

Eritrea and its Development: Understanding the Narrative

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While America's free-market economic system emerged as a revolt against Europe's feudal system, Africa have had to deal with wars, slavery, and colonialism. The double-edged mechanism improved America and Europe's governing prowess and its economy at the expense of Africa's growth and development. Africa's colonial experience denied it the opportunity to understand its own system of government; which could be said to be in its preliminary stages before the colonial incursion. (ushistory.org) states "the American democratic experiment did not begin in 1776. The Colonies had been practicing limited forms of self-government since the early 1600s." Eritrea represents that African country that seems determined to make its own mistakes and learn from it. It represents the true picture of Africa, looking at the way developed economies started off.

We usually bring our biases with us to the field and this does not help with understanding some events or opinions we encounter. This is so, because of the difficulty in relegating our biases to the backdrop and learn from the new and probably strange environment that we have just found ourselves. An individual is an embodiment of his/her culture and experience to mention a few. Thus, when we encounter things that challenge what we have believe, there is the tendency to resist. Thus, negative narratives are one of many forms of resistance to the perception of Eritrea's disregard for human rights. In the Western reality, the government perpetuates this through the national service that conscripts youths to the military indefinitely. That is the perception of the national service to someone unused to the African culture of 'service.' For example, some of my colleagues from the U.S could not reconcile the cultural implications of the national service as not infringing on human rights in Eritrea. From an African perspective, this is not a problem because regardless of your age, or what you earn, an unmarried youth must remain with your parents. A macrocosmic analogy presents Eritrea as the parent and the youth population as the teenager required to live with the parents until marriage. Consequently, culturally, it is strange for an African child to leave the parents' home just because he/she is eighteen years old.

With these in mind, I see development in Eritrea in terms of its good roads and access to remote villages. I see development in free education at every level and quality of healthcare. I see development in agriculture that ensures all year irrigation system that works. I see development in a self-guided development process across the board. These are important points to note especially if they are compared to

The Eritrean storying process cannot be fully understood from a non-African perspective or experience. In order to grasp the import of this statement, visiting Eritrea or waiting till it starts to reap the fruits of its commitment to its people might be the way to go. It is about to manifest in no distant time.