

# Africa's "Star Pupil" of Neo-Liberal Economic & Political Practices: An Assessment of Ghana's Elections, US Style Executive Presidency and Parliamentary Governance (1992-2020)

Kwamina Panford  
Northeastern University

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## Abstract

This paper has a dual purpose. First, it lays out the context: post-Cold War/ neo-liberal economic and political order through which western donors have indirectly become managers of African economic and governance institutions. As it were, African leaders have yielded responsibility for Africa's development to western donors (*The Gist* 1986 & Panford 2001). The second objective is to use Ghana to show why and how neo-liberal policies are not only expensive to implement but may have exacerbated Africa's problems wittingly or otherwise. These policies have diminished drastically Africa's capacity to rise and face 21<sup>st</sup> century development challenges including massive youth unemployment; rising poverty; decaying infrastructure, massive technological deficits and rapidly accelerating income and wealth inequality (Konadu Agyemang & Panford 2006, Alston 2018 and Oxfam 2020). Key themes covered are prohibitively expensive legislatures in Africa including those of Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, and Kenya with excessive salaries and perks with confusing and malfunctioning hybrid of US Executive Presidency incongruent with a British Westminster (Parliamentary) system Ghana has sought to practice since 1992. This study demonstrates dysfunctional governance which it connects to economic mismanagement, corruption or outright looting. This study illustrates how despite being acclaimed a leader in democratic governance, Ghana displays a dearth of creative, smart and practical solutions to Africa/Ghana's problems. Lastly, we ask a contentious question: With excessive emphasis on elections and parliamentary systems, has Ghana or others "placed the cart before the horse," exhibited wrong priorities and can African democracies be built on weak economies and can they be sustainable? This paper applies cases ranging from the Presidency in Ghana, which is front loaded with excessive powers, an unwieldy huge cabinet of 111 Ministers (from 2017 to 2021); MPs doubling up as Cabinet members; the use of party manifestos instead of legally mandated national development plans and what the author designates "excessive and fatal partisanship" (Panford 2017) and failure to check excesses of political appointees, "hacks" or operatives. Cases cited include: a Maritime Development Authority Executive who blatantly insists that his 4-Bedroom house needs 14 not 11 air conditioners paid for by the public; Parliament being a mere rubber stamp to ruling parties' wishes and commands; and how an NDC majority ensured that oil was used as collateral for loans in passing Petroleum Revenue Management Act (2011)—A major main conclusion is that Ghana's unwieldy and expensive governance is a bulwark to development. Instead, the state detracts from meeting basic needs and tackling revolutionary economic and technological challenges like applying Artificial Intelligence, robotics, green energy and sophisticated manufacturing systems and 5G and 6G communications that will lift massive numbers of Ghanaians out of poverty.

**Keywords:** elections, democracy, governance, neo-liberal economics and politics, and Multi-partism

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## 1. Introduction: Ghana or Africa Lurching Toward Neo-Liberal Democracy?

A point worth reiterating is that it is still worthwhile for Ghanaians/other Africans to work toward creating and sustaining *bona fide* democratic principles entailing fundamental human rights such as the right to vote, freedom of association and of speech. We assume that since these and other rights impact human dignity, all societies including those in Africa must strive to attain them. We also consider the need to meet basic economic/material needs like food, shelter, clothing and good jobs/careers and health that underlay human dignity. Nothing is more dignified than a good job to place food on the table and to have a roof over one's head and pay children's school fees. As this paper demonstrates with Ghana, post-Cold War economic and political party systems thrust upon Africans (by western donors) (1, have hindered Africans' capacity to resolve centuries-old development challenges (2) and to exploit 21<sup>st</sup> century technology to overcome underdevelopment.

This study answers questions *inter alia*: What has been the cost of post 1992 multi-party government to Ghanaians? What has Ghana achieved with successful transition from frequent military coups/no party government to one with liberal features of free or competitive multi-party elections and free press? Ghana is

heralded as a successful almost 30-year “darling” or “star pupil” by advocates of neo-liberalism (Gyekye–Jandoh 2017 and Okyir 2017) as attested to by the following observation by Deutsche Welle (DW) (2020): “... Ghana is doing well. It’s one of only four sub-Saharan African countries ranked free in 2020 on the Freedom in the World Index that measures political rights and civil liberties .... Ghana has a strong and independent broadcast media and consistently ranks in the top three countries in Africa for freedom of speech and press freedom.” Freedom in the World Index 2021 ranks Ghana as free and having a satisfactory situation. Although as by 1994, Ghana had emerged the most liberalized economy in all of Africa (Opoku 2010), since Ghana aspires to burnish its neo-liberal credentials based on macro-economic indicators such as attracting foreign private investment and boosting exports, this paper also draws attention to obstacles that impede attaining such lofty objectives (3). Typical bottlenecks are massive under and unemployment particularly among the youth (4); decaying physical or social infrastructure (5); poverty and its equally devastating twin, rising income inequality (6) plus rapidly ballooning national and international debts (7).

The global novel coronavirus (a.k.a COVID-19 pandemic) in the first and second quarters of 2020 exposed severe vulnerabilities in Africa’s neo-liberal economies. Although at the time of writing this paper, the pandemic had not hit the continent hard, except in South Africa, (Compared to the UK, US, Brazil, India and Italy) Africa’s economies, including that of Ghana, seem to begin to unravel as past macro-economic gains are threatened (Maclean and Marks 2020). Ghana, like other frail African economies, faces a huge dilemma. Under the aegis of the IMF-World Bank duo, neo-liberal economic policies have resulted in Ghana’s economy and government capacity being gutted over the years (Boafo –Arthur 2000, K Meagher 2019, Panford 2017, 1994, 2001, and Maclean and Marks 2020). High underemployment and unemployment especially among African youth (*Africa Renewal* 2017) have become the norm, resulting in as high as 90% of workers being trapped in an informal economy in Ghana. Since most workers in Ghana “live from hand-to-mouth” earning \$1 - \$2 daily, they cannot afford to stay home for a few days without starving. Ghana, like South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria, literally has to choose between financial collapse caused by lockdowns or the safety/health and even deaths of citizens. They are apparently in a no-win situation because they are forced to choose between two potential calamities: economic or health catastrophes. As the cases of Kenya and South Africa (British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) 2020 and Hall and Tucker 2020) reveal, there was the possible political fall out in the form of potential protests which could result in conflicts which the incumbent NPP Government could not bear in 2020, an election year. Ghana thus turned to the World Bank for a \$100m loan, and a \$2 billion IMF bailout to fight the virus (8)

With the outbreak of the novel global pandemic (Covid-19), it is appropriate to assess how under current governance, Ghana and other African nations are coping while developing capacity to manage and exploit newly emerging or even revolutionary data and information-driven technologies. These are significant because they impact the over 1.2 billion living in Africa who are 1 in 7 people living on the globe. New technologies Africans could use to boost capacity to develop and absorb more labor to shrink the development gap include: Artificial Intelligence (AI); new manufacturing systems known as manufacturing 4.0; autonomous, driverless cars, vans and prototype 18 wheeler trucks and big buses for goods and passengers; the Internet; machine learning; data mining, the application of algorithms, 5G and beyond (9). Even before Africans could figure out how to use 5G, already a super- fast 6G is on the technological horizon (*Tech* 2020).

While China is emerging as the new global technological and economic superpower (10) which is matching lockstep with and in the cases of 5G and 6G, superseding the US, UK, and other European nations, a question that drives the framing of key issues in this paper is: *How do Ghana and other African nations’ multiparty systems impact their current and future capacities to adapt new information/data-based technologies projected to be the panacea for development ills?* A closely related concern is how Africa’s political economy is impacting its dilapidated socio-economic infrastructure, in particular, bad roads, decades-old and decrepit rail roads and painfully slow and erratic telecommunications? These and current slow-paced rate of repairing and creating infrastructure, could result in Africans being the last people in the world to ride in autonomously operated vehicles and to deploy robots on any meaningful scale. It will be extraordinarily challenging for the computers on board driverless vehicles to navigate rough and pothole ridden roads in Ghana and the rest of Africa (11).

There are additional concerns emanating from the current African political economy landscape. A profound current and future threat to Africa emanates from both unemployment and underemployment of African youth. Not even the two largest economies – Nigeria and South Africa – and the darling of the west, Ghana, have generated or are on the verge of creating enough economic growth to spawn substantial employment (12).

Lastly and equally important, this paper, especially in the next section, depicts Africans’ post-slavery and colonial era apparently intractable quest to create governmental structures that do not only ensure human dignity through both civil and political rights but also build economic substructures to meet the fundamental economic needs of its over 1.2 billion citizens (13).

Although the US may have consigned the theory and practice of spoilage and patronage (14) to the dust or

trash bin of history, in most African countries, and paradoxically in Ghana too, appallingly corrupt, socially disruptive, divisive, and other corrosive political and economic practices and behaviors akin to classic spoilage and patronage are thriving with no end in sight. The two dominant parties that have ruled Ghana since 1992-1993, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and National Patriotic Party (NPP) are equal opportunity and unrepentant offenders. Almost institutionalized and egregious abuses of power politically and economically, are exhibited brazenly by officials of both parties. As shown in the final section of this study, party operatives act with impunity under the cover of a new democratic dispensation. This has become so severe since 2000 as cases we cite in this study show.

The remaining sections of this evaluation of Ghana and other African countries' multi-party governance deal with:

1. An overview of governance in Africa from "Independence" to the end of the Cold War (1950s to 1990)
2. Post-Cold War "conditionalities" leading to the rise of pro-democracy and multi-party systems of governance with a spate of elections from 1989 to 1996
3. Performance of Ghana/Africa's Multiparty Systems (1990s to 2020)
4. The High Cost of Ghana's Multiparty System and
5. The Dysfunctional Hybrid US Executive Presidency and British or Westminster Parliamentary Structures of Government in Ghana (1992-2020) and
6. Summary and Conclusion

## **2. Governance in Africa: From "Independence" to the End of the Cold War (1950s to 1990)**

Africa's nominal political independence was marked by Britain "bequeathing" to Anglophone colonies like Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya and Ghana, the British Westminster Parliamentary form of government. The French gave Francophone Africa, the French style system with Deputies which was supposedly akin to what prevailed in Paris. And in Lusophone Africa, the Portuguese did not leave any imprint of democracy. Likewise in former Italian and Spanish territories like Somaliland, Equatorial Guinea and Western Sahara, these former colonies were bereft of effective democratic structures.

Erroneous assertions and the description of what happened in Africa at the time of independence and at the end of the Cold War as "the birth of democracy" and "the re-birth of democracy" come from the neglect of fundamental facts about Africa. What happened in Africa should not be misconstrued as "real" or "substantive" independence (15). The latter would have led to real rapture in links between Africa and metropolitan colonial hubs like Lisbon, London and Paris. Westminster and other variants of European democracy require more than periodic elections and loyal opposition parties. Western/liberal democracy has equally important additional prerequisites – functioning capitalist economies buttressed by viable middle classes, free media and autonomous judiciary. None of these existed anywhere in Africa, even including the Gold Coast (modern Ghana) which the British deemed "a model colony." (16)

Other factors confirm the erroneous application of the independence concept to Africa at the end of colonial rule. In the Belgian Congo, total mayhem led to the assassination of the first democratically and nationally elected Prime Minister (PM), Patrice Lumumba, within the first 12 months of "independence" in June 1960 (Nzongola Ntalaja 2014, Panford 2017 and Nicholas Van de Walle 2015). Protracted post-independence wars in both Angola (of over 27 years) and Mozambique (of some 20 years) depict the utter failure of the Portuguese to give their Africa colonies gifts of Portuguese style democracy. In Lusophone Africa, even before independence on November 11, 1975, because the Portuguese left abruptly and in no way, shape or form prepared their former colonies for independence, both Angola and Mozambique were plunged into prolonged, bloody and financially costly civil wars (Keller and Rothchild 1996 and Panford 2017).

In Nigeria, instead of assisting democracy to flourish, according to a former British colonial administrator ".... in 1956 and 1959, Britain deliberately interfered with .... independence elections so its favored friends in the North would dominate the country after independence" (Smith 2005: 8 – 19). This is one of the fundamental roots of the challenges Nigerians face with corruption and incompetence which have thwarted development in spite of enormous natural resources and human capital with the largest population in Africa (Panford 2017). This is also what spurs Nigerians' almost intractable and frustratingly desperate attempts to create a government suitable for its culture and peoples' temperament (Kesselman, 2013).

Circumstances surrounding independence confirm that it did not lead to the inclusion of Africans in meaningful ways in the practice of western democracy. There was also a lack of genuine transfer of power from colonial administrators to African leaders. Even leaders like Nkrumah of Ghana and Lumumba of the Congo-Kinshasa (later Zaire and now Democratic Republic (DR) of Congo), who received hefty electoral mandates to lead their nations, were not exceptions. Thus, historical facts do not support the contention that there was a *bona fide* transfer of power from Europeans to Africans together with genuine democratic institutions. There were no exceptions anywhere in Africa. If any attempts were made, then the structures they left were so weak that they

were swept away in most of Africa by the military who used coups to dominate African politics for a long time (17). The weak, undemocratic structures and processes left by the colonial powers and their consequences are succinctly captured by Shillington (2019: 169 and 476) : “ ... *the façade of democratic process* ” was demolished swiftly as “... *most states ... suffered frequent military coups and counter-coups . From November 1965, coup followed coup with frightening regularity, taking in Nigeria and Ghana in early 1966. By the early 1970s, military rule had become a serious African political option. It remained the most frequent means for change of government ....* ”

Thus before the end of the Cold War, only Botswana, Senegal and Mauritius allowed the use of the ballot box to create governments. Where there were no military junta, there were one-party or no party states. Cameroonians have had only two leaders since independence: Ahmadou Ahidjo who ruled from 1960 to 1982 and Paul Biya as head of state from 1982 to the present. Ethiopia, on the other hand was ruled by a left-leaning military junta from 1974 to 1991. (Keller and Rothchild, 1996).

Closely aligned with the absence of the use of the ballot box to effect regime change in Africa was the popularity of “regime security,” in contrast with what prevails in the west –“national security.” It was also rare to encounter a surviving former African Head of State, especially one living in his or her home country. Most were exiled (Nkrumah to Guinea in the 1960s and 1970s and Mengistu of Ethiopia in Zimbabwe in the 1990s) or they were assassinated (Lumumba of Congo and Tafawa Balewa of Nigeria) or as a founder- President like Felix Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, who due to old age, became frail and died in 1993 still as President. There are also long surviving leaders dubbed “strong men” like Paul Biya of Cameroon who has reigned since 1982, Paul Kagame of Rwanda, since the genocide of April 6, 1994 and Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, from 1986 to present. Africa and one of the world’s longest reigning leaders is Equatorial Guinea’s Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasango who has been president since August 1979 ( Hinshaw and McGroarty 2014).

Thus, prior to the demise of the Cold War, the majority of Africans (in more than 50 states) did not exercise choices in who governed them. Regime security prevailed and regime change became dangerous, deadly and unpredictable because incumbents resisted their ouster while bloody force was applied to topple and replace governments. The barrel of the gun and bullets, not the ballot box became the major means to effect regime changes. Therefore, by the time the Cold War thawed, Africa’s political landscape was characterized by one-party/no party, right/left wing military or civilian regimes, life presidents/ “strong men,” with no term limits, and sporadic changes in government. In addition, opposition political parties were illegal or banned in some countries including the Ivory Coast ( Information from Ivorian Ambassador to the US, Pascal Kokora, Visit to Boston 21 November 2002) . That meant politics outside the one-party or military structures approved and supported by governments were deemed unlawful. For instance during “the December 31<sup>st</sup> Revolution” in Ghana, Fl. Lt. Jerry Rawlings announced on national radio and TV that Parliament was dissolved, all political parties proscribed and the President was dismissed from office! (Ali Mazrui, “In Search of Stability,” Video: Africa Series, 1984). Rawlings in effect had made party politics illegal.

Ghanaians, from December 31, 1981 to December 31, 1992, under the PNDC, experienced “a culture of silence.” Most citizens were afraid to speak negatively and openly about public matters. That was deemed too risky (18) until Ghana begun to open up politically by 1988-1989. Also, before 2000, there were no surviving former Ghanaian heads of state. Today there are two living former presidents – J. A. Kufuor and John Mahama. Both former Presidents, John Atta Mills and Jerry John Rawlings died from apparent natural causes, in 2012 and 2020 respectively. Prior to the demise of the Cold War, there was never a surviving former President/Prime Minister alive or resident in Ghana.

### 3. Post-Cold War Changes in Africa’s Political Landscape

Even though, as we illustrated elsewhere (Panford 2017, Clark 1996 and Gyekye – Jandoh 2017 ), the US and other western donors (mainly Britain, France the World Bank and IMF) did not prioritize democracy, human rights, and genuine representation of Africans in the continent’s governance; the west, led by the US, did a 180 degree turn immediately after the Cold War ended in 1990. There was a sudden shift in emphasis on political conditionalities attached to western aid (19). The US and UK – with Japan trailing behind them – and their respective international development agencies, in particular USAID (US) and DFID (UK), joined the “pro-democracy” bandwagon. Even the World Bank and IMF abandoned their so-called “political neutrality” (“see no evil, hear no evil, talk no evil” about one’s ally) and could not resist praising the virtues of democratic governance in Africa. When Zaire, still under Mobutu (an unflinching western cold war ally), followed in the footsteps of Benin’s National Conference (Robinson 1994), western donors for the first time since 1965 supported the right of Mobutu’s political opponents to conduct a National Conference. Mobutu’s long-standing dependable western allies distanced themselves from one of the foremost African “strong men” because the Cold War had stopped. It was no longer convenient to prop him up in the face of both military and political opposition. In the blink of an eye, the US Department of State determined that Mobutu had become not only a liability but also a pariah. His Swiss visa was swiftly revoked and he moved into exile in Rabat, Morocco until his death on



7 September 1997 (Panford 2017). These events directly linked to the end of the Cold War explain the sudden rapture in western attitudes toward the rights of Africans to good, effective, accountable, and democratic governance. Changed circumstances shaped the agenda and the roles of the West in post-Cold War African politics.

#### **4. Internal and External Factors Underlying Africa's Post-Cold War Pro-Democracy Movements**

From 1988 to 1996, Ghanaians and other Africans had previously unimaginable political experiences. For the first time since the coup of December 31<sup>st</sup> 1981, Ghanaians could vote for local representatives, albeit in non-partisan elections. They elected members of District Assemblies that were anticipated to lead to new decentralized public administration (20). Ghana was not the exception as soon after, other African nations followed. In sharp contrast with the cold war period when (except Botswana, Seychelles and Senegal where elections determined the party that reigned) the majority of regimes were one/no party or civilian/military dictatorships, a number of political developments acted like earthquakes to shake the African political landscape. Benin was the first to return to multiparty elections in 1990 (Robinson 1994). And as the first ever in Africa, Kenneth Kaunda lost the Presidency in elections in Zambia in 1991. From 1989 to 1997, approximately 75% of African countries, over 38 out of the over 50 counties, had multiparty elections (Burchard 2014: 11).

In 1997, even though it was a self-succession from military to a constitutional Presidency, it was the first time in Ghana since 1964-1965 (when Ghana used elections back-to-back) that a peaceful transition from one regime to another occurred without military intervention (21). This was followed by a long streak of harmonious changes in government in 2001, 2005, 2009, 2013 and 2017. A contentious election in modern Ghana was the latest held on 7 December 2020. The Electoral Commission declared the NPP's Akufo-Addo, the incumbent President, winner of the Presidency with the two parties, NPP and NDC neck-to-neck draw and equally split 137 each out of 275 Parliamentary seats ( Ghana Electoral Commission (EC) website 2020 Election Results, [ec.gov.gh](http://ec.gov.gh) ) with one Independent MP siding with the NPP. This independent candidate's decision to sit with the NPP grants the current ruling party the slimmest of all majorities in Ghana and Africa. This has also led to a hung Parliament. That is, both the ruling party and the opposition party have equal seats or parity in the number of seats each have.

Besides, the hung Parliament, the leader of the NDC, John Mahama petitioned the Supreme Court of Ghana on 30 December 2020 challenging the declaration by the EC that the NPP's Akufo Addo won the Presidential Election of 7 December 2020 with 51.59% of votes against Mahama's 47.36% of votes. On 4 March 2021 the Supreme Court of Ghana ruled that the NDC's petition had no merit and that the NPP and Akufo Addo were the winners of the Presidential poll (The Africa Report 2021 and Anan 2021). To the delight of Ghanaians, the decision of the Supreme Court did not appear to have led to any observable disturbances in Ghana.

Although political plurality is allowed constitutionally (22), because two parties dominate, Aryee (2017) refers to a political party "duopoly" in Ghana. The two parties are the NDC, an offshoot of the military and Rawlings-led PNDC. It used to boast of "a pro-people" or "ordinary people centeredness," and a nationalist ideology with claims to be revolutionary. The other party is the NPP whose pedigree is the politically conservative United Gold Coast Convention and the Progress Party Danquah-Busia-Dombo group. Its important credentials include being strongly anti-Convention People's Party/ Nkrumah, pro-business mantra of private business being the "engine of Ghana's growth" and "building a property-owning class" (Opoku 2010). Since 2000, both parties have been emphasizing their ideological differences less. Instead they are obsessed with winning elections, retaining power and profiting financially and mightily from incumbency. For instance, although Ghana's 1992 Constitution explicitly mandates creating a national development plan, both the NDC and the NPP refrain from devising national plans for Ghana's development (23). Rather, each jockeys for power *via* elections by patronizing supporters and voters, and implement their own party manifestos to position themselves competitively to enjoy incumbency and the many benefits that come with it.

#### **5. Inside Ghana's 4<sup>th</sup> Republic**

Three distinct events set Ghana apart from its peers and make it a trend setter in Africa. As the British Broadcasting Corporation (2018) acknowledges: "Ghana is considered one of the more stable countries in West Africa since its transition to multiparty democracy in 1992." Including the elections of 7 December 2020, Ghana has had 9 uninterrupted and peaceful back-to-back elections. Every four years since 1992, with the precision of clockwork, on 7 January, the incumbent President, if s/he has not served a second continuous term (of 8 years) and wins an election, or a new president wins a majority vote of 50% plus 1 of votes cast, is sworn in as Ghana's Head of State. This is typically at a public forum like the Black Star Square in Accra with colorful pomp and pageantry with parades.

Secondly, in January 2001, a unique turnover in Ghanaian governance occurred. For the first time, there was a peaceful ceding of power from a ruling government to an opposition party. Fl. Lt. Rawlings' NDC handed over power to the opposition NPP led by J. A. Kufuor. In 2009 there was a reversal, this time, the Atta-Mills-led

NDC defeated the Akufo-Addo-led NPP in the 2008 elections and Mills was sworn in as President on 7 January 2009. The 2008 elections were fiercely contested with the NPP losing by barely 5%, only 50, 000 votes (24). Thirdly, after losing a second time to the NDC (led by John Mahama) in the 2012 Presidential elections, both of which were led by Akufo-Addo, Ghana escaped election-induced mayhem that flared up in Kenya in 2007 and 2013; Zimbabwe in 2008 and 2019; and Cameroon in 2020 (26). Therefore Ghana, unlike neighbors in West Africa such as Liberia and Sierra Leone (Williams 2016), that endured long wars related to rigged elections and stalemate over contests to determine who rules, has reaped many benefits including its burnished reputation as an island of tranquility in Africa.

Events near the end of the Cold War were significant for the emergence of pro-democracy movements and constitutional governance in Ghana and the rest of Africa. In April-May 1983, Ghana turned to the IMF-World Bank duo and other western donors after the Soviets failed to rescue the economy from collapsing. From 1983 to 1985, Ghana underwent an Economic Recovery Program (ERP) under the guidance of western donors. The ERP was reinforced and converted into a more potent neo-liberal economic package dubbed Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) from 1986 to the present. According to Opoku (2010), by 1994 Ghana emerged as the leading neo-liberalized African economy. And starting in 1988, with the encouragement of the west, especially the US, the PNDC that was so recalcitrant about ceding power to anyone else, started yielding to pressure in and out of Ghana to convert to multi-partyism. Like in many African countries, the dissolution of the Soviet Union had “a demonstration effect” (Gyekye- Jandoh, Panford 1998 and 2001, Africa South of the Sahara: Ghana 2019). As it occurred elsewhere in the world, the loosening of Soviet grip over eastern and central European nations, emboldened Africans including Ghanaians to demand political change. In Benin, in 1989, what became known in Francophone Africa as a “National Conference” happened (Robinson 1994). For the first time, opposition politicians were no longer cowed from challenging incumbent governments. Opponents of regimes insisted on creating rule of law and constitutional governance with freedoms such as the right to assemble and to vote in elections.

Francophone African politicians in particular had more incentives to end the one-party state. The end of the Cold War, for instance, coincided with the French not being too keen on using its troops to prop up unpopular regimes which were no longer useful to winning allies in the Cold War against the Soviets. In 1994, France embarked on a new policy of “disengagement” with Africa because African allies were no longer geo-strategically useful due to the demise of both the Cold War and the Soviet Union. Threats and competition from the Soviets had ended, and the west could afford to neglect former allies in Africa and elsewhere. Within Africa, the one-party state or military dictatorship had confined opponents of governments to “economic exile” or “the wilderness.” With the end of the Cold War, these opponents resolved to end their exclusion from the largesse of politics by challenging incumbents. For instance, it was typical for a francophone Minister of Sports to have monopoly over the importation of sports items even as little as soccer or footballs and boots (cleats in the US). Thus, those in opposition exploited the political opportunities to compete for power which the end of Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union led to. Opponents of regimes sought power using the ballot box to improve their own access to material benefits for which they had been denied by incumbents during military or one-party eras. Former President Kufuor of Ghana alluded to such motives when he acknowledged in a speech in Ghana in the 1990s that “some of us have been in the wilderness for a long time” (Kwesi-Aning 2007).

With threats of heavy-handed consequences including arrest, torture, imprisonment, forced exile or even murder removed, plus the absence of the Soviets or the US to defend their allies militarily and or financially, Africa’s strong men and life-time presidents became vulnerable and in most cases were removed and replaced (27). For example, after ruling for 32 years, Zaire’s strong man and one of the US Cold War warriors in Africa—Mobutu Sese Seko was toppled militarily in 1997. Kenneth Kaunda, the Zambian Founder-President, in 1991 became the first African leader to be unseated through the ballot box in elections. Also closely aligned with global developments, because of the demise of the Soviet Union and the vanished threat it used to pose, the West led (by the US and other western allies) could no longer afford or was unwilling to support leaders who were in power before the Cold War stopped (28).

Cessation of the cold war also made the west to recalculate the benefits of its military and financial alliances with its most favored African dictators like Mobutu of Zaire and Doe of Liberia. The west itself was saddled with massive budget deficits due in part to arms race with the Soviets. Therefore, the west cut back budgets, especially monies for foreign aid. With dwindling Soviet threats, the US, Britain, Germany, France and Portugal sought to maximize returns on military, financial and technical aid to African states (Keller and Rothchild 1996). Considering Africa a non-priority or non-critical region from a geo-strategic, military or national security threat standpoint, Africa was hit hard in terms of cuts in financial assistance. France, as noted, in 1994 begun what it called “disengagement from Africa.” Although the west did not totally disengage from Africa, aid earmarked for Africa was reduced substantially. The west put more emphasis on financial gains from their involvement in Africa as it sought more “value for aid dollars” spent on Africa: the west became more interested in financial gains and less in ideological concerns. Africa’s geostrategic or military relevance shrunk

because the Soviet threat ceased (Keller and Rothchild 1996). More emphasis now went to fuller engagement with Africa's massive natural resources. US post cold war preoccupation which was tilted heavily toward national security and energy supplies in the form of crude petroleum was one of the reasons why the US launched the Africa Military Command (Panford 2017).

With the west's desire to reap maximum benefits for aid expenditures and unwillingness to prop up African dictators, the opposition became bold, and asked for term limits for legislators and Heads of State; freedom of association and speech, free media and fair or transparent elections and their incorporation into new constitutions as the basis of new governance. As it were, African elites joined the west's new chorus that sang the praises of neo-liberal democracy.

While new political demands were being made, the west simultaneously sought to legitimize neo-liberal economic policies and practices especially the SAPs, that had proliferated in over 75% of African countries. To legitimize neo-liberal policies that hurt Africans (Panford 2001, 1994, Bofo-Arthur 1999 and 2000 and Meagher 2019) the west imposed new political conditionalities incorporating most of the opposition's political demands. (Africa South of the Sahara: Ghana 2019, Panford 1998 and Gyekye Jandoh 2017).

Hence, the West had strong financial incentives to back pro-democracy movements in Africa. Convinced of the efficacy of constitutional government as the ultimate antidote to corruption, the west backed African efforts to replace no party and military regimes with multiparty systems which they deemed relatively incorrigible and hence financially efficient. Thus, based on considerations including financial calculus, the west which previously was not motivated to support democratic governments, turned 180 degrees: they discovered that multi-partyism and constitutional governance could be, in their view, the panacea to Africa's ills and offer better use of aid dollars, francs, euros or pounds. In the case Ghana's transition to a multiparty system, a paradox emerged. Although Rawlings and the PNDC government had vehemently and repeatedly opposed both neo-liberal politics and economic policies, in order to entrench itself in power, it collaborated with western donors who sought an ally in Africa to demonstrate the efficacy of their highly unpopular financial packages bundled together as SAPs which they thrust onto Africans. Due to how various western interests and motives combined to affect the rise of multiparty systems in Africa, a series of phenomena culminated in what Clark (1996) depicts aptly in the title of his paper: *"Reform or Democratization for Africa? Troubling Constraints and Partial Solutions?"* Thus, external motives, in this case, the interests of mainly the west, led by the US (Africa South of the Sahara 2019: Ghana) prevailed leading to, for instance, Ghana's 4<sup>th</sup> Republic launched on 7 January 1993. Gyekye-Jandoh (2017: 46) provides a succinct summary of the roles international factors played in the return to constitutional governance depending heavily on elections as sources of legitimacy:

*.... Ghana's democratization took place through a two-stage process, where the first stage saw the international community play a more dominant role leading up to Ghana's transition in 1992 .... decision to democratize was the outcome of a rare convergence of domestic and international forces that provided the structural context for political reform. There are two facets of the international impact: .... demonstration effect and .... political conditionality held sway .... that the transition to democracy was given a boost . Hence internal factors and the international community have merged to profoundly shape the nature and outcomes of Ghana and other African states' march toward democracy that started with the end of the Cold War (29).*

## **6. An Assessment of multiparty systems in Post-Cold War Africa.**

In the spheres of governance, there have been positive trends not anticipated a few years ago. There are considerable positive trends, in fact good news, linked to the transition to election-based multiparty and constitutional governance in different African states, in Ghana in particular. The seats taken by the NDC from the NPP in the 7 December 2020 elections leading to a tie in seats going to each party (NDC won 137 while the NPP kept 137 and formed the majority in Parliament with one independent MP) may be a harbinger of the birth of a new dawn in Ghanaian politics. A clear message has been sent to politicians to 'behave well' (that is, come up with reasonable, workable and implementable policies) or get kicked out of office. Several African countries have been following in the footsteps of Ghana.

For the first time in Africa, a court annulled and ordered fresh Presidential election in Kenya. Particularly, following the Kenyan opposition party's allegations that the polls were rigged, the Supreme Court of Kenya ordered new Presidential elections (30). This has been followed by the Supreme Court of Malawi also voiding the Presidential Election of 2019. The Court ordered a re-run which took place on 23 June 2020 and won by the opposition led by Lazarus Chakwera whose political career was thus literally resurrected when he was installed President (BBC 2020). These two firsts could be indicative of new trends with respect to judicial independence and potentially changed roles of the judiciary in Africa under the new auspices of constitutional, rule-of-law and plural political party governance. These cases could usher Africa into new political beginnings with room for judicial independence that stem from the courage to challenge incumbent presidents by ruling against them.

Equally stunning are important phenomena that support the contention that from a human rights or "human

dignity” perspective, politics could be changing in Africa. This is exemplified by the following incident. Barnabas Tinkasimire, an MP, accosted Uganda’s President Museveni by asking the President when he would step down and the President just ignored him (*Africa Review* 2013). This is one example of how the end of the Cold War has altered the political atmosphere in Africa in general. This Ugandan MP had the courage to confront an African leader—one of those deemed ‘strongmen’ knowing that there would not be dire consequences, unlike in the Cold War days when such acts of defiance would have been dangerous or resulted in death.

Since the return to civilian constitutional rule in April 1999 (after a long hiatus dating back to the mid 1980s) in spite of “teething pains,” much dissatisfaction and lots of groaning, Nigeria seems fairly determined to consign military intervention to the bin of history. Firstly, it survived potentially destabilizing constitutional crises when President Yar’Adua was physically absent from Nigeria due to prolonged illness. Contrary to expectations (due to Nigeria’s record of frequent military coups), to the credit of Nigerians, when Yar’Adua passed away, his Vice, Goodluck Johnathan peacefully assumed the Presidency in an almost seamless manner. Then on 1 April 2015, Muhammadu Buhari defeated the incumbent, Jonathan, with over 2.5 million votes. Jonathan’s defeat was a watershed moment in Nigeria’s history: For the first time in Nigeria, a sitting President lost to an opponent in an election (31). Bearing in mind past incidents of bloody coups and the adverse effects of elections in Nigeria, Jonathan’s concession saved the lives of many Nigerians from possible bloodshed.

The positive trends alluded to point to relatively new and “liberal” atmosphere in which politics is being conducted in many parts of post-Cold War Africa including Ghana (32). Ghanaians, Kenyans and Malawians alike have had to grapple with fiercely competitive elections which have given rise to keen litigation at their apex courts. The first Supreme Court case involving Presidential elections in Ghana was in 2012 when the losing NPP/Akufo Addo filed a challenge against the declared winner, the NDC ‘s Mahama and Ghana’s Electoral Commission (33). The Ghanaian Supreme Court upheld the declaration of the NDC and Mahama as winners by the EC. Despite a tense atmosphere generated by the hotly contested elections (spurred on by the fact that this was the second time the NPP’s Akufo Addo had lost his bid to become President) the NPP accepted the Court’s verdict and it was quiet in Ghana(34). This and other remarkable positive turning points in Ghana since 1992 have contributed to Ghana’s reputation as a “a beacon of peace and democracy” in a West African region mired in severe and bloody conflicts as in Sierra Leone’s 11-year-long war of 23 March 1991 to 18 January 2002 or Liberia’s bloody wars of December 1989 to 1997 and 1999 to 2003.

Like the Black Phoenix (reminiscent of its Black Stars heydays), Ghana has been rising from the ash heap of bloody coups engendering socio-economic decay and unpredictable changes in government from the 24 February 1966 coup to 7 January 1993. In fact, the Constitution of Ghana mandates precisely that on: “.... January 7<sup>th</sup> every four years and without fail, a President shall be installed according to Article 66(1) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana” Furthermore:

*A person elected as President shall, subject to clause (3) of this article, hold office for a term of four years beginning from the date on which he is sworn in as President (Article 66 (1) Ghana Constitution, 1992.)*

Thus, since 1993, it has become a tradition that every fourth year, after midnight on January 6<sup>th</sup> the Office of the President of Ghana becomes vacant and the following day, January 7<sup>th</sup> a new President swears the oath of office to assume the Presidency (Ninsin 2016). Ghana has repeated this on 9 separate occasions without fail (35). Even the novel global pandemic COVID-19 (aka coronavirus) did not prevent Ghanaians from registering and voting in Parliamentary and Presidential elections on 7 December, 2020.

Even the most ardent critic-cum-skeptic of Ghanaian politics would recognize that since 1993, Ghana’s “culture of silence” has dissipated considerably. The culture of silence emanating from intimidation has been replaced by a sense of general freedom to express one-self, associate freely and to protest openly without incurring the wrath of security agents such as the police or army. The 1992 Constitution is replete with provisions that define and emphasize the importance of human rights. They are operationalized and depicted in the following excerpts from the Constitution:

*Chapter 5 Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms:*

*12. (1) The fundamental human rights and freedoms enshrined in this Chapter shall be respected and upheld by the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary and all other organs of government and its agencies and .... by all .... in Ghana, and shall be enforceable by the courts ....*

*(2) Every person in Ghana .... shall be entitled to ... fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual contained in this Chapter ... subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest.*

*13. (1) No person shall be deprived of his life intentionally except in the exercise of the execution of a sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offence under the laws of Ghana of which he has been convicted.*

*14. (1) Every person shall be entitled to his personal liberty and no person shall be deprived of his personal liberty except in the following cases and in accordance with the procedure permitted by law*



(2) *A person who is arrested, restricted or detained shall be informed immediately, in a language that he understands, of the reasons for his arrest, restriction or detention and of his right to a lawyer of his choice.*

(3) *A person who is arrested, restricted or detained –*

- a) *For the purpose of bringing him before a court in execution of an order of a court; or*
- b) *upon reasonable suspicion of his having committed or being about to commit a criminal offence under the laws of Ghana, and who is not released, shall be brought before a court with forty-eight hours after the arrest, restriction or detention.*

(4) *Where a person arrested, restricted or detained under paragraph (a) or (b) of clause (3) of this article is not tried within a reasonable time, then, without prejudice to any further proceedings that may be brought against him, he shall be released either unconditionally or upon reasonable conditions reasonably necessary to ensure that he appears at a later date for trial or for proceedings preliminary to trial.*

1. (1) *The dignity of all persons shall be inviolable.*

(2) *No person shall, whether or not he is arrested, restricted or detained, be subjected to –*

- a) *Torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;*
- b) *Any other condition that detracts or is likely to detract from his dignity and worth as a human being.*

Lastly 34 (4) of the 1992 Constitution requires the Government of Ghana to “... cultivate among all Ghanaians respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms and the dignity of the human person.”

Due to the transition to a constitutional form of government, remarkably there have been few, if any, *bona fide* political detainees in Ghana and relatively few rampant abuses of human rights. Instead, there are some meaningful indicators of respect for human life, the dignity of life and persons including instances observed by this author. While on a sabbatical leave in Ghana in 1996, I travelled to Koforidua (the Capital of the Eastern Region of Ghana). I learned one of my neighbors had stolen stereo equipment. When I inquired what happened to him, his grandfather said, “he has been bailed out of jail.” When I probed further, the grandfather said “under the 1992 Constitution, the police could not detain him for more than 48 hours. So, they took him to the magistrate court, and he made bail. This is a definite tangible benefit that deals with human life, rights and dignity emanating directly from provisions in Ghana’s 1992 Constitution which we have cited above.

Press freedom is also fairly abundant in Ghana’s post-transition era. The country’s media landscape has been reshaped completely. According to *Africa South of the Sahara, Ghana 2019*, Ghana had 6 major daily newspapers; 2 periodicals; 2 bi-weeklies; 8 weekly newspapers and 11 magazines. Presenters use Akan, Dagbani, Ewe, Ga, Hausa, Nzema, Asante, Akwapim and Fante together with English in radio and television broadcasts (*Africa South of the Sahara, Ghana 2019*). Accordingly, from the days of only one major radio and TV stations (which were government owned and operated by the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation) there are now many competitor radio and TV stations. The capital Accra and all regional capitals and towns have local FM Radio and TV stations. These stations offer diverse programs and opinions on national matters. In some respects, press freedom is flourishing more because it is relatively financially inexpensive to set up a newspaper press or an FM station (37). With the print media, both government-owned dailies, *Daily Graphic* and *Ghanaian Times*, now contend with stiff competition as virtually every organization and cause in Ghana has its own mouthpiece in the form of a newspaper or magazine. Besides, Article 167 (c) of the Ghanaian Constitution of 1992 seeks to shield state owned media from political interference.

With respect to human rights, dignity and life, Ghana has taken additional commendable measures and hence earned its portrayal as a political role model for Africa (*Africa South of the Sahara: Ghana, 2019*). Except Germany that explicitly recognizes rights of unions/workers such as inclusion in corporate governance, section 21 of Ghana’s 1992 Constitution statutorily enhances fundamental workers’ rights (Panford 2001) such as :

- a) *freedom of assembly including freedom to take part in processions and demonstrations.*
- b) *freedom of association, which shall include freedom to form or join trade unions or other associations, national and international, for the protection of their interest (38).*

Because of the above provisions, workers in Ghana today have the choice of joining the premier federation, the Ghana Trades Union Congress, founded originally in 1945 and the Ghana Federation of Labor formed in 1998. Such union rights are also codified under Ghanaian law by the Labor Relations Act, 2003 ( Panford 2008, revised 2012).

Even though Aryee (2017) observes correctly that there is a duopoly political party structure, because of *de facto* two-party system in Ghana today, the 1992 Constitution does not only prohibit a one-party state (39) but has also led to a political scene with a relatively long list of parties. Seven presidential candidates contested the December 2016 elections in Ghana and there were 6 political parties (Aryee, 2017) and on 7 December 2020, 12 individuals vied for the Presidency.

Thus, for almost three decades, Ghanaians have had a proliferation of media/press, right to vote and express themselves, and to freely associate in terms of trade unions (40) and political party affiliation as a result of the transition to a constitutional order with many parties contesting free and fierce elections to successfully determine who governs Ghana 9 different times.

### **7. The High Cost of Ghana's Post 1992 Multiparty and Parliamentary Form of Governance**

This final section addresses major and, in some instances, unanticipated undesired aspects of Ghana's post 1992 governance and the kinds of adverse politics it has engendered. As part of the national effort to resolve once and for all, its virtually unending search for governmental structures that work, Ghana's 1992 Constitution launched a hybrid system of government. That is, Ghana has blended a US Executive Style Presidency with an English Westminster Prime Ministerial and Parliamentary forms of Government. The US Presidency invests the President with powers somehow akin to that of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a corporation. Section 58 (1) of Chapter 8 of the Constitution stipulates: "The Executive authority of Ghana shall vest in the President and shall be exercised in accordance with the provisions of this constitution." The Westminster system on the other hand, makes the Prime Minister, in effect the Head of Government and at the same time a peer of his/her Parliamentarians. Parliament is important and the British PM cannot act like the classic business CEO.

Hence what Ghana has sought to operate since 1993 is a form of government that has within it two contrasting principles and styles of administration. The delimitations inherent in what we designate as "a combo" or "odd admixture" of incompatible English and US forms of government plus the behavior of politicians belonging to Ghana's two dominant political parties have severely undermined the efficacy of Ghana's post 1992 governance. Thus, we stress that both the nature of the 1992 constitution *per se* and the inappropriate behavior of politicians and key public administrators have combined to yield most of the negative outcomes identified in this study.

The first of these important anomalies is the requirement that, like the British PM system, Section 78 (1) of the Ghana Constitution of 1992 requires that "... *the majority of Ministers of State shall be appointed from among members on top of their roles as legislators.* "

Dual roles of MPs are severe constraints inherent in Ghana's Constitution. MPs, as it were, have to serve two "masters" or wear two incongruent hats. As members of Parliament, they are expected to serve their constituencies back home that elected them. Post 1992 conditions in Ghana have led to MPs who are also Ministers showing unflinching loyalty to their political party and the President who appointed them and at whose pleasure they retain their cabinet posts. The issue that emerges here is, to whom do MPs who double up and hence assume dual responsibilities simultaneously as Ministers of State owe allegiance? Is it to the President who is also the party leader they have unflinching loyalty to and their political party? Or is it their constituents who elected them to Parliament? The incumbent NPP MP for New Juaben South, Asibe Yeboah, lost his party's primaries in June 2020 because the party "faithful" blamed him for being absent from the constituency (Ghana web, 20<sup>th</sup> June 2020). This could be a clear case of an MP not being able to serve two "masters" at the same time.

Aside from divided loyalty, there are also financial and physical constraints confronting MPs who come farther away from Accra - where the National Parliament is located - while serving at the pleasure of the President. Firstly, is the high cost of commuting and the physical challenges posed by Ghana's bad roads. MPs from far flung regions (especially areas with bad roads) contend with the tortuous physical commute to and from their constituencies. Difficulties staying in touch with constituents can be illustrated with the situations of MPs from long distances from Accra. An example is Sefwi Wiawso whose former NPP MP, Kweku Afriyie, also served as Minister for Health from 2001 to 2005. This MP may have had to fly from Accra to Takoradi (if flights were affordable and available) and then travel 170 miles by road for over five hours due to poor driving conditions. Similarly, a Sunyani MP who doubles up as a minister has to first get to Kumasi by air (if affordable and available) and then by road for an hour or even more hours especially on weekends due to heavy Kumasi-Sunyani road traffic because the Sunyani airport's runway is not suitable for commercial flights.

There is an additional adverse effect of MPs serving as members of the President's Cabinet and being an MP at the same time. Since being a Minister is more financially rewarding as well as socially prestigious, MPs who are Cabinet members are more likely to please the President who is also what in Ghanaian parlance is the Party "Flagbearer" or cheer leader -in- chief. Pressure on MPs to display loyalty to the President to retain Cabinet positions deemed so prestigious in Ghana is borne by how the NPP's Koforidua North's former MP lost his seat as a result of losing in the primaries: Yeboah shows why in Ghana it is important to be a Minister than a "mere" MP: "Delegates voted 2020 Against me for not holding Ministerial Position" (Peace FM, Ghanaweb, Accessed 30 July 2020) Such motivations could influence MPs' behaviors which may not be compatible with Parliament's independence and hence undercut the separation of executive from legislative powers while diluting the autonomy and efficacy of the Ghanaian Parliament.

Unique circumstances related to Ghana's transition from the military PNDC to civilian rule have also

exacerbated the delimitations of the current political system. To entice by incentivizing the military PNDC and Rawlings in particular to allow Ghana to convert to multiparty with constitutional government, the 1992 Constitution was literally “front loaded” with excess executive power and perks. What happened is analogous to “injecting” the Executive Presidential system with more “executive steroids.” That is, with more powers and privileges (41). This has contributed to a situation in which the President rewards politicians by appointing them as Ministers of State and to other prestigious and beneficial positions such as Directors of public bodies. Because a Cabinet position pays more and is more prestigious than an MP, most MPs prefer pleasing the President so that they are made Ministers or keep their Ministerial appointments. As Asibe Yeboah (New Juaben South/Koforidua MP unseated for not being in touch with his constituency) acknowledges, his own primary NPP delegates “.... voted against me for not holding a ministerial position (Peace FM 30 July 2020). Hence as it is, MPs compete to demonstrate their loyalties to the President and the ruling Party to retain important Cabinet positions to avoid becoming “mere” MPs (Panford 2017)

The combo US Style and British Westminster system undercuts Ghana’s constitutional governance in more ways. The requirement that the Cabinet should be majority MPs deals a fatal blow to a major prerequisite – a *conditio sine qua non* – for Parliamentary independence and hence the sovereignty of National Parliaments plus the separation of powers. It is especially important for Parliament’s effectiveness to avoid undue Executive influence. The physical presence of Cabinet Members in Parliament and the country’s peculiar circumstances after 1992 have accentuated the negative outcomes. As a result, the Ghanaian Parliament has been devoid of principles and good practices of real separation of powers while it has hardly made real attempts to assert and display autonomy. This is due largely to what Ghanaians have branded “stomach politics.” (Bob-Milliar 2012 ). MPs, like most post-1992 politicians and public officials, are perceived to be and may not in fact work to promote the national interest. Instead, most allegiance goes to the President who also acts as the ruling party’s flag bearer/Campaigner-in-chief in pursuit of their own personal financial well-being (Panford 2017) as well as doing everything to win elections to stay in power. It is important to stress the preponderant motivation to win or retain power at all costs and how that corrodes the effectiveness of the post 1992 Ghanaian Parliament. Patronage and spoilage politics have become highly visible and much alive in contemporary Ghana. Under the current constitution and in ongoing circumstances in which winning elections is the surest route to political power and riches, elections have become highly competitive at the expense of Ghanaian citizens. Competition is driven by the benefits of the Presidency, MP and Cabinet appointments. There are also added issues of “zero sum” and “winner takes all” which permit governments in power to reward party stalwarts, foot soldiers and other operatives with choice positions and jobs such as heads of state companies or boards that come with benefits including expensive sports utility vehicles (SUVs) which big engines that suck massive fuel nicknamed “V8s” in Ghana.

Since especially 2000, politics in Ghana has become “ an investment avenue” to amass wealth in the shortest possible time –in four year or eight-year terms of office. Hence political party primaries in particular have become fierce and costly than even national elections (42). In 2011-2012 for example, the author was informed in discussions with residents of Cape Coast in the Central Region that during the NDC’s primaries, Parliamentary Candidates offered cell phones with credit, flat screen TV sets, and cash payments – cedi notes/bills stuffed together with food in take away containers. At the 2018 Congress of the ruling NPP at Koforidua Technical University, relatives of this author confirmed that some delegates were “incentivized” with cash payments ranging from 300-400 Ghana cedis (approximately \$100/delegate).

The high cost of elections and democracy (others term “monecracy”) in a relatively poor country like Ghana is illustrated by the following. In September 2020 Ghana’s Electoral Commission announced that Presidential Candidates and aspirant MPs had to pay 400,000 Ghana cedis (equivalent to US \$80,000) and 10,000 Ghana cedis (approximately US \$2,000) respectively as registration fees (Osei, 2020). Before that, eight “bigwigs” who sought the Presidency on the NDC’s ticket formed an alliance called “yentua” (“ we will not pay in Twi, a Ghanaian language), refusing to pay the 400,000 Ghana cedi filing fee announced by the opposition NDC. Party bigwigs who protested such exorbitant fees included wealthy and long-time national political figures such as Alban Bagbin ( Current Speaker of Parliament) , Augustus “Goosie” Tanoh and Ekwow Spio-Garbrah (BBC News, 3 December 2018). Tanoh is a wealthy businessman –cum-politician and Spio-Garbrah is the former Head of International Telecommunication Union, many times Minister of State, former Ghana Ambassador to the US and member of the board of UNESCO. These bigwigs protested the 400,000 Ghana cedi NDC Presidential Candidate’s fees because they claimed they were exorbitant (43).

All these excessively expensive electioneering campaigns and other related processes are occurring in a society in which the Vice President, Mahamudu Bawumia, openly admits that Ghana could not afford a lock-down to mitigate the spread and devastating health consequences of the novel coronavirus (alias COVID-19) that struck globally in 2020. Ghana like most African and poor states could not provide financial support to citizens who needed to work but risked getting Covid infection. According to the Minister for Finance, Ken Ofori Atta: most would suffer severely because a whopping 90% of Ghanaians work in the informal economy

(Ghanaweb, 28 July 2020) facing economic hardships because they make sub-standard wages which have led to the common phenomenon of “working from hand to mouth,” without savings for emergencies. Also because of grossly inadequate Internet, most Ghanaians could not work remotely even if their jobs allowed them.

### **8. Why the High Cost of Ghana’s Post 1992 Politics, Democracy, Elections and Governance?**

What we designate the “oddmixture” of US Executive style Presidency and British Westminster forms of government severely threatens the current and future welfare of most Ghanaians. Current Ghanaian modalities of politics also make it extremely difficult for Ghana’s Parliament to comply with the Economic Commission for Africa’s (ECA) admonition to African legislatures:

*Parliaments have a critical role to play in the promotion of democracy and good governance. As a result of their lawmaking, representation and oversight functions, parliamentarians can actively engage in the development and implementation of laws and policies that promote democracy and good governance.*

Pursuit of individual financial gains, parties’ success at the polls through all means, the high cost of national elections and especially, party primaries plus the need to be loyal to the President and the party have culminated in what we have dubbed “destructive party jingoism.” This trend has many socially adverse or even dangerous effects such as blind loyalty to the party and President. This has created the attitude that “my party and only my party is right and always right” or “my party or the highway,” as well as the erroneous notion that compromises are for losers only and an anathema! This led to a prominent Ghanaian referring to some NDC young party loyalists as “Baby Sharks with Sharp Teeth.” These young party stalwarts fiercely defend their party at all costs in various public media including daily TV and radio shows.

Ghana’s spiraling cycle of deleterious anti-bipartism between the two *de facto* dominant NPP and NDC parties has since 2000 not allowed for healthy Parliamentary debates and a balanced approach to public matters in the Ghanaian body politic. Examples are managing Ghana’s natural resources judiciously and carefully scrutinizing all sorts of contracts, especially those for loans that are saddling Ghanaians with a mountain of debts (Panford 2017). One disturbing partisan behavior the author witnessed occurred at the National Parliament in Accra on 14 July 2010. During a briefing he was giving to NDC members of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Energy, anytime an NPP MP got near the briefing room, the NDC MPs he was briefing asked him to pause so that their opponents could not get the information from his research on managing Ghana’s petroleum. This kind of negative behavior is motivated by unproductive partisanship which could prevent the NPP (then in the opposition) from playing roles crucial to Parliament’s expected crucial oversight of Ghana’s budding petroleum industry.

Ghana’s quest to nib the proverbial resource curse (which we designate instead as “resource mismanagement” (Panford 2014a, 2014b and 2017) in mining and oil and gas has been seriously compromised by the National Parliament not acting to ensure optimum accountability and thus prudent use of oil, gas and other natural resources – especially gold, diamond and bauxite as well. This has led to our description of Ghana’s Parliament as “one of the weakest links” in national efforts to protect valuable resources as depicted in the following. First, the NPP led Parliament retroactively “rubber stamped,” *en masse*, several mining contracts (Panford 2017). Our research reveals that since 2007, except one oil agreement, the Pecan Aker AGM contract, all contracts submitted by Government have been approved by the Ghanaian Parliament. In the Pecan Aker AGM case, in May 2019, Parliament ordered the Minister of Energy to revise within six months sections (Panford forthcoming). Although the Minister for Energy complied with Parliament’s directive, the resubmitted agreement was one of the worst in the history of Ghana’s oil and gas (Panford Forthcoming). Parliament, led by an NPP majority, could not resist surrendering to the will and interests of foreign companies. Thus Ghanaian legislators failed to represent the best interests of Ghanaians. For instance, the original Ghanaian stake in the Pecan Oil Field was dropped precipitously from a high of 49% to a miserly 10%.

There are more examples of how Ghana’s Parliament has not acted as a bulwark against critical anti-people and anti-development phenomena. While Ghana’s crucial Petroleum Revenue Management Act (Act 815) 2011 was being drafted, many civil society groups vehemently objected to clauses allowing Ghana to use crude petroleum as collateral for loans. In spite of this huge opposition, the NDC used its majority to get Parliament to insert collateralization clauses into the law. This explains in part why Ghana has been on a borrowing binge and has become as a leading African debtor nation (*Wall Street Journal*, 17 September 2015; *New African*, 16 January 2016).

In spite of good intentions and efforts poured into new institutions to steer Ghana away from the proverbial resource curse, extreme partisanship has led to situations in which state institutions including the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation (GNPC, the National Oil Company (NOC)) and Ghana Gas Corporation are not held accountable. Since 2017, the Public Interest and Accountability Committee (PIAC) has been reporting that millions of dollars’ worth of gas from the Jubilee Field have been transferred from the GNPC to Ghana Gas without payments into the public coffers (PIAC 2017, 2018, 2019 [www.piacghana.org](http://www.piacghana.org)). In June 2020, Ghana’s Auditor-General also reported that in 2019 alone, over \$300 million of gas and surface rental fees that should



have gone into national oil funds were not paid (Ghanaweb, 17 June 2020). The Attorney General and Parliament have not acted on any of these serious adverse findings largely due to extreme partisanship making the NPP dominated Parliament and the Executive ( both the President and Attorney General) acting as if they do not see or hear any financial shenanigans happening. Both NPP and NDC MPs and their party stalwarts cannot and will not condemn acts by officials belonging to their parties even if such egregious acts are widely publicized and seriously injure the nation's interests and people. Contemporary Ghanaian partisanship does not allow the condemnation of one's own party members or leaders. That will be deemed unacceptable or political suicide in today's body politic.

The NPP's First Speaker of Parliament (from 2001 to 2005), Peter Adjetey, set the tone for Ghana's expensive democracy when he answered questions about why his office bought an expensive Mercedes sedan. He replied: Who told you democracy is cheap? Democracy is expensive. Following this incident, many politicians have behaved to confirm that indeed Ghanaian democracy is expensive. Ghana's post 2000 political scene is replete with blatant abuses of power that occur with impunity. This has created a system of transparency without accountability or sanctions for both abuse of political power and even financial corruption. The Christian Council of Ghana expressed concerns about what they termed the "4 Demonic Forces" in Ghana which include "the demon of abuse of power" (Ghanaweb, 20 July 2020). It is reported that a leading NPP Communicator, Afari Aggrey, retorted that as a member of the NPP ruling class, he would not recant insults he heaped on leading NDC personnel: " My Government is in power, I'll Not Retract the Insult." As a member of the government, Aggrey saw no need to apologize under any circumstance (Ghanaweb, 12 August 2020). This is becoming classic impunity displayed lackadaisically by both the NDC and NPP.

Rampant public display of abuse of state resources such as finances that are done publicly in nonchalant fashion show that politicians and public bureaucrats have not heeded Kan Dapaah's (former NPP Cabinet Minister and Head of Ghana's Security Agency) lament that

Unless we put an end to the disregard for key accountability mechanisms, we will continue to swim in awful poverty in spite of ... revenues accrued from our natural resources ....

.... the challenge we have is the lack of good financial governance, a situation that has resulted in massive corruption by politicians and individuals in public service.

(Aklorbortu, 2012: 53)

The behavior of several of Kan Dapaah's own NPP colleagues and NDC opponents confirm what happens when there is plentiful financial transparency without accountability or most importantly, sanctions to deter instances of abuse of power and especially financial resources as the following cases depict. After both the Auditor General and the Special Prosecutor found thousands of convertible currencies in bank accounts of the former head of Ghana's Public Procurement Authority, the President, Akufo-Addo merely dismissed him. He walks in Ghana freely without fear of arrest or prosecution. This is classic transparency without genuine enforcement or accountability. The second case we cite affirms the arrogance of public officials who abuse public assets with impunity. Instead, the public official mentioned here is as it were, "rewarded."

Kwame Owusu, head of Ghana's Maritime Authority, renovated a state owned 2-bedroom house at a cost of 1m Ghana cedis (approximately \$200,000). When asked about excessive costs, he replied proudly that in fact he deserved 13 and not 11 air conditioners (see YouTube interview, "Maritime Boss Justifies Why he needs 13, not 11 Air Conditioners: Says Criticism is due to Mediocrity," and Ghanaweb, 2 November 2018). That was not the end of Owusu's display of disregard and insensitivity to the dire financial straits of the bulk of the Ghanaian population. It was also alleged Owusu spent public funds totaling 135,000 Ghana cedis (over \$20,000) on lunch for a few guests (44). Instead of reprimanding or at the very least firing Owusu, the unexpected happened. President Akufo-Addo promoted Owusu. He was made the Chair of the Board, Ghana's Revenue Authority! ("Akufo-Addo Under Pressure to Sack Kwame Owusu," Ghanaweb, 1 November 2018). This and similar cases happening under both NDC and NPP administrations have made Ghana popular for its transparency on paper without impactful accountability and effective deterrence to the abuse of power and privileges by public administrators. Meanwhile, the basic needs of the majority of Ghanaians including the poor, working poor and especially those in the informal, low wage, low tech and low finance sector are neglected as they scrape for a living (45)

## 9. Ghana/Africa's Expensive Parliaments

Lastly, Ghana's democratic experiment, like those of other African states, has been prohibitively expensive in both relative and absolute terms in the fiscal sense. Ghana's Parliament may not be the costliest, but it is still in the top 5 tier of Africa's most expensive legislatures. Kenya led Africa as the most expensive when MPs earned \$120,000/year in 2012 which was cut to \$75,000/annum. In 2013, as if not content with their still high salaries, Kenyan MPs passed a bill that was to cost \$23m to pay themselves \$105,000 each as bonuses. Mwai Kibaki, the President was not able to sign onto these bonuses due to huge public outrage and protests (BBC 2012 & *Business and Financial News* 2013). Nigerians went into shock from disbelief when it was revealed that each

Senator was entitled to \$37,500 in allowances on top of a monthly salary of over \$2,000 (Nigerian Senator Calculator 2018). Liberian political classes earn salaries that are a thousand times the earnings of most Liberians. The Speaker, Deputy Speaker and each Representative earned in 2015-2016: \$65,210, \$64,740 and \$34,956 respectively. A *Pro Tempore* Senator made \$105,227 and Senators \$34,482. Legislators' salaries plus a long list of "general" and "special" allowances cost \$1,771,041 out of Liberia's meager half a billion dollar national annual budget (Liberia, *National Budget 2015-2016* and *MarketWatch* 2020). Therefore after paying its high maintenance legislators, the rest of Liberians have barely half a billion dollars left to pay for basic needs including garbage collection, education and health and the salaries of the less than 60 medical doctors left to fight ebola in Liberia in 2014-2015 (Taferenyika 2014: 11) and COVID-19 in 2020-2021.

Ghanaian MPs have not allowed themselves to be outdone in terms of salaries and perks given to their African counterparts. The first Parliament under the 4<sup>th</sup> Republic (1993-1997) set the pace for what in Ghana are definitely high emoluments. The first Parliamentarians arranged \$20,000-\$25,000 car loans for themselves. Also, through accelerated depreciation, they literally acquired cars at minimum cost to themselves while they manipulated their compensation to become the only employees in Ghana who are paid end-of-service benefits while still employed as MPs.

Subsequent Ghanaian Parliaments have exceeded the generous benefit packages the first Parliament allocated to itself. In a country like Ghana whose population faces a lot of hardship making a living on the proverbial \$1-\$2 daily, MPs received 50,000 cedis (approximately \$25,000) for housing in 2013 ("Nyannu Justifies 50,000 cedis Rent Allowance to MPs," Radioxyzonline.com, 25 January 2013). Salaries and generous allowances have made politics highly lucrative for MPs, Ministers of State and CEOs of statutory boards plus and Ghana's Council of State members. This has stiffened competition for public offices and the retention of power, especially since 2000 with no end in sight. Recent rising trends in using politics and political positions as the quickest route to amass individual and ruling class wealth contrasts sharply with practices in the 1960s and 1970s. J. R. Asiedu, the Speaker of National Parliament and a Convention People's Party (CPP) stalwart in the mid 1960, for instance, used his family revenues from cocoa in the Akwapim-Larteh area to sponsor the CPP. Also, at the time Col. I. K. Acheampong overthrew, the Busia Government (on 13 January 1972), the Progress Party's Eastern Region Branch owed Joe Panford & Son's Tire Company of Koforidua money for tires and car batteries the PP obtained on credit but had not paid for due to lack of funds in the party's account.

Although the focus of this paper has been the National Parliament of Ghana, other institutions essential to the success of Ghana's democracy deserve to be evaluated, albeit briefly (due to spatial limitations). Some of these have acted as additional "weak links" in Ghana's multi-party system. In spite of the flourishing of all types of media including electronic, print and since the age of the Internet, social media, media in Ghana have not as yet behaved like the proverbial 4<sup>th</sup> Estate. There is a lot of what is called "cut and paste reporting." This is, the media not performing critically and constructively toward a better Ghana through effective "watch dog" roles. Like typical institutions in Ghana today, the media have not escaped partisanship and decaying standards. The media have not insulated themselves and instead, some have aligned with one of the two dominant political parties. In some cases, acting like "mouth pieces" and public relations arm of political parties or factions. Besides, TV, radio programs and newspapers are full of commercials that take much space and airtime, leaving little room or time for news analyses or appropriate education and information for the public on pertinent national affairs (46). Much of the media have therefore abdicated their functions as the "watch dog" for the society. As a result, pertinent matters including incessant borrowing through the issue of Eurobonds to finance ballooning budget deficits by both the NDC and NPP; free secondary school education; a \$3b loan from the Chinese in exchange for Ghana's bauxite and crude oil and whether voters' register could be set aside and replaced with a new one when there is an outbreak of a new global pandemic, COVID-19, are not fully analyzed to ascertain their merits and demerits in most of Ghanaian media. Because of the media's low levels of proper engagement with salient national issues, Ghana is missing a key ingredient for creating an effective multi-party or constitutional system to ensure Ghanaians' welfare.

## 10. Conclusion

There is little or no doubt that Ghana ought to and should be commended for rising from the heady turbulent or "revolutionary" days of June 4, 1979 and December 31, 1981 to become a fairly stable society finding its way toward democratic governance. It has overcome substantial odds by taking important steps to deepen its democratic credentials. But there are issues looming in the background, including ones the Coronavirus is bringing into sharp focus. The 2020 elections leading to the absence of an absolute majority or even a simple majority by any party could also sorely test Ghana's democratic credentials. The NPP will be the first party in Ghana to face a test in governing with a hung Parliament, that is, both ruling and opposition parties have equal parliamentary seats (Annan2021)

There are massively deep and widening social cleavages identified by Philip Alston (2018) and by Oxfam (2020). In fact, Alston (2018) reports that in terms of social protection, Ghana lags its African peer. There is, in

addition to a rapidly growing population with a youth bulge, a large informal economy with little high technology, finance, and low productivity and safety employing 90% of workers in an economy addicted to dependence on the export of raw materials (receipts for which can be low and unpredictable) and the political system not providing solutions to substantial development bottles.

A pertinent question that arises here is: Can Ghana's multiparty system launched in 1993 be sustained and for how long? (47). A pervasive challenge today is how to make the Ghanaian economy generate jobs and careers for large numbers of youth including those with post-secondary qualifications (Panford 2001 and Africa Renewal 2017) (48). The daunting challenges of mounting youth unemployment and underemployment emanate from important demographic and other factors such as sluggish economic growth and painfully slow job creation with a dearth of technology and finances Panford 2001 and Alston 2018). In July 2020, University of Education at Winneba alone had 107,000 students while in 2019, 346,098 students took the high school exams. In 2020, the number of the latter shot up 8.6% leading to 375,763 students completing high school (*Ghanaweb* 13 November 2020 and Tetteh 2020). These data imply that the economy has to create a minimum of 250,000 to 300,000 jobs each year to absorb the large numbers of youth graduating each school year. This is one tough challenge out of the myriad economic challenges a country like Ghana must manage well if its people are to prosper.

So far Ghana and most African governments' response has been one of a default position: Entrepreneurship! As it were, Ghanaian and other African leaders – mostly Presidents and Prime Ministers and MPs – are asking graduates of Africa's severely constrained educational systems to create their own jobs to solve the continent's unusual situation of economic growth without jobs. A related question is, how do graduates with mostly inapplicable skills, from poor communities with few, if any, financial resources, become successful entrepreneurs in economies with inadequate but very expensive and unreliable electricity, Internet, and transport? The latter draws attention to the urgent need to narrow the huge technological gap between Africa and the rest of the world, in particular North America, western Europe and South East Asia (*Africa Renewal* 2017). Much of the future of Africa, especially its bulging youth population, may hinge on creating capacity to harness new green technologies and energy to scale up massively job creation.

Lastly, how Ghana and its African peers manage the current global pandemic – COVID-19 – will go a long way to show the efficacy of the continent's democratic experiment, neo-liberal economic policies and practices. Of particular urgency is whether African states can act prudently in protecting the well-being of the majority of citizens while simultaneously keeping their economic growth on track and keeping mostly intact the political and human rights gains made in the last three decades.

## Notes

1. Clark 1996 and Panford 2017 and 1998
2. Development challenges are used because Africa's development hurdles are socially and humanly induced and will be resolved with the right policy solutions. For a summary description of challenges, see Konadu Agyemang and Panford (2006)
3. For cogent and thoughtful analyses of how neo-liberal ideology, policies and practices have adversely impacted Africa, see Meagher 2019 interview with Thandika Mkwandawire. For a more blunt negative view, see Murray 2015
4. Ghana produces a quarter to a third of a million youth each year. In 2020 alone, 318,000 secondary school students were expected to graduate (Akuffo Addo Speech, *Ghanaweb* 2020). Most of these graduates will not pursue tertiary education or get formal employment. While Ghana is deemed "the darling pupil" of donors, large numbers of university graduates are not employed, leading to strikes and demonstrations by associations of unemployed graduates (*Ghanaweb* September 4, 2018). Youth unemployment is perceived to be a national security threat by Ghanaian Vice President Mahamadu Bawumia (*Ghanaweb* 15 January 2018). Similar trends occur across all of Africa: Only 6% of youth are in tertiary education. Africa also lags other regions in providing Internet-based learning while large numbers undertake perilous journeys to Europe crossing the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean and Red Seas in rickety boats (*Africa Renewal* 2017). The World Bank estimated in 2016 that Kenya had the highest youth unemployment in East Africa, 20%. Twenty-five per cent of African youth seeking greener pastures in Europe end up being sold as slaves in post-Gaddafi Libya (9 July 2011 to present), for \$300-\$400 a person, come from Nigeria, Africa's current largest economy (CNN 2017).
5. A popular refrain in Ghana today to the question why the country's social infrastructure is bad, especially with erratic but expensive Internet, electricity and water is: "the population has grown." As much as the population shot from 6 million in the 1960s to the current 26+ million people, the bad infrastructure is due to wanton neglect, decay, lack of planning and failure to invest in a sustained and appreciable manner. Lack of planning is mainly responsible for a predictable feature of Ghana and most of Africa in the last 20-30 years: erratic, low quality and unstable electricity,

- water and Internet which cost prohibitively ( Ghanaweb, General News March 15, 2013).
6. The UN's Rapporteur Philip Alston (2018) states that Ghana's socio-economic inequality exceeds that of its peers in Africa. He observes that less than 100 Ghanaians' wealth is 7% of Ghana's GDP while Ghana ranks below its peers in supporting the poor and the new working poor. Oxfam (2020) confirms Alston's findings about poverty and inequality in Ghana.
  7. Ghana has graduated from a low debtor nation status, to one of Africa's leading debtors. Under donor tutelage, Ghana has been binging on domestic and huge international debts. In 2015, it obtained Eurobonds at a high 10.75% interest rate to finance budget deficits. In 2016 it topped the list of highly indebted African states including Kenya, Zambia, Mozambique and Gabon (*New African*, January 2016 and *Wall Street Journal*, 17 November 2015: 1 & 3). In March 2020, Ghana's total debt was 236.1 billion cedis making the debt-to-GDP ratio 59.3%. Ghana owed \$22.9 billion in international debt, out of which \$4.2b was owed to the World Bank ("Minority Wants Independent Audit of Public Debt," Ghanaweb, 26 June 2020 and "Coronavirus: Ghana Yet to Apply for World Bank debt relief," Ghanaweb 26 June 2020). By 2019, Ghana's total debt skyrocketed to a whopping 172.9 billion cedis which at 5 cedis to the US dollar meant a \$34.6 billion national debt (CNR CitiNewsroom.com Accessed 28 November 2020).
  8. "World Bank Supports Ghana's Covid-19 Fight with \$100m" (Citi Newsroom 2 April 2020. See also Ruth Maclean and Simon Marks "10 African Countries Have No Ventilators. That's Only Part of the Problem," *New York Times*, 18 April 2020, updated 17 May 2020; "Coronavirus Disrupting Labor Markets" Ghanaweb, 30 April 2020 and "We'll Fight for Job Security Amidst Impact of Coronavirus Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) Pledges," City Newsroom, 25 May 2020). For a vivid description of the tough policy dilemmas facing Africa because of Covid-19 see video: "The Bullet and the Virus" BBC Africa Eye, 15 June 2020.
  9. A few African countries have made substantial preparations for the new waves of revolutionary technologies and the application of information and green technologies. Botswana is installing 5G with the aid of South Africa's Vodafone; Kenya has invested \$10 billion in the Internet seeking to emerge as the Silicon Valley of the Safari. That is, Africa's technology and information innovation hub. Kenya is in addition, investing heavily to tap geothermal energy and obtain 50% of its grid power from renewable energy. Kenya, Morocco and Ethiopia are building rails for fast transport of goods and services while Ethiopia completes one of the largest dam projects. Ethiopia seeks to use its \$4 billion Renaissance Dam to spur industrialization. On the contrary, even before Ghana could finish its new rail lines, parts were washed away by rains (Ghanaweb.com 2020).
  10. Finley, "The Wired Guide to 5G: Here's Everything You'll Ever Want to Know about the Spectrum, Millimeter Wave Technology" and "Why 5G Could Give China an Edge in the AI race," *Wired Magazine* 18 December 2019. According to PwC, the world's top 10 economies in 2050 will be led by China in the first place (PwC, "Five Superpowers Ruling the World in 2050" 2019).
  11. Except Abuja (Capital of Nigeria) most urban areas, including capital cities in Africa, require costly and massive facelift and re-planning to suit them to modern and advanced rail and road transport. Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Ethiopia, and Kenya are however, developing new light and heavy rail systems for intra-city and long-distance transport.
  12. *Africa Renewal* 2017 has details of the long list of constraints the youth face in Africa.
  13. Whereas China has since 1982 raised over a half a billion of its citizens out of poverty, Africa is the only continent that two decades into the 21<sup>st</sup> century still has large numbers of poor and working poor people (Panford 2017). China has moved 600 million citizens from poor and peasant rural sectors into factories paying decent wages to lift its citizens out of poverty and for them to enjoy made in China goods.
  14. Vintage spoilage and patronage style politics allow winners of elections to replace public officials with appointees they favor as a reward for their cash or in-kind contributions and loyalty.
  15. Nkrumah 1971) invented and applied the concept neo-colonialism to capture relations between Africa and Europe after colonial rule. (See his *Neo-Colonialism in Africa*). On how the British scuttled Nigeria's independence and sewed seeds for political discord after independence, see Smith (2005).
  16. In spite of the British deeming Ghana to be a "model colony," as late as the early 1950s, the British view was that Ghana needed 50 more years to mature to be independent (Panford 2012).
  17. The military ruled Nigerians 75% of the time from independence in 1960 to April 1999 (Kesselman 2013).
  18. A former Ivorian Ambassador to the US informed this author that because it was extremely dangerous to conduct party politics, he and his colleagues – Laurent Gbagbo and three founding members of the Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI) met in 1982 at times in his bedroom. They met



- clandestinely because it was dangerous in the early 1980s to conduct partisan politics. The FPI, led by Laurent Gbagbo, later formed the government in the Ivory Coast (Discussions with Ambassador Pascal Kokora, Boston 21 November 2002).
19. These conditionalities comprised of presidential term limits, free, transparent and competitive elections; multi- parties; free press and media; rule of law, respect for private property and independent judiciary. Gyekye- Jandoh ( 2017) describes how the US Ambassador to Ghana frequently impressed on Rawlings the need to convert to multi-partyism. Similarly, although the US had turned a “blind eye” toward Kenya after it became Africa’s last “official one-party state” in 1984, by the early 1990s, with the Cold War’s demise, the US Ambassador to Kenya begun to preach to the Kenyan Government the virtues of democracy and the ills of the one-party state (Jane Perlez, “Kenyan Yielding on Multiparty Politics,” *New York Times*, December 1991, Section A : 3)
  20. Anticipated follow up Presidential and Parliament elections were halted temporarily because of the PNDC and Rawlings’ concerns about electoral defeats suffered by Daniel Ortega and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. Ghanaians had to wait until 1992 to start a multiparty government (Information from a senior Provisional National Defense Council security officer, Accra Ghana, August 2017. See also Panford 1998)
  21. Panford 1988 and Gyeke-Jandoh 2017 provide details of how and why Ghana’s military PNDC launched one of Africa’s most heralded conversion to “constitutional” rule.
  22. Article 55 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana stipulates :
    - 1) *The right to form political parties is hereby guaranteed.*
    - 2) *Every citizen of Ghana of voting age has the right to join a political party.*
    - 3) *Subject to the provisions of this article, a political party is free to participate in shaping the political will of the people ....*
  23. Although the center-right NPP and the previously center-left NDC both eschew socialism while the country does not proclaim any hard-core ideological stances, Articles 86 and 87 of the Constitution of 1992 prescribe creating both a National Development Planning Commission and a National Development Plan. Furthermore, Article 36 (5) states “... the President shall present to Parliament a coordinated program of economic and social development policies, including agricultural and industrial programs at all levels and in all the regions of Ghana.” Besides, Section 51 of Ghana’s Petroleum Revenue Management Act, 2011 (Act 815) requires the Government of Ghana to use a national development plan to guide expenditures involving petroleum funds.
  24. The closest the US came to such a tightly contested election was when John Kennedy beat Richard Nixon with 112,000 votes in the 44<sup>th</sup> US Quadrennial Presidential Election of 8 November 1960.
  25. Ghana Supreme Court case: Akufo-Addo versus NDC, Mahama & Ghana Electoral Commission ( Akufo-Addo and others vs Mahama & Another (Ruling) J8/31/2013 GHASC 137 (22 January 2013). A tense atmosphere before the Court’s ruling led to the US Embassy issuing an advisory to US citizens in Ghana.
  26. For more information on election related violence, including killings in Kenya in 2007 and 2008, and in Zimbabwe in 2012 to 2013 leading to EU and US sanctions, see Williams (2016)
  27. Evidence of improved post-cold war political atmosphere is the fact that a Ugandan MP confronted President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda about when he, the President, would retire and nothing happened to the MP (*Africa Review*, January 14, 2013).
  28. Mobutu, for example, was abandoned or “literally discarded” by the US State Department, while France and Switzerland revoked his diplomatic visas. He died in exile in Morocco from prostate cancer on 7 September 1997.
  29. The heavy influence of the west, notably the US and the UK, in African elections after the Cold War was revealed when Nigeria’s President Muhammadu Buhari informed the BBC and CNN in interviews that incumbent President Goodluck Johnathan conceded the March 2015 elections because “the Americans and the British spoke to Johnathan” (Adam Nossiter, “Nigeria’s Presidential Race Stretches to Another Day,” *New York Times* 30 March 2015 and BBC 1 April 2015). Hence both internal and outside factors have been important in Ghana and other African states’ efforts to create multi-party governance
  30. Led by Chief Justice David Maraga, the Supreme Court of Kenya stunned Kenyans, other Africans and the whole world when in August 2017, the Court overturned results of the 2017 Presidential Elections in Kenya. The Court cited irregularities and ordered Kenya’s Electoral & Boundary Commission to conduct another Presidential Election (*New African*, December 2017 and De Freytas Tamura, Boston Globe 1 September 2017: A12). That was the first time a Supreme Court in Africa had ruled in favor of any opposition and against a sitting President.
  31. As much as Nigerians ought to be commended for apparently jinxing the military “curse,” a related

- confounding matter is that in an interview with CNN and BBC, Nigerian President Buhari attributed such success to the influence and roles of the British and Americans (BBC, 1 April 2015). See also Note 30 above.
32. This author vividly recalls remarks by Professor Ofori-Armah that the author was fortunate to present his paper “The Impact of Structural Adjustment in Ghana” without severe recriminations because of the liberal political atmosphere in Ghana (Legon Center for International Affairs, University of Ghana, Accra Summer 1996).
  33. See Note 25
  34. Tensions rose to almost a boiling point that the US Embassy in Ghana issued official advisory asking US nationals to shelter in place and remain cautious while in Ghana.
  35. It is expected that precisely every four years on January 7, one would witness a presidential swearing in ceremony at the Independence Square or any designated public gathering place. This so far has been the kind of clockwork precision with which Ghana conducts its presidential affairs.
  36. Although not alluding to COVID-19, Ninsin (2017) touches on the kinds of constitutional crises that could potentially arise out of section 66(1) requiring a President to be sworn in every four years on January 7. The concern here is Ghana could experience constitutional crisis if it became impossible to install a President on exactly 7 January after an election. Ghana does not have any statutory remedies to resolve such situations if they arose.
  37. Universities in Ghana have their own radio stations. For instance, UCC 98.3 FM is a professionally managed radio station at the University of Cape Coast’s Atlantic Hall. It offers a wide variety of good programming broadcast in Cape Coast and surrounding communities in the Central Region of Ghana.
  38. Although member states of the Geneva (Switzerland) based International Labor Organization (ILO) expect governments to recognize workers’ rights to join unions and to bargain collectively with employers, Ghana has exceeded such expectations. It is one of the few, if not the only country, to have backed such rights with both labor statutes and constitutional provisions. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana provides for workers’ rights to join unions and to bargain and Labor Relations Act (815) 2003 further cements such worker rights. In this regard, Ghana has proven exceptional (ILO Conventions and Recommendations, 1986 and Panford 1986, 2001, 2008, Revised 2012).
  39. Section 3(1) of Ghana’s Constitution of 1992 states: *Parliament shall have no power to enact a law establishing a one-party state and (2) any activity... which suppresses or seeks to suppress the lawful political activity of any ... person.... is unlawful.*
  40. Today, Ghanaian workers exercise rights to trade union freedoms. At the national level, Ghana now has two major trade unions: Trades Union Congress of Ghana and Ghana Federation of Labor. Equally important, public employees’ right to bargain with the Government of Ghana is enshrined in the law (Panford 2008, Revised 2012).
  41. A high-ranking PNDC-era national security military operative I interviewed at East Legon, Accra in August 2017 explained how much power was deliberately given to the Office of the President through the 1992 Constitution to motivate Rawlings to accept the transition from the military PNDC to the Fourth Republic.
  42. A colleague at the University of Ghana, Legon whose spouse became an MP, confirmed to this author that party primary elections were more expensive and trickier to win than inter-party competition for Parliamentary seats (in-depth discussions, University of Ghana, Legon, June-August 2015).
  43. In 2012, an MP in the Central Region (Ghana) explained to this author how and why both party primaries and Parliamentary elections were extremely expensive. He cited cases of MPs and prospective MPs selling property like land or houses and often incurring debt by borrowing to finance election campaigns. Typical expenditures were cash payments to party “foot soldiers” (campaigners at the grass roots); vehicles and fuel plus maintenance, payroll for party office staff and rent for offices. Candidates and political parties also spend massively on rallies with huge crowds.
  44. Annual Meeting and Conference at Boston in November 2019. The Opening Ceremony/Reception cost \$15,000 for 350 people with three separate live performances and entertainment including catered food and drinks in one of the most expensive regions of the US and the world. In contrast, the Head of Ghana’s Maritime Development Authority spent over \$20,000 on a year’s end party for his small staff (ASA Annual Meeting & Conference, Boston, November 20-24 2019 and Ghanaweb.com)
  45. Conditions of the typical new working poor is vividly captured by the plight of a woman who earns

- a paltry 4 cedis (less than a dollar) a day peddling sachet water in a big tray balanced on her head with a baby on her back in the streets of Ghana's second harbor and leading commercial and industrial hub, Tema ( 18 miles from Accra, Ghana) (Ghanaweb 10 July 2020). Two reports ( Alston 2018 and Oxfam America, 2020) depict not only the extent of poverty in Ghana but also the gaping divide in living standards between the rich and the poor in Ghana.
46. Content analyses of Ghana's leading national newspaper, *the Daily Graphic* by this author shows that out of over 50 pages of each edition, about 60% were paid advertisements. Entire pages were verbatim reprints of sponsored announcements programs and activities of organizations that paid for spaces (Panford, Fulbright Senior Scholar Fellowship Application, 2013-2014).
  47. The good news is that most Ghanaians do not have the appetite for any abrupt military intervention leading to regime change as it was in the past. Ghanaians trust that they will ultimately succeed with their democratic experiment.
  48. On numerous field trips from 2009 to 2018, the author encountered several groups of youth at Cape Coast, Koforidua and Accra, Ghana. Most scheme " to go anywhere but Ghana" for jobs while others try so hard to be recruited as the next ace footballer (soccer player) to be recruited by a top European club. While most of these youth seek legitimate work, others engage in Internet and other fraud dubbed "Sakawa" (involving the spiritual realm) in Ghana, "419" in Nigeria and "grazing" in the Ivory Coast to get rich quick. Other hordes of youth sell live dog puppies at commercial centers and shopping malls that are springing up all over Accra ( the national capital) and other cities hawking petty items like imported toothpick as well as luxuries definitely priced out of their reach because they earn meagre incomes of \$2 or less a day as depicted by the woman with the baby strapped on her back selling sachet water in a tray on her head (See Note 45) . These conditions have become the norm not the exception in all of Africa not excepting Ghana, the IMF, World Bank and other neo-liberals' favorite.

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