Democracy and its Determinants: A Critique

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Abstract

Scholars of comparative politics have been concerned with the meaning of democracy as well as the pre-conditions for the emergence and consolidation of democracy. The commonly examined determinants include a set of cultural, ideological, economic and external assistance factors. This article engages one variant of democracy namely liberal democracy in order to understand whether or not it presupposes certain conditions to happen and consolidate. I argue that although liberal democracy is certainly the dominant kind of democracy in the world, it has worked differently across space and time to the extent that the pre-condition argument is progressively losing its explanatory power.

Keywords: Democracy, pre-conditions, culture, ideology, economy

Introduction

The debate over the meaning of democracy is as old as the political theory itself. From the earliest Greek democracy to the modern and popular form of liberal democracy, theorists, scholars and practitioners disagree on the meaning of democracy. The debate revolves around three definitional issues: Inclusiveness against exclusiveness, procedures against substance, and finally its universal claim over cultural relativism. From the outset, it must be acknowledged that the word "democracy" literally and mostly equated with "rule by the people", from earliest times and even more in the modern period, has come to represent the belief in autonomy or self-determination for individuals and the collectivities to which they belong (Lakof, 1996). It is believed that of all social and political systems, democracy alone holds out the promise of personal and political freedom to the fullest practical extent and as a matter of constitutional right, not governmental ca-price (Lakof, Ibid). This favourable view over democracy did not come by design but rather by default following the bad experiences of the dictatorial political systems (Plattner, 2010). Despite this winning appeal, the debate on democracy is yet to be conclusive (Gilley, 2009).

Przeworski posits that "democracies are not all the same systems of representation, arrangements of division and supervision of powers, manners of organization of interests, legal doctrine, as well as bundles of rights and obligations associated with citizenship but differ significantly across regimes that are generally recognized as democratic" (Przeworski, 1995: 12-13). In light of this view, Crick attributes the root cause of this divergence of democratic practices to the many meanings attached to the word democracy which carry different social, moral, or political agenda (Crick, 2002). In its etymological meaning, democracy of the ancient Greece was understood to denote direct popular government by assembled citizens. But who were the citizens? In Greece, citizens were mainly free male adults who owned property. Women, metics and slaves were not regarded as citizens and hence excluded from political participation. This means citizenship was restricted to sex, property and birth origin. It should be admitted that this was the first inherent omission of democracy at its birth which later democracies have yet to escape from. To scholars such as Yash Tandon, the foundation of this exclusion of Greek democracy rests on its class nature of the society itself. He would argue that democracy is a material question and it is about peoples' daily struggles for survival. And therefore, to attain maximum inclusion of participation of all adult people means to establish a classless society (Tandon, 1979). Capitalising this view, Nzomo claims that: "[…] democracy in a class society is an ideological weapon that serves the interests of the dominant class, that the dominated class have, through history, been subjected to varying degrees of exploitation and oppression, depending on such intervening factors as the historical period, sex and cultural identity" (Nzomo, 1988:139). This position is subject to debate since as society develops in terms of technology, productive forces and production for surplus, greater specialization appears and ultimately leads to the emergence of classes. In terms of practice, Greek democracy was simple. People would assemble, discuss and vote on simple majority basis. This was made possible due to the small number of citizens in the polity as well as simplicity of issues of the time. One distinctive feature of Greek democracy was its emphasis on the community autonomy as opposed to the individual one.

The modern states, with big populations as well as complex issues, have a different way of doing democracy. This is called "indirect or representative democracy". Emphasizing on individual autonomy, representative democracy frequently used interchangeably with liberal democracy was born in Western Europe. And hence, it is sometimes referred to as Western democracy. Western societies are by and large founded on capitalism. However, this does not imply

that for liberal democracy to happen a society must attain capitalism. In simple terms, there is no strict correlation between capitalism and democracy as I shall argue in due course. Unlike the Greek democracy, representative democracy has been under severe debate. The Schumpeterian "minimalist definition of democracy" views election as central to democracy (Schumpeter , 1947: 270). Diamond describes this kind of democracy as "electoral democracy" (Diamond, 1999: 7). The danger of Schumpeterian view is to reduce democracy to elections where many parties compete to run the government. If one considers democracy along this line of reasoning, it may be concluded that the world is more democratic than it was three decades ago. Beyond this perspective there is a "maximalist definition of democracy" which emphasizes on three parameters: Competition, participation and civil liberty. This view is supported by Robert Dahl (Dahl, 1971). Recapitulating these parameters, Diamond exhaustively identifies ten elements of this variant of democracy and he names it "liberal democracy" to differentiate it from the electoral democracy. These include: Rule of law, individual liberty, independent judiciary, rights to information, freedom of association, minority rights, strong opposition, uncertainty of a party or individual to win an election, accountability of state officials, and competitive free and fair elections. Thus, electoral democracy focuses much on procedures, while liberal democracy capitalizes on its substance.

The practice of liberal democracy beyond the confines of its birth place has again raised concerns on its universal claim (Ake, 1993). There is no doubt that liberal democracy is the most dominant form of democracy on earth (Plattner, 1996). This does not want to suggest however that it is the last, perfect and acceptable model of democracy. Defending one party system, which is a version of an authoritarian regime, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania came up with his own definition of democracy. To him, democracy is an attitude of mind and its practice need not be confined to the multiparty system (Lakof, 1996). It can therefore be submitted that the definition of democracy is illusive. The question of democratizing the hitherto authoritarian regimes raises many questions over the conditions necessary to set in motion such democratic transition as well as consolidation of democracy itself. These conditions, popularly known as "pre-conditions for democracy" include such as culture, ideology, economic development as well as the role of external forces. The next section surveys these conditions in a more elaborate way.

Culture

The first determinant is culture. The relationship between culture and democracy is a difficult topic. Chabal aptly argues that since most present-day democracies are Western, emphasis on such cultural attributes necessarily means painting a Western image of democracy. Moreover, political cultures vary greatly in different parts of the world and therefore the focus on Western political "virtues" may implicitly be perceived as criticism by non-Western peoples (Chabal, 1998). In similar vein, Fukuyama emphasizes that: "The development history of England or the United States cannot be held up as a standard against which subsequent experiences must be measured. It is evident that there is not a single path to modernity […]. Indeed, it is difficult to come up with a universally valid rule for the sequencing of political and economic liberalization" (Fukuyama, 1995: 23).

To put it differently, the whole question of democratization may be seen as "imposing democracy" on the rest of the world on the face of culture. From the outset, it should be recalled that the cultural topic has become more pronounced at the international stage especially after the decline and fall of communism worldwide (Midlarsky, 1998). This is not by default since during the Cold War communism posed a significant challenge to the expansion of capitalism worldwide. Its collapse left a vacuum in which culture became a new system of establishing order or hierarchy. The "clash of civilization" thesis is a testimony to this development where Huntington clearly puts, "The underlying problem for the West is not Islamic fundamentalism. It is Islam" (Huntington, 1996: 217). Reacting to this view Marks argues that "the hidden question behind this book, and to which it is the answer, is simply this: With the end of the Soviet Union, who or what is now the enemy of the United States?" (Marks, 2000: 104). Consistent with the "clash of civilization" thesis, Fukuyama posits:

> As the twenty-first century unfolds, it seems unfortunately clear that liberal democracy continues to face multiple challenges. One challenge particularly apparent to Americans since the attacks of September 11 is that of Jihadist terrorism. The radical Islamist ideology motivating such terrorism is profoundly anti-liberal and, when combined with the destructive possibilities of modern technology, poses a tremendous security challenge (Fukuyama, 2006: 5).

Confucianism is also treated like Islam though with a moderated eye. This is because unlike Islam it has yet to pose security challenge. From the above

backdrop, two basic arguments on the relationship between culture and democracy are identified. The first one maintains that for democracy to happen and sustain, it presupposes a certain culture i.e. "democratic culture" which has its deeper roots in Christianity. Lerner puts "[…] Christian emphasis on individual, and rightly, since it is hard for men to resist the tyranny of absolute souls in the sight of God. Thus, the doctrine of the soul and of the equality of men before God has given a crucial imputes to those movements for freedom out of which Western democracy has been born" (Learner, 1954: 127). Reaffirming this view, Huntington argues:

> Historically, there has been a strong correlation between Western Christianity and democracy. By the early 1970s, most of the Protestant countries in the world had already become democratic. The third wave of 1970s and 1980s was overwhelmingly a Catholic wave […]. Roughly three-quarters of the countries that transited to democracy between 1974 and 1989 were predominantly Catholic (Huntington, 1991a: 13).

Apparently, Huntington seems to contradict his very own position when he submits that "By 1990, sub-Saharan Africa was the only region of the world where substantial numbers of Catholics and Protestants lived under authoritarian regimes in a large number of countries" (Huntington, 1991a: 14). Supporting Huntington's position, Philpott sees the correlation between Catholicism and democracy (Philpott, 2004). However, he admits that the role played by the Roman Catholic church differed in terms of space and time. Contrary to Huntington's Catholic wave, Lipset and Lerner maintain that Catholic societies have tended to retain an authoritarian spirit which resists the inroads of both the free-market society and democratic thought while Protestant societies, on the other hand, have nurtured both the spirit of capitalism and that of democracy (Lipset, 1990).

In contrast, Islam is argued to have no basic elements that support democracy (Midlarsky, 1998; Karatnycky 2002). The most frequently advanced reason to this incompatibility is that Islam and politics are fused to the extent that Islamic concepts of politics come to differ from and contradict the premises of democratic politics. But Tibi cautions that there has been misreading of important concepts between Islam and political Islam which leads some scholars to generalize the incompatibility between democracy and Islam (Tibi, 2008). He notes that while Islam is a faith, Islamism is an ideology whose political agenda is to establish an "Islamic state or Islamic Order" either peacefully through

democratic means or jihad which is a violent means. In the former case, however, it is striking to note that Islamist movements that embrace ballots do not at the same time give up bullets as with the case of Hamas in Palestine, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. Tibi thus contends "All Islamists seek to 'shari 'a-tize' Islam" both in the world of Islam itself and the world at large. Faithful Muslims with a spiritual understanding of Islam are not Islamists because they do not subscribe to this agenda (Tibi, 2008). To be sure, Islamist parties are inimical to democracy. Fukuyama holds the same view when he argues that "The radical Islamist ideology that has motivated many of terror attacks over the past decade must be seen in large measure as a manifestation of modern identity politics rather than as an assertion of traditional Muslim culture" (Fukuyama, 2006: 9-10). What it means here is that Islam by itself is not problematic to democracy, but rather Islamism.

The second argument on religion sees that Islam and democracy are fundamentally compatible. Larry Diamond as quoted in Friedman contends that "The obstacle to democracy in the Middle East is not the culture or the religion of Islam […].When asked in 2006 if democracy is a Western form of government, incompatible with Islam, two-thirds of those surveyed in Jordan and Palestine disagreed" (Friedman, 2008: 175). These findings are consistent with those by Tessler et al. where 59% of those who were interviewed in Iraq had a favourable attitude towards democracy by assigning it a "strongly agree" response and 51% with a "fairly good" response (Tessler, 2006 40). It is along this line of empirical findings that Ibrahim summarises:

> Islam has always experienced the primacy of 'adl, or justice, which is a close approximation of what the West defines as freedom. Justice entails ruling according to the dictates of Islamic law, which emphasize consultation and condemn despotism and tyranny […] Notwithstanding the current malaise of authoritarianism plaguing the Muslim world, there can be no question that several crucial elements of constitutional democracy and civil society are also moral imperatives in Islam – freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, and the sanctity of life and property – as demonstrated very clearly by the Koran, as well, as by the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, perhaps most succinctly and eloquently in his farewell address (Ibrahim, 2006: 7).

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If Almond and Verba thesis that for democratic model to develop in new nations it requires going beyond institutions to include the norms and attitudes of ordinary citizens as part of political culture[1] is held, it is convincing to argue that Islamic countries are now set towards democracy (Almond and Verba, 1963). The empirical studies reveal that citizens in most of those countries are looking ahead of democracy the condition potential for democratic consolidation. These competing views can well be understood under the "cultural relativism v. universalism" debate. Two central problems revolve around the above discussion: One stems from the definition of democracy itself and concerns about the absence of a universal and accepted meaning of the term across cultures. It should be acknowledged that liberal democracy manages to dominate the world. This is not by accident however. The spread of this democracy has been necessitated by a complex chain of processes and institutions. They include such as colonization, globalization, regional integrations especially the European Union, the IMF, World Bank, United Nations, United States of America (USA), Freedom House surveys, ideas of renowned scholarships and philosophers ranging from John Locke to the current ones such as Lipset, Linz, Dahl, Huntington, Diamond, Fukuyama, Plattner, Lijphart etc. Their volume of works shape thought and perception of democracy worldwide. It is now a struggle to establish which is the best form of government, where liberal democracy is far ahead to compel others measuring against it. A combination of all these factors culminated into the dominance of liberal democracy. There is no any other version of democracy which has enjoyed all these advantages. It is against this backdrop that every political system however it calls itself democratic will in one way or another rely on the parameters of liberal dimensions of democracy although its practice may vary from place to place.

To be noted is that Africa has not yet been part of this struggle over the cultural debate. This is because the centuries of colonisation were able to reorient their cultures; and yet there is no single and organised dominant culture over the region. The influence of Western education system and poverty equally diverts the cultural attention. Bratton and Mattes argue "contrary to cultural interpretations, we contend that standard liberal ideas of civil and political rights lie at the core of African understandings of democracy". This leads them to conclude "In one form or another, democracy seems to have entered the vocabulary of most African citizens. When the 1997 Ghanaian survey asked respondents 'What is the first thing that comes to mind[…]when you think of living in a democracy?', 61.5 percent were able to provide a meaningful

response, rising to 75 per cent in 1999 […]"(Bratton, Mattes and E. Gyimah Boadi 2001:454). The second problem is religion where Islam and Christianity come into a clash. This clash of value is now translated into politics. The danger of this phenomenon is to politicize religion for political ends.

Ideology

The second determinant of democracy is ideology. The debate over the compatibility or incompatibility of certain ideology to democracy reached its height during the East-West Cold War in which "liberal democracy" and "bureaucratic socialism" were in a continual clash. Huntington's Third Wave clearly singles out the Marxist-Leninist ideology as a barrier towards democracy (Huntington, 1991a: 20). This would imply that capitalism seems to support it. Schumpeter quoted in Lipset argues that "Modern democracy is a product of capitalist process" and when he was asked "Can capitalism survive?" he answered "No" (Lipset, 1993: 44-46). He noted that capitalism has produced the atmosphere of almost universal hostility to its own social order. It is striking to note however that Schumpeter did not say anything on whether democracy as one of those products of capitalism will die with it. Along the same line of reasoning, Katz posits that "liberal democracy and capitalism have been closely connected. They have been the dominant political and economic ideologies, respectively, of the same people[…]. Both liberal politics and liberal economies are based on an individualistic conception of society and on an egoistic conception of man"(Katz, 1997: 46). This view suggests that socialism which is founded on collective conception of society is incompatible with liberal democracy. For one thing, it undermines a sense of individualism and private property the central tenets of a liberal society. It is quite interesting to note that other scholars while acknowledging the compatibility of both capitalist and socialist ideologies to democracy, they go further to question the kind of democracy in that relation. Ruboko submits that capitalism and liberal democracy are compatible but such democracy is only limited to minority in a polity largely the elites. On the other hand he argues that socialism guarantees democracy to the majority. To capture his argument, it is worth quoting him in extenso:

> So, democracy in the liberal sense essentially implies the defence, promotion and protection of the capitalist system, and the domination of the world by imperialism. The rights and privileges of the propertied classes and their perpetual subjugation of the dispossessed classes and the developing countries are important components of capitalism.

> Political parties in Western Europe are agreed about one thing: the defence of privilege vis-à-vis the workers in their own countries, and the developing world globally. Multi-partysim is, therefore, a system allowing for the circulation and change of bourgeois-oriented leadership at periodic intervals[…]. The struggle for democratic order should be rightly linked to the establishment of socialism, which system is the one that can guarantee justice for the majority and not only the minority. Socialism is appealing because it provides the framework for confronting imperialism, and extending democracy beyond the elite, to the peasants and the workers (Ruboko, 1991: 124-125).

The quoted paragraph shifts the debate to inclusiveness and exclusiveness parameters of a political system. But importantly, liberal democracy is equated to domination and exploitation. This view may tempt one to think that the resistance of the Soviet Union, China and other countries in Asia, the Middle East and African countries to democracy is informed by the fact that democratisation may have a hidden agenda. This point is brought home by Crick when he correctly notes that democracy is an essentially contested term where scholars and philosophers have never all agreed to define it in the same way because the very definition carries a different social, moral or political agenda (Crick, 2002: 1).

The middle ground position in the debate negates the inherent correlations between either capitalism or socialism to democracy. It asserts that to argue that either of the ideologies is inherently linked to democracy is too simplistic and reductionist to be accepted as a basis for serious analysis (Olukoshi, 1998). This analysis was reinforced during the Cold War where various academic partisans took position depending on where their loyalties were. It should be noted that both capitalism and socialism were completely different projects from democracy. The first democracy in Greece, for example, was neither founded on a capitalist nor a socialist system. Similarly, it was observed that capitalism both at its early stages and to its later stages of monopoly phase displayed a capacity to produce highly repressive and anti-democratic political and administrative tendencies, including fascism in the period after the First World War. Just like capitalism, socialism either is not inherently democratic. The experience of socialist countries after the 1917 did not lead to democracy but rather amounted into increasing repressive systems to individual liberty (Olukoshi, 1998). It is along this logical conclusion that Fukuyama puts it clearly that:

The relationship between capitalism and democracy is an indirect one. That is, capitalism in itself does not generate direct pressures for democracy. It is perfectly compatible with many forms of authoritarianism (though obviously not with communist totalitarianism), and may even flourish better in non-democracies. But capitalism is a more efficient engine of economic growth than socialism, and thus is more likely to generate the rapid socioeconomic change that favours the emergence of stable democracy (Fukuyama, 1992: 108).

It is worth noting that although Fukuyama rejects an inherent causal correlation between capitalism and democracy, he is still encroached with an ideological mindset of capitalism. It is ridiculous to argue that capitalism is "perfectly compatible with many forms of authoritarianism and even flourish better in non-democracies" on the one hand and maintain an indirect relationship between capitalism and democracy on the other hand. Fukuyama seems to be uneasy with communism which he regards it to be totalitarianism. But he fails to understand that the non-democracies in which capitalism are compatible may also be classified as totalitarianism. And therefore his claimed indirect relationship is a probable suspect of what it may appear in reality. To short-circuit much of this debate, one may proceed to argue that democracy is possible in the absence of socialism just the same as without capitalism.

Economy
The third determinant is economy. The debate over the correlation, if any, between economic development and democracy is as old as the political theory itself (Olukoshi, 1998). There are two strands of arguments regarding the relationships between economy and democracy. The first and perhaps the oldest strand maintains that economy impacts positively on democracy. It posits that for democracy to happen and sustain, it must be preceded by economic development (growth), that is, "wealth determines democracy". One of the pioneering of this explanation is Lipset who argued that economic development leads into producing middle class that is necessary for democracy (Lipset, 1959). Recapitulating the same view, Huntington states that "Most poor societies will remain undemocratic so long as they remain poor. Economic development makes democracy possible; political leadership makes it real" (Huntington, 1991b: 316). Viewed from this perspective, the process of democratization seems to take place in a linear path whereby the previous stage determines the next upper one. Summarising this perspective, Przeworski and Limong

underscore what "modernization theorists" would argue in line with this chain of events:

> The basic assumption of this theory, in any of its versions, is that there is one general process of which democratization is but the final stage. Modernization consists of a gradual differentiation and specialization of social structures that culminates in a separation of political structures from other structures and makes democracy possible. The specific causal chains consist of sequences of industrialization, urbanization, education, communication, mobilization, and political incorporation, among innumerable others: a progressive accumulation of social changes that ready a society to proceed to its culmination, democratization (Przeworski and Limongi, 1997: 158).

To assume that democracy is an outcome of these strict causal relations is too fallacious. This leads to the second strand of argument which maintains that economy does not determine democracy to happen. For one thing, there are some authoritarian regimes which are not poor. To be sure, Przeworski and Limong posit that "[…] dictatorships flourished in Singapore, East Germany, Taiwan, USSR, Spain, Bulgaria, Argentina, and Mexico for many years after these countries enjoyed incomes above $5,000, which Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Netherlands, and Norway did not have by 1950" (Przeworski and Limongi, 1997: 159). Schimitter and Karl incline to this view when submitting that "Democracies are not necessarily more efficient economically than other forms of government. Their rates of aggregate growth, savings and investment may be no better than those of non-democracies" (Schimitter and Karl, 1996: 59). Similarly it was observed that there are countries in the Third World where democratization has taken place albeit in poor condition such as Botswana, Zambia, Benin, Ghana etc. In the final analysis this view sees the cause of democracy beyond the economic realm. It maintains that democracy is crafted by political actors. This is a strategic choice of actors to establish or not to establish democracy. In line with this perspective, Przeworski and Limong thus argue:

> The emergence of democracy is not a by-product of economic development. Democracy is or is not established by political actors pursuing their goals, and it can be initiated at any level of development. Only once it is established do economic constraints play a role: the chances for the survival of democracy are greater when the country is

richer. Yet even the current wealth of a country is not decisive: democracy is more likely to survive in a growing economy with less than $1,000 per capita income than in a country with an income between $1,000 and $2,000 that declines economically. If they succeed in generating development, democracies can survive even in the poorest nations (Przeworski and Limongi, 1997: 176-7).

The above position differentiates between two things; the emergence and the sustainability of democracy. The former does not depend on the economic factor but the latter can be facilitated in richer countries. Fukuyama reaffirms the political crafting thesis when he sums up:

> The choice of democracy must spring from the realm of politics and ideology – that is, from man's self-conscious effort to think through his situation in society and to devise rules and institutions that are in some manner in accordance with his underlying nature. The realm of politics therefore cannot be comprehensively explained according to the sub-political categories of economics or sociology (Fukuyama, 1992: 106).

To him, an autonomous political process is informed by political factors such as: The apparent success of democracy relative to its authoritarian competitors in other countries; the fortunes of war (and peace) in the international system; the skill and competence of the individual leaders who seek to create and consolidate democratic systems; and sheer accident. It is worth noting from this quotation that democracy emerges as man struggles against nature. True to this observation is what "the social contract" thesis of John Locke is all about whereby the state of nature and fear of death conditioned men to enter into a contract culminating to a democratic government. It may be raised for example, "What makes an election free and fair?" To this simple question it would be awkward for one to think of economic rather than political crafting by the actors. This would mean that if there is no political commitment by actors albeit in good economic condition, then democratization would be problematic. If this argument is held, the entire foundation of Huntington's Third Wave which he claimed to have been triggered off by the global economic growth is challenged.

External Forces
The fourth determinant of democracy is external forces. The debate over external forces normally revolves around two dimensions: The first one concerns the balancing force between the external and the domestic ones and

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basically questions which one is primary or secondary in bringing democratization. The second issue is on whether the external forces are purely motivated by democratic agenda rather than their own interests. In relation to the balancing force, the first argument contends that external forces to democratization are secondary (Huntington, 1991a; Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; Diamond, 1999; Pinkney, 2003; Brownlee, 2007). These literatures point out such forces to include: The influence by the United States of America (USA), the European Union (EU), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) as well as the United Nations (UN) etc. These forces play their roles in different forms depending on the nature of the country to be democratised. For example, they use aid conditionalities, economic sanctions, diplomacy, threats and in some cases military means. Most African countries which are poor were victims of aid conditionalities and economic sanctions. But it should be understood that in some instances the domestic forces were extremely weak to envisage democracy in which case the external ones became more important. It is against that background that some scholars came to argue that the external forces in those cases were primary. Barry Munslow and Tom Young quoted in Bratton and van de Walle view that the external forces were primary (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). The effect of external driven democracy was a mixed outcome. Bratton and van de Walle for example note that "[…] of 25 cases of official political conditionality in Africa, only 8 ended in democratic transition, with the remaining 17 cases falling short: 8 became blocked, 7 were flawed and 2 never got underway. In short, donor-driven transitions were problematic and led to ambiguous outcome" (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997: 219). To be frank, the dominant view today is that the movement for democracy in most cases was initiated by the domestic rather than external forces. As a whole, however, both internal and external forces jointly instigated the democratic movement.

The second issue is whether the external forces are purely motivated by the democratic agenda or otherwise. It should be noted, one common feature of the aforementioned forces is that they are rooted in the capitalist social economic formations. It is this fact which makes most observers to be sceptical to the entire democratization move by the external forces. And worse still, these forces in some cases play a double-standard role to democratization in order to pursue their own interests. Friedman argues that:

> Too much is hidden and misdescribed by the notion of a third wave of democracy […]. In the Cold War era, Washington supported numerous authoritarian regimes, from fascist Spain to apartheid South Africa to

single-party policy states such as Chiang Kai-shek's regime on Taiwan. America backed friendly authoritarian governments in order to check Soviet Power […] During the Cold War the United States supported the overthrow of democratically elected governments in Iran in 1953, in Guatemala in 1954 and in Chile in 1973 (Friedman, 2008: 173).

Consistent with this observation, Brownlee shows how the Paris Club and the USA for example relieved Egyptian authoritarianism of billions of debts just because it assisted them in the Gulf War (Brownlee, 2007). Surprisingly the same powers have sanctioned Zimbabwe of its authoritarianism. But it is striking to note that in Zimbabwe there is greatest interest of UK over the land issue (Makulilo, 2009). The questions here would be: Which interests are dominant: Democracy or the land issue? In similar terms, the military invasion of USA in Iraq is also telling. Initially, it was said that the invasion was motivated by the weapons of mass destruction which were not found and later on the justification shifted to democracy (Plattner, 2009). The study of organisation theory reminds us that for any organisation there is no goal specificity as claimed by rational theorists. Goals are always multiple and competing (Scott, 1992). Thus, it is worth asking: Was the US invasion of Iraq a part of project of containing the expansionism of Islamists after the collapse of Communism? Or, if Iraq is one of the rich oil producing countries can't one argue that USA is after such scarce resource in the world? Or, if war is considered one of the "profitable" project can't it be argued that the invasion was motivated by the quest to sell armaments, "food, cloth, medication aid" to the displaced and projects to rebuild the country after the war and therefore creating employment opportunities to its nationals? A serious analysis should provide multiple motives and expose which are the dominant or hidden agenda and why. Huntington, one of the leading scholars and supporters of militarizing the Middle East region seems to set aside these reflective questions (Huntington, 1991a). But Pinkney cautions that:

> Global businesses may have no specific ideological preferences between democracy and authoritarianism, and may even prefer a sustainable democratic regime to an authoritarian one that is losing its capacity to rule in the face of popular resistance or internal intrigue. However, businesses want a return on their investment, low prices for their raw materials, and a minimum of competition from countries building up competing industries. This may lead them, and the Western governments over which they have influence, to support the

> suppression of democracy if there is a prospect of people electing a government that threatens their interests (Pinkney, 2003: 37).

The above quotation is instructive. For one thing, one of the weaknesses of the literature on democratization today is to ignore to discuss other factors which may be behind the democratization agenda. The external forces are taken and treated for granted as being purely motivated by democracy and not something else. The industrialization of China for example, may partly explain why the tension between China and USA on democracy is still inconclusive. China provides a significant threat not only to the Americas businesses but also to most of the Western countries. Similarly, to treat USA as the sole guardian of democracy in the world and its absence as endangering world's peace and security is also parochial. Every nation wants security. It must be noted that USA alone has no resources and military capacity to democratize the whole world.

Conclusion

The pre-condition perspective of democracy seems to lose its explanatory power. Democracy should not be taken as something which happens if and only if certain conditions exist. This article has engaged the pre-conditions for democracy only to find out that democracy is happening in some countries irrespective of the non-existence of the so called "pre-conditions". In that case, it is imperative to understand democracy by bringing on board the role of agency in shaping circumstances of the day.

Notes

1. Almond and Verba define political culture as attitudes toward the political system and its various parts, and attitudes toward the role of the self in the system. Three types of political cultures are identified: (a) *Parochial political culture* exists in tribal or traditional societies where political system is not fully differentiated from the social-economic system; (b) *Subject political culture* in which there is a high frequency of orientations toward a differentiated political system and toward the output aspects of the system. Subject political cultures are passive because orientations toward self (as participant) and input processes (or politics) are weak. Subject political cultures exist where, for historical and other reasons, the majority of the people do not make the explicit use of political institutions in an attempt to influence government policies. Generally, subject political cultures tend to emphasize obedience and obligations over competence and rights; (c) *Participant political cultures* in which members of the society tend to be

explicitly oriented to the system as a whole and to both the political (input/upward flow) and administrative (output/downward flow) structures and processes. Participant political cultures stress both rights and obligations, political competence and obedience, See Almond, Gabriel A. and Verba, Sydney. 1963. *The Civil Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

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