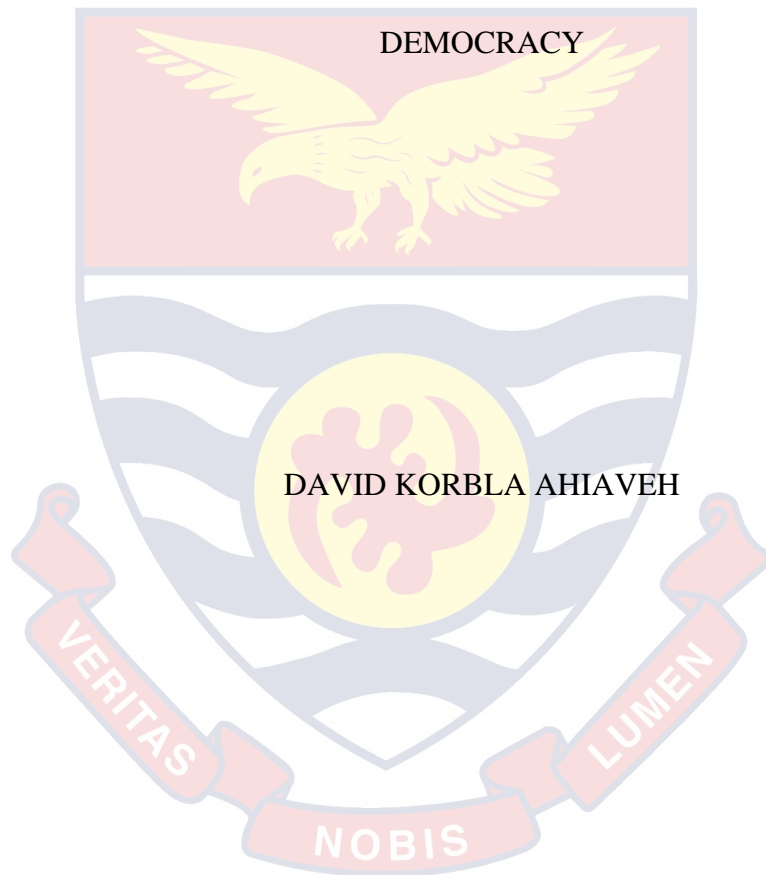


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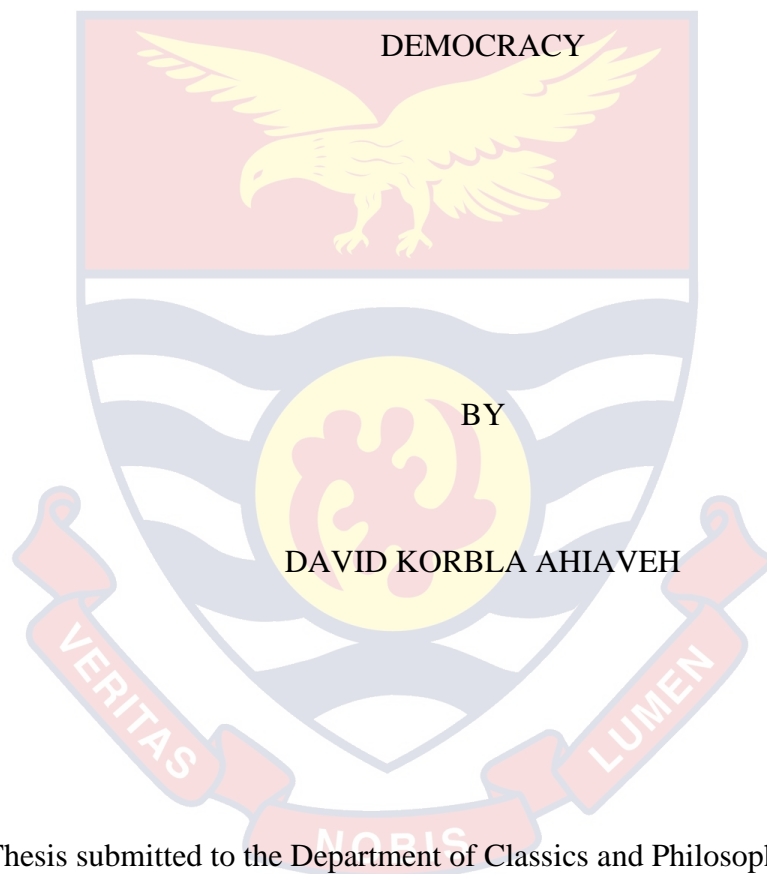
A CRITICAL STUDY OF KWESI WIREDU'S CONSENSUAL



2021

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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Thesis submitted to the Department of Classics and Philosophy of the Faculty of Arts, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Philosophy

JUNE 2021

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: Date:.....

Name: David K. Ahiaveh

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Prof. Raymond N. Osei

Co-supervisor's Signature:..... Date:.....

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the normative merits of Kwesi Wiredu's consensual democracy. This theory, as presented by Wiredu, embodies arguments that reject the party system as an appropriate mode for governance in Africa. By showing the majoritarian system as adversarial and divisive, Wiredu proposes a consensual model that reflects the decision making of the traditional Africans. This thesis examines the core arguments of his proposal within the framework of deliberative democracy. It argues that Wiredu's idea of consensus has normative appeal. But his notion of non-party society, which is a reflection of the ancient consensus system, does not seem to embrace the diversities that characterize the contemporary cosmopolitan society. A pure consensus model can degenerate into a mob rule if we affirm the primacy of popular participation over a party system. Conversely, to price the majoritarian values over consensus principles can lead to an aristocracy. The need to retrieve and adopt pre-colonial values in the contemporary context, however, seems to require a fusion of the consensus model and some of the key principles governing the party system. Hence, this thesis argues that if a multi-party coalition system is synthesized with the consensus model, it could serve as a feasible model for guiding the diverse and complex society of ours.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project could not have been accomplished without the support of some great people. I express my profound gratitude to my supervisors, Prof. Raymond N. Osei and Mr. Abraham Amissah both of the Department of Classics and Philosophy, University of Cape Coast, for their immense assistance and professional guidance. The doors of Prof. Osei were always freely open to me. He has, through his vast experience in supervision, shaped my intellectual cast of mind as well as enriched the content of this work. Mr. Amissah's remarks were very useful in shaping the work. Without the support of my supervisors, this work would have remained only as thoughts.

I wish gratefully to acknowledge Prof. Peter K. Grant, the former head of the Department of Classics and Philosophy, for accepting me into the program and encouraging me to excel. I appreciate Dr. Inusah Hussein, the current head of the said department for his interest in my progress and success. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Reverend Dr. Richard Ansah for his encouragement and inspiration and Dr. Usifoh Eromosele E. for his goodwill and the provision of valuable materials on the subject.

Finally, I express my most profound gratitude to my family for the unfailing love, affection, and support given me throughout my studies and the process of writing this thesis. To my brothers, Patrick, Stephen, Christian, Kenneth, and my sisters Benedicta, Felicia, and Mary thank you for your care. My greatest appreciation to brother Ignatius Ahiaveh for his material and intellectual contribution to my life and this work.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to the memory of my father.



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The period between the 1950s and 1960s witnessed an increased number of liberations from colonialism across the continent of Africa (Ozumba and Okon, 2012). Thus, the immediate post-independence period was marked by huge expectations for social and political transformation from external domination to self-governance (Nkrumah, 1964; Owusu, 1992). However, the first two decades of the post-colonial epoch was marked by dictatorships (Wiredu, 2004), particularly, from the mid-60s onwards, military coups d'états were rife, ethnic conflicts increased, and tribal minorities were marginalized (Wiredu, 2004). Political instability was accompanied by numerous bloodshed (Wiredu, 1995). Nearly half a decade into independence, African dictators found themselves under immense pressure by their former colonialists to adopt full-scaled multi-party democracy (Eze, 2000).

This fact gave rise to the belief that the majoritarian system could bring about political salvation to Africa (Wiredu, 2000). Particularly, it was thought that this model has certain special values that could be harnessed to fashion and develop Africa (Wiredu, 2004). But this model, as scholars have argued, has functioned contrary to the supposed beliefs. Rather than providing the framework for all-inclusive governance, the majoritarian system tends to polarize society into ethnic and party cleavages (Gyekye, 1997; Wamala, 2004). Unwarranted politicization of social and political programs characterizes government activities. As a mode of promoting party programs, the politicization gives rise to acrimony (Wamala, 2004). For most people, the

multi-party system has been unsuccessful in saving Africa. For others, it is rather the African leaders who have failed to effectively convert the best majoritarian values into governance (Eze, 2000).

But Kwesi Wiredu argues that the origin of most of the troubling political antagonisms in post-colonial Africa is traceable to the majoritarian system (Wiredu, 2004; 2000). Thus, despite the wide appeal to the project of multi-party democratization in Africa, Wiredu's political thought points to the contrary. His political philosophy presents a novel idea of consensus democracy as an alternative to the multi-party system (Wiredu, 1995). This idea is founded on the African indigenous political structure. As Wiredu's theory has shown, his idea developed from the conception that the majoritarian model is not only inherently adversarial, but it also stands in stark contrast to African culture and systems (Wamala, 2004).

But a reflection on contemporary democratic theories shows the contrary. It points to the view that modern multi-party democracy exhibits a considerable variety of formal institutional structures that could guarantee fairness, equality, and prevent the tyranny of the majority (Fishkin, 2018). This view confirms the presupposition that modern multi-party democracy indeed establishes legal frameworks that safeguard rights and administers justice (Schumpeter, 2003; Fishkin, 2018). This suggests that the multi-party system provides room for public deliberation, evaluation of, and justification for political processes and practices (Bohman and Rehg, 1997). Thus, since the multi-party democracy is conceived to affirm the primacy of the rule of law and equality, it is logical to consider it capable of ensuring a legitimate political system that promotes fairness, stability, and peace.

But the majoritarian system seems to show patterns of irregularities, especially when examined from the African perspective of governance (Owusu, 1992). To most Africans and even the world in general, this system sanctions the tyranny of the majority. For example, in a full-grown democratic society like the USA, it is generally claimed that the majority wield sovereign power (Fishkin, 2018). Flowing from this is the argument that if such an omnipotent majority group can use power against their opponents, then we cannot deny the possibility of the same concerning majority groups in African politics (Cunningham, 2002). Marked by a competitive struggle for power, the majoritarian model does not, in reality, ensure free and fair political practices as asserted by democratic theories. Rather, it tends to create antagonistic relations among citizenry (Wiredu, 1995). And such dissension, according to Ajei (2016), characterizes the contemporary political practices of most African countries giving rise to frequent obstructions. Dominated by majority powers, minority voice is often disregarded or even suppressed from being expressed. As evidenced by Africa's post-colonial experiences, power struggles between socio-political classes have developed widespread conflicts (Wiredu, 1995).

Hence, most African independence leaders had thought that the root cause of Africa's problems was colonialism (Ciaffa, 2008). This hypothesis stimulated the desire among many African leaders to overthrow the colonial powers and restore the African communal mode of governance which was thought to have been violently disrupted by the colonizers. A chief justification for this idea was that African communalism if retrieved, could promote the dignity and social development of Africans. The colonizers' structures, in

contrast, were regarded as not only too confrontational but also a system that could fashion ethnic division among Africans (Wiredu, 2004).

Thus, infuriated by the tragic effects of colonialism, African independence leaders fought hard for emancipation from colonial rule (Owusu, 1992). The likes of Nkrumah (of Ghana) characterized the Western model of governance as that which typifies the capitalist mode of production (Nkrumah, 1967). The foreign structures are conceived to be the conduit through which the exploitation of African resources is carried. Nkrumah considered Western systems as mechanisms fashioned to extort Africans (Nkrumah, 1967).

Nkrumah along with Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, and others, driven by the core objective of establishing an ideal Africa, theorized varied forms of African socialism as the most viable political paradigm for salvaging the African continent (Ozumba and Okon, 2012). Although African independent leaders conceived African socialism differently, they all seem to argue that African socialism reflects African values (Omoregbe, 2010).

But despite the attractions of African socialism, it has come under serious attack (Okadigbo, 1985). It has been argued that African socialism has the potential to occasion political division (Wiredu, 2004). Hence, this ideology functioned contrary to the very purpose for which it was theorized. The objective of African socialism was to promote egalitarianism, mass participation in governance, and above all, communal ownership of the means of production (Ozumba and Okon, 2012). But African socialism developed into an elitist system of government (Bohman and Rehg, 1997). Since the ideology was conceived differently by different African leaders each leader considered

himself as the ultimate source of vision for both his country and Africa at large. According to some critics, heads of government in Africa regarded themselves as “the philosopher kings”, more intelligent than all others (Wiredu, 2004).

It has been contended that in the process of converting colonial systems in Africa to a better form of government which African leaders had sought to do, they rather constructed statecrafts that could best be described as one-party government (Wiredu, 1995). The one-party regime was considered to be dictatorial, and for many people, it did not represent a true form of democracy at all (Wiredu, 2000). Generally speaking, most scholars believe that this system exacerbated political plight, widen up the social and economic polarity, and ethnic division rather than healing Africa’s colonial wounds. For some scholars, this problem can be blamed on the majoritarian system of government which African leaders sought to experiment after independence (Wiredu, 1995).

Some scholars have argued that the contention of whether the majoritarian system is a weak model or not is not a contemporary issue (Wamala, 2004). It can be traced as far back as ancient Greek politics. In Athenian democracy, for example, Plato witnessed how the majority vote of Five Hundred and one jurors unjustifiably led to the assassination of Socrates (Elshtain, 1994). He also saw how women and other minority groups were marginalized and removed from the public decision-making process (Elshtain, 1994).

This stimulated Plato to examine various forms of government such as aristocracy, despotism, totalitarianism, and different forms of democracies to determine the most ideal system (Omoregbe, 2010). The general conclusion which Plato arrived at was that the majoritarian democracy was not appropriate.

The most suitable political society for him, however, was the one in which only intellectuals govern (Elshtain, 1994). Consistent contemplation by such wise leaders would enable them to engage in rational deliberation that would yield sound decisions concerning the common good. Plato grounded an ideal society not just on a political model but on the very character of the human soul (or nature) (Elshtain, 1994).

Although this idea seems palpable to many scholars, it has been criticized as being too aristocratic. That is, Plato's conception does not only lead to the rule of a few selected intellectuals; but such highly rational beings without self-interest might not exist on earth (Popper, 1945).

Since the Athenian epoch, democracy has received significant evolutionary changes over the past centuries to its present form. According to Gyekye (1997), the type of democracy practiced in modern times has evolved through autocratic rule, military dictatorships, and monarchical regimes. Democracy has been shaped by enlightened or benevolent despotisms (Gyekye, 1997). This reveals that all through the evolutionary stages, democracy has been characterized by conflicts, abuse, domination, and manipulation of citizens by the political elites and capitalists' class (Omogbe, 2007).

Such conflicts, according to Marx (1859), do not issue from political systems but economic conditions of life. The social and political conflicts constitute the elements that give rise to social change. The source of such struggles can be associated to how national wealth is shared. And, since governance, as Laswell (1938) conceives it, designates the authoritative allocation of national wealth, values, and resources, political antagonism is connected to governance; it arises from the unequal distribution of common

good or national resources (Marx, 1859). Since politics concerns a competitive struggle for power to allocate economic value, it exposes why competition and disagreement often characterize all societies and contemporary Africa in particular.

This idea precisely points to the aggressive character associated with the majoritarian model of democracy. As it appears, the winner takes all principles, as well as the majority tendency for tyranny, constitute major flaws in the majoritarian model (Teffo, 2004). And, such flaws could be regarded as a potential (qualitative) condition for political conflict. For many scholars, majoritarian democracy is only a refined form of despotism and dictatorships of the privileged class (Omoregbe, 2010)

Hence, over the last two decades, scholars have shown a general loss of interest in the majoritarian system. There seems to be some radical shift of attention to a consensus model of governance (Sultana, 2012). The consensus system aims at achieving common understanding in decision making through consensus especially in pluralistic societies (Bevir, 2007). This model seeks to promote a system of representation in which all members who are affected by a particular political decision engage in a process of discussion to arrive at a consensual decision. The core philosophy of this system is to reach an agreement concerning the common good (Lijphart, 2012).

The idea behind this model resembles that of ancient Greece. In ancient Greece, citizens assembled to deliberate on public issues. Conceived in Greek political thought was the idea of the common good which was broadly defined in terms of common values and shared traditions (Elshtain, 1994). Such common good must not only be understood by decision-makers, but they must

also have the capacity for retrieving and converting them into governance (Sultana, 2012). Although the Greeks were said to have pursued vigorous and effective deliberation which generally led to consensus, their success was seen largely as a consequence of the low level of the population (Wamala, 2004).

The classical Athenian democracy closely resembles that of the Akan (of Ghana) in terms of consensus-building (Teffor, 2004). Both the Akan and the Athenian system generally embraced direct and representative participation (Haddox, 2016; Abraham, 1962). As opposed to the majoritarian system, Wiredu considers the Akan model as the most appropriate. His critique is that such a system is too adversarial.

Inspired by the Akan model, Wiredu has innovatively formulated his consensual democracy. His model, contrary to the multi-party democracy, rejects the existence of political parties as to the structures on which governance should be based (Wiredu, 1995). To be sure, his theory seeks to offer a logical basis for decolonizing all Western traditions which Africans have hitherto 'uncritically' assimilated into their minds (Wiredu, 1996). His idea provides the framework for eliminating the effect of the diverse cultural traditions that have been deeply rooted in the consciousness of the post-colonial Africans.

Statement of the Problem

Over the past two decades, one crucial debate has dominated African philosophy. This debate presents an argument that the majoritarian governance system that was bequeathed to Africa by its colonizers is unfavorable to the various cultures in the continent. As a consequence, this model is said to have undermined the progress of the continent. As the principal critic, Kwesi Wiredu has rejected this system. In place of it, he has proposed and advocated for a

consensus model as a suitable alternative. For scholars like Ajei, Wamala, and Teffo, Wiredu's model is attractive (Ajei, 2016; Wamala, 2004; Teffo, 2004). But other scholars like Eze, Bodunrin, and Matolino have debunked it (Eze, 2000, Bodunrin, 1991; Matolino, 2013). In the course of the debate about Wiredu's idea of democracy, one expects scholars to suggest models they consider fit for Africa. Yet the arguments have mainly focused on the feasibility or the otherwise of Wiredu's idea. None of Wiredu's critics as well as his defenders have proposed any alternative political model by governance could be carried out in Africa. This thesis is an attempt to fill this gap.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments Wiredu has advanced in favor of his consensual democracy as against the majoritarian model. The study seeks to determine whether Wiredu's idea is feasible for Africa's political practice.

Thesis Statement

The thesis of this study is that the notion of consensus, as a principle of decision making, has normative merits, but Wiredu's conception of democracy which presents itself as a reflection of precolonial mode of governance is impracticable in (contemporary and) a more complex society.

The study runs on the assumption that human society is naturally prone to conflict. This conflict, as Plato prompts us, inheres in human nature itself and expresses through subjective desires (Lorenz, 2006). But society can evolve through the harmonization of diverse interests. Based on the communitarian conception of life, Wiredu's theory of consensus democracy affirms the primacy of communal interest over that of the individual. This seems to

overlook how subjective wishes or interests of people have shaped contemporary society. Since contemporary society is characterized by diverse competing beliefs and interests, I argue that emphasizing common interests without adequate treatment of the diversity of interests might lead to conflicts.

Methodology and Sources of the Study

This thesis uses the analytical approach to examine Wiredu's conception of democracy. This approach is useful as the thesis will evaluate arguments presented by Wiredu's theory. Drawing from Plato's view on the psychology of humankind, the political thought of Karl Marx, the Athenian model of democracy, and African indigenous systems, we situate our analysis in the contemporary setting.

In doing so, both primary and secondary sources of materials have been used. Some of the primary materials that will be used include: *A Companion to African Philosophy* (2004), *The Need for Conceptual decolonization in African philosophy* (1995), *Democracy and Consensus in African Traditional Politics: A Plea for a Non-Party Polity* (1995), *Post-colonial African philosophy: some commentaries* (1995). The primary sources are the original works of Wiredu. These works have provided first-hand information on Wiredu's political thought. The secondary sources constitute commentaries and critical studies done by other scholars on this subject have been consulted in the research. Such works have provided detailed interpretations and evaluations which would be useful for our analysis.

Delimitation of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to the confines of Wiredu's notion of consensual democracy and non-party democracy. Wiredu implies that the two amounts to one (Wiredu, 2000, Wiredu, 1996). Wiredu's critique of multiparty democracy shall be examined. But his other works in political philosophy, for example, his theory of conceptual decolonization shall be considered to be beyond the scope of this research. Such works may only be consulted if it becomes imperative to clarify salient points.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts deliberative democracy as a theoretical framework. Deliberative democracy is a normative theory. It is based on the ideal of popular democratic association and participation of citizens. Through debate and justification of ideas, it advocates public policymaking among equals (Cohen, 1997). This model emphasizes inclusiveness, compromise, and bargaining aimed at rationally motivated consensus (Lijphart, 2012).

In deliberative democracy, members of the society are conceived to have diverse opinions, convictions, preferences, and diverse interests (Cohen, 1997). It is in this sense that deliberative democracy is different from Wiredu's consensual democracy which seems to have a communitarian conception of citizenship. This conception affirms common interest of a community without due consideration of individual's interest. Thus unlike the Wiredu's consensual model, the deliberative democracy holds a multi-cultural view of citizenship (Pietrzyk-Reeves, 2006). Since it emphasizes identities, it asserts the principles of sharing political power with diverse groups including grassroots participation in public deliberations (Pietrzyk-Reeves, 2006).

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one is composed of the background and general introduction to the study. The chapter exposes the research problem, the purpose of the study, the thesis statement, the methodology, and sources. Here, the scope of the study, the theoretical framework, the organization of the study are also defined.

In chapter two, related works relevant to the study have been reviewed. In this appraisal, both primary and secondary materials have been discussed. In the process, the bearings of these texts on this study have been drawn out, and the gap therein this research has attempted to fill. This chapter has also examined the concept of democracy. An understanding of this has enabled us to place our evaluation of Wiredu's theory in a proper context and allowed an evaluation of Wiredu's preferred model. In respect of this, the direct and representative models and their key variants have also been examined.

Chapter three is an exposition of Wiredu's conception of democracy. Here, concepts such as common interest, consensus, participation, reconciliation, deliberation, etc. have been surveyed. The pre-colonial African political system has also been discussed. Chapter four is an evaluation of the foundational tenets of Wiredu's theory as presented in chapter three.

Chapter five is the final chapter of the study. It presents a recommendation, summary, and conclusion of this thesis. This embodies the author's perspective and philosophy.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND MODELS OF DEMOCRACY

Introduction

This chapter consists of a review of some of the published materials related to the study. Here, I have categorized the literature and debate characterizing Wiredu's notion of consensus democracy generally into three positions: the defenders of Wiredu theory, and their critics, and those who think that some elements of Wiredu's model can be useful in the currently majoritarian system practiced in Africa.

This chapter also examines the concept of democracy. It seeks to understand the direct and representative models of governance and their key variants. The purpose of this is to inform an analysis of Wiredu's preferred model of governance.

Supporters of Wiredu's Theory

Kwesi Wiredu's notion of consensual democracy has received broad support from scholars such as Edward Wamala, Joe Teffo, Kwame Gyekye, and M. Odei Ajei. Wamala (2004) uses the traditional Ganda, as an example, to advance arguments that generally follow that of Wiredu. He says that governance in traditional Ganda was democratic like the Akan. This is because political discussions in that society were based on consensus. Just as the Akan theory of governance has shown, Wamala argues that a chief's power was limited in Ganda society. He contrasts this idea with the majoritarian system in which presidents together with the majority parties are vested with excessive sovereign powers.

However, Wamala (2004) says that although, the traditional African society demonstrated a considerable propensity to consensus, the sort of pure consensus which has been presented by some proponents of consensus democracy did not exist. He believes that advocates of consensus democracy in Africa have exaggerated too much the idea of the unanimity of the past. He observes that consensus presupposes conflict. Wamala says that the Ganda political system encouraged mass participation and development. But he does not show how the people are organized within the general political structures and processes that bring about such development.

Like Wamala, Ajei (2016) has made a critical evaluation of Wiredu's consensus democracy and argues that it represents an appropriate system for Africa. He follows Wiredu and Wamala in denying any prospect of the majoritarian system. As Wiredu has argued, Ajei claims that multi-party democracy has not only engendered violence in Africa but also vests too much power in a majority party (Ajei, 2016). But Ajei does not show how the majoritarian system can create violence.

In his book, *Socio-Political Philosophy: A Systematic and Historical Study, Volume two* Omoregbe (2010) follows Wiredu and presents a detailed justification for his position that multi-party democracy is not appropriate for Africa. He claims that multi-party democracy is for the "enlightened Whites" (2010 p.3). He implies that the communal or consensus model is for Africans. This view implies that Africans are not enlightened enough to run such a system. Omoregbe claims that the vast majority of Africans are illiterate and thus politically undiscerning. This deprives them of the expert knowledge, training, as well as discipline needed to operate the majoritarian system.

But if we consider the number of African leaders who are well educated, we may not be justified if we completely attribute Africa's democratic crisis to a lack of education. All over the world, the majoritarian system is being criticized. Scholars argue that such a system takes power from the people and vests it in the hands of elected representatives who destroy society (Cohen 1997).

Like Ajei, Omoregbe observes that the majoritarian democracy affirms certain principles and ethical values aimed at ensuring a just society (Omoregbe, 2010). For both scholars, the welfare of the Africans remains the same if not worse despite such fundamental principles (Omoregbe, 2010; Ajei, 2016). But it seems that both scholars fail to acknowledge that democratic values by themselves, no matter how virtuous they are cannot effect changes in society unless they are enforced by people. This applies to the consensus principles.

Further, Teffo (2004) has explored Wiredu's concept of consensus democracy in Africa. His studies have led him to conclude that the idea of accepting majoritarian democracy in Africa is not consistent with logic. He contends that the reality of cultural diversity of the world logically implies that different democratic paradigms must exist. Thus, a particular cultural setting, which is distinguished from the other, may have a peculiar mode of governance. Democracy in his view must follow the same principles. That is, for him, Wiredu's consensus democracy is consistent with African culture whereas the majoritarian system is opposed to African it. Teffo argues that despite the cultural diversity, all democracies must be guided by the same principles namely, accountability, participation, and representation.

Aligning with Sindane's interpretation, Teffo (2004) considers democracy as a process of decision making that involves and reflect the interests of the people concerned. He believes that since African values are not the same as those of the multi-party, it is not logical to imitate them. Liberal democracy according to him, is a manifestation of hegemonic tendencies inherent in the Western conception of reality.

Teffo (2004) does not think that through innovation, development of positive attitudes, and building of essential foundational political structures, multi-party democracy can work in Africa. Because, for him, the content of democratization in Africa itself is being shaped by Western forces and politics. Being shaped by such paradigms, Africa tends to be re-colonized in a different form. Thus, according to Teffo, democracy by consensus represents a necessary framework for political emancipation from the colonized. Hence, his invitation to all Africans to retrieve and perpetrate such an ideal.

But it seems erroneous to assume that by a mere adoption of consensual democracy, Africa would extricate itself from foreign influences. It is also not entirely true that Africa would suddenly be free from disharmony by mere adoption and practice of the non-party polity theory. Consensual democracy might be a necessary but not sufficient condition for stability. Other important factors such as economic freedom and equitable distribution of national wealth seem to be essential conditions for greater political freedom and peace.

Teffo (2004) emphasizes that a contemporary model of democracy could be developed "based on an institutionalized quest for consensus". But such a system cannot be called a party system even if it is based on multiple parties. This is because it is not parties that defines a political system, but the

principle by which it is governed. This view is consistent with the position of this thesis. However, Teffo does not establish a theoretical framework in which such an idea could be realized.

Ajei, Wamala, Omoregbe, and Teffo have emphasized various parts of consensus practices in the African political system demonstrating why it is imperative to adopt them. Omoregbe has affirmed Wiredu's critique of the majoritarian system as inhospitable to the African culture. Whilst Teffo sees the possibility of fashioning consensus into all systems of governance without making it party-based, Wamala reifies consensus to only Africa. Wamala distinguishes Wiredu's consensus democracy as communal, consensual, and opposite of majoritarianism. This view denies that mankind is naturally individualistic. But it can be argued that since community and individuality form the fundamental spaces in the lives of mankind, society can only progress by the synthesis of these.

Supporters of both Wiredu's consensus democracy and Multiparty System

Although works such as Gyekye (1997), Williams (2014), and Ciaffa (2008), generally agree with Wiredu's notion of consensus democracy, they suggest that Wiredu's idea cannot be sustained without certain aspects of majoritarian values.

Gyekye (1997) has broadly examined the viability of consensus democracy in contemporary Africa. He thinks that the post-colonial society is a product of both the pre-colonial and Western cultures. In his view, contemporary Africa is so diverse and complex than the pre-colonial society. For these reasons adopting the pure pre-colonial system would be very difficult.

The core elements of Wiredu's consensual democracy, Gyekye (1997) observes, are inclusive governance, a plurality of participation, and public deliberation. But these elements, he argues, are already enshrined in the constitution of most countries in Africa. He particularly referred to decentralization which has been considered crucial in most African countries. Gyekye implies that the multi-party system of government embraces a communal and consensual approach to decision making. But African political leaders have deliberately ignored this aspect of governance. In his view, the effective implementation of the decentralization policy has tremendous potential for a better democracy. This is because, given the communitarian nature of African society, democracy in Africa will serve its purpose if decision-making powers are decentralized.

Gyekye (1997) implies that decentralization would allow people to make decisions that take into account their interests. This would enable them to make decisions that reflect their needs in public policy. But this can only be achieved if citizens are allowed to elect their leaders at the local level. Although, some countries including Nigeria are operating a decentralized system, many African political leaders have consciously disallowed the implementation of the decentralized system. In countries where it is implemented such as Nigeria, it is poorly run and generally used as a vehicle for corruption. In many African countries including Ghana, all the powers of government are centered around the central government which is located in the capital city.

Gyekye's analysis appears sound. This is because it shows how democracy could bring about human development whilst promoting political participation. However, Gyekye does not tell us how his idea would resist

extreme partisanship which has characterized most African politics. Partisanship tends to create conflict, undermine cohesion, and solidarity.

Williams (2014) characterizes Wiredu's idea of consensus in decision making as a normative ideal in all societies. But a consensus approach to decision making can be comprehended as a communal method of conflict resolution. Unlike Ajei, Williams says that humans by nature are self-interest beings. This egoistic tendency of humans makes social divisions part of society. Williams does not think that communal interest represents individual interests. But a consensus is possible when citizens have a common ideal. In his opinion, identifying national interest as the basis of governance may produce a high level of consensus. Williams argues that although the individual may be driven by self-interest, he may be motivated by the common good if it is known. Thus, if the common good resonates with citizens' interests, they may be bent to agree. This idea seems plausible. This because in the US for instance, where majoritarianism is extensively practiced, members generally tend to converge at a point in deliberation when an issue concerns "US national interest".

But the question is: to what extent does national interest reflect the interest of all people in a country? Williams (2014) implies that not every citizen in a country may be motivated by the national interest. But such a system over time may create a more sustained high-level of consensus than those who are governed by party interest. This may guarantee the possibility of consensus in the multi-party system if representatives are driven by national interest. Just as Teffo has said, Williams suggests that if consensus is institutionalized it can constrain decisions that emanate from the narrowed interests of members (Williams, 2014). This view is apt. Williams' view on national interest appears

vital since it might psychologically motivate citizens to aspire for a greater national ideal.

In his article, *Tradition, and Modernity*, Ciaffa (2008) has examined Wiredu's consensus systems of governance and the multi-party democracy. He situates his analysis in contemporary society. His study focuses on the extent to which consensus ideals of the past could be significant to the needs of modern African society (Ciaffa, 2008).

Like the other defenders of Wiredu, Ciaffa identifies the African traditional system of governance with communalism (Ciaffa, 2008). His critique of the majoritarian system is generally consistent with those of Wiredu and his supporters. However, whilst Wiredu thinks that general good should be pursued collectively, Ciaffa suggests that general good could be achieved by promoting individual interest. He does not think that Wiredu's conception of an identity of interest takes into account the interests of individuals. This for him is an underestimation of the importance of individual interest in decision making. This is because Wiredu's notion of consensus requires individuals to dispense with their deeply held desires for the interest of a group.

Ciaffa (2008) conceives a democratic society to embrace two interrelated principles, representation, and justice. Democracy should establish institutions that allow individuals to express their preferences and will. Such institutions, he suggests, must protect and guarantee the basic rights and freedoms of all citizens. It must also ensure justice for all members so that popular rule does not degenerate into a tyrannical majority.

But Ciaffa (2008) does not examine in detail what defines representation and justice and the extent to which freedom and right should be granted. These

concepts could be interpreted and applied differently by different countries. But I agree with Ciaffa's view that mankind has a natural urge to gain freedom. Nonetheless, it appears that nature itself imposes on human beings certain restraints that inhibit them from fully enjoying rights and freedoms. Since humans live in a dialectical relationship with one another, freedom should be enjoyed within certain boundaries. True freedom can be perceived; but, only within a certain frame of ethical (or natural) laws that require mankind not to force the full realization of but rather the limitation of their liberties for the progress and freedom of society at larger.

This idea is consistent with that of Ciaffa (2008). On the one hand, Ciaffa argues that majoritarian principles do not promote collective social goals. This view is implied from the ideology of liberalism upon which liberal democracy is based. Because liberalism excessively pushes for the enjoyment of individual rights and freedoms without advocating for restraints of such rights. On the other hand, Ciaffa suggests that Wiredu's idea of non-party polity contrasts with human rights and democratic values. Both the liberal democracy and the non-party democracy advocate extreme human freedom. But unlimited enjoyment of rights and freedoms can undermine rights and freedoms. Like Gyekye, Ciaffa concludes that Africans should adopt the positive elements of Wiredu's consensual democracy into contemporary structures. But here again, like the other supporters of Wiredu's theory, Ciaffa does not prescribe any normative framework by which his idea could be realized.

Opposers of Wiredu's Theory

Eze (2000) does not favor the distinction between western-adversarial and African-consensual-democracy which has been drawn by Wiredu. Such a

distinction for Eze is not accurate. He thinks that it is the political conflicts in places such as Nigeria, Sudan, Liberia that gave rise to such distinction. Eze emphasizes that much of the conflicts in post-colonial Africa has been occasioned not by the majoritarian democracy, but by African leaders. He particularly mentions that the post-colonial dictators, through greed and selfishness, have created conflicts in Africa. For example, he cites the military government of Ibrahim Babangida of Nigeria as despotic; and, his arbitrary rule (mindset) manifested in most parts of African countries and inspired more conflicts.

Eze (2000) does not understand why Wiredu argues that chiefs derived legitimacy only from their persuasive communication rather than appeal to the gods and ancestors. This point is about Wiredu's claim that kingship was not only political but sacred or divine; chiefship was sacred because it was considered as a link between the community and its ancestors (Wiredu, 2000). The ancestors, Wiredu indicates, are superintendents who supervise human affairs. Eze implies that this view directly points to ancestral and divine powers as sources of political legitimacy and power. He thus rejects Wiredu's claim that in the traditional system the king exercised only persuasive skills to influence decision making.

Indeed, in societies where people make decisions based on religious beliefs, people tend to conclude on issues based on what they believe rather than what reason says. But this does not also suggest that religious people lack the rational or analytical capacity needed for deliberation. Eze's observation on a whole seems useful. It exposes a crucial point that is apt for our research. It will

enable us to investigate whether or not religious beliefs can offer any workable ideas in constructing a viable political paradigm for contemporary Africa.

Also, whilst examining the history of political events, Bodunrin (1991) draws out the implications of Wiredu's consensus democracy on modern social and political practices. His study exposes a fundamental distinction between the pre-colonial and post-colonial African societies. This difference points to communalism as to the foundation upon which consensus practices in traditional Africa was built. However, with the imposition of colonialism and its emergent structure of multiparty democracy, the communal basis of the African style of governance has been eroded. For this reason, Bodunrin suggests that all the arguments that have been advanced in favor of Wiredu's consensual democracy have no basis.

Just as Bodunrin has argued, Hountondji (1996) describes Africans as culturally and ethnically diverse. He implies that each country, tribe, or ethnic group in Africa has its language. And each culture or ethnic group has its distinct values, norms aspirations, which are tied to their peculiar traditional system of governance. Hountondji argues that these apparent differences would not always foster agreement. He criticizes African consensus theories which assume that Africa is composed of people with a collective view who will always agree. For him, this assumption is erroneous. Hountondji rejects the idea of constructing worldviews that represent the whole of Africa as both culturally and politically united. For him, such worldviews could best be described as "the myth of primitive unanimity" (Hountondji, 1996). In this regard, the consensual democracy in his opinion is premised on the wrong foundation.

Being skeptical about the African consensus, Hountondji (1996) argues that Africa must take a "clean break" with the past. Because the idea of African communalism which has been evoked as to the foundation for consensual democracy has been overemphasized. For him, inherent in such superfluous emphasis is the denials of crucial issues such as social and economic crisis from which Africa seriously needs liberation. Hountondji implies that the economic problems in post-colonial Africa are the base root from which Africa's political problems have emerged. To resolve this problem does not require the retrieval of pre-colonial political traditions, but a critical development of the minds of African people to innovatively tackle the problems (Hountondji, 1996 p. 48).

A reflection on Hountondji's views shows that his examination coheres with African philosophers who desire intelligent exploitation of African philosophical resources, systems, traditions, and ideas to solve contemporary problems. This thesis agrees with this view. However, what seems unclear from Hountondji's account is what he refers to as "pre-colonial ideas".

Like Hountondji, Ani (2014) expresses a critical view of Wiredu's idea of consensus democracy. He finds problems with Wiredu's characterization of deliberation and consensus as pure, rational, and immanently African. Ani thinks that such characterization is not fundamentally different from the one which distinguishes intelligence or superiority as immanently White. Ani thus criticizes Wiredu's particularizations as an unhealthy assumption that draws a prejudiced dichotomy between the Western and African paradigms. Deliberation, in Ani's opinion, is globally seen as a process and consensus as an outcome. And so, consensus cannot be characterized as immanent African. He claims that deliberation precedes every political action. And political actions

are expected to be consensual. He asserts that consensus has a normative value as a social and political ideal. This ideal is what deliberators strive to achieve.

In his analysis of governance systems, Ani (2014) draws a similarity between the consensual method of decision making and formal voting which Wiredu rejects. Ani argues that voting is a basic human approach to solving group decisional problems just like consensus decision making. Although, he does not appear as a supporter of Wiredu's theory he agrees that the ideal of consensus can promote inclusive governance. He also concedes that the consensus system has the potential for political stability than the majoritarian system. However, he does not think that a consensus method of deliberation would always yield a perfect resolution of issues just as the formal system of voting in the majoritarian system. Here, Ani fails to recognize that the two methods of decision-making are fundamentally governed by different principles which often tend to yield different outcomes. Majoritarian and consensus principles are disparate and tend to produce different consequences.

In his article, *The Nature of Opposition in Kwesi Wiredu's Democracy by Consensus*, Matolino (2013) makes a detailed study of Wiredu's theory of consensus democracy in a non-party polity. He expresses a general agreement with Wiredu's idea of consensual democracy. But he finds problems with Wiredu's conception of political parties and their functions. Matolino thinks that Wiredu's concept of non-party politics is the same as the one-party system. The only difference he finds between the two systems is that whilst the one-party system endeavored to achieve common interest through the vision of a single leader, Wiredu's non-party polity seeks to reach the general good through the vision and efforts of all citizens.

According to Matolino (2013), the problem with these two systems is that they both assume that all members of the society have the same common interest which must be attained by all members of the society. For Matolino, this assumption compels members to think the same, behave the same, and have the same worldview. This for him is repressive.

Just like Ciaffa and Eze, Matolino argues that Wiredu's theory emphasizes too much collective interest and ignores the merit of individual interests. He refers to Eze's critique of Wiredu's idea of common interest of which Eze states that such a conception of "rock bottom" identity of interest does not exist (Matolino, 2013). Matolino doubts if what Wiredu described as the rock bottom common good is indeed common to all people. He argues that it is not plausible for everyone in society to benefit from such a common good if it does exist. But even if it exists and is obtained, it would benefit only a few groups of people (Ibid).

Furthermore, (Matolino, 2013) criticizes Wiredu's dialogical procedure for reaching consensus. From Wiredu's theory, Matolino gathers that consensus is a product of logical and persuasive deliberation. This dialogical procedure in Matolino's view does not take into consideration the diversity and plurality that mark the contemporary African polities. According to Matolino, it is easy to attain consensus in a small society such as the traditional past. But it is not easy to reach consensus during deliberation in a complex society. Matolino implies that the post-colonial Africa was complex and characterized by cultural diversity. Cultural diversity gives rise to diverse beliefs and values in a society. In social relations such beliefs and values tend to conflict all the time. But this

is not so in communal societies of the past in which a society (or an individual) is defined by common interest.

Matolino (2013) argues that there is no established or formalized mechanism in Wiredu's theory of consensual democracy that guarantees consensus. He contends that the only mechanism Wiredu prescribes for ensuring consensus is the notion of consensus itself. For Matolino, this is only a mere appeal for the need for consensus. Hence this is not how to reach consensus. He argues that mere dialogue does not entail consensus; there should be a properly laid down mechanism for consensus which is independent of mere desire for consensus.

We consider Matolino's analysis appropriate and very much in sync with the position of this thesis. As Matolino has pointed out, this study recognizes the diversity of cultures and interests in which contemporary society has evolved. Therefore, it argues for a rational consensus through the harmonization of all interests.

Models of Democracy

The notion of direct participation as expressed by Wiredu in his theory of consensual democracy presents the view that formal representation in the majoritarian system denies substantive representation (Wiredu, 2000). This is to say that although the logic of representation is to allow elected officials to mirror the will of voters in public deliberation, only government officials have the power to determine public policy and societal will. This denies the people the right to express their interests in the determination of policy preferences of their society. In his evaluation, Wiredu considers this as a shortcoming that needs to be corrected (Wiredu, 2004). By asserting a pluralistic model of

deliberation, Wiredu seeks to establish a more egalitarian society in which ordinary members can directly participate in governance.

Democratic Models

In determining an ideal democratic society, we can distinguish two competing models, both of which present cogent arguments in prescribing what constitutes a legitimate democratic society. These are the direct and representative models. These models have different variants (Pietrzyk-Reeves, 2006). However, such variations become apparent within their broader framework.

Direct Model

Direct democracy, also known as a pure democracy, is a form of government in which citizens participate directly in decision making, as opposed to indirect or representative democracy (Bulmer, 2017). The notion of a direct form of government has been advocated by thinkers such as Jean Jacques Rousseau, James Fishkin, Joseph Cohen, Arend Lijphart, George Douglas Howard Cole, among others (Rousseau, 1978; Lijpart, 2012; Fishkin, 2018; Cohen, 1997). The idea of direct democracy is based on a philosophical proposition that the human being has a peculiar will that cannot be adequately expressed or represented by others. Hence, direct democracy is conceived as a form of rule which allows the popular sovereignty of people to be given expression in governance; through laid down mechanisms, citizens can vote on particular legislations, laws, constitutional reforms, public policies, treaties, and other state decisions (Bulmer, 2017).

This model designates a system of governance in which supreme decision-making power resides in the people by which political choices are made by citizens themselves (Premat, 2006). It establishes institutions, guidelines, and procedures that allow the populace to vote on a given proposal concerning laws or statutory amendment (Premat, 2006). Pure democracy guarantees citizens the right to decide on issues concerning their society directly without any intermediary or representatives.

Radical direct democrats seek to eliminate political parties, representatives, and other intermediary organizations from popular voting processes (Bulmer, 2017). This is because they think that intermediate institutions do not promote popular will expression. They are a barrier to them. Direct democracy does not concentrate power in a single party or individuals. Rather, it shares power broadly with individuals together with governing institutions. Its institutions and rules seek to ensure all-inclusive governance. They also aim at policy formulation based on the consent of the people (Lijphat, 2012).

Proponents of direct democracy distinguish two kinds of interests or will or good. These are a general will and the will of all (Rousseau, 1978). The latter designates the aggregation of private will. The former represents the summation of common interest that remains after individual interests are subtracted. But direct democracy does not emphasize individual interest in society. However, it considers general interest as the primary social good which must take precedence over private interests. The general will, according to Rousseau, is not merely the elimination of an individual's will; it is a reflection of the composite

will of the whole society (Rousseau, 1978). What is termed as the general good, however, is the harmony of individuals' interests.

Contemporary theorists of democracy distinguish between two models of direct democracy. These are the classical and contemporary pure democracy (Premat, 2006). Direct democracy, as has been shown, can be traced to ancient Athens (in the 5th century BC) where citizens assembled to make collective decisions (Graeber, 2013). It can also be traced to the Roman Republic (around 509 BC) (Abbott, 1901). Like the Athenian system, the classical Roman Republic allowed citizens to make laws, formulate programs and policies; and they had veto powers against legislative decisions. The classical society recognized every mentally sound person as a good candidate for political decision-making. But women and slaves were excluded from participating in public affairs (Graeber, 2013). A member of the assembly (the *ecclesia*) had the right to vote on an issue or law and could propose new legislation (Abbott, 1901).

Unlike the present ballot method of voting, the ancient society adopted a lottery system of voting known as *sortition* (Graeber, 2013). This method of selecting leaders was intended to eliminate biases, factionalism, and to give equal opportunity to all potential officeholders (Graeber, 2013). Whereas classical direct democracy preferred assemblies of citizens to make public policy, contemporary direct democracy adapts people's initiative and referenda as key mechanisms for decision making. However, like the classical society, the contemporary direct democrats are concerned with achieving the common good.

The referendum designates a mechanism that allows citizens to vote on specific political issues such as constitutional or legislative decisions (Premat,

2006). Such issues have to be referred to citizens by a governing body (such as the legislature or the executive). The verdict of the people is considered legitimate and binding (Bulmer, 2017). Here, the role of the people in making choices is often limited to two options; either they affirm the government's proposal or reject it. This implies that the matter on which a decision ought to be made had to be predetermined by a governing body. This method of voting is not strictly at variance with that of the classical epoch's direct democracy. In Athens for instance, the council of Five Hundred determined the agenda on which deliberation was made. And every person individually voted on an issue by lifting their hands or simply saying, "yes or no", to show their objection or acceptance of the proposal (Hansen, 1992).

In addition to the referendum, direct democracy also uses citizens' initiative as an instrument for making policy, law, or any other public decision (Premat, 2006; Croissant, 2002). This mechanism allows citizens to propose a political agenda. Like the referendum, the initiative must relate to a specific legislative instrument or constitutional provision. Whereas the referendum can only be initiated by the government, the citizen's initiative can be proposed only by the people. And just like the referendum, a popular initiative may be binding (Fiorino, et al. 2007). In some cases, decisions that arise from both referendum and citizens' initiative can lead to the enactment of a new law or constitutional amendment without any objections from elected lawmakers (Bulmer, 2017).

Another mechanism that direct democracy uses in decision making is a recall. Like the referendum and the citizens' initiative, this instrument gives the right to citizens to make public decisions. Following a petition signed by a certain number, the people can vote on the withdrawal from the office an elected

representative (Bulmer, 2017). Also, with the advent of technology, direct democracy has increased people's capacity to directly participate in public policymaking (Budge, 2006). For instance, in countries where citizens are considered part of public policymakers, they frequently vote on policies through the adaptation of electronic voting systems.

Like classical popular democracy, contemporary direct democracy expresses itself in the form of federation or decentralization (Gyekye, 1997). Unlike the unitary and centralized government, direct democracy guarantees autonomy to federal and local governments. Federal and local governments under this system, perform several important functions that are backed by law (Lijphart, 2012). Here, powers are shared between the central government and federal or local governments. Federation and decentralization are ways of demarcating society into political, social, or ethnic boundaries (Lijphart, 2012). This ensures that various societies develop a kind of homogeneity within their provinces in the process of deliberating on their particular needs. The federal and local governments are also empowered by the constitution to enact by-laws to govern their locality and to ensure social development (Lijphart, 2012).

Pure democracy is known to promote transparency and accountability. This is because it allows for a greater degree of openness between the populace and the government (Palle, 2007). Federation and decentralization could check corruption, and bring about social development (Palle, 2007). This is because information concerning the operations of a central government can easily be accessed; and, those of the assembly can easily be made available and examined. Decentralization and federation bring the government closer to the people. In this context, rather than alienating people from the government, local

governance empowers and integrates them into the collective decision-making processes. In this case, even people in the remotest areas can easily participate in a decision that affects their lives (Gyekye, 1997).

Since direct democracy works on the principle of popular participation, it reduces the tendency of economic and political domination by the aristocrats (Segrillo, 2012). Here, political participation is considered as equally important as economic participation. Without the structures and principles to allow for the egalitarian distribution of wealth political participation is of no value (Segrillo, 2012). In this context, direct participation tends to allow a fair allocation of societal values since members potentially have equal access to political power.

But despite these attractions, direct democracy can be conceived to be marred with some serious problems. Although the desire to achieve the common good (interest) for the whole society has a major appeal, it is not possible for the interests of all people to be known. Even if it can be known, there is not an apparent method to realize it. As Plato suggests, the human soul has the natural tendency to seek material gratification and to dominate and control society (*Republic*, 580d-581a). In the process of seeking to achieve collective desires, the strong subdue the weak. Hence, in advocating the participation of all, there is the propensity for the rich to influence decision making. In that case, what is conceived as the common good might be a mere reflection of the interest of the dominant class. In this context, as Plato implies, popular participation can degenerate into tyranny. This is because the masses tend to lack the psychological capacity to control their souls or minds from the corruptions of the world-the influences of the material things.

It can also be said that the idea of all-inclusive governance as advocated by pure democracy is not practical. This is because the masses have no motivation for political participation. This assertion can be premised on another claim that there are people who have no requisite knowledge and skills to enable them to participate. Even if they do, the increase in population would not allow all citizens to participate directly in governance. Most importantly, the masses do not have the needed skill and understanding of governance processes.

In essence, direct democracy can be conceived broadly as consisting of a variety of decision making procedures by which citizens make laws or decisions concerning the common good. The methods of making a decision could include recalls, elections, town meetings, and different types of referendums. But direct democracy still faces challenges as to how to determine the common good, the feasibility of mass participation, and lack of skills on the part of the masses.

Deliberative Model

Exponents of deliberative democracy include James Fishkin, Philip Pettit, Joshua Cohen, Amy Gutmann, and Dennis Thompson. Deliberative democracy is a normative political theory which emphasizes a synergy between the participatory and consensus democracy (Pietrzyk-Reeves, 2006). Whereas participatory democracy emphasizes mass participation, political equality, and equal voting right of all citizens, consensus democracy stresses political deliberation, a plurality of participation, and agreement (Pietrzyk-Reeves, 2006). Participatory seeks to achieve citizens' inclusiveness in decision making both at the national and grassroots levels (Dryzek, 2000).

Participatory, deliberative, and consensus models all aim at shaping democratic practices. They do this by advocating for a richer understanding of legitimate political choices and broad participation in decision making (Fishkin, 2009). The next chapter discusses consensus democracy in a little more detail. Since deliberative democracy projects an ideal political society its proposal is not descriptive, but prescriptive. By appealing to deliberation and consensus, it harks back to the Athenian political institutions such as the council of 500 and the court where members were chosen by lot. In contemporary times, it appeals to the idea of citizen Assemblies in British Columbia where citizens assemble for deliberation through the “Deliberative Poll” (Fishkin, 1991).

The idea of deliberative democracy is premised on the intuitive ideal of a democratic association that advocates public decision making through debates and justification of ideas among equals (Cohen, 1997). This model emphasizes inclusiveness, compromise, and bargaining aimed at rationally motivated consensus (Fishkin, 2009). The thinking behind deliberative democracy is to arrive at a public will through the reasoning of the people. It prefers direct involvement by all citizens to an indirect representation. It seeks to gather for deliberation, from the populace, all key viewpoints and preferences through a random selection of people in their suitable proportions (Țutui, 2015). This allows all citizens who are concerned with a certain policy to come to deliberate on that policy (Țutui, 2015). Thus deliberation would provide the medium through which individuals would logically and effectively examine the merits and reasons put forward for various proposals (Dryzek, 2000).

Although the hallmark of deliberative democracy is to reach a rationally motivated consensus, it recognizes the impediment to this goal due to the

diversity of interests. In that case, it accepts some form of majority rule as a minimum requirement for decision making (Cohen, 1997). It takes cognizance of the fact that free deliberation and binding rule cannot be made without requisite institutions. Thus, as a normative theory, deliberative democracy urges the provision of the institutional framework within which popular will could be solidified into legislations or policies. The possibility of this theory translating into practice lies in the sufficient provision of laws and institutions that would guarantee its success (Cohen, 1997).

Representative Model

Representative democracy, also known as indirect democracy, is a type of governance system built on the principle of elected officials acting on behalf of a segment of people, as opposed to direct rule (Bohn, 1854). The principle of representation requires that officials are voted and authorized to act, represent, or make decisions on behalf of the electorates (Kemp, 2010). This is a model of government that is elected by the whole population or the greater proportion of them; and consequently, the ultimate power of the people is transferred to the government in all its fullness.

The representative system does not allow citizens who elect government officials to be directly involved in law-making. However, they transfer their responsibility of governance to the chosen representatives. The representatives, in turn, make policies on behalf of the people (Modise, 2017). The people surrender their will to the representative through voting. In this case, representatives are considered agents of the people. This system operates on the assumption of the identity of will between the representative and the represented. In other words, it is supposed that the representative and those he

represents have a common interest. And this interest must be expressed through the representative. By performing the duty of law-making the representative is thus putting into effect the interest of the people.

The representative system mainly makes use of political parties as the principal agents through which representation is achieved (Modise, 2017). This is because electoral rules and laws oblige citizens to vote for members based on party affiliations (Modise, 2017). As opposed to the direct system, individuals are forbidden by law to represent themselves to make public policy. Thus contrary to direct democracy, power is kept in the hands of representatives, and not the people.

For a better appreciation of the concept of representative democracy, it might be useful to go to its founding fathers and to consider from their philosophical reflections the rationale behind this system. In his book *Two Treatises on Government*, Locke rejects Hobbes's idea of the Leviathan who represents an ultimate authority capable of putting to an end all the conflicts that exist in society (Locke, 1887). Hobbes thinks that since mankind has a natural tendency to disobey (natural) laws, an omnipotent individual must rule.

But unlike Hobbes who thinks that men must surrender their natural right to an absolute sovereign in exchange for protection, natural rights in Locke's account are liberties endowed to men by God that cannot be relinquished (Locke, 1887). These include the right to life, liberty, and property. On this account, men are created to enjoy the wealth which God has endowed the universe (Locke, 1887). Since men are created to explore life and enjoy private possessions, the need for a distinct governing body, therefore, arises.

Hence, in Locke's opinion, the duty of a government is to protect man's natural liberty (Ascher, 2015). By safeguarding rights and liberties, men are thus reserved the freedom to maximize life. A representative government, conceived in this context, is a government whose legislature is vested with the authority to make laws and protect man's natural rights. Yet, since man's natural right is supreme, citizens reserve the power to remove a legislature if he is found acting against the (natural) laws (Ascher, 2015).

As a proponent of natural right, Mill's conception of representation generally agrees with that of Locke. But unlike Locke, Mill recognizes the tendency of an absolute government degenerating into despotism. His view reveals the likelihood of representatives becoming tyrannical if only a section of the populace represents the whole society.

As Mill implies, a representative democracy means a system of government in which the whole populace is equally represented. As it appears, the problem of a majoritarian system is that it does not necessarily give representation to all segments of society. This is because the minority party is usually denied a voice in making important policies by the representatives of the party in government.

Proportional Representation Versus Majoritarian System

Proportional representation is the system of representation that seeks to provide representation to not the majority party but the majority of citizens (Mansbridge, 1999). In this political system, seats are allocated to an elected body in proportion to the total number of votes cast (Mill, 1861). Thus, if X% of the voters support a particular party, then X% of the seat(s) will be allocated

to that party. This system seeks to eliminate the tendency of majority tyranny as demonstrated by the majoritarian system.

The majoritarian representation refers to the type of representation in which a candidate who gets the majority of the total votes cast emerges the winner of an election (Phillips, 1995). This denies the remaining candidates who participated in an election the chance to be part of decision-makers. For instance, suppose we have candidates, P1, P2, and P3 standing for an election. If candidate P1 receives the greatest number of votes he becomes the winner. Candidate P2, and P3 who, although, may receive some number of votes become losers. Here the preferences of all the electorates who vote for P2, and P3 will be denied according to the majoritarian principle.

Whereas in the majoritarian system plurality of votes determines a winner, in a representative system, each party wins seats according to aggregate vote shares. Also, whilst the representative model seeks to provide fair representation to the whole populace, the majoritarian model tends to ensure that only a section of the populace is represented. This explains why society under this system could be controlled by the majority in government.

The word representation, as Mansbridge (1999) indicates, is a representation; meaning to be present again. It literally suggests something not physically present yet can be regarded as present in a non-literal sense. The logic is that citizens can be present only in principle but not involved in the actual operation of governance. Although they are ruling, they are not directly governing. They are absent yet govern through others. Hence, we have substantive representation and formal representation.

A substantive representation denotes the propensity of the elected representatives to advocate the wishes of the represented (Mansbridge, 1999). According to this idea, the representative “should do what citizens want” (Powell 2004, p. 91) regardless of shared characteristics between the representative and the represented (Phillips, 1995). Descriptive representation as we have shown refers to “the making present in some sense of something which is nevertheless not present literally or in fact”(Pitkin, 1967 p. 114).

Descriptive representation operates on the normative notion that representatives will promote the interest of the represented because they share a certain common interest. By this idea, many tend to assume that descriptive would lead to substantive representation. But Wiredu’s theory shows preference to substantive representative and not descriptive representation (Wiredu, 2000). The claim is that substantive representation does not obtain under the logic of descriptive representation. But Wiredu idea, consistent with popular (direct) democracy, does not show how descriptive representation can be avoided and still achieve a well-informed decision if we want decisions that pertains to technical issues.

Chapter Summary

The foregoing has examined the debate characterizing Wiredu’s consensus democracy; it has generally categorized the positions into three. These are the defenders of Wiredu's idea and their critics as well as those who think that some element of Wiredu’s theory is useful to contemporary political practice. Following the communitarian conception of life, supporters of Wiredu have advanced similar arguments to affirm that Wiredu’s idea is appropriate. The critics argue that Wiredu’s idea is impracticable. Whilst other scholars

reject the pre-colonial basis upon which Wiredu's idea is based, they indicate that aspects of it can be adopted in modern political systems. The thesis of this study is in support of this.

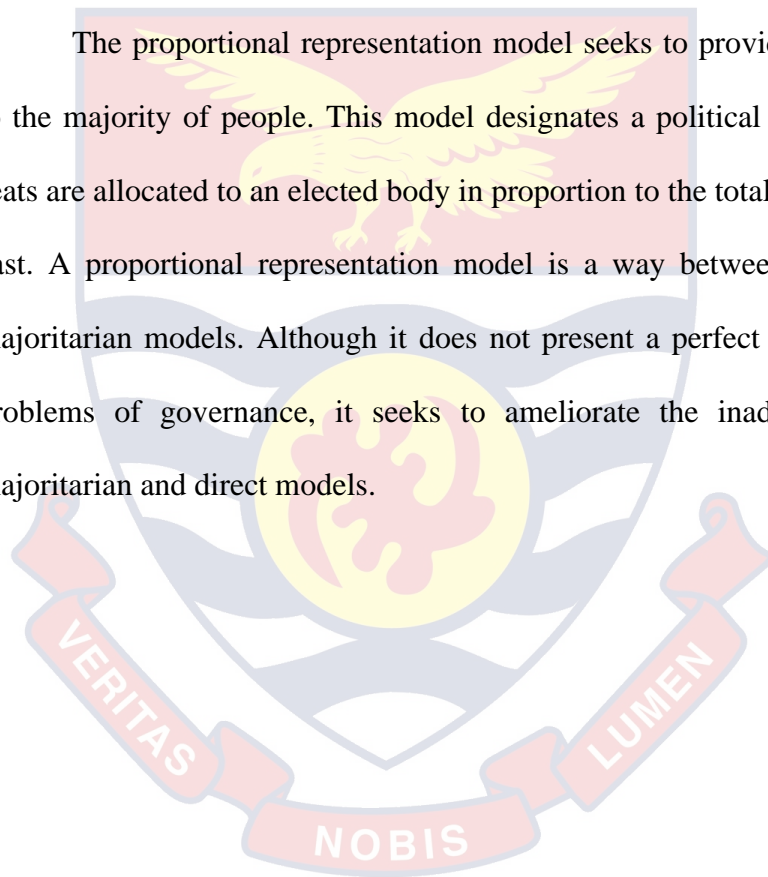
As it appears, the defenders of Wiredu's idea as well as their opposers all seem to agree that a consensus method of making decisions is a desirable ideal. Nonetheless, none of these scholars has established any normative framework by which governance could be contextualized and organized in the context of post-colonial Africa. This thesis is an attempt to fill this void.

Meanwhile, I have examined some of the key models of governance which should enable us to place Wiredu's theory in a proper context. Besides, the aim of this is to provide a framework within which to evaluate Wiredu's preferred model. Here the direct and indirect democracies and their main branches have been examined. My studies of these models in light of the fundamental principles governing Wiredu's theory places Wiredu's model under direct democracy.

The direct model of governance designates a system in which citizens participate directly in decision making. Through laid down mechanisms, citizens can vote on particular legislations, laws, constitutional reforms, public policies, treaties, and other state decisions. This model aims at achieving the common good. None the less, it does not precisely establish how common good can be known and achieved. The idea of popular participation in direct democracy is based on the assumption that all citizens have the intellectual capacity to make an effective contribution to public deliberation. But most people may lack the requisite knowledge and skills needed to effectively contribute to decision making especially where expert knowledge is required.

The majoritarian model refers to the system of government in which a candidate who gets the majority of the total votes cast emerges as the winner of an election. And ultimately, the power of the people is transferred to the government in all its fullness. This denies the remaining candidates who participated in an election the chance to be part of the government. Unlike the direct model, the representative system does not allow citizens who elect government officials to directly involve in law-making.

The proportional representation model seeks to provide representation to the majority of people. This model designates a political system in which seats are allocated to an elected body in proportion to the total number of votes cast. A proportional representation model is a way between the direct and majoritarian models. Although it does not present a perfect resolution to the problems of governance, it seeks to ameliorate the inadequacies of the majoritarian and direct models.



CHAPTER THREE

WIREDU'S IDEA OF CONSENSUAL DEMOCRACY

Introduction

This chapter is an exposition of Wiredu's conception of democracy. Here, concepts such as common interest, consensus, participation, reconciliation, etc. shall be examined. The aim of this is to deepen our understanding of Wiredu's idea of consensual democracy. The issues discussed in this section will form the basis for our analysis in the next chapter. Here, Wiredu's objections to multi-party democracy shall not be left out. This should broaden the context within which to understand Wiredu's political thought.

Wiredu's Objection to Multi-Party Democracy

Wiredu's notion of consensual democracy opposes multi-party democracy (Wiredu, 1996). He argues that the majoritarian system of governance is too confrontational. He describes his model of consensual democracy as a suitable replacement for the multi-party system currently being practiced in Africa (Wiredu, 2000). Marked by a competitive struggle for power, Wiredu conceives of majoritarian democracy as a cause of division among Africans (Wiredu, 1996). He does not think that the minority party acts as checks and balances (Wiredu, 2004). In fact, he says that even in the United States where the majoritarian democracy is considered to have developed, the check and balance system can turn out to be unbalanced. This is because opposition parties frequently obstruct government giving rise to a phenomenon called gridlock. This makes it difficult for the government to carry out meaningful programs (Wiredu, 1996).

Wiredu emphasizes that competitiveness which characterizes multiparty democracy forces candidates to go to persuade electorates (Wiredu, 2000). After a relentless struggle for votes, a candidate who gets the majority of total votes is declared the winner while the candidate who gets fewer votes becomes the loser (Wiredu, 2004). Having a monopoly of power, the winners (the majority) excludes the loser (the minority) from the decision-making process (Wiredu, 2004). This winner takes all principles, creates misrepresentation which ultimately breeds social and ethnic division. As a consequence, an antagonistic institution is formed and adversarial politics created (Wiredu, 1995). For Wiredu, such antagonism is a reflection of the colonialist approach to life and governance which is fundamentally opposed to the communal values of Africa (Wiredu, 2012). Thus, gaining political independence presents the chance for Africans to complete their emancipation process from the colonizers by getting rid of colonial systems, institutions, culture, and practices from Africa (Wiredu, 1996). While rejecting these foreign systems, Wiredu indicates that Africa must also unlock its consensus values which have been forced to lie dormant for decades (Wiredu, 1997).

Wiredu argues that representatives of the majoritarian system deploy violent means to win an election at all costs (Wiredu, 2004). This encourages arbitrary rule and tyranny of the majority (Wiredu, 1995). This also makes Western democratic ideals different from that of Africa. Wiredu emphasizes that under the Western system of governance majority prevails upon the minority. The minority is constrained by the decisions taken by the majority no matter how they are unpalatable to the minority (Wiredu, 1995). This, in Wiredu's view, undermines the very principle of democracy since in African

society, governance is understood in terms of consensus. Wiredu argues that a majoritarian system of democracy is, in fact, not democratic at all (Wiredu, 2004). This would mean that the Western political system which African leaders sought to implement is inconsistent with African traditions. He argued thus:

It does not fit to implement a majoritarian model of democracy in a heterogeneous society like Africa. Since this is being done, Africans should not expect anything less a tragic society (deprived of peace) (Wiredu, 2004).

Here, Wiredu conceives of Western democracy as inherently combative. He distinguishes the African model of governance as consensual (Wiredu, 2004). Wiredu's theory exposes how the African way of living (mode of thinking) has been negatively impacted as a result of colonialism (Wiredu, 1996). To be sure, he argues that the foundation of some of the most fundamental problems of Africa is traceable to the "uncritical" assimilation of colonial legacies that have tainted the minds of Africans (Wiredu, 1996). Colonialism in his view was accompanied by numerous negative effects. And thus, having gained political independence, it is imperative to purge all colonial residues that have accumulated in the minds of Africans (Wiredu, 1996). The colonial legacies which Wiredu urges Africa to reject, of course, include the majoritarian system of governance.

Wiredu's Conception of Democracy

Consensual democracy is defined by Wiredu as a system of government without political parties (Wiredu, 2012). The continuous existence of this non-political organization is ensured by social and legal systems (Wiredu, 2012). It is grounded in the logic of non-confrontational and cooperation. And its purpose is mass participation in political deliberation and not a monopoly of power by a

section of society (Wiredu, 1997). This conception is a principal aspect of Wiredu's conceptual decolonization of the African mind and thought (Ajei, 2016). It comprises two things. First, to re-embrace the value of the African indigenous system in contemporary political practice. Second, to show that the African indigenous system of governance is a viable alternative to the colonial system of governance bequeathed to Africans by colonizers (Wiredu, 1996). Thus, Wiredu thinks that majoritarian democracy is an epiphenomenon of colonialism. And, having gained independence Africans must replace this system of governance with African consensus practices (Wiredu, 1996). This is an advocate for direct participation, a civic right that has been denied by the majoritarian model. But this idea presupposes that all persons have equal capacity for deliberation (Ajei, 2016).

Pre-colonial basis of Wiredu's idea of Consensual Democracy

Wiredu's conception of consensual democracy is inspired by pre-colonial consensual practices of Africa. He goes back to the precolonial era to discover two forms of societies, centralized and less centralized. The centralized society according to him had a well-founded political system that regulated the social and political affairs of the people. For example, the Zulus and the Ashantis (Wiredu, 2000). The less centralized society was without any such government machinery that controlled its socio-political activity. The Talensi of northern Ghana and the Nuer of South Sudan are examples (Wiredu, 1996). The less centralized system had no formal political structure. But despite being anarchistic it generally functioned as orderly as the centralized system (Wiredu, 1996).

Wiredu observes that centralized societies such as the Zulu and the Ashanti exhibited warlike attitudes. But they vigorously pursued consensus in their political practice. In contrast, centralized societies that were also less militaristic such as the Bemba or the Banyankole did not show interest in consensus decision making compared to the Ashanti or the Zulu (Wiredu, 2000)

But Wiredu says that in the pre-colonial African society consensus was an immanent phenomenon common to all social interactions (Wiredu, 1995). He suggests that since the pre-colonial society was generally cooperative, the post-colonial society should be established on the consensus system of the past (Wiredu, 2000). Although Wiredu seems to allude to the fact that disagreement characterized decision making, he argues that there were no usually divided opinions in deliberation (Wiredu, 1996). However, he says that where issues divided along lines of strict contradictions, the people used dialogue to arrive at a compromise that was agreed upon by all. This was because the people of pre-colonial society saw the need for consensus. This was the basis for which they willingly suspended disagreement through dialogue (Wiredu, 1995).

Thus, unlike the majoritarian democracy, decision-making in traditional society, in general, was not based on confrontation. Wiredu says that there is enormous evidence that supports this assertion; that consensus decision making as a matter of principle was the order of the day (Wiredu, 1997). To defend this view, he quotes three African scholars, Kenneth Kaunda, Julius Nyerere, and Clutton-Brock thus:

Kenneth Kaunda avows that the original way of deliberation in Africa was by consensus. A matter was solemnly discussed in a meeting until an agreement is reached: Julius Nyerere also said. . . in African indigenous society, a free discussion was the method of conducting socio-political affairs. Guy Clutton-Brock adds that in African traditional

society, "The elders sit under the big trees, and talk until they agree" (Wiredu, 1995).

The above pronouncement supports that consensus was prevalent in the pre-colonial society, although, negotiation presupposes the existence of disagreement (Wiredu, 2000). In African traditional society, consensus did not merely characterize political decision making. It was intrinsic in all social and political affairs (Wiredu 1995). A consensus was thus a virtue among the elders. This is because it fostered their interpersonal relations. But although Wiredu conceives of consensus as an immanent character of traditional African society, he believes that there was no place in Africa where there was constant harmony (Wiredu, 1996). Thus, conflict was a regular occurrence between tribes and ethnic groups.

However, for him, unlike the majoritarian system of governance which is adversarial, African indigenous society considered consensus as a principle in all ways of life (Wiredu, 1995). This shows that African traditional society emphasizes unity, togetherness, as against division. This according to Wiredu, is the basis for non-competitive politics in Akan society (Wiredu, 1997). Wiredu suggests that while the majoritarian system is fixed on the competitive struggle for the people's votes, the Akan model of democracy seeks to achieve unanimity in making political choices (Wiredu, 2000). He argues that the majoritarian model, being framed on formal voting systems, is far from consensus. This is because the majoritarian system, unlike the Akan, lacks a hundred percent (100%) agreement. Thus, Wiredu implies that every political choice must be made from a 100% agreement. He writes thus:

In the Akan system of governance, the act of voting does not exist. Indeed, there is no official word for voting in Ashanti. The current expression for voting is (aba to). This word is

coined from a foreign language (culture) that was imported or rather imposed on Africa (Wiredu, 1995).

Since there was no formal system of voting, Wiredu suggests that voting is alien to Africa. Hence, it must be rejected (Wiredu, 1995). Although the African system cannot be described as representative as in the case of the majoritarian system, Wiredu suggests that there was a representative element in the traditional African system. For example, chiefs and elders constituted the main decision-making body. A council meeting was not for mass participation (Wiredu, 1995). Contrary to the majoritarian system, Wiredu implies that descriptive representation led to substantive representation (Wiredu, 2000). But as opposed to multiparty democracy, representation in the Akan government was not based on elections (Wiredu, 1995 p. 55).

Below is a brief sketch of representation in the Akan system of government as canvassed by Wiredu. In Akan society, a lineage is composed of all the people in a town or village who are traceable to a common female ancestor (Wiredu, 1995). Each lineage is a political unit, and each unit has a head who then becomes an automatic member of the council which is the governing body of the town or village. To qualify for lineage headship, one must demonstrate a sense of civic responsibility, wisdom, be the most senior person, and possess the ability to persuade (Wiredu, 1995).

The president of the council was the natural ruler known as the chief. The chiefship was not only hereditary, but a chief must also come from a royal home. Wiredu says that the chief is selected by a queen mother from potentially qualified chiefs. The selection had to be accepted by the council and sanctioned by "the young peoples' association". Wiredu refers to Abraham (1962) who says

that chiefship was not only political but sacred. As such, the monarch was the link between the ancestors, (the gods) and the people. Once political positions were conferred the leader remained at post for life if the leader did not become morally corrupt. As Wiredu says this system is devoid of excessive partisanship which is a worrying characteristic feature of liberal democracy especially in Africa (Wiredu, 1995).

A chief who is the leader of the Akan town or village is selected from a royal lineage (Gyekye, 1997). The selection of chief was done in consultation with other members of the lineage. The person who was to be chosen as a chief must be accepted by the councilors who were the heads of the clans as well as the Asafo company. The Asafo company was composed of the young men, the commoners, or the body of citizens. Here, the election of the paramount chief follows the same process as the town and village chiefs. Except that, in this case, the suitability of the paramount chief is assessed by the chiefs of the town and village concerned (Gyekye, 1997).

The narratives about the constitution of Akan government suggests that the Akan model of democracy conformed with both direct and representative form of participation. It was direct because the Asafo company composed of a body of citizens was directly involved in decision making. It was representative because the council was constituted by a select of chiefs and elders who took charge of affairs of governance; they performed administrative, executive, legislative, and judicial functions. But Wiredu implies that chiefs and elders were more sovereigns than citizens. As Abraham (1962) says, Akan citizens transferred their sovereignty to the chief. This was to enable the chief and elders to determine the common good for the community.

Furthermore, the Akan conceives of human life as interdependent (Wiredu, 2004). This is expressed in the maxim that “life is based on mutual aid” (Ajei, 2016). This idea of mutual assistance which is the corollary of the concept of interdependence forms the basis of Wiredu's notion of common interest (Ajei, 2016). Inspired by the Akan theory of governance, Wiredu asserts that all members of the community ultimately have the same interest. Since this is a rock bottom identity of interest people have different perceptions about it (Wiredu, 2000). This mutual interest can be realized by cutting through to the rock bottom all the diverse interests of the people. And this can be done through rational deliberation (Wiredu, 1995). To be precise, Wiredu argues that:

The practice of consensus was premised on the belief that the interest of all members of the community is essentially the same. However, people may perceive it differently. This is expressed in a metaphor of a two-headed crocodile with one stomach struggling over food. The two heads fight over the food because they could not see that the food will go to the same stomach. If they could see that, they would realize the irrationality of fighting each other. But the Anshan has the solution to this. Despite human differences, the Ashanti can dig down to eventually discover the rock bottom identity of interest (Wiredu, 1995).

The above gives the impression that the Ashantis, despite their perceived differences, have the same fundamental desires. Wiredu suggests that the pre-colonial society was classless. This made members have common ideals.

Since it appears that all Ashantis have the same values, Wiredu conceives of reconciliation as an essential element of consensus in the Ashantis system of governance (Wiredu, 1996). He says that the primary aim of deliberation was to restore goodwill. Goodwill was restored through reconciliation and persuasive dialogue (Wiredu, 1996). This was possible because a member of deliberation acknowledged and respected one another's

deliberative power. Beyond this, they also acknowledged that deliberation involved not just two parties but also two dissenting opinions (Wiredu, 1997). By this consideration, if rivals are given ample time to re-examine their stance on a matter, they were likely to withdraw their disagreement. This was not just to avoid further recrimination but because they were persuaded that even rock bottom differences could be bridged in a manner that is agreeable to all or at least, not obnoxious to any (Wiredu, 1997).

Wiredu does not explain whether an agreement to dispense with conflict is the same as, and depended on, rock bottom identity of interest. Or rock bottom common interest depended on an agreement to consensus (Wiredu, 2000). However, he says that the possibility of arriving at consensus depended on the established value of cooperation within the mode of politics which upholds the idea of bottom interest (Wiredu, 1996). He argues that in such a political system, decision-makers will reason more objectively, open to dissenting views, be more open-minded, resort to adopting persuasion, and compromise for cooperation (Wiredu, 1997). But Wiredu does not seem to guarantee the existence of such a morally and intellectually sound individual in contemporary society.

According to Wiredu (1995), reconciliation does not involve moral judgment or rational opinions. All that was needed was that the parties involved were able to feel that adequate consideration has been given to their points of view (Wiredu, 1995). It is on this basis that a future scheme of coexistence would be proposed. Wiredu says that, although the kind of issues that yielded this sort of agreement was generally not complex, whenever people are willing to achieve consensus, dialogue can help them to willingly suspend disagreement

(Wiredu, 1997). This makes it possible for an agreed action without necessarily agreed notion. Wiredu uses disjunctive logic to explain this. He says, for example, either we are to go to war or we are not. Although Wiredu observes that settling on one option rather than the other is extremely difficult, he asserts that this can be resolved by the willing suspension of interest which was held by the residual minority. But he says that this can only be feasible on two conditions, patience and persuasiveness of the right people (Wiredu, 2000).

As Wiredu says, reconciliation does not need a rational or ethical assessment of opinions. Thus, reconciliation does not require giving judgment (Wiredu, 1996). This was to avoid a verdict that could frustrate possible future coexistence. As Wiredu suggests, this practice could be conceivable only in communities where people have close social relations.

Political Participation in Wiredu's Non-Party Polity

In Wiredu's conception of community, individual citizens or representatives would come together to deliberate over and pursue policies and programs (Wiredu, 2000). This would encourage popular participation in the discussions concerning the common good. This would be supported by a constitutional and social arrangement that would ensure the continuity of the state and community (Wiredu, 2012). The government of consensual democracy will be formed as "a coalition, not as in the common acceptance of parties but of citizens" (Wiredu, 1997: 189). Thus, this system will encourage popular participation in deliberation concerning the common good. There will be voluntary agreement among citizens.

Within this social organization, citizens in making political decisions would be levelheaded, reason more objectively, and give sound judgment

(Wiredu, 1996). This would make them adopt a persuasive rather than confrontation approach to deliberation. They would resort to negotiation, compromise, and accommodation of each other's opinions to reach a consensus (Wiredu, 1997). This description of consensus appears as an ideal political goal. But for the Ashantis, this does not prevent the pursuit of consensus (Wiredu, 1997). They reject the majority opinion. The majority decision does not reflect the will of the whole. It does not reflect the will of the minority. This renders minority representation of no use. Thus, it denies the minority the very essence of representation in making a decision.

Two forms of representation fall within this consideration (Wiredu, 2000). First, there is a representative of a particular community in the council. Wiredu calls this formal representation. Second, there is a direct representation as a representative himself directly expresses his will in decision making. This is a substantive representation (Wiredu, 2000). Wiredu points out that there could be formal representation without correspondent substantive representation (Wiredu, 2000). This is a principal flaw in the majoritarian model. But for the Ashantis, substantive representation is a fundamental right of every person. Since every human has the right to contribute to the decision that affects his life, consensus democracy becomes relevant (Wiredu, 2000). Formal representation deprived of substance is likely to create displeasure, Wiredu argues.

If a system of government is constitutionally designed to deny substantive representation, it is apt to establish and institutionalize dissatisfaction. An example of this model is the adversarial majoritarian democracy (Wiredu, 1995). From Ashanti's standpoint, even if consensus was

not achieved, it was an ideal that was always aimed for (Wiredu, 1996). Wiredu envisions a political system in Africa that establishes institutions that is fundamentally different from the majoritarian system. Such institutions he says should be hedged with checks and balances.

By this, Wiredu canvases that the Ashantis' model represents a genuine democratic system (Wiredu, 1996). This is because the government was based on the will of the people, and was controlled by the people through their representatives. It was also a consensus because the will of the people prevailed at large based on the principle of consensus (Wiredu, 2000). In contrast, a majoritarian democracy is based on the majority principle. The principle states that the party that wins the majority of votes wields power. The party that receives less of the total vote is a loser (Wiredu, 1996). The main purpose of such parties is to win power and implement their manifesto without much regard to the totality of the community at large.

Wiredu distinguishes between parties thus:

All parties that take political decisions can be taken as parties X to deliberation. All parties that reached consensus to deliberation can be considered as parties Y. Here, majoritarian parties differ considerably from Ashanti's model. If party Y produced consensus in the Akan model, this is distinguished from the majoritarian system which produces additional parties Z. Party Z is a winning party and the rest are opponents. In our use of parties, party X denotes people with common interests or issues. Party Y means all participants. And party Z means a like-minded individual with the sole purpose of acquiring political power (Wiredu, 2001)

Thus, Wiredu argues that the idea of party Z existing in a democratic society is inconsistent with democratic principles (Wiredu, 1996). This is because the relationship between the parties X, Y, and Z, as seen in the majoritarian system, is purely antagonistic. Political parties in this context, are inherently opposed to

unity. They cherish conflict as a core democratic principle by demanding that "contrast be drawn" between acceptable democratic values (Ajei, 2016). This contrast, Wiredu argues, leads to a confrontation that tends to erode the social virtue of coexistence and cooperation. For this reason, Wiredu's idea of consensus democracy aims at encouraging pluralistic participation (Wiredu, 1996).

Chapter Summary

The chapter has discussed Wiredu's notion of consensus democracy. I have shown that the concept of consensus democracy that Wiredu presents in his political philosophy, forms a core aspect of his grand agenda of conceptual decolonization of the African mind and thought. The primary aim of this project is to establish a framework for re-embracing the value of the African indigenous system in the post-colonial era (Wiredu, 1996). This framework conceives the majoritarian system as a colonial legacy through which the African identity and consciousness have been undermined. Thus, having gained independence, Wiredu contends that Africa must remove all foreign structures and replace them with its own. This could be done by readopting the consensus practices of the past (Wiredu, 1996). He argues that the majoritarian system of governance is too confrontational. Marked by a competitive struggle for power, it tends to engender division among Africans (Wiredu, 1996). This encourages arbitrary rule and tyranny of the majority (Wiredu, 1995).

In contrast, the consensual democracy which Wiredu has proposed embraces the pluralistic sharing of power between all citizens (Wiredu, 2000). It asserts a society or a system of government in which the presence of political parties is absent (Wiredu, 2012).

CHAPTER FOUR

FOUNDATION OF WIREDU'S CONSENSUAL DEMOCRACY

Introduction

This chapter evaluates the core foundational concepts of Wiredu's consensual democracy that has been presented in the preceding chapter. It focuses on the Akan concept of governance and society which is the main idea upon which Wiredu's notion of consensus democracy is based. It also explores the notion of communalism, common interest, political association, voting, and the nature of deliberation.

Consensus and Majoritarian Decision-Making

The theory of consensus democracy as it appears in Wiredu's political philosophy defends the thesis that a democratic model based on consensus decision-making would be the best alternative for Africa (Wiredu, 2000). This model rejects the majoritarian method of policymaking. This is because it conceives the majoritarian decision-making process as adversarial (Wiredu, 2000; Ajei, 2016). Thus, consensus democratic values oppose the majoritarian system which keeps power in the hands of the majority party to the exclusion of the minority (Wiredu, 2000).

The idea of consensus in Wiredu's theory has normative merits. This is because as opposed to the majoritarian system, the consensus approach would take into consideration a broad range of views as possible in the determination of public agenda. In this way, the national policy would be a reflection of not only the majority party but the society as a whole. Popular participation in governance tends to reduce political conflict; for a system of government that

includes citizens in decision making and works towards achieving consensus in all matters would be less susceptible to internal conflict than other forms of government. By taking into account a broad range of opinions, it can lessen the inclination of one-party dominating others. This would help to reduce the propensity of the majority to monopolize power. It would also promote social cohesion.

The majoritarian system, primarily governed by the winner takes all principle, works towards winning power as an ultimate political goal, and implementing party programs on which the destiny of the whole society must be based. Since representatives in this system are usually induced by narrow party interests, they are disposed to adopt violent means to win power. The competitive struggle for the people's votes tends to divide society into factions. In a multi-ethnic society like Africa, the aggressive struggle for votes tends to stir ethnic, political, and religious conflict or divide society into ideological syndicates.

As the laws of the majoritarian democracy work, this model allows only political parties to govern. Its principles do not permit popular participation. Through an alternation of regimes, parties exercise political power to the exclusion of the rest of the populace. Democracy, in this context, suggests a set of procedures and practices that reflects not the general interest but the interests of party representatives. This is what Wiredu's notion of a non-party system tends to avoid. Unlike the party system, Wiredu's system does not endorse political parties as an organization for governance since they tend to appropriate political power. But in Wiredu's system, power would be shared by the whole populace. The non-party system is intended to eliminate (parties) social

cleavages that develop as a consequence of the alienation of citizens from political affairs.

On the one hand, a legitimate democratic decision, as Lewis (1965) suggests, is a decision that reflects the will of not the majority party but the majority of people. From this idea, we gather that democratic governance can be conceived to mean a decision-making approach in which all who are concerned with a particular decision have the opportunity to contribute to the making of that decision either by themselves or through elected representatives. Democracy by consensus, on the other hand, represents a policy-making process in which all citizens have the chance to participate in making policies that suit them.

Here, it is obvious that the conception of democratic decision making as described by the majoritarian system is not consistent with the notion of democracy suggested by Lewis. Because in the majoritarian system, the majority of people neither directly participate in governance nor contribute to lawmaking. It is from this context that Wiredu's conception of democracy becomes a better democratic framework as it syncs with Lewis' view and that of Abraham Lincoln whose definition of the term has generally been accepted. For Lincoln, democracy means the government of the people by the people, and for the people (Ajei, 2016). Like Lincoln, the kind of democracy which Wiredu proposes will allow the greatest number of citizens to have a say in government. Since majoritarian democracy seeks to exclude the majority of the populace from decision-making processes a better democratic model would then be conceived as the one which by its nature and design endorses pluralistic participation.

Exponents of the majoritarian democracy may argue that the majoritarian democracy does not permanently deny the minority party the decision-making power. They may claim that government changes; thus, a democratic principle allows a more responsible government to come to power if the government in power fails to accomplish what the people desire. And through the change of governments, both minority and majority get the chance to govern. Democracy may obtain in this context if the party in power will serve not its own will but the preferences of the whole citizenry. But this arrangement cannot obtain under the laws of the majoritarian democracy. This is because the majoritarian system by its structure and principles neither directly takes into account the views of the populace nor the minority opinions.

In addition to overriding minority opinions, the minority is considered not as an ally but an opposition party. An opposition party suggests an antagonistic body rather than a party complementary to the government. Thus, the minority is fundamentally viewed as an organization that only criticizes the governing party and not auxiliary to govern. Conceived as an opponent, the minority will also fight to come to power. This rapacious desire to win elections and control state affairs can be conceived as the root cause of the conflict associated with the majoritarian system. The consensus system, on the other hand, as Wiredu avers, would establish institutional procedures that would methodically guide deliberation to consensus. As Wiredu's theory exposes, the majoritarian system does not adequately capture the spirit of the "government of the people by the people and for the people" definition of democracy.

Nature of Deliberation and Consensus

In Wiredu's view, consensus can be achieved through compromise, negotiation, and persuasion (Wiredu, 2000). In his opinion, a reappraisal of issues at dispute would give rise to reconciliation when the resolution of cases is being negotiated (Wiredu, 2000). He writes thus:

There is substantial evidence that decision by consensus was often the order of the day in African deliberations. So, it was not just an exercise in hyperbole when Kaunda, said "In our original societies we operated by consensus. An issue was talked out in solemn conclave until an agreement could be achieved" ... Consider the non-party democracy in which members would be willing to compromise and with this, the prospects of consensus would be enhanced (Wiredu, 2000).

It may be argued that reconciliation and compromise are simply pre-colonial methods of resolving technically non-complex issues. Hence, this method might not be feasible for addressing contemporary political issues that are complex. Indeed, as Wiredu (1995) concedes, within families and among ethnic groups of the pre-colonial era, sporadic conflicts and misunderstandings occurred among (members of) tribes. During council deliberations too, disagreement did occur. But such disagreements did not usually polarize members into rivals or factions. Since political and social issues were less value-laden, a dialogue was used to resolve matters and re-unite parties without creating any antipathy between them. From this context, it may be agreed that what made consensus possible in the pre-colonial society was the nature of issues that arose in that epoch; issues were usually non-complex epistemologically. Also, what made reconciliation work well was because people involved in a dispute were usually members of the same tribe.

But in the post-colonial African society, issues for political discussion are generally deeply embedded not only with political but also religious and

economic interests. This is because post-colonial Africa is a product of diverse cultural traditions arising from different religious, economic, and political orientations. This claim is affirmed by Nkrumah in his book titled *Consciencism*. In this book, Nkrumah analyzes the experiences of slavery and colonialism and their impact on African identity. Nkrumah observes that in the conscience of the African is a fundamental crisis (Nkrumah, 1964). Such a crisis is occasioned by an admixture of three cultural forces arising from influences from European civilization, Islamic religion, and African traditions (Nkrumah, 1964). As a consequence, the African has been brought to the crossroad where he can neither return to the values of the past nor fully assume a foreign identity. A synthesis of these traditions and social consciousness would produce an African with a mindset entirely different from that of the past. Meanwhile, the post-colonial society is also a period in which ethics and morality are established not by social ideals but through the power of capital. For instance, owners of capital control the media, government, culture, and every aspect of life. In essence, they determine what should be accepted or not accepted by society.

Since post-colonial Africa is a hybrid of different cultural traditions, lawmaking arms of government are often divided along different lines of interests and beliefs. Decision making in the post-colonial society, therefore, tends to require members to adduce evidence, data, statistics, and facts to fervently defend their beliefs or positions. This justification of subjective beliefs, interests, and values seems to have been accepted as a valid method by which political decisions could be made. This method of decision making is difficult to produce a consensus because people tend to have a deep attachment

to their subjective beliefs, opinions, and interests which tend to conflict with those of others.

It is along this line of thought that Wiredu concedes that “certain issues do precipitate exhaustive disjunctives which no dialogue can resolve. For example, either we go to war or we do not” (Wiredu, 1995, p. 54). Although discussing issues of this nature in the past would not usually sharply divide deliberators into strong lines of disagreement, in post-colonial Africa, political issues of this kind might not easily lead to the achievement of consensus especially among legislators. Thus, since deliberators would deeply attach themselves to their beliefs and opinions, the problem arises as to how to take one group’s opinion over that of the other. This poses a huge difficulty in reaching a consensus.

But despite this difficulty, consensus can still flourish. Council of governors can easily reach consensus if their membership is not too large. In the legislature too, members can reach broad agreement if they are willing to. But this would still be difficult if there is no suitable political structures or principles to guide consensus decision making. In this respect, a consensus-based political structure would be crucial. Because a successful democratic society is one that is based on an appropriate political structure whose fundamental building blocks are chiefly the constitution, laws, and positive political consciousness. As the majoritarian system is founded on a constitution that promotes majority rule, if the consensus system is built on a consensual constitutional arrangement, it would ensure consensus. As Ajei (2016) indicates, although the majoritarian democracy may occasionally achieve a consensus in making a decision, this model cannot be termed as a consensus system. This is because its institutional

frameworks are fundamentally opposed to that of the consensus model. For instance, the constitution of the majoritarian system, as we have shown, operates by the law of winner takes all. This system creates bitterness and antagonism by giving all seats to the party that wins the greatest number of votes; since the majority tends to get absolute power it is inclined to the oppression of the minority. The majority is thus seen as tyrannical because as a rule, it does not accommodate the interest of the minority.

Chiefship, Legal, and Ethical Foundation of Wiredu's Theory

The theory of consensual democracy in Wiredu's political philosophy has its foundation in the chiefship system of government (Wiredu, 2000). Under this system, Wiredu follows Abraham (1962) by asserting that chiefship, as an institution of governance, was more sacred than political (Wiredu, 2000). Chiefship was sacred because a chief who was the head of government was also the link between the spiritual beings (the ancestors and the gods) and the living (Wiredu 1995). The ancestors and the gods aided governance and oversaw social and political affairs from an incorporeal vantage point (Wiredu, 1995). The spiritual world, as Wiredu argued before, is ontologically homogeneous. This idea is based on the philosophy that a uniform relationship exists among spirit beings. Hence, in the Akan metaphysics, Wiredu informs us that there is no fundamental distinction between spirit and matter; spirit is immanent in matter (Wiredu, 1996).

The idea of the ontology of being introduces an ethical dimension in the physical world. This is because spirit beings are conceived to have the power to administer punishment to people who break certain immoral codes as well as civic laws (Abraham, 1962; Wiredu, 1996). This is reinforced in the Akan

philosophy that the Akan law is inspired by the Akan religion, and the Akan law could be conceived as a sort of complement to ethics (Abraham, 1962). Although Wiredu does not place God as the object of Akan ethics, he does indicate that the belief in the gods, spirits or ancestors, commands special reverence as they constitute authoritative forces that influence political choices in the physical world (Wiredu, 2000). “And if it involves supra-human belief, the relevant ethic will be based logically or psychologically on the supra-being or being concerned” (Wiredu, 1996, p. 46). But the Akan religion has a social dimension through which commitment to moral codes are instilled in members (Wiredu, 1996).

Such a harmonious relationship, as Wiredu (1996) indicates, is supposed to replicate in human society through the governance systems of which the chief is the head. Indeed, appealing to spiritual beings could command obedience. For instance, in the absence of coercive instrument of power in the traditional setting, divine authority was appealed to ensure adherence to social norms; for fear of the gods constrains human conduct and ensure social compliance. Hence, the Akan religion could promote values such as unity, consensus, egalitarianism, corporation, collectivity, and unanimity.

But harmony (or unanimity) among the gods and spirits would obtain if their desires, interests, and values converge. The correspondence of such harmony among humans is also possible if humans have the same interests and values. But spiritual beings upon whom unity among humans are supposed to depend are sometimes conceived to be good or bad. A spirit being that is interested in doing evil may be referred to as bad (or evil) whilst those that cherish good deeds may be called good spirits. An evil spirit will not agree with

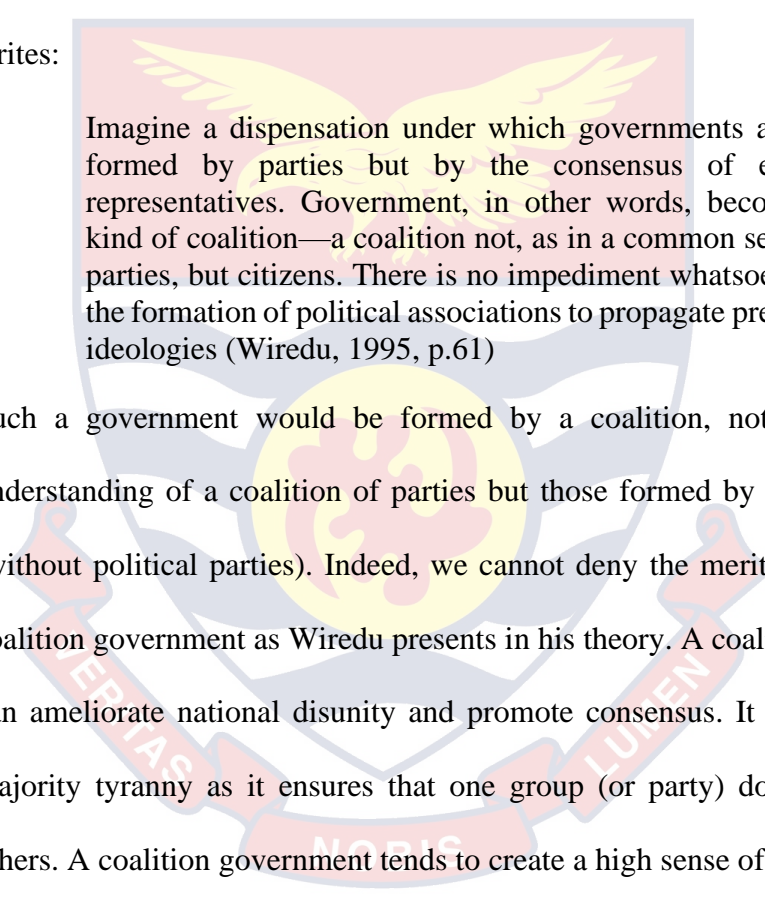
a good spirit neither will a bad god agree with a good god. The values “good” and “evil” (bad) are disparate. This contradiction does not show a harmonious relationship among the spirits. If the spiritual mode of life that is supposed to reflect in the human world can be conflictual, then one cannot accept the opposite concerning an absolute homogeneity among men.

The chieftaincy system, as a model for governance, could also be regarded as inhospitable to the modern political society. Because the chiefship system, like the majoritarian system, had oligarchy tendencies. It allowed only a select few known as royal families to rule. The remaining families, conceived as non-royals, did not have direct access to political power. Whilst the royal families could be perceived as superior, the non-royals could be seen as inferior and generally mere members of the polity. To distinguish one family as royal and others and as common people may be regarded as discrimination. It may be seen as unjust. Besides, since contemporary Africa is composed of multi-ethnic groups it would be very difficult to identify which particular ethnic group could be the noblest, from which national leaders could be appointed.

Moreover, since contemporary society has embraced scientific methods of conducting government business it cannot base its laws on spirits and ancestors. Although contemporary society is pervaded with diverse religious beliefs, laws are now codified as well as enforced by the police and the judiciary. These have displaced the role the spirit world played in the pristine society. The laws of society should be grounded in science and reason. Reason, as the basis of law and its scientific application, does not undermine the call for consensus politics. It simply shows that the governance of the world has evolved from the hands of the gods (spirit), as Hegel would say, to the hands of men.

Coalition, Political Association, and Non-party Politics

Wiredu rejects any form of a majoritarian principle of decision making and a formal system of voting as an appropriate means of making decisions (Wiredu, 2004). In his view, the multiparty system of voting falls short of 100% consensus (Wiredu, 1995). Since Wiredu rejects the idea of voting and party system, he invites us to consider a government that is formed not by parties, but through consensus appointment of representatives (Wiredu, 2000). Wiredu writes:



Imagine a dispensation under which governments are not formed by parties but by the consensus of elected representatives. Government, in other words, becomes a kind of coalition—a coalition not, as in a common sense of parties, but citizens. There is no impediment whatsoever to the formation of political associations to propagate preferred ideologies (Wiredu, 1995, p.61)

Such a government would be formed by a coalition, not as the popular understanding of a coalition of parties but those formed by ordinary citizens (without political parties). Indeed, we cannot deny the merit of the idea of a coalition government as Wiredu presents in his theory. A coalition government can ameliorate national disunity and promote consensus. It can also prevent majority tyranny as it ensures that one group (or party) does not dominate others. A coalition government tends to create a high sense of legitimacy and a common identity. And it can also help eliminate internal political conflicts.

But Wiredu's conception of coalition raises some fundamental questions. Since he rejects the idea of voting, what would be the procedure for the consensual election of leaders? How do we select the most qualified leaders from the many qualified and potential leaders without creating conflict? The idea of political association in Wiredu's theory implies that all tribes, for

example, have a common interest concerning who becomes a political leader. The consensus potential of deliberation and selecting national leaders would depend on the irenic cultural norm of a particular society. If a society is characterized by a natural (social) instinct to consent to a collective decision then it has the chance of achieving a high level of consensus. However, if a society is not willing to achieve consensus it has a less degree of achieving consensus under the coalition system. Generally, the coalition system is the most preferable system for minimizing domestic social division, because it allows for broad consultation and corporation aimed at reaching consensus.

But in contemporary society, there are many tribes and ethnic groups with different interests and diverse aspirations. Each tribe would desire that a head of state or a political leader comes from within it. If this desire is not fulfilled it would engender strife and opposition. As people come from different tribes, using consensus as a means to dissuade competing candidates from becoming leaders might be faced with strife. This may pose a challenge to Wiredu's conception of a political association which does not seem to embrace diversity.

Notion of Communitarianism

The dichotomy between the majoritarian and consensual model of democracy is drawn from Western and African conceptions of person and society (Wiredu, 1995; Ajei, 2016). According to the African conception, a person is a part of the community (Ramose, 2002). A person's identity is deeply attached to his community. This concept of personhood forms the basis of Wiredu's consensus democracy (Wiredu, 1996; Ajei, 2016). But this idea seems to deny a person's individuality, autonomy, self-interest, and independence. The

distinction between Western and African conception of persons and their correspondence consensus and liberal democracy, as we see in Wiredu's philosophy, implies that the Western conception of a person emphasizes individualism whilst the African communal system cherishes communal interests. Since a person is identified by his community in the African setting, Wiredu prizes the primacy of communality over individuality (Wiredu, 2000).

On the one hand, to assert the supremacy of the community over the individual implies that community can exist without individuals. But it is human beings who make up a community. On the other hand, to say that individuals existed before the community is ontologically contradictory. For society is an indispensable place for humans. In this case, embracing an absolute individualistic approach to life and governance undermines mankind's instinct of living together in a community. This assertion is perfectly supported by Gyekye's analysis of the communitarian conception of individual and society. Here Gyekye implies that whilst human beings are the basis of social analysis, they are also independent self-conscious beings who make up a community. Thus to argue that community supersedes individual means to deny a person of his individuality and autonomy as a rational being. To do so means that the individual has to lose her autonomy and freewill which are key defining elements of her nature. If individuals surrender their independence to another, they become no more than slaves. The identity of a person, in this case, is defined by her psychological nature or subjective awareness of himself and the universe. But the identity of a person is also shaped by communal consciousness.

Whilst the community could be conceived as the macro framework within which an individual can realize his being, the individual can be considered as the micro-framework within which individuality, personal identity, and potentiality of the person can be discovered and given expression. The individual is a thinking being; he has the ability for self-reflection on how the community is to be organized. Conversely, the community as a composite of human (mind) beings, determines an individual's social consciousness. Therefore, the correct relationship between the individual and the community is dialectical. One is indispensable to the other. Hence, since the individuals cannot be separated from the community nor society from the individual, we can only have a society that embraces individuality and community.

Again, as shown in Wiredu's theory, the idea of consensus is derived from a community whose people were bonded by family and blood relations (Wiredu, 2000). In such an environment, unanimity was easily attainable. This is because the people (Akan) who were united by blood would naturally conceive themselves as one. Usually, in the pre-colonial (Akan) society, as Wamala (2004) implies, one's father's brother is considered as a father, and one's mother's sister is taken as a mother. At the bigger tribal level, no one could marry from other tribes or ethnic groups. Sons and daughters could marry only members of other clans from the same ethnic group. As a result, the whole of society could become one body of a family. Everybody is related to the other in the community.

In this sense, the Akan (pre-colonial) society is highly likely to exhibit strong social cohesion, solidarity, sense of togetherness than a modern heterogeneous society composing of several ethnic or cultural groupings. Thus,

since the Akan society appears homogeneous, it could be considered conducive to unanimous decision making than the contemporary political community which is highly diverse. This makes the pre-colonial model of democracy far removed from contemporary political operations. But since the majoritarian model seems flawed, we are better off producing a new model.

Furthermore, the contrast between the adversarial and Wiredu's conception of democracy emerges from differences in Western and the African (Akan) notion of the world (Ajei, 2016). Here again, Wiredu's theory suggests that the Western view of community is informed by individualism whereas that of Africa is based on collectivity or communalism (Wiredu, 1995). Indeed, this view shows that the values of these two societies are opposite. It is important to keep in mind that what distinguishes a particular society from the other in the history of social formation is the class character of the mode of production. For example, in the African context, the mode of production is communal. The land was the main resource from which material means of man were produced. The political economy of the communal society of that era worked more by the principle of consensus, and collectivity. The social, political, cultural, and economic relations of the communal society was based on principles of agreement and interdependence. This political and economic formation is guided by egalitarianism, as both economic and political principles. Since communalism encourages collective economic activities, consensus, as a mode of decision making was not difficult to adopt.

But the political economy of post-colonial Africa is neither defined by communal ownership of the means of production nor egalitarianism. It is governed not only by private ownership of means of life but also by the liberal

ideology which is the underlining principle of the liberal democracy that is taking over not only Africa but the whole world. The imposition of capitalism in Africa means an abrupt break from the communal past. As Fayemi (2010) reminds us, Africa's socio-political and economic systems have currently been deeply tied to global politics and financial systems. In a society where there is private ownership of the means of production, people tend to have diverse values, interests, and beliefs, conflicting against one another in the relations of production. This does not allow African society to develop social and political organizations equivalent to that of the pre-colonial epoch. To construct an analogous society, however, suggests that we should be able to eliminate social classes and capitalism which is the basis of inequality and conflict.

Thus, the dichotomy between the adversarial and communal system of government can be comprehended by the dynamics in the (global) political economy. The extent to which egalitarian relations or consensus model of government can obtain in African will be determined by the degree to which the society is free from capitalism and competing interests. In a society where capitalists and political leaders are bent to dominate political and economic affairs, it denies others the right to participate in it. This would not engender agreement. In contrast, in a communal society where societal resources are collectively owned, there is harmony and peace.

Common Interest

The theory of consensus democracy which Wiredu presents makes the following claim: "all members of society have the same interest, although, their immediate perception about it might be different" (Wiredu, 1995, p. 57). This "expresses in a metaphor of a two-headed crocodile with one stomach struggling

over food” (Wiredu, 1995, p 57). For Wiredu, the two heads fight over food because they could not recognize that food will ultimately go to the same stomach. If they did, they would not fight each other because they will realize the irrationality in doing so (Wiredu, 1995, p. 57). Wiredu suggests that members of a society have “a rock bottom identity of interest” which the Ashantis can navigate and discover (Wiredu, 1995, p. 57).

Indeed, as social beings, we live in a society in which one depends on others. This implies that one person cannot live or make a community. Hence, we agree with Wiredu’s view that consensus democracy can guarantee the possibility of sustaining a democratic deliberation which could lead to the discovery of common interest (good). Because at least it suggests that for common interest to be arrived at, the people involved need to (dialectically) “cut through the rock” through deliberation to arrive at it.

But in his analysis, Wiredu does not seem to regard personal interests as the key factor from which all conflicts emerge and therefore must be given due treatment. Wiredu uses two expressions in his analogy, “the interests of all members of society are the same” and “food was destined for the same stomach” (Wiredu, 1995, p. 57). He uses these expressions to show that people have the same interest in accessing food; they also have the same common interest in eating food. By using these expressions in each instance to designate common interest, Wiredu does not seem to help us to understand the terms common and private interests as well as common good as discussed in political thought. As implied from Rousseau’s philosophy, common interest appears to be an aggregate will of people to which a particular thing (good) can satisfy (Rousseau, 1998). For example, if a body of people purposefully assembles for

deliberation, they have, “common interest” which is to arrive at a decision that promotes the general good (or well-being). Thus, a common interest is not the common good. Whilst common good can be comprehended as the object for which a decision is made, common interest may designate the aggregate will of people from which such a decision is made. Also, the common good, as Aristotle suggests, denotes the highest good considered as adequate by a society for which deliberation is made (Lintott, 1992). Situating Wiredu's proposition in this context, the common interest could correspond to "all members have a common interest" (in decision making about food), whereas the common good might be the product of decision, "food".

We can also infer that common interest though reflects the general interest, has an element of private interest. This is because a body of people who assemble to deliberate have common interests as well as private or individual (will) interests. The idea that two heads fight over food which Wiredu as indicated affirms this. It shows that private interest or element is embedded in general interest which needs to be removed to arrive at a common interest which truly reflects the interest of all. In removing this private interest, we subject common interest to a deliberative process of refinement which is dialectical. The dialectical process in deliberation refers to the process in which thoughts and ideas are refined. It is a science of decision making in which contradictions, oppositions, and conflicts are resolved to lead to a decision. In doing so, Wiredu's view, "two heads fight over food" becomes evident. Whereas Wiredu seems to characterize fight in decision making as negative, the dialectical method conceives fight or conflict as a fact that characterizes deliberation processes. Through this process, private interests are removed or reduced. But

since we live in association with others, public deliberation must have a communal character. That is amidst disagreements, diverse opinions must be harmonized to arrive at a decision.

By saying that “The two heads fight over food because they could not see the irrationality of fighting each other” suggests that there is no reasonable ground for people to fight over enjoying food; each person has no reason to think that he should chew and enjoy food rather than the other. In other words, to say that it is irrational for two people to fight over food suggests that there is no personal interest in chewing or enjoying food.

On the one hand, if every person can derive personal enjoyment from national food, then why do individuals fight? Indeed, it would be unreasonable to involve in such a fight. On the other hand, if there is a specific and equal benefit in eating food, then we may be justified in saying that conflict over food is irrational. This will yield two propositions: either the people have the same interest which they are ignorant of, as Wiredu says, or they have conflicting interests. In this case, Wiredu rejects the second alternative. If this is true, then Wiredu's option holds, but perhaps partially. Because according to dialectical logic, both options can entail; that the two heads both have the same interest which they are ignorant of and they also have conflicting interests. And it is this conflict of interests in deliberation that can be synthesized into a consensus decision.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter offers recommendation, summarizes the central arguments, and draws conclusion of this thesis. It captures the author's reflections (perspective and philosophy) on which the recommendation and the conclusion are based. One of the central arguments has been discussed in Chapter three. It holds that the majoritarian system of governance is designed to support only a segment of people in society who aggressively pursue and capture power (this view is also supported by Wiredu and his defenders). Such an unhealthy competition for power is informed by the majority principle. This winner takes all rule is explained to mean that candidates who get the majority of the total votes cast in an election become winners of the election. Candidates who do not get the greatest proportion of the votes is conceived to be the losers. Such candidates are denied the opportunity to be part of the government. This model denies the rest of the populace the right to have their voices integrated into important decisions that affect them. Parties, upon winning power, seek to implement not the general will but party programs. In this context, the party manifesto becomes the key instrument by which the destiny of a whole society is determined. The aggressive struggle for the people's votes tends to divide society into factions. In the context of Africa, for instance, this gives rise to tribal politics, which is usually accompanied by tribal dissents.

As I have indicated, Wiredu's consensual democracy has a core aim of correcting these inadequacies by eliminating the adversarial tendencies associated with the majoritarian system. To do this, it advocates a non-party

system of government that repudiates the existence of party system; but it embraces citizen associations. This association of citizens, according to him, would draw together citizens, not parties, in a form of a coalition to conduct governmental affairs (Wiredu, 1996). Wiredu's idea of consensus and a coalition government, as has been shown, have positive values. This is because this structure of governance can minimize internal conflict than other forms of government by preventing majority tyranny. It also ensures that one group or party does not dominate others.

However, within the framework of his non-party polity and political association, Wiredu rejects the formal method of voting as a means by which leaders are selected. Whilst this idea is attractive, it raises some fundamental questions: Since Wiredu rejects the idea of voting, what would be the consensus procedure for the selection of leaders? How do we select the most qualified national leaders from the many competent and potential leaders without creating conflict? If such associations would undertake governmental functions, they might, in essence, not be different from political parties. And they might eventually degenerate into party cleavages.

Recommendation

Political Model

This thesis recommends a model I call the amalga model of democracy. The term "amalga" is coined from the word 'amalgamation', which means to merge. The amalga model is thus a model for governance that draws from the direct and the indirect models a leveraged decision-making power from diverse classes of people to promote collective good. It is a model that recognizes social division as the primary constitutive element of society. And it thus affirms

governance based on such segmentation. It posits that by focusing on social grouping, we can have a government so divided to focus on the needs of each segment. This is because the voices of various divisions would be coalesced to form a national will. Hence, decision making would be based on broad agreement on policies that the government needs to pursue.

The laws, principles, procedures, and institutions of this model would not only seek to share powers among the branches of government but also limit them. This model would rest on an ethical foundation that seeks to eliminate excessive self-seeking tendencies that obtain in the public realm. The model is founded on the utilitarian idea that democracy must give equal opportunity to the greatest number of people as possible. But whilst it advocates popular participation, it also recognizes that some decisions cannot be taken by the masses. Some political choices can only be determined by the experienced and experts. Hence, this model may be ideal because it seeks to balance opposing interests in society.

Competition and Wealth Creation

The amalga model is informed by the idea that private ownership of property, as inspired by liberal democracy, poses a threat to a consensus mode of governance especially in the context of post-colonial Africa. The history of social formation gives us clues to suggest that private ownership of enterprise tends to lead to wealth creation. But non-investment of capital is generally leads to economic deprivation. These reveals two general attitudes of mankind relative to economic activities and operations of market forces. This generally corresponds to two types of people. The investors and non-investors. These attitudes and types of people broadly divide society into unparallel class

relationships. These unequal economic relations breed envy and greed. Since politics designates an acquisition of power to allocate economic values, political actors tend to direct power toward the appropriation of national wealth. And they are in turn treated as first-class citizens, with grandeur, respects, and superfluous honor. Some become wealthy through corruption. In Africa, for instance, political leaders usually own the most expensive cars bought by the government which they drive in flamboyant fashion. In addition to this, they are paid a monthly salary by the state.

This creates two negative impacts on society. First, it skews the wealth of a nation to only a segment of people. Second, it influences the remaining segments of people to strive hard, not to succeed through their own efforts, but to get rich by any means possible especially through appropriation of public fund. And this should put them in parallel economic status with politicians, within the shortest possible time. The struggle of people to get wealth from the national coffers is the basis of conflict, as depicted in liberal and majoritarian democracies. Indeed, one may argue that mankind has a natural inclination to acquire wealth. Hence an argument against the acquisition of wealth is flawed. Whilst this holds, the tendency for some individuals to acquire wealth through dishonesty defies the natural law of reason. This is a law that can be grasped through reasoning. It can also be taught to those who cannot apprehend it and those who apprehend it but have not developed the capacity to obey it. This law is bestowed on every man to know that despite the natural inclination for self-preservation the emotion of pain is not an experience desirable by anyone against which one must exploit society for self-gain. Based on this law a

political community must be consciously established to have a foundation on ethics that repudiate such ills.

To do this, the classical communal society offers us a good model from which to learn. In the traditional governance system, the central principle that governed deliberation was a consensus. Apart from political decision making, social relations were also underlined by cooperation and agreement. These principles are reflected in the production and distribution of material needs. The land which was the main source of economic value was shared based on egalitarianism. This mode of wealth distribution does not lead to conflict. Also, there was no conflict because there was less motivation for using political power to gain wealth. Hence, the aggressive competition for power was absent. In fact, in the pristine society, political leaders did not earn a monthly salary for their political services as it is the main motivation for leadership in contemporary society. The aggressive or competitive struggle for power and wealth, as typified by the liberal and majoritarian system, can thus be considered to potentially undermine peace as it can engender conflict. As informed by the communal examples, the amalga model advocates a sustainable moral community that is sustained by laws.

The novel model would guarantee the best economic, social, and political atmosphere. The majoritarian model as a derivative of the liberal ideology, emphasizes free enterprise. This ideology fuels the formation of classes. But this system does not incorporate all classes of people in governance. It limits the participation of the lower classes. But it increases the participation of only a segment of individuals who can dominate, influence decisions, and exercise power over the rest. Here, the amalga model, in contrast, is informed

by the idea that different groups and classes of people with different capacities exist in a society. Generally, a society is composed of the upper, middle, and lower classes. There are also interest-based associations that are economic, political, educational, and religious; there are also labor unions. Besides, post-colonial Africa is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-religious, cosmopolitan society. By focusing on diverse classes or groups, shaping their ideologies, and incorporating their unique preferences, needs, and aspirations in governance we move away from a narrowed conception society to a more holistic one.

Parties, Association, and Coalition Government

The idea of governance, group affiliation, and association could be conceived as basic human features. Mankind since the classical communal society tended to live in groups. Hence, since human beings have an inherent inclination to belong to groups and associations there is no contradiction if we posit that the anatomy of a society should be understood in terms of groups and affiliations. In this context, political associations, as agents for governance, could work toward a stable society. But parties could serve as a more effective instrument for governance especially in the contemporary context. A political association can enrich a countries' democracy, shape public opinion, and promote political culture. But such bodies cannot govern. Because the idea of political association is not about a frontline governmental activity.

But a political party, as generally conceived, may represent bodies that can present officials for an election with an intent to govern. From the context of the amalga model, both political parties and political associations can be considered parties for public deliberation. But parties would serve as key

instruments for public policymaking. Both political associations and parties could serve as the machinery by which conflicting ideas are harmonized into a decision through debating. They could also constitute vital sources of ideas required for national development. But parties would direct the focus of political debate; they would lead in the critical examination of ideas by sharing new and diverse perspectives about the common good through deliberation. Through debates, ideas would be refined through a deliberative dialectical process. Since the main purpose of such parties would not be winning elections, the struggle for power does not arise.

Hence it is recommended that electoral systems are organized in a way that if a party wins the majority of seats it can neither form a government nor take policy initiatives on its own. This would allow for a coalition government to be formed. As a coalition government, the amalga model of democracy would not allow the party that wins the plurality of votes to either appropriate power or become a tyrant. But would work in a manner that parties, through negotiation, compromise, understanding, and consensus make key policy decisions together. The logic for allowing, cooperation, negotiation, and compromise among parties is to allow for broad consultation on policies that would reflect the general will.

Parties in this context would be owned by the state rather than individuals. Such parties may be referred to as “national parties”. They may be conceived to be political parties but not parties as to the normal acceptance of the term political parties as in the majoritarian model. They would simply be parties intended for the formation of a coalition, debating, and discussing ideas, and promotion of social development. If state ownership, control, or funding of

such parties aims at discouraging private funding, it can overcome the dominance of wealthy persons. It can eliminate unhealthy competition that characterizes the majoritarian system. This can help provide a more egalitarian platform for deliberation which could otherwise be hindered by financial inequality among citizens. This system would help to overcome an undue influence and serve as a means to a more objective deliberation. In this arrangement, proper mediating structures such as voting, compromise, and restrained party competition would have crucial roles to play.

Parties, Voting, and Consensus

The idea of voting, as emphasized by the amalga model, is inspired by the assumption of its coalition form of government. This assumption indicates that since national parties have the core aim of working together, they would eliminate the dominance of any one of the parties within that union. The core aim of such a government is to promote cooperation among government officials and to eliminate the tendencies of leaders pursuing private interests.

Though it acknowledges that a government is a form of business, the motive of such a business is not to generate profit for individuals. But its core aim is to generate benefits that promote the good life for the entire society. Such an organization would require that competent persons are chosen from dozens of qualified persons to serve. In this case, a decision has to be made on the selection of leaders based on experience and relevant knowledge of governance. Here, the only methods available for such a selection are consensus and voting. A rejection of the latter presupposes that the former method can be used to make all national decisions. But if we emphasize the former (consensus) unanimity over the latter (voting) as the only method for decision making what would be

the mode for such unanimous selection of national leaders? How do we choose the most capable leaders from the countless qualified and potential leaders desiring to lead without creating conflict? Here, since modern states are large, to achieve a consensus decision among so many people concerning who ought to be a leader would be very difficult.

Generally, a consensus method should be the most preferred as it would seek to minimize internal political division. But in the case of national selection of leaders, a consensual decision has to be arrived at from series of consultations which would be too broad. To affirm the primacy of consensus over an election of leaders is to assume that a consensus method of decision making would always produce 100% unanimity. But a deliberation that is expected to always yield consensus might create a gridlock. To avoid this, an election must be organized for the selection of leaders. An election of lawmakers should be done by the people. Lawmakers should in turn constitute the council of governors whose membership should be drawn from the various regions and major ethnic groups. There must not be campaigning for votes. The selection of leaders should be based on experience, expertise, and a good moral character. An institution for appraisal must be established in this respect for assessing the suitability of candidates.

Interest, Deliberation, and Consensus

The amalga model of democracy recognizes that whilst humans have common interests, they also have conflicting private interests. Private interest pertains to personal desires or preferences whilst public interest leads to collective good. Private interests should not influence deliberation concerning the common good although people tend to attach themselves to them. Through

deliberation, private interests must be removed. The process of such deliberation should be considered as dialectical. This method of decision making designates a mode of deliberation in which parties involved endeavor to arrive at truth through logical interrogation and justification of ideas. Such a deliberation would aim at making clear contradictory views, understanding their contents and aims, and reconciling disparate views.

The common good in this context becomes that which is agreed upon. It is not something whose ontology is mechanical. The merit of this view lies in its acknowledgment that different perceptions or perspectives exist, and the harmony of diverse viewpoints leads to the formulation of the common good. If such harmonization delays, a decision also delays. But this limitation can be resolved by adopting a four-fifths or 80% majority principle as a requirement to facilitate decision making if consensus is difficult to reach. Though this is a majority rule, it is close to consensus.

Science of Governance System

Governance can be conceived as a process by which leaders, together with the people who have chosen them, get their collective problems resolved; and each day, the lives of the people are expected to become better off even as they move towards the ideal (a happier) life. To this end, a political community exists. An organization of such a community should be not arbitrary. Hence governance should be understood as a science. By the science of governance, I mean an objective study of the various divisions or groupings and their interactions and behaviors within society. Such grouping may be an association of farmers, artisans, educationalists. It may also be ethnic groups, tribes, elites, grassroots, and so on. As segments of society, groups appear to have peculiar

needs and disinclinations. Therefore, the study of diverse groups should inform how a government ought to be organized.

Just as Hegel has argued in his *Science of Logic*, there is a dialectical relationship between the various categories of people (Hegel, 1892). This suggests that development in society arises from interactions between different departments and institutions. This law exposes that unity and diversity of interests inevitably develop between and among institutions once they are established. Hence societal development can only obtain if there are checks and balances of interests. In the political evolution of society, we see this law at play. For instance, in the pristine communal society, political structures consisted of the judicial, legislative, and military arms. These institutions performed different peculiar roles. But they are headed by sub-chiefs. However, the whole political organization is controlled by one paramount chief. In such a society, the political system was structured to demonstrate the separation of powers among governing bodies. This ensures a dialectical relationship amongst them.

Like the communal society, the majoritarian democracy practiced in Africa is generally divided into branches to ensure separation and balance of power. However, despite this principle, the majoritarian constitution tends to endow omnipotent powers to presidents. In Ghana, for instance, presidents reserve the power for the appointment of ministers, chief justice, electoral commissioners, inspector general of police, and so on. The constitution mandates the president to select ministers from parliament to check the executive. But the ministers tend to play to the gallery. Because a parliamentarian would always desire to be chosen by a president as a minister.

In this case, the constitution which endows presidents such a sovereign authority cannot be regarded as democratic in the true sense of the word; and, such all-powerful leaders can only be characterized as a democratic dictator. Unlike this model, the amalga model aims at a balanced power-sharing among each division of government.

Generally, apart from the courts which deal with law adjudication, a government should be composed of four governing bodies. These are the council of governors, the parliament, the council of ministers (of state), and the council of lords. A member of parliament should not double as a minister of state. Lawmakers should focus on making legislation and examining government documents such as contracts and agreements. They should be responsible for checking the council of governors and perform oversight functions. Legislatures should be elected by the people. And the council of governors should be constituted by the legislature.

Relevant representatives of political associations and groups concerned with the particular policy should be incorporated in the making of law or policy. But this should have a limit. It is preferred that the legislature is composed of experts; experienced lawyers, ethicists, enlightened persons, (reflective) philosophers, or sage would be most ideal. Such a category of persons would constitute a dynamic intellectual force by which the moral foundation of a society can be sustained. Members of the society, through citizens' initiative and recall, can also initiate public policy. Important decisions that border on public interest should be held in camera and the public, through various media, participate in the making of such decisions. It is preferred that laws are made to be consistent with African values, norms, and aspirations, although, dynamism

should not be sacrificed. For, a society that teaches its citizens to possess moral virtue, which they demonstrate in practical life, is the one in which citizens find excellence and happiness.

Ministers of state can be conceived to be agents for development. They should be bodies through which government visions and plans are realized. Their daily activities should fuel the achievement of projects that brings about human, social, and material development: for instance, the minister for agriculture should focus on boosting agriculture, devising strategies and appropriate technologies for producing more food for internal consumption and excess for export: the minister for education should focus on developing the educational system to be relevant to the African context. It must focus more on developing skills through technical, vocational, and technological education relevant to industrial growth. Apart from the technical aspect, education must promote the teaching of science, African history, African culture, and African philosophy, and African medicine: the minister for culture should have a core duty of promoting African culture. Minister for trade and industry should be concerned with developing productive forces, creating systems to ensure the transformation of raw materials into finished products. All ministers must work together toward human development and what can be referred to as a humanist industrial revolution in Africa.

The governing council should be in charge of the day-to-day administration of the state. They must be seen to exercise executive powers. But such powers should be limited by the constitution. The operations of the council of governors should be checked by the lawmakers. The activities of the legislature should be securitized by the council of lords. Thus, the council of

lords should be charged for giving a second look into and ratify crucial activities of the parliament. Hence, the relationship between the branches, the council of governors, lawmakers, the council of ministers, and the council of lords should be dialectical. Such a dialectical relationship should aim at avoiding any one of the branches to become too powerful. A council of governors should be constituted from the various regions of the country. This should make it possible for them to rule in the interest of all. Each member can rule for a tenure of one year until each one of them has governed. This systemic rotation would aim at avoiding alienation of a region or a major tribe from dominating as the producer of a head of state. This should help to eliminate tribal politics. Though the council of governors could be seen as responsible for day-to-day government operations, they should be servants of all the other bodies of government.

The assembly should be an important institution within the local governance system. It should be a place where members of a village or town or community assemble to form the community's will. Like the Athenian society, assembly meetings must be open to all who want to participate in deliberation concerning the needs of a community. The needs of a community should be integrated into the overall plans of the local government. Information concerning both local and national government must be freely accessible by all. Every local government should have the autonomy to rule its affairs, although it should work hand in hand with the national government. Part of the taxes collected should be used to develop the local communities.

Remuneration and Wages

As I have indicated, one of the reasons why consensus flourished in the pre-colonial society was that the distribution of economic value was governed

by the principle of egalitarianism. Each member of society has a fair share or access to land, which was the primary means of production. In the communal society, there was less tendency to appropriate land, which belongs to the whole community. Chiefs only kept land in the custody of their people. The inclination for the appropriation of land was minimal. Although chiefs and elders perform various political and cultural functions, they did not receive any official salary for their services. This lack of monetary remuneration supported by the political system itself undermines possibilities for aggressive competition for power.

This implies that one of the motivations for the competitive struggle for power which is a core feature of contemporary politics is the financial benefit that accrues to leaders. One may be correct to argue that the functions of the pristine political leaders were not only non-complex but also, it was part-time based. This explains why they were not paid. Therefore, since political leaders in the modern setting work full time, they must be paid. Whilst this possible argument could be valid, the point has to do with how to reduce the excessive competition for the political power of which wealth is the main motivation? This could be done by a critical re-evaluation of the financial benefits that leaders gain. Here, I posit that government officials should be paid. But they should be paid enough to have their needs met and to enable them to focus on governance. Wages should not be too huge. This should discourage a flamboyant lifestyle. The wages of leaders should be in line with public service policy. For leadership is indeed public service. At the end of tenure, ex gratia payments must be based on the leader's performance, achievement, or contribution to society. Such payments should be based on merit. In this regard,

an institution for performance appraisal could be established and used for assessing the leader's performance and contribution to development.

To give their best in public service, all political office holders should not engage in private business, although, possession of the private property is allowable. As it is, the purpose of statesmanship is not to amass wealth but service for the commonwealth. All leaders must constantly undergo training in areas of function. This will allow them to develop excellence in their work. Those involved in international relations especially must continually undergo training to enable them to effectively engage with the global world. This should help them to strike good deals from such engagements. Effective engagement with the world should be the core concern of government. Because underlying the notion of globalization is to get the most from others.

Chiefship and Coalition Government

The chiefship system of government, as I have shown, is a system of government in which chiefs, assisted by elders, ruled. It a system adopted in communal societies. This mode of governance is appropriate to smaller societies such as nation-states, tribes, and other small groups of people within a country. This system is different from contemporary models in which a government is developed to cover the whole country. But despite the contemporary majoritarian system, communal societies still obtain in the larger society, in post-colonial Africa.

Therefore, since the chiefship system appears compatible with African society there is no contradiction if the chiefship is associated with and given constitutional backing in both local and national governance systems. But this may not be feasible under the majoritarian system. Because the structure and

operations of this system, just as Wamala (2004) implies, does not only displaces the position of chiefs but also works contrary to African culture and values which chiefs represent. The chiefship system can be more compatible with the amalga model. Under this system, a chief could still be regarded as the custodian of culture without any impediment whatsoever. Just as the constitutional monarch of the United Kingdom, a chief can function as a ceremonial head within his jurisdiction of power. A (paramount) chief could also be given a place in the council of governors. But unlike the pre-colonial society where only families considered to be royals ruled, chiefship could be given a more democratic consideration in terms of selection. That is, all families could be made potentially qualified to produce a chief. And if possible, the culture of a life long tenure of chiefs could be revised, where a chief could be in office only for some period of years only. Chiefship would maintain the African culture by slowing the rate at which Africa culture is being altered by foreign civilization.

Conclusion

The motivation for this study is capture by the thought that Africa, after political independence, expected social growth and development. None the less, in less than two decades after political freedom, many of the countries in the continent witnessed series of dictatorships and conflicts. Kwesi Wiredu reflected on this and concluded that the root cause of this problem is attributable to the majoritarian mode of governance which African leaders adopted from their erstwhile colonizers. Wiredu, therefore, proposes a new model known as consensual democracy which is considered by him a suitable replacement to the majoritarian system (Wiredu, 2000; 2004).

But Wiredu's model has been rejected by critics. These are composed of Eze (2000), Ani (2014), Matolino (2013), Bodunrin (1991), and so on. The central argument of these scholars is that Wiredu's notion of democracy is far removed from the modern setting. And, therefore, it cannot be feasible. The apologists of Wiredu including Edward Wamala, Joe Teffo, Martin Odei Ajei, etc. have responded by defending Wiredu's theory. Following the communitarian conception of life, these scholars have generally argued along the lines of Wiredu on his notion of democracy. Some scholars including Gyekye (1997), Ciaffa (2008), and Williams (2014) have also suggested that some elements of Wiredu's theory could be useful to the contemporary context.

Although this idea has received a general acceptance, none of the scholars, both the followers of Wiredu and the defenders have established any normative framework by which governance in the African context could be contextualized and organized. The central arguments of the debate characterizing Wiredu's proposal are basically about the feasibility or otherwise of his idea. This thesis has endeavored to fill this void. The argument is that if a multi-party coalition system is synthesized with the consensus model, it could create a model feasible for governance in the multi-cultural society of ours.

In so doing, we have examined the key models of democracy to enable us to place Wiredu's theory in a proper context. This is to inform our analysis of his preferred governance model, and to carve out a perspective for a new framework. We have studied direct democracy and majoritarian democracy and their key variants. The participatory, consensus, and deliberative democracy are key branches of direct democracy. Generally, direct democracy emphasizes

political equality, consensus, and legitimate political choices by popular participation.

The majoritarian system designates a model of a democracy governed by the majority principle. This means that when a candidate gets the majority of the total votes cast in an election, he/she emerges as the winner of the election (Phillips, 1995). The candidate who did not get the majority of votes is regarded as the loser and therefore excluded from government. The model, in this context, denies the minority party together with the rest of the populace the right to have their voices incorporated into important decisions that affect them.

The proportional representation is a system in which seats are allocated to an elected body in proportion to the total number of votes cast (Mill, 1861). Thus, if X% of the voters support a particular party, then in the legislature, X% of the seats will be allocated to that party (Croissant, 2002). A proportional representation leads to a coalition government. A coalition government seeks to resolve the inadequacies of the direct and majoritarian models. But the type of coalition system (particularly the proportional representation) in the Western world may not fit in the African context due to the uniqueness and diversities peculiar to Africa.

An examination of the various models of democracy in light of the fundamental democratic principle underlying Wiredu's theory places his model under the direct form of democracy. Since the direct model embraces mass participation, it tends to assume that all people have the intellectual resources to effectively engage in public deliberation. But under certain conditions of direct democracy, deliberation does not require the participation of all people especially in situations where expert knowledge is required.

I have shown that the idea of consensus and coalition in Wiredu's theory is attractive. This is because as opposed to the majoritarian system, the consensus approach would take into consideration a broad range of views as possible in the determination of public agenda. In this way, a national policy would be a reflection of not only the majority party but the society as a whole. A coalition and popular participation can ameliorate national disunity. Because a governance system that incorporates citizens in decision making and endeavors to achieve consensus in all decision making would be less prone to internal conflict than other systems. But since Wiredu's idea of non-party and political association repudiate the practice of voting it poses difficulty to how qualified leaders could be selected from many capable and potential leaders without creating conflict. Just like Wiredu has noted, I have argued that since humans are naturally inclined to living and working in groups and associations, and since Africa is grouped along cultural, ethnic, and tribal lines, a coalition government is the most preferred. But again, such a model must be unique to Africa, because of heterogeneity.

This idea would have a perfect expression only within the amalga model. This model would require organized groups or parties to form an effective government. In this respect, it affirms the existence of "national parties" as the basis for the formation of a government. It would also require an organized election of leaders. It would not strictly adhere tradition governance structures because African ethics and values which sustained such a system, have been shaped highly by colonialism and its emergent effect from capitalism and foreign cultural domination. This has given rise to a new orientation to politics, governance, economic, and social interests. However, despite the wave of

capitalism which serves as a dominant force that fuels social, economic, and political disintegration, post-colonial Africa is still characterized by communal values.

Hence, there is no contradiction if some practices, chiefship, for instance, is associated with and given constitutional backing in both local and national governance systems. The local government must have autonomy for self-determination and development although it must cooperate with the national government. In addition to the justice system which should deal with the interpretation of the law, national governments should be divided into four branches, the council of ministers, the parliament, the council of governors, and the council of lords. Ministers of state can be conceived to be agents for development. Lawmakers should focus on legislation, and examining government operations such as contracts and agreements (both domestic and external). They should be responsible for checking the council of governors and perform oversight functions. The governing council should be in charge of the day-to-day administration of the state. They must be seen to exercise executive powers. But such powers should be seriously limited by the constitution. The council of lords, composed of highly experienced persons, would designate the branch that scrutinizes the operations of parliament. They would give a second and objective look into agreements and ratify other activities of the government.

In the making of laws and policies, there should not be any barriers of any kind to representatives of political associations, and relevant groups concerned with a particular policy to be incorporated in the making of that law or policy. As a coalition government, the institutions and laws of this model would aim at harmonizing contradictions and complementarities of values

through compromise, cooperation, and consensus. However, if consensus is difficult to achieve due to a sharp division of opinions, four-fifths or 80% majority rule can be used for decision making. Although this is an overwhelming majority, it is close to consensus. A decision from this arrangement would reflect the will of the greatest majority of the people. This fusion of a consensus with the majority principle of this kind could be a feasible approach for guiding political operations of the diverse and complex society of ours.



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