Record Nr. Titolo	UNINA9910450955703321 The awkward embrace : one-party domination and democracy / /
	edited by Hermann Giliomee and Charles Simkins
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cape Town, South Africa : , : Tafelberg, , 1999
ISBN	1-135-29717-7 1-280-15582-5 0-203-98964-3
Edizione	[First edition.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (388 p.)
Altri autori (Persone)	GiliomeeHermann Buhr <1938-> SimkinsC. E. W (Charles Edward Wickens)
Disciplina	321.8 321.9
Soggetti	Totalitarianism Democracy Political parties - South Africa Political parties - Taiwan Political parties - Mexico Political parties - Malaysia Electronic books.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Preliminaries; CONTENTS; List of Contributors; Introduction; 1 The Dominant Party Regimes of South Africa, Mexico, Taiwan and Malaysia: A Comparative Assessment; 2 Stability and Competitiveness in the Political Configurations of Semi Developed Countries Charles Simkins; 3 A Born-Again Dominant Party?; 4 No Easy Stroll to Dominance; 5 The Resilience of One-Party Dominance in Malaysia and Singapore; 6 Dominant Party and Opposition Parties in Mexico; 7 Bridge or Bridgehead?; 8 The Transformation of Labor-Based One-Partyism at the End of the 20th Century; 9 The Mexican Paradox 10 Corporatism as Minority Veto under ANC Hegemony in South Africa11 Democracy or Democratic Hegemony?; 12 Grassroots Electoral Organization and Political Reform in the ROC on Taiwan and Mexico; 13

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	Does Democracy Require an Opposition Party?; 14 Conclusion; Index;
Sommario/riassunto	Democracies derive their resilience and vitality from the fact that the rule of a particular majority is usually only of a temporary nature. By looking at four case studies, this work studies democracies of a different kind: rule by a dominant party which is virtually immune from defeat.