

Indices of Bad Governance by African Political Leaders: The Case Study of Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda

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Abstract

Marcel SONY LabouTansi, the author of the novel "The Shameful State", denounces the dictatorial system often practiced by most African leaders in the management of the "res publica". He paints the barbarity of man in relation to his fellow man. It also presents the duality between the traditional society characterized by democracy, peace ... and the modern society based on dictatorship in which the government behaves as a state, as absolute master, and the governed in the eternal "- mute", "voiceless". It invites the recipients to renounce to the bad principle in order to establish democracy, a system that respects the individual freedom of the people, that of human rights, of professional promotion for the harmonious development of a sovereign and democratic State. The novel "The Shameful State" unfolds the spiral of the unpleasant reign of a megalomaniacal, criminal and lustful president, Colonel Martillimi Lopez, who "shamefully" manages power and ends with the crying and gnashing of his constituents' teeth. After having committed: pedophilia, adultery, assassination of opponents, he was deposed by his relatives who created an insurrection and was forced to hand over power to civilians to return to his native village.

Keywords

Africa; governance; leadership; political responsibility; politicians



I. Introduction

The impression that emerges from observing the behavior of African leaders at the time of taking power, symbolized by coups d'état, human rights violations and bad governance, is commonplace as a mode of management and in order to perpetuate the refit of ceding power is dogma. The human being is called to live in peace and harmony with his peers. No one is allowed to hinder others in the illegal conditions of exploiting it at will. But "The Shameful State", an understudied novel, retraces the crying barbarity of an African leader Martillimi Lopez towards the black man. Criminal and lustful, Colonel Martillimi Lopez was the embodiment of the misfortune of his constituents: beatings, illegal imprisonment, human rights violations, assassinations, etc. such was the balance sheet of his reign. But he will be forced to leave the throne. Why do most African leaders

fall into such evils? What are the sedative paths of this negligence? These are the questions that will guide the framework of this study.

The choice and the interest that we are taking in this study were dictated by our great concern to make black African leaders more aware of their political responsibility in the African societies to come. The drama that the African continent is living and that we are witnessing gives us food for thought. We encounter dictatorship, tyranny, nepotism and dehumanization in all their forms. Indeed, we are constantly wondering what must be done to eliminate this state of affairs in Africa in order to enable black Africans to live as dignified and responsible men to achieve this ideal-project, the questioning of the conscience of the leader is necessary, because he is the artisan of the socio-economic development of a continent.

II. Research Methods

The sociological method consists in capturing in the work, the reflection of society and the vision of the world. We also used the thematic method to further illustrate the dictatorial and immoral behavior of Colonel Martillimi Lopez. The biographical method was used to block our spotlight on everything related to the author's life.

III. Results and Discussion

Presentation of the Work under Study

Marcel SONY Labou Tansi is a Congolese writer (Congo-Brazzaville), born in 1947 in Kimwanja (Bas-Congo) in the Democratic Republic of Congo.¹ He learned French at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Brazzaville. From 1971, he taught French and English in Kindamba, then in Pointe-Noire. He was successively a teacher, head of department at the General Directorate of Scientific Research and Deputy in Makelélé. Novelist, poet and playwright, SONY LabouTansi was a member of the African avant-garde. His satirical but hopeful writing faced censorship on numerous occasions. The central themes developed there are: the corruption of power and resistance. He often provoked and then broke with the Western literary genre by using exaggeration; a dismembered language and an anti-naturalist aesthetic. SONY LabouTansi never abandoned political satire, but in his latest works he also touches on themes such as love, life and death.

In 1979, he founded the "Rocadozulu Theatre" of Brazzaville² and published his first novel "Life and a Half". SONY LabouTansi won several literary prizes, notably: The Great Literary Prize of Black Africa for "L'Anti peuple" in 1981 and the SACD's Francophonie prize in 1988 as well as the Ibsen Foundation prize.³ He has always lived in Congo Brazzaville and came closer to the end of his life as leader Bernard Kolelas. In 1990, he conducted a writing resistance at the Maison des auteurs des Francophonie en Limousin which was presented and co-produced in Brazzaville, Dakar, Paris and New York. Disturbing novelist, he himself asserts that his books are: "The painting of man's barbarity towards man in all its possible manifestations, because art is the strength to make people say by their own means or, in any case, what they risked voluntarily passing over in silence".⁴ Affected by AIDS, SONY LabouTansi died on June 14, 1995, two weeks after the death of his wife Pierrette.

¹Joubert, JL, *Littérature francophonie d'Afrique Centrale : Anthologie Paris, Nathan, 19995, Ps 116*

²CNOCKAERT, S.J. *Littérature négro-africaine francophone : Panorama historique, Kinshasa, C.R.P 2003, P 83*

³[http://www.lefrancophonies.com/maison-desauteurs/labou-tansi/SONY. \(17/03/2010\)](http://www.lefrancophonies.com/maison-desauteurs/labou-tansi/SONY. (17/03/2010))

⁴Joubert, JI, *Op cit, 116*

3.1 Characteristics of Leaders

In his novel "The Shameful State", SONY Labou Tansi unfolds the spiral of the unpleasant reign of a megalomaniacal and lustful president, Colonel Martillimi Lopez, who shamefully manages the power tarnished by the crying and gnashing of teeth of his many constituents. The entire novel traces the various abuses of Colonel Martillimi Lopez. Our task here is to identify the signs of bad governance and to illustrate them with the following characteristics:

a. Dictatorship and Tyranny

A dictator is a person who after seizing power, exercises it under control, monopolizes all the key positions in order to stay in power as long as possible. In fact, Martillimi Lopez was a dictator president, "As soon as he was installed, he drew by a show of hands the new dimensions of the fatherland. He drew four straight lines that joined two by two, leaving parts of the national territory with our neighbors and taking from our neighbors parts of their territory; from now on, the part will be squared," he said. We cannot live in a funnel drawn by the settlers anyway! What kind of people are we if we don't even have the leisure to make our own borders? And then, he dictated to Carvanso the act of command by a show of hands.⁵ This way of doing things of President Martillimi Lopez proved enough his dictatorial spirit. Surrounded by his pages, he made decisions without consultation; he maintained conflicts with his neighbors by taking parts of their territory.

b. Killings and Assassinations

A murderer or an assassin is one who sets up a premeditated ambush to cause the death of a person i.e. one who kills a person with premeditation. He is a murderer, a criminal and rejoices in the execution of the innocent. Martillimi Lopez was more of a killer than a murderer, as the following passages show:

"What are you doing here Barbara Janco? He turns around and I put him six shots in the hermit. He coughs his blood of traitor of the fatherland. But her, what am I going to do with her? I don't have any more lead. I jump at her throat, I squeeze, I squeeze, and she coughs her life as a dog. Her corpse took a real (SIC) hot shit. Attention to you! Attention; in position! Everything is ready my God, everything is ready. Goodbye hope, this one understands my emotion and smiles. He himself shouted "fire" and the guys fired. He fell, blood. We have all already seen the blood but not this blood; all the bullets hit the heart".⁶ The killings, the assassinations, these are the pathetic acts approved by the regime of President Martillimi Lopez.

c. The Physical and Moral Devaluation of Women

It is the lowering of the legal; physical and moral value of man by man. This study shows the physical and moral devaluation, the dehumanization of women by African leaders. In fact Martilimi Lopez lacked morals, this is revealed through his words full of insanity held in public without the slightest modesty or courtesy towards women. The following passages from the "Romande la rose" by Guillaume de Louis illustrate this social shortcoming:

⁵SONY LabouTansi, *l'Etat honteux, ...pp 10-13*

⁶ *Idem, Pp 36-65*

"No Carvanso; I don't see how the consumption of the vagina can harm the smooth running of the State. (...) women cannot be commanded to take their legs seriously. Sex is not an object of courtesy, it is a material of the state".⁷

The dehumanization of women is one of the acceptable practices and lived by most of our leaders from the top to our recourse. They find in women an object of pleasure. Therefore, for them, women are worth only for their sex. Let's look at our administration which pushes us back to the various job applications; isn't it that we hire, because it is a woman we rely on for her sex and not for her competence?

d. Tribalism and Nepotism

Tribalism is an organization based on the favor granted to a member of one's tribe. This is also identified with nepotism, which is manifested by the favor granted to one's parents or relatives. In fact, this tendency is innate and is quite natural and normal, but it becomes a handicap when one can only grant favor to members of one's family or tribe. It does not matter how good he or she is. Such was Martillimi Lopez, as the following passages show:

"Lopez directed Center the garbage like the unfortunate national Caetanopablo who went into the bush with Laurent and his mother. Caetanopablo whose meat was to be given to all of you who came to this meeting one morning; by you expatriates who shamefully support the rebellion by giving seventeen Mausers, what are you going to do with three Bhas who are in the government? You were going to spare them ah this is deadly tribalism of the Bhas. Who is the master of the conspiracy: it is YamboYambi, isn't it? Oh that one; we should kill him at times; make soap out of him or give his meat to the dogs".⁸

A saying says "a man you need in the right place", also, to want to contribute to the harmonious development of our country, of our environment is to banish tribalism, nepotism.

e. Mismanagement

Mismanagement is a disorder resulting from the mismanagement of financial resources; it is also the waste of financial resources for reasons of lesser importance related to honors by a political and economic management capable of sacrificing the mass of the governed. The latter appear to be outside the world managed outside the laws and principles of good governance. This practice leads to a social organization of those who give the image of a python bred from game. This creates, on the one hand, those who take themselves for the most human by behaving as absolute masters, getting richer and richer and arrogating to themselves the power to live in perpetual feast, while on the other hand, live the governed, the majority of whom languish in misery.

f. Pedophilia

Pedophilia is the sexual attraction of adults to teenagers. The excerpt below shows us that President Lopez, like most African leaders, is a pedophile: "He is presented with a young prisoner almost naked. This beauty irritates my thighs (.....). He dips his hand in his wand to calm his khaki musette; hold on while we do politics but "She national" doesn't hear his master's advice (.....). You will be my wife, the end of the single life. The whole stadium applauds loudly; but she cries, I marry her, did you hear? Yes, Mr. President, and

⁷*Idem, Opcit. Pp 41-82*

⁸*SONY LabouTansi, Op.cit., Pp 25 et 116.*

then there was silence; "Let's be quiet, Daddy National loves his wife, not music, not cars; no one in the street for two days."⁹

g. Sadomasochism

It is sadism combined with masochism i.e. a person who is both sadistic and masochistic at the same time. It is a sexual perversion where pleasure is obtained through suffering inflicted on the object of desire. It is still a moral pleasure that is taken from the suffering of others; the following excerpt illustrates this social bias (....) You will be my wife, finished the life of a bachelor; the whole stage applauded very loudly, but she cried.

- I will marry her, did you hear?

- Yes, Mr. President...

In the light of Martillimi Lopez, most African heads of state have also practiced sadomasochism and still practice it today.

h. Deshumanization

Dehumanization is the action of making someone loses their human character. In a regime where human rights are not respected, the humanitarian principle is violated, and the rulers treat the population as they please. The population is doomed to its sad fate without any form of protection. Here is an excerpt: "(.....) Do I have to open your belly for a little signature corner to put here? I can't (.....) like a rag. It opens; it tears it encloses. Here man is not worth the candle". It reminds me of that day when I visited the slaughterhouses of thisourni, what a horror, I stopped eating meat. They put a pellet in your skull and say you tried to run away. This is the vision that the national radio will comment on.¹⁰

3.2 Extrapolation of Bad Governance in Central Africa Countries

"The Shameful State" is a novel that unfolds in the Congolese artistic framework. SONY as an artist used the Congolese daily life to decipher the dramatic situation that Africa in particular and the world in general. He presents the character of Martillime who, versed in anti-values, dehumanizes his constituents. At the end of this character, many African leaders become champions in the mistreatment of their respective populations.

a. Some Cases of Bad Governance

1. Congo-Kinshasa (former Zaire) Mobutu's regime

a) Bref history

This territory located in the center of Africa, which bears this name today, was internationally recognized around 1877 thanks to the explorer Henry Morton Stanley. It was the beginning of the colonization of the Congo by King Leopold II of Belgium, who will hold it as his private property under the name of "l'Etat Indépendant du Congo". In 1908, the Belgian parliament took over the guardianship of this territory, which would henceforth be called Congo-Belgium. On a certain Thursday, June 30, 1960, the Congo obtained its independence with Joseph KASA-VUBU as president.

b) Bad governance

At the political level, Mobutu came to power through a coup d'état launched against President Joseph KASA-VUBU, which led to the assassination of the Prime Minister Emery LUMUMBA. "After a coup d'etat that does not mention its name, in which he

⁹SONY Labou Tansi, *Op.cit.*, Pp 28,33

¹⁰Idem, *Op cit.* P32

neutralized the Prime Minister Emery Lumumba and installed general commissioners, Lieutenant-General Joseph-Désiré Mobutu overthrew the elected President Joseph KASA-VUBU.¹¹

This trend was further concretized by the institutionalization of the popular movement of the revolution (MPR) as a party-state to the detriment of the multiparty system, a guarantee of democracy. This engendered the deification manifest in political animation, prostitution, sexual enjoyment, reception of the President with its corollaries such as nepotism, dictatorship (authoritarianism) as noted: "As a young head of state, Mobutu personally sees himself as an absolute monarch".¹²

This situation will provoke persecutions, impoverishment and will make the opposing brains flee in accident (Belgium and France). At the economic level, his policy of Zairianization led to galloping inflation of the national currency, of which, in 1967, 1 Congolese franc was worth 2 US dollars. The country was hit by an acute economic crisis, due to the fall in copper prices and the increase in oil prices. Instead of modernizing agriculture, cereals and meat are imported from South Africa and Rhodesia.

This situation led to the fact that "from 1973, the country was affected by an economic crisis characterized by galloping inflation, the deterioration of the terms of trade. This state of affairs pushed it to privatize many companies in its name or in the names of its products".¹³ Mobutu embezzled the State's currency in such a way that in 1984, he was one of the richest men on the planet with an account of nearly 4 billion dollars, the equivalent of the country's foreign debt. All the anti-values as found in the "shameful state" were used under Mobutu's regime.

This mismanagement has strongly affected the administrative system of the country where corruption has gained ground due to irregular salaries, the works of society are no longer respected, and justice is for the benefit of the strongest. All the anti-values decried in the artistic work namely: the dehumanization of men and the physical and moral devaluation of women are a handicap and a brake on the socio-cultural and economic development of the country.

At the social level, there will be a very pronounced hiatus between the minority ruling political class and the majority of the population left to its own sad fate. "The clan surrounding the head of state was able to benefit more from the nationalization policy."¹⁴ Following the popular animations orchestrated to associate the thirst of the regime with a tendency to deify, thus opening the way to large-scale prostitution among the actors of the folk movement for the benefit of the political minority, this situation led to the mental alienation of the people to the detriment of the harmonious development of the country.

2. The Central African Republic under Jean-Bedel Bokassa's regime

The Central African Republic, a neighboring country of Congo-Kinshasa, also experienced poor governance during the time of the late President Jean-Bedel Bokassa. At the political level, Jean-Bedel BOKASSA came to power through a coup d'état launched against his cousin, David Dako, then President of the newly independent R.C.A. Jean-Bedel Bokassa was rather popular during the first seven years in power, despite the violence of his regime, which practiced torture and summary executions. He strengthened his dictatorial regime by proclaiming himself President for life, then promoted himself to

¹¹Tiré de Google.net, un article de Wikipédia, l'Encyclopédie libre.

¹² Idem

¹³Google, Op.cit.

¹⁴Google, Op.cit.

Marshal on May 19, 1974 and created the Movement for the Social Evolution of Black Africa (MESAN).

The single political party provided to him a reputation as a megalomaniac because in January, he bloodily repressed demonstrations by high school students, participating in the massacre in Bangui prison of 100 people who were allegedly arrested for protesting against the excessive cost of uniforms imposed by the Emperor. President BOKASSA had the same tendency as MOBUTU in Zaire; their regimes share almost the same corollaries. BOKASSA was a polygamist with seven wives and forty children.

Economically, he participated in the creation of the Union of Central African States (UEAC) with Congo - Kinshasa and Chad, created a seed reform, he took the value of work and denounced corruption; he changed his name to Salali Edodine Ahmed BOKASSA with the objective of pleasing Kadhafi in order to benefit from Libyan financial aid. Socially, on January 2, 1975, he formed a new government created the post of Prime Minister, he appointed Elisabeth Domitien, Prime Minister who was the first woman to occupy this post in Africa

3. Republic of Uganda under Idi Amin Dada's regime

Uganda is a country bordering the DRC and is located to its eastern part. Politically, Idi Amin Dada was a dictator, bloodthirsty and cannibal. He came to power through a coup d'etat and instituted a one-party presidential regime. Military leaders who did not support the coup were executed; he drove out many Indo-Pakistanis, Asians and soldiers plundered and raped Indians with impunity.¹⁵

The anti-values noted in "the shameful states are attested under this regime because the dehumanization of man and the physical and moral devaluation of women in Uganda has been a scandal never known. Economically, Uganda was weakened by the departure of Pakistanis to entrepreneurship in the country, most foreign businessmen, by the cessation of accidental aid suffered another blow in 1978 with the fall in the price of coffee, Uganda's main export product, abandoned agriculture and widespread corruption.

Socially, there is no humanitarian sense. The people then live in terror and excel in obsession: "At the summit, he marries in fifth wedding a young dancer whose husband disappeared during Miss; the previous year interested the young woman. Yasser Arafat was one of the witnesses of the marriage".¹⁶ From all of the above, it follows that most African leaders shine: dictatorship, assassination, debauchery, pedophilia, dehumanization and the physical and moral devaluation of women, as described in "the shameful state, what is the profit of a good leader? ».

b. Profile of an Ideal Leader for Good Governance

A good leader is the man who looks like the father of the family, the one who takes his responsibilities in hand, who knows how to manage, protect and look after his family at all times. He is comparable to a good shepherd who gives his life for his sheep. A good leader who cares about the well-being of all his people; he is aware of his way of life every day.

¹⁵Google, *Op.cit.*

¹⁶ Idem

1. Nationalist

The nationalist leader is the man who puts his country above his concerns. He is the person who must bear witness to grave serenity and trace for his people the prospects of salvation in freedom and in union. According to Alain Rey, "a nationalist is a person who has a passionate attachment to his nation".¹⁷ In a nationalist country, the economy is intraverted, that is to say, it must benefit the patriots; the government is primarily concerned with the well-being of its people in the areas of health and the economy, without excluding cooperation with other countries.

2. Peacemaker

A peacemaker, according to Rey's dictionary, is a person who brings a war-torn country back to calm, to peace. He is also the man who makes war and loves peace, which is the sine qua non for a better balance of spirit and integral human development. Peace implies the limits of respect for others. Thus a peacemaker president could be acclaimed: "Mr. President, you are a good president, you are honor and peace".¹⁸ Saydou Badian Kouyate also told us in the chaka word: "(...) I was that young girl who was kidnapped one night in a hut by a high school student. It was dark. I shouted and shouted. It was Chaka; he killed the beast and saved my life (...) ".¹⁹ Further on, he declares: "Chaka has something to be recognized: he is never too big for us. Someone with a fever is there. A child does not live well; Chaka sent for him and was healed by his healers".

3. Altruistic ou philanthropic

An altruistic person is a man who wants the well-being of another and devotes himself to him; he has love for humanity²⁰; altruism is a propensity to love and help his neighbor. This must be the profile of a good leader who cares about the well-being of his people.

4. Facilitator

A facilitator is one who makes life easy for his fellow man.

5. Balanced man

A well-balanced man is one who, in front of any man, has self-control. He seeks to pass judgment with honesty, condemns what is bad and appreciates what is good. He is also a person who respects the rights and duties he renders to his party.

6. Democrat

A democrat, Rey explains, is the proponent of democracy. This term comes from the Greek word: demo, which means people and cratos power, therefore "power exercised by the people and for the people". A democrat is the man who makes his country rest on four pillars or values: equality and freedom, justice or concern for well-being and the participation of all through representation in the construction and development of the country. Respect for these values facilitates harmonious economic, social and cultural development.

¹⁷Le Robert Mure, *Dictionnaire d'apprentissage de la tanguer Française, Paris, poche 2007, P873*

¹⁸SONY Laban Tansi, *Opcit, P59*

¹⁹Saydou Badvan Kouyate, *Op cit Pp 16-17*

²⁰REY A et Cie *op.cit. p 43*

"Transparent and equitable management of mining, oil, and forestry resources will be a decisive factor in promoting peace, reducing poverty, fighting corruption and impunity, and also contributing to integral and solidarity-based development.²¹

IV. Conclusion

The human being is called to live in quietude without constraint and in harmony with his fellow human beings. The novel "The Shameful State" traces the human barbarity in all its forms of an African leader towards mankind; however, our concern is to make African leaders more concrete about their various responsibilities in the African societies to become. This study makes a brief analysis of the leaders of Central Africa (including Central African Republic and Democratic Republic of the Congo) and Uganda in a modern society. Indeed, the traditional African society reflects the profile of a good leader whose characteristics are: father of a family and an excellent shepherd, nationalist, peacemaker, facilitator, balanced man and democrat; while the modern African society is characterized by dictatorship, corruption, debauchery, physical and moral devaluation of women, tribalism, mismanagement, pedophilia, sadomasochism and dehumanization of the being. At a time when democracy and human rights are the major preoccupation of all humanity, any power that is not legitimate is a pure dictatorship of which downfall is predictable at any time.

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²¹« MUHINGIRWA RusambukuFerdinand, Bonne gouvernance secteur minier en R.D.Congo » in Congo-Afrique, n° 439 Nou 2009, P691.