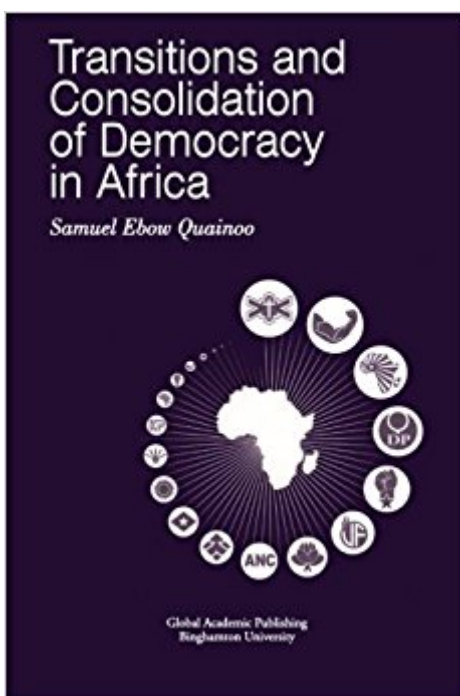


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Transitions And Consolidation Of Democracy In Africa (Global Academic Publishing)



Synopsis

Examines the transitions to democracy in Africa. What conditions motivate a transition to democracy? Can the dynamics of a transition influence its outcome? Under what circumstances has democracy been consolidated in Africa? This trilogy of questions has become necessary in light of the current democratic wave engulfing Africa and the rest of the world. In examining the conditions that initiate democratic transitions, this book investigates the circumstances under which democracy movements have operated between 1980 and 1990. It concludes that, contrary to dominant democratic theory, the transitions to democracy in Africa have occurred under declining levels of development. With regard to transitions, the book recognizes that they have their own dynamics. Two main types of transitions are discerned: top-down and bottom-up. The book argues that in spite of the restrictive nature of top-down transitions, they offer a better opportunity for democratic consolidation because of the consensus between elites of the pro-democracy regime and their counterparts in the authoritarian regime, a condition that is normally absent under bottom-up transitions. Finally, relying on the cases of consolidated democracies, the book derives an African democracy model. The model delineates five main conditions that facilitate democratic consolidation, including good leadership, relevant political institutions, external support, civic space, and a reasonable level of development. It cautions, however, that these are not sufficient conditions, nor are all of them necessary. Since countries have unique historical circumstances, specific countries will have to combine conditions in the model that are relevant to that society to consolidate its democracy. The right combination will depend on the specific needs of the individual country.

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