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Andrew Ewoh

Texas Southern University, andrew.ewoh@tsu.edu

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Emerging Issues on Democratization and Economic Development in Africa

Andrew I. E. Ewoh
Texas Southern University

This volume of the *African Social Science Review* is imbued with cutting edge research on democratization, climate change and economic development. It starts with a discussion of an assessment of the impact of elections in African democracy focusing on the explication of regime variation in the Sub-Saharan fourth wave democratization processes in terms of the evolutionary trends. The volume concludes with a review of the relationship between politics and land tenure in the Ugandan Albertine region. Nonetheless, the six articles presented in this volume underscore the *Review's* stance as a scholarly outlet dedicated to theoretical and practical discourse on political economy and sustainable public policy matters for the wellbeing of the continent.

In the first article, "Democratization or Business As Usual? Evaluating the Long-term Impact of Africa's Watershed Elections," Anna Brigeovich contends that watershed elections in various African nations have resulted not only in political liberalization, but they paved the way for democratization processes witnessed in some of these countries. Using a transitology approach, the analysis demonstrates that the implementation of various reform measures influenced the course of liberalization within the last decade. In conclusion, the author opines that nations where a unified opposition regained power from the elites tend to keep their liberalization gains while countries with disorganized opposition and weak civil society organizations tend to be hybrid regimes.

The second article, "Attitudes, Practices and Knowledge of Communities Toward Climate Change Around Lake Mburo National Park Uganda: A Gender Centered Analysis," by Judith Nagasha, Michael Ocaido, and Elizabeth Kaase Bwanga, explores men and women attitudinal responses to climate change. Using both participatory and questionnaire techniques, both gender observed signs of climate change such as cutting of trees, drainage of swamps, use of solar panels, and a curse from God; the authors find interesting results.

For example, more men than women believe that tree cutting was the major cause of climate change, while more women than men maintain that it was a curse from God, and the other causes had no statistical significant effect on gender differences. The study concludes that while the communities were aware of climate change and environmental degradation, they do not have any sustainable coping mechanisms for dealing with the crises, and recommends communal education on how to cope with the effects of climate change through the lenses of gender socialization.

Kingsley Agomor in the third article, “Understanding the Origins of Political Duopoly in Ghana’s Fourth Republic Democracy,” examines political party formation and fragmentation in Ghana. The study uses both a multi-theory approach and a content analysis to explain political permutations in Ghanaian democratization processes. While political party activism started with the formation of the nationalist movements to end colonial domination, fragmentation of political parties emerged during the pre-independence era due to different philosophies and identities of the citizens which are antithetical to the major objective of the nationalist forces. The article concludes that the Ghanaian fourth republican constitutional entrenchment of a multiparty system has been suffocated by the practical institutionalization of two-party system, and the low voter turnout in the 2016 general elections demonstrate citizens’ dissatisfaction with party activism.

In the fourth article, “The Effects of Common Currency on Economic Growth: Evidence from CEMAC Custom Union,” Devine Kangami and Oluyele Aninkugbe used regression discontinuity model to examine the causal effects of the common currency on economic growth in the Central African Monetary Community (CEMAC) by deploying the value of gross domestic product per capital as a proxy for economic growth. The analysis concludes that reform measures implemented in 1994 by CEMAC region did not play any statistical significant role in promoting economic growth rather the performance of the CEMAC custom union was very poor in comparison to its regional counterpart—the West African Economic and Monetary Union—that deployed comparable currency and exchange rate.

The fifth article, “Organizational Virtuousness: The Customers’ Perspective,” by Joshua Gukiina, Joseph Ntayi, Waswa Balunywa, and Augustine Ahiauzu, reviews the literature of organizational virtues to create a concept of organizational virtuousness from the customers’ perception. Since the authors emphasize the perspective of customers in their design, they recommend that future studies ought to deploy more dependable mixed designs that use both

qualitative and quantitative methods including a survey instrument and oral interviews to enrich its findings.

In the sixth and final article, “Oil Politics and Land Tenure in Uganda: Understanding the Curse of Dispossession in the Albertine Region,” Julius Niringiyimana, William Muhumuza, and Rutanga Murindwa analyze various ways that oil politics impact land tenure dynamics and alienation of local citizens’ land rights. Using a qualitative method and in-depth interviews, the study findings show that oil politics influence land tenure dynamics through two causal methods. First through disruption of existing land governance structures, and second via the reconstitution of land interests in the region. The authors conclude that both central and local governments along with other beneficiaries have crucial roles to play in establishing the rules for inclusive and sustainable development by protecting the interests of all the stakeholders, both owners and users.

In sum, my sincere gratitude goes to our reviewers for their professional service, and contributors for considering the *African Social Science Review* as their publication outlet. As always, thanks to our editorial team especially, Emmanuel Oritsejafor, Nicholas Alozie, Jesse Chanley, and Kathy Thomas, to mention but a few, for their efforts in producing the *Review*.