



Contextualizing Plato's Critique of Athenian Democracy vis-à-vis the Nigerian Democratic Experience

ADIDI, Dokpesi Timothy, Ph.D
Department of Philosophy,
Veritas University
(The Catholic University of Nigeria) Abuja.
Email: adidit@veritas.edu.ng

and

Dr. Anthony O. Azuwiki
Faculty of Law
Veritas University
(The Catholic University of Nigeria) Abuja
Email: azuwikea@veritas.edu.ng

Abstract

Plato's critique of democracy has been widely interpreted as a rejection of democratic principles. However, a closer examination of Plato reveals a different perspective. Plato's concerns about democracy centered on mob rule, lack of expertise, and corruption. He believed that democratic leaders often prioritized short-term gains and popularity over long-term vision and justice. However, this critique was not aimed at dismissing democratic principles but rather at highlighting the need for a more informed and virtuous form of governance. Plato's ideal system of government, as outlined in *The Republic*, incorporates elements of democracy, such as equality, participation, and accountability. His concept of the philosopher-king, who rules based on reason and justice, can be equated to a democratic leader who prioritizes the common good. This paper argues that Plato's criticisms of democracy were primarily directed at the specific form of democracy practiced in ancient Athens, rather than a rejection of democracy itself. It challenges the common interpretation of Plato as an anti-democratic thinker and presents a purer understanding of his critique of democracy. By examining Plato's works in their historical and philosophical contexts, we gain a deeper understanding of his thoughts on governance and democracy. Drawing from Plato's criticism of democracy, this paper also critiques the Nigerian democracy, which faces numerous challenges, including corruption, insecurity, and economic instability. It explores the relevance of Plato's critique of democracy to Nigeria's democratic experience and argues that Plato's critique of democracy offers

valuable insights into how the Nigerian democracy can be better formulated. It adopts a qualitative research approach with philosophical analysis, while its findings suggest that Plato's critique of democracy remains relevant to the purification of modern-day democracies.

Keywords: Plato, democracy, Nigeria, common good, elections, mob rule, philosopher kings.

Introduction

Post-colonialism has so many expectations in redefining Africa's pathway to political success and economic restoration (Asante, 2020; Mungai, 2015; Okafor, 1998). Thus, since independence in 1960, Nigeria has been on a difficult and turbulent journey of democratic experience. This is because, like most African transition states, the country has had a lengthy history of military takeovers and interventions in its quest for political and democratic evolution post-independence. These events have resulted in conflict, instability, and the undermining of democratic institutions responsible for the strengthening and consolidation of democracy (Jatau & Maza, 2023). This has essentially impacted the establishment and solidification of an ideal political culture. And for Azuwiki (2023), "Whereas African nations aspire to develop most aspects of their nations' leadership along democratic lines, democracy remains an ideal yet to be firmly grasped, interiorized, and/or incarnated within the African socio-cultural consciousness."

Democratic institutions in Africa today are under intense threat because a critical appraisal of democracy as a system of government appears not to be yielding the desired fruits of good governance. Scholars often perceive democratic theories and institutions to be of Western origins (Spellman, 2017; Wilson, 1937); hence, scholars who believe democracy is of Western origins are beginning to probe and explore the possibility of abandoning Western democracy due to its undue influence on the African political space (Nehru, 1979). This is consequent upon the failure of democracy in meeting African socio-political and ideological expectations and the realization of good governance, which raises critical questions on the nature of democracy, its origin, and what constitutes democracy. For instance, assessing the pros and cons of Nigeria's democratic experience remains an ambivalent exercise, let alone evaluating the unfolding democratic culture, its maturity, and its gains (Azuwiki, 2023). Democracy itself is not a Western invention; rather, it is an ontological reality to human beings as the foundation for democratic rule (Kanu, Adidi, & Omenukwa, 2024). It evolves as an organic process of self-actualization and has no boundaries. Democracy, therefore, is neither a Western nor an African ideology (Obiagwu & Adidi, 2020) but strikes at the political nature of the human person.

Plato's critique of the Athenian democracy has been emphasised to the detriment of elevating democracy above every other system of government. Mukherjee & Ramaswamy (2011) argue that

The *Republic* was an indictment of the Athenian way of life and its vibrant participatory democratic institutions. Plato dismissed the Athenian practice of happy versatility, whereby every Greek male adult could participate in the political process and offer a political opinion, as amateurism. He attacked democracy for another reason: incompetence

and ignorance of politicians, for that gave rise to factionalism, extreme violence, and partisan politics, which were the causes of political instability.

When brought to bear on the African experience of democracy, the danger is to begin to reconsider military rule as the best option in Africa. This is obvious in the various military coups that have taken place in African countries over time due to the perceived failure of democracy in those countries. The temptation is for leaders to embrace monarchy or autocratic rule, using Plato's critique of democracy as a justification. It is our considered view that Plato was not anti-democracy in its pure form; he was only critical of democracy as practiced in Athens, and the Athenian form of democracy is not a model for African democracy.

For Azuwike (2023), "in the bid to arrive at the human developmental promises of democracy, multiple nations have since embraced democracy, including African nations to whom the idea, in its classical form, was in large part, alien." To this end, democracy has become a necessary condition for restoring political stability and entrenching the rule of law (Otegwu & Maina, 2024). Every country in its political culture has encountered problems in practicing democracy, and Nigeria (like some other African countries) is not an exception. This does not, however, undermine democracy in its pure form, but employing Plato's critique of Athenian democracy, this paper exposes the problems of Nigerian democracy and underscores democracy as the form of government that has the best promise of authentically driving the principles of the rule of law in Nigerian democratic institutions. This raises the following research question: Is something wrong with democracy in its pure form? What exactly is wrong with the practice of democracy in Nigeria? To what extent can Plato's view of democracy reshape Nigerian democracy? Drawing from Plato's criticism of democracy, this paper critiques the Nigerian democracy, which faces numerous challenges, including corruption, insecurity, and economic instability. It explores the relevance of Plato's critique of democracy to Nigeria's democratic experience and argues that Plato's critique of democracy offers valuable insights into how the Nigerian democracy can be better formulated. It adopts a qualitative research approach with philosophical analysis, while its findings suggest that Plato's critique of democracy remains relevant to the purification of modern-day democracies.

Biographical Sketch of Plato

Plato's background cannot be extricated from the political situation of his time. Plato's concern for politics was basically due to the fact of his parental connection with the Athenian politics of his time. He was born in Athens around 428 or 427 B.C. into an aristocratic family and was a disciple of Socrates. He was a prominent Greek philosopher, known for his theories on the nature of reality. Plato's concern for ethical issues is strongly connected to his political philosophy. As such, political philosophy was also a major concern in Plato's works (Lawhead, 2002). Plato was an ancient Greek philosopher and was also a teacher of Aristotle and the founder of the *Academy*, which was a famous school in ancient Athens founded around 387 B.C. The Academy was located on the outskirts of Athens, on land that was originally a sacred grove. It is considered the world's first university and played a crucial role in shaping Western philosophy and education.

Plato's works are known to be classical, and his philosophical thought has evolved and influenced many scholars from antiquity to contemporary times. According to Adidi and Abiona (2025),

The penetrating value and vitality of the influence of Plato's epistemic enterprise cannot be taken for granted due to its enriching traits and characteristics from ancient to contemporary epochs of philosophical and historical development. Plato's thought has sharpened and is still sharpening the value of human knowledge despite its ancient flavor that is classical, going through the Middle Ages, reverberating the Augustinian tradition, penetrating the modern era, at the same time reinvigorating contemporary times.

Plato's real name was Aristocles, which meant the "best and renowned" (Mukherjee & Ramaswamy, 2011). He was given the nickname "Plato," derived from *platys*, because of his broad and strong shoulders. The son of Ariston (his father) and Perictione (his mother). Plato was born in the year after the death of the great Athenian statesman *Pericles*. His brothers, Glaucon and Adeimantus, are portrayed as interlocutors in Plato's masterpiece, *The Republic*, and his half-brother, Antiphon, figures in the *Parmenides*. Plato's family was aristocratic and distinguished; his father's side claimed descent from the god *Poseidon*, and his mother's side was related to the lawgiver *Solon* (c. 630/560 B.C.). His mother's close relatives, *Critias* and *Charmides*, were among the *Thirty Tyrants* who seized power in Athens and ruled briefly until the restoration of democracy in 403. Plato died in 347 B.C.

The Ontological Nature of African Democracy

The origin of democracy is one that scholars have debated in socio-political philosophy and in the history of political thought. Nonetheless, scholars have taken it for granted to establish that democracy began in ancient Greece (Udebunu, 2009), specifically in Athens, in the 6th century B.C. (Heywood, 2002). We underscore the origin of the concept "democracy" as it emanates from Athens as a nomenclature, but not as regards the nature of democracy. This is because the nature of democracy and its origin are two different concepts. To insist that democracy originated from Athens is to say that the concept of democracy and its nature are of Athens. Therefore, other political cultures do not have democratic traces or characteristics in their geographical extraction. In Africa, the concept of democracy may not have been described in Athenian nomenclature or etymological definition, but that does not mean that Africans lack the language that subscribes to the nature of democracy. It is very possible to say that classical democracy began in Athens because of its gazette as a reference document that sets itself as a political model or political theory. This does not necessarily mean that democracy as a system of government began or originated in Athens, but rather that the Athenian society is only a reference point for documenting and developing it as a model for other democracies.

In Kenya, the term *njamayaitwika* (Kenyatta, 2007) forms the foundation of democratic rule, which has its origin in a revolution that took place before colonial rule, according to the Kikuyu tribal legend (Kenyatta, 2007). The *njamayaitwika* is known as *itwika*, derived from the word

twika (Kenyatta, 2007), which means to break away from autocracy to democracy (Kenyatta, 2007), underscoring the originality of the democratic concept in Africa. Thus, to consider African democracy as an offshoot of colonial rule (Ihuah, 2025) undermines the originality of democracy in Africa. It is appropriate to say, therefore, that given the colonial administrative intervention, African democracy became polluted with the tainted nature of Western democracy. Ikechukwu Okodo (2009) laments this tainted political system of democracy when he asserts that “when Europeans came to Africa, they did not see the kind of government obtainable in their home states in Africa, and so, they felt that Africans had no system of managing their state. Nothing is further from the truth. They, nonetheless, conquered Africa in bits as they fought their way through. According to Okodo (2009), “the Igbo people of Nigeria are well known for the practice of democratic principles in their traditional way of life. This is because issues are deliberated and agreed upon at meetings where everyone gets the chance to air their view before it is implemented. This was the case in all aspects of governance. The Igbo people's governance, although different from the modern world's system, was satisfactory insofar as it met their needs for the organization of the society. This underscores Kanu's ontological foundation of African democracy as rooted in Igwebuikocracy (Kanu, 2019). He argues that “Igwebuik is based on the African sense of community, which is the underlying principle and unity of the African philosophical experience...” This is founded on the Igwebuik philosophy. He states:

Igwebuik carries the idea of the purpose of having a nation the purpose of coming together. It is rooted in the ideology that when human beings come together in solidarity and complementarity, they are powerful or can constitute an insurmountable force or strength, and at this level, no task is beyond their collective capability. Without solidarity and complementarity, of what use is the nation? The nation must be one in which everyone participates in the construction and reconstruction of the political community. The people must agree that they are a nation in spite of differences and conflicts, and consent to build it because individual and corporate success depend on national success. For if a nation fails, its individuals fail as well.

This is akin to Kenyatta's theory of collectivism as drawn from two African traditions, which include political democracy and mutual responsibility (Kenyatta, 1965). Democracy as a concept, therefore, is not limited to the Athenian society, but can be traced to other societies in Africa as well.

Democracy operates like a spirited entity (Adidi & Irabor, 2019) that resides in the human person. One basic component of the human being is freedom. Freedom is the life, oxygen, and lungs that make democracy evolve into something new. It is this freedom that breathes life into the concept of “democracy”. This freedom is possessed by all human beings, which forms the foundation of human rights. These rights are natural and cannot be given or denied to the human person, and they are abused when freedom is not well utilized. Natural rights are fundamental, universal, and inalienable rights that all individuals possess simply by being human. They are not granted by governments or societies but are inherent and exist

independently of any culture or legal system. This aligns with the thoughts of classical philosophers like Thomas Hobbes, Jean Jacques Rousseau, John Locke, and others who are proponents of the natural rights theory in the modern era. Despite the ample literature from classical philosophers of natural rights, some philosophers disagree that natural rights are derived from a metaphysical foundation. However, some agree that this metaphysical foundation of natural rights and freedom forms the basis of the democratic culture that flows from human nature.

In his *Republic*, Plato was highly critical of democracy because of his view of it as a defective system capable of slipping into tyranny. He saw democracy as a stepping-stone to tyranny, as the instability and chaos it can create provide fertile ground for a powerful leader to seize control. This is because Plato believed that the emphasis on freedom and equality in democracies could easily be manipulated by charismatic characters by appealing to the masses' emotions and getting into power, which may lead to demagoguery and tyranny. He argued that these demagogues could manipulate the public into supporting their self-serving policies rather than the common good, eventually leading to tyranny.

Despite its apparent appeal, he thought that the "rule of the people" lacked the knowledge and experience needed to govern successfully, which ultimately resulted in societal decline. Like any other craft or profession, Plato maintained that governing requires specific knowledge and training. He wondered whether the "best" leaders are naturally chosen or if they need to be educated and trained to make wise choices. In his view, because democracies have leaders without proper skills or morals, it is highly improbable that the most qualified individuals will assume power.

Plato advocated for a system where the philosopher kings those with wisdom and virtue would become leaders, rather than the critical mass of people who are after their own selfish interests. Thus, for him, democracy, which allows anyone to participate in political decision-making, often results in the rule of the unqualified, rather than people of sound judgment (*Republic* Book II).

Democracy, in Plato's view, is typically regarded as a kind of mob rule, albeit in a very different kind of state. This view was influenced by Plato's distaste for the Sophists, who were the teachers of rhetoric to Athenian politicians who were adept at lying to deceive the people. So for Plato, the philosopher-kings are the ideal rulers. This is because they are not only the wisest, but they are also virtuous and selfless (*Republic*, Book II).

Plato and the Athenian Democracy: Context and Issues

The basis on which Plato criticized democracy is situated within the context of the fall of the Athenian society. The Athenian society was known for its political freedom, liberal political ideals, intellectual sagacity, and a humanistic approach to political life that was centered on capacity development and cultural creativity (Perry et al., 2013). Pericles (495-429 B.C.), who was then a central figure in Athenian life during the middle of the fifth century, underscores the freedom and liberty of the Athenian society as the "enormous amount of creative energy, making possible Athens' extraordinary cultural accomplishment" (Thucydides, 1954). This political development and accomplishment of the Athenian society was a threat to Sparta and the Peloponnesian states, which were under the control of Athens through the instrumentality

of the Delian League. The Delian League was a military alliance formed in ancient Greece in 478 B.C after the Persian wars. The league was named after the island of Delos, where its headquarters and treasury were located. The primary purpose of the Delian League was to counter Persian influence and protect the members of the Greek city-states from potential Persian attacks. This was to establish and assert that the Greek cities under Persian control were free. Lastly, the Delian League is to offer collective defense against external threats. This gave Athens political power and contributed to its economic prosperity (Perry et al., 2013).

Plato's work came to the limelight when Athens was in difficult political tension after the defeat in the Peloponnesian War. Plato was essentially from an aristocratic and conservative class and was averse to the democratic experiment, which reached its zenith during the time of Pericles (Mukherjee & Ramaswamy, 2011), though he was introduced to democratic ideas by his stepfather, Pyrilampas, a close friend of Pericles. Plato's justification for the rejection of the Athenian democracy was on the following grounds: (a) the crass materialism and individualism that was slowly engulfing the Athenian society; (b) the high level of corruption and degradation that existed amongst traders, artisans, merchants, and politicians; (c) his view of the system as being susceptible to demagogues who would exploit the populace for personal gain, rather than acting in the best interests of the city-state.

In fact, for Plato, the defeat of Athens was a result of the practice of democracy, though most scholars disagree and would rather argue that "the defeat of Athens in the war was due to an error in military strategy" (Mukherjee & Ramaswamy, 2011). According to Perry et al. (2013), what led to the defeat of Athens was

The Athenian expedition against Sicily and its largest city, Syracuse. Athenians were intoxicated by an imperialist urge to extend the empire in the west and by the prospects of riches. Swayed by speeches that stirred the emotions, the Athenian populace, believing disaster to be impossible and forsaking caution and reason, approved the Sicilian venture. Launched with extravagant expectations, the Sicilian expedition ended in dismal failure. Athens and its allies lost fifty thousand men and two hundred ships in the venture; the expedition also cost Athens all hope of victory in the struggle with Sparta. Fearful that victory in Sicily would increase Athenian manpower and wealth, Sparta in 414 B.C. had again taken up the sword. Strengthened by financial support from Persia and by the defection of some Athenian allies, Sparta moved to end the war. Finally, with its navy decimated and its food supply dwindling, besieged Athens surrendered in 404 B.C. Sparta dissolved the Delian League, left Athens with only a handful of ships, and forced the city to pull down its long walls ramparts designed to protect it against siege weapons. But the Spartans refused to massacre Athenian men and enslave the women and children, as some allies had urged.

To this end, the strong and revered political life of the Greeks was dismantled, and this led to Plato's recommendation of the restoration, revitalization, and reformation of the aristocratic society that would once again become the basis of civic life.

The Nigerian Democratic Culture and Its Problems

Democracy is not new to the traditional Nigerian culture. Traces of democracy have always been found within the Nigerian traditional system of governance, though the democratic political structure might not have been prevalent in a way that represents the classical democracy of the Athenian society. Although the Nigerian democracy is not documented as that of the classical philosophers, current hermeneutical investigation and contextual analysis of historical antecedents have opened the socio-political world of primordial Nigerian democratic political culture. According to Okodo (2009), the term “democracy” was not coined as the system of governance, but “Igbo traditional democracy had an essential component of the democratic establishment, like the judiciary.” He posits that the Igbo traditional judiciary

...settles disputes between two persons or groups. It also settles quarrels that involve the gods. One avenue of settling quarrels is to invite relatives to discuss disputes and apportion blame. Where the matter is not resolved within the family, the aggrieved party can seek redress at the meetings of the kindred or the village. That is what Chinua Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* refers to when others wonder why Uzowulu took the dispute between him and his in-law, who took away his (Uzowulu's) wife, to the masquerade court of *egwugwu*.

The above reflects the democratic and judicial system of settling disputes in the traditional Igbo culture. Unfortunately, the interruption occasioned by the evolution of the “modern” Nigerian democratic process destroyed the legislative, judiciary, and executive arms of the traditional political system. This interruption was due to the colonial administration, which impeded the development of the native political system (Okodo, 2009).

Post-colonial Nigerian democracy and the emerging definition and nature of African democracy within the context of Nigeria face serious challenges. According to Odife (2009), “the (modern) Nigerian democratic experience has been a torturous and checkered one.” This is because of the military interventions in governance and the instances of people with strong military backgrounds ruling Nigeria for a greater portion of its years as a democracy, a phenomenon that has profoundly influenced democratic culture. The Nigerian democracy thus raises fundamental questions regarding the practical application and relevance of its intra-national democracy. The ambivalence around the African democratic experience has brought about the resurgence of military coups and counter coups in Africa. According to Matthew Hassan Kukah (2009),

For almost fifty years of Nigeria's independence, the country has been a victim of the strong-armed tactics of the military for almost thirty years. Years and years of coups and counter-coups turned governance into a blood-drenched struggle for power. Each coup created new friends and found old enemies among the populace, but even more so among the political classes. Coups that followed elections in Nigeria were often greeted by the opposition with ecstasy. This further deepened resentment and division within the political class because every regime was keen on

creating its political proxies with which it could share power. The cumulative impact of all this has been the erosion of ideology and the elimination of any broad-based platform for contest in Nigerian politics.

These incessant coups have affected the Nigerian democratic process and growth, and Nigeria still battles with military hangovers of political administration. Similarly, the legislative arm of government, which is supposed to uphold democratic values and dignity, has shortchanged its oversight functions for personal interest. Kukah (2009) puts this succinctly:

Sadly, today, the national and state assemblies command very little respect in the popular imagination of most Nigerians. There is a feeling that members are putting personal interests, business, and politics way ahead of lawmaking. And many of them are also ill-equipped for the intricate task of lawmaking. For example, after ten years, we are still stuck with a constitution that has not been reviewed or amended despite a lot of grandstanding.

The fundamental challenge is to understand the role of the National Assembly in entrenching democracy in Nigeria. How robust are the arguments and debates in the National Assembly? Democracy is about arguments and debates, but unfortunately, what currently exists is what most have described as a “rubber-stamp” National Assembly whose oversight functions are devoid of critical values of democratic resilience in interrogating and analyzing issues to deliver democratic dividends and good governance.

According to Oguejiofor (2009),

The level of corruption in Nigeria has reached such an alarming state that if it persists at that level, it is well-nigh impossible to obtain functional democracy in the country. Our ten years of democracy have witnessed elections where paid party representatives of small parties take money to sign on to bogus election results against their very own parties. We have seen several situations where elections never took place at all in whole states, and still governors were “elected” and their elections confirmed by courts of law and litigation.

This situation has aggravated to an abysmal level, and the judiciary is infiltrated with the same corruption to the point that “corrupt governments are common and create a severe developmental challenge for Nigeria and most African states. It has undermined the normal functioning of national social, economic, and political systems. This effectively undermines good governance, endangers democracy, and erodes the social and moral fabric of a nation” (Audu, 2009).

Another threat to Nigerian democratic growth is political authoritarianism (Audu, 2009). It is a political system that rejects political pluralism, uses a powerful central government to maintain the status quo, and diminishes democracy, the rule of law, civil freedoms, and the separation of powers (Kalu, 2019). In a broader sense, authoritarian nations are those in which the government and opposition do not switch positions at least once after free elections, or in which human rights like freedom of religion are not upheld (Svolik, 2012). The Nigerian state

today reflects the phenomenon of political parties dwindling towards a one-party state. According to Svolik (2012), nominally democratic institutions like political parties, legislatures, and elections may exist in authoritarian nations, and they are controlled to strengthen the authoritarian grip, which may include rigged or uncompetitive elections. In Nigeria, this authoritarian nature of governance has led to human rights abuses since the reemergence of democracy in 1999 (Omoleke, 2024). These human rights abuses include extrajudicial executions, excessive use of force by security forces, the abuse of office by government officials without any consequences, arbitrary arrests, and arrests without trial (Onwuazombe, 2017). This is a gross violation of the rule of law, which is a basic principle of democracy.

The “rule of law” and “constitutionalism” are closely related concepts that both aim to limit government power and ensure a fair and just society, and are vital for the creation of just and stable societies. The rule of law is a fundamental tenet of a functioning democracy, which states that everyone is subject to the law, including public servants and law enforcement agents. Conversely, constitutionalism is the belief that the constitution, which is the grundnorm, limits the authority of the government. These values are essential for upholding accountability, advancing good governance, and defending human rights. Yet, these important aspects of the democratic process seem inadequate, especially as the judiciary and legislative arms of government either pale or capitulate to the authoritarian hegemony.

The mixture of democratic politics and religion has historically proven to be a recipe for complex political waters. Religious fanaticism only makes matters worse and is a serious threat to the nascent Nigerian democracy. Religion, for some, is supposed to uphold democracy. However, the misapplication of religion has become problematic rather than strengthening its evolving network. Despite Nigeria's constitutional postulation designating it as a secular state, religion has a big influence on politics, influencing social cohesion, legislation, and governance. Religion frequently influences political debates and rhetoric, especially when deciding the place of Sharia law in a constitutional democracy, considering the constitution's position on the establishment of a state religion (Jatau & Maza, 2023). The significant religious divide, mostly between Christians and Muslims, has been a defining feature of Nigeria's democratic experiment (Njoku & Njoku, 2013; Hassan & Umar, 2014; Atoi & Babale, 2021). Unfortunately, religious differences, which are supposed to diversify democratic culture, have affected democratic rationality, political morality (Kanu, Ogabo & Adidi, 2020), and democratic sensibility. These dynamics have led to complex interactions between faith and political power, sometimes resulting in conflict and sometimes in accommodation.

Money, politics, and corruption are other factors that threaten the realization of the democratic promise in Nigeria. The term “money politics” describes the use of cash and other inducements, like food and material items, to sway voters both during campaigns and on election day. In essence, it is the buying and selling of votes whereby material or monetary incentives, rather than the electorate's political views, ideas, or philosophies, influence their electoral choices (Awopeju & Martins, 2022). Vote buying can take various forms, such as a monetary exchange, as well as an exchange for necessary goods or services. Although this is not only a Nigerian phenomenon, its prevalence also cannot be underestimated in the country's electoral exercise. Thus, vote buying affects the fabric of a democratic culture and impedes human freedom (Stokes, 2005) and the right to rationally choose their leaders; and because it

tampers with the ability to use a popular vote as a gauge of public support for proposed government policies, vote buying threatens democracy itself in democratic regimes.

Economic sustainability has a role to play in enhancing African democratic culture. As such, there is a correlation between a weak economy and vote buying. The viability and sustainability of an economy can reduce vote buying and other electoral malpractices that can impede the democratic culture, processes, and evolution (Faye & Nzally, 2022). Nigeria's economy is showing conflicting signs. Even while there are encouraging indicators like faster GDP growth and higher investor confidence, problems like high unemployment, inflation, and insecurity still exist (Udi, 2024). The economy is expected to grow, but more slowly than in prior years. To this end, insofar as the Nigerian economy continues to dwindle, the democratic culture suffers setbacks in realizing its potential. Thus, institutions and procedures of democracy can be seriously threatened by a weak economy. Economic volatility within a democracy can cause political instability, social unrest, and a reduction in public confidence. Similarly, economic inequality undermines social cohesiveness and political division, ills triggered by economic downturns, which makes it more difficult to uphold democratic principles.

Due to the nature of political authoritarianism and its autocratic nature, there is a tendency to have a one-party state in Africa, made possible by the power of incumbency, which underscores the advantage that an individual or party in an elected office (the incumbent) enjoys over their rivals during an election. These advantages accrue from existing ties, name recognition, and access to both official and unofficial resources.

The idea of a one-party system is inherently antithetical to democracy. Multiple political parties must freely and openly participate in the democratic process to foster competition, free choice, and accountability. These aspects of democracy are naturally constrained in a one-party system, in which only one party is permitted by law or by convention (Irabor & Adidi, 2019). These realities lend themselves to the criticism of Nigeria's democracy, akin to the reasons that prompted Thomas Aquinas's critique of the Athenian democracy.

Liberal Democracy and the Imperative of Separation of Powers

Liberal democracy is a form of government and, at the same time, a political philosophy that highlights a system of checks and balances between the several institutions of government, an independent judiciary, and the separation of powers. Liberal democracies are characterized by multi-party systems with at least two enduring, successful political parties. According to Adidi (2023), "It is the accommodation of so many political parties, and these usually exist side by side in a genuine democracy." Liberal democracy may not necessarily be an African-style democracy, but the liberal democracy of Baron de Montesquieu, one of the great political philosophers of the Enlightenment age, along with Thomas Aquinas' mixed democracy, can serve as possible models for emerging from the challenges faced by African democracy as it strives towards political emancipation. These social and political thinkers provide models for recognizing the basic tenets of democracy characterized by elections between multiple political parties, the separation of powers into different branches of government, the rule of law in everyday life as part of an open society, a market economy with private property, and the equal protection of human rights and civil rights, civil liberties, and the political freedom of all peoples (Oreoluwa, 2015).

In *The Spirit of the Laws*(SL), Montesquieu sought to elucidate social structures and human rules. This may seem like an impossible task: positive laws and social institutions are made by imperfect humans who are “subject to ignorance and error [and] hurried away by a thousand impetuous passions”(SL 1.1), in contrast to physical laws, which Montesquieu believed were established and maintained by God. Hence, to leave issues of governance to a selected few without checking them, the use of power can lead to the destruction of society (tyranny as imagined by Plato).The saying “Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely” means that when a person or a group of persons has unchecked power, they are more likely to abuse it, leading to negative consequences. Hence, in a democracy, the people are sovereign. They may govern through ministers or be advised by a senate, but they must have the power of choosing their ministers and senators for themselves, just as Plato posited in his *Republic*.

The principle of democracy is political virtue, by which Montesquieu means “the love of the laws and our country”(SL 4.5). Characteristics and attitudes deemed necessary for good citizenship and efficient governance within a political society are referred to as political virtues. It includes a variety of attributes that allow people to uphold the values of justice and equity, advance the common good, and engage in public life in a responsible manner (Crick, 1982).According to Montesquieu, certain arrangements make it easier for the three powers to check one another, and only the legislative branch should be able to impose taxes, because it may then deny the executive branch funds if it tries to impose its will without cause. Similarly, the legislature should consist of two houses, each of which has the authority to block acts of the other from becoming law, and the executive branch should have the power to veto legislative actions. People should “fear the office, but not the magistrate,” and “the judicial power, so terrible to mankind, ... becomes, as it were, invisible” if the judiciary is free from both the legislative and executive branches and limited to applying the law to specific cases in a set and consistent way(SL 11.6). In this regard, the rule of law becomes very vital.

Montesquieu was a fervent supporter of the rule of law, arguing that it is essential for preserving individual liberty and restraining political power. In his view, a government ought to be bound by established, well-known laws rather than capricious rulings by the ruling class. This idea seeks to stop the concentration and misuse of power, as does his notion of the separation of powers. Considering this, Chidi (2020) argues:

The rule of law is the building block on which the modern democratic society is founded. For a successful functioning of the polity, there must be enforcement of law and of all contracts based on law. One of the prime objects of making laws is to maintain law and order in society and develop a peaceful environment for the progress of the people. The rule of law means that the law is supreme and is above every individual. No individual, whether he is rich, poor, ruler, or ruled, etc.,is above the law, and they should obey the law.

According to Adetokunbo (1961), the Rule of Law has its roots even in African origin. He posits:

The rule of law is not a Western idea, nor is it linked up with any economic or social system. As soon as you accept that man is governed by law and

not by the whims of man, it is the rule of law. It may be under different forms from country to country, but it is based on principles; it is not an abstract notion. It exists not only in democratic countries but in every country where the law is supreme, where the dignity of man is respected, and provision is made for his legislative rights. Today, around us, we see countries where basic principles are disregarded, where there are arbitrary arrests and detention without trial; cases of the repression of the opposition in parliamentary government; cases of the negation of social and political rights; and cases of the judiciary stifled and paralyzed by fear and the dismissal of judges. When we look around, we find some of these encroachments of the Executive on the rights of the individuals... in countries ostensibly practicing democracy, but in fact, the individual is subject to such restrictions that deprive him almost completely of his freedom.

The value of democracy is not so much in structures as in the institutionalization of law. The court must be free to carry out its role as the spokesperson for the laws without getting sidetracked by new rulings that lawmakers and policymakers make while deliberating. Most importantly, freedom and equality are necessary ingredients for achieving democratic consolidation in Africa (Doomen, 2014).

Critical Evaluation:

It is generally believed today that democracy, "government of the people by the people and for the people," is the best and only fully justifiable political system. Doubts as to this postulation have been raised regarding African democracy in particular owing to the less than desirable experiences of some African democratic dispensations. However, some of these Achilles' heels of democracy are not new.

In the *Republic*, Plato criticized the direct and unchecked democracy of his time precisely because of its leading features (557a-564a). Firstly, although freedom is for Plato a true value, democracy involves the danger of excessive freedom, of doing as one likes, which leads to anarchy. Secondly, equality, related to the belief that everyone has the right and equal capacity to rule, brings to politics all kinds of power-seeking individuals, motivated by personal gain rather than public good. Democracy is thus highly corruptible. It opens gates to demagogues and potential dictators and can thus lead to tyranny. Hence, although it may not be applicable to modern liberal democracies, Plato's main charge against the democracy he knew from the ancient Greek political practice is that it is unstable, leading from anarchy to tyranny, and that it may lack leaders with proper skill and morals. For Plato, democracy depends on chance and must be mixed with competent leadership (501b). Thus, without able and virtuous leaders, such as Solon or Pericles, who come and go by chance, it is not a good form of government. But even Pericles, who, as Socrates says, made people "wilder" rather than more virtuous, is considered not to be the best leader (*Gorgias*, 516c). If ruling a state is a craft, indeed statecraft, Plato argues, then politics needs expert rulers, and they cannot come to it merely by accident but must be carefully selected and prepared in the course of extensive training. Making political decisions requires good judgment. Politics needs competence, at least in the form of

civil servants. Who then should the experts be, and why? Plato, in the *Republic*, thinks that the wheels of the state should be handed to philosophers whom he called the Philosopher Kings.

The vision of the ideal state is used rather to illustrate the main thesis of the dialogue that justice, understood traditionally as virtue and related to goodness, is the foundation of a good political order, and as such is in everyone's interest. Justice, if rightly understood, Plato argues, is not to the exclusive advantage of any of the city's factions but is concerned with the common good of the whole political community and is to the advantage of everyone. It provides the city with a sense of unity and thus is a basic condition for its health. "Injustice causes civil war, hatred, and fighting, while justice brings friendship and a sense of common purpose" (351d). Thus, the best political order for Plato is that which promotes social peace in the environment of cooperation and friendship among different social groups, each benefitting from and each adding to the common good. Plato, therefore, argues in the *Republic* that the best form of government is a philosophical aristocracy or monarchy a traditional polity: the mixed or composite constitution that reconciles different partisan interests and includes aristocratic, oligarchic, and democratic elements. This is because a perfect system would incorporate the positive elements in the other forms of government for the sake of the common good of those governed and to ensure social peace and stability.

Thomas Aquinas refers to "peace" as the aim of the ideal political life. "Peace is cross-categorical, because it is both the natural goal of society as well as a fruit of the Holy Spirit, a supernatural gift. ...peace in both cases is a special kind of harmony that results from order" (Thomas Aquinas, *De Regno*, c. 3, n. 17). Peace goes beyond mere absence of conflict and is envisioned as a "moral unity" of all citizens in unified pursuit of the same goals. It is as a "moral unity" of all citizens working toward the same objectives, and it goes beyond simply the absence of conflict. Essentially, Plato's focus on popular participation, mixed government, and the common good prepared the way for later advancements in democratic thought. He considers it as "the best form of government since there is one at the head of all. It is aristocracy insofar as a number of persons are set in authority, and it is democracy, i.e., government by the people, insofar as the rulers can be chosen from the people, and the people have the right to choose their rulers" (This is echoed by Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologiae*, I II, q. 150, a. 1).

From the above, it is obvious that Plato would be no less critical of democracy as currently practiced in Nigeria. One would expect that with over a quarter of a century since the return of democracy to the Nigerian political system, democracy would have matured to a reasonable extent. Sadly, the hooliganism, electoral fraud, ballot stuffing, and ballot snatching that first characterized the electoral process from the beginning have only degenerated to a more bizarre dimension. Today, the cankerworms of tribalism and ethnic bigotry have joined the other electoral ills as witnessed in the 2023 general elections and other elections after that, to the extent that citizens of a certain extraction of the country residing in other parts of the country are tactically disenfranchised by either the denial of voter cards by making it impossible for them to register or the destruction of their cards even after they were produced. Those able to show up for voting, armed with their voter cards, are disenfranchised either by the non-arrival of electoral officers, voting materials, or both or by trumped-up excuses of the non-

functionality of the accreditation machines. In some polling units, the same group of people are harassed, beaten, wounded, and prevented from voting. This has become a recurrent decimal in Nigerian elections under a democratic system that should grow towards perfection rather than disintegrate to anarchy.

The above scenario completely negates the Platonian idea of representative democracy, where the people must participate in the electoral process by having a say in who leads them. Today, elections in Nigeria are nothing but a sham and merely a "selection" of the leaders by the powerful oligarchy constituted of the political class, who have become the biggest enemies of the masses. These powerful figures sit down and pre-decide who would become the president, governor, senator, assemblyman, councilor, and occupants of every available office. On election day, therefore, whatever the people come out to do by way of voting becomes a waste of time and an exercise in futility. This is not democracy. Democracy should never be used to legitimize all kinds of illegitimacies, either by the dictatorship of the proletariat or the oligarchy backed by the judiciary. In history whenever this has happened, it was met by a severe backlash (see Azuwike 2023).

Plato's view is that the people's participation and choice of their leaders is an avenue for peace. The sham elections organised in Nigeria explain the reason why she qualifies today as a "restless nation," borrowing the title of Adiseshiah and Pearson's book. This is because peace is not achievable in a system where the will of the people is truncated and ignored for the most part. Peace, as "the tranquility of order," is only possible where good order is maintained rather than the near anarchic situation in which the race for political positions is conducted.

Justice is a necessary condition for social peace. In this circumstance, can justice be said to undergird the democratic process? According to Dionysius (Div. Nom. iv), "Peace is the 'work of justice' indirectly, insofar as justice removes the obstacles to peace." The chaos, violence, and injustice that have trailed the electoral process have ensured that Nigeria remains a "restless nation" devoid of peace at every level. Unfortunately, the judiciary, which should be 'the last hope of the common man' and the last guard in democracy's line of defence, has also capitulated to the hegemony of corruption, ethnicity, and the political genocide currently crippling the nation. Baron De Montesquieu's separation of powers has been collapsed into a monolithic system under the executive in which the legislature is only a rubber stamp arm and the judiciary, a puppet simply doing the executive's bidding. What is the remedy in such a scenario? Could this be the reason why a philosopher like Aquinas argued that the best regime is not a democracy but a mixed constitution, which looks "something like a constitutional monarchy," akin to Plato's postulations? One may be tempted to conclude that modern-day democracy may not, after all, be the best form of government and rather advocate with Plato for an inclusive democracy, which is a type of government that comprises the positive features of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy itself a system in which one is bestowed with the power to preside over the rest of the citizens and others with governing powers under him as subordinates. In this system, government is shared by all due to everyone's eligibility to govern and because everyone participates in the process of choosing those who rule.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, African democracy is still an evolving phenomenon. This is with specific reference to the Nigerian democracy that is constantly under siege due to its unpatriotic political actors a situation that constantly disappoints the hope that Nigeria's democracy could be a viable option for laying the foundations of an enduring African democratic culture. Nonetheless, Plato's critique of democracy provides a contextualized alternative in the current circumstances as an ideological framework for the renewal of African democracy, especially given the fact that Africa is familiar with the monarchical system of government and other systems that present positive elements that cannot be drowned altogether by modern-day democracy, especially as practiced in Nigeria. We underscore the truth that every political order has its challenges within its operational process. Thus, no matter the shortcomings of democracy, liberal democracy still holds relevance, political vitality, and a potential for both cultural and social amplification. However, given that African democracy still leaves much to be desired, there is an urgent need for a conscious and honest reform without which it stands the risk of continued slide into dictatorships, political hooliganism, state capture, and widened corruption, as is already happening in the Sahel region of West Africa and, to a large extent, Nigeria. Platonian political thought remains a veritable cognitive guide for the continued evaluation and critique of democracy aimed at its purification and refinement. The quest must continue.

Works Cited

- Adidi, D. T., & Abiona, L. A. (2025). "Beyond the Shadows: Plato's Two Worlds and the Limits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Character Formation." In the *International Journal of African Catholicism*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2025, p. 23 <https://www.saintleo.edu/academics/colleges/arts-and-science/ijac>
- Adidi, D.T. & Irabor, P.B. (2019). "John Dewey's Education and Social Inquiry: A Nexus Towards Democratic Consolidation and Citizenship Education in Nigeria." In *Tropical Journal of Art and Humanities*, Vol. 1, 27-42.
- Adidi, D.T. (2023) *A Philosophical Appraisal of Obafemi Awolowo's Democratic Socialism*. In a Thesis Submitted to the Department of Philosophy, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (Faculty of Arts). In Partial Fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctorate, Philosophy in Philosophy, P. 13
- Alafe, A. F. (2018). "The Fallacies in Plato's Theory of Forms and the Recollection Thesis: A Critical Analysis. In *FALSAFA: Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2018. Ahmadu Bello University Press, p. 171
- Asante, M. K. (2020). Afrocentricity. In *Routledge Handbook of Pan-Africanism* (pp. 147-158). Routledge.
- Atoi, E. N., & Yakubu K. B. (2021). "Religious Intolerance and the Quest for Progressive Change in Nigeria. *LWATI: A Journal of Contemporary Research* 18: 20020. [Google Scholar]
- Audu, J. (2009). "The Dialectics of Corruption and Development in Post-Colonial Africa: The Nigerian Experience." In *Democracy, Leadership and Accountability in Post-Colonial Africa: Challenges and Possibilities* (eds.) Tony Edoh & Terhemba Wuam, *Essays in Honour of Professor Akase Paul Sorkaa* (Makurdi: Aboki Publishers), p. 200
- Awopeju, A. & Martins, O.L. (2022) "Election, Money Politics and the Implications for Sustainability of Democracy in Nigeria." In *Wukari International Studies Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 1.
- Azuwike, A. (2023), "Civil Rights or Civil Wrongs? The South's Response to Judicial Social Change and the Role of the White Citizen's Council." *International Journal of Group and Minority Rights*, Volume 34, pp. 183-204.

- Azuwike, A. (2023), "The Democratic Philosophy, Law and the Politics of Identity in Nigeria." *Juriscope Law Journal*, Volume 3, No. 1, pp. 59-73.
- Boesche, R. (1990). "Fearing Monarchs and Merchants: Montesquieu's Two Theories of Despotism". *The Western Political Quarterly*. 43 (4): 741-761.
- Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, trans. By Thomas Nugent, revised ed. (New York: Colonial Press, 1899), Book 11, s. 6, pp. 151-162 at 151.
- Chidi, P. A. (2020). "Issues of Human Rights and the Rule of Law." In *Justice and the Rule of Law in Africa*, (eds) Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony and Ndubuisi, Ejike J.O. (A Publication of the Association for the Promotion of African Studies), p. 28
- Crick, B. (1982). *In Defense of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Doomen, J. (2014). *Freedom and Equality in a Liberal Democratic State*. (Brussels: Bruylant), pp. 88, 101.
- Feldman, R. (1999). "Contextualism and Skepticism," in *Tomberlin*.
- Fukuyama, F. (1989). "The End of History?" *The National Interest* (16): 318
- He, Jiacheng (2022). "The Patterns of Democracy in the Context of Historical Political Science". *Chinese Political Science Review*. 7 (1). Springer Science and Business Media LLC: 111-139.
- Henderson D. (2008) "Motivated contextualism", in *Philosophical Studies*, volume 142, number 1.
- Heywood, A. (2002). *Politics* 2nd Edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 69
- Ihuah S.A. (2025) "Reimagining African Democracy: Between the Grass and the Glass Houses". In *Philosophy and Praxis* Vol. 15. No.1, 2025, p. 146
- Irabor, P.I. & Adidi, D.T. (2019) "Lockean Appraisal of Nigerian Democracy: Education as a Corrective Mechanism". In *EKO Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, [Google Scholar] https://scholar.google.com/citations?view_op=view_citation&hl=en&user=3ezSitsAAAAJ&citation_for_view=3ezSitsAAAAJ:roLk4NBRz8UC Retrieved online 22nd June, 2025
- Jatau, V. & Maza, D.K. (2023) "Democracy, Peace and Religion in Nigeria: Can Religion Be Used to Consolidate or Undermine Democracy and Peace?" In *Journal of Peace, Politics and Religion*, 14(10), 1305; <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14101305> retrieved online 10th June, 2025.
- Kalu, K. N. (2019). *A Functional Theory of Government, Law, and Institutions*. (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield), p. 161
- Kanu, I. A. (2019). "Igwebuikocracy: The Igbo-African Participatory Socio-Political System of Governance." In *Volle Lege: An Augustinian Journal of Philosophy and Theology*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2019.
- Kanu, I.A., Adidi, D.T. & Omenukwa, C.P. (2024) "Collectivism, Virtue and Human Rights in the Political Philosophy of Jomo Kenyatta." In *Veritas Journal of Humanities*, Vol 5, No. 2, Veritas University Press, p. 181
- Kanu, I.A., Ogabo, G.A. & Adidi, D.T. (2020). "An Ontological Survey of Crime and Criminality in Nigeria: Stating the Causes and Seeking the Solutions." In *Journal of African Studies and Sustainable Development*, Vol 3 No. 6, p. 186
- Kenyatta, J. (1965) "Kenya's Socialism." An Extract from *Kenya Government Sessional Paper*, No. 10
- Kenyatta, J. (2007) "The Gikuyu System of Government." In *Readings of African Political Thought* (eds.) Gideon Cyrus M. Mutiso, Rohio W.S. London: Heinemann Publishers, p. 19
- Kukah, H.M. (2009) "Ten Years of Democracy in Nigeria" In *The Humanities and Nigeria's Democratic Experience* (eds) Chiebgoka, A.B.C., Nwadigwe, C.E., Umezina, E.C. Anambra: Rex Charles & Patrick Ltd, p. 4
- Lawhead, F. W. (2002). *The Voyage of Discovery: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy* (2nd Edition). United Kingdom: Wadsworth Publication, p. 46
- Mukherjee S. & Ramaswamy S. (2011). *A History of Political Thought: Plato to Marx*, 2nd Edition. PHI Learning: New Delhi, p. 58

- Mungai, N. W. (2015). Afrocentric Social Work: Implications for Practice Issues. Some Aspects of Community Empowerment and Resilience, 6579.
- Nehru, B. K. (1979). Western Democracy and the Third World. *Third World Quarterly*, 1(2), 5370. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3990333>
- Njoku, D.I., & Nkechi C. N. (2013). "Appraisal of Religious Intolerance in Nigeria." In an *International Journal of Theology & Reformed Tradition* 5: 12142. [Google Scholar]
- Nzally H. & Faye M. (2022) "Democratization in Africa and Its Challenges" In *International Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 2 Issue 2, <https://doi.org/10.51483/IJAFRS.2.2.2022.1-11>, retrieved online 22nd June, 2025.
- Obiagwu, V.O. & Adidi, D.T. (2020) "The State, Justice and the Common Good: An African (Nigerian) Perspective." In *Tansian University Journal of Arts, Management and Social Sciences*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, p. 7
- Odife, I. (2009) "Contentious Issues in Nigeria's Current Democratic Experience." In *The Humanities and Nigeria's Democratic Experience* (eds) Chiebgoka, A.B.C., Nwadigwe, C.E., Umezina, E.C. Anambra: Rex Charles & Patrick Ltd., p. 136
- Oguejiofor, O.J. (2009) "Practicing Democracy in a Culture of Corruption: Reflections on Ten Years of Democracy in Nigeria" In *The Humanities and Nigeria's Democratic Experience* (eds) Chiebgoka, A.B.C., Nwadigwe, C.E., Umezina, E.C. Anambra: Rex Charles & Patrick Ltd, p. 22
- Okafor, V. O. (1998). The Functional Implications of Afrocentrism. *Afrocentric Vision: Studies in Culture and Communication*, 209228.
- Okodo, I. (2009). "From Igbo Pre-colonial Democracy to British Colonial Dictatorship: Issues in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*." In *The Humanities and Nigeria's Democratic Experience* (eds) Chiebgoka, A.B.C., Nwadigwe, C.E., and Umezina, E.C. Anambra: Rex Charles & Patrick Ltd, p. 372.
- Omoreke, O.M. (2024) "Human Right Abuse in Nigeria: Trends, Issues, Challenges and Prospects." In *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, Vol. 12, No. 11. <https://doi.org/10.55908/sdgs.v12i11.4104>. Retrieved online 2nd June, 2025.
- Onwuazombe, I. I. (2017). "Human Rights Abuse and Violations in Nigeria: A Case Study of the Oil-producing Communities in the Niger Delta Region." *Ann. Surv. Int'l & Comp. L.*, 22(1), 115-160.
- Oreoluwa A. J. (2015) "A Liberal Democratic Perspective of the Nigerian State." In an *International Journal for Innovation, Education and Research*, Vol. 3 No. 10, p. 12
- Otegwu, I.O. & Maina, W.A. (2024). "An Empirical Interrogation of the Nexus Between Democracy and Terrorism in Nigeria." In the *Irish Journal of Law, Political Science and Administration*, Vol. 8, Issue 4, p. 34
- Perry, M. Chase, M. Jacob, R.J., R.J. Von Laue, H.T. (2013). *Western Civilization: Ideas, Politics, and Society*. Tenth Edition, Australia: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, p. 431
- Price, A. W. (2008). *Contextuality in Practical Reason*. Oxford University Press.
- Quoted by Busia A.K. (2006), "The Ingredients of Democracy," in A Compilation of *Readings in African Political Thought*
- Schmitt, C. (1985). *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*. (Cambridge: MIT Press), pp. 2, 8.
- Shklar, J. (1987). *Montesquieu* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Spellman, W. M. (2017). *A Short History of Western Political Thought*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Stanley J. 2005. *Knowledge and Practical Interests*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Stokes, S. C. (2005). "Perverse Accountability: A Formal Model of Machine Politics with Evidence from Argentina." *American Political Science Review*. 99
- Svolik, M. W. (2012). *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 20.
- Thucydides (1954). *History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Rex Warner. Baltimore: Penguin Books, p. 118

- Udebunu, C. (2009) "Democracy and Philosopher Queens: Plato on the Liberation of Women." In *The Humanities and Nigeria's Democratic Experience* (eds) Chiebgoka, A.B.C., Nwadigwe, C.E., Umezinwa, E.C. Anambra: Rex Charles & Patrick Ltd, p. 56
- Udi, A. (2024). "Nigeria's GDP grows by 3.19% in Q2, 2024NBS." *Nairametrics*.
- Wilson, C. H. (1937). "The Separation of Powers under Democracy and Fascism." *Political Science Quarterly*, 52(4), 481-504.