

## **ABSTRACT**

### **DEMOCRATIZATION AND LIBERALIZATION IN AFRICA: THE CASE STUDY OF GHANA**

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Ghana is considered to be one of the most successful cases of democratization in Africa. The objective of this paper is to critically assess the Ghanaian implementation of democracy, and secondly, to attempt to explain this success. Although this paper shows that Ghana has been considerably successful in its democratization process as compared to other African states (according to standardized quantitative measures of democracy), it argues that understanding Ghana's democratization requires a more comprehensive methodology. Moreover, while this paper updates the most recent analysis of Ghana's democratization, it shows that it is relevant to use both liberal and structuralist theories, as well as a framework that gives weight to economic redistribution in its assessment of Ghana's democratization. The main finding of this paper is that, in comparison with other African countries, Ghana has experienced relatively outstanding socioeconomic performance (partially the result of comparatively high levels of foreign aid) and this has led to a relative success in democratization. However, this success in democratization has been undermined by unsound (neo)liberal economic policies that have increased inequalities and have created more opportunities for rent-seeking behaviour and neopatrimonialism.