Finding Aid for the Barack Obama Presidential Election Memorabilia from Kenya, 2008

Processed by Krystal Appiah in the Center for Primary Research and Training (CFPRT), with assistance from Kelley Wolfe Bachil, 2009; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Barack Obama Presidential Election Memorabilia from Kenya
Date (inclusive): 2008
Collection number: 1831
Extent: 4 boxes (one document box, one shoe box, and two oversize boxes)
Abstract: On November 4, 2008, Barack Obama became the first African American to be elected president of the United States of America. Because President Obama's father was from Kenya, Kenyans have closely followed Barack Obama's political career since his election to the United States Senate in 2004. The collection consists of Kenyan memorabilia commemorating Obama's victory in the United States 2008 presidential election.
Language: Finding aid is written in English and Swahili.
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library. Department of Special Collections.
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Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library, Department of Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.
Restrictions on Access
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Provenance/Source of Acquisition
Purchase, 2008. The items in collection were purchased at the request of Ruby Bell-Gam, UCLA's African Studies Bibliographer, by Pamela Howard-Reguindin, Field Director of the Library of Congress Office in Nairobi, Kenya.
Preferred Citation
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Biography
On November 4, 2008, Barack Obama became the first African American to be elected president of the United States of America. Because President Obama's father was from Kenya, Kenyans have closely followed Barack Obama's political career since his election to the United States Senate in 2004.
Barack Obama was born in Hawaii on August 4, 1961 to a Kenyan father and American mother. His parents divorced three years later, and his father returned to Kenya where he died in 1982. Obama was raised by his mother and her parents. He attended Columbia University, graduating in 1983 with a B.A. in political science. Two years later he left New York City to work as a community organizer in Chicago. In 1988, Obama entered Harvard Law School, becoming the first African American president of the Harvard Law Review in his second year. Upon receiving his law degree in 1991, Obama returned to Chicago, leading a voter registration drive and teaching constitutional law at the University of Chicago. Obama entered the political arena in 1997, serving in the Illinois State Senate until 2004 when he was elected United States Senator for Illinois.
In February 2007, Obama announced his candidacy for President of the United States. After almost a year and a half of campaigning, Obama defeated his rival, Hillary Clinton, in the primary election and was nominated as the Democratic Party's presidential candidate in August 2008. In the presidential election on November 4, 2008, Obama defeated John McCain, the Republican candidate. President Obama was sworn into office on January 20, 2009, becoming the forty-fourth president of the United States.
Throughout Obama's political career, Kenyans have shown their pride in his success and historic accomplishments. In addition to naming schools after him and honoring him in songs and performances, Obama's image and campaign slogans have been portrayed on Kenyan posters, bumper stickers, billboards, advertisements, t-shirts, and other memorabilia. After the November election was conceded to Obama, President Kibaki of Kenya declared the next day a national holiday to celebrate the election win. Memorabilia after November 4, 2008 reflect Obama's victory in the presidential election.
Scope and Content
The collection consists of Kenyan memorabilia commemorating Barack Obama's victory in the United States 2008 presidential election. President Obama's image or references to him are prominently featured on all the items, which include a souvenir issue of a Kenyan newspaper as well as several articles of clothing such as a baseball cap, t-shirts, and election buttons. Items of particular note and which are distinctive to the region are a kanga, a bottle of a special edition commemorative beer, and a rear-view mirror ornament.

The kanga is an East African rectangular cotton textile with a border surrounding a Swahili saying in the center panel. Kangas have may be used as a skirt, shawl, headdress, or baby sling and are frequently worn to convey a social or political message. Following Obama's victory, many kangas featured Obama's image and messages of congratulations, good wishes or reaffirmations of his campaign slogans.

East Africa Breweries Limited created the "Senator" brand of beer when Barack Obama was elected United States Senator in 2004. After Barack Obama won the presidential election, East Africa Breweries launched the limited edition brand, "President."

Organization and Arrangement
Since items were acquired individually, the collection is organized according to format.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects
Barack Obama.

Box 1
Item no.  Kanga ca. 2008 November
Scope and Content Note
Blue with a picture of President Barack Obama in the center panel below the Swahili phrase "Hongera Barack Obama" (English translation: "Congratulations Barack Obama"). The bottom border contains the Swahili inscription, "Upendo Na Amani Ametujalia Mungu" (English translation: "God has granted us love and peace.")

Box 2
Item no. 1 "President Special Edition Lager" beer bottle ca. 2008 November

Item no. 2 Rear-view mirror ornament ca. 2008 November
Scope and Content Note
Photograph of Barack Obama and slogan "Change we can believe in. Barrack Obama."

Item no. 3 Badge ca. 2008 November
Scope and Content Note
Photograph of Barack Obama against a background of the United States flag. "Barrack Obama. President of the United States of America."

Item no. 4 Button ca. 2008 November
Scope and Content Note
Round with "Obama Pride" beneath the Obama campaign logo in rainbow colors.

Item no. 5 Button ca. 2008 November
Scope and Content Note
Round with Barack Obama's photograph, "Obama," and "The 44th US President" against a red, white, and blue background.

Item no. 6 Bumper sticker ca. 2008 November
Scope and Content Note
Photograph of Barack Obama and the United States flag with "Obama the U.S. President" against a white background.
| Box 3 | Item no. **Baseball cap** ca. 2008 November |
| Box 4 | Item no. 1 **Nairobi Star newspaper** 5 November 2008  
Scope and Content Note  
Obama Souvenir Special issue |
| Box 4 | Item no. 2 **T-shirt** ca. 2008 November  
Scope and Content Note  
White with six images of Barack Obama above the phrase "Kenya says, yes we can!" |
| Box 4 | Item no. 3 **T-shirt** ca. 2008 November  
Scope and Content Note  
Black with "Obama '08" beneath an image of Barack Obama against a background of the Kenyan flag. |