THE LOGIC OF NEOPATRIMONIALISM AND DEMOCRATIC DEEPENING: A CASE OF GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC

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Africa's quest for effective governance in the first two decades after independence yielded in different shades of political organizations ranging from radical socialism, militarism, military and/or civil authoritarianism and one party democracy. After the collapse of Berlin Wall and the demise of communism, most African states overwhelmingly joined what Huntington called the "Third Wave" of democratization of which Ghana was no exception. Although Ghana's decades of democratizing state institutions and its politics have yielded relatively significant electoral democratic gains, democratic rule in Ghana still faces challenges of legitimization. While some Africanist scholars admit that Ghana is a neopatrimonial state, none of these scholars has drawn a linkage between neopatrimonial logic and political legitimacy crisis in Ghana. As an exploratory research design, this paper employed in-depth interview method to investigate the nexus between neopatrimonial logic and democratic deepening in Ghana. Findings reveal that in spite of Ghana's several attempts at democratizing its state institutions and politics, legitimacy crisis still persists. This paper thus, concluded that the disruptive potentiality of neopatrimonial logic bears inordinate (holding all other factors constant) responsibility.

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INTRODUCTION

The major concern of post-colonial Africa immediately after independence was to harness political independent regime to facilitate rapid economic growth. Unfortunately, Africa's quest for effective governance in the first two decades after independence yielded in different shades of political organizations ranging from radical socialism, militarism, military and/or civil authoritarianism and one party democracy. Consequently, these regimes further created political exclusivity, tension, conflicts and acrimonies¹. The pervasive and persistent political exclusivity and tensions that characterized post-colonial Ghana are believed to be responsible for further deepening of Ghana's decade of legitimacy crisis and development backwardness.² And hence after the collapse of Berlin Wall and the demise of communism, most African states including Ghana overwhelmingly joined what Huntington called the "Third Wave of democratization".

The authoritarian breakdown which occurred at the turn of the 21st century was therefore seen in most African states particularly, Ghana as a critical breakthrough in the history of the continent's geopolitics. To most African countries, the "third wave"³ was more or less the "second independence"⁴ and that perhaps explains why most African states did not only overwhelmingly join democratization wave, but also embraced it with great enthusiasm and optimism.

In a way of responding to the growing democratic optimism, many African states including Ghana have been making concerted efforts to

¹ The mid-1960s and early 1970s have been described by many Africanist scholars as the era of persistent political upheavals-coup d'états and counter coup d'états coalesced with decades of economic mismanagement and political assassinations (Lukham, 1975; Hutcfu, 1987; Herbt, 1989).

² Ake, Claude, *The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa*, CODESRIA (2000); Mkandawire, Thandika, *Thinking about Developmental states in Africa*, JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY (1998).

³ HUNTINGTON, S.P., *THE THIRD WAVE OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY* (University of Oklahoma Press 1991).

⁴ African continent has gone through chequered periods of political instability as a result of pervasive militarism, one party and no party rules which ushered the continent into decades of authoritarianism and political exclusivity and economic alienation. Consequently, most parts of the African continent began to form pro-democracy movements to wrestle political power through constitutional means and hence the opening up of political space in early 1990s saw massive participation in the political reforms by many African states.

democratize state institutions and politics.⁵ And, today the contention within the community of the best practices is that these democratized states⁶ are among other emerging “mature democracies” in Africa which have more or less “perfected” the democratic rule at least at the level of periodic elections.⁷ Beyond democratization, again, these relatively “perfected” democratic states are said to have reached the threshold of deepening democracy.⁸

Notwithstanding the unprecedented record of relatively successful electoral democratic gains in some parts of Africa including Ghana;⁹ however, in less than a decade, the enthusiasm with which Ghana embraced liberal democracy has been moving from wax to wane.¹⁰ The pessimist scholars claim that structural problems such as lack of effectual legislature, lack of judicial independence, election manipulations, widespread political corruption, violence and polarization of the state¹¹ collectively account for the deepening legitimacy crises and diminishing returns in democratic deepening in Ghana.

The point of departure of this paper however ingrained informal institution of neopatrimonial rule is not only so widespread in post-independent Ghana but also it is steadily holding in sway the democratization of state institutions and its politics and hence the paper hypothesizes that neopatrimonial logic although

⁵ Joseph, Richard, *Africa: The Rebirth of Liberalism*, JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY (1992); Sandbrook, Richard, and Jay Oelbaum, *Reforming the Political Kingdom: Governance and Development in Ghana's Fourth Republic*, ACCRA: CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT (1999); Gyimah-Boadi, E., *A Peaceful Turnover in Ghana*, 12(1) JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY (2001); POLITICAL PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC (Ninsin, K. and Drah F. K. eds., Accra, Woeli Publishing Services 1993).

⁶ The Africa's notable successful democratic states include Botswana, Mauritius, Cape Verde and Ghana.

⁷ ABDULAI, A-G. AND CRAWFORD, G., CONSOLIDATING DEMOCRACY IN GHANA: PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS? (Publisher Routledge Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales 2008); Daddieh, Cyril. K., *Democratic Consolidation without a Second Turnover: Ghana's Remarkable 2004 Elections*, in ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN WEST AFRICA: 1990-2009 (Abdoulaye Saine et. al. eds., Trenton, N.J., Africa World Press 2011).

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ van de Walle, N., *Elections Without Democracy: Africa's Range of Regimes*, 13(2) JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY (2002); OKECHUKU, OKO, THE CHALLENGES OF DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN AFRICA, (Southern University Law Center Reinner Publishers 2008); Haynes, Jeffrey, *The Challenges of Democratic Consolidation in Africa: The Problematic case of Ghana*. JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY XI (2003); Gyimah-Boadi, E., *Ghana: The Challenges of Democratic Consolidation*, DEMOCRACY, SOCIETY AND CONFLICTS IN AFRICA (Joseph Richard ed. 1999).

¹¹ Lindberg, Staffan I. and Morrison, M.C.K., *Are African Voters Really Ethnic or Clientelistic? SURVEY EVIDENCE FROM GHANA* (Department of Political Science University of Florida 2008); LINZ, JUAN J., AND ALFRED C. STEPHAN, PROBLEMS OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION AND CONSOLIDATION: SOUTHERN EUROPE, SOUTH AMERICA, AND POST-COMMUNIST EUROPE (Baltimore, MD, Johns Hopkins University Press 1996).

far from exclusive, is not only deepening legitimacy crisis but also, placing a heavy burden on the process of deepening democracy in Ghana. This paper thus posits that, apart from its inherent structural problems, the historical trajectories of neopatrimonial logic contribute significantly to explaining why “Africa’s democracy does not work”, and also, why “disorders have become political instrument in securing political legitimacy”¹². Using productive dialogue method, concept analysis approach and other secondary materials obtained from peer review articles in scholarly journals, this paper therefore explores first, democratic deepening, second, the nature, and the dysfunctionalities of neopatrimonial logic (patron—client networks), third, it analyzes the nexus between neopatrimonial logic and political legitimacy in the Ghanaian body politic. In what follows, this paper explicates the dynamics or the state of democratic deepening in Ghana’s Fourth Republic.

I. DEMOCRATIC DEEPENING

In the meantime, some authors have been very critical on the legitimacy crisis and apparent democracy reversal to democratic authoritarian regimes in Ghana by contending that Ghana lacks what it takes to democratize.¹³ Evidence shows that the growing dichotomy between optimist and pessimist’s views on Ghana’s democratic credentials¹⁴ indicates how erratic political legitimation and deepening of democratic practice in Ghana have become. Indeed, the emerging worry is that if the current liberal agenda in fashion in most Africa including Ghana fails, democracy will either remain in survival stage or even return to a democratic authoritarian trajectory thereby eroding the relative democratic achievements or credentials recorded over the years.¹⁵ Seeing the erratic

¹² CHABAL, PATRICK, AND JEAN-PAUL DALOZ, *AFRICA WORKS: DISORDER AS POLITICAL INSTRUMENT* (Indianapolis, Indiana University Press 1999).

¹³ Haynes, Jeffrey, *The Challenges of Democratic Consolidation in Africa: The Problematic case of Ghana*, JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY XI (2003); Gyimah-Boadi, *Watching Democracy in Ghana*, CDD, Ghana News Agency, “CDD calls for conventions to curb executive discretion” *General News of Monday* (2008); Ake, Claude, *The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa*, CODESRIA (2000); BRATTON, MICHAEL, AND NICHOLAS VAN DE WALLE, *DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENTS IN AFRICA: REGIME TRANSITIONS IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1997).

¹⁴ In one of my articles I have argued that the legitimacy crisis is emanated from vicious circle of deepening political repression, citizens’ alienation and marginalization, questioning of governmental legitimacy, oppressive rule, citizens’ apathy towards the state and political alienation.

¹⁵ BRATTON, MICHAEL, AND NICHOLAS VAN DE WALLE, *DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENTS IN AFRICA: REGIME TRANSITIONS IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1997); THOMPSON, A., *AN INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN POLITICS* (London Routledge 2004); Gyimah-Boadi, *Watching Democracy in Ghana*, CDD. Ghana News Agency, “CDD calls for conventions to curb executive discretion” *General News of Monday* (2008).

nature of Ghana's political legitimation and democratic practice, many Africanist writers have offered some explanations of deepening political legitimacy nuances yet in an insufficient manner.¹⁶ This paper argues that an empirical inquiry is imperative to provide better understanding of the discourse on democratic deepening and political legitimation in Ghana. Thus, this paper establishes that there is a correlation between the level of political legitimacy and the nature of democratic practice. Similarly, there is also a linkage between neopatrimonial logic and political legitimacy crisis and hence the correlation between neopatrimonial logic and democratic stability requires critical scholarly attention. It is for this reason why a study like this becomes imperative. In what follows, this paper conceptualizes neopatrimonial logic and shows how its co-existence with democratic practice undermines political legitimacy and the process of deepening democracy in Ghana.

II. NEOPATRIMONIAL LOGIC

The concepts of "neopatrimonial logic" and related conceptual labels have been widely used in political research, yet remain inadequately conceptualized. To make it a useful analytical category for exploratory research, this paper clarifies the concept of neopatrimonial logic, derives its nominal definition and shows its suitability within state authority structure. A novel typological framework is advanced as an improved conceptual design that is able to capture difference on two salient dimensions of contemporary regimes and the level of political legitimation and the anatomy of state authority in Ghana's democratic dispensation. Originally, the concept "neopatrimonialism" (neopatrimonial logic) took its root from Weber's¹⁷ traditional construct of "patrimonialism" which refers to a traditional system of rule based basically upon military officer's (the subordinate) obligation to the commands and dictates of the Army

¹⁶ ALMOND AND VERBA, *POLITICAL CULTURE AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION* (1985); Ake, Claude, *The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa*, CODESRIA (2000); HUNTINGTON, S.P., *THE THIRD WAVE OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY* (University of Oklahoma Press 1991); BRATTON, MICHAEL, AND NICHOLAS VAN DE WALLE, *DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENTS IN AFRICA: REGIME TRANSITIONS IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1997); SANDBROOK, RICHARD, AND JAY OELBAUM, *REFORMING THE POLITICAL KINGDOM: GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC* (Accra, Center for Democracy and Development 1999); OKECHUKU, OKO, *THE CHALLENGES OF DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN AFRICA* (Southern University Law Center Reinner Publishers 2008).

¹⁷ EISENSTAEDT, S., *TRADITIONAL PATRIMONIALISM AND MODERN NEOPATRIMONIALISM* (1973).

Commander (the superior). Some scholars of neopatrimonialism¹⁸ reconceptualized Weber's "patrimonialism" to reflect a more political conception refers to patron-client network relationship involving "a powerful patron and a weaker client." Other scholars also conceptualized neopatrimonialism to mean: "Patronage politics"¹⁹; "political clientelism"²⁰; "Prebendalism"²¹; "the politics of the belly"²² and "personal rule or personalism"²³ just to highlight few of the conceptualizations.

Neopatrimonial logic in this context is defined as:

The practice of basing authority primarily on the person of the ruler or office-holder rather than the formal office he or she holds, and thereby empowering the office—holder to assume more or less total control over the vast resources.

And, it is a ubiquitous phenomenon despite the almost worldwide acceptance of formal institutional legality and public administration, which derives its organizational source of legitimacy from the principles of Weber's rational-legal authority. Often, neopatrimonial logic is seen as a framework for analyzing regimes type and to help us explain the nature of political system, culture and political attitude of particularly African states. It consists of a number of conceptual typologies perhaps, in association with different countries due probably to the variations in political cultures.

At this point, this paper analyzes the prototypes of neopatrimonial logic.

III. THE PROTOTYPE OF NEOPATRIMONIAL LOGIC

However, as with some other political science concepts, Africa's neopatrimonial logic is pervasive such that it has resulted in many cases, in several conceptual propagations. The most recent rubric of "neopatrimonial logic" includes a broad range of labels such as big men syndrome, populist politics and programmatic appeal. Interestingly, scholars often use the concepts of "(neo)patrimonial regime" to refer sometimes to "kleptocracy" or as inventive conceptual combinations such as "patrimonial communism", "(neo) patrimonial democracy"; "pseudo-democracy," "patrimonial

¹⁸ Eisenstaedt, *op.cit*; MEDARD, NEOPATRIMONIALISM AFRICAN POLITICS (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1994).

¹⁹ CLAPHAM, C., THE POLITICS OF THE THIRD WORLD (Cambridge, Cambridge University 1995).

²⁰ SANDBROOK, RICHARD, AND JAY OELBAUM, REFORMING THE POLITICAL KINGDOM: GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC (Accra, Center for Democracy and Development 1999).

²¹ Joseph, Richard, *Africa: The Rebirth of Liberalism*, JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY (1992).

²² CHABAL, PATRICK, AND JEAN-PAUL DALOZ, AFRICA WORKS: DISORDER AS POLITICAL INSTRUMENT (Indianapolis, Indiana University Press 1999).

²³ Farid Guliyev (2011).

presidentialism” or “regime hybridity” and also sometime as “electoral patrimonial system”.²⁴ In this paper, we address each of the rubrics of neopatrimonial logic in turn drawing empirical lessons or evidence from Ghanaian political context.

Before proceeding to explain the conceptual propagations mentioned in this section, it is important to note that the concept neopatrimonial logic is not only pervasive, entrenched or institutionalized but also, it is a very complex and contradictory phenomenon in that is simultaneously spurs and negates political legitimacy. The various forms or dimensional constructs it takes help to explain to some extent the complex nature of neopatrimonial logic.

IV. MULTIDIMENSIONAL FRAMEWORK OF NEOPATRIMONIAL LOGIC

This paper mainly focuses on neopatrimonial logic at the level of political regimes, for which “neopatrimonial logic” is the most standard term. The phenomenon called neopatrimonialism has been used extensively by several scholars²⁵ not only as a pejorative connotation but also to explain policy failures and political instability. With regard to neopatrimonialism as an explanation of the anatomy of the state or an emerging democracy such as Ghana, scholars usually focus on its dysfunctionality rather than the eufunctionality and hence they turn to limit its analytical versatility. In this paper, the study focuses mainly on neopatrimonial logic as a concept, its eufunctionality and so, this may detain us for a while.

Meanwhile, an interesting debate on the most recent rubric of neopatrimonial logic such as pure neopatrimonialism, big-men syndrome, populist politics and programmatic appeal is not rather about their dysfunctionalities but the dominant type in the Ghanaian body politic. What is central to this hotly debated argument is whether or not party policies reflect clientelism, neopatrimonial logic, populist or programmatic appeals.

²⁴ LINDBERG, STAFFAN I., *IT'S OUR TIME TO "CHOP": DO ELECTIONS IN AFRICA FEED NEO-PATRIMONIALISM RATHER THAN COUNTER-ACT IT?* 10: 2, 12 (Publisher Routledge, Democratization, University of Groningen 2003); Keefer, Philip and Razvan Vlaicu, *Democracy, Credibility and Clientelism*, The World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3594 (2006); BRATTON, MICHAEL, AND NICHOLAS VAN DE WALLE, *DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENTS IN AFRICA: REGIME TRANSITIONS IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1997).

²⁵ Jockers, H; Kohnert, D and Nugent, P, *The Successful Ghana Election of 2008 –a Convenient Myth?* 48(1) JOURNAL OF MODERN AFRICAN STUDIES 95-115 (2009). Edited by the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA; Joseph, Richard 1992), *Africa: The Rebirth of Liberalism*, JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY; Lindberg, Staffan I., *It's Our Time to "Chop": Do Elections in Africa Feed Neo-Patrimonialism Rather Than Counter-Act It?* 10: 2, 12 (Publisher Routledge, Democratization, University of Groningen 2003).

This has led many scholars to debate what type of neopatrimonial logic reflects governmental policies and the nature of democratic accountability mechanisms in Ghana.²⁶ To contribute to the debate and to analyze the extent to which populist, neopatrimonial and programmatic means of mobilizing votes in contemporary Ghanaian politics are significant therefore, it is imperative to provide operational definitions of these terms. Here, these terms are employed simply as models of how Ghanaian political parties choose their linkage strategies and, as the Ghanaian case demonstrates; parties may appeal to different constituencies with different linkage efforts. For instance, politicians who require the votes of just a constituency usually resort to “pure” neopatrimonialism or the big men syndrome.

A. *“Pure” or Big Men Neopatrimonial Logic*

This logic is a distinct form of acquiring state legitimacy. First, the political elite or leader establishes patron-client network to facilitate the exchange of social benefits and/or provision of favours for political support. Big men neopatrimonial logic arises where patronage politics have managed to “supplant the legal-rational apparatus”.²⁷ Actually, an essential element is the co-existence, in tension, within the state of a legal-rational element and a patronage element. As already indicated, it is based on the giving and granting of favours where the public/private dichotomy in policy decisions and resource distribution become shard to distinguish. In a situation where the political leader’s ability to win elections is contingent upon aggregated votes beyond a single constituency, such political leader may employ either the populist or programmatic or even both.

B. *Programmatic Appeal*

This study makes reference to the definition by some scholars²⁸ which refers to a “programmatic” party as a modern day, organized political party mainly focused around election campaigns. It has three characteristics: It tends to have a much more distinct, consistent, and coherent “programmatic” or ideological agenda. It clearly incorporates those ideological or “programmatic” appeals in its electoral campaigns and its

²⁶ Joseph, Richard, *Africa: The Rebirth of Liberalism*, JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY (1992); Mkandawire, Thandika, *Thinking about Developmental States in Africa*, Journal of Democracy (1998).

²⁷ Keefer, et al. (2006).

²⁸ Diamond, Larry. and Gunther, *Democracy in Latin America: Degrees, Illusions, and Directions for Consolidation*, In BEYOND SOVEREIGNTY: COLLECTIVELY DEFENDING DEMOCRACY IN THE AMERICAS (Farer, Tom J. ed., Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press 2001).

legislative and government agenda. Basically, its issue appeals are less diffused, vague and eclectic, it seeks to win control of government through this sharper definition of a party platform or vision, and lastly, as some scholars²⁹ maintain the programmatic party has a more clearly defined social base, and possibly some firmer linkages to like-minded civil society organizations. Moreover, issues of party's inability to ensure credible or broad national programmatic policy is hotly debated in the third world new democracies, particularly Ghana.³⁰

C. *Populist Politics (Populism)*

Populist politics is the attempt to gain political support using paternalistic policies, in the form of income redistribution.³¹ It is a highly debated concept today since many Ghanaian politicians fall into the tempting trap of following populist policies simply to garner the votes.

Here, basically the political class (the elite/patron) relies on income redistribution to the poor (the masses/clients) in order to "buy" political support to perpetuate the elite's control of political power (to entrench neopatrimonial rule). In essence, populism is an informal alternative to institutionalized forms of political representation provided by political parties.³²

Obviously there are traces of populist politics which cut across all the first Three Republics of post-independent Ghana. This confirms that the institutional hallmark of ancient regimes of post-colonial Ghana was clientelism and neopatrimonialism. The actions of the political leaders reflected patron-clientelist network to their logical conclusion.³³ And that

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ deGrassi, Aaron, "Neopatrimonialism" and Agricultural Development in Africa: Contributions and Limitations of a Contested Concept, 51(3) AFRICAN STUDIES REVIEW (2008); van de Walle, N., *Elections Without Democracy: Africa's Range of Regimes*, 13(2) JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY (2002); ZOLBERG, P., PATRIARCHY AND PATRIMONIALISM (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1996); Keefer, Philip and Razvan Vlaicu, *Democracy, Credibility and Clientelism*, The World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3594 (2006); LINDBERG, STAFFAN I., IT'S OUR TIME TO "CHOP": DO ELECTIONS IN AFRICA FEED NEO-PATRIMONIALISM RATHER THAN COUNTER-ACT IT? 10: 2, 12 (Publisher Routledge, Democratization, University of Groningen 2003).

³¹ Booth, David, Richard Crook, E. Gyimah-Boadi, Tony Killick and Robin Luckham, with Nana Boateng, *What are the Drivers of Change in Ghana?* CDD/ODI (Center for Democratic Development/Overseas Development Institute Policy), Brief No. 1 (November 2005); AIDOO, T.M., *POLITICAL STABILITY IN GHANA SINCE THE 1992 RE-DEMOCRATIZATION WAVE* (Accra, Asempah Publishers 2008).

³² Aidoo, 2008; Daddieh, 2011.

³³ BRATTON, MICHAEL, AND NICHOLAS VAN DE WALLE, *DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENTS IN AFRICA: REGIME TRANSITIONS IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1997); Gyimah-Boadi, E., *Ghana: The Challenges of Democratic Consolidation*, DEMOCRACY, SOCIETY AND CONFLICTS IN AFRICA (Joseph Richard ed 1999).

clientelism and neopatrimonial logic produced economic disorders and in the end propelled military intervention and distortion of democratic gains made earlier in post-independent Ghana.³⁴

It is worthy of note that the relationships between each of the multidimensional frameworks of neopatrimonial logic and the democracy or non-democracy distinction remain rather ambiguous. Also important to note is that, all the concepts mentioned above refer to the "same general phenomena under related theoretical labels," and that the theoretical differences between them are insignificant and generally semantic. Although, the prototype of the concept of neopatrimonial logic is made with reference to the generic theoretical materials of neopatrimonialism yet, there is still no consensus about one most dominant type of neopatrimonial logic, not to mention its operationalization. And, hence this paper makes it clear by providing the prototypes of neopatrimonial logic and explores its theoretical versatility as well as its limitations. So, for a better understanding of the nature of the state and its politics, it is equally imperative to appreciate the multiple frameworks of neopatrimonial logic as already highlighted.

Furthermore, a careful look at the analysis of the politics of policy-making or, for wants of a better word, "Policy Issue-Framing" in Ghana's Republics reveals a significant linkage between neopatrimonialism and policy issue framing process. Figure 1 shows how neopatrimonial logic is deployed to shape policy decision-making process in Ghana's neopatrimonial-democratic regime. In other words, Figure 1 provides an insight into how neopatrimonial logic is applied in the decision-making process or policy dynamics and becomes a dysfunctionality in the Ghanaian body politic.

From Figure 1, the vertical column represents the policy interest and decision-making point which consists of three levels of interests such as "the propensity to win votes is high", "the propensity to win votes is less or low" and "the propensity to win votes is unclear", a "compromising situation" whereas the horizontal column consists of the executive or the ruling elites whose decision is often resolute on the one hand and implementation of policy-decision which is also represented by Civil Bureaucrats and Technocrats whose role in policy process is not only very critical but indispensable yet their participation in the process is contingent

³⁴ AIDOO, K.O. AND DEMARCO, P., THE NEOPATRIMONIAL FRAMEWORK AND MILITARY COUP D'ÉTAT IN AFRICA: REFLECTIONS (Accra, Asempa Publishers 2009). Ake, Claude, *The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa*, CODESRIA (2000); ABDULAI, A-G AND CRAWFORD, G., CONSOLIDATING DEMOCRACY IN GHANA: PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS? (Publisher Routledge Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales 2008); POLITICAL PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC (Ninsin, K. and Drah F.K. eds., Accra, Woeli Publishing Services 1993).

on the political elites' decision. Among this group are the selectorate or electorate whose role is either to select or decide on who becomes the political leader yet they seldom participate directly in the decision-making process and implementation of programmes.

Fig. 1 Neopatrimonial Logic and Policy Issue Framing/Implementation.

Decision-making point policy formulation/ implementation option			
Policy Interest	Policy Owners(Government –in- power and cabinet ministers)	Civil Bureaucrats Technocrats, other stakeholders	Policy Outcome
where the propensity to win votes is high	YES -Do-	NO -Don't-	Implemented
where the propensity to win votes is less	NO -Don't-	YES -Do-	Not Implemented (inertia)
Compromised Position	YES -Do-	YES -Do-	Implemented

Source: Author's construct.

From Figure 1, it shows that policies and programmes get implemented where the propensity of such policy to attract votes tends to be high or vice versa. It also indicates that their implementation of its content is contingent upon the political elites' interest or, at least where there is a 50%-50% chance (compromising situation) of that policy satisfying the interest of the political elites. Where the policy has less propensity to attract votes yet it is geared towards key social issues, it does not get implemented and often resulted in inertia.

The neopatrimonial logic usually schemes a systematic patron-client network through which state resources are often distributed to the acolytes in a manner that the system does not only endanger vertical and horizontal accountability but also promotes nepotism and socio-economic discriminations resulting in economic disorders. See this way, the question is what kind of relationship exists between neopatrimonial logic and political legitimization. Is there any empirical evidence of the manifestation and application of neopatrimonial logic and what is its implication for democratic deepening in Ghana?

In the meantime, in 2004 then President John Agyekum Kufour and the NPP government reduced the tariff on all imported rice. In 2010 the Late President John Atta Mills and the NDC government also emphasized the need for increase in the production and consumption of locally produced rice under the SADA project. At the surface level,³⁵ the attempts by the two

³⁵ I have argued in one of my articles that policies pursued by governments in Ghana have not been insulated from the vagaries of neopatrimonialism and that at the surface level, policies seem to satisfy the interest of all Ghanaians however, the opposite is always true when examine or analyze deeper the rationale behind its formulation and even the implementation approach.

presidents to promote rice importation, production and consumption are a clear indication that rice is not only an important diet of Ghanaians but also one can read politics into the policies of locally produced or importation and consumption of rice in Ghana. Hence, this paper cites rice policies under Kufour and the NPP government and Mills' NDC administration, as classic examples of populist policies.

Furthermore, it is equally important to pose empirical question such as: in which way(s) has the attempt to obtain the 50% plus 1 valid vote influenced NDC and NPP policies and programmes? In which way does neopatrimonial logic feed into Ghana's Fourth Republican Constitutionalism? Why political parties in Ghana are not programmatic and what implication does the absence of programmatic parties have for the party's credibility, political legitimation and democratic governance in Ghana?

V. NEOPATRIMONIAL LOGIC AND POLITICAL LEGITIMATION

Politics is about how power is gained, used or lost, whereas political legitimacy entails the rightful or acceptable way of using power that is recognized by the entire citizenry. By this standard, political legitimacy is acquired through due processes of law, established rules and procedures that reflect legal-rational bureaucratic principles as espoused by Weber.³⁶ On the contrary, neopatrimonial logic is not only antithetical to liberalism but also pervasive, ubiquitous. It is a corrupt practice though, it is not illegal and hence most politicians often use as catalyst for political legitimation.³⁷ For example, Rawlings-led PNDC/NDC government extended electricity power to the rural Ghana which did not only make less economic sense³⁸ but also served as patronage inducements for votes. Thus, it is worthwhile clarifying the concept of neopatrimonial logic so as to make it a useful analytical category for political research. The clarification of this concept is also important in light of the growing recognition in the literature that the way researchers define and use the concepts may be responsible for the results they obtain. In order to realize the theoretical versatility of neopatrimonial logic, as already indicated, this paper employed productive dialogue or in-depth face-to-face interview to explore the pervasive nature of

³⁶ Eisenstadt, *op cit* (1973).

³⁷ Gyimah-Boadi, *op cit* (2001); Lindberg, *op cit* (2003).

³⁸ In the recent article published in Journal of Communication Media and Society (JOCMAS), I argue that, Rawlings' decision to extend electricity to rural Ghana which initially was not part of the projection of electricity project where the people could not afford to pay for electricity bills is explainable in terms of neopatrimonial logic or simply put, a populist strategy to galvanize votes.

neopatrimonial logic, its manifestations and how it meddles with political legitimization in democratic governance in the Ghanaian body politic.

Findings show that:

The political legitimization is a correlate of the ability to win elections and that the winning of elections is also dependent upon the extent to which the political elite or leader (the patron acting as transfer pump) is able to mobilize political supports via redistribution of incentives, social benefits, and favours (neopatrimonial synergy).

Reponses from the majority of Ghanaians interviewed revealed that “the political elite does not only have to establish what Richard Sandbrook called ‘patron-client network’, but also, to sustain it.” Findings reveal further that “political legitimacy depends to a large extent on the continuity of this patron-client network relationship.”

As a respondent interview put it: thus, for the patron to be able to entrench neopatrimonial rule requires his or her ability to maintain frequent supply of neopatrimonial incentives favours, money, roofing sheets, jobs and contracts kickbacks etc.. This finding corroborated Chabal and Daloz’s position that a neopatrimonial regime which faces resources exhaustion often turns to experience institutional crisis, in that, when there are no longer funds to redistribute, the next option is disorders, sometimes in the form of ethnic mobilization.³⁹ Some respondents interviewed confirmed for instance, that: “when politicians are unable to meet their patronage obligations (i.e. if they are ‘broke’), they often resort to verbal dwells, personality clashes and often short change the electorate by making ‘seemingly credible promises’ which in the end, are untenable.” Again, empirical evidence shows that “both the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) administrations have pursued various forms of policies with vagaries of populism.” As policy experts said that: “Ghana’s political elite deliberately, design both social and economic policies and programmes with the intension to canvas for political supports.” Usually, they added, “such policy, project or programme is tailored to the particular need of some Ghanaians within a particular geographic area.” And that “such policy, project or programme is purposive one and it is normally designed to satisfy ethnic, religious or regional considerations.” In fact, the overwhelming majority of Ghanaians interviewed agreed that:

³⁹ Ethnic mobilization entails instigating one ethnic group against other, while other forms of disorders include endorsement of illegal activities such as garamsay operation and often abuse of state directives such as abandon city decongestion exercise for fear of losing votes.

Typical examples of such populist policies include Rawlings and the NDC's Rural Electrification project carried out in the mid-1990s, Kufour and the NPP's rice importation policy in 2004 as well as Mills and the NDC's policy which sought to impose heavy tariff on rice importation.

This paper further discusses the application and manifestation of populist politics and explores the versatility of neopatrimonial logic in the Ghanaian body politic.

VI. MANIFESTATIONS VERSATILITY AND LIMITATIONS OF NEOPATRIMONIAL LOGIC

Whatever form it may take on—paternalism, clientelism, patronage, corruption, cronyism, rent-seeking or nepotism—neopatrimonial logic always involves confusion by a public official to set apart his/ her public role from private roles. In some of the newer states of the developing and emerging democracies such as Ghana, political institutions are typically ineffectual, and the distinction between the public and private domains is always glossed over in practice, which in the extreme case may result in the privatization of the public office. Neopatrimonial logic thus manifests itself in different forms. These may include the level of practices, for example; petty corruption and, informal coordination structures such as systematic clientelism and/or even segments of society including “anthropological” clientelism.

Indeed, we cannot talk about neopatrimonial manifestations without first and foremost identify the elements that feed it and for that matter, sustain neopatrimonial network. A number of elements therefore combined to sustain neopatrimonial logic and these include power, authority, elections, desire for political legitimacy, contract kickbacks, jobs, political appointments, poverty and favours etc. Evidence gathered from the interviews conducted overwhelmingly confirms that “neopatrimonial logic manifests itself through a network of ‘whom you know.’” Findings from the interview conducted with some selected political scientists at the University of Ghana, selected experts in democracy affairs from CDD and IDEG in 2012 overwhelmingly confirmed that “petty corruption is engendered by ‘whom you know’ which is on the increase in Ghana.” Also, these respondents emphasized that “patronage politics—‘whom you know’ constitutes the basis for economic, social, political or even religious dealings in Ghana.” According to a respondent interviewed, a public policy expert at Center for Policy Analysis (CEPA) in November 19, 2012, “within the policy issues framing process, politicians apply neopatrimonial logic by

endorsing only policies and programmes that seem to satisfy their political interest at the expense of the national interest.” For instance, when asked “which type of policy or programme will politicians always consider: a) policy for votes e.g. Distribution of school uniforms, School feeding programme or b) Pro-poor policy such as broad national policy for national development (interest) e.g. city decongestion exercise, tax holidays etc.?” The overwhelming majority of the respondents said “policy for votes.” Further findings reveals that neopatrimonial logic is noticeable in the form of “anthropological” clientelism involving leaders paying for funeral expenses, school fees and commissioning public toilets among other public utilities. Evidence from interviews confirmed that “neopatrimonial logic is institutionalized in Ghanaian body politic in that it rewards obedience but sanctions disobedience or disloyalty.”

Again findings reveal that the majority of the Ghanaians believed that “Ghana’s successful or peaceful political atmosphere enjoyed over the years, and, particularly, the degree of Ghanaians responsiveness to 2012 election’s outcome could be attributed partially to the ingrained patronage network politics in the country.” While some respondents believe that “patron-client network greases the wheel of progress”, others think “it is a mechanism for social massaging”. “In Ghana today, one finds it extremely difficult to get job, secure contract, appointments or even get admission if one does not know any big man.” This finding reinforces the zulu saying “People are people because of people.” Indeed, these findings led this paper to draw the following conclusions.

CONCLUSION

This paper makes a number of critical conclusions. First, at the theoretical level, the concept is not only versatile but also a complex and contradictory phenomenon. Second, the clarification of this concept is also important in light of growing recognition in the literature on politics that the way researchers define and use the concepts may be responsible for the results they obtain. Third, methodologically, following the approach to concept analysis advocated by (neo)Sartorian scholars, this paper presupposes a minimal definitional standard to guide the use of the concept in future research. This leads us to conclude that absence of programmatic parties hinders credible national programmatic policy and that social interventionist policy of one regime faces implementation challenges in another. This situation further worsens the already dilapidated social conditions such that credible national policies suffer implementation and

legitimacy and continuity problems whenever there is a regime change and, consequently slows down democratic deepening.

Fourth, at the empirical level, neopatrimonial logic manifests itself in different forms and therefore may require approach from different levels of analysis. Moreover, it is worthy of note that different forms of neopatrimonial logic may influence political legitimacy at different levels. This paper has therefore highlighted the nexus of neopatrimonial logic and political legitimization in Ghana by showing how most politicians deploy it as catalyst for political legitimacy. In fine, rather than being “dying species”, different forms of neopatrimonial domination have survived to this day while some newer ones emerged and matured since the end of the Cold War.