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BOAFO-ARTHUR, Kwame (ed.). – *Ghana, One Decade of the Liberal State*. Dakar, Codesria Books ; Pretoria, In association with Unisa Press ; Accra, EPP Book Services ; London-New York, Zed Books, 2007, 156 p., bibl., index.

- 1 Ten University of Ghana (Legon) professors assess here the decade of liberalization from 1992 to 2003. They judge that despite considerable gains in political freedom Ghana's pervasive poverty, aggravated by neo-liberal reforms under IMF/World Bank and foreign competition, has not declined. In a historical review Boafo-Arthur looks at the mitigated policy successes followed by Quashiga's overview of human rights trends, and Tsikata's, Ninsin's and Amponsah's articles on economic performance, markets, and institutions. Frempong deals with political elite consensus, Ayee with political leadership, and Ansah-Kumi with security agencies. Essuman-Johnson considers unions' changing roles, Boafo-Arthur foreign policy and "economic diplomacy" while Beatrice Allah-Mensah judges women's participation in politics. A keyword index and general bibliography complete the volume and supplement each article's bibliography. This volume might have gained from a wider perspective—authors from other professions or institutions and outside Accra. The authors focus too much on the political center and the president while neglecting the multiple actors and facets on life in regions and districts and fail to illustrate liberalism's impact on average Ghanaians or of policies such as decentralization and local development planning on internal conflicts. However, for a critical and comprehensive review, this is a useful work.
- 2 Boafo-Arthur reminds us of the collapse of the Soviet Union's in 1989 and pressures on the PNDC government to liberalize which resulted in the constitution and national elections of 1992. The NDC commitment to market reforms ignored welfare impacts,

and trade liberalization led to imports, job losses and deteriorating worker conditions without corresponding investment growth. Government's budgets reductions left social welfare to a growing charity market. Mining and forestry did bring export revenues, but at the expense of valueadded growth and without backward-forward linkages. Environmental and human damage even increased from surface mining and traditional processes (logging, charcoaling, gold washing), though exports grew rapidly compared to the previous decade's negative growth of. Neglect of agriculture by scrapping input subsidies offset export gains, especially in the cocoa sector which oriented towards Ivory Coast for convertible currency, and because of lacking incentives for replanting left plantations deteriorate. Until 2004 growth never exceeded 5 % while foreign debt burden (\$ 6 billion) increased to 10-12 % of GNI.

- 3 Quashiga notes that Ghana's first constitution believed in the supremacy of parliament to guarantee peoples' rights, and did not contain human rights provisions ; the second and third Republics' constitutions (1969 and 1979) did but were soon abrogated. Finally Ghana's 1992 honors basic rights : Preamble, articles 12, 33 and 42, and the Directive Principles of State Policy guarantee life, liberty, human dignity, privacy, property, protection from slavery or forced labor, freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Chapter 5 protects freedom of association and movement, rights of women and children, rights to work, education and one's culture, and, specifically, media independence. The Supreme Court has the duty to interpret constitutional rights, while the High Court shall defend or enforce them against government and individuals. The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) receives complaints and has developed jurisprudence through prison inspections and sanctioning police excesses, while hampered by lack of state funds to uphold economic or cultural rights e.g. those of communities threatened by logging or mining interests. More commitment by executive and courts is needed. While Parliament has asked to strike the indemnity clauses off the constitution, and created a National Reconciliation Commission in 2001, past abuses remain unpunished.
- 4 Kwaku Tsikata reviews growth strategies—the strongest challenge to Ghana's leadership and democracy—in the decade. Since 1983 structural adjustment (SAP) has cut public sector spending and privatized or closed most state-owned enterprises, achieving adequate growth between 1981 to 1991. From 1992 to 2000 growth fell below 5 % leading to increasing poverty. Post-election deficits discouraged investment, until in 1997 government, impressed by the Asian "tigers", launched *Vision 2020* for vigorous export growth. But whereas a skilled labor force, high savings/investment ratio, and low national debt had accounted for rapid growth in Asia, political uncertainty, high propensity to consume, lack of savings and human capital formation prevail in Ghana. Agriculture suffered from cuts in subsidies for inputs and extension services while low producer prices and unstable currency reduced cocoa production. Mining and forestry did show a 10 % growth, but few linkages with manufacturing were built. While the NDC government provided stability by paying the national debt, only NPP government has been able to renegotiated terms and obtain debt relief (results are not demonstrable in the period covered by this book), but for sustained growth Ghana needs more developmental leadership, commitment to human capital formation and an end of corruption.
- 5 K. Ninsin documents the following theses a) orderly transition through the 2000 elections resulted in the consolidation of democracy ; b) elections alone without

citizens' involvement in the political process cannot solve the grand political issues ; c) market reforms result in elitism and a rise in poverty ; d) market reforms force the state to surrender (some of) its functions which are only partly absorbed by NGOs and civil organizations ; e) poverty still limits the freedom of choice and "effective citizenship" not relieved by periodic elections.

- 6 Nicholas Amponsah argues on Economic Performance and Institutions, argues that the democratic transition through free and fair elections was insufficient to sustain democracy, but that "credible institutions" are needed. While institutional credibility based on upholding private property has certainly increased under NPP government, business impediments by state agencies and suspicious functionaries continue to deter investors. Initially the incoming NPP administration investigated contracts signed by the NDC government, and revoked some, while reviewing their debt implications. Many Ghanaians who did criticize corruption under the NDC government, continue to complain about *kalabule*, favors asked from local and foreign business. Banking, currency restrictions and "red tape" still reduce private investment flow. Despite good governance the liberal state has continued with slow growth due to lack of institutional credibility. Especially with regard to acquisition and security of property rights (land titles) investors are in doubt. As long as state institutions continue to be rigid and slow, elections, parliament or media pluralism do not automatically translate into economic growth.
- 7 Frempong's article on political conflict and elite consensus in the liberal state argues that regime change has been a success in itself after the previous government twice organized elections (1992 and 1996) but stayed in power through manipulations. Yet for sustained stability elite consensus on the rules of conflict management is necessary. Competition for political power is among the most important (intra-elite) conflicts—which needs to be mediated. Frempong concludes that Ghana's political elite(s) yet have to adopt democratic culture in face of continued threat of authoritarianism, and parliament should control the government rather than still rubber-stamping executive orders. The current transition period, however, may serve useful ends if elites will agree on a common set of democratic rules without resorting to violence.
- 8 Joseph Ayee analyses the presidencies of J. J. Rawlings (1993-2000) and J. Kufuor (2000-2004) with regard to leadership. He proposes the following criteria for measuring and comparing leadership (after Leach & Wilson 2002)¹: a) cohesion of the administration ; b) strategic policy toward change ; c) relationship politicians-bureaucrats, and d) personal style. Both presidents maintained the cohesion of party and administration, despite serious internal fractures and rivalries. Both formulated and implemented key policies for peace, stability and poverty reduction, however, with little public debate. Politician-bureaucrat relations did not differ markedly : while the former formulated policies they expected bureaucrats to implement, except when bureaucrats turn politicians without resigning their posts they develop conflicts of interest. Leadership styles differed substantially based on personal background and ideology : Rawlings was accustomed to army command culture, Kufuor, as lawyer and businessman, respected liberalism and constitutional democracy. Unfortunately open and frank leadership style does not guarantee policy impact, citizen involvement or institution-building. Also outside challenges, beyond the reach and influence of Ghana's leaders, affected leadership along the criteria above. More mentoring and seasoning

would benefit Ghana's leaders, and has not like "the Asian dragons developed transformational leaders", merely applied liberal policies concocted in Washington. |

- 9 K. Ansah-Koi reviews national security agencies against the background of previous governments—for whom security agencies meant eliminating opposition. He notes NPP's success to bring all agencies under effective civil control and thus maintain its integrity. The National Security Council (NSC)—with regional and district chapters—integrates army, air force, Police Service, Immigration Service, Prison Services, Fire Service and Customs Service, as well as the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) under Foreign Affairs. Those agencies have since 1992 improved their tarnished image through professionalism and better information of the public, and were rewarded better pay and equipment. The NPP has re-defined the scope of "security" from narrow "regime maintenance" to "human security", "personal security" and "food security" "but there is still a long way to go before they come anywhere close to establishing freedom and justice under democratic and constitutional governance". For example, the constitution requires President to appoint a Minister responsible for all agencies to coordinate and inform parliament—which has not been done. Only parliamentary control and not imperial presidency will guarantee stability and avoid inter-agency conflicts, which accounted for past political instability and human rights violations.
- 10 Abeeku Essuman-Johnson traces the fate of TUC (Trade Union Congress) from workers' wing of Nkrumah's CPP through the 1957 Industrial Relations Act, abolition by Busia's liberal government, to supporter of the NRC, and main opposition against PNDC's structural adjustment program (SAP) in 1982. The PNDC launched a propaganda campaign against TUC leadership and promoted a rival union—ALU (Association of Labor Unions). Even after 1992 SAP policies and IMF/World Bank dictate continued. Divestiture of state enterprises and public spending cuts caused TUC to lose 50 % membership between 1987 and 1990 namely 235.000. While Civil Service Association (CSA) supported LRP (Labor redeployment program), ICU (Industrial and Commercial Workers) and GAWU (Ghana Agricultural Workers Union) opposed it, and had most members laid off. As workers entered the informal (self-employed) sector TUC raised capital and assisted with small enterprise development. A new Labour Act abolished compulsory TUC membership making union creation free for anyone. This resulted in the breakaway of some unions from TUC which since 1992 aligned its constitution on the 1992 democratic constitution, thereby reaffirming its right to intervene in economic policies violating rights and international conventions *e.g.* child labor.
- 11 Did the liberal state mean change or continuity in foreign policy ? Boafo-Arthur tries to answer this question noting the decline state's overall economic role, while gaining on the political side by adopting the rule of law and rights' guarantees, thus increasing people's access to power. Not only NPP but the PNDC itself introduced major changes by purging its radical left in 1983 and adopting IMF and World Bank liberalism. In order to revive Ghana's economy, both embarked on quiet "economic diplomacy" guided by the national interest. The NPP despite campaigning for "positive change" continued foreign policy rather than "blaze a new trail". Rawlings launched investment drives by personally contacting major trade partners and Kufuor continued this. Both, serving twice as ECOWAS chairmen, worked for regional peace in Liberia by supporting ECOMOG. Kufuor improved relations with Togo and Burkina Faso and acquired a peacemaker profile. He achieved HIPC status for Ghana and obtained debt relief from major donors, while joining the French Priority Solidarity zone, and signed cooperation

and loan agreements with many emerging economies. Thus the NPP government has brought a foreign policy difference in emphasis and scope rather than a change in thrust or objectives to foreign policy.

- 12 Beatrix Allah-Mensah reviews women's roles : the co-option of womens' organizations under Nkrumah by the CPP, the negligible involvement of women in the post-1966 military juntas women's, and the PNDC's creation of 31st December Womens' Movement (DWM) in 1982. It organized women's groups and propose candidates for elections in 1988 and 1992 and assisted with incomegenerating activities. The Consultative Assembly (CA) of 1991 urged to enhance women's political participation-allocating their organizations 10 seats. While most parties promised women greater participation in their manifestoes, they put only few on executive committees. In 2000 only 19 women (9.6 %) became MP's, thus lowering women's share from 18 % in 1965 to under 10 % (since 1992 only 1.5 % increase), while in parliamentary committees it is 5-10 %. However, women's participation in local assemblies rose from 27 to 38 % (1996-2000). Despite electorate belief that women are capable and creation of a Ministry for Women's and Children's Affairs, Allah Mensah deems that "extra attention needs to be paid" to enable women to contest elections and increase community participation by sensitizing and motivating them, as done by the NGO Ibis.

NOTES

1. LEACH, S. & WILSON, D., "Rethinking Local Political Leadership", *Public Administration* 80 (4), pp. 665-689.