

The Moral Economy of Elections in Africa

Do elections turn people into democratic citizens? Elections have long been seen as a way to foster democracy, development and security in Africa, with many hoping that the secret ballot would transform states. Adopting a new approach that focusses on the moral economy of elections, Nic Cheeseman, Gabrielle Lynch and Justin Willis show how elections are shaped by competing visions of what it means to be a good leader, bureaucrat or citizen. Using a mixed-methods study of elections in Ghana, Kenya and Uganda, they explore moral claims made by officials, politicians, civil society, international observers and voters themselves. This radical new lens reveals that elections are the site of intense moral contestation, which helps to explain why there is such vigorous participation in processes that often seem flawed. Demonstrating the impact of these debates on six decades of electoral practice, they explain why the behaviour of those involved so frequently transgresses national law and international norms, as well as the ways in which such transgressions are evaluated and critiqued – so that despite the purported significance of ‘vote-buying’, the candidates that spend the most do not always win.

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The Moral Economy of Elections in Africa

Democracy, Voting and Virtue

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*This book is dedicated to Sammy, a remarkable research
assistant and friend who is gone too soon.*

Samuel Kweku Yamoah

1982–2020

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Abbreviations and Glossary

AU	African Union
<i>asantehene</i>	customary ruler of Asante (Ghana)
CCEDU	Citizens’ Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda
CCG	Christian Council of Ghana
CDD-Ghana	Centre for Democratic Development – Ghana
CEON-U	Citizens Election Observers Network – Uganda
CJPC	Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (Kenya)
CODEO	Coalition of Domestic Observers (Ghana)
COG	Commonwealth Observation Group
CPP	Convention People’s Party (Ghana)
CRECO	Constitution and Reform Education Consortium (Kenya)
CRO	Commonwealth Relations Office
CSO	civil society organization
DC	district commissioner
DemGroup	Democracy Monitoring Group (Uganda)
DP	Democratic Party (Kenya and Uganda)
EC	Electoral Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EMB	electoral management body
ELOG	Election Observation Group (Kenya)
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EU	European Union
EU EOM	European Union Election Observation Mission
FBIS	Foreign Broadcast Information Service
FBO	faith-based organization
FDC	Forum for Democratic Change (Uganda)
FORD	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (Kenya)
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDEG	Institute for Democratic Governance (Ghana)
IEA	Institute of Economic Affairs (Ghana)

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IEBC	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
IEC	Interim Electoral Commission
IED	Institute for Education in Democracy (Kenya)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
<i>kabaka</i>	customary ruler of Buganda (Uganda)
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KCCB	Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops
KHRC	Kenya Human Rights Commission
KEDOF	Kenya Election Domestic Observation Forum
KPU	Kenya People's Union
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army (Uganda)
MP	member of parliament
MUHURI	Muslims for Human Rights (Kenya)
NAL	National Alliance of Liberals (Ghana)
NARA	National Archives and Record Administration (United States)
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition (Kenya)
NASA	National Super Alliance (Kenya)
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education (Ghana)
NCEP	National Civic Education Programme (Kenya)
NCCK	National Council of Churches of Kenya
NDC	National Democratic Congress (Ghana)
NEDEO	Network of Domestic Election Observers (Ghana)
NEMU	National Electoral Monitoring Unit (Kenya)
NEMGROUP-U	Election Monitoring Group (Uganda)
NDI	National Democratic Institute (United States)
NDP	National Development Party (Kenya)
NGO	non-governmental organization
NLC	National Liberation Council (Ghana)
NLM	National Liberation Movement (Ghana)
NPP	New Patriotic Party (Ghana)
NRA	National Resistance Army (Uganda)
NRM	National Resistance Movement (Uganda)
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement (Kenya)
PC	provincial commissioner
PFP	Popular Front Party (Ghana)
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council (Ghana)
PNP	People's National Party (Ghana)
PNU	Party of National Unity (Kenya)
PP	Progress Party (Ghana)

PRAAD	Public Record and Archive Administration Department (Ghana)
PVT	parallel vote tabulation
SUPKEM	Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (Kenya)
SWB	Summary of World Broadcasts
TNA	The National Alliance (Kenya)
UGCC	United Gold Coast Congress (Ghana)
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
UJCC	Uganda Joint Christian Council
UKNA	United Kingdom National Archives
UN	United Nations
UNA	Uganda National Archive (Uganda)
UP	United Party (Ghana)
UPC	Uganda People’s Congress (Uganda)
UPM	Uganda Patriotic Movement
USAID	United States Agency for International Development