

Democracy for development: an African philosophical perspective

Abstract

Among the different definitions of democracy, one of them maintains that it is ‘the rule of the people’, which is a system of making rules determined by the people who are to obey those rules. Accordingly, then, democracy implies the rule of law. The hope is that, the rule of law concretizes democratic practice, by making it a code of behaviour, an attitude and a state of mind. It is this behaviour pattern, this attitude and state of mind of the people that in turn promotes development. But in the context of Africa, a number of countries have adopted the rule of law, yet this code of behaviour, this attitude and state of mind has not sunk into the behaviour pattern of African leaders and populace, creating a serious setback in African development. The question is; why is this the case? This question prompts us to investigate the relationship between the rule of law and democratic practice in Africa, in order to find out if they have any necessary link with African development. This paper then probes into the dialectics between democracy and the rule of law, so as to understand what kind of democratic practice promotes development in Africa. The hypothesis is that, if there is a genuine democratic practice, then the rule of law is only a part and not really identical with it. Such a genuine democratic practice is more than the rule of law, and African development equally needs more than mere liberal democracy. African development can only be achieved if African democracy is based on African metaphysics.

Keywords: African development, democracy, rule of law, political philosophy, African metaphysics

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Introduction

Democracy has been defined differently by different authors. However, one of these definitions is that it is ‘the rule of the people’; which is a system of making rules determined by the people who are to obey those rules.¹ Safty (2000) calls democracy “rule on the basis of the consent of the governed”. Talking about the nature and management of political power in Africa, Lajul observes that “the basis of any political power, whether in Africa or elsewhere, is the power of the people and how this power is managed” (2014:89). For that matter, democracy is then a given people’s power of self-governance. The form this self-governance takes may vary from place to place. However, among the so many forms of democracy that exist in the world, some are; direct democracy, liberal democracy, plural democracy, and representative democracy.²

The Council of Europe Forum,² also defines democracy as “a society founded on the principles of a sovereign citizenship, transparent decision making and accountable government” (2007:219). However, they also noticed that though democracy is realized in different forms of governments, “The most widespread form of democracy is liberal or representative democracy, in which citizens elect representatives who create laws and policies and appoint the government officials”.²

Whether we call democracy the rule of the people on the basis of their consent or simply people’s power of self-governance, what usually matters is the form it takes in practice. Africa like other parts of the world today, is increasingly taking on the form called liberal or representative democracy.

Villoro distinguishes between, “democracy as an ideal of political association and democracy as a system of government” (1998:95). As an ideal of political association, democracy is then; the “power of the people” in the totality of its members, where all the members

control collective decisions and their execution. In such a political association, the people only obey themselves, no group dominate over the others, nobody is subject to anyone else and it is the freedom of everyone; it is an ideal society.³ Unfortunately, Villoro admits, this type of democracy does not exist in its entirety anywhere in the world.

As a system or form of government, democracy is: a system of rules and institutions which support a system of power; it is equality of citizens before the law; it is an electoral democracy; a system where decisions are taken by the majority; a system of separation of powers; it is not an ideal form of government; it is not an association conforming to specific values; and it is a way of living under a specific power system.³ Villoro admits, the above description is the most common form of democracy in the world.

In this paper, we shall then understand democracy in this second sense of Villoro, which is identical with liberal democracy. This liberal system of government is usually regulated by the rule of law. The hope is that, the rule of law will help to concretize democratic practice by making it a code of behaviour, an attitude and state of mind. It is this behaviour pattern, attitude and state of mind of the people that in turn promotes development. This is because, as Villoro puts it, liberal system of government can become a means of achieving certain common objectives, in this case development. Such a system of government can become relevant in as far as it succeeds in contributing and achieving developmental objectives.

The Council of Europe Forum,² proclaims that, “Never in the history of Europe has democracy been so widespread and strong in the continent as at the turn of the twenty-first century”. They believe that, almost all European societies are considered to be democratic because European countries are founded on the principles of sovereign citizenship and transparent decision making and accountable governments.

On the other hand, the Council of Europe Forum,² also noticed that, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, there is a universal concern about the status of democracy. They affirm, “In many European democracies, political discontent and scepticism are widespread, and people often believe the political elite can afford to disregard the will of the people”. Besides, Forbrig also noticed that there are “Some contradictory developments of democracy [in Europe] such as acute social inequality and corruption which cause frustration and anger that can lead to populism supported by the mass media. Citizens often feel powerless and are discouraged from taking a more active role in their society”⁴.

This means, the rule of law that prevails in Europe has failed to establish a firm code of behaviour, an attitude and state of mind required of a democratic society. These disturbing facts, make one wonder as to what has happened to the principles of; sovereign citizenship, transparent decision making, and accountable western governments?

The situation may be worse for Africa. Andebrhan observes that half a century after independence, political situation in Africa is in deep crisis.

It has failed to provide for the needs, promote the wellbeing, cater for the aspirations and safeguard the security of the people. Dismal performance and inability to deliver have led to its irrelevance and alienation. Oblivious to the imperatives of the social contract, certain states are at war with their own people. Unable to govern with the consent of the governed and scornful of their will, they perpetrate their indefinite and despotic rule and seek to achieve submission through repression and intimidation, creating a general state of fear and insecurity.⁵

In the above text, Andebrhan outlines evils that are meted against the people of Africa by their own leaders. From the point of view of development; African political leaders failed to meet the needs of their people by promoting their well-being, catering for their aspirations and safeguarding the security of their people. Democratically, African states and their statesmen/women have become alienated and irrelevant to their own people, since some are at war with their own people. They do not govern with the consent of their people, but they impose themselves on their people and are also scornful of the people’s will. They use the very rule of law to seek submission of the people to their whims of power, compounded by repressions, intimidations, creating fear among the populace. What Andebrhan did not mention was to say, they now use their people’s tax revenue to keep the people at ransom.

The question is why? To answer this question, this paper will investigate, why the very rule of law that is supposed to create a code of behaviour, an attitude and state of mind of the political leaders and the populace in order to propel African development, is being used to repress and intimidate and create fear in the African population. Why is the rule of law being used to steal public resources, suppress the principles of ‘sovereign citizenship’, ‘transparent decision making’ and ‘accountable governments’ in Africa? This prompts us to seek better solutions beyond the rule of law, if true democracy and development is to take place in Africa.

This paper then investigates the dialectics between democracy and the rule of law, and democracy and development in Africa. The hypothesis is that, it is in African metaphysics, that African democratic practice shall find solid basis to bring sanity to its development.

The dialectics between democracy and the rule of law

The relationship between democracy and the rule of law is dialectical. On the one hand, you cannot have a democratic system without the rule of law; on the other hand, African political leaders use the very rule of law to undermine democracy. To some extent, the Platonic and Aristotelian discourses come here to the fore. For Plato, the problem is that we need the best man at the political helm to have a meaningful democratic process in a political dispensation. For Aristotle, the best law suffices to get a good political dispensation moving forward. This paper argues that, though we need both the best law and morally upright leaders to get a good political dispensation progressing in a democracy, the problem is much deeper than just law and personality.

The deeper issue is to understand the motive for human action. Ayn Rand thinks, the motive for human action is selfishness, which means the actor and the beneficiary of human action must be identical. She proposes that man must act for rational self-interest rather than for social interest.⁶ Ayn Rand,⁶ justifies this behavioural trend, by calling it rational self-interest. She calls it virtue of selfishness. Rand thinks this selfishness should be qualified as rational self-interest, ignoring what this paper would call rational social-interest.

Rand distinguishes subjective theories of ethics, from the objective ones. She identifies mystic (appeal to God) and social (appeal to public goods) theories of ethics as subjective. On the other hand, she identifies rational selfishness as objectivist ethics, and proposes that this ethical theory should become the norm for human action.⁶ She equally distinguishes rational self-interest from irrational self-interest. She says, *rational selfishness* means: the values required for man’s survival *qua* man; unlike *irrational selfishness*, which are values produced by the desires, the feelings, the whims or the needs of irrational brutes, who have never outgrown the primordial practice of human sacrifice.⁶

Rand also rejects ethics of altruism. She says; the ethics of altruism has created the image of the brute, as its answer, in order to make men accept two inhuman tenets:

- A. That any concern with one’s own interests is evil, regardless of what these interests might be, and
- B. That the brute’s activities are *in fact* to one’s own interest, which altruism enjoins man to renounce for the sake of his neighbours.⁶ She continues to say, “Altruism declares that any action taken for the benefit of others is good, and any action taken for one’s own benefit is evil. Thus, the *beneficiary* of an action is the only criterion of moral value – and so long as that beneficiary is anybody other than oneself, anything goes”⁶.

Rand believes that, to join the beneficiary of an action with the actor, is not a licence to do as one pleases and it is not applicable to the altruists’ image of a “selfish” brute nor to any man motivated by irrational emotions, feelings, urges, wishes or whims.⁶

Machiavelli is one of the renowned philosophers who think that humans are by nature egoistic, aggressive and acquisitive. The universal egoism of humans is an immutable principle, which leads to competition, according to Machiavelli. However, this egoism explains the stability of healthy society in which the opposing interests are held in equilibrium. So, these corrupt, unlimited egoism of African political leaders is the only base on which opposing forces in society would be put in equilibrium.⁷

Similarly, Thomas Hobbes thinks self-preservation is the most fundamental natural principle upon which human society is built. However, he distinguishes between primitive self-preservation from rational self-preservation; the former being rash, aggressive and brutal, while the latter is intelligent, calculated, and rational.⁸ Adam Smith thinks, humans are egoistic, so the answer to human egoism is competition. So, he proposes free competitive market economy.

This selfish egoism has been made worse by globalization. Thus, globalization in the name of free market economy has universalized this egoism and wants it to be adopted as a universal principle of human activities in all spheres of human life.

Analysis of these dialectics

Looking at the relationship between economic philosophy and political practice, one can realize that the two are following the same philosophical principle of free competition. While a number of people in the world continue to think free market economy is only applicable to economic policies, but they are mistaken. This is because, a number of political leaders in the world now treat their political entities like business enterprises, literally applying the free market economic principle. They extract from the political enterprises they lead, not only political, but also economic benefits. They maximize political profits, while minimising political risks, by being smarter, more calculated, and using the rule of law.

In the above analysis we can see that some political organizations that should practice democracy in the world, are using Rand's theory of rational self-interest, because they are doing what can benefit themselves, without balancing it with what could also benefit others; what this paper calls rational social interests. Though modern political leaders basically act for their rational self-interest, they are not following the theory of utilitarianism, which aims at maximizing what benefits the majority members of society, and minimising what hurts the majority of the members of their societies. Their actions are far away from the Kantian deontological ethical theory of judging an action on its own merits, without necessarily looking at their consequences.

A number of political actors in the world are fully imbued with the Machiavellian political philosophy of amorality, refusing to let ethics guide their actions. They are also fully following the Hobbian political philosophy of self-preservation, but in well calculated and rationalized manners of controlling their societies. In economics, a number of political practitioners, if not all, follow Adam Smith's economic philosophy of free competition, totally disregarding the philosophy of cooperation. Cooperation is the only salvage for the vulnerable members of society, since they have no capacity for competing with the rich and the abled members of the economic world. This has created disturbing disparities between the poor and the rich within different countries, and disparities between the poor and the rich countries of the world. The result is massive exodus of human populations from poor or developing countries to the rich countries of the world. This has been made worse by globalization, which on the basis of the same principles of free market economy has created wealth for individuals and their companies, much bigger than national budgets, making them to begin controlling political policies and decisions within them in the world.

By distinguishing and anti-thesizing subjective from objective ethics, Rand succeeded in promoting selfishness and greed in the world of economics and politics. By identifying, mystic (appeal to God) and social (appeal to public goods) with subjective ethics, Rand annihilated and destroyed the relevance of religious and ethical values

from political and economic practice. When both genuine religious values and ethics are removed from political practice, then the results are obvious; unlimited corruption and massive accumulation of wealth by individuals and multinational companies far beyond the power of most national governments.

Analysing the rule of law and democracy, one realizes that a number of political leaders and political institutions in Africa, have generated two problems. The first is the inculcation of the culture of bad laws that do not favour the democratic and developmental impetus of their people. Secondly, they have introduced a culture of laws that suits their personal interests and the interests of their cronies, greatly undermining the principles of good democratic governance and practice in Africa. In making constitutional laws, they give no heed to John Rawls' principle of the 'veil of ignorance' in the process of law making. Political leaders in Africa make or change laws to benefit themselves and their followers, but never for the good of the entire political entity have they ruled. Veil of ignorance would mean, making laws without knowing how they would personally benefit from those laws. Without this veil of ignorance, African political leaders, continue to make laws that are draconian, partial, one-sided, well calculated to perpetuate their political dispensations and using those laws to protect them and their personal interests, other than the interests of the population they lead. At its core, this practice gravely undermines democracy and its practice in the world, besides destroying the very ambience for development.

The second thing is that they have no regard of ethical considerations in the governance of the political communities they lead. Apparently, they are following the Machiavellian principle of amorality in political practice. For Machiavelli, ethics or morality does not matter, and if a political leader wants to act morally, Machiavelli advised, they would become weak leaders. Besides, African political leaders have drifted away from the strong religious values that were backbones for their traditional political societies. A King in traditional Africa, however powerful or dictatorial he was, he would always listen to the voice of the gods and the dictates and legacies left by their ancestors. Today, with the multiplicity of religions that in big numbers have also drifted away from the ways of God, African political leaders feel completely dispensed from their obligations to follow God's commands. However, in the view of this paper, the problem is deeper than all these; the problem seems to come from the principle of universal egoism in humans.

Someone may question; why care about others, what is wrong if a political leader seeks his rational self-interest and works hard to achieve it. Must he or she wait for the majority of humanity that are lazy, dormant and keep on waiting only to benefit from the sweat of others, in order to progress?

Ayn Rand would say, rational self-interest and objectivist ethics is the answer, as we saw above. However, there is one underlying fallacy in the view of Rand. This fallacy is to say; if acting for self-interest is good, then acting for others interests become the antithesis, i.e., bad. Surely, in as much as acting for one's interest may not be bad in itself, likewise acting for others' interests is not necessarily bad. If there is possibility of acting rationally for self-interest, equally there is possibility of rationally acting for social interests.

The view of this article is that, the evil we are experiencing in the field of politics today is actually coming from this fallacy. Political leaders are now only acting for their so-called rational self-interests, and completely forgetting to act for rational social interests. When one acts only for rational self-interests without balancing it with rational social interests, then we have selfishness and greed at play. This is

selfishness in the negative sense that is eating the very fibre of our political societies like cancer.

Where rational self-interest prevails in African political practice, ethics is often sacrificed, rule of law is twisted, and monetary power is used to manipulate political system, policies and ideals. Political leaders' desires and aspirations become the guiding principles for political activities other than the aspirations and will of the political community. Such rational self-interests, usually ignore rational social interests of the electorate. The political elites, in this situation, work for themselves, their families and their cronies. Unfortunately, this is becoming a trend in both developing and developed countries of the world as we have seen above.

Most African political leaders, have transitioned from being aggressive, rash and brutal (the Hobbian primitive self-preservation), to intelligently using the rule of law, well calculated to achieve their interests (the Hobbian rational self-preservation). In the case of a number of African political leaders, this can be seen as the difference between primitive self-preservation of, for instance, Idi Amin and a well calculated rational self-preservation of other African presidents. What unites these two categories of African political leadership is that they are both selfish and egoistic; the difference is that one is rash and brutal and the other is intelligent and calculated. Unfortunately, the world hardly associates the calculated African leaders with selfishness, in the view of this paper, they may be worse than the primitive self-preservation African political leaders.

Democracy and development in Africa

In this section, our interest is to discuss the relationship between democracy and development in the context of Africa. We have already defined democracy as a given people's power of self-governance. Whether we call it the rule of the people on the basis of their consent or simply people's power of self-governance, what usually matters is the form that democracy takes in practice. Africa, like other parts of the world, commonly takes on the form called liberal or representative democracy. A system guided by three main principles; sovereignty of the citizens, transparency in decision making, and accountability of the government to its people.

Development on the other hand, can be defined as the progressive qualitative improvement of human capacity and standard of living. Development, influences the relationship between humans and their environment. It improves the use and extraction of necessary resources from the environment on the basis of human knowledge without jeopardizing the integrity of that environment. The key elements in any serious development are then: human capacity for qualitative change; ability to protect the environment; and capacity for human improvement on the basis of human knowledge.

If democracy is to be appreciated, then it must be the type of democracy that promotes the quality of human life, through the use and respect of the human environment, by employing human skills and knowledge. This means, ultimately, the end of any democratic process is human development, and the means to make this possible is the use of ethically centred rule of law. This also means democracy is the state, a situation in which humans should live and prosper. Development is the end towards which democratic process should lead humans. Rule of law should be the means to achieve that purposeful end.

In trying to understand the relationship between democracy and development, Santiso asks three things:

- a) Whether democracy fosters wealth and growth;

- b) Whether higher incomes and wealth promote democracy; or

- c) Whether there is a synergistic, combination effect of both".^{9,10}

In response to these questions, different authors have given different answers. To answer whether democracy stimulates or hinders economic growth, Przeworski and Limongi,¹¹ holds that they do not know. As regards the second question, whether development promotes democracy, Kaplan,¹² says, no; other conditions will need first to be fulfilled; like level of employment, economic stability, and civil peace. While later, Przeworski,¹³ opines that, democracies can survive better in wealthy economies. As regards the synergies between development and democracy, Carothers, says, political and economic development are not synergistic.¹⁰ Others think, democracy is the ability of the people to determine whether they want first to eat then vote, or first to vote then eat.

Meaning, do people first need development before they have democracy, or they first need democracy before development. This is another dialectic a number of authors sometimes battle with. Whether democracy comes first, then development, or development first then democracy. The view of this article is that, none of these is correct, because democracy is a basis for any meaningful development to take place, and development is the purpose for any democratic establishment.

At this point, it is also good to note the distinction between, economic development and human development. While economic development is just the attainment of economic well-being; human development is a "process of enhancing human capabilities in a way that expands choice and participation".¹⁰ If development is taken as economic growth, then there is no clear synergy between development and democracy; but if development is taken as human development, then "democracy and its values go to the very heart of human development".^{14,10}

The issue being discussed here is that, there is really no necessary link between democracy and economic development. A country can be economically well developed, yet it is not a guarantee it is also democratic. However, where there is high level of democracy in a country, there are greater chances that economic development is more likely.

The problem with this type of analysis is to try and equate democracy with liberal democracy. The concept of liberal democracy, with its basic principles of the sovereignty of the citizens, transparency, and accountability on the basis of the rule of law, is quite limiting. In liberal democracy, it is very difficult to gauge the levels of the sovereignty of the citizens. Besides, where the rational interests of the political elites are considered to be very important, then rational social interests are sacrificed. Where political elites do not respect the will of the people, definitely democracy is degraded. We need something more, if we are to talk about democracy as a basis of development in Africa as we shall shortly discuss.

As argued above, the relationship between democracy and development can only be best understood, when we take democracy as a basis of human development. Development is taken as the purpose of a democratic system, and the rule of law is taken as the means to achieve this end.

African metaphysics as basis of African development

The relationship between African metaphysics and political philosophy is that without investigating the deeper issues behind African political crisis, we cannot come out with convincing and workable

solutions for African development and problems of democracy. To investigate the relationship between African metaphysics and development, African thinkers need not to have dispassionate critical reflections on the African political realities, but this should begin by interacting with these political realities like: corruption, electoral malpractices, abuse of the rule of law, and developmental deficits like: poverty, diseases, poor infrastructures, poor education, poor agricultural practices, mismanagement of national resources etc., and derive from them meaningful solutions for African democratic and developmental problems. This is derived from understanding African metaphysics as transcendental, teleological and holistic.¹⁵

Metaphysics in general can be defined as the investigation of the essence, properties and laws of existence.¹⁶ It is “that which is beyond the physical”,¹⁷ it deals with the nature of existence,¹⁸ and it is the study of “reality, existing in everything and in every being in the universe”.¹⁹

African metaphysics, on the other hand, has been defined by different authors as follows. Ozumba defines African metaphysics as “the African way of perceiving, interpreting and making meaning out of interactions, among beings, and reality in general. It is the totality of the African’s perception of reality” (2004).

Menkiti thinks, African metaphysics is “empirically grounded” (2004:69), while Obenga,²⁰ says African metaphysics, should be engagement with reality. Lajul,¹⁵ thinks Obenga derives this definition from the distinction he makes between Greek and Egyptian philosophies. For the Greeks, philosophy is *love of wisdom*, while for the Egyptians, a philosopher is a *lover of wisdom* (2017:19). Obenga says, for the Egyptians, to philosophize is “to be engaged with love, intense desire, and strong enthusiasm in the investigation of causes underlying reality in order to build up a system of values by which society may live” (2004: 33). “African metaphysics is then, the intense engagement with reality itself, and through this engagement, the meaning and the underlying causes of reality are discovered”.¹⁵

This article proposes that philosophy should be understood in the Egyptian sense, and African metaphysics as an interaction with and an investigation of the causes underlying realities with which Africans are confronted in our everyday life. Meaning, a political philosopher should be involved, intensively engaged, and not just reflect on political problems, but to investigate passionately, the causes underlying the political reality in Africa in order to derive and build a practical value system by which African societies should live, democratically and progress economically.

African metaphysics, as being proposed in this article should be the basis of African political philosophy and the starting point in analysing the solutions to political democracy and development in Africa. The solution begins in analysing the three major characteristics of African metaphysics. These are; the transcendent, teleological and holistic nature of African metaphysics without sacrificing the well-known rationality, criticality and the beyond physicality thesis of any metaphysics.

Reflecting on African metaphysics as *transcendent*, other authors associate this with mysticism. Some think, this transcendental African metaphysics has undermined African development. For instance, Asouzu thinks, African metaphysics is *mythological*, while western metaphysics is *Science oriented*, and this is precisely the cause of African under-development since Africans concentrate on understanding and living by the whims of the mystical world other than trying to understand the world in a scientific and verifiable manner.²¹

Other authors like, Omeregbe and Anyanwu say, Africans seek this metaphysics to understand and discover the causes underlying reality.¹⁵ The fact about this metaphysics is that it is transcendental, because it goes beyond physical realities. It is “a belief in the existence of realities beyond those that can be mentally verified, although they are mentally perceivable.¹⁵ These mentally perceivable realities have influence on human lives.

To say philosophy cannot be related to such ideas, like the existence of God or the soul, because they cannot be verified by scientific proof or by rationality, would be a wrong step to begin from. Total denial of these realities in the name of science, rationality, objectivity is one of the reasons for the rejection of God, ethics and morality in the political domain. Unfortunately, this is the trend in political science and practice. If our political leaders want to be amoral, it is because they say; there are no other realities beyond the physical world. African metaphysics need to teach the world that to continue to deny this reality and its possible impact on political science and its practice, will undermine genuine efforts to create sanity in the political world.

Secondly, African metaphysics is *teleological*. By teleological I mean the ability to see meaning behind the existence of reality, purpose for the existence of the world and underlying consistent principles creating coherency between being and existence. African political philosophy should begin focussing on the purposes for which African societies exist. The world today seems to over-emphasize the importance of existence over being. This is seen in the importance the world puts on *having* other than on *being*. Being a human being is now not as important as acquiring material wealth, which is important for sustaining humans in existence. Life has lost its meaning amidst this new world philosophy. African political metaphysics should re-focus on the purpose for life and create political laws and practices that enhance this purpose and meaning. Such meaning, balances and makes clear the distinctions between concepts of *having* and *being*; *welfare* and *wellbeing*; *existence* and *personhood*.

Modern political philosophy and practice, as we have seen earlier, thinks that the only meaningful purpose for our existence and actions, should be the rational self-interest. Humans must behave in such a way that the actor and beneficiary are the same.⁶ Such an ethical principle reduces humans to rationally egoistic beings, without any concern for the neighbour or the environment. Teleological African metaphysics tells us that, there is a reason why nature or God has made things the way they are. There is a purpose for being in a leadership position, purpose for being a human being and not a beast. If such metaphysics is accepted, then true sanity can be created in the political world. African democracy and developmental agenda, needs this type of metaphysics that goes beyond the physical things we see. It helps us to conceptualize the necessary reasons and purposes for which we are in this world, at this time and place.

Thirdly, African metaphysics is *holistic*; that is to say, there is the interaction of the vital forces: God and humankind; between humans and the other living and non-living things; relationship among humans; etc. (Teffo and Roux, 1998:138). That is why Lajul thinks that; “To stimulate economic growth in the world, both individuals and institutions (economic and political) should foster cooperation when and where it is necessary and competition when and where it is necessary” (2016:1384).²² The African world, tends to emphasize cooperation against competition, while the western world emphasizes competition over and above cooperation. The solution is to accept that both are necessary and important. Competition makes humans strive for higher goals in life; while cooperation gives support to the underdogs of this world, those that need support, like the children, the

disabled, and the elderly. Without this balanced emphasis, in politics and economic life, both democracy and development will become more and more aliens to each other.

Another major political problem in the world today is to deal with politics like a business. Politics has become a platform, where politicians compete without limits, take advantage of the political space they occupy for personal gain and profit making, other than service to the community, where they maximize political gains and minimize political risks etc. But in a political dispensation, people compete so as to show they have better ideas to serve society, but this is not the case for politicians in Africa. Politicians do not see the interrelatedness of individuals and societies. If they see any relatedness, then it is just utilitarian relatedness, but never purposeful relatedness. Leave alone vertical relatedness, that we are also related to God who sees us all and wants us to live in harmony with each other. Once the mutual horizontal and vertical holistic relatedness among humans, between humans and their environment, and between humans and their God is not restored, there can be no political sanity.

This article then concludes that deriving from African metaphysics, which is characteristically transcendental, teleological and holistic, African democracy should draw its principles for building democratic societies in Africa. It is only such a democratic society built on sound metaphysical principles that can help to propel African development. The paper proposes that for that to happen, African political thinking should not substitute the transcendental with the material; the emotional with the rational; the natural with the scientific; the human with the machine; cooperation with competition; and community with individuality, all in the name of democracy and development.^{23–27}

Conclusion

In conclusion, this article has probed into the meaning and relationship between democracy and development in Africa. It discovered that, democracy is more than the rule of law, because democracy is only a basis for human development. The rule of law on the other hand, is only a means for the realization of democratic purpose, which is human development.

For democracy and development to get rooted in Africa, political thinkers and practitioners, should dig deeper into the political philosophy that inform and guide political activities. This philosophy can only be the African metaphysics. This metaphysics is advantageous because it is transcendental, teleological, and holistic.

The transcendental aspect helps political thinkers and practitioners to appreciate realities beyond that which they can see with their naked eyes. In accepting the transcendental African metaphysics, they can derive ethical principles and moral values that can help to inform and improve African political practice.

The teleological perspective will help to re-introduce meaning and purposeful orientations in human actions and the political practice. Seems the world has to re-learn that the purpose of life is more than those that can be understood rationally and seen experientially. Humans do not need only to act for rational self-interest alone, but also for rational social interests. The reasons for acting are not only the identification of the actor with the beneficiary, since some of the beneficiaries are not able to act meaningfully for their own self-interests, like; the disabled, the children and the elderly.

Lastly, from the holistic perspective, political thinkers and actors must see the relatedness of the realities in this world. One should be able to see why plants should breathe out oxygen which humans and other animals need, while humans and other animals breathe out

instead the carbon-dioxide the plants need. Humans are holistically related to one another. This is very important for the conservation of the living species in this world and for the survival of humans and their environment. It is this holistic relatedness, including relatedness with beings that we cannot see with our naked eyes that good and more worthwhile political theories and principles of political practice will be developed for the improvement of economic and political life.

In political practice, it will never be sufficient to have rules of law, but equally important, it will be necessary to have political laws that are ethically and politically sound. It will not be enough to equate democracies with regular elections, existence of laws and political institutions; it is equally important to have political institutions that can promote human development. Human development, as we have seen, can never come down like manna from heaven. Humans must work hard to bring it about using democratic governance as a base, and rule of law as a means, all driving toward the end, which is human development.

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