

# DEMOCRATISATION: TRANSITIONS AND OBSTACLES AMONGST FRANCOPHONE WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES

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**Abstract:** The democratic process that was triggered in Africa in the 1990s, especially in Francophone West Africa is choked with various problems. Few years ago, many African countries were either under military regimes or one party system. Today, the continent has witnessed a positive change at least in form and nomenclature with the exception of few countries where there were military coups recently namely: Mali, Niger Republic, Burkina Fasso. From Gambia to Benin Republic to Togolese Republic, countries have adopted democratic constitutions through popular elections. Yet in the course of transition through national conferences or military regimes to democratic regimes, most of these countries find themselves at crossroads. Democratization is synonymous to democratic consolidation which must entails guarantee of free and fair elections, fundamental human rights, freedoms, participation and rule of law. This paper discusses transitions to democracy of some francophone West African countries and analyses the problems confronting its development process. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex process of democratization in Francophone West Africa.

**Keywords:** Democratization; Francophone West Africa; Democratic transitions; Obstacles

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Democracy is usually defined as a set of institutions or governmental processes. Yet one seldom wonders what makes these institutions democratic. Thus when these institutions are used, as they most often are, for non democratic purposes, identifying them automatically to democracy leads to a situation where democracy itself is a bad name [1].

Democracy was born in the ancient city of Athens in Greece. Greek democracy was probably the first form of democratic politics after which western civilization was patterned. To an Athenian, every male citizen ought to play his part in the affairs of his city. Politics was the business of the ‘city’. The Greek thinkers who first commented on Athenian democracy and whose works contain some of the challenging and durable assessments of democratic theory and practice that have been written are Thucydides (460-399 B.C.); Plato (427-476 B.C.); and Aristotle (348 B. C. – 322 B. C.). The ideals and aims of Athenian democracy are recounted in the famous funeral speech attributed to Pericles, prominent Athenian General and politician. The speech recomposed by Thucydides thirty years after its delivery extols the political strength and importance of Athens. The following passage is worthy to be highlighted here:

Our constitution is called a democracy because power is not in the hands of a minority, but of the whole people. When it is a question of settling private disputes, everyone is equal before the law; when it is a question of putting one person before another in position of public responsibility what counts is not membership of a particular class, but the actual ability which the man possesses. No one, so long as he has it in him to be of service to the state, is kept in political obscurity because of poverty. We are free and tolerant in our private lives, but in public affairs we keep to the law. This is because it commands our deep respects. We give our obedience to those whom we put in positions of authority, and we obey the laws themselves, especially, those which are for the protection of the oppressed. We Athenians, in our own persons, take our decisions on policy or submit them to proper discussion: for we do not think that there is an incompatibility between words and deeds; the worst thing is to rush into action before the consequences have been properly debated. Thucydides cited [2].

Subsequently, there was the emergence of the concept of the “republic” in Rome, to establish the participation of citizens in the management of public affairs. Gradually the need to involve citizens in public decisions extended to Europe and America. Liberal model of democracy emerged with universal suffrage and the willingness to promote citizens’ rights and liberties.

Democratization in Africa in general was also launched immediately after the end of the cold war with the collapse of communism and the last wave starting in the last decade of the twentieth century and especially when donor countries like France imposed democratic label on aid-dependent countries mainly its former colonies. In addition, internal agitations from civil society associations compelled the military and one party civilian dictator to open up the political terrain for multiparty elections. These brought dramatic political change to Africa. The whole continent is swept by a wave of democratization; government after government was forced to compete in multiparty elections. As at 1998, as many as twenty-nine countries in Africa were operating the one-party system. These countries included: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo-Brazzaville, Cote d’Ivoire, Djibouti Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principé, Seychelles, Sierra

Leone, Somalia, Tanzania, Togo, Zaire and Zambia. As at 1998, about ten African countries were military oligarchies. These include: Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, Guinea, Lesotho, Libya, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Uganda. In addition, two of these countries namely Morocco and Swaziland operate a monarchical form of government. Presently, four Francophone West African have returned to Military rule namely Mali, Niger and Burkina Fasso and Chad in Central Africa. Western governments no longer had strategic interests in propping up repressive regimes merely because they were friendly to the West. Along with the World Bank, they concluded that one party regimes lacking popular participation constituted a serious hindrance to economic development and placed emphasis on the need for democratic reform. At a France-African summit at la Baule in France, in June 1990, which was attended by thirty-three African delegations, twenty-two of which were led by Heads of State, President Francois Mitterrand stated that French aid would be dependent on efforts towards liberalization. While pledging to stand by Africa during its current economic crisis, President François said that French aid would in the future flow more enthusiastically to countries that take steps towards democracy [3]. The emergence of a western consensus in favor of promoting democratic principles coincided with the rise of increasingly vocal & powerful African Pro-Democracy movements, popular protests and demands for political reform often emerged as a response to the intensification of government-sponsored political repression and human rights abuses throughout the 1980s.

This trend peaked in 1991, when, according to a commentator; a total of eighty six popular protests were recorded in thirty African countries – protestors were emboldened by the adoption of continent-wide human rights norms, which was confirmed by the ratification of the African Charter of Human and People’s Rights by the majority of African Countries at the beginning of the 1990s. Protesters were also driven by the severe deterioration of African economies that made it difficult for individual families, already perilously close to abject poverty.

Transitions from authoritarianism to democracy have been extremely varied, making it difficult to discern patterns that aid explanation. This complexity is sometimes compounded by confusion between the causes of authoritarian breakdown and the processes by which democratic replacement are introduced, as with a classification of the “routes” to democracy as: “modernization”, which focuses on the economic prerequisites of democracy; “structural”, which focuses on the effects on authoritarianism of changes in class and power; and “transitional” which focuses on the bargaining between elites which negotiate the transition to democracy [4].

## 2 TRANSITION THROUGH ONE PARTY- SYSTEM

From the list above, we can see that as late as 1988, one party state and military regimes were dominant, while opposition parties were outlawed in most African countries. The political norm was a highly personalized executive who governed through tightly controlled one party- systems. A good example of such a country was Côte d’Ivoire, then, home to some 15 million people in West Africa, a former French colony, where the first three decades were dominated by one individual, Felix Houphouet-Boigny. He was the focus of all state activity, master-minding the centralization of the government. Houphouet-Boigny exercised personal rule from the office of President, gaining legitimacy for his regime through a complex network that cast his influence in all areas of the Ivoirian society.

He ruled through the Parti Démocratique de la Côte d’Ivoire (P.D.C.I). He was, however, forced by many pressures including the former President Laurent Gbagbo, to compete in his first multi-party contest for the post of President (after holding this office for 30 years). Felix Houphouet-Boigny died in 1993, marking the end of an era. This pattern was followed by a number of African countries- Zambia, Gabon, Burkina Faso and Kenya. Needless to say, there are variations in the countries in which the pattern has been adopted, especially as regards the space of time within which the change was effected. The political frameworks bequeathed to the African continent at the beginning of the contemporary independence era embodied an authoritarian-democratic paradox in which African leaders, educated in authoritarianism during the colonial era, were expected to perform like seasoned experts in democracy. Despite their almost complete disregard for the promotion of democratic values during the colonial era, departing colonial administrators hastily constructed political arrangements that purported to embody western democratic ideals, such as systems of checks-and-balances, in which offices of the president, legislatures and judiciaries would balance each other’s power and prevent the emergence of authoritarianism.

In France’s former colonies, the centralized Elysée model was introduced. Generally the so-called democracies left behind by the colonial masters represented largely untested and ill-suited political procedures that were not grounded in African political cultures

Schraeder P.J. highlighted a variety of authoritarian measures taken by those African leaders to enhance their political power and ensure political survival at the expense of competing interests. Among those actions taken were the [5]:-

- ❖ Staffing of bureaucracies, Militaries, and police force with members of leader’s ethnic or clan groups, as well as with their principal ethnic or clan allies.
- ❖ Rejection of “Federalist” arrangements, such as constitutional amendments that allowed for the political autonomy of groups or regions based on ethnic, linguistic or religious claims.
- ❖ Marginalization or even disbanding of independent parliaments and judiciaries that at best became “rubber stamp” organizations incapable of serving as a check on the powers of the executive.

- ❖ Imprisonment or exile of vocal critics from civil society, including women's groups labour unions, student organizations, and religious groups.
- ❖ Outlawing of rival political parties.

### 3 TRANSITION BY NATIONAL CONFERENCES

Among Francophone West African countries, the Republic of Benin was the pace-setter in democratic transition by national conference which was really like a popular coup d'état though no violence was involved [6]. The Benin Republic's transition to democracy through National Conference is a significant event in African history. In response to popular agitation featuring mass demonstrations supported by an umbrella of organisations called *Assemblée des Forces Démocratiques*, (Assembly of Democratic Forces) comprising four different movements, the one party- government of president Matthew Kérékou in January 1990 officially renounced Marxism-leninism, and called for a National conference on democratic reforms with members drawn from the government, the ruling party and the military both at home and in exile. The Benin Republic instituted a national Conference with sovereign powers which culminated in political democracy for the country [7].

The conference, at its meeting on February 21, 1990 declared itself, without due authorization, as having power to draft a new constitution, to give binding effect to its decision and to implement them accordingly. Against protestation by president Kerekou who declared that, "the conference had not been set up as constituent assembly and could not turn itself into one", the conference proceeded, in line with its earlier declaration, to take decision on multi- party presidential election to be held on January 27, 1991. It appointed Nicéphore Soglo as Prime Minister to head of a new cabinet with predominantly pro-democracy members.

The National Conference created what was called, *Le Haut Conseil de la République* meaning The High Council of the Republic (HCR) to oversee the executive, supervise the elections and approve the draft constitution. "Four former presidents of the country and the conference chairman (a bishop) were members of the H.C.R. At the same time, the country was re-named the Republic of Benin, thus dropping the word "people" [8]. Parliamentary elections, contested by 17 political parties, were held in February 1991, and presidential election in March in which, Nicéphore Soglo emerged the winner, defeating the incumbent Matthew Kérékou. The transition process in Benin was certainly "one of the most remarkable changes among the moves by African states towards democracy in 1990, It was novel, a revolutionary trail which many African countries: Togo, Niger, Ethiopia, Congo and Mali followed. The national Conference was a pivotal moment in Benin transition to democracy. It brought together various stake holders, including politicians, civil society representatives and traditional leaders to discuss the country's future and establish a new democratic framework. As Andre Salifou, the President of Niger's National Conference described it *Le Benin fait l'école* - "Benin is setting the exemple" [5]. This statement highlights the significance of Benin's National Conference as a model for democratic transition in Africa.

In Mali a new multi-party constitution drafted under the auspices of an interim government appointed by the national conference was approved at a referendum in January 1992, and elections for local government councils contested by 20 parties were held.

The national conferences of Togo and Niger were interrupted by the army assigned by the incumbent military heads of state to restore their powers. In Niger Republic, the national conference, inaugurated on 29 July, 1991 with 1200 delegates representing trade unions, students' unions, thirty political parties, the Chamber of Commerce and the civil service, constituted itself as the supreme authority for the government of the country, reducing the then President Ali Saibou to a mere ceremonial Head of State. In November 1991, the national conference, headed by an academic from the University of Niger, Professor Andre Salifou, came up with an interim government installed to rule the country for 15 months during which general elections would be held. The army was divided between those supporting and those opposed to the national conference, resulting in an uprising in which, the former took over the radio station, arrested some members of Ali Saibou's regime and forced the dissolution of his council of ministers. Jibrin Ibrahim explained how this development fostered the passion for liberty throughout the country:

It generated very wide public interest in politics which expressed itself through popular participation in political discussion in the newspapers, three of which had sprung up during the period, and through numerous petitions for investigations into corrupt practices and other abuses. It reversed the marginality of the population and the will and determination for people participation in politics became the order of the day [9].

According to Schraeder P. J., the democratization process with the guidance of the national conference generally follow five major steps [5].

First, a broad coalition of leaders responds to a growing crisis of governance in the country by convening a national conference in the capital city. The guiding principle of this body is its self-appointed "sovereignty" (i.e. independence) from either the existing constitutional framework or any interference on the part of the ruling regime.

Second, the national conference appoints a transitional government that initially seeks dialogue with the ruling regime. Over time, however, a weakened president is either robbed of his executive powers or is simply declared an illegitimate authority that no longer has authority to lead. In either case, the president is usually reduced to a figurehead. Third, the national conference transforms itself into a transitional legislative body (often called the High Council) that, in turn, formally elects a

Prime Minister who manages the transition process. Finally, the transitional government adopts a new constitution and holds legislative and presidential elections, subsequently dissolving itself on the inauguration of the newly elected democratic regime.

Another transition through national conference but with different perspective was held in Togo. General Eyadema, the then military President of the country made concession to the opposition when faced with successive waves of popular protests, but retained the control of the army to decide what the outcome of the National Conferences would be. After month of strikes, demonstration and violence. In April 1991, he allowed opposition parties to operate and in July, yielded to demands for a national conference. In a mood of euphoria, suddenly free to speak out, opposition activities used the conference in July and August to denounce the years of brutality and repression they had suffered at the hands of his regime and to demand his prosecution [10].

Many gave harrowing first-hand accounts of detentions, torture and murder. Defying Eyadema's authority, delegates then declared the conference to be sovereign, appointed a High Council of the Republic under the leadership of a Catholic Bishop to draft a new constitution, chose a well-known human rights crusader, Kokou Koffigoh, as Prime Minister and scheduled election for June 1992. Eyadema denounced what he describes as "civilian coup" and rejected the new dispensation [11].

#### 4 OBSTACLES TO DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN FRANCOPHONE WEST AFRICA

Since many African countries became independent, experience has shown there are various challenges confronting democracy in the continent. This has led some scholars to wonder whether democracy is feasible in Africa. Claude Ake for instance queried:

Is democratization feasible in Africa? That is the question that I wish to address. It should not be confused with the question of the possibility of democracy in Africa which, though often asked, does not really arise, because democracy is in principle possible everywhere. The question is not whether democracy can be or even whether it ought to be but how it "becomes" in the light of the circumstances of a particular historical situation [12].

#### 5 COLONIALISM

History and the physical environment are very important in shaping national character and institutions. A Tocquevillian approach calls for tracing the origins of contemporary societies. If applied to African countries, this means analysing the impact of colonization on African societies would go a long; in fact, the immediate source of the African post-colonial crisis is situated in the colonial history of Africa. Colonialism can be said to be a part of the disastrous history of slavery and imperialism. The legitimating of the colonial enterprise started with the intellectual denigration of Africans perpetuated by Kant, Hegel and Hume to mention but few European scholars who stamped the African with the badge of sub humanity. Then, in the agenda of the European "civilization mission" laid the economic necessity which drove an industrializing Europe into an imperialistic imbroglio culminating in the 1884 Berlin Conference.

It was in Berlin that the African continent was balkanized into colonies serving the metropolitan economic, political and socio-cultural interests of Europe. Scholars have argued that the brief seven year period between the 1884 Berlin Conference and 1891 which signaled the beginning of the decolonization process represents an inadequate understanding of the history of the Western exploitation. The important aspect of western exploitation could be traced to the beginning of the maritime commercial incursion into Africa by the early European merchants in the mid-fifteenth century. It was a commercial enterprise aimed at the extraction and exploitation of the natural and raw materials of the African continent which led to the horror of the slave trade. One can mention such commercial traders and explorers like Lord Lugard in Nigeria, Cecil Rhodes in South Africa, Brazza in Congo, Mongo Park in Mali and Hugh De Lamere in Kenya. Eze supported this view:

The European imperial incursions in Africa, which began in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and grew into the massive transatlantic slave trade, (2) the violent conquest and occupation of the various parts of the continent by diverse European powers which took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; and (3) the forced administration of African lands and peoples which followed this conquest, and which lasted into the years of independence in the 1950s and 1960s... slave trade, conquest, occupation, and forced administration of people, in that order, were all part of an unfolding history of colonialism [12].

The two phases of European colonialism led to the indescribable crisis and deep suffering of Africans, which consequently led to the disruption of their culture and psyche. The first and major effect was the partitioning of the continent into colonial fiefdoms for the interest of the European powers. Writing on the consequences of colonialism on African culture, Abiola Irele stated:

... For the intensity of the ambivalence we demonstrate in our response to Europe and Western civilization is in fact a measure of our emotional tribute: It is expressive, in a profound way, of the cultural hold which Europe has secured upon us- of the alienation which it has imposed upon us as a historical fate [13].

The effect of colonialism according to him led to the pathology of alienation. An average African was schooled to abandon and even to work against the cultural heritage of his forefathers. He was not free to determine the condition of his existence and the colonialists never encouraged such conditions.

## **6 LACK OF LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC TRADITION**

Alexis de Tocqueville, a nineteenth century French thinker of liberal democracy in his book titled: *On Democracy* warned that formal rules providing for democratic institutions and liberties would not easily be enforced by rulers nor invoked by people in society without liberal traditions. He regarded concentration of power in the hands of a single person or political institution as an obstacle to liberal democracy because it can lead to centralized power and centralized administration [14]. Throughout francophone West Africa, one party regimes and military regimes violated the right guaranteed by their countries' constitutions.

Generally, in postcolonial Africa, the state has been the primary arena of class formation and the primary means for the accumulation of personal wealth, leading to corruption, the concentration of power, the emergence of a parasitic bureaucratic bourgeoisie, and the absence of a middle class to demand the expansion of democratic rights and limitation of state power. With a few exceptions, there was absence of autonomous associations, traditional leaders, trade unions, religious groups, students unions, and so on – that are necessary for stable, responsive and accountable government. Military dominance prevented the autonomy of the civil society and political parties, a foundation of liberal democratic tradition has been removed with authoritarian consequences.

## **7 NATIONAL QUESTION/THE DANGER OF ETHNICITY**

The notion of the civil society is more or less synonymous with the notion for national unity, and its creation raises the same question, (in many plural societies of Africa) which is generally referred to as the “national question.” The negative cultural influence of colonialism on traditional societies and their lumping together into countries cannot be overemphasized. The traditional societies separated as they are by differences in values and norms are yet to coalesce into one national civil society animated by a common spirit and a feeling of a common nationality and identity, propelled by the same social dynamics [15].

Most heterogeneous African countries like Nigeria do not yet have citizens, only different people (such as Hausas, Igbos and Yoruba) or, in the words of Tocqueville, they only have “men” but not “social body.” Colonialism was the glue that stuck these human units together into a shape recognizable in an atlas. To transform these ethnic units into a nation, into one national civil society bound together by the fellow-feeling (15) of common citizens is one of the obstacles to democratic consolidation in Africa. The main force of civil society lies in a united public opinion, such a force is impossible among a people without fellow-feeling.

The influence which forms opinions and decides political acts at different sections of the country, their mutual antipathies are generally much stronger than jealousy of the government. That any of them feels aggrieved by the policy of the common ruler is sufficient to determine whether or not to support that policy. Even if all are aggrieved, none feels that they can rely on the others for fidelity in a joint resistance [16].

For Africans to solve this problem, they must learn to live together as one, before the arrival of the white man. Africans must create common ties among themselves; banish ethnic distrust, prejudices and fear. In addition, the government must accord every citizen and group equal opportunity for progress. Individuals must rise above the temptation and disposition to champion the interest of one's ethnic group at the expense of others. It is not to denounce ethnicity, far from it, ethnicity is a reality and a fact. After all, as diverse as African societies are in ethnic groups, there was a good degree of unity among people, especially among people of the same race before the slave trade. For most of us, these social formations and group identities are not externalities but the core of our being; it is by these identities that most of us define our individuality [17]. The danger of ethnicity is its tendency towards nepotism, when an individual, or group of people decide to champion his/their ethnic interests in total disregard of those of others and the nation itself.

## **8 INEQUALITY**

Democracy is supposed to be the product and the guardian both of equality and of liberty, being so consecrated by its relationship to both these precious possessions as to be almost above criticism [18].

Unlike European and American societies, social inequality, abject and illiteracy are conspicuous features of African societies. Compare to the farmers or urban workers in Africa who dominate the population, the factory worker in America or Europe have a fairly good salary and better living standards. He can afford medical, water, electric bills, school fees for his children, a decent accommodation equipped with recreational and leisure facilities.

In western countries the gap between the rich millionaire and the poor factory worker has been narrowed. The latter can afford to regard the former with an attitude if not of equality, then certainly not of servility. The present democratic regime

in Africa in general must try to narrow the existing gap that has been created between people by the military and one-party governments. Secondary school dropouts, who are now political office holders earn more than university professors. Disparity in wealth and income produces disparity in political influence among individuals. With the extreme concentration of wealth in the hands of few, the influence exerted may indeed be so great as almost to put the control of the entire political process in the hands of the privileged few. Government must also provide a level playing ground for everybody, as all are equal before the law, there must be provision of basic amenities and jobs [19].

## 9 MILITARY INTERVENTION

Military Coup d'états have been present on the African political scene since Independence, through which the military achieve power and influence over the civilian governments. By the end of the 1960s, military leaders have launched over twenty-five successful coups, ushering in a period of militarization that soon left more than 50 percent of all African countries governed by military regimes. The pervasiveness of military leaders as the principal agents of regime change is demonstrated by the unfolding of many successful military coups from 1951-2002 [20].

The current democratization is not spared, from 2017-2022, sub-Saharan Africa is witnessing another wave of military coups. Latest among them took place in Sudan, Chad. In Francophone West Africa, in Mali the military seized power in August 2020, ousting democratically elected President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita. On the 5th of September, democratically elected Alpha Conde of Guinea Conakry was overthrown by the military [20]. Similarly in Burkina Fasso, the military took control in January 2022, overthrowing President Raoch Marc Kabore and last year July, the military seized in Niger overthrowing democratically elected President Mohamed Bazoum. Men in khaki cited bad governance as the reason for their intervention. Their reasons whether genuine or not have been a clog in the wheel of democratic consolidation in Africa.

## 10 LACK OF FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

Credible elections constitute a platform upon which, the rule of law, transparency, good governance, respect for human rights and other institutionalised democratic mechanisms can foster. Yet, credible elections or a shallow democratic beginning is no guarantee for future democratic stability. We saw it in 18<sup>th</sup> century France when the revolutionary forces violently sacked the monarchy, killed the king and all his sympathizers - not only did the revolution result in the brutal and dictatorial reign of Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, it equally failed to start democracy. Revolution is a good option in case of a guided democracy where a charismatic leader that respects and promotes the rule of law, good governance and transparency became the head of state. Ghana is a good example of a country that has achieved the gains of a guided democratic revolution [21].

African countries that refuse to consolidate their democracy are today below the threshold of electoral democracy. Under this group we have Mali, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Egypt among others. The situation is not different in countries where the military regime transformed itself into democratic government and holding on to power for life through kangaroo elections. Under this group we have: Togo, Burkina Faso, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo, Central Africa, Gabon and Cameroon where President Paul Biya, who just died this year, perpetuated himself in power for 42 years. Countries that were able to conduct fairly free and fair elections are also at risk of military intervention because their leaders violate the constitution. Under this group Benin, Niger and Senegal. The attitude of all these leaders is what Tocqueville termed "democratic despotism"

The Economist Intelligence Unit' a body that measures the state of democracy based on 60 indicators divided into five different categories: Electoral process, pluralism, civic liberties, functioning of government, participation and political culture, classified all the countries into 3 categories: full democracies, flawed democracies and authoritarian regimes. According to this body, all African democratic governments fall under authoritarian regimes except, South Africa, Cap Verde, Benin and Ghana that are flawed democracies. In African states, therefore, the challenge is not to implement the machinery of electoral democracy but to establish the norms within the democratic political culture that will make people to reject other forms of government. The process of consolidating democracy is far beyond elections, it entails strengthening democratic institutions (rule of law, protection of civil rights). Political institutions and the society need to be infused with democratic culture by preventing authoritarian tendencies. There is need for mass literacy, freedom of expression and empowerment of associations especially at local level to encourage popular participation. Yet, most African countries experiencing democratization have rejected political liberty or paid mere lip service to it. As could be seen, democracy in many African countries is crises-ridden because it is devoid of appropriate democratic culture which could nurture it [23].

## 11 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Analysis, also, have revealed that, the Anglophone countries, and the francophone countries share the same democratization experiences. While, the first power elites retained the colonial state structure in place, the contemporary leaders are selfish, corrupt and insensitive to people's plight. Worse still, they conspire with Western countries to further compound the

problem of African societies. Since the end of the cold war, democracy is touted as the only medium France, Britain and America have been using to consolidate their political hegemony created by the collapse of the Soviet Union [22]. Western countries involvement in Africa is for selfish reason. We have seen it in the case of France with “Les réseaux Rocard (The Rocard Networks) through which it maintained its dominion over its former colonies. According the same Documentary, In 1958, when Guinée Conakry opted for immediate independence from France, Charles de Gaulle the then President of France, fought the Government of Sékou Touré to a standstill. After the independence of Gabon, Congo and Algeria, their leaders continue to conspire with France through ELF, to embezzle the money accrued from the petroleum proceeds [23]. These same Western countries are coming back through World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). On one hand these so called development agencies advise us to domesticate our democracy; on the other hand they force us to accept their policies as the only condition for loans refundable with high interests. And, our leaders are already possessed with the spirit of corruption, obtain those loans and force it on the ordinary people, policies that have not been tested and proven anywhere in the world.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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