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Leadership flaws and fallibilities impacting democratization processes, governance and functional statehood in Africa

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The United Nations, the World Banks, other western institutions and nations have all reported that, despite its richness in human and natural resources, Africa is characterized by wars, poverty and disaster. In spite of the continent's devastating tyrannical rule since the period of independence, it was only towards the late 80s that a World Bank (1989) report blamed Africa's underdevelopment and devastation on "the crisis of government". This paper is an analysis of the leadership flaws and the political fallibilities notorious to African political systems. It analyzes the weaknesses and phenomena of leadership failures qualifying them into different categories, such as lack of statesmanship of its leaders, ethnic divisions and clientelism, non-constitutionalism, change of power through coup and "inheritance", manipulation and rejection of election results by incumbent etc. It further presents them as stumbling blocks to governance, democracy and democratization processes that are typical of Africa. According to the analysis in this paper, these flaws in leadership have resulted in failed transitions to democracy, failed governance and dysfunctional states in Africa. These flaws and fallibilities manifest in far reaching political dimensions, that are only common to Africa, leaving the continent in a state of poverty, conflict, despair and dependence.

Key words: Leadership flaws and fallibilities, democracy, corruption, flexible constitution, ethnicity, clientelism, neo-patrimonialism, political disease.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of leadership and its failures in Africa

In his writings on the two treatises on Government: The Original Extent and Ends of Civil Government, John (1691) argues that the purpose of men uniting under a government is to preserve their lives, liberties and properties. Peter (1988: 4) further noted that John Locke's writing on Government has a great impact on the growth to maturity of English liberalism, the development of events which had their issue in the American and later French Revolutions and their parallels in southern America, in Ireland, in India and all countries where government by consent of the governed has made its impact felt. The bills of right in England and the 19 century revolutions in Europe aimed at overcoming greedy and tyrant leadership and securing political and social freedom in Western societies further confirm Charles (1748) argument that man is selfish and greedy, regardless of his region of origin, educational culture and background. According to

Montesquieu, the natural law of self-preservation required protection against, as well as the encouragement of government in other to prevent abuse of the powers of government (Positive laws, Book 1: 3). Personal security, society's wellbeing and preservation could be threatened by policies of religious intolerance or arbitrary taxation. Based on the teachings of these and other political philo-sophers, Western polities have succeeded in constructing and upholding governments which to a great extent safeguard the wellbeing of their societies, as a result of effective systems of checks and balances and constitutionalism that have gone a long way to confine the negative outcomes of selfish and tyrant leadership embedded in the nature of man.

Lasslet's observation is not only true but unmasks the absence of the first rudiments of a Lacedaemonian government or government worthy of their Extent and Ends in Sub-Sahara Africa. Lasslet consciously or unconsciously did not include Africa in his list of countries

or region, where government by consent of the people has had its impact because of the obvious reason, that this impact is not felt in Africa and was/is conspicuously missing. Subsequently, not more than nine countries were rated as liberal democracies according to 1998 Freedom House rating: that is, countries rated free with free and fair multiparty elections where the people enjoy liberal democratic values according to international standards. This paper unlike my other paper on the Analysis of international factors and actors marring African socio-economic and political development (Alemazung, 2010), focuses on the internal aspects of leadership failures in Africa.

As the title reads, the analyses in this paper dwell on the weaknesses and failure in African leadership found in the political systems and based on the character of the leaders themselves. As the political writings of John Locke after the 1688 Glorious Revolution in England and sub-sequent revolutions in Europe suggest, tyrant and selfish leadership is primordial in all societies including Africa. However, Western polities learning from the negative experience of tyrant leadership were able to establish constitutionalism founded upon political arrangements and institutional orders, that could curb man's greed and abuse of power, thereby directing leadership toward serving the common good. Unfortunately, this process of "steering leadership" toward serving the common good has not been successful in Africa. The result is political tyranny, selfish and abusive leadership in excessive forms which are peculiar and persistent in Africa.

The particular case of Africa: In 2006, the famous artist and song writer Simon Longuè Longuè released a song titled "50 ans au pouvoir c'est la maladie de l'afrique"/Fifty years in power, that's the African disease. As a de jure (Freedom House, 2007) and a de facto (events on the ground) "not-free" country, the Cameroon government slammed a ban on this song in the public and private media (Musa, 2008). The song text by Longuè Longuè lists amongst other problems, constitutional change, as it suited the power greed of African leaders, election rigging, embezzlement of state funds, succession by their offspring, and the use of state security forces to oppress the people as "la maladie de l'Afrique/the African disease" (Longue, 2006). All the diseases that Longue Longue criticized in his song which include amongst others: ethnic divisions, clientelism and institutionalized and widespread corruption, are not only common (also present in successful industrialised nations) in African political systems but have become a canker worm to political leadership in Africa, with overwhelmingly devastating effects on the societies.

Thus analysis of this paper is on the impact of leadership fallibilities on democracy and democratization processes, governance and functional statehood on the continent. These leadership failures and peculiarities are treated in this paper on a general analytical approach with selective examples from cases studies around the continent to illustrate these fallibilities. The paper is aimed to have a "diagnostic effect" on leadership ailments in Africa: only a better understanding of Africa's political problems and the roots of their causes could pave the way to the right and lasting solution. In addition, the paper concludes that the outcomes of these leadership fallibilities are politically weak and dysfunctional states whose institutions grab instead of produce. It deduces that unstable polity and weak economies, which are constantly dependent on foreign support and incapable of providing the minimum services, required of them by their people, are a conse-quence of poor and failed governance founded upon bad leadership. As well as concluding that ,these leadership flaws have steered their respective governments off their course of serving the people, some suggestions a made as to how these fallibilities and flaws could be contained.

Categories of flaws and fallibilities in African leaderships

All societies in the world require democratic governance (a government for, by and of the people), corrupt-free systems and positive development in terms of the economic, social, cultural and political dimensions of the country. Almost all, if not all the nations of this world have at one stage in their history, struggled to achieve many or all of these criteria for their people. In many cases, where the societies live in freedom and prosperity today, the people or founders of the affected nations gave priority to the common good of the nation and its people, as opposed to their own personal interests and the results are developed nations with free peoples. By putting their personal interests aside for national interests the founders or constructors of today's free nations were able to overcome, curb or minimise the "human leadership flaws and fallibilities" addressed in this paper. Where political values of freedom and leadership of the common good has not found their establishment like in Africa, these leadership flaws and fallibilities have instead overcome the rulers and dominated the political system.

Subsequently, political developments in Africa have been influenced and characterized by these flaws, most often in the form of attitudes of political actors/rulers, which over time have become frequent and peculiar to the continent. In its extreme these trends in leadership flaws have become the political culture of the African system. Even though these weaknesses are common beyond African systems, the dimension in which they manifest themselves in Africa and the impact they have on the socio-economic and political evolution is not only peculiar but deplorable for the continent. It is very difficult to categorize these flaws and fallibilities as they often overlap with one another with sometimes cross-cutting effects on the different political systems on the continent.

However, for simplicity reasons these flaws are categorized here into the following; ethnic division and

clientelism, corrupt leadership and lack of statesmanship, coups and unconstitutional change of power, inheritance and monarchic democracy, and constitutional flexibility. These flaws amongst others could be attributed to lack of statesmanship among the ruling elites or incumbents and are amongst a cluster of leadership flaws and fallibilities (African diseases) analysed in this paper.

Ethnic divisions, tribalism[1] and neo-patrimonialism

One major characteristic of modern African states was and still is high multi-ethnicity, an outcome of the colonial arbitrary division of the continent. Contrary to historical pre-colonial societies, which very much survived as mono-ethnic societies/states with intact original boundaries, mono-ethnic states after colonialism became an exception (Breytenbach, 2002). The arbitrary frontiers of these states enclosed different ethnic groups, with sometimes tenuous bonds, into one nation. This situation often left the states socially and politically fragile (Ogunbadejo, 1979: 85). As a continent, Africa has a unique make-up described by Eboussi (1997: 8) as "nation of nations", which considers the ethnic groups in each nation as micro-nations or as nationalities. At this point there are certain questions about ethnicity that need to be addressed; these include, what role does ethnicity play within political developments on the continent and how does this affect Africa's political environment? The diversity in ethnic groups in many of the new independent states also resulted in the creation of parties along ethnic lines.

This was the case in countries such as Nigeria, Ghana (Meredith, 2005) and Cameroon (Mehler, 1993: 51) amongst others. Unfortunately, the African post independent nations did not consider the need to create an institutional arrangement which could accommodate the ethnic plurality of their societies. Instead, they went on to establish centralised, one-party states in the name and pretext of unity as a necessity for the construction of "one strong nation" for the newly born countries (Barkan, 2002: 72). As the reality would have it, formation of political parties took place in Africa along ethnic lines paving the way for politics based on ethnic allegiance or loyalty. This tendency further provided support for the post independent leaders' argument that a multi-party arrangement would encourage division which would in turn "obstruct" the construction of their new states. These leaders launched a campaign for a unitary party constitution with the argument that multi-party politics could easily lead to conflicts, divisions and tribalism (Tordorff, 1993: 68 and 29; Mehler, 1993: 51).

In the West African country of Guinea, for example, its first president Sekou Toure stood against tribalism after

independence, and instituted a centralized unitary state which according to him "was the best solution against division" (Ottaway, 1999: 303). After severing relations with France in 1958, Sekou Toure began a campaign to build up Guinea into a strong independent state and called on other Franco-African countries to follow his example. He was apparently against ethnic nationalism and voiced this saying, "in three or four years," he told the Guineans, "no one will remember the tribal, ethnic or religious rivalry which, in the recent past, caused so much damage to our country and its population" (Young, 1976: 6). Like Toure, subsequent nationalist leaders of the new nations vehemently rejected ethnic nationalism as a threat to the new states. Despite these rejections and campaigns against nationalism, Marina (1999: 303) maintains that, outside the cities, much of the citizenry most likely identified themselves with their local/ethnic group or areas rather than with the entire country. The rejection of the legitimacy of ethnic plurality led to the leaders' and nation builders' failure to address it appropriately. Thus, the failure to recognise ethnic plurality and accommodate it in the constitution of these new states resulted in problems with ethnic division and ethnic politics as is experienced in Africa today. Ethnic division and its impact on contemporary African societies remains a major leadership flaw in the building of the post-independent states.

Furthermore, the heads of states, "reactionary as well as revolutionary", who in post independent Africa were very much against the legitimacy of ethnic plurality, were very suspicious of the chiefs who headed these groups (Rouveroy van Nieuwaal as quoted by Herbst, 2000: 175). Consequently, post-independent leaders suppressed and undermined traditional or better still ethnic leaders. For example: in Guinea, Sekou Toure undermined the chief-doms in his country; in Ghana, Nkrumah enacted legal constraints on chiefs; in Tanzania chiefdoms were simply abolished; and in Upper Volta, the ruler of the Mossi people, Mogho Naba was simply marginalized. Similar situations followed in Nigeria, Uganda and Burundi as the chiefs and other traditional leaders were at odds with the centralised one-party system and its operating code, that the leaders were forging into their new nations in the 1960s (Herbst, 2000: 175).

There can be little or no doubt that the national construction of states that have collections of peoples with parochial loyalties ranging from families, clans to large ethnic groups, was and still does remain a very demanding task. Attempts by leaders in the past to overcome the challenges of ethnic plurality through suppression, have unmasked the inaptitude and weakness of political leadership in Africa. Ignoring or refusing the legitimacy of ethnic plurality only encouraged and still encourages it to gain influence within political developments of these states. The tendency to construct parties along ethnic lines in post independent Africa is made worse by antagonistic politics towards ethnicity (Meredith, 2005: ch. 8). This is due to the leadership's inability to handle or address the needs of the different ethnic groups, that are not loyal to

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[1] Tribalism comes from the noun tribe, which denotes an ethnic group. In Cameroon for example, tribalism most often refers to a handful of individuals who act only in their interest and involve their "brothers" in a worthless fight to play to the gallery and get rich at the expense of all others (see Nzongang 1997).

the ruling elites. Instead of seeking constitutional arrangements that could satisfy the interests of the many diverse ethnic groups and identities (Lijphart, 1977, 1999), these leaders practice a politics of co-optation or "buying off" leaders from ethnic groups which do not support them in order to increase their control and ensure a so-called "peace and stability".

From the period after independence until date, democracy with its values of multi-partyism, civil liberties, and political rights, has been traded for unity in the name and pretext of peace and stability. This is the opposite thesis to Western expansion and support for democracy around the world as an instrument that can guarantee a peaceful world (Kant, 1795; Huntington, 1991: 28-29). Ethnic plurality and the leadership approach in handling it, ruined the project of building nations for the people by the people and prevented the establishment of functional successful democratic states. In Riggs' (1964: 8) volume, based on his research experience in Asia, Riggs argues that poly-communal and poly-normative societies would naturally suffer from endemic corruption and inefficient administration. It is interesting to find that, even though Riggs' experience was based in Asia, his "thesis" could apply in Africa.

African poly-communal (multi-ethnic) countries suffer from severe corruption (Transperancy International, 2007) and inefficient political administration, both of which could be classified under bad governance or simply summed up as "crises of governance" (World Bank, 1989). Riggs (1964) argues further that, bureaucracy is very strong in poly-communal societies as a result of weak institutions that cannot control it. Due to this lack of control such polities are characterized by corruption, nepotism, self-seeking and inefficiency. This has been the situation in most of Africa until it was "officially diagnosed" in a World Bank report in 1989 which suggested that the problems of underdevelopment, dysfunctionality of African states, and the inability of these states to sustain themselves and the debt they have incurred over the years were based on "governance crisis".

Following this report (World Bank, 1989), international institutions and world powers began to apply pressure to instigate changes that would improve the situation in Africa This pressure resulted in the second attempt or liberation of the African people. This time it was liberation from local dictatorship and government for the self, unlike the liberation from alien dictatorship of the early 1960s. This second liberation took off in the late 1980s and ethnic plurality, which had become a "political problem" due to the failure of post-independence leaders to address it properly, took another turn in creating conflicts, propagating division and stalling the transition process. Like in the post-independent state construction ethnic division accounted for the creation of countless parties and obstructed the democratization process in many countries like Cameroon, Rwanda (Straus, 2008), Togo to name a few.

Furthermore, and according to Huntington (1991: 37),

many different theories have revealed that, the process of democratization, in the third wave of democratization, has certain independent variables that contribute to enhancing the process. As diverse as these variables might be, one of them is greatly connected to the ethnic or tribal problems of African countries and politics, namely, that low levels of political polarization and extremism, can facilitate transition in ethnically divided societies (Lijphart, 1999). Ethnic plurality in African politics unfortunately produces the opposite effect by increasing the level of political polarization and extremism through the patron-client network. In the patron-client network, head of government/ state (political patrons) use state resources, usually ministerial or other high government posts and sometimes even material resources, to reward their supporters. The expected political support they get in return is usually the clients' votes or support during elections. Ethnic division laid the foundation for tribalist-politics which in turn encouraged clientelism and neo-patrimonial politics. The result is a political setting that opposes democratic states and hampers the transition to a successful and functional democracy (Bayart, 1993: 42).

Democracy's value of equality and rule of law poses a threat to the advantaged and privileged power holders (patrons) and their political clients in ethnically divided societies in Africa. Due to fear of losing power, rulers rely on division resulting from the ethnic plurality as a mechanism for consolidating their stay in power in a neo-patrimonial order (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2004: 162-192). In the words of Clapham (1985: 57): "one of the strongest, most alluring, and at the same time most dangerous forms of clientelism, is the mobilization of ethnic identities". Ethnic division provides a fertile ground for political mobilization along patron-client networks. Moreover, ethnic division or tribalist-politicking has a disenfranchising effect on democracy, "because it deprives voters 'of the power to hold their politicians truly accountable through common action with other voters across the land'" (Lonsdale, 1986: 141). The autocratic depth of post-independent regimes and neo-patri-monialism, based upon a clientelist network structure with non-constitutionalism and weak institutions, made the second liberation of the late 80s and early 90s very difficult. During this second liberation, the authoritarian leaders, who suddenly underwent metamorphoses from dictators to "democrats", were torn between institutiona-lizing democracy and retaining their presidency. Contrary to patrimonialism, defined by Max Weber's (1978) as a system where military and administrative personnel owe their responsibility to the ruler, neo-patrimonialism in Africa combines elements of patrimonialism and rational bureaucratic rule (Clapham, 1985: 48; Bratton et al., 1997: 62; Erdmann, 2002). Unlike in patrimonial systems where there is one patron, the ruler, neo-patrimonialism revolves more around the arrangement of services and resources between clients and political patrons. Exchanges in neo-patrimonialism involve the transfer of public resources (in

the form of money, ministerial positions, contracts etc.) by the political patron as a reward for loyalty or support from the people (Weber, 1978: 133-134, 136). Clientelism, another side of neo-patrimonial rule, is basically the exchange of services or state resources for political support from ethnic based politicians serving as clients to the ruling patron. Thus in most countries, where the transition processes of the second liberation is stalled, there still exists the challenge of breaking down this clientelist network in favour of de facto democratic institutions.

Neo-patrimonialism weakens the institutions, thereby limiting or hindering their "universal mission", or as Gero (2002) puts it, "in the sense of serving the public well being". At the same time, the unwillingness of autocrats to render "practical" legitimacy to democratic institutions, because of fears of losing power (or limiting it), has continued to prolong the status of "theoretical" legitimacy which institutions have in neo-patrimonial authoritarian settings.

Theoretical legitimacy in Africa describes the formal existence of institutions which have no practical functions that ensure say, the rule of law through the separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary. Practical legitimacy refers to institutions that are practically functional and fulfil their purpose in ensuring rule of law and general well-being of the people through effective and the appropriate governance.

Corrupt leadership and lack of statesmanship

In Plato's (360 BC) The Statesman or Politicus, he defines the ideal ruler as someone who is endowed with a particular kind of political expertise or skill (politike techne) (Annas and Waterfield, 1995: 9). In other words a statesman is an ideal governor of the commonwealth. Why is he ideal? Plato describes ruling as a task that needs a kind of expertise. The governor must be equipped with knowledge and be able to use his political skills to make the people have what he deems is good for himself; "the virtuous agent will rule over others, making them as well as himself virtuous" (Annas and Waterfield: xii). This means that the governor who is first morally of good will, strives for the moral good or wellbeing of the society and as a statesman with political skills he knows how to attain this objective. The statesman gives the society what he would give to himself.

Considering the cases of "state sponsored theft" (Nyamnjoh, 2007) and kleptocracy (Acemoglu et al., 2004) as experienced in Africa, this implies that a statesman at the helm of the nation would not steal "his nation's resources" nor would he undertake corrupt practices because he does not expect his people to steal or carry out corrupt practices. On the contrary, one of the worse instruments of state theft, like embezzlement and corruption in high offices, is particularly present in Africa. According to a report by the BBC's Africa Analyst,

Elizabeth Blunt in September 2002, corruption in Africa was said to cost the continent nearly 150 billion Dollars. Corruption and embezzlement of state resources belong to the worst examples of immoral practices of political societies in Africa and places the continent at the fore front of the world corruption league table. Thus, bad governance in African countries can also be considered to result from a lack of statesmen in the position of governors. Corruption and state robbery is endemic in almost all countries on the continent and is a serious flaw in African leadership. In addition to corruption, kleptocracy and the unjustified amassing of state resources by greedy and irresponsible leaders have stunted development and heightened the level of impoverishment. According to an African Union study of 2002, corruption cost the continent up to 150 billion Dollars yearly (Blunt, 2002).

Furthermore, embezzlement of state funds account for a meaningful proportion of money that, could have helped improve the impoverish state of Africa, if it were invested in developmental projects and not allowed to disappear in the private accounts and investments of African rulers. In 2009, Transparency International (TI) filed a case against three African presidents for embezzlement. According to TI these leaders Omar Bongo of Gabon, Denis Sasou Nguesou of Republic of Congo and Teodore Obiang Nguema embezzled millions of Euros from their respective countries. A report on Afrik.com of May 7th 1009 by Stéphane Ballong further reveals that:

"In total, the French police identified in 2007 during a preliminary investigation, 39 properties and 70 bank accounts belonging to Omar Bongo and his family, 24 properties and 112 bank accounts held by the family Sassou-Nguesso, as well as limousines bought by the Obiang family. The judicial inquiry could see all the alleged ill-gotten assets confiscated and returned to the people of the countries concerned".

It must be noted that despite the oil produced in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea and with a population of less than 2 million and less than one million respectively, a vast amount of the people in these countries live in poverty. According to a TI Global Report of 2004, late president Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire from 1965 to 97 stole as much as US$ 5 billion while his counterpart in Nigeria from 1993 to 1998, General Sani Abacha siphoned between US$ 2 to US$ 5 billion. Putting the money from state robbery and the cost of corruption together and comparing this to the money Africa receives from developed nations as aid (for example US$ 22.5 billion in 2008), the question is, would it be better to fight state robbery/embezzlement and corruption rather than give aid and accumulate debt for innocent future African generations? Most often, corrupt leaders receiving huge aid revenues vigorously oppose democracy to prevent more equal distribution of aid resources—the "aid curse" effect (Easterly, 2006: 135). According to Steve Knack of the World Bank, increased

aid "worsens bureaucratic quality and leads to violation of the rule of law with more impunity and to more corruption" (Easterly, 2006: 136). In this regard, western aid to autocratic leaders could also be considered as a flaw in Africa leadership that has contributed to the failure of governance and statehood on the continent (Alemazung, 2010: 70-77). These corrupt leaders buy votes and rig elections twisting democracy. In other words, it is easier and surer for these leaders to use state resources and aid money to buy and "arrange" election results in their favor rather than win elections due to good leadership and rightful governance.

Bentham (1824,1987) supported by his collaborator James Mill, proposed two basic principles on which a worthy government, that is, a government that meets its ends/purpose and respects its extent (constitutionalism) or fulfills the purpose of its existence can be founded upon. These propositions include the principle of self-reliance which affirms the idea that all men, including the legislatures, realize what brings them happiness and strive towards it. Man and therefore also the legislators, would promote that which will maximize his own happiness (Birsch, 2001: 83); the second principle is that of utility. The utility principle is based on the claim that, the right and proper end of a government is to promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number of citizens (Birsch, 83; Bentham, 1824,1987). According to the principle of self-reference, voters' happiness would therefore promote a legislator's happiness, thus he would strive to achieve this.

In addition, the utilitarian principles would generally ensure that, legislators and governors should endeavor to make the greatest number of people possible happy. Still, self-reference can be viewed in the context of Plato's extension of virtue to all men in the society. Statesmen ignore their private interests for the service of the common good. They do this by using their expertise to correct actual practical politics and to make sure the preservation of the society is not endangered in any way by anyone. The function of a statesman therefore, is to use his knowledge and his administrative staff to direct practical politics that have been developed for the common good.

A statesman does not put policies into practice directly by himself but relies on "an administrative staff", in the form of ministers and related/designated "public servants". Even though he is human, equal to the citizens he governs, his focus remains on the common interest of the community. On analysis, it is likely that one may not focus on the "positive aspects" of a politician of this caliber, especially when the state is running well and the life, liberty and property of the people are being preserved. Africa as a continent whose societies and nations are in an array of social and economic devastation desperately need leaders with statesman qualities. Most often a statesman's qualities are recognized in bad times and it is in such times that a country's statesman comes to the forefront. Africa is destitute of leaders with a good conscience who are equipped with knowledge, understanding of state management and affection for their country. It is destitute of men and women who understand what their country needs and must do in order to preserve the common good.

Former US President Theodore Roosevelt described this kind of statesman with these words:

> "if there is no war, one does not get a great general and so too, if there is no great occasion, one cannot get a great statesman".

Roosevelt concludes by saying that no one would have known Lincoln, had he lived in a time of peace—he was a "situation-made" statesman (BrainyQuote, 2008). Africa, after independence, faced difficult times whilst it built new nations out of an oppressed and brutally exploited one (Dumont, 1966; Rodney, 1972; Hochschild, 1999). During this period, it needed men of knowledge who had an understanding about government and political arrangements that would match Africa's natural and social realities like the plurality of the society and would ensure and secure good and functional governance regardless of whoever stood at the head of the nation's governing apparatus at any time.

Post independent Africa produced statesmen such as Patrice Lumumba of Zaire, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Nkwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso who arguably might have put their countries' interest at the top of their priority list.

In their various countries and in the entire African continent, these men are considered as statesmen due to the "common-good" plan and efforts they had to build their nations for the good of their people ("The Assassination of Patrice Lumumba" by Ludo de Witte 2001; "Africa Unbound: Reflections of an African Statesman" by Alex, 1965; and "Thomas Sankara: L'espoir assassine" by Valere D. Some 1990). Nevertheless, these leaders suffered serious set-backs in their countries due to their leadership approach and measures, many of which are blamed on their leadership flaws (inability): that is, lack of leadership skills in managing their new nations (Meredith, 2005: 8; Tordorff, 1993: 68, 129). Unskillful leadership by founding fathers of the new African nations and their inability to build strong institutions that would serve the people and not the leaders, continue to play a big role in the agony of today's Africa (Tordorff, 1993: 70). Tordorff (1993: 68) noted, there were very few graduates with senior level administrative experience at the time of independence and many of the clerks of colonial administration became permanent private secretaries to the new leaders overnight. However, the shortage of "manpower" which these nations suffered at independence also reflected very much the colonizer's neglect of the African peoples' education.

According to Lonsdale (1986: 145) these leaders were ignorant about what power is all about and the "innocence of power", Lonsdale continued, "...removed what are normally its prudential barriers to irresponsibility".

However, and unfortunately for Africa most of its statesmen were killed or chased out of power before they realized the "common good" visions for their countries. Instead, the caliber of sophists, kleptocrates and tyrants such as late Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, late Gnassimgbe Eyadema of Togo, Jean Bedel Bokassa of Central African Republic (CAR) and their copunterparts who transformed their once independent multiparty states into centralized military or authoritarian states "flourished". These tyrants flourished through oppression, co-optation and the practice of sophism, turning the continent into one whose government was/is founded upon greed and the struggle over state wealth. Mobutu Sese Seko developed a centralized one-party state and a personality cult amassing the country's wealth which gave birth to kleptocracy (Andrew Maykuth, May 11, 1997 article published in The Seatle Times titled "A `Kleptocracy' Collapses - Years Of Looting By Zaire's Mobutu Coming To An End"). Eyadema's reign of close to half a century in Togo had a destructive outcome towards the Togolese society. An Amnesty International report titled "Togo: Le règne de la terreur dans un climat d'impunité" of May 1999 described Eyadema's "governing" style as marked by a 'persistent pattern' of extrajudicial executions, 'disappearances', arbitrary arrest and torture; Bokassa was the president of CAR who earned the reputation as a blood-thirsty killer, proclaiming himself marshal and president-for-life in 1972, emperor in 1977 and naming his country as the Central African Empire. Amnesty international reported in 1979 that, 100 children were killed in a school in the country's capital of Bangui for protesting against the cost of school uniforms (Nundy, 1996). According to an analysis of the state in Africa by Bayart (1993: 20), state governments were/are based on the governing mentality of the "politics of the belly".

After Africa's independence, Africa needed statesmen, who despite the absence of or minimal "power checks and limitations", could focus on the common interest of their (new) states and use the power in their hands to establish the right political arrangements and institutional order for functional nation-states directed towards the common good. This implied drawing up a democratic constitution and a political system that would safeguard good leadership even after they were gone. A statesman has the society's wellbeing as his primary focus and thus he thinks of the society beyond his rule and beyond his life time on earth. He makes sure that his political actions today would benefit the future generations. He uses his political expertise to raise the social, economic and political standard of his nations to a more desirable or excellent level or to preserve the desirable condition of the nation by preventing a change towards the worse (Gildin, 1989: 3). He has an understanding of what is meant by a 'good life' for his society, and what would bring happiness and fulfillment to all members of the society. Unfortunately, instead of statesmen, Africa nurtured an abundance of opportunists, sophists and tyrants who have seized every

little advantage to satisfy their greed (Bayart, 1993: 228; Guest, 2005). The fresh and poorly established states with weak institutions and/or poor political arrangements had no chance to survive or attain maturity such that, the common good of the people could be preserved. National interests were not on their agenda, the governors thought only of themselves and appreciated nothing except a life of luxury, comfort, a tie and 3-piece suit in warm Africa, air conditioned Sport Utility Vehicles on bad African roads which they never built nor maintained, and all these at the expense of their peoples (Nugent, 2004: 59-60).

Another important quality of a statesman, besides his skills and knowledge to manage the state very well (according to Plato), and in the case of Africa in particular, is the quality of magnanimity. The magnanimous character of the leader is particularly important in the case of Africa. The leadership ability to give in to the will of the people, accept election results and avoid election rigging and manipulations, and respect constitutional paragraphs or articles that restrain the leader in any form, are all vital to guarantee a successful transition or to facilitate democratic consolidation after a successful transition. This quality is also vital for the incumbent to step down—give up power— put an end to the autocratic and neo-patrimonial regime and pave the way for a re-constitution. Benin's Mathieu Kerekou, Ghana's Jerry Rawling and Mali's Alpha Omar Konare are a few examples of countries in Africa where the magnanimity of the incumbent has proven the importance of this threat in political progress in Africa. These leaders gave in to constitutionalism and stepped down without protesting election results or changing the constitution. The result is successful transition and democratic establishment in these countries. The case of Benin with a military dictator like Kerekou was astonishingly the pioneer transition of the second liberation. Even though many would criticize Kerekou's authoritarian style, it is thanks to his bowing down to the people's will during the 1990 national conference, that Benin today has a democracy. Despite pressures from his military staff to reject the people's call for sovereignty of the national conference, Kerekou defied the pressure, notably from officers like Maurice Kwandete, to disperse the people with force saying, he would "not spill the blood of the Benin people" (Magnusson, 1999: 221).

This was the defining point of Benin's transition. The democratization process has now passed on to the consolidation stage because subsequent leaders follow the democratic precedent set by Kerekou in respecting the people's will and the constitution, as well as accepting unfavorable (to the leaders) judgments passed against them by the constitutional court (Magnusson, 1999): For example in a case between NGOs and the Ministry of Interior, the Constitutional Court in 1994 declared a decision of the Ministry of Interior as unconstitutional, since it violated freedom of association. From 1991 to 2002, the Constitutional Court of Benin handed down over 300 decisions on human rights and public liberties (Rotman,

Table 1. Statistics on how leaders leave office: coup, invasion or election?

Decade	Through coup war or invasion	Elections
1960-69	27	0
1970-79	30	0
1980-89	22	1
1990-2000	22	14

Source: Arthur, 2000: "Risk, Rule and Reason: Leadership in Africa", Africa Notes, Institute for African Development, Cornell University.

2004: 303). Its rulings against both the executive and legislative branches, which were respected by both branches, not only demonstrated its independence from both these branches of government but also indicated the existence of the rule of law in Benin. The constitutional court has thus continued to gain influence and its presence, as well as its active role now affect the behavior of political authorities positively (Rotman, 2004: 303).

During the last US presidential campaign, the then New York's Senator and current US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton, in her South Carolina January 2008 campaign for democrat nomination for the 2008 US presidential elections, said that the difference between a politician and a statesman is that, the politician looks forward to the next election but the statesman looks forward to the next generation.

The situation, where politicians become active only when elections are approaching, is very prominent in African countries. The ruling parties, as well as the opposition parties, begin engaging themselves into political debates and promises of all kinds. The opposition starts criticizing the government while the government starts making new promises and repeating its unfulfilled promises of the last electoral campaigns. Incumbents like opposition leaders are politically "dead" and only become active when elections are approaching. All they care about is power, how to get it or preserve it. The challenges facing such leaders are not the sufferings, poverty and the general social and economic insecurities confronting their societies but their political rivals and challengers to their hold on power.

However, in spite of the importance of the statesmen in Africa, strong leadership would not purely depend upon the "statesmanship-traits" of an individual but to a great extent, also upon proper and efficient political arrangements. The statesmanship that is associated with an individual ends with the leader's rule. Ideally, any threat of a successor that contradicts the social contract's principles of 'men forming a government to serve them and to do so only with their approval', would be arrested by the correct institutional design and political arrangement, i.e. constitutionalism. Consequently, to sustain and preserve statesmanship the political system must be made with "strings" that would not only "fabricate" statesmen but also uphold statesmanship.

Coups and unconstitutional change of power

Seizure of power and rule by oppression are both common phenomena in Africa which greatly influence political developments on the continent, especially the transition to democracy. Elections, as the mechanism to select rulers, was greatly undermined and "disqualified" in unitary centralised states of post-independent Africa. During and after independence, some presidents who came to power through elections quickly lost power again through coup d'état. Coup d'état eventually replaced elections as the means to access positions of power (Table 1). Within the period 1960 to 1970 more than twenty coups were conducted in Africa. Examples found in the 1960 coup decade include the following: In Togo Etienne Eyadema killed President Silvanus Olympio in 1963 and later in 1967 took over and stayed in power through a repressive and tyrannical rule until his death in 2005 (Meredith, 2005: 176); in Congo-Brazzaville the government of Abbe' Youlou overthrown in August 1963; in Dahomey, Colonel Christophe Soghlo overthrew President Maga in December 1963; in Gabon, a successful February 1964 Coup d'etat was reverted by French forces; again in Dahomey Colonel Christophe Soghlo forced the President to step down and a provisional government was formed in 1965; in Burundi, army officers overthrew the monarchy in October 1965; in Central Africa Republic, Colonel Jean Bokassa ousted President David Dacko in January 1966; in Upper Volta and still in January 1966, President Yamego was deposed by Colonel Lamizana; in Ghana, President Kwame Nkruma was overthrown by General Ankrah in February 1966; in Nigeria General Gowon overthrew General Ironsi in July 1966; Likewise Burundi 1966, Sierra Leone 1967 and 1968, Mali 1968, Sudan 1969, Libya 1969 and Somalia 1969 all witnessed successful changes of power through military coup. Major Jimmi Wangomeby (1985) described the 1960s as the "decade of coups in Africa". The majority of the coups involved military take over and by 1975, an estimated half of all countries on the continent had military or civil-military led governments. From this decade until the 1980s, an overthrow of government or power seizure in Africa became a prevalent phenomenon (Decalo, 1976).

In the evolution of post-colonial Africa freedom of speech and opposition to the government were eradicated from African political culture. Leaders and the ruling elites became indignant to politics that involved opposition and did everything to suppress it. Autocracy and dictatorship with all its ills underwent consolidation and became the "legitimate" political culture in Africa. Leaders thus do everything to maintain autocratic rule. In Malawi, for example, its president, Kamuzu Banda bluntly said:

"If to maintain the political stability and efficient administration, I have to detain ten thousand or one hundred thousand, I will do it" (Meredith, 2005: 176).

Unfortunately for Africa, these leaders neither ensure

political stability nor do they run efficient administrations as a result of greed and love for power. Many of these leaders, whose leadership were marked by oppression, are alleged to have slaughtered hundreds, thousands and in some cases even up to millions of their populace during their rule (Meredith's chapter 13, titled "The coming of tyrants" for examples in CAR, Uganda, Equatorial Guinea and Ethiopia). With such an established long-term autocratic culture, it is difficult for autocrats of this calibre, to become democrats overnight as many of them claim. The outcome of the democratization process: call it adjective democracy (Collier and Levitsky, 1997), is failed transition to stable, functioning and successful demo-cracies where the people can enjoy their right to liberty, rule of law, property and security. De facto autocratic rule combined with de jure democracy is partly due to a leadership culture of "president for life" or access to power by coup which emerged in these societies and established itself through a "political socialization" process that characterised the post-independent elite rulership generations. Considering the argument of the French political scientist, Jean Francois Médard (Le Vine, 1986: 91-92), political systems with strong personalised leadership, are possible only in favour of weak states: This means that, despite putting in place autocratic structural and institutional foundations, the whole system still remains unstable because of the basic unanswered questions of power, legitimacy, and authority. Le Vine (1986: 92) affirms the argument of Médard by concluding that, the ineffectiveness in running these states and the inability to handle internal crisis, revealed by the record of their state of affairs since 1960, supports Médard's argument. The stability in African political systems is tied to the personality of the ruler and not to the working and effectiveness of institutions. This contributes to the transfer of power by coup, or the transfer of power to 'handmaidens' as well as offspring of the rulers after their death or on rare occasions, resignation. Even after the re-introduction of democracy in early 1990s, elected leaders of the second liberation era have been overthrown through coups, as was the case in the Republic of Congo in 1997 when its ex-autocratic ruler, Denis Sassou Nguessou, overthrew the 1992 democratically elected president Pascal Lissouba (Magnusson and Clark, 2005: 561-564; BBC, 2009).

Inheritance and monarchic "democracy"

"Family-nization" of leadership in Africa, as described here, is not in any way related to the situation whereby family-members get into public positions by "merits" or through democratic elections. Instead, in Africa, it is the personal appointment of family members, particularly sons, or successors (through inheritance) by autocratic rulers to high state positions without consultations, merits or elections. The singled-handed style of rulership for the

pursuit of personal interest and preservation of power also contributes or encourages the family-nization of state powers and institutions in Africa. Gabon is a good illustration of the genesis and the emergence of 'love for power' and family-nization of politics. Its former president, Omar Bongo took power in 1967 upon the death of the country's first president, Leon Mba. Bongo later dissolved all political parties and established his Parti Démocrtique Gabonais (PDG) as the only political party of the country and the only forum for political discussion and criticism (Yates, 2005: 179).

From this period onwards, Bongo, besides being the president, still occupied many ministerial positions: ministry of information, planning and development (1969 to 1981), ministry of management of the territory (1972 to 1981), ministry of national guidance (1974 to 1981) and postal service and communication (1975 to 1981) (Yates, 2005: 180). In response to criticism in the 1980s for his numerous ministry occupations in addition to the presidency, Bongo decided to appoint his children and other members of his family so as to retain control of these ministries. His sons, Martin Bongo (1984 to 1989) and Ali Bongo (1989 to 1991) and his daughter Pascaline Bongo (1991 to 1994) were placed at the ministry of foreign affairs. While Bongo was running the country with his family, he also did what his counterparts in DRC and Togo did by simply preparing their sons to eventually inherit the presidency upon their death. In Togo, in February 2005 after the long serving tyrant ruler, Gnassimgbe Eyadema's death, he was unconstitutionally succeeded by his thirty-nine year old son Faure Essozimna Eyadema. The people of Togo, as well as the African Union and external powers, protested against this gesture and the disrespect for the state constitution. Faure Eyadema simply accepted to organize elections for the successor of his father but refused to step down and hand the interim position to the speaker of the house as the constitution demands. He won the elections that followed which were organized by his government, and is currently running the country after his father's rule that began in 1967 (Polgreen, 2005). A similar situation occurred in DRC, when the president, Laurent D. Kabila was assassinated, his son immediately took over, still backed by the army. He later organized elections to "legitimize" his stay in power. Kabila now runs the state as a "born-again" civilian ruler after "discarding" the military status that he used to access power (Onishi, 2001).

In Gabon Ali Bongo has succeeded his father after the former's death following more than 30 years in power. Despite winning an election with strongly contested results, the polity that was established and political legacy, which was left behind by his late father Omar Bongo, made a different result impossible. This new trend of monarchic democracy, where sons of presidents take-over power from their fathers and organize and win disputed elections in order to legitimize the unconstitutional succession of their fathers, deprives the people of the affected nations of the right to freely choose their own leader. From the Togo,

DRC and Gabon examples, the phenomenon of power inheritance and monarchic democracy is prevalent in francophone Africa. This non-constitutional change of head of state (with the exception of Gabon where the elections where organized "constitutionally"), which are later "recognized" nationally and internationally through elections and unconventional constitutional adjustments typical of (French) Africa, can be typified as inheritance and monarchic democracy. It is neither democratic in terms of constitutionalism, nor free elections, but it somehow applies some apparent democratic instruments like "unfair" elections to gain and/or justify its existence.

Constitutional flexibility

In many countries in Africa, presidents change const-itutions on a regular basis to suit their own stay in power. Constitutional flexibility describes the manipulation or change of state constitutions by African leaders, in order to consolidate their control over power and increase longevity in power. The manipulation of state constitution is a major problem in Africa which stems from the political leadership's philosophy of "president for life". The basics of constitutional manipulation were laid down during the transformation from multi-party post-independent states to unitary one-party centralized states. President Sese Seko of Zaire for example, did not allow the constitution to enter into force from 1965, when he came to power through a coup until 1970. After the introduction of one party constitution, post-independence leaders continued with the constant alteration or manipulation of articles and paragraphs in their constitutions so as to maintain their grip to power. When international institutions and Western powers "contributing" to and impacting African rulership, in the late 1980s, "forced" them to re-introduce democracy, many of these leaders who practiced and knew nothing other than the political culture of autocracy and presidency for life, simply changed articles and paragraphs in their constitutions. They launched "democracy" by introducing one or more paragraphs that permitted the legalization of opposition parties while retaining all the paragraphs which granted them the right to restrain democratic operations by these parties.

One of the "democratic" articles introduced, was the limitation to the presidential term by more than half of the rulers of in Africa between 1990 and 1994. This was seen as a positive move to end the autocratic trend of president for life, whereby leaders left power only through death or coup. Nevertheless, these term limits were ephemeral due to constitutional flexibility. Ozoukou (2005) has analyzed constitutional manipulation by African leaders, in order to retain power. His article on Chirac's (1990) speech, includes the declaration by Chirac, former French president, that "Africa is not ripe for democracy". An opposing question to Chirac's is—is the continent ripe for dictatorship? Under the subtitle of "confiscation de alternance politique"/the confiscation of power alternation

in politics, Ozoukou presented a list of countries where presidents manipulate state constitutions in order to preserve power: In Senegal, the national assembly in 1998, revisited the electoral code which limited the mandate of the president to two terms and uplifted this limitation; after 40 years in power, Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo changed article 59 of the October 14, 1992 constitution that introduced multi-partism in the country and limited the presidential mandate to two terms, per-mitting him to run for a third term in 2003; After nine years in power, president Sam Nojuma of Namibia changed the constitution of the country in 1999 erasing the limitation on the number of terms in office and allowing him to run for a third mandate in march 2000; amending article 24 of the country's constitution, late president Lasana Conte of Guinea secured for himself the possibility of re-election for a seven-year term in office as often as he lived. Paul Biya of Cameroon changed the constitution after intense national and international pressure to legalize opposition parties, placing a presidential limit of two terms. In 2008, he changed this same constitution, against heavy protest from the Cameroonian people, by removing the limitation to the terms of office to allow him run again in 2011.

Furthermore, he added a clause to the constitution that basically grants him immunity for any crimes committed as president in case he leaves power before death (African Press International: April, 2008). Protest against this act from the Cameroonian populace was seriously cracked down by Biya's loyal forces (Tansa 2008). Even Longue (2006) protest song and firm belief that, the trend of constitutional change that enable presidents to stay in power will never occur in Cameroon because (as he insisted) Cameroonians will never accept that, thus failed (Musa, 2008). The list of nations that have presidents who manipulate constitutions and practice an apparent democracy or called them democracies with adjectives, further includes Chad, Burkina Faso and Uganda. The presidents of these countries have manipulated their constitutions in favor of clinging to power and in other cases like in Malawi, Nigeria and Zambia, such attempts by their leaders to change constitutions in order to remain in power failed (Sturman, 2009). In August 2009, Mamadou Tandja of Niger became the twelfth president within a decade to overturn the constitution, in order to extend his stay on power. Kathryn (2009), understandably expressed her doubt whether the tide has turned against the third wave of democratization in Africa. The negative impact of constitutional manipulation on democratization processes and the construction of stable functional states with successful democratic governance cannot be overemphasized.

Conclusion

Borrowing from Robert (2005), "dictatorship by strongmen, corruption, civil wars and genocide, tribalism and corruption, widespread poverty and the interventions and

manipulations of the major powers has all relegated Africa to the position of an aid 'basket case', the world's poorest and least-developed continent". There is no doubt the leadership fallibilities and flaws discussed in this paper are to a great extent major contributors to the failures in Africa. Many actions of governments in SSA have been similar to some despotic, absolutist, brutal and abusive power leaderships that are addressed in most of the social contract theories (Locke, 1689; Montesquieu, 1748). Through these flaws the people's rights are abused by members of the government who should instead be at the service of the people. Looking at the dreadful situations on the African continent, the question that comes up is: where is the government, the law makers and the judges who are endowed with the responsibility of governing-ensuring justice, liberty and freedom for all, a responsibility which entails an obligation of preserving the common good. Publications with empirical case studies on greed, conflicts, neo-patrimonialism and other flaws as described in this paper (Berdal and Malone, 2000; Mullins and Rothe, 2008) illustrate the dreadful situation suffered by people under rulership with these flaws.

State constitutions are centered on constitutional and political arrangements that, serve the greed and wealth amassing interest of the leaders, and have created and consolidated a political culture which is against the people and national interest. This autocratic legacy is difficult to break especially when the leaders are everything short of magnanimity. Despite the lives that have been lost, and the continual call for freedom and governments for the people and by the people, these leaders ignore common interests and only in very few occasions have some of them taken measures towards establishing a political arrangement that yield governments that enable "the society to have and secure their liberty, property and lives" (Locke, 1689: II §§139).

Considering the removal of power restrictions, limitation or the introduction of non-constitutionalism in the political leadership in Africa, these leadership flaws are bound to continue having a negative impact on governance, democratization and functional statehood. Without true democracy the people are doomed to suffer autocracy and the resultant government that opposes the very purpose of its existence. Likewise, without the appropriate liberal constitutions with separation of powers that guarantee the rule of law and the right political arrangements and institutions to provide adequate service to the people, democracy will continue to exist on paper for these societies. This notwithstanding and considering the long tradition of autocracy and disrespect for the constitution by longstanding autocrat leaders and elites, a democratic constitution with the right kind of political arrangement alone will not suffice if incumbents refuse to respect the will of the people or ignore the law and the constitution. Thus, leadership affection for the country and statesmanship in the form of magnanimous character can result to successful transition and consolidation of properly governed democratic functional states.

The contrary has stalled and will continue to stall and disrupt democratic transition as in Kenya after the 2007 elections in which the incumbent President Mwai Kibaki was accused of manipulation of election results or as in the recent case of Cote d'Ivoire where incumbent Laurent Gbagbo ignored the results of the November 2010 presidential elections proclaimed by the independent electoral commission (IRIN, 2010). While goodwill and magnanimous leadership can facilitate successful transition to functional democratic states, their absence facilitate constitutional flexibility and mask autocracy as democracy leading to failed transitions, poor governance and underdeveloped nations. Despite these flaws and fallibilities, which are the results of man's nature of greed and hunger for power, the appropriate state constitutions, political arrangements and leadership consciousness of true statesmen have enabled successful functional and stable nations today to enjoy prosperity, peace and a reasonable level of satisfaction through a minimum threshold of human development.

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