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Election 2019

Edited by Collette Schulz-Herzenberg and Roger Southall

Is 2019's election the most important since the advent of democracy in 1994?

The sixth general election since the arrival of democracy occurs at a critical moment in South Africa's history. Since claiming a fifth electoral victory under the leadership of President Jacob Zuma in 2014, the ANC has become embroiled in one scandal and failure of governance after another. It has allowed the state to be 'captured' by outside interests, corruption has flourished, the economy has plunged and the ruling party itself has become deeply divided between competing factions. When Cyril Ramaphosa won the race to become party leader at the ANC's national conference in December 2017, the stage was set for him to revive the economy and cleanse the state of corruption. Yet his narrow victory meant his internal party opponents remained strong, and the ANC remained sharply divided between pro- and anti-Zuma factions. Ramaphosa's road to reform was strewn with numerous obstacles.

The immediate question this book poses is will the ANC manage to manufacture a sixth electoral victory despite its disastrous record in government since 2014? It finds the answer in the personal popularity of Ramaphosa, the ANC's capacity to forge political unity when confronted by the risk of losing power, established voting trends amongst older voters, a sharp decline in participation among the youth which might otherwise have produced electoral shifts and the failure of opposition parties to present themselves as viable alternatives.

The subsequent question is what the consequences of a sixth successive election victory for the ANC will be for South African democracy. Will the ANC's triumph provide a sufficiently strong mandate for Ramaphosa to turn South Africa around, or will he fail to overcome Zuma's allies within the party? Whether he succeeds or fails, will the ANC manage to hold itself together? Is the future and quality of South African democracy dictated by whether the ANC stays together or splits into rival parts?

Election 2019 covers the context of the election, analyses changing voter participation and attitudes, outlines party campaigns and explores the role of gender and the media before evaluating the result. At its heart is the issue of whether South African democracy will survive.



ABOUT THE EDITORS

Roger Southall is an honorary professor in sociology at the University of the Witwatersrand and was previously Distinguished Research Fellow at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and Professor of Political Studies at Rhodes University. Prior to that he worked in universities in Uganda, Lesotho, Canada and the UK. He is the author or editor of around a dozen books. He founded the HSRC's State of the Nation project and coedited the first four volumes. He has also published extensively on African politics, political economy and labour in leading academic journals, as well as contributing chapters to numerous books. He is editor of the *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*.

Collette Schulz-Herzenberg holds a BA Hons in politics from the School of Oriental and African Studies (London University), an MSc in democratic governance and a PhD in politics from the University of Cape Town (UCT). She completed her postdoctoral fellowship with the Centre for Social Science Research at UCT in 2013, specialising in South African voter behaviour. Collette's academic interests include political behaviour, elections and voters, party systems, democratization and research methods. Her teaching specialisations include political behaviour and political theory, survey research and quantitative methodologies.

TOP SELLING POINTS

- This bracing analysis sheds light on the election's implications for the future direction of South African politics.
- Provides a platform for in-depth discussion and analysis of party campaigns, voting patterns and election results of the 2019 general elections.
- Draws on the expertise of renowned authors to cover important aspects of the election, including the major political party campaigns, the media's coverage of the campaigns, the latest trends in political participation and party fortunes, gender dynamics, the black middle class, as well as insights into the voter and public opinion on the eve of the election.