual and reproductive rights, domestic workers, migrant workers, sex workers and labour rights.

Felogene Anumo is a feminist activist with experience in advancing gender and economic justice through activism, advocacy, research and capacity strengthening of feminist-led organising. Her roots in feminist movement building were planted at the University of Nairobi where she served as the Women Students' Chairperson across seven campuses. Felogene currently works for the Association of Women's Rights and Development (AWID) as co-lead for the Building Feminist Economies (BFE) Program and is the immediate former Manager of the Young Feminist Activism Program at AWID. Prior to joining AWID, she worked with Women in Law and Development in Africa—Kenya Chapter (WiLDAF-K) and the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET).

Patrick Hajayandi works at the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation as the Senior Project Leader for the Great Lakes Region of Africa. He holds a Master of Arts degree in Political Science from Rostov State University in Russia. He has worked a lecturer at the National School of Administration in Bujumbura-Burundi and as a Consultant and Researcher for Transitional Demobilization and Reintegration Program (TDRP) of the World Bank. At the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, Hajayandi's main project for the Great Lakes Region is to contribute to developing young people's leadership and ownership for peacebuilding processes in a context of Regional reconciliation.

Princess Mpelo Malebye is a feminist from South Africa. She has a Masters in Gender Studies and Law from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. Malebye completed her undergraduate degree in Gender Studies, Sociology and Psychology at the University of Cape Town and her BA (Hons) in Psychology at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. Princess has worked as a research assistant for Kike Consulting, Media Monitoring Africa and the Knowledges of Power project (National Research Foundation funded). Malebye is currently a research and policy analyst for the Commission for Gender Equality, South Africa.

Zoneziwoh Mbondgulo-Wondieh is the executive director of Women for a Change, Cameroon (Wfac), a feminist organisation that works in and with communities of grassroots women around their sexual and reproductive health rights, leadership and development. Zoneziwoh holds an M.Sc. in Sex, Gender and Violence, from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland; Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Sciences, University of Buea, Cameroon. Zoneziwoh is a Chevening Scholar, a Women's Fellow with the African Leadership Centre, Kenya, and a Mandela Washington Fellow for the Young African Leaders Initiative, a flagship programme of President Barack Obama.

Sarah O. Nugdalla is a gender consultant and researcher from Sudan. She holds an MA in Gender Studies from SOAS University of London and a BA in International Relations from the American University of Sharjah. Nugdalla's research interests are grounded in the relationship between gender, Islam and the state, and has written extensively on gendered citizenship and feminist activism in Sudan.

Awino Okech is a lecturer at the Centre for Gender Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). Her teaching and research interests lie in the nexus between gender, sexuality and nation/state making projects as they occur in conflict and post-conflict societies. She continues to contribute to knowledge production and transfer through her affiliation with the African Leadership Centre at King's College London. Dr. Okech also has a professional history of gender and conflict programming work in Africa with a range of international and national organisations.

Awuor Onyango is a Nairobi-based writer and multidisciplinary artist somewhat trained in English and French laws, Fine Art and Film. Her practice is concerned with claiming public space disallowed to people considered black, woman and other, whether the space is intellectual, physical, in memory or historical. She's uses (digital & video) installation, experimental film and self-care to explore the transgression, shame and discomfort of the black feminine. Recent exhibitions include Chale Wote (Accra 2016), BodaBoda Lounge (15 spaces in Africa 2016), SHE: Artists (London, 2016), Chouftouhanna (Tunisia 2016), Digital Art Festival (Kenya 2016), To Revolutionary Type Love (Nairobi, 2017), Images of Tomorrow (London, 2017) and Node Forum for Digital Arts (Frankfurt/Nairobi 2017).

Wadeisor Rukato is a Peace, Security and Development Fellow at the African Leadership Centre (ALC) and is based at King's College London. She has a Master of Arts degree in China Studies, with a concentration in International Relations, from Peking University's Yenching Academy (2017). Her broad research interests include: the security dimensions of Africa-China relations; the multiple roles of youth in peace, security and development in Africa; and the effectiveness of experiential peace education programmes in community building.

Radwa Saad is a Doctoral Researcher in the Africana Studies and Research Centre at Cornell University. She holds an M.Sc. in Security and Development from King's College London and is an alumni fellow of the African Leadership Centre's Peace Security and Development programme for African Scholars. Her research interests include Afro-Arab relations, regional integration efforts in Africa and protest, social movements and revolutions as state-building processes.

Moses Tofa holds a Ph.D. in Political Studies from the University of Johannesburg and a Ph.D. in Peace Studies from the University of

KwaZulu-Natal. He is a Postdoctoral Fellow in Peace, Security and Development with the African Leadership Centre, Nairobi. He worked as a Senior Researcher with the Centre for Conflict Resolution and the Mass Public Opinion Institute. Moses has also taught politics and international relations at the University of Zimbabwe and the Women's University in Africa.