

# THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

## The Resurgence of Autocratic-Democracy in Kenya: A Philosophical Reconstruction

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### **Abstract:**

*One of the major goals of the freedom fighters in the post-independent Kenya was to establish a free and fair democratic society. A society in which each Kenyan with respect to the existing constitutional measures would be able to access socio-political and economic resources to improve his/her livelihood. The attainment of this objective has however been curtailed by the constant wrangles witnessed among Kenyans. Though Kenya has over the years been viewed as a growing democracy in Africa, the democratic ideals as expressed in the constitution are literary being eroded away by the political elite. Kenya is gradually sliding to autocratic leadership. This possibility is apparently an attainable reality because the more Kenyans become enlightened, the higher the possibility of Kenya becoming an autocracy as expressed through the elites' actions. This article by re-examining some of the factors that may have led to this autocratic tendency over the years in post-independent Kenya, proposes through a philosophical reconstruction a few reasons why it's important for her as a nation to rediscover the democratic ideals as intended by the founding fathers. The article through a speculative approach, provides the possible measures that if adopted could aid in ensuring Kenyans joyfully live together as a cohesive people.*

**Keywords:** Democracy, autocracy, ethnicity, party politics, party alliances

### **1. Introduction**

Man is a being naturally meant to subsist in societies. He is therefore expected to form reciprocal relationships. These relationships should be holistic in nature that is by ensuring people within various societies share their talents by fulfilling each others' deficiencies'. Ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle described man as a social and political animal (*politics, 2791*). He as a scholar implied that man is intrinsically constituted to exist in societies and participate in political and economic affairs. Since politics affects all human activities, an individual can participate in such activities either as a private or public entity. Individuals should be conscious that their private decisions and activities whether they are actively involved in politics or not are determined by the existing socio-political environment. This socio-political environment affects elements like economy, security, religion and social integration that are generally core factors influencing one's private decisions. As a public entity, man is expected to actively participate in all public affairs. That means any activity that man engages in as a member of a given society, directly affects the other members of the very society. Aristotle's mentor Plato insisted on nurturing all members of the society in order to enable them participate in socio-political affairs both as private and public entities (*Plato, 1997*). This nurturing was expected to be procedural with education taking the centre stage. The intention of this procedural nurturing majorly focused on establishing individual's talents so that each person would be assigned his rightful position in life. Socrates on the other hand advocated for living a virtuous life. All societal members according to him were to strive to be morally upright. This meant that to live a virtuous life one was to ensure day to day interaction with fellow persons was to be morally acceptable. A human being can however as a socio-political being be virtuous only if apart from being morally upright, act according to the laid down contractual agreements within their respective constitutions. The critical consideration of the researchers is whether this is possible in Kenya based on the volatile state of our nation. Kenya is a nation deeply divided along tribal lines. This division has caused unnecessary tensions among various tribes, among people hailing from the same tribe and between individuals from different tribes mostly perceived to be hostile to each other.

The challenges facing the Kenyan society can well be addressed if analyzed from a historical point of view. The long standing detrimental feuds among Kenyan tribes were apparently laid down by the founding fathers immediately after Kenya gained independence. It was a deviation from the democratic principles they had for our society in the pre-independent Kenya. This has been propagated up to date by their sycophants. And as Aristotle puts it in his work, *The Politics*, (2811) people engage in politics not for its own sake but because it a form of work. It provides them with their daily bread. That is why the

political class cannot agree on socio-political issues causing discomfort among the majority of Kenyans. Reaching any compromise would be suicidal to the political elite because it may lead to some losing out. The recent political theatrics are a disguise of the ill motives of the greedy politicians and corrupt individuals. A critical question would then be, is there a way of taming the unruly politicians and corrupt individuals given that Kenya professes to be a democratic nation with well laid down structures of governance through her constitution?

The above question, would lead one to demand to know what the truth is about Kenyan politics. The quest for this perceived truth would still inculcate the desire among people to know why it does or doesn't exist. Such desire is later likely to lead to more questions that require serious considerations. Is Kenya still one holistic nation? Is Kenya a functional democracy? Are the social institutions like the judicial, legislature, religious groupings and learning centres perceived to be the focal points of enlightenment truly functional? Have the successive regimes led to the negligence of some tribes? What are the long-term effects of this dissatisfaction among Kenyans? Is the constitution still the principle guide when it comes to cohesive existence? What is the place of the media in our society today is it relaying the required or right information to the masses? In order to arrive at the correct responses to the above burning questions, the truth about Kenya's socio-political and economic existence must be sought in all its forms. The truth being sought may in this case end up either appearing sweet or bitter for others. The key consideration should be to use the findings in order to develop measures that will eliminate animosity among Kenyan tribes or people. These measures will also help in sealing the loopholes that have over the years contributed to Kenya sliding from democratic principles to autocratic rule.

Democracy is the rule of majority through their representatives. A democratic society is therefore expected to be an inclusive entity. The elected representatives should focus on ensuring that both their supporters and opponents receive proportionally equal and just treatment. The systems of governance established in such societies should foster the highest good for all the members. This view is contrary to the state of affairs in most of the African nations. Those purporting to be democracies are disguised forms of autocracies. A critical interest of the researchers is that apart from postulating some of the issues that may have led Kenya to adopting this slippery route to autocracy, proposes possible ways of redeeming this lost ideal. This article by analyzing a few selected events that have occurred in Kenya will endeavour to show why as a nation we still have a long way to go in ensuring that the members are treated as dictated by the established constitutions.

## 2. Autocracy vs. Democracy in Post-Independent Kenya, a Historical Survey

Kenya as a nation is lying on the hotbed of violence and divisive tribalism. The genesis of this division can be traced back to the divisive foundation the founding fathers of our nation laid. Slightly after gaining independence, which is from mid 1960's the period of dominantly single party rule to early 1990's the period of multi-party system, Kenya as a nation experienced autocratic leadership disguised as democracy by its propagators. The personal rule especially under Jomo Kenyatta and Moi's regimes became a dominant feature. This form of leadership which mostly tolerated sycophants led to the cultivation of bad governance that is still plaguing Kenya up to date. The autocratic tendencies before the multiparty era encouraged the dissolution of political parties, therefore, aggravated the situation leading to more pain among Kenyans. The founding fathers contrary to their promise of promoting positive constitutional amendments thus fostering a democratic and liberal spirit, promoted autocracy. There was rampant abuse of human rights, corruption and nepotism mostly pronounced in the late 1960's to mid 1980's. Nepotism has led to the establishment of leadership or family dynasties especially from the genealogies of the founding fathers. These dynasties always view themselves as the rightful people to rule Kenya; anything contrary to this position makes them feel that they are being undermined. They have indeed taken it a notch higher by making it look like tribal wars while the issue at hand is family supremacy and autocracy. Late 1980's to 1990's during Moi's regime, Kenya experienced the revolutionary wave of multi-party politics. There was a general cry to redeem the nation by ensuring that Kenyans are granted their constitutional rights which had been taken away by the autocratic rulers, (*Odhiambo-Mbai, 2003, 51*). With the constant formation of political alliances after the establishment of the vibrant multi-party politics in 1992, the situation is still worse. The ills performed before this period, have taken a new form since there has never been a strong opposition to fully make the leaders in government accountable. The multi-party system existing in Kenya today is an adulterated party democracy where leaders have taken refuge in tribal party alliances so as to fulfill their individualistic and ethnocentric interests.

In their analysis of autocratic rule, Nwabuzor and Mueller, (1985), goes ahead to purport that autocratic states are intrinsically made of the following features:

- There is pronounced use of coercion in order to enforce the mass political obedience to the existing political elite.
- There is a lack of a well articulated ideology at the expense of nationalism. This encourages the rise of populist leaders causing constant political wrangles.
- There is pronounced prevalence of ineffective political party politics. This mostly leads to constant formations of political parties and alliances in order to meet the political elite's demands. In such situation, there is a very high likelihood of just like in Kenya today for negative ethnicity to be fostered.
- The rule is highly personal. The political elite mostly in this case show little respect or disrespect the legal rights of the masses. The set legal frameworks therefore become semi-functional.
- Autocratic states mostly lack sufficient and effective means of mass control. They are therefore unable to regulate socio-economic or socio-political life.

Unlike autocratic rule, democratic rule supposedly works for the people and with the people. Some of the intrinsic features of the democratic rule include;

- Popular participation and ultimate control over government usually achieved through free and fair electioneering processes.
- Formation of trade unions and associations which are free to operate and influence government's operations and decisions.
- Recognition of civil liberties like freedom of associations, worship and speech as stipulated in the Kenyan constitution.
- There is recognizable separation of powers through the three arms of government that is the judiciary, executive and legislature. With the current state of issues like the imposing character of the political class which is mostly in charge of the executive arm, it is contestable whether such separation is a concrete reality or just a speculation in Kenya.
- The extent of the political control over socio-economic affairs is relatively limited. The government is expected to only assume a supervisory role.

From the above assessment of both autocratic and democratic leadership, it is evident that the modern-day system of governance in Kenya is a hybrid of the two systems. It is a dictatorship through party politics with autocracy disguised as a democracy. Some of the common features that support the researchers' position especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century include;

- Inadequate substantive reforms. The inadequacy of these reforms is based on the fact that most of them are carried out with a view of appeasing the domineering class. Since this class comprises of the political elite, all reforms are political in nature thus not helpful to the struggling masses.
- Kenya as a nation being plagued with extreme negative ethnicity, experiences numerous reported cases of socio-political related violence. The domineering class members believe that through their tribal alliances they can always remain powerful. These tribal alliances are used by individuals from these groups for personal gain, (Jonyo, 2003). The divisions witnessed among Kenyan tribes are mostly politically motivated. The politicians from these backgrounds believe in the divide and rule ideology, making it hard to come up with objectively oriented democratic means to govern Kenya.
- The tendency of boycotting elections among Kenyan politicians, instead of promoting democracy, it thwarts any effort sustaining its existence. This practice culminated in the 2017 presidential elections boycott by the main challenger or opposition leader. Though this may have been seen as a fight for just electioneering system, it was essentially a mockery to the judicial system of Kenya that had ordered for a reelection. This act then raises a lot of questions especially relating to the respect of the judicial decisions that are made to safeguard the Kenyan democracy.
- Since independence, there have been reported cases in Kenya and across most African states of shuttering all media outlets deemed not to be working for and with the existing governments. Kenya under Jomo Kenyatta's and Moi's regimes did not tolerate the existence of private sponsored media houses because such move was viewed as a threat to their political domineering. Though Kenya has witnessed an increase in the number of media houses both as private and public entities, their roles as the guardian of the democracy through objective reporting has been restricted to the periphery. The media houses have become biased in their reporting with most of them leaning towards the ruling party.
- Kenya is among the few African countries that have allowed a restricted freedom of people's expression through social media. Though this allowance is positive, the attempts to monitor what citizens are expressing through such channels creates fear of the afterwards repercussions. That is, in case the ruling elite opts to pursue those posting information deemed to be against the government's interests, then the outcome may be detrimental to the victims.
- During Karl Marx's time, he refuted the economic environment that had remained tightly restricted under the bourgeoisie class. The bourgeoisie' class had remained the kingpin of all the socio-economic activities, rendering the proletariat class totally depended on them (Marx, 2000). This scenario is apparently similar to the Kenyan socio-political and economic environment that has remained tightly restricted under the main family dynasties, tribes and tribal alliances. It is a kind of mentality that has fostered negative ethnicity. It has enhanced the divide and rule ideology as planted by Jomo Kenyatta's and Moi's regimes. The politicians look at politics as a profession instead of looking at it as a vocation. To actualize this, they have to tightly ensure that all socio-political and economic systems are geared towards creating and enhancing a hostile political environment pitying tribe against each other. This then creates a loophole where they can use to plant their destructive and divisive ideas. In order to create a peaceful and friendly environment, Kenya has also to strive and eliminate creation of chiefdoms that view political leadership as their birth right. Kenya has in the course of time since independence, experienced the families of the founding fathers dominating politics. These families have gone ahead to let their feuds spill over to the public limelight. Instead of urging Kenyans to work together as one people, they have led to more hostility among tribes, also among the various tribal segments like clans and families. Certain clans and families have because of these mentalities viewed others as inferior species. To be able to constructively stabilize Kenyan

politics, then ideologies like Odingaism, Kenyattaism and Moism that have become political brands on their own must be discarded. Kenyans have to find a way of bringing new blood abode so as to remain innovative and inventive politically.

- The enactment of the new constitution in 2010 by Kibaki's regime brought with itself new hopes and aspirations among Kenyans. The hope was based on the fact that Kenya would become a nation where people can have a better life especially for future generations. The aspirations were based on the fact that each member of the Kenyan society would be free to pursue their dreams. That the aspirations and potentials of many Kenyans were to be realized through an attractive environment created by the enforced dictums of the new environment. These hopes and aspirations have been thwarted by the continuous attempts to subvert the constitution. This has left many Kenyans wallowing in the limbo of hopelessness and lack of the zeal to achieve these aspirations and fulfill their individual hopes. These have led to the discharging of gifted professionals from their duties either by the government or private sectors. A fact that has left many of them frustrated because of the inability to achieve their goals. This is why there have been pronounced cases of strikes in various sectors like health and education. The government has been at the forefront of threatening most of these professionals of dire consequences should they go on to fight for their constitutionally granted rights. A subversion of these rights implies that though Kenya is a constitutionally democratic recognized nation, is not practically democratic society. It is a society that has embraced autocracy disguised as democracy. The leaders instead of the constitution, have the right of stipulating what having rights as a human person denotes. A mentality majorly held by communistic oriented nations like China and Russia that Kenya has of late become indebted to. These nations had for sometime normalized the oppression of the critical minds, especially those known to fight these oppressive regimes. With this kind of indebtedness, it remains unachievable reality that Kenya would ever be a realistically a democratic society.
- Kenya has also witnessed the rise of the cases of where the executive arm has been in indirect control of the legislative arm of the government especially when it comes to creation of sound or objectively acceptable laws. This is achieved by ensuring that the ruling party has majority members in legislature who will then be used to dictate the course decisions reached in august house takes. Most of these decisions are reached in order to favor the ruling class. They mostly focus on establishing laws that favor their political ideologies in the shaping of the various institutions, in order to create a scenario where these institutions can neither advise nor correct the government's activities. The attempt to revoke the licenses of some Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) especially when nearing the various electioneering periods over the past years is an open secret. The most recent was during the 2017 August elections when some NGO's were almost stripped off their working licenses. Though they were accused for having gone against the rules governing NGO's in Kenya, most of them were either those belonging to the individuals opposed to the government or may in the course of their duties criticized the government activities they deemed repressive. The government has invested to augmenting unbridled democracy as away maintaining political dominance.
- The tendency of taking the electioneering process for granted does not promote democracy. This tendency among Kenyans is a habit that has been on the rise over the years after attaining independence. This habit has also been enhanced by some political leaders discouraging their supporters to desist from participating in voting as pronounced in 2017 repeat elections. Though some of the concerns raised by such leaders like allowing and promoting Kenyan voters in foreign lands to participate in the voting exercise, ensuring that voting stations are located in areas that are easily accessible, coming up objectively oriented electoral reforms meant to promote the common good of all Kenya without looking at their social status and allowing the media houses acting within the law to freely pass over relevant information to the masses when need arises are valid, their insistence on complete voter boycott is a mockery of the democratic gains Kenya has so far attained. Democracy can only be measured when it comes to electioneering process with respect to how free the exercise is. This therefore implies that proper measures like fostering free voters education and participation in elections, ensuring that vices of voter bribery are eliminated whenever the elections come by, political alliances that are tribal in nature are constitutionally eliminated by insisting on the adopting a national outlook and conveying voting outcomes as soon as possible are enforced to eliminate the possibility of tensioning arising which has always been the source of post-election violence witnessed during some electioneering periods.
- Kenya as a nation is strictly divided along two clashing socio-economic classes as Marx argued during the 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial revolution. These classes are the class of the rich versus the class of the poor. With the rising income inequality, the democratic power becomes with time dysfunctional making the economic power to be concentrated in the hands of a few people. These individuals are usually the ruling political elite. This category of individuals would do anything to ensure that their social status remains the same. Some of the measures undertaken include raising their salaries without looking at the general effects it may have on the nation's wage bill, appointing their friends possibly deemed to be of the same status into government positions, formulating laws motivated by political considerations of the party in power and insisting on partisan distribution of power are in themselves antidemocratic acts. On the other hand, the poor marginalized class is exposed to numerous socio-economic challenges. These challenges include poor wage rate, inhumane treatment especially when they

demand for respect of their constitutionally granted rights by those in power, the exposure to socio-economic structure that do not grant them an easier way of traversing the ladder to the top and the possibility of being an outcast especially if by any chance one gets himself or herself occupying a position deemed to be a reserve for the elite member of the society. The aim of the ruling elite is to ensure the overhauling of all societal structures or systems, and with recourse to use of threats and blackmail, they are able to create a country that has been rendered incapable and cowardly to defy the autocratic or dictatorial rule.

- The “insider” vs. “outsider” wrangles also creates unnecessary tensions leading to autocratic tendencies because the ruling class will be drawn towards supporting the parties believed to be supporting its course. The insiders are the very members of the Kenyan society struggling for the little available societal resources. That is the opposition vs. the ruling party, the party leaders vs. their supporters, tribe vs. tribe, and clan vs. clan or members of the same affiliation vs. their very own members. The contributing factor to the insider wrangles is to always remain domineering. Remaining dominant is an indication that one will always be in charge of all societal resources thus being able to get the lion’s share of these resources. The outsiders involve all those foreign powers having an interest in the certain elements like natural resources or export market for their finished resources (Moyo, 2009). These outsiders include nations like China and United States of America (USA). USA has remained a domineering superpower for long, and it is always striving to ensure that its investments around the world are not interfered with. On the other hand, China as an emerging superpower is striving to ensure that it widely invests in various nations so as to gain dominance status. China as an emerging power has also the need to find ready market for its finished products and the surplus workforce. As a nation therefore, it is making inroads to the foreign markets which USA has for years presumed its own. The incursion of China in these markets has created tensions between the two nations. These tensions have spilled over into the nations that have been relying on these two great economic powers for foreign aid (Mwaura, 2005, 55-59).

Kenya being a dependant nation, the tensions between the West and East can be traced as one of the contributing factors to the fallout between the Kenya’s founding fathers immediately after independence. While Jomo Kenyatta and his cohort comprising of people like Mboya looked to the West for assistance, Jaramogi and his cohort comprising of people like Pio Gama Pinto looked to the East, (Mboya, 1965). The position Jomo occupied as the founding president, led to Kenya fully embracing USA as a closer ally in comparison to China. This culture continued throughout Moi’s regime, the second president of Kenya. With the incoming of Kibaki’s regime, there was a shift to the East which was fully embraced during Uhuru’s era. USA however remains the old ally that Kenyan leaders cannot let go. Kenya like most of the dependent nations, has therefore continuously found herself being drawn towards serving the interests of its masters. Based on the fact that this tendency mostly depends on the government of the day and to which of the two the ruling class prefers, democracy still remains an illusion. The ruling class will always tend to become autocratic therefore crushing those opposed to its position in order to serve the interest of their masters. Such interests come at cost. The over-borrowing of loans from either of these nations is an indication that Kenya will always remain dependent. With the international debt rising immensely, Kenya cannot go against their wishes because of the unknown consequences we may face as a nation. Leaders are therefore forced to increase the taxes in order to pay back the debts and sell out the natural resources at a throw away cost.

### **3. Kenya’s Political Alliances vs. Autocracy and Democracy**

Parties can be described as associative social relationships, where membership rests purely on free and willing recruitment (Weber, 1947). The main objective for party formations is always to secure and protect its members’ rights over some societal issues like acquisition of economic resources. The existence of political parties is an intrinsic requirement for any democratic rule. These parties’ main focus should always be to bridge the gap between the regime in power and the civil society. They are the channels through which political participation by the people is attained. Generally, the nature of existing political parties putting into consideration the composition, that is whether multiethnic or mono-ethnic, determines the nature of political competition that will exist in a given society.

Most of the political parties in Kenya since independence tend to be mono-ethnic in nature. This mono-ethnicity later forces these parties to get into political alliances in order to safeguard their voting base. Such formations lead to the non-existence of a framework upon which the progress of these parties over a given duration can be analyzed. This framework can only be realized if there are practicable party ideologies. The democratic ideologies in an ethnically divided society are usually the spring board or hotbed for socio-political conflicts and instability. The political parties are therefore formed based on this reality. To remain relevant, parties are established on certain cleavage lines whose essence is negative ethnicity. The cleavage lines are then introduced into national politics through these already divided parties. In order for these parties to have a national outlook, leaders are forced to form alliances that maybe mono-ethnic or multiethnic. Mono-ethnic alliances largely comprises of several parties having a basis in one community coming up to form one major party like Forum of Restoration Democracy of Kenya (FORD-K) and Amani National Congress (ANC) from Western Kenya. Multiethnic alliances comprise of small parties having their basis from different communities coming up to form one major alliance like The National Alliance (TNA) and United Republic Party (URP) from Central and Rift Valley respectfully. The above alliances aim not at protecting the poor man’s rights but the rich man’s interests. It is always the war of the have vs. have nots. The war that ensures that the policies formulated through the societal structures and systems like the legislature, have the interests of the elite at heart.

With such weak alliances, the rise of autocratic rule as witnessed in Kenya since independence will always be the order of the day.

#### 4. Factors Leading to Negative Ethnicity in Kenya

Ethnicity is a concept not intrinsically erroneous or evil as such. It implies the coming together of a people sharing the same cultural background and some common elements. It however becomes erroneous, when it gains a negative meaning and application, (Chukwu, 2002). When people especially from a specific community use it to stereotype other communities, to eliminate others or as a gambling tool for political mileages it then becomes erroneous concept. Kenya has over the years especially during the post independent era witnessed the rise of negative ethnicity. The rising animosity between various members, for example between the Luo from Nyanza and Kikuyu from central, Luhya and Kalenjin are due to the rise of this negative mentality. There is a feeling of the neglected vs. the owners of Kenya as such. The communities from the opposition always feel neglected while those from the areas that have occupied executive positions are perceived to be the owners of Kenya.

A critical assessment of the rise and perpetuation of this animosity resulting from negative ethnicity, may not be our tribal backgrounds as Kenyans but the desire by the political elite to propagate it so as to remain politically relevant. In his lectures on politics, Max Weber analyses the two major types of politicians existing world over, (Weber, 1978). The first type is of the politicians that look at politics as a vocation while the other looks at politics as a profession. The category of politicians that view politics as a vocation, usually treat any political engagement as a calling to service. They are driven by the desire to leave their very societies better than they found them. Such individuals focus on creating a more unified society. They are directed by the basic principle underlying all men as Boethius argues of possessing commonality in our rationality as human persons. This category of individuals instead of dwelling on societal elements that would enhance negative ethnicity and animosity between various Kenyan tribes, they promote positive elements that encourage oneness. They live for politics instead of living from politics. The existence of such individuals in Kenya is however wanting. The second category of politicians is of those that look at politics as a profession. These are individuals that live from politics. Their major goal is to use politics as a channel of enriching themselves. They would thus use all means including advocating for negative ethnicity in order to protect their socio-political and economic relevance. These are the sadists who rejoice when there is instability in Kenya. The existence of instability creates unsafe environment for their competitors to thrive or invest in Kenya leaving them as a dominant class. They would always portray any one opposed to their ideas especially from other tribes as anti-democratic. This is a decoy used by these individuals. It leaves tribes fighting among themselves. This with time degenerates into members from the same tribe engaging into warring tactics in order to maintain their autonomy or become tribal kingpins.

With the rise of professional politicians, democratic structures already in place are likely to become irrelevant. They are likely to promote autocratic or personal rule. This is all done with the main objective being to protect and promote their interests. These are the same individuals that create cleavage lines among various tribes. Some of the tactics they use to create these cleavage lines include: -

- Establishing of communal boundaries. The promulgation of the 2010 Constitution in Kenya came with both negative and positive elements. Though the positives have outweighed the negatives, a good number of politicians have used the concepts like creation of county government territories to cause more divisions among Kenyans. The constitution advocates for any Kenyan to work and live anywhere within the country as long as he or she possesses the right to whichever property he purports to be his. This reality is yet to be actualized as such. Most county governments have become tribal bastions. Members from the different county governments working or living in other counties especially those that have one dominant tribe are mostly treated as second class citizens. For example, a Luo in Central is viewed as an uninvited guest while a Kikuyu in Nyanza is viewed as an intruder. Instead of creating unity among Kenyans as a people, it tends to promote disunity. This approach leads to more animosity among various tribes with only those perceived to be friendly being able to tolerate each other as witnessed during the 2013 and 2017 electioneering periods.
- The second tactic is coming up with irreconcilable party positions. These positions are based on certain ethnic or tribal demands. With perennial problem of politicians forming political alliances in order to safeguard their voting base, certain conditions are likely to be set before forming such engagements. The reality about these alliances is that they mostly tend to be used for individual gains (Nash, 2010). The various communities in question in relation to the voting bases are only used as bargaining tools. After attaining their goals, that may be political positions or socio-economic gains, these alliances collapse. The contributing factor to the collapse is the irreconcilable positions the parties maybe having. The parties usually do not dissolve fully like the National Super Alliance (NASA) and its constituent parties like FORD-K, AMANI and WIPER parties. In case of any disagreements these parties' option is to break up and move on to their old ways. Such formations do not promote democratic ideals. They instead promote autocratic ideals, with their leaders developing a mentality of forcing their wishes through in order to take the greater share. If such leaders are later elected to govern the nation as a whole, they end up being autocratic. Instead of realizing that as national leaders they should assume a national outlook, they depict forceful character as implanted in them by their parties. For example, for constant wrangles witnessed between TNA and URP in 2013 before the merge to form JUBILEE in 2017. Such leaders tend to serve party interests instead national interests.

- The third tendency is to come up with policies directed at thwarting the interests of their opponents. This is mostly the war between those in power and those in the opposition. A culture that has been promoted through the presidential system as it is in Kenya. The winner takes it all. There has been a tradition since independence that once an election is over, the opponents become enemies not co-workers. Those who may have won look at those who lost as enemies thus they should be eliminated. They are deemed to be enemies of progress thus democracy. Any positive measures that anybody from opposition maybe having aimed at facilitating the societal progress are viewed as ways of bringing down the regime of the day. On the other hand, those in opposition always view their opponents as having won through fraud. Despite the fact most tend to advocate for free and fair elections, the basic conviction is that of seeing themselves as the rightful people who should have won the elections. This mentality leaves Kenya in a dark spot. There is need for both the opposition and those in power to realize that an election is an event whose process cannot last for a lifetime. The two groupings should thus focus on ensuring that Kenya remains as united as before and that the rule of law is observed. But with the continuous wrangles over elections outcome, autocratism is likely to thrive. Those in power may be prone to using the arms of governance before them to maintain order, while those in opposition are likely revolt use of mass action leading a state of anarchy.

### 5. Filling the Gap, a Philosophic Reconstruction

Democracy is a familiar concept that has widely over the years been misunderstood and misused. The Greek etymological meaning of the term, that is '*demos*' meaning people and '*kraiten*' meaning to govern, demonstrates that a democratic system of governance involves the rule by the majority. The Greek philosopher Aristotle classified democracy among the bad systems of governance. In his argument, he purported that once the masses have made a decision on who is to rule, there is a tendency of the few chosen opting for autocratic rule thus fostering dictatorship. Though democracy has been adopted differently from the Aristotelian understanding, this assertion still resonates today and requires a serious consideration in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We have had single party regimes, military coups governments, communistic leaning governments and tribal party alliances claiming to exercise democratic power despite being oppressive. The power of democracy has however prevailed critical and turbulent historical epochs and it still exists today despite its abuse.

Democratic rule can be exercised either directly or through elected representatives (*Nwabuzor, 1985*). The recent occurrences in Kenya, have led to a mockery of true democracy. There has been an attempt by elected leaders to exercise the representative power invested in them by their electorates. This attempt has however been thwarted by the respective party bureaucracies sponsoring the respective politicians. On the other hand, the desire by the masses to exercise direct democracy has been met by a brutal force from the ruling power. This historically has always been interpreted as a form of defiance of the existing constitutional systems established to be used as a means for expressing one's dissatisfaction. This state of confusion has led to a juxtaposition of the two ways of exercising democracy. And since democracy intrinsically implies freedom, the inability to exercise true democratic principles in Kenya has led to curtailing of people's freedom to express themselves as one people. This is facilitated by the fact that the autocratic principles or rule disguised as a democracy is on the rise in Kenya.

### 6. Conclusion

Democracy being the rule by the people has over the years lost credibility in post-independent Kenya. The autocratic ideals that have always been prevalent in Kenya are usually disguised as democratic ideals. The policy makers should be in a position to formulate and implement laws that essentially curtail the thriving of autocracy. There can be the promotion democratic ideals if the following proposed measures as per the Kenya 2010 constitution are well adhered to:

- The conducting of free and fair elections across the nation. Proper articulated measures should be fostered in order to facilitate those in diaspora to exercise their voting rights.
- Promotion and protection of individual Kenyans rights. This includes the constitutionally granted rights of expression, picketing, and religious association, freedom of the media and access to information in order to keep the nation well informed. In exercising these rights, the citizens should ensure that they do not go contrary to the dictates demanding all Kenyans to co-exist peacefully.
- The promotion and observation of the values of tolerance, compromise and cooperation.

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