Innovations

Analysis of Democracy as a Political Tool for Authoritarian(ISM)

Pelekeh H. Tapang

Visiting PhD Researcher
Department of Political Science, York University, Canada

Abstract: *The research analyzes limitations of democracy in enforcing its values and institutions in countries that have authoritarian leaders. The study delves into the political landscape of Cameroon, where leadership operates in absolute authoritarianism. It investigates electoral deficiencies and manipulations, which hinders democratic process. The research reveals that despite claims of electoral reforms in undemocratic nations, opposition parties struggle against electoral frauds. The research concludes that democracy's implementation in authoritarian regimes is compromised by concentration of power and lack of genuine oppositions, leading to a hybrid political system that exhibits authoritarian tendencies flourishing with ease within democratic structures; in other words democracy helping authoritarians to attain legitimacy.*

Keywords: *Democracy, Authoritarians, Political System, Institutions, & Security*

Introduction

Democratic institutions are often established to ensure checks and balances, protect civil liberties, and uphold the rule of law. However, authoritarian leaders skilfully co-opt political institutions to legitimize their rule. While such regimes may hold elections, their manipulation of political processes and control over key aspects of state apparatus undermine the principles of political competition and fairness. The study explores the tactics and unique dynamics that underpin the survival of authoritarians in contemporary politics.

The interaction between democracy and authoritarianism has entrepôt significant scholarly attention, particularly in the context of hybrid democracies. Cameroon's political landscape provides a compelling case study to investigate how democratic institutions can be exploited to consolidate authoritarian rule. The study aims to shed more light on the mechanisms through which democracy serves authoritarian ends. Authoritarian regimes often seek international legitimacy, and they exploit democratic processes to showcase their adherence to global norms. International actors, in their pursuit of stability and economic interests, can inadvertently validate authoritarian practices. The international community's reluctance to challenge democratic erosion in Cameroon and other authoritarian regimes like Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon (before the coup d'etat), etc. underscores how authoritarian leaders leverage democratic veneers for international legitimacy.

The Arab Spring had exposed democracy's deficiency to establish itself in countries were authoritarianism is well rooted; Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, and Libya are verifiable proves. In Egypt for instance, Democracy couldn't succeed even after the revolution successfully removed the authoritarian leadership that had been in power for several decades. Evident by the fact that

the democratic leader who emerged after the revolt was undemocratically ousted and imprisoned and an authoritarian take over power. The undemocratic move was supported by countries who claim to be beacons of democracy in the world. In the same alignment, Sub-Sahara Africa has witnessed a series of coup d'etat, thereby, revealing the unfruitful nature of democracy to meet expectations out of Western spheres. France, a democracy crusader supported the unconstitutional transfer of power in Chad after the death of president Idris Derby Itno. But they claimed democracy must be respected in neighbouring Niger after the military ousted a democratic elected leader. At the same time, nothing was said against the coup leaders who took over power in Gabon (meanwhile, this occurred shortly after the coup d'état in Chad); a clear showcase of double standards. Meanwhile, the USA and other Western countries did not speak against the undemocratic transfer of power in Chad that was supported by France. Are Western democracies championing democracy or political interest?

The research critically examines the deficiencies within democracy through the lens of Cameroon's political landscape, where President Paul Biya's leadership is characterized by absolute authoritarianism, his decisions are unchallenged and he is seen as a political deity. The paper investigates Cameroon's electoral challenges, particularly the persistence of fraudulent practices, and emphasizes a lack of significant electoral reforms. The integration of occult practices into politics further deepens the intricate relationship between tradition and democracy. The research also explores the impact of cultural concerns and fears of immigration which is sometimes well handled by political extremists; this suggests that democracies cannot efficiently handle such issues. The paper equally examines the role of political oligarchs within democratic systems and their impact on governance.

A Blend of Democracy and Authoritarianism

The literature review aims to synthesize and analyze the existing body of knowledge on how democracy has helped to successfully provides legitimacy to authoritarian(ism). Democracy has been a subject of extensive scholarly research, and its role as a political tool in authoritarian contexts has garnered significant attention. The complexities of how democratic institutions can be manipulated and exploited by authoritarian regimes to maintain and sustain their longevity in power are frequently becoming a political normalcy (Diamond 2002; Levitsky & Way 2010).

The relationship between democratic institutions and authoritarianism has been a matter of endless debates. Authoritarian regimes strategically adopt superficial democratic features to legitimize their rule domestically and internationally (Schedler 2006). This has led to the introduction of "competitive authoritarianism," in political lexicons; which depicts that in such a political landscape, democratic institutions are maintained while the playing field is systematically skewed in favour of the ruling regime (Levitsky & Way (2010). Authoritarian leaders equally co-opt opposition leaders/parties, essentially by bringing them under their control (Magaloni & Kricheli 2010). This façade of competition and false pluralism reinforces an authoritarian regimes legitimacy while effectively side-lining genuine oppositions. In the context of Cameroon, democratic institutions have been harnessed to consolidate political powers (Mbaku 2005). The dominance of the ruling CPDM party and its manipulation of electoral processes has led to the exploits of the façade of multi-party politics while indirectly suppressing all oppositions.

Authoritarians who operate within democracies are referred to as hybrid regimes; this occurs when there exist pari passu a combination of democratic institutions and authoritarian practices. Hybrid regimes often utilize democratic elements to legitimize their rule while suppressing political opposition (Levitsky & Way 2010). Cameroon's political system exhibits hybrid features, as democratic institutions coexist with actions that undermine democratic principles. This fusion allows rulers to project an image of political openness while strategically consolidating power.

This commutates to "*competitive authoritarianism*"; Authoritarian regimes allow the existence of opposition parties in order to attain public acceptance (Gandhi & Lust-Okar 2009; Levitsky & Way 2010). This strategic manoeuvring maintains a semblance of political pluralism while simultaneously enabling autocratic rule. Rulers within authoritarian regimes often craft [new] legal frameworks to regulate opposition parties, civil society, and media by restricting their influences while at the same time cementing the dominance of their ruling party (Bunce & Wolchik 2010).

The nuanced art of "election fraud" reveals that it is a tool that authoritarian regimes employ to control electoral outcomes without overtly discarding democratic mechanisms (Magaloni 2006). The ruling CPDM party in Cameroon has a political scheme for electioneering, side-lining opposition parties, and stifling genuine political pluralism (Fonteh 2018). This strategic manoeuvring permits authoritarian regimes to maintain an appearance of democratic electoral participation while extending their grip on power and control over political institutions. The purpose of democratic institutions in the eyes and understanding of authoritarians in contemporary politics is that institutions are meant to be harnessed in a way that it bolsters the public image of political strong men. Through this, a political scheme is hashed that projects authoritarians as fervent democrats because they operate in the confines of democratic institutions - legislative, executive and judiciary.

Opposition parties and civil society play crucial roles in holding governments accountable. However, in authoritarianism, these actors often face subjugation and constraints, thereby, hindering their ability to challenge undemocratic practices. This is an apt political pictorial of all authoritarian regimes; where there are endless manipulations of democratic institutions by ruling elites, thence, leaving opposition parties with no true democratic means to challenge electoral engineering. Courts are forced to always rule in favour of the ruling party. Thus, the outcomes of electoral litigations are known before hand. This causes opposition parties to lose faith in democratic institutions. This accounts for why most opposition leaders within authoritarian regimes often supports undemocratic actions like coup d'etat because it seems to be the only feasible part way for them to meet their political aspirations. In this light, an undemocratic action of this nature may serve the purpose of democracy if coup plotters (juntas) gain power and establish a genuine democratic system where there is a fair and plain field for competitions, and the rule of law is respected.

However, interplay of democracy and authoritarianism is a seemingly contradictory political system, which is not static; rather, it evolve over time in response to internal and external pressures (Levitsky & Way (2010). This perspective aligns with all authoritarian regimes, where shifts in power dynamics, socio-political changes, global, regional and sub-regional influences, forces authoritarian leaders to adopt novel adaptive survival strategies. Through this tactic, Cameroon's ruling party has adeptly used democratic processes to establish political hegemony and dynasty (Fonteh 2018). Notwithstanding, scholarships are cautioned against oversimplifying the dynamics, and are urged to consider historical, cultural, and contextual specificities (Geddes 2005). Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge the limitations and challenges that are inherent in studying the aggravated interplay and political romance that exist between democracy and authoritarianism.

Methodology
Research Question:
How does the utilization of democratic structures contribute to the perpetuation of authoritarianism?

Clarification of the Research Question:
This qualitative study aims to explore the ways in which democratic institutions are employed as political tools to sustain authoritarian practices.

The study relied on the collection of secondary data from sources such as academic journals, government reports, policy documents, articles, and books. These sources provided insights into the mechanisms by which democracy is used to consolidate authoritarian control. A content analysis approach was used to systematically examine and categorize the collected secondary data. Themes related to the utilization of democratic structures for authoritarian purposes was identified and analyzed. By analyzing a range of sources, the research uncovers strategies and tactics used by the Cameroon government to harness democratic institutions for the purpose of consolidating authoritarian rule.

Triangulation of Data:
Multiple sources of secondary data were analyzed to ensure the credibility and reliability of findings. Triangulating data from diverse sources enhanced the validity of the study.

Scope and Limitations:
The study acknowledges potential limitations related to the availability and reliability of secondary data. Bias in the collection and interpretation of secondary data was mitigated by utilizing a systematic and transparent content analysis approach.

Ethical Considerations:
Ethical considerations in qualitative study pertain to the proper citation and utilization of secondary data from reputable sources. Accuracy in data representation and analysis was upheld.

Significance:
The research contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between democracy and authoritarianism, focusing specifically on how democratic institutions can be co-opted to reinforce authoritarian practices. The case of Cameroon serves as a context-specific example that can inform discussions on governance dynamics in similar contexts.

Gaps in the Literature and Research Questions

While existing literature has examined the interaction between democracy and authoritarianism, there is a need for deeper insights into specific mechanisms through which democratic institutions can be exploited for authoritarian purposes. This research aims to address this gap by focusing on Cameroon's case by analyzing the nuances of democracy as a fertile political tool for authoritarianism. While the literature presents invaluable insights, it also underscores the complexities inherent in studying the interplay of these two political ideologies. This explains why researchers needs precautions against overlooking the intricate historical, cultural, and contextual factors that shape the dynamics between these seemingly opposing concepts that are becoming politically interwoven. Leading to a novel political system supported by some Western democracies if it serves their interests, and they throw it under the boss if it doesn't serve their interests.

Justification of The Study

The interplay between democracy and authoritarianism has been an increasing subject of academic inquiry and policy concerns. In many countries, the rise of democratically elected leaders who later consolidate power through authoritarian practices has challenged conventional notions of

democratic transition and governance. The study contributes to this important discourse by focusing on the case of Cameroon, where the dynamics of democracy and authoritarianism have shaped its political landscape in distinctive ways. Most of Africa, Asia, South America and Eastern Europe have witnessed complex trajectory of governance systems characterized by democratic practices intertwined with authoritarian tendencies. Despite adopting democratic institutions and organizing multi-party elections, these regions grapples with challenges related to political pluralism, human rights, electoral frauds, and lack of accountability. Ggovernments manipulation of democratic processes to preserve political authority has raised questions about the role of democratic institutions in consolidating authoritarian rule.

Democracy has been strategically employed by authoritarian regimes to legitimize undemocratic practices. By examining the mechanisms through which democratic processes are utilized to suppress dissent, curtail political competition, and maintain centralized control, this research shed light on the nuanced in which democracy and authoritarianism interact and or coexist. Moreover, the insights gained from the analysis of Cameroon's can contribute to broader theoretical discussions about the conditionality, compatibility and tensions between democracy and authoritarianism in other political contexts. Understanding the nexus betwixt democracy-authoritarianism dynamics in Cameroon can inform more effective strategies to address democratic backsliding in order to promote genuine democratic transitions. The insights gained from this research can also enhance the design of policies that promote accountability, human rights, and political inclusivity in all contexts where democracy is used to cloak authoritarian practices.

Conceptualizing Authoritarianism in Democracy

The political leadership of Cameroon operates in absolute authoritarianism; the Executive arm of government headed by President Paul Biya is likened to a creator; he is being regarded as a deity by Cabinet members and Legislators, coupled with political elites. President Biya's 'wish and will' are unopposed and unquestionable by democratic institutions; legislative and judiciary (Mişcoiu & Kakdeu 2021). The silence of democratic institutions to perform checks and balances implies that the Executive is not acting undemocratically. Also, Cabinet members in Cameroon worship President Biya like a demi god. Mişcoiu & Kakdeu cited a speech made in 2010 by a Minister who proclaimed that: *"We are all the creatures or the creations of President Biya, it is him who is entitled to the whole glory of whatever we do. None of us is important; we are nothing more but his servants or, even better, his slaves."*

There are severe electoral ills in Cameroon and the highest authorities in Cameroon's government have accepted to make comprehensive electoral changes (Thaddeus 2006). Despite these findings; till date (2023) no significant electoral reform has been made (Mişcoiu & Kakdeu 2021). Any electoral reform in order to improve democracy would reduce the powers of the ruling party to manipulate election results. One of the main reform opposition parties have been striving for is the establishment of a Single Ballot Paper; which would help to reduce electoral fraud. Cameroon has continued to use Multi Ballot Papers (the use of separate ballot papers for parties) and this has greatly accounted for electioneering; the ballot papers of opposition parties are often not evenly distributed to all polling stations during elections. In some cases where the ballot papers of opposition parties are found in polling stations, there has been several reported cases of shortages on election days when voting is ongoing. But there has never been any reported case of shortage for the ballot papers of the ruling party. The authoritarian leader of Cameroon has decided not to entertain demands to implement electoral changes and the reason for this is simple; leaders (both democratic and authoritarians) do not change political systems that favours them.

This rationalizes why it was not surprising to see that in 2012 the development of: "Law No. 2012/001 of 19 April relating to the Electoral Code" did not deem it necessary to initiate the use of a Single Ballot Paper for all elections. This intentional neglect, may account for the reasons why the 2018 Presidential election was highly characterized with transparent electoral frauds, evident by doctored polling results. There was nothing opposition parties could do about this. Opposition party leaders are not aware that they are being used as political tools to project that Cameroon is a multi-party democracy; it has several opposition parties who always campaign for public offices during elections.

Some scholars contends that political parties that do not win seats into the Legislative and those that lack coalition potentials should not be counted as political parties (Sartori 1976; Powell 1981). But what may be the use of a few numbers of seats for numerous opposition parties in a democracy where one party has always headed the Executive and it continues to retain majority seats in the Legislative? Sartori & Powell's arguments may be found wanting in the case of Cameroon because occupying Legislative seats that could not cause any effect or influence during the development of laws or passing of Bills may be of no real value. I consider such a political sphere to be a one party system disguised through Authoritarian tendencies with the help of Democracy to look like a multi-party democratic system. Also, Sartori & Powell failed to take into consideration the aspect of "free and fair" election. Not all elections meet this criterion as it's often the case in all authoritarian regimes where opposition parties regularly complain about electoral frauds.

Traits of Authoritarianism in Party Systems and Legislative

 In some democracies, there exist parties within parties (pseudo parties) were they appear to the public as separate parties but in reality, it is one party spreading out its political tentacles (Laver & Schofield 1990). This could be likened to the case of Cameroon when the CNU was changed to CPDM. In practice and ideology, there was no real political change; it was just a mere re-branding or what may be described as putting old wines into new bottles. However, Lowell (1896) believes that a political system and Legislative should consist of only two political parties. This line of argument is centre on the fact that multi-party systems brings about political instability because numerous diverse parties implies divergent ideologies and endless uncontrolled disagreements. This will always make it very difficult for any government to govern. Lowell incline that a Two Party Legislative ensures and assures smoothness in the establishment and passing of Legislations.

The Legislative in Cameroon is an area where there have been many endless unanswered political questions. The Upper Chamber was created in 1996 following an amendment to the Cameroon Constitution. Despite this, the Upper Chamber did not go operational and the country continued to practice a Bi-Camera Legislative system even though its constitution had permitted it to practice Unicameralism (Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon - 1972, as amended in 2008). Grave worries arouse in 2013 following the signing of Presidential decree № 2013/056 which immediately caused into effect the operationalisation of the Upper House of Legislative. The decree stated categorically that the Executive will appoint 30% of Senators (Mişcoiu & Kakdeu 2021).

The initiative of appointing members into the Upper Chamber was never included as a Claus in the amended 1972 constitution. This move could be seen as a political ploy to ensure that the authoritarian ruling party should always have majority in the Legislative; this will enable it to continue to easily pass its Bills unchallenged. This has made many Political pundits, Sociologists, Commentators, Constitutionalists, Philosophers, and writers to question the usefulness of the Legislative or the effectiveness of Cameroon's Unicameral Legislative System. One could visualize

without any lens how political leaders are exploiting democratic institutions for their self-interest at the expense of citizens. Which constituency do appointed Legislators represent? Who are they accountable to? What is the yard stick for screening before appointment? In Cameroon, appointed members of Cabinet do not go through vetting. This rationalizes that the Executive exercises absolute political powers. Absolute powers are often common with monarchies and not in Republics. The case of Cameroon is a rare occurrence (Conroy 1992; Cohler 1988; Cox 1983; Hulliung 1976).

Ever since Cameroon achieved its independence, it has been in search of developing its own unique style of democracy; a democracy that would reflect Cameroonians and their values. This led Cameroon to reject any form of importation of Western models of democracy. Western models of democracy have been struggling to successfully function in Africa. The first attempt by Cameroon in developing its own democracy was the introduction of a Single Party System. This brought about the tyranny of political elites (David 2012). Bur this should not be considered to be a novel model for democracy in African because one party system of democracy was common almost across the whole of Africa during the first era of post-colonialism. This was made possible because most African countries gain independence in the 1960s and the leaders at that time were trying to consolidate their powers. This attest to why they did not want any form of opposition to their political ambitions. Arguments that a one party system instituted in Cameroon or other parts in Africa was a form of democracy are limited in rationality and exactitude.

In Cameroon, anti-democracy forces continue to remain very strong at the watch of civil society (Mbuagbo & Celestina 2003). Even though the government have mobilize all forces against civil society to ensure that they become ineffective in their fight for democracy, civil society in Cameroon have failed to rally themselves and join their resources in order to cause a significant political change. They may be described as political spectators or football fans who seats in the stands and watch their teams play on the pitch without directly interfering with happenings. But even football fans sometimes booed their teams from the stands as a means to convey a message of dissatisfaction. Civil society needs to go back to the drawing board and review the main objectives, and functions they ought to play in political systems while uphold professional integrity. Only this, will they be able to channel a substantial change towards achieving a democracy in authoritarian regimes that works for all.

Democracy in Cameroon was moving towards an opposite direction and it was exacerbated in 1990 with the introduction of multi-partism. The birth of multi-partism was highly heralded by the masses with the aspiration that they would finally have a democracy that works. But the contrary to this aspiration has been the reality. Numerous reasons, including efforts by anti-democratic armed forces to support and maintain autocratic rule, has resulted to Authoritarianism. Cameroonians, just like citizens of other African countries in the 1960s, enjoyed the euphoria of independence with limitless political expectations. Unfortunately, a majority of the political class helped post-independence leaders in Africa to personalized powers. They were given names like: Founding Fathers, Father of The State, Papa, etc. These patriarchal appellations gave unlimited rights to leaders who exploited it to developed political systems that made them above all laws (Mbuagbo & Akoko 2004).

The political pillars, upon which African states were built, were structured and engineered in a way that it will continue to be a milking ground for imperialists. This was made possible by instituting systems and institutions that are meant to control the people through coercion. The imperialists never left Africa on their free will, thus, they never abandoned their exploitative quest for African resources. A democratic Africa will put an end to any form of exploitation and this explains why the continent is full of Authoritarians who are heavily backed and supported by Westerners. The Authoritarians pledges their national resources to imperialists in exchange of

their services to endeavour that they guarantees their longevity in power. This explains one of the reasons why African leaders keep more than two third of their financial reserves in Western States (Mbuagbo & Akoko 2004; Mbaku 2002; Konings 1996; Frank 1991). Democracy is a very expensive political ideology to implement and maintain, hence, countries that are unable to manage their resources and financial reserves are likely to be unsuccessful in their attempts to establish a democracy that yield the value interest of their citizens.

Processes and Practices of Democracy

During post imperialism, African States began importing liberal democracy in 1990 (Orock 2014). However, this view which is widely supported by some scholars may be misleading. Conflictual understanding often occurs because democracy and liberal democracy are wrongly often used interchangeably. However, these two concepts convey different depictions. The latter; according to Abraham Lincoln implies: "government of the people, for the people, by the people." This got its original interpretation from its Greek meaning which simply considers democracy to be a process by which people freely choose their leaders (direct democracy or indirect democracy). Democracy initially did not guarantee liberty for the masses in all spheres of life. It core was aimed at producing leaders who are true representatives of their people.

After several years of practising democracy, Western States later started to incorporate Liberalism into their democracy. This move came after the end of the Second World War. It was solidified with the establishment of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This gave birth to what is now known as Liberal Democracy. Thence, Western States began abolishing capital punishment from their laws, enshrined rights to protest, freedom of speech, media, and religious. Based on this elaboration, one could see that, we cannot talk about liberal democracy in a country/continent that was not democratic before and during imperialism. Out of 54 countries in Africa, Mauritius is the only recognized democracy. This cast doubts for arguments which may try to present Cameroon and other African countries as a Democracy. Democracy gave birth to liberal democracy; there was no importation of liberal democracy by Africans in 1990 as argued by Osei-Hwedie (2000) and Orock (2014).

The political system of Cameroon is often accused of diabolic practices (Ndjio 2011). Unlike in Western democracies were politician's works endlessly to strategize on how to win elections, in Cameroon; political elites are fond of consulting and utilizing spiritual powers to win elections. The ruling party is believed to be a member of strong secret cults. This argument may look untrue but Ndjio explored the linkages between occultism and politics and found that witchcraft practices are inseparable from political practices in Cameroon and most Sub Sahara African countries.

This explains why closer to election periods and during elections, strange happenings like dead bodies are found on streets or in bushes without vital body parts (private parts, tongue, breast, ear, nose, etc.) and the disappearance of children and adults are very common. Election years in Africa, is characterized with diverse practices of witchcraft orchestrated by politicians. Earlier studies carried out by: Ashforth (1998), and Ciekawy & Geschiere (1998) on the relationship of spirituality and politics in Africa have shown that, the two are inseparable; they are inter woven.

Gaps created by Democracy for Authoritarianism to Explore and Fill

Democracy has strongly been a supporter of neo-liberal human rights which has made some of it strong proponents who are highly conservatives to withdraw their supports in championing democracy. They accused democracy for shifting away from its core values of upholding traditional belief systems (Wodak 2015). Traditionalists have opined and pointed negative

fingers at democracy for advocating and encouraging racial diversities and religious pluralism. This accounts for why protecting religious values and traditionalism are key selling points for Authoritarians. Authoritarians have been able to prevent the integration of hybrid cultures into their societies. Cameroon for example has banned homosexuality and abortion. Looked at Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans, political extremists are using nationalism as a way to consolidate their power (Hay & Wincott 2012). They are portraying liberal democracy and human rights (hybrid cultures like abortion, gayism, lesbianism, and trans-genderism) as foreign agenda which some cosmopolitan elites want to impose on nations against their traditions. This is a common feature among all authoritarians which resonate well with a majority of the masses and it serves as one of their strongest political adage.

Political extremism according to Urbinati (1998) is a strategy of rebalancing the distribution of political powers among established and emerging social groups. Tensions between democracy and political extremists stems from the ways in which these ideologies perceive the relations between representative institutions and the "will of the people". For Authoritarians, the primary task of political institutions is not to serve as systems of Checks and Balances or as protectors of civil rights, but rather as instrumental tools for translating 'majority will' into political decisions. This is a direct contrast to the way democracy sees political institutions. This argument is what all authoritarian leaders have been portraying for several decades. The governance system of Cameroon could be seen as one that has little regard for democratic institutions and its precepts. This has given democracy an in-active secondary role in political systems headed by authoritarians (Mișcoiu & Kakdeu 2021).

Democracy is a political ideology that has been practised across the globe by all humans, right from the time they were created; it could be located at the beginning of the history of all nations. Democracy is a political ideology that is not perfect. And being a process of practice, countries can continue to learn in order to perfect their practices (Lawyer 2016). This argument is opposed by biblical writings and history which teaches that there was no nation when the first man (Adam) was created. Adam lived in a garden called the Garden of Eden. Also, the discipline of Nations and Nationalism in Political Science teaches that there were no nations when humans were created because all nations are the creation of Nationalists. This line of argument was put forth by the Theory of Constructivism [also known as Theory of Modernism] (Özkırımlı 2010; Ichijo & Uzelac 2005).

Contrary to the Constructivists view is the Theory of Primordialism which had previously argued that nations just like humans where everywhere at the time of creation. Primordialists like Ernest Renan and Stephen Grosby rejected the Constructivists argument that nations were created by nationalists (Smith 1991, 1998). But even if we were to consider both theories, there is no real relativism between human creation and democracy. At creation, Adam was the head of his wife (Eve). He needed no democracy to head his wife? Even when he had children, did he use any form of democracy to become the head of his family? Thus, Lawyer's argument may need more scientific groundings to establish its point. Seeing democracy everywhere at all epochs of human history implies that there was democracy during Feudalism, Class System, Roman conquest, and European imperialism or before the American war of independence. The era of Enlightenment came about because there was no democracy in Europe; the French Revolution and the Glorious Revolution in England are glaring examples to justify this argument.

Democracy has been accused for being responsible for political crisis in Africa because it is a system that is practised in diverse ways throughout the globe; it lacks a unique pattern (Yacouba & Emmanuel 2017). This makes it to also lack uniformity for example: American Democracy is different from British Democracy, Italian democracy is different from French democracy, etc. Despite this, democracy as a political concept and system of governance is succinctly defined in

the developed world. But the reverse is true in Africa where democracy may be seen as a concept and system of governance that escape definition. Various Western countries were able to develop their democracies based on the value interest of their citizens while taking into consideration historical epochs, socio-cultural dynamics, and prevailing conditions in order to meet the expectations of present and future generations. African countries have failed to take such initiatives; they have tried to copy and paste Western democracies. They did not take into consideration that Western democracy flourishes in a Sociological, Political and Cultural environment that is different from those in Africa.

The failure of democracy to achieve a significant result in Africa has provided a political vacuum which has been exploited by Authoritarians. Western democratic regimes functions either as: Presidential or Parliamentary with well enshrined norms instituted in their constitutions. While African political regimes operate as: Authoritarians, Autocrats, Despots, etc. Even in countries where there are established laws, often at times, laws in Africa are seen by those in power as something that is meant to be implemented only on the masses. The composition of Western societies aligned either with: a Civil State or Ethno-cultural State. But African states do not fall under these two basic forms of States; they did not pass through processes of State formation. Statehood in Africa was born from decolonization. It explains why Western countries are Nation States while African countries are Community States; they were made from numerous diverse communities brought together by imperialists to form a State (they did not experience processes leading to the formation of Nation States). This may justify why imported Western models of democracies have failed in Africa (Yacouba & Emmanuel 2017; Wonkeryor et al. 2000).

Political pluralism is a fertile breeding ground for political extremist and unending refugee crisis in so many countries may definitely bring an end to democracy, because democracy has proven to be unable to solve immigration problems (Christophe 2017) . But authoritarians have succeeded to control immigration to a certain extent. In Cameroon, there is no real socio-political crisis caused by immigration. Even though some may argue that African countries do not usually experience immigration crisis, this is not entirely true. African countries also often have immigration crisis; for example: South Africa, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Morocco, and Libya, are currently having socio-political and economic problems caused by immigration. The authoritarian leader of Cameroon has succeeded to quench immigration crisis. Gaddafi's Libya had no immigration problem which benefited Europe also.

 The fear of cultural erosion and the rise of religious fundamentalism are the main driving forces which help to galvanize and strengthen authoritarian regimes. These ills may be hidden inherent features of democracy because if they were not part of democracy why has democracy been unable to remedy it? Democracy has also encouraged the sharp rise of "Oligarchic Totalitarian" and "Authoritarian Regime" (Christophe 2017). This was what Robert Michel had earlier caution in one of his works where he clearly established how Oligarchs have hijacked political parties and democratic institutions - Michel's *Iron Law of Oligarchy.* The very high admired and applauded book: Democracy and the Iron Law of Oligarchy; vividly classified democracy to be the worse form of Bourgeoisie system of governance an it has aided to breed authoritarians (Tolbert 2010; Darcy 2005). In authoritarian regimes, Oligarchs are products of the political system; they hardly act contrary to the interest of the government.

Assessing The Nuance and Interplay

Cameroon has experienced only two Presidents throughout its political history; Ahmadou Ahidjo 1960-1982, and Paul Biya 1982 to present. Notably, Cameroon has been ruled for more than 60 years by a single political party; an occurrence of this nature leads to party dictatorship Roland (2022). This is what Sir Arthur Lewis (1965) [cited in Lijphat 2012) described to be an

undemocratic practice. Majoritarian rule leads to party dictatorship; a scenario where ruling parties exclude opposition parties from decision making. Lewis pointed out that government-versus-opposition pattern is undemocratic because it exhibits principles of exclusion; whereas, democracy implies inclusiveness.

In Cameroon, appointed Members of Cabinet do not go through any form of vetting before taking office, and 30% of Members of Legislative in the Upper House of Chamber are appointed by the President of the Republic. Based on the principles of Separation of Powers outline by Montesquieu (Hazo 1968), there should be three distinct organs of governments. These should include; the Executive, Legislative, and the Judiciary. The Legislative and Judiciary are meant to act as Checks and Balances to the Executive in order to ensure it does not abuse its constitutional prescribed powers. But in a situations where some Legislative Members are appointed, it could indicate that they would no longer perform the function of their office freely. In the history of the two Houses of Legislative (the Lower Chamber and the Upper Chamber) no Bill sent by the Executive has ever been rejected. This raises more undemocratic issues as Political Scientists pondered whether the Legislative in Cameroon is an extension of Cabinet or a mere window dressing used to shield the appearance of Authoritarianism (Mişcoiu & Kakdeu 20215).

The fact that no Bill submitted by the Executive to the Legislative has ever been rejected offers a concrete evidence of how democratic institutions are used as political tools in the hands of Authoritarians. Also, because the ruling party (with only a change in the party's name) which has been in existence since Cameroon had its independence has been the only party with majority seats in the two Houses of Legislative despite the presence of more than 300 registered political parties, exemplifies aspects of ruling party Authoritarianism (Mişcoiu & Kakdeu 2021; Lewis 1965). These vividly illustrate how Authoritarianism has crept into democracy and occupy premium positions to dictate political occurrences.

This illustrates how democratic structures can easily be manipulated to consolidate power within authoritarian regimes (Bunce & Wolchik 2010; Gandhi & Lust-Okar 2009). Democracy is responsible for breeding too much politicking which has been exploited by undemocratic leaders (Hey (2007). This causes Hey to suggest that we should take "Politics out of Politics". Robert Dahl (1971) in his powerful seminarian work: 'Polyarchy' believes that no country is 100% democratic. Thus, he urges citizens to strive for more freedom rather than fighting to attain a perfect democracy which is unattainable - in other words, he assumes that perfection is far fetch from democracy (Krouse 1982).

Conclusion

The existing body of literature illuminates the multifarious strategies authoritarian regimes employ to co-opt democratic institutions for their own end means. In Cameroon and beyond, these manipulations reveal the skilful adaptability of authoritarian rule in the face of democratic norms. However, it is imperative to recognize that the relationship between democracy and authoritarianism is far from static; rather, it is shaped by contextual intricacies that must be explore with meticulous attention. For instance, the first President of Cameroon: Ahmadou Ahidjo built a personalized system of governance that ensures everything evolved around him. He laid a solid foundation on which his predecessor: President Paul Biya exploited and accruals to himself power that even his predecessor did tot ascribed to.

The analysis of Cameroon's political landscape reveals a complex interaction between democracy and authoritarianism. President Biya's unopposed rule epitomizes authoritarian tendencies within democratic structures. Despite claims of electoral reform, electioneering, manipulation and fraud persist, which hinders democratic processes. Cconcerns about cultural erosion and

immigration problems contribute to the successes and grounding of political extremism. The role of political oligarchs further distorts democratic frameworks. Overall, Cameroon's case illustrates democracy's vulnerabilities when confronted with deeply entrenched authoritarian practices. The paper highlights that Cameroon's hybrid political system is marked by authoritarian influence within democratic structures, emphasizing the need for nuanced analysis of democracy's implementation in diverse contexts. Striking a balance between democratic principles and local traditions is essential for achieving sustainable governance.

Democracy is responsible for breeding undemocratic practices, and examples abound; Zimbabwe, Egypt, Cameroon, Cuba, Chad, Afghanistan, Libya, Iraq, etc. These nations may organise elections simply because they intend to gain local and international legitimacy. They function and operate with ease in democratic institutions like Legislative, and Judiciary. This make them look similar with democratic nations. This ill was created by democracy but it's time for election to be split and given two distinct appellations: 1) Democratic Election, 2) Authoritarian Election. This would help to demarcate or solve the nuance. The concept of Election in contemporary politics should merely serve as a generic term and not as a democratic concept.

Democracy merely has identified institutions - Executive, Legislative & Judiciary, and practices like election, but electoral systems are different across democracies. Term of office for public offices varies across countries; some have 4 years per tenure, others have 5 years, 7 years, while some countries do not have any sort of maximum; a leader can continue running for political office as long as s/he wishes. In addition, some Legislative systems are Bi-Camera while others are Uni-Camera. Why not is there no "Pi-Camera System" (authors coinage) - a legislative system that has more than two legislative houses or a Pelek-Camera System (authors coinage) - a legislative system that has more than three legislative houses including a special house meant only for civil society and it should be given more powers and ranked above political houses. The extent to which individual freedom should be guaranteed varies across democracies which justify why the author proposed a Pelek-Camera System; civil society may best help to draw a fine-line to guarantee maximum freedom for all.

Democracy suffers from a severe lack of standardisation which accounts for its limitations and failures to succeed in political systems where other political ideologies have been firmly instituted. For example, Democracy failed woefully in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya. Democracy must be contextualized with historical epochs, culture, sociological perspectives and dynamics. Africans should take these aspects into consideration and fashion a system that can produce representative leaders based on their unique environments. This explains why USA democracy would not succeed in Britain and vice versa. USA did not copy Bi-Cameralism from its colonial master - Britain. It adopted Uni-Cameralism based on its sociological composition.

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