

Challenges of Democracy and Development in Africa, South of the Sahara

Joseph Aketema

National Film and Television Institute

(NAFTI), Accra, Ghana

Email: aketema@yahoo.com

ORCID: 0000-0003-1791-1612

Abstract

Development thrives when democratic principles and governance are exuded by leaders. There is a challenge in the democratisation processes looking at the development deficits of Africa. Postcolonial leaders of Africa, south of the Sahara have struggled desperately to live up to their political expectations—a reason why many would argue, results in the snail pace development of their respective countries. Democracy nourishes strong institutions, transparent governance, accountability and equitable distribution of resources. However, what is commonly noticed in the least developed states in Africa south of the Sahara is a practices of clientelism, prebendalism, ‘clanisation’ and patrimonialism. This paper examines the link between democracy and development. It discusses some of the lapses of political leaders and how that impedes the political, and development agendas of Africa, south of the Sahara. The discussion concludes that should Africa, south of the Saharan leaders continue to promote token gestures of democracy to the masses, their development agenda will never be met. It is, therefore, important to stress by way of recommendation, the strengthening of institutions to fight corruption, and freedom of press and citizen’s speech, be critically encouraged.

Keywords: Democracy, Political leaders, Development, Freedom of press, Corruption.

Introduction

Most often than not, the term democracy when used in any endeavour of learning or any form of engagement is synonymous to unity, progress and

development. Other forms of 'administrative' actions that are out of favour among a larger group in any institution, the daily lives of people, could be termed as unconstitutional or undemocratic. What then is democracy? Preferring to describe what democracy is rather than define it, O'Neil (2003, p.135) claims that "a fundamental feature of democracy is that it relinquishes power to the people who exercise that power directly or indirectly in mostly three forms which include: "participation, such as through voting and elections; competition, such as that between political parties; and liberty such as freedom of speech, or assembly." Przeworski (2004) observes that "democracy is a political regime in which rulers are selected through free and contested elections. Operationally, democracy is a regime in which incumbents lose elections and leave office if they do" (p. 3). Of the many forms of democracies that exist worldwide, liberal democracy is widely extolled for its ideology which is pinned on liberalism and as one that promotes massive and popular participation of the masses in the affairs of the state, as well as upholding the integrity and rights of every individual (Omoera, 2010).

Bangura (1991) explains the features of democracy indicating that "although democracy is primarily concerned with the rules and institutions that allow for open competition and participation in government, it also embodies social and economic characteristics that are crucial in determining its capacity to survive" (p. 4). Having briefly looked at democracy, I will interrogate what development is. The term development is polysemous. Various scholars in different fields of studies have couched definitions which serve their interests and purpose (Lee, et al., 2020; Fritz, et al., 2019; Pearce, Barbier & Markandya, 2013; Farah, 2008; Jamo, 2013). Van Zeijl-Rozema et al. (2008), citing the Brundtland Commission's report of 1987, look not only at development but sustainable development. They explain sustainable development to mean: "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (p. 2). There is a consanguineous relationship between this definition and what is discussed here concerning the politics of African states, south of the Sahara. One, therefore, cannot talk about development without looking at how it serves the current needs of society and at the same time strives to make provision for the survival of posterity. In this respect, forms of democracies as well as economic activities within nation-states such as lumbering, mining and syphoning of crude oil no matter how profitable if they pose a threat to the existence of the next generation then they cannot

be endorsed as development. Though development in politics can be seen in terms of human resource development, social development and even the development of democracy itself, what is dominating when the term is used in politics is the economic development of states. For this reason, much of the discussion will reflect that.

Economic development is often given the greatest emphasis in the discourse of democracy (Fukuyama, 2015b, p.410) even though O'Neill (2003, pp. 242-249) reveals the positive development of state power and growth of civil society are those that result to economic development. Even with the growth of seemingly vibrant institutions and intense participation of political actors in the political scenes, there is an equally visible presence of a coterie of the political cabal and inner caucus of most ruling governments in Africa, south of the Sahara, who are argued to stampe the growth of most states (Olver, 2021; Ejiogu, 2016; Odorige, 2023). It has been argued that most African leaders give undue favours to their party faithful and sponsors (clientelism) to the detriment of nationalistic or state interest. This largely affects development (Omilusi, 2020; Kwarteng, 1996). Along a development discourse, this paper uses secondary and archival materials (sourced from the media) to examine the challenges of democracy in Africa, south of the Sahara and its resultant effect on development.

Democracy and Development: The Contending Issues in Africa, South of the Sahara

Various schools of thought have argued profusely in their attempt to draw the connectives between democracy and development. Some hold that democracy is a necessary prerequisite for development (Oslon, 1993; Alence, 2004; Knutsen, 2010) while others insist that development precedes democracy (Lipset, 1981; Huntington, 1991; Kopstein & Wittenberg, 2010). The modernisation theorist explains that democracies are likely to emerge as countries become economically developed (Przeworski, 2004, p. 4). Some also hold that the two go hand in hand. Whatever the argument may be, they are both entwined and are indispensable although the argument remains which comes first. An assumption that could be supported by evidence is that most democratic countries are developed even though this might not be the case in all instances. Lipson (1969) cautions that "democracy has no automatic guarantees that its leadership will always be wise or its masses sufficiently enlightened" (p. 231). Therefore, Lipson's submission is that it takes the

wisdom of the leaders and demanding and well-informed masses who must play complementary roles for democracy to triumph. An absence of that in Osita's (1984) opinion is a failure of democracy. Huntington (1968, p.1) agrees with Osita when he avers that:

The most important political distinction among countries concerns, not their form of government but their degree of government. The differences between democracy and dictatorship are less than the differences between those countries whose politics embodies consensus, community, legitimacy, organization, effectiveness, and stability, and those countries whose politics is deficient in these qualities.

This statement notwithstanding, it would be noticed that fewer autocratic countries and oppressive regimes in the world are developed or wealthier as compared to the numerous democratic nations. This drives the urge to conveniently settle that democracy leads to development. Fukuyama (2015b), accepts that economic growth for which development is a component, "is linked to democracy in a multistage process" (p. 410). Fukuyama contends that "economic growth engenders social mobilization via the spreading division of labour, and social mobilization, in turn, produces demands for both rule of law and greater democracy" (p. 410). Fukuyama thus either argues or concludes that democracies mature if there is relative economic growth. The use of democracy here does not mean those countries that hide under the pale shadows of democracy to unleash and suffocate the masses or those who assume to have a democracy on paper yet still cannot manifest a scintilla of it within the nation-state. In most discourses concerning democracy and its relation with development, there is always the temptation to point to some few Asian tigers such as Singapore; North Korea and arguably, Rwanda as countries that have been undemocratic yet can develop. The factors that dictate the flourishing of democracies, however, vary from country to country. One should then be careful not to fall into the trap of presenting facts without looking at the other variables within the nation-state that are most probably the key determinants to those nations of democracies. Przeworski, Cheibub, and Limongi (2005, pp. 128-129) share:

The durability of democracies may not be simply a matter of economic social, or cultural conditions, because their institutional frameworks may differ in their capacity to process conflicts, particularly when these conditions become

so adverse that democratic performance is considered to be inadequate. Democracy is sustainable when its institutional framework promotes normatively desirable and politically desired objectives, but also when these institutions are adept at handling crises that occur when such objectives are not being fulfilled.

Przeworski et al. emphasised on institutional frameworks which they say must exist within democracies for countries to advance. African states are not in want for such institutions. It is rather a question of how efficacious those institutions are in serving the purposes for which they were created. Huntington (1968) asserts that political institutions have moral as well as structural dimensions. He maintained that a society whose political institutions are tenuous will lack: "The ability to curb the excesses of personal and parochial desires" (p. 24). Before expounding further on the discourse of democratisation and development, it is imperative to briefly look at the trajectory of democracy in some states of African, south of the Sahara. The democracy of many countries in the world including most African states is a colonial legacy that was left to cater for itself against all odds (Przeworski, et al. 2005; p. 83; Ake, 1991; p. 32). Ake (1991) claims the inherited democracies suffered setbacks primarily because of the political elites in their discourses and agenda: "excluded not only democracy but even the idea of good government, and politics were reduced to the clash of one exclusive claim to power against another" (p. 32). In these kinds of governance, one's focus is on power but not development. The situation Ake (1991) and Fukuyama (2015) observe, has not been any different when the African states gained independence.

Having been bestowed a democratic constitution, instead of the leaders advancing democracy which will lead to massive development as the 'populist' nationalist leaders had started, the new leaders who faced growing challenges of opposing groups leaned on development as a means of tightening their grip of power. The result was a gradual decay of democracy for which many people in their attempt to invalidate it, decrees its ineffectiveness due to its alien nature to Africans. Ake, however, explains that contrary to some perceptions that democracy is problematic in Africa because it is a Western-imported concept, there abounds some evidence which lay a solid claim that most African indigenous practices are laden with some elements of this assumed borrowed Western principles of governance. Ake (1991), p.35) explicates that traditional

African political systems were infused with democratic values. They were invariably patrimonial, and consciousness was communal; everything was everybody's business, engendering a strong emphasis on participation. Standards of accountability were even stricter than in Western societies. Chiefs were answerable not only for their actions but for natural catastrophes such as famine, epidemics, floods, and drought.

It, therefore, behoves Africans and African leaders to infuse their locally held beliefs such as the spirit of accountability, communalism and massive participation into our polities. This would triumph over our democracy. However, the lack of such or their absence remains why Africa, south of the Sahara is struggling to meet its development deficits. Ake (1991) agrees that there is a link between democracy to economic development while asserting also that the quest for democracy must be considered in the context of Africa's most pressing needs, especially emancipation from "ignorance, poverty, and disease" (p. 35). Furthermore, Ake (1991) discloses that those who advocate development first before democracy have premised their stand that the pursuit of democracy will not, feed the hungry or heal the sick nor will it give shelter to the homeless. This school of thought insists that "people must be educated and fed before they can appreciate democracy, for there is no choice in ignorance and there are no possibilities for self-fulfillment in extreme poverty" (Ake, 1991, p. 35). This argument does not fully accept democracy as a panacea to development but rather suggests, an enlightenment of the population, and provision of their basic needs are crucial first before one can think of democracy. Ake argues the alternative – authoritarianism has neither fared well looking at the state of some of the countries that practised it. Chabal (1994) commends democracy for its developmental prowess but appears to look at the insipid representation of it in Africa which culminates in its failure to bring development.

Chabal scrutinizes how democracy and power are attained and sustained since the processes of acquiring power have a direct relation to what one does with it. Interestingly in African polity, as Chabal examines: "power comes at a cost: cooptation, clientelism, patrimonialism, prebendalism and corruption are expensive" (p. 92). All these assignees to the power, and how it is maintained is to enable us to examine what nourishes democracy for which reason it is staggering in Africa, south of the Sahara. Ake (1996) indicated for the African politician, "political power was everything; it was not only the access to wealth but also the

means to security and the only guarantor of general well-being" (p. 7). By this agenda Ake is reaffirming earlier held notions that, the interest of the African politician is foremost, to amass wealth and rule. Ake (1996) further reveals that since development was the justification for rallying behind the current leadership, criminalising political dissent, and institutionalising the single-party structure, to abandoning it would undermine the power strategy of the elite. The elite responded to this dilemma by making token gestures to development while trying to pass on the responsibility for development to foreign patrons. (p. 7). In the assessment of Ake (1991), one cannot talk about the failure of African democracy to develop African states precisely because development is not an integral part of the African agenda. He explains that:

When African leaders chose to take over the colonial system instead of transforming it and thus became alienated from their people, the genuine pursuit of development became all but impossible. Besieged by the hostile forces unleashed by their repression, they became absorbed in survival, and relegated everything else, including development, to a very low priority. What passed for development was usually a crudely fabricated plan that an embattled and distracted leadership put together for the sake of appearances, often with an eye to lure prospective donors. (Ake, 1991, p. 35)

If we take a close look at Ghana, Nigeria, and Cote D'Ivoire one will detect that even with the limitless resources that the countries have, repressive schemes have emerged proposing overly ambitious developmental agendas without really achieving much. They spend time implementing quasi and short-sighted projects and instituting schemes that will ensure that they satiate the thirst of their clients to remain long in power. At present, even as governments come and go in disputed and rigged elections, the masses remain oppressed and desirous for monumental and enduring programmes and projects that will transform their lives. Fukuyama citing Nigeria as an example asked: "If democracy means rule by the people, the questions that contemporary Nigeria forces on us are, why don't people get angrier and try to take charge of the situation, as they did in the United States of America or Britain during the nineteenth century"? (p. 223). Fukuyama reveals that the answer given by scholars like Richard Joseph is, the people are engrossed in prebendalism, "involving a fatal mixture of rent-seeking, clientelism and ethnicity" (p.

223). Inglehart and Weel (2009) emphasise: "democracy is most likely to emerge and survive when certain social and cultural conditions are in place" (p. 33). One may view this statement as advocating development before democracy but it could rather be seen as what matures democracy. This is because as Inglehart and Weel (2009, p. 38) postulate that beyond a certain point, it becomes difficult to avoid democratization, because repressing mass demands for more open societies becomes increasingly costly and detrimental to economic effectiveness. Thus, in its advanced stages, modernization brings social and cultural changes that make the emergence and flourishing of democratic institutions increasingly likely.

Ake (1996) presents that a weakness on the part of some leaders to develop was because of development paradigms that were instituted that conceived development as an autonomous process, independent of politics, culture, and institutional framework. Conceiving development this way allowed the African leadership unrestricted liberties. They could appropriate from African traditional institutions and culture, using what serves them best to maintain and exploit the power while discarding the rest. Thus, they used traditional institutions and notions of consensus to justify one-party systems without drawing attention to the traditional processes and participation that produced this consensus (p. 12). Musa (2017, p. 151) argues that "achieving democracy is directly linked to overcoming the current spate of underdevelopment in Africa and other third-world countries." He added the prescription that reputed external Western powers represented by the Bretton Woods institutions such as, "bilateral donor agencies and donor governments is that liberal democracy precedes development." Unfortunately, Musa observes that "the push for democracy has ended in ritualistic multi-party elections that are often manipulated in favour of the incumbent" (p. 154). For the state to advance and for realistic development, Francis Fukuyama (2015a; 2015b, p. 37), advised that modern liberal democracies should be propelled by the three most vital institutions: the state, rule of law and democratic accountability. The first is the state which must use all forms of its resources to safeguard and defend the territorial boundaries and enforce the rule of laws reflecting the societal values but which most times, are highly wielded by the elites.

There is a need for democratic accountability which must serve all earnestly according to the values of the society but, which seldom benefits the masses (p. 12). Ake (1993) accuses the leadership of African countries of failing to incorporate realistically the antidotes that have been

prescribed by the local technocrats as well as those of the Bretton Woods and sister institutions Ake explains that poor leadership and structural constraints have turned the high expectations of the independence movement into painful disappointment, forcing many African leaders to rely more on coercion which has deepened their alienation. But the coercion and alienation have worsened the prospects of development, leading to yet more alienation and coercion. The tragic consequences of this vicious circle are all too clear in contemporary Africa: with minor exceptions, physical infrastructures as well as social infrastructures have collapsed, economies are mired in chronic crisis, poverty has greatly intensified and the people are in revolt...movement, democracy is largely a strategy for power, not a vehicle for popular empowerment. (p. 240)

At the second extraordinary session meeting of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) held on 28-29 April 1980, some profound resolutions were arrived at (OAU, 1980; pp. 3-104). A failure to adapt to the resolution that was reached by The Lagos Plan of Action in 1980 aimed at restricting African economies is partly a bane of our development. Ake (1996) explains that Africa was challenged to pin their economic development on two principles: self-reliance and self-sustaining development ...Restructuring for self-reliance was to entail, among other things, changing Africa's location in the existing international division of labour, changing the pattern of production from primary commodities to manufactured goods, and relying more on internal sources of raw materials, spare parts, management, finance and technology. The pursuit of national self-reliance was to be a matter of depending more on internal demand to stimulate production and less on imported inputs. (p. 23).

Nearly four decades after the Lagos Plan of Actions agreements, significant and practical strides have not been made to industrialise Africa. Africa still feeds the world's industrial powers with her raw materials. Our democracies are mostly passed based on them being free and fair. Yet we know our electioneering processes are hardly so. African countries count themselves lucky if of all the electoral malfeasance they come out of the elections unscathed. In the wake of these, Africans remain marginalised in the global affairs of business and development. Global trade is dwindling, domestic debt is escalating and foreign investor turnout in some volatile regions is low due to insecurity (Ake, 1996, p. 115). The marginalisation discourses appear also not to address Africa's needs.

A weakness of these discourse Ake (1996, p.116) points out, is that it orchestrates concerns about non-Africans not taking enough interest in Africa, not doing enough with it or for it, and not considering it. It worries about external social forces being allowed to complicate or even defeat Africa's bid to escape from underdevelopment. And it encourages non-Africans to pay more benevolent attention to Africa. On a practical note, Ake examines that the African problem is less exogamous and more endogamous. If African states have failed year after year in democracy and development, then the problem is largely hers. If Africans south of the Sahara have failed to develop even though the Bretton Woods and its other sister institutions have intervened to salvage it from economic crises then the problem again is hers' to deal with. Ake advises that there must be a careful examination of the democratisation processes of Africans. The African development and democratic agenda should be led, foremost by Africans. This will manifest in the quality of democracy, enlightenment of the masses and a concerted effort to develop their respective states.

The Bane of Africa's Development and the Shroud of Democracy

Probing the numerous countries especially those of the African continent that are staggering and wallowing in economic crisis, what one will discover is the lack of vibrant pro-constitutional institutions, the absence of democracy or a pale representation of it. Anti-corruption agencies and other institutions have either become corrupt themselves, non-performing or have abysmally failed in dealing with corruption within their respective states. Fukuyama (2015), for instance, revealed that in the 2000s, the Obasanjo government instituted the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and also appointed Nuhu Ribadu as its first chairman. While EFCC is credited to have prosecuted some officials, Ribadu will later be dismissed under indistinguishable conditions, and the EFCC neutralised. Fukuyama (2015) observed that "the simple availability of information about corruption tends not to produce genuine accountability because the politically active part of the population are members of clientelistic networks...the leaders who organize these networks have no interest in seeing anticorruption measures go far" (p. 224). Later, in 2014 as Fukuyama further explains, Lamidu Sanusi then Governor of the Central Bank of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was dismissed after \$20 billion from the national oil company went missing. With good democracy been a rare commodity in Nigeria, non-performing institutions and military regimes have had a field day by not only

stagnating development but has further exacerbated the ethnic and sectarian conflicts.

The consequence is the backwardness and snail pace development of most states. Fukuyama (2015) states that “ethnically and religiously based clientelism displaces any broader political mobilization around issues of ideology or public property” (p. 224). Similarly in Ghana, an office of a Special Prosecutor was established on 11 January, 2018 by the Nana Addo-led administration. The office was until recently chaired by a former Attorney General of the state, Martin Kaiser Amidu¹. The special prosecutor Amidu, until his unexpected resignation, failed to make any significant mark in its fight against corruption. Martin Kaiser Amidu registered his difficulties in fighting corruption in Ghana and accused the very government which appointed him to the office of a special prosecutor as corrupt. Martin Kaiser Amidu, in one of his several damning epistles, labelled the president who assented to, and endorsed his appointment as a ‘²mother serpent of corruption’. In this scenario, it is hard not to believe the flourishing enterprise of corruption in high government institutions and offices in Ghana. The comparison of democracy against autocratic regimes important as it might be may be looked at with due cognizance to the myriad of factors dictating events in individual nation-states. Fukuyama (2014) explains that well-endowed Nigeria while starting at the same time with less endowed Indonesia, which was then worse off than the West African country, is now far more advanced than Nigeria. Indonesia has multiple ethnicities and sectarian divides similar to Nigeria but probably not the same in magnitude.

Democracy and development in Nigeria have not advanced as expected because of its poor performance, including its weak and corrupt political leadership (Omoera & Aiwuyo, 2017). The utter lack of loyalty to a national entity on the part of Nigeria's diverse ethnic and religious groups is another issue of concern. In the early years, this led to overt civil war. After the end of the Biafra conflict, the country held together only as a result of the elite's ability to distribute oil rents to the country's restive ethnic groups and their patronage chains. The problem of Africa's development as Huntington (1968, p. 30) corroborates that it is because of the “high manifestation and prevalence of strong ethnic loyalties while state loyalties are increasingly becoming weaker within the nation-states.”

¹ <https://www.bbc.com/pidgin/tori-54970440>

² <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/politics/why-martin-amidu-resigned-as-special-prosecutor.html>

The issue of internal conflicts and tribalism has endured in African politics through to current times. The call for most African states to look beyond religious and ethnic lines in the interest of nationhood have never been more intense (Peter Obi; 2022³, Dominic Nitiwul; 2022⁴; Joseph Lansana Kormoh, 2020⁵). The truncation of civilian governments in Nigeria, Ghana, Mali, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra-Leone based on such divides has resulted in unrewarding ends. These divisive schemes are largely to blame for the irresponsible, corrupt military juntas which remained accused as one of the major reasons why Africa, south of the Sahara has failed to make its expected mark of development.

Elaborating on Sierra Leone, one of the poorest countries in West Africa, Alao (1999) explains that Sierra Leone had one of the world's purest diamonds whose quality is only second to that of Namibia. The country also has gold, bauxite and rutile. Alao (1999) states that since the discovery of diamonds in the 1930s, about 50 million carats of them have been extracted. This is aside from the fact that they have seventy-five per cent arable land coupled with a coast for fishing and a vibrant trading port. In the wake of this, the five million people residing in a 28,000 square miles country remain one of the poorest on earth. This is due to 'clan and ethnic politics (Kalyvas, 2001), resulting in civil strife and wanton corruption. Furthermore, Alao (1999) contends that from early 1991 to 2000, a protracted power struggle among Sierra Leoneans further devastated the country as different ethnic groups struggled and throttled each other for power. Foday Sankoh's (Temne ethnic group) Revolutionary United Front, Ahmed Tijan Kabbah (Mandingo ethnic group) loyal forces, and other people like Captain Valentine Strasser (from the Krio ethnic group), Brigadier Julius Maada Wonie Bio (Sherbro), and President Joseph Saidu Momoh (of the Limba people) through armed conflicts turned the country into a national catastrophe. Within this context, there were Krio, Mandingo Sherbro and Limba people shredding Sierra Leone under the cloak of national politics. For instance, in his desperation and quest for

³ <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/07/2023-wont-be-based-on-my-turn-ethnicity-religion-peter-obi/>

⁴ <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/NPP-is-strongly-against-ethnic-politics-Nitiwul-349065?gallery=1>

⁵ <https://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/ethnicity-and-conflict-instigation-in-sierra-leone/>

⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/08/08/opinion/the-business-of-war-in-africa.html>

power, Kabbah is accused of spending much on arms deals to bring mercenaries to Sierra Leone. He is accused of dubiously paying huge sums of money to Rakesh Sakena, an international businessman with questionable credentials for his support (Alao, 1999, pp. 44-62).

This is aside from the massive allegations of corruption that were earlier on levelled against the government of Steven Siakwa and others. All this while, democracy was the least thought of as personal and clannish aggrandizement remained their strategic concentration. Amidst the fighting, the looting continued as clannish affiliates of rebels scavenged the diamond fields prowling the precious stones and selling them cheaply at the world's black market. There is an assertion that one of the components to be considered for the progress of democracy is a working constitution which will be the soul of the nation. The constitution would give the direction a country wants to go, the goals it wants to attain coupled with how it will safeguard its people's interest. The curious question is, will leaders make manifest the constitutional provisions in the lives of the citizenry and as well submit themselves to scrutiny by the masses? The answer is not a convenient yes. If a constitution could erode clannish' religious politics and kleptocracy in government, corruption in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Mali would have been non-existent or minimal. There are only fewer instances where opposition political leaders who hitherto were themselves office occupiers are thrown into prison. But for a government to critically check itself and allow its independent judiciary to probe and imprison its own remains a practical illusion.

Drawing the relationships between democracy and a 'workable' constitution as a way of looking at development, Fukuyama (2015a) posits that a typical constitution is, in essence, a programme of action as to how people should be governed, the relation between those who govern and the governed, and is in every case essentially a mirror of class structure that determine the political philosophy or ideology. One of the troubles of countries such as Nigeria, which though rich in resources is not able to develop exponentially as expected. This is because regimes that sometimes appear to play the democratic card are unable to have that relationship with the governed (Ibagere & Omoera, 2010). They might not consider them important to the development of their countries. For instance, during the Abacha regime, strong resistance had emerged with persons such as Ken Siro Wiwa, claiming that the government apart from denying them infrastructure was also destroying their livelihood through

the activities of Shell, a Western oil company. The Movement for the Emancipation of the Ogoni people protested against the government which had their farmlands destroyed and water polluted, billions of dollars from the crude oil proceeds were not used to offer them any compensation or improve their living. A good relationship between the government and the governed; a vital recipe for development worldwide in most African states is unfortunately the epitome of the fox and chicken situation.

Quite recently, peaceful demonstrations for better leaving conditions in parts of West Africa have met stiffer government resistance including imprisonment and death (BBC Pidgin News, 2022⁷, the guardian, 2022⁸, BBC Pidgin News, 2021⁹). Also, the masses' craving for accountability has not been too successful. Using Nigeria as a case study, Idris Ahmed Jamo (2013), citing Ebinbowei and Ogonna (2012) claims that "from 2000-2009, oil revenue generated N34.2 (82%) trillion into the federation account, while non-oil revenue generated N7.3 (17.64%) trillion. Not only that, the price of oil which contributed to about 80% of Nigeria's GDP rose from \$13 per barrel to \$125" (p. 90). From all these revenues there is less enduring and monumental development that has been attained in Nigeria to meet the teeming demands of the majority of the impoverished populace. Continuously, advocates for good governance disappeared or were hanged as in the case of the infamous hanging of Ken Siro Wiwa in 1995 (Smock, 2009, p. 3. Debasree, 2014, p. 452). For instance, Senator James Ibori of Delta State under the Goodluck Jonathan administration was charged for state theft and fraud running into several millions of dollars. Watts (2009) discloses that since 1960, Nigeria's total oil revenue is about \$700 billion with eighty per cent (80%) going to one per cent of the population out of which another forty per cent (40%) is stolen or cannot be accounted for. Is it then needful to ask why countries in Africa South of the Sahara who have embraced democracy have not advanced like other countries or is it that Africans never practiced democracy? Apart from the masses who are oppressed and brutalised, there was often also a war on the intellectuals whose sharp scrutiny of matters of state are needful for the development of Africa. People like Wole Soyinka, among other notable persons, at certain

⁷ <https://www.bbc.com/pidgin/articles/c9ex32j0dmzo>

⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/aug/21/sierra-leone-protests-inflation-cost-of-living>

⁹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-58817690>

regimes, fled Nigeria or risked suffering forms of abuse because they were increasingly becoming 'intolerant' of how the government run the affairs of the country.

Earlier in the 1960s, the Yakubu Gowon administration had Soyinka imprisoned and in 1997, the Abacha-led regime sentenced him to death in absentia. Critics such as Kunle Ajibade, and Obi Ben Charles were incarcerated. The failure of democracy and the inability of the leaders to provide for the needs of its people remains one of the causes of political instability which further aggravate economic backwardness (Przeworski, 2004, p. 17; Huntington, 1968, pp. 4-5). When the masses are repressed, and when it becomes clear that the leaders are insensitive to the plight of the people they conceive ways of revolting or forcibly taking their share of the national cake in the most unenticing of ways. For instance, when the looting intensified, ethnic armed groups kidnap investors and render ineffective government oil refineries as is commonly the case in Nigeria. In the case of the federal republic of Nigeria, Watts (2009, p. 3) informs that on May 13th 2009 federal troops launched a full-scale military offensive against what the government sees as violent organized criminals who have crippled the oil and gas industry. Thousands of dirt-poor villagers in the region around Gbaramatu, southwest of the oil city of Warri in Delta State – an area known to harbour some militant encampments including the notorious Camp 5– have been displaced and hundreds of innocent civilians killed. The casualties are almost wholly Ijaw, an ethnic minority who inhabit the creeks and lowland riverine environments where the Niger River empties into the Atlantic. The militants in return launched ferocious reprisal attacks, gutting Chevron's Okan manifold which controls 80% of the company's shipments of oil. Over two months from mid-May to mid-July, twelve attacks were launched against Nigeria's \$120 billion oil infrastructure.

As Fukuyama (2015b) observes, there is still persistent violence in the Niger Delta home to Ijaws and Ogoni's: "where Western oil companies have been operating since the 1950s" (p. 222). The masses continue to form militia groups whose main acts include assassination, kidnapping, and vandalising public properties. In the current democratic dispensation, the relationships have not changed. The technocrats with practical solutions to advance their countries have been relegated to the background while the political stage is led by political 'elites' most of whom appear clueless to the grappling effects of poverty, insecurity and newer forms of imperialism. These political elites are without any practical bailout agenda

and continue to occupy the frontlines in any form of discourse aimed at propelling their respective countries. Without thinking of any ramifications of their actions, Ake (1996) observes that "the African elites marginalized the African role in the development of Africa by their politics" (p. 116). It is thus deduced, the practical solutions offered by the few enlightened governed are mostly impractical to the ruling government which has its corrupt and ephemeral agenda and a horde of internal and external clients and cabals to settle. To imbibe these solutions will mar their ambition of concretising their grip on power. Other critics have stated that development has failed in Africa because what Africans practised is not democracy and even if it does exist, it is nourished by corruption (Lindberg, 2003, pp.134-139; Thompson, 2010, pp. 3-79). Currently, even with the 'successes' of democracy in Africa, south of the Sahara, there is still the loud cry for Africans to harmonise, re-strategise and invigorate their institutions in ways that would enable them to fight hunger, reduce unemployment, check political 'brigandage' as well as mitigate new emerging threats of terrorism, all of which affect development.

Conclusion

Democracy precedes development. However, the quality of democracies ensures the level of development a country may have. Africa, south of the Saharan states lacks economic development because they have not made development an integral part of their agenda. Any constitutional government which has that commitment to development will have it manifested in how the state constitution deals with corrupt persons. It will further manage how elections are contested and won. An enlightened mass of electorates are not only those who are literate but those aware of the schemes of the political elites. From the discussion, if forms of prebendalism, clientelism and patrimonialism are managed or drastically dealt with, and if the commitment of the enlightened mass of the state is stronger than the tribal and ethnic loyalties, Africa shortly advance astronomically.

References

- Ake, C. (1991). Rethinking African democracy. *Journal of Democracy*, 2(1), 32-44.
Ake, C. (1993). The unique case of African democracy. *International Affairs*, 44, 239-244.

- Ake, C. (1996). *Democracy and development in Africa*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Alao, A. (1999). Diamonds are forever... but so also are controversies: Diamonds and the actors in Sierra Leone's civil war. *Civil Wars*, 2(3), 43-64.
- Alence, R. (2004). Political institutions and developmental governance in sub-Saharan Africa. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 42(2), 163-187.
- Bangura, Y. (1991). *Authoritarian rule and democracy in Africa: A theoretical discourse* (No. 18). Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.
- Chabal, P. (1994). *Power in Africa: An essay in political interpretation*. Cham: Springer.
- Debasree, D. (2014). Development-induced displacement: Impact on Adivasi women of Odisha. *Community Development Journal*, 50(3), 448-462.
- Ejiogu, E. C. (2016). *The roots of political instability in Nigeria: Political evolution and development in the Niger Basin*. London: Routledge.
- Farah, M. J., Betancourt, L., Shera, D. M., Savage, J. H., Giannetta, J. M., Brodsky, N. L., & Hurt, H. (2008). Environmental stimulation, parental nurturance and cognitive development in humans. *Developmental Science*, 11(5), 793-801.
- Fritz, S., See, L., Carlson, T., Haklay, M. M., Oliver, J. L., Fraisl, D., & West, S. (2019). Citizen science and the United Nations sustainable development goals. *Nature Sustainability*, 2(10), 922-930.
- Fukuyama, F. (2014). States and democracy. *Democratization*, 21(7), 1326-134.
- Fukuyama, F. (2015a). Political order and political decay: From the industrial revolution to the globalisation of democracy. London: Profile Books.
- Fukuyama, F. (2015b). Why is democracy performing so poorly? *Journal of Democracy*, 26(1), 11-20
- Huntington, S. (1991). *The third wave: Democratisation in the late twentieth century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Huntington, S. P. (1968). *Political order in changing societies*. Yale University Press.
- Huntington, S. P. (2006). *Political order in changing societies*. Yale University Press.
- Ibagere, E. & Omoera, O.S. (2010). The democratization process and the Nigerian theatre artiste. *Studies of Tribes and Tribals*, 8 (2), 67-75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0972639X.2010.11886620>
- Inglehart, R. & Weel, C. (2009). How development leads to democracy. *Foreign Affairs*, 88(2), 34.
- Jamo, I. A. (2013). Democracy and development in Nigeria: Is there a link? *Oman Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 34, 1-10.
- Kalyvas, S. N. (2001). "New" and "old" civil wars: A valid distinction? *World Politics*, 54(1), 99-118.
- Knutson, C. H. (2010). *Africa's growth tragedy revisited: Weak states, strong rulers*. Department of Political Science, University of Oslo Centre for the Study of Civil War, PRIO.

- Kopstein, J. S., & Wittenberg, J. (2010). Beyond dictatorship and democracy: Rethinking national minority inclusion and regime type in interwar eastern Europe. *Comparative Political Studies*, 43(8-9), 1089-1118.
- Kwarteng, C. (1996). 'Babangidaization' after Babangida: The Nigerian military and the politics of incumbency. *The Round Table*, 85(338), 183-204.
- Lee, K. H., Noh, J., & Khim, J. S. (2020). The blue economy and the United Nations' sustainable development goals: Challenges and opportunities. *Environment International*, 137, 105528.
- Leslie, L. (1969). *The democratic civilization*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Lindberg, S. I. (2006). *Democracy and elections in Africa*. JHU Press.
- Lipset, S. M. (1981). *Political man: The social bases of politics*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Musa, A. P., (2017, October, 02). *Democracy and development in Africa*. [Review of the book, *Democracy and development in Africa*, by Claude Ake] Spectrum Book Ltd. Ibadan.
- Odorige, C.E. (forthcoming). New media and its ability to engender effective communication among development actors. In O.S. Omoera (Ed.), *Media, culture and conflict in Africa*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing
- O'Neill, P. H. (2003). *Essentials of comparative politics*. WW Norton & Company.
- Olson, M. (1993). Dictatorship, democracy, and development. *The American Political Science Review*, 87 (3), 567-576.
- Olver, C. (2021). Power, institutions and rents in two South African cities. *Area Development and Policy*, 6(3), 250-270.
- Omilusi, M. (2020). Elite fragmentation and oligarchic implosion in Nigeria's democratic space: A mere stopgap or an impetus to people's emancipation? *Journal of Asia Pacific Studies*, 5(4).
- Omoera, O.S. (2010). The import of the media in an emerging democracy: An evaluation of the Nigerian situation. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 22 (1), 33-38. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2010.11892781>
- Omoera, O.S. & Aiwuyo, O.M. (2017). Curtailing security challenges and strengthening democratic spaces in Nigeria through media inventiveness. In J. A. I. Bewaji, K. Harrow, E. Omonzeje & C. Ukhun (Eds.). *The humanities and the dynamics of African culture in the 21st century* (pp.423-443). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Osita C. E. (1984). *Human rights in Africa. Some selected problems*. Lagos: The Nigerian Institute of International Affairs.
- Pearce, D., Barbier, E., & Markandya, A. (2013). *Sustainable development: Economics and environment in the Third World*. London: Routledge.
- Przeworski, A. (2004). *Democracy and economic development*. In E. Mansfield & R. Sisson (Eds.), *The evolution of political knowledge: Democracy, autonomy, and conflict in comparative and international politics* (pp. 300-324).

- Przeworski, A., Alvarez, E. M., Cheibub, J. A., & Limongi, F. (2005). *Democracy and Development. Political institutions and well-being in the world, 1950-1990*. Cambridge University Press
- Smock, D. R. (2009). *Crisis in the Niger Delta*. US Institute of Peace.
- Thomson, A. (2010). *An introduction to African politics*. Third edition. New York: Routledge.
- VanZeijl-Rozema, A., Cörvers, R., Kemp, R., & Martens, P. (2008). Governance for sustainable development: a framework. *Sustainable Development*, 16(6), 410-421.
- Watts, M. (2009). Crude politics: Life and death on the Nigerian oil fields. *Niger Delta Economies of Violence Working Papers*, 25, 1-27