

Political Sacramental and Leadership Non Performance in Africa:

The Synergy

Dr. Frank-Collins N. Okafor

Senior Lecturer, Department of Political Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria.

Email: Fcollins67@yahoo.com

Abstract

Over the years, African leaders have been publicly identified with some actions suggestive of mystic involvements in leadership. While some have claimed and played *god*, others carry themselves as special creatures on *salvific* mission. Thus, often times, various objects serve as political sacramental manifestation of their links to the esoteric which instill pauperizing psychosomatic fears in the minds of the citizenry. Although these acts boost the courage of the holder and superficially fortify his grip on power, they estrange and mystify leadership just as they serve as forerunners to non performance. From the noble and ancient throne of Haile Salesie to the brutal legacies of Bokassa and Mobutu, etc, the situation has been the same to the detriment of the continent. This paper therefore, examines critically, the role of this miasmic situation in the pauperization and impoverishment of Africans by their leaders. It identifies the relationship between this situation and bad governance and argues within the conceptual benefits of myths and experiences in leadership, the impact of the situation in terms of the linkage between the two realities in the leadership styles in the continent. It concludes that so long as leadership continues to be mystified in Africa that democracy and its dividends remain a mirage and opts for a simple, demystified effective leadership in democratic Africa.

Keywords: Political Sacramental, Leadership, Mythology, Non Performance, Symbols.

1 Introduction

Leadership, like other professions has its own peculiarities. In this peculiar oddness lies the desire to make and create a niche as it sits in control and judgment of the affairs of men. This desire to be different has often served as inspiration to generate unique postures, disposition, pattern, symbols or insignia that distinguish it from others in the same world of political peculiarities. Some of these may also be mythically, cryptically or spiritually rooted but in the eyes of the ordinary, are mere colourful paraphernalia of leadership.

The essence of symbols in political leadership is legendry and represents most often, an outward representation of the leader's inner intention. They go with the expression, aspiration and the dreams of the originator or holder. They could be seen as political *sacramental* representing outward sign of inward disposition (grace) of the holder. Political sacramental may come in the forms of special regalia, images, symbols, signs or myths that are strictly peculiar to individual leader and which, in some cases, may also be occultic. To the Bahá'í faith:

A symbol is opaque until it is understood. For the one to whom the symbol makes inspirational sense, the symbol is translucent, at once a way of looking at present reality, and at the same time affording a glimpse of the potential future, of a possible collective scenario, of the ideal, real (and) the translucent shadows of the spiritual world. These symbols take on a life of their own in the inner world of spiritual consciousness (Buck, 1998).

In the light of the above, an occultic magical symbol is an 'image which hides an inner meaning. Thus, meaning is usually cunningly hidden behind a form' (Goodman, 1989). Occultists the world over believe that, once a symbol is created, it acquires power of its own and more powers are generated when symbols are created without the profane (uninitiated) knowing about it. A symbol or set of symbols possesses inherent power once they are created. Therefore occultist doctrine teaches that these symbols would act as a powerful electric-grid once they were set in place or injected into political leadership. Therefore, as they come in different forms, political *sacramental* also come with varied meanings depending on the personal or collective intentions of the user or users. Few examples are relevant here:

The Star of David which is the interlaced triangles variously used by Jewish leaders before it was later adopted as national symbol by the Jewish state of Israel represents the inseparable unity of spirit and matter. One triangle points down, toward the physical world, and the other points up, toward the spiritual world. The hexagram shape formed by their intersection is the union of spirit and matter. In Ghana, two-headed Crocodile is a unity symbol. In it, two-headed crocodile fights itself over food that goes to a common stomach. One head is at the top of the image, and the other is at the far left. The shared stomach is the center of the image. This symbol stresses the

oneness of humanity in spite of cultural diversity. It also emphasizes the need for unity in the family or state. K Nkonsonkonson is an African symbol that represents the chain of humanity in life and death, sharing one blood. It stands for unity, responsibility, and interdependence (Conley, 2004) etc. It is an explicable fact that the idea behind the use of these is to communicate and maintain, in one way or the other, an overriding influence and control on the beholder who is often carried away by the opulent generosity of collective sense of belonging which, according to Hackman and Johnson (in Vickrey, 1998), is possible because communication is based on the transfer of symbols. This transfer allows for creation of meaning within individuals. Thus, Vickrey (1998) concludes that viewing leadership *as* communication and perceiving the currency of its realm to be symbolic interaction have important ramifications for leaders and those people they seek to lead.

African leaders understood this and had used them even in the pure traditional era. King Njoya, for example, elevated and amplified his leadership. The royal imagery incorporates varied power symbols such as spiders and double edged snakes (Wadworth, n.d). Those of Shaka Zulu are still evergreen. Contemporary leaders use mythical leadership symbols for one political reason or the other. The names come as the symbols are varied: Emperor Haile Salesie had 'the Lion of Judah' as a significant leadership insignia of his invincibility and power. Idi Amin Dada of Uganda used a mythical swagger stick, a kilt and tartan forage cap while Nigeria's Ironsi had a Crocodile swagger. The story is the same for Mobutu Sese Seku of Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo), Jean-Bede Bokassa of Central Africa Republic, Milton Obote of Uganda, kamuzu Banda of Malawi, and Omar Al-Bashir of Sudan etc.

It is interesting to note that at times this leadership political *sacramental* do not originate from the leadership itself but the led. Out of their collective awe for the leaders, people could come up with one mystic-related story or the other about them. For example, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, former President of Nigeria was at a time said to be immortal and invincible which did not exclude the power to appear and disappear at will. He had the power of advance knowledge too with which he escaped persistent attempts by the colonialists to kill him. He was also credited as the custodian of the proverbial key to the River Niger. However, it should be stated that not all symbols used by political leaders could be regarded as political *sacramental* but those used for political purposes.

The problematic does not lie in the use of these *sacramental* by African leaders (which sometimes are beautiful to behold) but the role they have played in one way or the other in the impoverishment and underdevelopment of Africa. This is because some of these leaders adopted this strategy following their desire to create some myths around their leaderships as well as instill spiritual and physical fears in the minds of the people, after all, 'Leadership (indeed) is persuasion (Hogan *et al* 1994). And how does one seek to persuade - to influence others without resorting to coercion or, say, extrasensory perception? There is but one way to do so: symbolic interaction (Vickrey, 1998).

2. African Leaders and Political Sacramental

While it could be said that the use of mythology and symbols is not new within the circle of African traditional leadership, one can boldly add that their use in contemporary times runs short of their significance in ancient days. For example, Shaka Zulu, the great warrior and leader of the Zulu kingdom always had spiritualists around him. He had great and wide-spread myth about his military exploits made possible to a great extent by his mythically intimidating traditional regalia. The difference today is that while Shaka's was aimed at perpetual intimidation of his enemies and visitors, contemporary political *sacramental* are instruments of terror, grip and pauperization of innocent people. The experience is both ancient and modern. Haile Selassie was the Emperor of Ethiopia. On November 2nd, 1930:

He was crowned King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Elect of God and Power of the Trinity in the eyes of the 72 nations of this world bowing down to His Imperial Majesty. Rastas hold that Selassie was a direct descendant of the Israelite Tribe of Judah through the lineage of King David and Solomon, and that he was also the Lion of Judah mentioned in the Book of Revelation.

In heeding to the above assertions, the emperor adopted the lion as his leadership sacramental and was said to have lived with a live one in his palace as a physical manifestation of his spiritual link to the tribe of David, dynasty of Solomon and his invincibility. Thus, Selassie was revered to the point of worship by the people. He was *god* to the Rastafarians. His name was not mentioned with impunity. It was said that at the time of his overthrow, the live lion disappeared with him and has never returned. If Salesie's case was expository, the case of the *Leopard King of Zaire* (now Democratic Republic of Congo), Mobutu Sese Seku, is captivating. Mobutu, 'Actor and Director of his destiny' espoused an ideology he named *authenticite* based on the notion of the superiority of 'authentic' African traditions in which he portrayed himself as a traditional chief (Mobutuism). Along with his trademark, leopard skin cap, Mobutu always used a wooden walking stick and a carved eagle, a

symbol of power that allegedly took the strength of eight normal men to carry (*This means nothing*, 2002). The 'Rock Emperor' deified himself and played *god*. According to his former Information Minister, Sakombi Inongo:

I took the picture of Mobutu and put it in the clouds and before every TV news broadcast, Mobutu emerged from the clouds like god. Children thought he was god since he came out of the clouds (Inongo, in Thierry, n.d.).

His claim to a *god* became manifest when he banned the use of Christian and European names and western attires in his country and changed his name from Joseph Desire Mobutu to Mobutu Sese Seku Kuku Ngbendu wa Zabanga. As *god*, he cherished songs and praises as *he went about doing political good*. His 'godness' was also publicly sung. While sitting on gold-plated wooden throne with his legs on a spread Leopard skin, Mobutu listened with smiles as people called him a *creator*. He never objected. Mobutu also established a massive personality cult and assumed such titles as "Messiah," "Father of the Nation," "Second Hero," "Mulopwe" ("emperor" or "god-king"), etc. Images of him were everywhere, pronouns referring to Him in government press releases were capitalized; his mother was compared to the Virgin Mary and he to Jesus (Latimer, 2006). It was total madness. Jean-Bede Bokassa of Central African Republic was another revealing case in leadership mystification. He saw himself as demi-god, married seventeen wives, converted back and forth from Islam to Christianity, and had an extra-long military jacket tailored to accommodate all the various medals he awarded himself. That was not enough. To the astonishment of even his most dedicated sycophants, he decided to declare himself "Emperor Bokassa I," and changed the name of his landlocked nation to the Central African Empire to suit his new title. He had himself crowned Emperor on December 4, 1977 in a spectacle that cost about a third of the nation's gross national product. Hundreds of mango trees that had lined Bangui's wide avenues were cut down to better accommodate the imperial procession, and a good portion of the capital's population was compelled to march behind a train of white horses imported from Belgium, pulling an antique Coach decorated with golden eagles.

Inside the Coach was the new Emperor Bokassa, almost lost within a 32-pound coronation robe with 2 million tiny pearls and crystal beads sewn into the fabric. Atop his head was a crown that cost \$2 million, with a doorknob-sized 138-carat diamond as centerpiece. It was an appropriate symbol, for diamonds had helped keep him in power (Zoellnerjeeps, 2006). The flamboyant but tyrannical Idi Amin Dada of Uganda represents a symbolic leadership in absolute negativity. By most accounts, an illiterate and gluttonous buffoon, Amin had become the subject of many bizarre rumours and myths. There were stories of cannibalism, of feeding the corpses of his victims to crocodiles, of keeping severed heads in a freezer at his home and bringing them out on occasions for "talks" - most or all of which are unsubstantiated, but not necessarily untrue (Moreorless, 2007). He was addressed to as 'His Excellency, President for Life, Field Marshall al Hadji Doctor Idi Amin Dada' (Wikipedia, 2009). He went further by:

declaring himself Emperor of Uganda and awarded himself the VC (Victorious Cross) and CBE (Conqueror of the British Empire). He also styled himself "the last king of Scotland". He wore a kilt and tartan forage cap, symbols of a love affair with Scotland that began when Willie Cochrane, Pipe Major of the King's African Rifles, taught Amin to play the bagpipes (Judd, 2003).

He was also popularly referred to as 'Big Daddy', a.k.a 'Butcher of Africa', 'Conqueror of the British Empire', 'Lord of All the Beasts of the Earth and Fishes of the Sea'. Determined to make Uganda "a blackman's country", Amin in 1972, expelled the country's 40,000-80,000 Indians and Pakistanis in the closing months of the year, reportedly after receiving a message from God during a dream (Moreorless, 2007). Amin's swagger stick and the kilt and tartan forage cap became a rallying point in Kampala as children and the old tried imitating him in their attires and behaviors. He was regarded as *a national hero and true Pan-Africanist*. As Idi Amin went about re-enslaving his own people, his leadership sacramental and 300 pounds body became 'symbols of nationalism and Uganda's liberation'. 'The God of Guinea', Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo represents another study in leadership mythology and symbol usage. Obiang, as he was popularly called, was a man of contradictions, with feelings about him completely mixed. He was an enigma who refused to accept the dignity and kingship of God except his. Through his political manipulations of calmness and soft-spokenness he sold and forced his dreams of becoming *god* to his people and succeeded eventually. In July 2003 the state radio station announced that Obiang was:

the God of Equatorial Guinea" and that he now enjoyed the right to "decide to kill without having to give anyone an account and without going to hell". Despite his reputation as a brutal leader that rules with an iron hand, he is very soft-spoken and not prone to public displays of anger; he is extremely in control of his person and patient. His mode of dressing is typically very businesslike and professional for official matter... (www.dictatorofthemonth.com)

The Life President of Malawi, Ngwazi Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda was also part of the African leaders that mystified leadership while *lording* it over his own people. The title of Ngwazi means 'Great Lion or Conqueror' and created a peculiar image by his English-style three-piece suits, matching handkerchiefs and fly-whisk. Within Malawi, views on him ranged from a cult-like devotion to fear. His government according to Wikipedia (2007) was rigidly authoritarian, even by African standards of the time. Banda was the subject of a very pervasive cult of personality. Every business building was required to have an official picture of Banda hanging on the wall, and no poster, clock or picture could be higher than his picture. Before every movie, a video of Banda waving to the people was shown while the anthem played. When Banda visited a city, a contingent of women was expected to greet him at the airport and dance for him. A special cloth, bearing the president's picture, was the required attire for those performances. The case of the young Yahya Jammeh of the Gambia is not different. He was also accused of the use of voodoo in leadership with which he is able to control his subjects. He dresses in immaculate Wolof attires, claims to be a messenger of Allah and goes around with his Quran and Rosary. Jammeh, in his usual claim to some divine powers boasted that he has cure for AIDS with the miracle concoction of green paste, bitter drink and bananas. An incident in one of his outings is worth reporting:

From the pockets of his billowing white robe, Gambia's President pulls out a plastic container, closes his eyes in prayer and rubs a green herbal paste onto the rib cage of the patient — a concoction he claims is a cure for AIDS. He then orders the thin man to swallow a bitter yellow drink, followed by two bananas (MSNBC, 2007).

Jammeh sponsors the *Futampaf* which is a cultural cum spiritual ceremony in the country. In 2008 for example, he attended and was the one that 'anointed the Chief Priest of the ceremony, performed the important ceremony of praying for and pouring libation (water) on the Chief Priest and the initiates "to appease the ancestral spirits and protect the initiates' (Halake, 2008). According to Chris (2011), the case of late Myanmar Gaddafi of Libya is also a very serious one. In his 42 years in power he was so used to 'swanky Louis Vuitton sunglasses'. Like many potentates, Gaddafi was fond of ostentatious ornamentation. Gaddafi's grandiose razzle-dazzle was used to awe and impress his own population and convince foreign powers of his dominance over that same population.

When in vibrantly-coloured traditional dress, he affected the well-off Man of the People image beloved of all dictators who prefer not to look at their real oppressive selves in the mirror. In military garb, he saw himself as a Strong Man, able to exert his will over others. And when in more Western – if eccentric – garb, Gaddafi fancied himself an Independently-Minded World Statesman with pretensions of influencing the Great Powers of the globe (Chris, 2011:1).

The list of leaders with political leadership myths cannot be exhausted here.

3. Political Sacramental and the Quandary of Leadership Failure In Africa

Political *Sacramental* or Leadership mythology can play significant role in the leadership of a nation. While some of these sacramental may be spiritual, others could be physical. Empirical evidence suggests that these objects and the rituals inherent in their acquisition and maintenance have played significant role in the failure of leadership and underdevelopment of the African continent. Over-emphasis becomes irrelevant on the overbearing opportunities, protection and control they provide the leaders as they engage in the enslavement enterprise and plundering spree of the continent. The excruciating grips of dictatorship and *sit-tightism* prevalent in Africa cannot be divorced from the reality of political *sacramental*. They instill physical fear in the minds of the people and disarm them against possible revolts or disobedience. For example, the timely adoption of the Leopard skin by Mobutu sent an intimidating message to all and sundry that he had the Leopard's heart in him, especially at a time he felt that possible opposition was likely if left unchecked. Hearing one of his compatriots here in reference to him is really interesting:

The leopard never attacks head-on as a rule. It does rely on physical force. At times people are working and the leopard is in the trees. He jumps on you from there. He has a treacherous nature. He knows how to manipulate human feeling like a man; he speaks like a man but he is a wild animal, a cat. And that will enable him to stay in power for a long time (Mukende in Thierry, n.d)

The meaning of his new name was also symbolic. He was born Joseph Desire Mobutu but changed it to 'Mobutu Sese Seku Kuku Ngbendu wa Zabanga' meaning "the all-powerful warrior who, because of his endurance and inflexible will to win, goes from conquest to conquest, leaving fire in his wake". He declared publicly when confronted with the danger of possible opposition that 'there is no opposition. We need no opposition. We are Bantus. We are not a world of opposition' (Mobutu in Thierry, n.d). The implication of these symbolic adoptions is that the people are forced to accept whatever the leader does bearing in mind the consequences of disagreements.

General Idi Amin's kilt and tartan forage cap and a swagger stick's message were very clear: he told his people that if he could be the 'Last King of Scotland and Conqueror of the British Empire' he was more powerful than pockets of opposition forces in Uganda and he went on to demonstrate it. His nickname of 'Big Daddy' and 'Butcher of Africa' represented a meticulous balance of terror and compassion. President Banda's impression in Malawi ranged from a cult-like devotion to fear which he consummated with his matching handkerchief and fly-whisk as a 'Great Lion or Conqueror'. Those outfits became national regalia. Apart from the physical fear, these symbols also instill spiritual or esoteric fear in the citizenry. This is based on the strong religious bias of Africans. Hence, the adoption of the title 'King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Elect of God and Power of the Trinity' and host to a live Lion by Haile Selassie and the biblical interpretations of those were enough to elicit the needed loyalty. The 'Lion of Judah' was the symbol of the Israelite tribe of Judah. In Genesis 49:9, the patriarch Jacob refers to his son as Gur Areyeh גִּוּר אֶרְיֵהּ, a "Young Lion" when blessing him. In Christian tradition, the Lion of Judah represents Jesus. Many Christian organizations and ministries use the 'Lion of Judah' as their emblem. The phrase appears in the New Testament Book of revelation 5:5; "And one of the elders saith unto me, weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof" (Wikipedia, 2009). Moreover, as *god* to Rastafarians, his position was readily assured in terms of popular solidarity. When Mobutu played *god* and was publicly called 'a creator' to the point of worship, he knew its effects on the people. This was compounded by the image created of Mobutu as *god* that descended from the clouds as shown in Zairian television. As *god*, and to integrate this notion into his hypnotizing process, Mobutu and his followers adopted songs that showed him as such:

Mobutu O yee! Mobutu loves only work; Mobutu the most powerful; Mobutu is the strongest;
Mobutu is the saviour; Mobutu is the redresser; Mobutu the creator...

It was so real to the extent that the creator of that programme regretted it all at the fall of Mobutu in 1997:

The concentration of power, the praise, the story, the popularity, the media, all in the service of one man. I didn't know I was wrong at the time. The Congo then was like a village. Wherever he went, he wanted people to sing and dance for him (Sakombi Inongo, Mobutu's former Information Minister in Thierry, n.d).

If Mobutu was mad, President Jammeh is insane. 'The lunacy of Yahya Jammeh has no boundaries. The man is delusional and running the Gambia into the ground in the process. What kind of a prank is this fool pulling on Gambians? He will run to any dingy institution to get a title. Obviously been called doctor has gotten to his head. He is literally practicing some kind of voodoo on patients admitted at the Royal Victoria Hospital' (Ceesay, 2007). Solidarity is sealed and guaranteed whenever and wherever a recognized political *sacramental* is displayed, especially when the reason for the adoption of such is understood by all and sundry. Banda's handkerchiefs and fly-whisk were everywhere in Malawi and the message was very clear: symbols of the revolution which must be guarded and protected. And when the revolution turned to unprecedented brutality, all was still accepted in the 'same spirit', and it kept the people grudgingly committed to *the struggle*. Moreover, Political *sacramental* can help leaders in the mobilization of the citizenry toward the accomplishment of a purpose as they remind them about their leaders and the tasks ahead. The efficacy of these was well understood by the leadership as they compete in the quest for popularly recognized political symbols. A juxtaposition of the way political *sacramental* had been used by African leaders and the help they render to them as they wreck havoc on the continent is better observed than imagined. It is unimaginable that someone who claimed god could unleash the kind of terror which Satan could not even do against his opponents.

No doubt, political *sacramental* plays a hypnotizing role in the underdevelopment of the continent. It waters the ground for the leaders to declare *fait accompli* on the people. Thus, upon his claim to divine connection, Jean-Bede Bokassa of Central African Republic stooped so low to decree in 1972 that all the nation's schoolchildren should wear uniforms—and the only uniform producer in Bangui happened to be one of his wives. Poor children (there were almost no other variety of child in Bangui) couldn't afford the expense and one day, a group of them threw rocks at the Emperor's Limousine in protest. An enraged Bokassa rounded up approximately one hundred children, innocent and guilty alike, and had them murdered. Bokassa killed many of them himself, and kept their remains in a refrigerator in his palace. In the same larder he kept the corpses of some of the political enemies he had liquidated, and snacked on their brains and hearts. Bokassa also claimed that he had surreptitiously fed human flesh to an unwitting President Giscard d'Estaing during several of their banquets together. The testimony of the palace chef at a 1986 trial was damning (Zoellnerjeeps, 2006).

In spite of Idi Amin's Pan-Africanist posture that attracted him the Chairmanship of the then OAU, he had the stories of cannibalism, of feeding the corpses of his victims to crocodiles, of keeping severed heads in a freezer at his home and bringing them out on occasions for "talks"- most or all of which are unsubstantiated, but not necessarily untrue. He was reputed to have murdered between 100,000 and 500, 000 of the rival tribes and

Obote supporters. In some cases entire villages were wiped out and corpses thrown into the Nile (About.com, 2007). Théoneste Bagosora, a.k.a 'Colonel Death' or Rwanda's 'Milosevic' killed over 500,000 Tutsis and thousands of moderate Hutus during the Rwandan genocide of 1994 (The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda estimates "some 800,000 Rwandans were killed". Other sources estimate that between 800,000 and one million were killed). The logic is that any 'god-King' that excels in the killing of his own people cannot be said to be Godly no matter the faith.

The most disturbing about the killings was the way most of them were perfected and the courage the perpetrators had in bragging and telling the world they did so. Freezing human flesh and feeding on them is inhuman. The method of killings is also disturbing. They question the nature of African leaders over the years as well as raise the need for psychological examination as part of criteria for leadership aspiration in the continent. Amin's victims were either shot or bludgeoned to death. Many condemned men were forced to smash the skulls of fellow prisoners with sledgehammers. Describing the sound of such execution, Moore said it was "a curious noise, as of an egg being broken" (Moore in Judd, 2003).

Emotional attachments to political *sacramental* and leadership myths remain a tension dousing instrument and apostles of silence as the leaders exploit and sap the resources and wealth of the continent. Many religions, if not all, frown at personal grudges and organized complaints against the leadership, and Africans (being so religious), adhere to this. Thus, when corruption, *Run Down the State Syndrome* and state terrorism were inflicted on the continent, the people watched hand-akimbo and seemingly accepted them with the Christian finality of 'Amen'. They went on primitive accumulation spree and before people could understand what was happening around them, nothing was left for them: it is believed that Banda accumulated at least US\$320 million in personal assets. Mobutu had about \$4bn in secret Swiss account in addition to several villas in Europe bought at Zaire's expense (Bubramanian, 1997); with his standing order of transferring \$15m each day to his Swiss account, Abacha of Nigeria, in spite of his political sacramental-dark-sunglasses had a personal fortune of between \$3-\$5bn (*African Banker*, April 2009); Eyadema of Togo stole over \$2.8bn (Acqaah-Gaisie, 2005) and Babangida of Nigeria could not explain the whereabouts of over \$12 billion oil windfall during his regime. The list can go on and on just as the mayhem they unleashed on helpless Africans remains uncountable.

It is a pity that at every point in any discourse on Africa's underdevelopment, the West is still accused as its originator and the perpetual cause even when the continent had been offered ample opportunities to make amends. Some of the African states have been ruled by Africans more than the years of colonialism. To this end, Adusei laments that:

The incompetence and lack of visionary leadership in Africa is seen in Gabon where Omar Bongo has been in power for 42 years; has received billions of dollars from oil and yet his 1.4 million people live in poverty. In Libya, Gaddafi has been in power for 39(42 by the time he died) years, has received several billions of dollars and his people are poor. Denis Sassou Nguesso and Eduardo dos Santos each has ruled for 30 years yet their people are poor. Obiang Nguema has 28 years to his credit yet the 600,000 people in his country live in abject poverty despite receiving billions of dollars in oil revenue. Mugabe, Blaise Campore, Hosni Mubarak, Yoweri Museveni, Omar Al Bashir all have ruled for more than two decades yet their people are poor (Adusei, 2009, n.d).

The situation is so pathetic and a reflection of the lack of mission and vision that have formed the signature tune of leadership in Africa.

Conclusion

In the light of the above, a critical comparison of the evils of colonialism and post independence African leadership is suggestive that the evils of the former could be exonerated on grounds that colonialism and the colonialists exploited Africa for the collective gains of their home countries and people, while African exploiters in the gig and pranks of leadership, do so for the selfish interest of themselves and their families to the detriment of the collectivity. Europe developed, thanks to the abundant resources and manpower it generated from Africa but Africa under-develops due to the gains of its exploited abundant resources that end up in personal pockets; it fails to develop due to the conspiracy of its leadership in making sure that nothing works; it fails because the people on their part, are not so willing to liberate themselves even at the critical point of decision making.

No doubt, Africa is a continent of the future but this realization rests only on the condition that things must be put in the right perspectives. Thus, necessary machinery must be put in place to address its leadership problem. Evidence show that there are enough resources in Africa but the problem lies in their utilization for the general good. To this end, political leadership should no longer be mystified and symbolized to the point of hypnotization, fear and worship. The claim to divine will and call to service must be down-played so that everyone becomes accountable to the system that empowers him or her.

It should be stated that the inevitability of psychological test-run on prospective national political leadership cannot be overemphasized and should be made compulsory election requirement in Africa. This is to weed out

psychotics like Idi Amin whose mental balance was widely questioned. There is no way Africans can be entirely exonerated from the crises that engulf the continent; they are easily deceived and massively hypnotized by little leadership abracadabra. A simple dance steps by South African Jacob Zuma, for example, goes as far as creating bandwagon effect even when the people can display better and more acrobatic dance steps. They are easily carried away by everything not excluding an ordinary white handkerchief. This should be the moment of truth and decision for both the continent's leaders and the led.

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