The concept of patrimonial governance: prospects for post-Weberian rediscriptions.

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Weberian notion of patrimonialism proved to be very productive and produced in contemporary scholarly literature a host of derivative terms and interpretations. This has led to conceptual stretching. The article provides a framework to overcoming of the stretching and to rationalization of scholarly nomenclature related to patrimonial rule and political orders.

Key words: patrimonialism, conceptual stretching, neo-patrimonialism, caesarism, sultanism, political orders

What is the paramount historical embodiment of patrimonialism? For its researchers the answers would be different. Many believe it is Africa with Congo or Cameroon as the model cases. Others would claim it is Asia with China being the prototype. It is Russia for me and my Russian colleagues who had learned about the notion of patrimonialism from the seminal book of Richard Pipes1.

The very introduction of the notion of patrimonialism is usually attributed to Max Weber. To this effect he used Russia, China, Ptolemaic Egypt, Tudor England and some other less evident examples as the basic reference points while doing so2. Weber’s authority tempts scholars of patrimonialism to consider it a clear and well-defined analytical instrument. Many call it an ideal type but at the same give a remarkably focused contextual interpretations. The result is a traveling problem of Sartori3, ensuing conceptual stretching and actual multiplication of notions.

1 Conceptual stretching of patrimonialism.

The terms patrimonialism and neo-patrimonialism got wide handling since late 60s to identify varieties of personal rule4. The authors typically referred to its use by Max Weber as the precedent. Many claimed or implied that patrimonialism is an ideal type that has obvious relevance for current politics particularly in the third world countries. “However, its theoretical

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1 PIPES R. Russia under the old regime. With new forward to the second edition by the author. Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1995 (first published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson in 1974). Pipes claims that “Russia belongs par excellence to that category of states which in the political and sociological literature it has become customary to refer to as ‘patrimonial’” (ibid., p.xxii).
3 SARTORI G. “Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics”. American Political Science Review, n 4, 1970
status was not properly defined. As a result, it was often used rather indiscriminately and thus tended to become ‘something of a catch-all concept, in danger of losing its analytical utility’ (Theobald, 1982: 555)\textsuperscript{5}. The notions are overstretched both by further extension of the conceptual domain and by shifting a semantic focus to very specific attributes of respective phenomena. This in fact makes them a new distinct kind of the notion that has radically different prototype core. Thus two highly knowledgeable experts on African politics would claim the very essence (sic!) of neopatrimonialism to be “the award by public officials of personal favors, both within the state… and in society…”\textsuperscript{6}. Neopatrimonialism could be seen as a synonym for corruption, clientelism, patronage, cronyism, nepotism, the “big man” syndrome, godfatherism, warlordism, capture, predation, kleptocracy, prebendal regime, etc.\textsuperscript{7} or it may be side-tracked to the “common denominator for a range of practices that are highly characteristic of politics in Africa, namely nepotism, clannish behaviour, so-called ‘tribalism’, regionalism, patronage, ‘cronyism’, ‘prebendalism’, corruption, predation, factionalism, etc.”\textsuperscript{8}. Typically negative features crucial for very specific research interests of political contexts are treated as central and essential.

With each new application of the terms to countries, regimes or specific practices respective notions would refocus interpretation of the phenomena called patrimonial. Eventually “the ‘endemic’ nature of references to neopatrimonialism has contributed to its conceptual stretching. The concept gradually transformed into an ‘elusive’ notion”\textsuperscript{9}. It is described as catch-all\textsuperscript{10}, as dues ex machina\textsuperscript{11} or fluid\textsuperscript{12} notion.

One is tempted to overcome elusiveness of patrimonialism by resorting to the authoritative source – the writings of Max Weber. And very often scholars look for Weber’s definitions and conceptual claims to support their own treatment of patrimonialism or neo-patrimonialism. Respective references are fairly arbitrary and often conflict each other.

One should not overestimate clarity, rigor and parsimony of each and every Weberian conceptual tool. In fact Weber developed and used not only ideal types, but a whole range of

\textsuperscript{6} BRATTON M. & van de WALLE N. “Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa”. World Politics. n 4, p.458
\textsuperscript{9} ERDMANN G. & ENGEL U. “Neopatrimonialism Reconsidered: Critical Review and Elaboration of an Elusive Concept”. Commonwealth & Comparative Politics. n 1, 2007, pp. 95-119
\textsuperscript{10} ERDMANN C. & ENGEL U.
\textsuperscript{11} THEOBALD 1982, p.555
analytical instruments and a number of types of different level of abstraction up to historical and boarder types. Very often they were shaped by specific research interests that Weber pursued in his individual works. Weberian notion of patrimonialism is just kind of a conceptual instrument. It is more concrete and specific and more enrooted in practice then a pure type or even an ideal type.

Weber himself employs a whole range of types of different degree of abstraction – all the way from ideal type to historical and what he called border types. In my view there are good reasons to believe that Russian patrimonialism was defined in “Economy and Society” as a genuine historical type alongside other distinctly specific types of Egyptian (Ptolemaic), Chinese (Qin) and English (Tudor) patrimonialism. Those historical types only exemplify a declared ideal type by and large unstipulated as such in “Economy and Society”. A number of ‘general’ definitions of patrimonialism in the book always have references to specific historical practices or institutions thus remaining not abstract enough for an ideal type.

Many authors tend to believe that Max Weber in his works developed a genuine ideal type of patrimonialism. Others would deny it and even question coherence of Weberian conceptualization of patrimonialism. Some identify variation within Weberian conceptual domain of patrimonialism. Thus, Charrad and Adams stress, “Patrimonialism can characterize a relationship as limited and stylized as the classical Weberian triad of ruler-staff-ruled, or as rich and complex as the system of power characterizing a national state. It has also been mobilized—including by Weber himself—as a key to understanding the rise and fall of world empires, which preexisted the rise of the nation-state and persist as a counterpoint to contemporary states and interstate relations”. In his turn Mikhail Maslovsky notes that “in his discussion of patrimonialism Weber employs three different concepts: patrimonialism proper, sultanism and estate-type domination”. He further concludes that “apparently all of them should be treated as separate ‘pure types’, which are, nevertheless, interrelated and comprise a particular...”
ideal-typical model”. Eventually “patrimonialism can be regarded not as a separate pure type but as a system of such types”\(^{19}\).

Following and rationalizing Weber it would be obvious to reveal a possible range of conceptual instruments from notions to pure types. The starting point is a word of ordinary language or rather the cognitive scheme (metaphor) that underlies it. The next stage is that of broad and vague notions having a prototype core and a broad conceptual periphery. Historical types would be more coherent conceptual tools developed by reducing both their volume and content by a very easy procedure of dropping all ‘alien’ data and characteristics. Placing together of a few historical types and focusing on their common features while dropping specific would produce analytical concepts. Their further refinement would produce ideal types and eventually pure types\(^{20}\).

2 Patrimonial conceptual range in Weber’s works and beyond.

In his “Economy and Society” Max Weber introduced a notion of patrimonialism as a sub-type of traditional domination. While doing so he displayed a whole range of traditional domination varieties. They were ‘primary’ patriarchalism (primärer Patriarchalismus), rule of elders (Honoratiorenherrschaft) or gerontocracy (Gerontokratie), patrimonialism (Patrimonialismus), sultanism (Sultanismus), and estate domination (ständische Herrschaft). All those sub-types belonged to an encompassing type of traditional domination which potentially could be upgraded to an ideal or even pure type. This task was largely left along by Weber for further research although in § 6 of section 3, chapter 3 of the first part of “Economy and Society” he gave a fairly general definition of the traditional domination and its types. He essentially identified it as a personal (!) rule of one or more lords (Herren) by the virtue of ‘their manifest personal esteem’ (ihnen zugewiesenen Eigenwürde) and defined respective polity as ‘reverence community’ (Pietätsverband)\(^{21}\).

The ideal type of traditional domination had two dimensions: “material tradition-bound exercise of domination” (material traditionsgebundenen Herrenhandelns) and “material tradition-free exercise of domination” (material traditionsfreien Herrenhandelns). In other words it

\(^{19}\) MASLOVSKY p.298. A more elaborate analysis of patrimonialism and bureaucracy in Weber’s works Mikhail Maslovsky provides in his book (Theory of bureaucracy of Max Weber and contemporary political sociology. – in Russian).

\(^{20}\) The two-way ladder of symbolizing – embodying form facts to nomens and back is developed in ИЛЬИН М. Слова и смысла. Опыт описания ключевых политических понятий. М.: РОССПЭН, 1997 (ILYIN M. Words and meanings. Accounts of the key political notions. Moscow: Russian political encyclopedia, 1997 – in Russian).

\(^{21}\) “Traditional soll eine Herrschaft heißen, wenn ihre Legitimität sich stützt und geglaubt wird auf Grund der Heiligkeit altüberkommener (»von jeher bestehender«) Ordnungen und Herrregewalten. Der Herr (oder: die mehreren Herren) sind kraft traditional überkommener Regel bestimmt. Gehorcht wird ihnen kraft der durch die Tradition ihnen zugewiesenen Eigenwürde. Der Herrschaftsverband ist, im einfachsten Fall, primär ein durch Erziehungsgemeinsamkeit bestimmter Pietätsverband“ (S. 130).
extended from a ‘pure’ extreme of being tradition-bound to another ‘pure’ extreme of being tradition-free. Within this range Weber placed a series of historical types just mentioned above. Their sequence from ‘primary’ and thus nearly ‘pure’ patriarchalism to estate domination (ständische Herrschaft) could be explained by gradual decrease of tradition-bound domination and equivalent increase of tradition-free domination. Similarly primary patriarchalism was a direct interaction of the ruler(s) and the ruled while through all other varieties some media (staff, institutions etc.) were getting ever greater prominence. Finally the sequence was also history advised from earlier to later historical cases.

It is crucially important to understand that Weber did not treat his types and other conceptual tools as clear-cut containers for what ‘really is’ in its entirety. He criticized Marxists, for example for misuse of the excellent analytical tool of capitalism for close linking with the reality out there (do not remember where, it seems in the article on objectivity and the journal, but cannot find it there). It means that patrimonialism is not the thing out there but what we can see in the world around using the tool. The second point is the overlapping results of analysis and verstehen when two or more tools are used simultaneously. Usually Weber developed new types like Caesarism etc.

This analytical and historical logic would allow to place just after estate-type domination and close to the tradition-free and present day ‘pole’ some other types of domination. The most ‘advanced’ one is that of neopatrimonialism introduced a few decades after Weber. But there are or rather were at least three more introduced by Weber himself but not discussed by him in detail in “Economy and Society”. They were Caesarismus (Cäsarismus), rule of officials (Beamtenherrschaft) and plebiscitary domination (plebiszitäre Herrschaft).

Weber’s historical type of Caesarism as well as rule of officials (Beamtenherrschaft) may be seen as a further extension of the conceptual family of patrimonialism into the domains of legal-rational and charismatic domination. In fact plebiscitary domination (and democracy) are further developments within the same conceptual continuum. In all those cases their very reference traditions are rationalized and legalized but the ruler(s) remain highly personalized agents. They all constitute an overlapping set of highly ambiguous types combining patrimonial qualities with legal-rational ones and in the case of plebiscitary domination also charismatic properties.

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This is equally true of neopatrimonialism. By all standards – as its very naming suggests – it is infused with patrimonial properties. But the prefix neo- also suggests that it extends beyond limits of traditional domination into legal-rational domain.

We are not to discuss here what Max Weber ‘really meant’. His attributions of the terms from patrimonialism to caesarism and plebiscitary domination were advised by his specific research questions and the context of his times and political momenta. It is true that “patrimonialism can characterize a relationship as limited and stylized as the classical Weberian triad of ruler-staff-ruled, or as rich and complex as the system of power characterizing a national state. It has also been mobilized—including by Weber himself—as a key to understanding the rise and fall of world empires, which preexisted the rise of the nation-state and persist as a counterpoint to contemporary states and interstate relations”23.

Patrimonialism occupies the central place within the sequence of traditional kinds of domination. While primary patriarchalism is largely tradition-bound and estate domination is relatively tradition-free, with patrimonialism both trends are to be more or less balanced.

What brings together all those different kinds of traditional domination? What tradition rest upon? Generations of rulers and the rules come and go but something remains a vehicle of ‘dragging on’ habitual domination. That vehicle is some constant medium that links the rulers and the ruled. Weber often but not exclusively identified this link as this or that kind of staff. But it is more then changing and specific kinds of staff. They also come and go. The vehicle is something that transcends the stuff as well as the rulers and the ruled. It is something common to all of them. Common good may be probably the best expression to describe it at the outset. But it would be not the optimal choice for two reasons. First, the very term common good is highly charged and has very specific connotations in an assortment of ideologies. Second, the very notion extends far beyond domain of traditions into the broadest possible sphere of values. Still it very accurately points at the functional load of the key patrimonial medium.

3 Patrimonial rule: the single type or a family of options.

Within the Weberian perspective patrimonial rule emerges not as a single pure or ideal type but rather as “a system of such types”24. Within the context of conceptual stretching patrimonial and patrimonial rule is just a label on a distinct pattern of power relations with very specific properties either within a state or of the entire state25. Those properties may range from rather neutral patronage to nepotism and cronyism and end up with highly charged corruption or

24 MASLOVSKY p.298.
even outright predation. Their purpose is to provide a “teleological explanation of the decline of the state” in an individual case or a handful of cases. As a result “cross-cutting grid of analysis [is] still missing”\textsuperscript{26}.

The purpose of this article is a different one. It is elaboration of conceptual tool that could be applied to a broad range of individual cases and serve as a common profile denominator for them. Russian patrimonialism is not the object of analysis per se but rather a challenging case to test the tool. In my deep conviction comparative politics cannot support claims for exceptionality of Russia or any other country. Any event or phenomenon is individual and unique but all can be studied as comparable phenomena in their own right. Thus, within the research addenda of this article it is much more appealing to looks not so much for unique embodiment(s) of patrimonialism (as do majority of neopatrimonialism scholars) but for an analytical instrument that may help to identify patrimonial characteristics in a variety of cases.

The point of departure may be a search for common quality of their character. In my view this common rationale and justification of patrimonialism rest on a residual ability to maintain a ‘reverence community’ (\textit{Pietätsverband}) in changing contexts of any type. What is to be revered by members of the community? At first glance Weber’s answer is not what but who – the lord or lords (der Herr oder die mehreren Herren). But it is clear that they are revered not for their purely personal characteristics\textsuperscript{27} but because of their essential entrenchment or embeddedness within a tradition of rule or even a tradition at large. Patrimonial lords are only vehicles and embodiments of what keeps ‘reverence community’ together. What integrates? What is the base for reverence and obedience of subjects as well as willpower and authority of the rulers? What maintains the tradition itself? It is something that could be could be defined as the common revered heritage of an entire durable (multi-generation) community entrusted to and managed by an authority that embodies it at a given moment. Let us call it common patrimony – or rather use a neutral Latin word \textit{patrimonium} to cleanse it and dispose of everyday connotations of our mother languages.

Are there any essential limitations for any institutional structure to be identified as a patrimonium? Hardly any. In practical terms it means that neither cultural contexts, nor evolutionary morphology may prevent a political community to single out a particular concept of order and use it as a patrimonium. It turns out to be not a generic concept based on classical genus–differentia distinction but rather an elusive and fuzzy nebula of ideas brought together by their family resemblance just like famous Wittgensteinian notion of games. In much the same

\textsuperscript{26} BACH D.C. & GAZIBO M. (eds.) \textit{Neopatrimonialism in Africa and Beyond}. L. and N.Y.: Routledge 1912. p.2
\textsuperscript{27} Personal esteem or rather affection and even adoration are the basis of charismatic role. But even this case charisma transcends the personality of the ruler and stands for something bigger and socially more significant. The ruler is only a vehicle and embodiment of charisma. It is not his property, but he is the ‘property’, manifestation of charisma.
way we may assume people resort to patrimonia just like they resort to games but patrimonia are just as numerous and heterogeneous as games.

It is also evident that both people and rulers would be quite free to shape or re-shape such a concept to specific historical conjunctures and daily life contexts. Patrimonium with all its trans-generation validity is also remarkably fluid and adaptable. So it is only natural that momentary aberrations like prebendalism, or tribalism, or ‘big man’ complex may seem to be its distinct features.

Beyond those superfluous momentary properties lay conceptual features that are more persistent or rather recurring on a multi-generation scale. They may or may not relate to conceptual schemata deeply ingrained in cultures. Typically they could be metaphors of heritage, common good, fortune, gift, lot in life, chosen destiny etc. Some of those conceptual schemata are culturally obscure and hidden while others are quite clear and manifest. Some could be even profoundly elaborated in mythologies, religions and ideologies as the case may be.

Within Roman tradition the notion was conceptualized both as *patria* and as *partimonium*. This notion was accepted by new European languages and cultures. Needless to say that terminological choice of patrimonialism made by Max Weber was greatly predetermined by this deep-rooted tradition.

An alternative and in many ways mirror notion was and still is used by Chinese. Their idea of the Mandate of Heaven (*tiān mìng*) may be considered as a model of patrimonium. In fact it implies not only the Divine Right of the ruler but rather his reverence to common good of the people. It is this reverence that makes the Heaven (*tiān*) happy – its instruction (*mìng*) being fulfilled and destiny, fate, good luck and life itself (all other meanings of *mìng*) restored.

In personal terms philosophy of *tiān mìng* implies reverence of an active agent (son) to elders (fathers) as translators of patrimony. The Chinese patriarchal domination is a more clear ‘reverse’ relation – it is the son’s respect to his father. It is not patriarchal, it is sonly.

What is essential for patrimonial world view? Persistent and consistent ('habitual’) use of a mental construction of ‘imagined patrimony’ as a point of departure. And then people of the patrimonial ‘reverence community’ claim – it is all ours, it is indivisible, we all share it. Typically the ruler being one of them is still better equipped to act for each of them individually albeit not necessarily collectively. The ‘imagined patrimony’ is all theirs and indivisible. They all share it but the ruler takes over a major burden of doing the job of maintaining patrimonium. He is better equipped to act for each member of the ‘reverence community’ and they are just to adhere to him. People are to give all possible support to the ruler and to remain faithful to him.

Patrimony may have different appearances. It may be Russian *votchna* (family belonging), or Napoleonic *patrie*, or imagined ‘stronghold of all progressive humanity’ the
USSR. What is important it is a common good that is taken for granted as a departure point for anything done (thinking, imagining, acting) in politics.

For many scholars of patrimonialism this refocusing from the ruler to the common good of ‘reverence community’ may seem odd and tenuous compared to regular and apparent perspective of the ruler and his manner of rule. The ruler-centered vision was fully justified by Weberian conceptual dimension of authoritative domination (*Herrschaft*). In that perspective it is only natural that the ruler as a source of domination would appear the main or even the only instance. But if we shift our interests and our vision to a more general conceptual domain of consent and order then the core instance would be the ‘reverence community’ and the object of their reverence. It would be their common good and their everlasting heritage that the ruler is only momentary care-taker of. That perspective would probably allow to accept other possible care-takers of patrimonium as agents allied with the ruler or even autonomous to a degree. Typically such an agent is bureaucracy and some other modern institutions and organizations. In fact neopatrimonial turn is clearly related to intrusion of bureaucracy and modernity into traditional patrimonial domain.

4 The tripled knot.

Admixture of bureaucracy and modernity to patrimonialism is not just an arbitrary scholarly invention. “This triple knot—patrimonialism, bureaucracy, and modernity—remains a key to our troubled times”28. This combination may seem odd and demanding. Long-established and novel qualities, formalized and informal practices would hardly go together. But experience proves that in the overwhelming majority of cases neopatrimonial combinations appear straightforward and relatively easy to manage both to the rulers and ruled. A possible explanation may be a drastic reduction of demands and expectations to both agency and structure of bureaucratic, patrimonial and adopted ‘modern’ orders. As a result the ensuing practices rest on indistinctness or blur of authoritative agency and its function. Authority is seen as essentially integral: to have an authority means to be an authority and visa versa. There is no way to tell apart public and private, office and officeholder although the respective regulations, establishments and set ups are definitely in place.

The emerging fuzziness of practices does not prescribe vagueness and ambiguity of scholarly analysis. On the opposite it must be very clear and go beyond superficial appearance of the factual particulars however telling they may seem at the first glance. To better understand the

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perplexing knot of heterogeneous phenomena one has to resort to highly detached and definite analytical distinctions of each of its components.

A possible approach would imply building an abstract classification of various types patrimonialisms with admixtures. One can use, for example two dimensions – a Weberian and evolutionary ones. The extended Weberian patrimonial-related typology includes ‘primary’ patriarchalism (*primärer Patriarchalismus*), rule of elders (*Honoratiorenherrschaft*) or gerontocracy (*Gerontokratie*), patrimonialism proper (*Patrimonialismus*), sultanism (*Sultanismus*), estate domination (*ständische Herrschaft*) as well as Caesarismus (*Cäsarismus*), rule of officials (*Beamtenherrschaft*) and plebiscitary domination (*plebiszitäre Herrschaft*). Such a broad variation of types defined by assorted and significantly varying criteria could hardly make a single dimension that can provide both parametrical and operational variable. It would be more realistic to range patrimonialism by a degree of its inclination towards charismatic and rational-legal types and their possible overlapping. Then and only then specific historical types may exemplify main segments of a single abstract variable.

Following Weberian logic criteria for classification may be operationalized by reference to resources the dominant ruler has to rely upon. They could be broadly speaking (1) structural patterns of time-tested ways of rule and obedience, (2) a promising and convincing mission unifying people around its symbolic articulator, (3) rational calculus of consent and reduction of transaction cost through concentration of power. The first type would be a apparent patrimonialism with a historically and culturally rooted patrimonium. The second type is charismatized patrimonialism with a contextually and topically redefined patrimonium. The third type would be a rationalized patrimonialism with a pragmatically operationalized patrimonium.

Although Weberian dimension may be occasionally interpreted with a tinge of evolutionary vision such occasions are purely contextual and history informed. His typology is evidently not an evolutionary one. This fact makes evolutionary dimension particularly promising. It may help to identify institutional impact of modernization upon power concentration in individual cases. Thus, a non-modern authority can be essentially integral and primordial with negligible or little impact of modernity diffusion identified in terms of open access and accountability. A proto-modern authority could be influenced by contextual exogenous modernization but would retain its reliance upon closed access and transcendental sanction. A modernizing authority would be immersed by both endogenous and exogenous modernization.

As a result there may be distinguished nine types or conceptual schemata of patrimonial-related orders that can be placed in a table.

Table 1. Conceptual schemata of patrimonial orders.
Combination of ‘pure’ Weberian and evolutionary schemata produces more coherent or contradictory mixed types. It is probably due to the fact that Weberian resources are already evolutionary leaning. It is probably one of the reasons why the mixed types on down-up and left-right diagonal look ‘normal’ and other ‘deviant’ or even ‘impossible’. Still one could find instances of applying schema of modernizing traditional monarchies in Jordan or Oman. Similarly schema of rational-legal but non-modern rule may be identified in small island communities of the Pacific like Tonga or Tuvalu.

The sequence of ‘normal’ or ‘natural’ schemata runs from traditional non-modern through charismatic proto-modern to rational-legal modernizing. Those basic schemata may be extended by supplying additional attributes and parameters into individualized ideal types. Traditional non-modern schema could be extended into patrimonial type, charismatic proto-modern schema to neo-patrimonial type and rational-legal modernizing scheme into caesarist plebescitarian type.

5 Functions and dysfunctions of patrimonialism.

Many researchers of patrimonialism and related phenomena typically focus their interests on ensuing evils and harms of specific problematic cases. This contextual and subjective incline unconsciously moves them to defining respective phenomena by their negative manifestations or dysfunctions, e.g. personal favors, nepotism, cronyism, corruption, predation, factionalism, bribery, extortion, graft, fraud, racket, repression, godfatherism, warlordism etc. Thus, they are treated as essentially dysfunctional. This approach could be called dysfunctional definition fallacy. It is hard to believe but in social sciences claiming to be value-free (wertfrei) this fallacy is very common. Both neopatrimonialism and autocracy are nearly exclusively in this negative-dysfunctional way.

Imagine we apply such a fallacy to democracy. Let corruption, fraud and electoral misuse being used as criteria standard cases would be crippled democracies while well-established democracies would turn out deviations. No doubt dysfunctional definition fallacy would relate
patrimonialism to kleptocracy, predatory state, dictatorship, godfatherism, warlordism, capture, etc. The question is what could be the result of functional definition of patrimonialism. Unfortunately this type of definition is not widespread in neopatrimonialism literature.

As noted by Daniel Bach, the concept has become a “teleological explanation of the decline of the state”, comparable to the notion of the “anti-development state”, but analysis in other parts of the world shows many more complex examples of states that are simultaneously patrimonial and developing. One must therefore separate neopatrimonialism within the state from patterns of neopatrimonialism that permeate the entire state.29

It would be auspicious to go further and to distinguish the framework order of a state and autonomous orders within a state. Moreover, it may be often necessary to identify complex nature of the framework order of a state and acknowledge combination of its component framework patterns of various kinds (patrimonial, authoritarian, democratic etc.).

Various patrimonial orders may co-exist, overlap and produce empirical entities that cannot be reduced to a single neatly defined ‘type’. Neither concepts nor phenomena replace or substitute their ‘predecessors’. In Hegelian terms new phenomena aufheben (‘take over’, ‘overrun’) previous ones in a sense of retaining them in an immersed way within their new shapes. Thus, an initial form of patrimonial rule is overrun and retained by series of its new re-appearances each adding up something new and adapting older residue shapes. But some exceedingly simple clue (draft, silhouette, contour, trace) is retained virtually unchanged. It is crucial to identify it both in phenomena and concepts because such a clue is in fact a prototype that provides ‘blueprints’ for both new and retained forms and their combinations.

You can substitute patrimonialists for atomized Soviets who would have only option left – to rely on their would be ‘republic of labour’ (communist future adding up something new and adapting older residue shapes. But some exceedingly simple clue (draft, silhouette, contour, trace) is retained virtually unchanged. It is crucial to identify it both in phenomena and concepts because such a clue is in fact a prototype that provides ‘blueprints’ for both new and retained forms and their combinations.

Furthermore, functional aspects of neopatrimonialism remain undisclosed with the exception of anthropological studies. But even there they are not numerous. If we leave out studies in historical anthropology like highly informed and deep analysis of Botswana (Tswana)

kingdoms or rather complex chiefdoms by Ørnulf Gulbrandsen\(^{30}\) only very few would remain. They include Hans Bakker’s analyses of Indonesian patrimonial prebendarism\(^{31}\) and Douglas Webber’s work on consolidated patrimonial democracy also in Indonesia\(^ {32}\). Henry Hale discusses patrimonial democracy in Post-Soviet Eurasia\(^ {33}\). Strangely enough I failed to detect works on functional aspects of patrimonialism neither in China, nor in Japan.

This obvious deficit proves urgent need to clarify functional properties of patrimonialism. One can follow Max Weber and concentrate on the ruler(s) and the manner of his (their) control over the populace. There are evident limits to such an approach. First, it is difficult to extend analysis beyond reverence of subjects to authority or their predisposition to legitimize their principals and accept their manner of governing. Second, an unchallenged manner of rule would work anyway with no incentives to improve.

In my view a key mental ‘clue’ for patrimonialist thinking and behaviour is a common frame of reference. It is their inalienable common good, their ‘heritage’, ‘patrimony’ implanted and passed over from generation to generation. They all equally share this patrimony but it has to be cared, maintained and provided by a *patriarch* – one of them but the best of all since he has better access to a transcendental source of a tradition.

This common good of generations, their revered heritage and patrimony is a morphological ‘blueprint’\(^ {34}\). It is not just a metaphor but a theoretical as well as analytic instrument of evolutionary morphology of politics. Polities that employ such a ‘blueprint’ could be considered patrimonial insofar as the ‘blueprint’ is used.

Patrimonium could be defined as the common revered heritage of an entire durable (multi-generation) community entrusted to and managed by an authority that embodies it at a given moment. Such a patrimonium is a framework and as a foundation for political order and respective mode of rule.

In its historical or rather morphological sense patrimonialism is a manner of rule when the ruler and the ruled depart from the shared perspective of a single authority residing within their common patrimony of successive generations. As a consequence both the ruler and the ruled do not distinguish between personal and public patrimony, patrimony as substance and

\(^{30}\) GULBRANDSEN Ø. The King Is King by the Grace of the People: The Exercise and Control of Power in Subject-Ruler Relations. - Comparative Study of Society and History, vol. 1995

\(^{31}\) BAKKER J.I. Weber’s Pure Ideal Type Model of Patrimonial Prebendarism: Testing the Applicability of the Model in Indonesia. – Paper for the 92\(^{nd}\) Annual Meeting of ASA, August 9-13, 1997;


\(^{34}\) The notion of blueprint (Bauplan) was introduced by one of the pioneering scholars of evolutionary morphology Werner Patzelt, cf. PATZELT W. (hgb.) Evolutischer Institutionalsmus. Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2007; PATZELT W. (hgb.) Parlamente und ihre Evolution. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2012
legal entitlement (those are evolutionary later analytical distinctions). They would not tell apart material and all other resources of a community from the agency and properties the ruler.

Genuine or ‘pure’ brands of patrimonialism close to the above research prototype are near extinct. Rare examples can be found in distant climes and exotic surroundings where relative isolation helped to preserve primordial ways and habits. In this article a broader morphological understanding of the term is applied. The absence of distinctions and differentiations is treated not as actual one but conditional or rather ‘imaginary’. People do understand that common wealth and the right to use it, collated power and entitlement to authority are different things, but in their good faith they still believe it is proper to act as if all power and matters of mutual concern were amalgamated for the sake common good and prosperity.

6. Can patrimonium democratize?

There are conflicting ideas on the ability of patrimonial orders to become democratic. Functionality and particularly dysfunctionality of patrimonialism turn very problematic in this regard. On the other hand there no structural obstacles to redefine patrimonium democratically. In his article “Can Neopatrimonialism Dissolve into Democracy?” Mamoudou Gazibo fairly convincingly showed that neopatrimonialism could fuse with democracy within hybrid regimes of “new democracies” in the post-Communist space or “third wave democracies” in Latin America (Mamoudou Gazibo. 2012. “Can neopatrimonialism dissolve into democracy?” In Daniel Bach and Mamoudou Gazibo, eds., 2012. Neopatrimonialism in Africa and Beyond. London and New York: Routledge, 79-89). There are regimes that are more accountable to public opinion and even be strengthened by efficiency reforms, as shown in the case of Zambia (Christian van Soest. 2007. “How Does Neopatrimonialism Affect the African State? The Case of Tax Collection in Zambia.” Journal of Modern African Studies 45: 4: 621-645).

What about prospect of democratizing patrimonial political orders in the ongoing passion for democracy in Middle East and other parts of the world? Resorts to patrimonialism, neopatrimonialism and caesarism are imminent. They are too firmly entrenched in the tradition. But it is also clear that their use would never be as strong and persistent as it was and has been recently. Their exercise would be ever more diversified and more pointedly related to varying contexts. And what is equally important personal rule and uncontested domination in politics have slimmer chances in the decades to come. The change would not be easy and momentary. It is quite probable that transition countries would live through a series of entries and reentries of strongmen as its heads of state. But is equally probable - they would share more power, they would delegate more authority and they would become more accountable.