

Original Paper

Modern Democracy and Traditional Bantu Governance: Towards an Alternative Policy

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Abstract

This study starts from the analysis of the limits of modern democracy to propose a new form of Bantu-inspired political governance. The uprising of peoples in democratic countries signals the end of democracy based on ultra-liberalism. It is therefore urgent to think of a new type of political governance, much more concerned with people's lives. The traditional Bantu (people) government is therefore a model to revisit and update, in this world where people feel abused by politics. We propose a political theory, based on consensual governance and the well-being of people. It is necessary to assert that the solution to the problems posed by modern democracy can only come from the traditional political governance model of the Bantu.

Keywords

modern democracy, bantu governance, Africa, political theory

1. Introduction

The twenty-first century, with the proliferation of the media, is strongly marked by the presence of political debates around the future of participatory democracy. Among political actors, the question of the governance of society is now locked in the management of public opinion by the media, without an analysis of governance models and alternative political regimes. Political governance has become an entity of quest and conquest of political power, that is to say in a closed vicious circle in which the powers are organized and exercised, in institutional and practical forms, far from the concern for the well-being of peoples.

Of the researchers who critically analyze modern democracy, Christopher Achen and Larry Bartels (2016) are arguably the most lucid. They attack the theory at the heart of contemporary thinking about

democratic politics and government, and offer an alternative and provocative viewpoint based on the human nature of democratic citizens. Several researchers are also trying to deepen democratic theory, with the proposal of different models of democracy (Warren, 2017). But these debates are less and less productive. Model-based strategies encourage theorists to over-generalize the place and functions of typical ideal characteristics of democracy, such as deliberation and elections.

This study of social philosophy aims to return to African sources Bantu ancient governance of society. We propose a political theory, based on consensual governance and the well-being of people. It is necessary to assert that the solution to the problems posed by modern democracy can only come from the traditional political governance model of the Bantu. In front of the turbulent horizon and the exhaustion of the current political models, inherited from the modernity of power in the West, thought by the philosophers of the contract and advocated by the partisans of economic liberalism, it is salutary to return to the human power of origins and origins of political power, to think with a fresh eye its origin, its functioning and its finality.

We propose a model of political governance, alternative to the models that are officially practiced by the nation states of the world today. It is the Bantu aristocracy, which we define as the political regime of the competent servant-governors, that is to say the regime of the people (Bantu) capable of consensually leading the governed to their well-being, beyond the game of political empowerment. The Bantu chief is a servant governor who is characterized by the primacy and priority he gives to the service of others. It is because he is a servant that he is elevated to the rank of political ruler.

The term “Bantu”, taken from the word “people” in many of these languages, was first proposed by Bleek, who in 1851 laid the foundation for the comparative study of the Bantu languages. This term has been universally used since (Greenberg, 1999).

On the other hand, participatory democracy, with pluralist elections as a means of coming to power, is showing its limits everywhere in the world, with the protest of peoples (Széll, 2018). Everything happens as if the governance of post-election crises takes the place of politics and replaces the art of governing the city. It is a kind of challenge governance, in which elected leaders multiply strategies to be re-elected in future elections.

The problematic of this article can be summed up as follows: to the extent that the conquest of power is increasingly seen as the royal road to the selfish confiscation of the riches of the community by political actors, should not we think of a new political regime, more adapted to the current context of the world?

Why this return to the African past? Charles Darwin was the first scientist to publish a modern theory of evolution and the origin of mankind. He was also the first to designate Africa as his place of origin. Over the last hundred years, research has shown how right he was, as many aspects of Darwin’s precursor work have been confirmed (Leakey, 1999).

Two hypotheses are to be verified in this article. The first hypothesis is: if Africa is the place of origin of mankind, it is clear that it is on this continent that the human species has learned to live in peace

with others in society. The second hypothesis is: traditional Bantu governance is an alternative to the crisis of modern democracy. The Bantu ethical aristocracy can therefore provide a pragmatic orientation to the political governance of states, instead of participatory democracy. The paper is divided into four parts with the first part introducing the thrust of the paper.

2. Method

This article is, as its title suggests, about power in two political systems, namely modern democracy and traditional Bantu governance. Power is the central notion, but it is treated in a systemic perspective, where one-to-one power relations have little meaning, contrary to what remains practiced in political science. Political systems, understood as governing systems of public affairs, are the ones on which the study of power relations is concerned. Our method, therefore, is to compare two systems of political governance, namely modern democracy and the traditional Bantu system of governance, from studies of sociology and politics. This comparison allows us to pose a new political theory.

2.1 *Limits of Participatory Democracy*

The list of studies presented here is not exhaustive, but it takes into account the most important research in the English-speaking world. Recent studies of democracy show that this political model is running out of steam, especially in its Western variants. Certainly, the crisis of participatory democracy is congenital to its institutionalization (Laski, 1933). But modern democracy, which has developed in the West, is today the focus of fundamental criticism of scholars and popular protest. Zakaria (1997) already spoke of “the rise of non-liberal democracy”. Colin Crouch (2004) calls it “post-democracy” and Pierre Rosanvallon (2008) “counter-democracy”.

Basically, the main problem of participatory democracy is its nature as such. It is now established, with the uprising of peoples in the West, that victory in elections is not a reliable indicator of democratic quality. The protest movement of “yellow vests” launched in France in November 2018 remains the greatest illustration in this area. For months, this movement calls for a referendum of citizen initiative and improvement of taxation. This movement is the questioning of the neoliberal system held by the ultra-rich, who command the democratic alternation and the judicial system. The question that arises at this level is this: how to measure the qualitative reliability of a participative democracy?

A study by Foa and Mounk (2016) on democratic practices in several countries has shown that people’s support for democracy is falling. The crisis of democracy is not limited to Western countries, but it is emerging in Japan (Yazawa, 2015) as well as in the Philippines, the former American colony. The term of “Popular Democracy”, which is the concept of the socialist countries (North Korea, Vietnam, China), is characterized by a single party. Of these countries, China is undoubtedly the most important. It is not only the most populous country, but also, soon, the world’s largest economy. Some studies show that the United States is a “defective democracy”. Alexis de Tocqueville (1965) in *Democracy in America* (1835) spoke of the US government in terms of “dictatorship of the majority”.

Today, we have gone from the dictatorship of the majority to the “dictatorship of the masses” (Corner

& Lim, 2016). This phenomenon indicates that, unlike military dictatorships, it is not a pure oppression by consent of the majority, but of the survival of the system. As can be seen, the debate on participatory democracy is rich in paradoxes. David van Reybrouck (2016) supports the idea against elections; Pierre Rosanvallon (2008) and Jason Brennan (2016) argue for a counter-democracy. And the arrival of the Internet and its social networks has led us to believe that everyone's access to information should promote participatory democracy. But it soon became apparent that social networks are controlled by a few gigantic corporations, and their main interest is to generate profits, even leading to some form of user dependence, thus increasing social control. Consequently, social media is able to overthrow authoritarian regimes only makes these regimes more authoritarian and paranoid (Gayo-Avello, 2017). Much research focuses on the causes and consequences of direct democracy and the legitimacy of political regimes. Over the last two decades, an abundant literature has dealt with the growing disaffection of citizens with respect to representative democracy. The existence of several problems in the process of political representation is reflected in the behavior of citizens who have gradually abandoned traditional modes of electoral participation and party membership. The tendency is to move towards more reactive forms of participation such as demonstrations and petitions. In light of these developments, researchers have begun to speak of a "democratic malaise" because citizens are moving away from the political process as a whole. One possible solution to this uneasiness has been the adoption of direct democracy procedures through which citizens can have a say in political decision-making. Studies show the decline in the legitimacy of the democratic regime around the world. The recent street uprising in France is only an indication of the attitudes and behavior of citizens towards the political authorities.

The concept of legitimacy, as we know, concerns the way in which power can be used by state institutions and the reaction of citizens. Legitimacy can be broadly defined as the ability of a political system to engender and maintain the belief that existing institutions are the most appropriate or appropriate for society. Understood in this way, legitimacy encompasses three dimensions: compliance with established norms, justifiability of rules by reference to shared beliefs, and expressed consent of people living in the same society.

Then, legitimacy is more and more seized according to two axes. The first axis concerns the normative or objective aspect, relating to the working principles and the functioning of the State institutions. Here, the focus is on decision-making and the exercise of power. The second axis refers to the legitimacy of descriptive or subjective type, referring to the public evaluation of the quality of the institutions' performance. In short, a diet is legitimate when the population perceives it as such. The compliance of state institutions with the rules has no effect if citizens do not believe that these rules are legitimate. If they are not justified in the terms of shared beliefs, the population is likely to reject institutions and withdraw support. This type of legitimacy is evaluative in that citizens decide whether political institutions are acceptable. The descriptive approach to legitimacy substantially covers the subject (population), the object (public institutions) and the relationship between the two (attitudes and

behaviors as effects of institutional characteristics).

Moreover, it is possible to situate legitimacy at a more precise level, namely that of the evaluation of the populations on the capacity of the institutions of the State to exercise legitimately the political power. It is about assessing the acceptance, consent and support of the population to a specific system of governance. Subjective legitimacy includes notions such as political support or trust. This means that citizens have the ability to identify their common interests and to develop standards to evaluate the performance of state institutions, with regard to these interests. The degree to which citizens' standards are achieved determines the degree of legitimacy. This complex process runs through forms of support to state institutions and (specific) elites or to the political community and the regime. Institutional trust is a useful concept but too narrow to equate it with legitimacy. We can say that the political system of participatory democracy is losing legitimacy.

The gradual weakening of representative democracy has opened up alternative solutions, with more opportunities for political involvement of citizens (Peter, 2011). If citizens suspect corruption in the political decision-making process, legitimacy ends up being lost. Thus, if citizens consider that the degree of their influence on policy making is weak, legitimacy may also be weak. Elections in democracies should be the key mechanism for ensuring citizen participation. However, elections rarely provide citizens with effective opportunities to influence policy makers. The elections are intended to allow citizens to choose between several intermediaries who promise to group and represent their interests.

From this point of view, they are of a competitive nature, opening the field to the confrontation between competitors (parties or candidates) with general promises, often quite similar, which are rarely pursued after the elections. Moreover, even when the choices between competitors are significant election results do not always reflect the popular will, being artificially influenced by the rules of the game. It is not surprising that the public is increasingly dissatisfied with the system of representative democracy, as to the taking into account of their opinion in public policies. In this sense, the representative mechanisms are not replaced but rather complemented by different means of political engagement of citizens.

How, then, can the presence of direct democracy have an impact on the perception of the legitimacy of a regime? This question refers to the fundamental aspects of self-identity (values, rights and freedoms, sovereignty) that require major changes in society. Such changes can hardly be accepted if debates take place only among the political elites in parliament without the participation of civil society. The tools of direct democracy used to solve problems are not intended to avoid debate and conflict, but for additional legitimacy. Citizen involvement and the use of direct democracy instruments can legitimize these changes.

Similarly, representative institutions and politicians often try to use tools of direct democracy to legitimize their policies, increase their chances and win back citizens. The elites can control some of the direct democratic practices and submit to the citizens referendum questions that are in accordance

with their will. Over the past five decades, changing social trends have favored the development of a large category of citizens.

As political parties simplify choices, a growing proportion of people welcome the opportunity to express preferences without mediation. Citizens appreciate their involvement in decision-making, so that a more direct democracy leads to greater citizen satisfaction. When representative institutions do not meet the expectations of the public, direct democracy can change the degree of discontent by promoting the emergence of a (partial) system of self-governance. This allows for the pursuit of interests and preferences that may (for various reasons) be excluded from representative politics.

Ultimately, sociological studies in Europe indicate that the provisions relating to direct democracy at the national level and the use of referendums at the national level are associated with legitimacy. The major conclusion is that the tools of direct democracy can have an impact on the legitimacy of the regime when they are applied. When provisions remain only on paper, direct democracy can not trigger the expected attitudes of citizens. In addition, there are differences between Eastern and Western Europe in relation to legislation, so that relations with the regime's subjective legitimacy go in different directions. In practical terms, the mechanisms observed are quite similar but much more powerful among the countries with a lower degree of democratization. It is therefore possible to positively include direct democracy as a source of subjective legitimacy in analytical frameworks. As a result, direct democracy does not only appear to be a cure for citizens' uneasiness, but also a potential factor for strengthening legitimacy.

2.2 Traditional Bantu Societies and Their Social Organization

We present here the organization of Bantu societies of the past, according to studies conducted by anthropologists, to show the relevance of this organization today. This is to defend the idea that this political organization is superior to participatory democracy, as far as it works according to consensus. After nearly a century of linguistic and archaeological studies, it is established that the distribution of Bantu languages is the effect of the population growth (generally called Bantu expansion) that began in the Benue Valley, between the south East of Nigeria and western Cameroon (Johnston, 1919; Bakel, 1981; Vansina, 1984, 1995). This is mainly supported by the fact that Bantoid languages, considered to be ancestor of Bantu languages, are currently spoken in this region (Greenberg, 1949; Guthrie, 1962; Lwanga-Lunyiigo, 1976). Relatively new population growth and the colonization of new territories are still accepted by most scholars as the most reasonable explanation for the geographical dispersion and relative homogeneity of Bantu languages (Schoenbrun, 2001). It has also been suggested that the first stages of migration have followed two main paths, which have been defined as "western" and "eastern" flows (Vansina, 1984, 1995; Schoenbrun, 2001).

An alternative scenario was proposed by Guthrie (1962). While agreeing with Greenberg and others on the center of origin of the Bantu languages, he proposed the Katanga region, located in the south of the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the middle of the equatorial forest, as the region from which Bantu-speaking populations were spreading. However, some authors have highlighted the reductionism

of these assumptions on the basis of a single large population migration related to language propagation and molecular ecology has emphasized the relevance of local migration processes (Lwanga-Lunyiigo, 1976; Ehret, 2001; Schoenbrun, 2001). Population genetic studies have clarified the dynamics underlying the current distribution of Bantu populations at the regional and sub-continental levels (Mitchell, 2010).

Proto-Bantu were ruled by leaders and spiritually by minister-diviners. They recognize a unique, almighty, but distant God of human destiny. A Bantu village is a chieftaincy. And this one can include under its authority several hamlets. Clan and village are related, as are lineage and tribe. Thus, the inhabitants of a village consider themselves almost all as parents. A good leader is necessarily a historian of the clan tradition, ethnic. It is up to the leader who is often doubled by a diviner to say, as a sign of celebration and eulogy, the story of the deified ancestors who are also leaders. We can therefore understand the permanent symbiosis that exists between the world of the living and that of the dead by the effect (action, word, ceremonies) of the recognized and crowned leader. The basic elements of Bantu politics are provided by the kinship system and the system of intermarriage: the lineage leader is virtually erased from the leader of the lineage group. Each leader has a human group, and the eminent chief is precisely the chief of the earth or of all the ethnic, national land.

Authority is in a sense crystallized into defined characters that command specific groups: the socio-political life is constituted by the total life of the group. This life integrates directly any economic, artistic, religious or social activity of each member of the group. The peoples speaking the Bantu languages, coming out of prehistory, following long migrations due to an increase in the population, the mastery of agricultural and metallurgical techniques, have created social entities more or less wide to perpetuate life. As much as myths and legends represent Bantu' genesis in time and space, their ideas, their beliefs, all the riches of their intelligence, so social structures are the living expression of their external, political organization.

The Bantu were divided into tribes: each tribe ended up occupying a particular location, without intermingling with the other tribes. The Bantu tribes (duala, fang, kikuyu, teke, kongo, mbochi, sena, sotho, zulu ...) are the result of the ancient migrations of the Bantu people in central, eastern and southern Africa. A Bantu tribe is therefore a portion of the Bantu people, having a definite establishment after long migrations, having its political and spiritual leaders, its judges who form a council, its special individuality, adoring protective deities. In pre-colonial black Africa, the emergence of states did not destroy social, cultural, economic and political importance of families and tribes.

Everywhere in the Bantu world, we find the same basic system of households (enclosures whose different boxes house members of the same family: children from the same father and a wife or wives of it and the possible wives of the children), of lineages, of clans, of tribes, with heads of family, lineage, clan and tribe. The models of which different, but the clannish system (groups several clans by integrating them with the tribes) does not miss anywhere: it is the cement even of any Bantu tribe. In Bantu societies, the fundamental units are constituted and directed by groups of descent.

In the Bantu world, there are three types of political structures, namely the states with a central government, small states organized in village-communities, under chiefs, clans and tribes without leaders, but led by councils: class of age and seniors. We know that the colonial order has used traditional chiefdoms to impose itself, notably by creating the “Indigenous Justice”. It is also known that the Ujamaa, the basis of socialism in Tanzania, put the community, solidarity and democratic spirit of the traditional African society, in which everyone worked and everyone lived by their own toil.

In the tribe, each group, each community, each village has its leader. When a community grows, it splits in turn into small communities, with their respective leaders. Thus, the chieftaincies are independent of each other, politically. However, they remain linked by kinship ties (clans, lineages, families). There is therefore no central authority with a highly structured administrative and judicial apparatus as in royalty. The chief’s roles are: the direction of religious ceremonies, the arbitration of palavers, the conduct of war, the organization of commerce.

The tribe comprising several thousand people was the largest political unit among the Sotho and Nguni (Zulu, Ndebele, Xhosa ...) of Southern Africa. In these two groups (Sotho and Nguni), the leader was all-powerful, but an overly authoritarian leader quickly became unpopular: he was abandoned to go to another leader more lenient and more just.

Two councils assisted the chief in his functions: a small council and a wider council or assembly. The first council included the chief’s confidants: they helped him in his daily tasks of material and cultural management of the country. The Assembly was composed of all the subordinate chiefs, though of some importance. Problems affecting the entire nation were discussed, and any adult man could participate freely. The leader could be criticized during the assizes of the Assembly.

The Sotho or Nguni leader was considered the symbol of national unity, tribal: he personally directed all religious, judicial, administrative and military affairs. We could also talk about the Bemba (20 political units) or Songo chiefdoms.

A chieftaincy is a much more flexible political organization than a kingdom with hierarchical and centralized government structures. From the cultural point of view, a chieftaincy is no less “civilized” than a vast kingdom. The chieftaincy is a complete political organization. Chieftaincy and kingdom are two distinct forms of government in their nature and not in essence: the chieftaincy is a small state, while the kingdom is a much broader state.

In pre-colonial times, the Kongo had created a vast political entity: the Kongo Kingdom. The Bemba, they were politically organized within a multitude of separate head units, on the tribal territory. But here and there, there was an administration, an economy, leaders of lineage and clan, especially the national consciousness to perpetuate, through the structures put in place, the glory of distant ancestors.

3. Result

As we have shown, modern democracy is less and less able to solve the problems of social peace. And the organization of traditional society among the old Bantu seems to be a model for thinking about a new post-democratic political regime. We call this model *Bantucracy*, which is based on traditional Bantu governance. The Bantu political system is based on four levels of relationship: the relationship of man with God and ancestors, the relationship of man to the world, the relationship of man with other human beings, and the relationship of the man with himself. Political leaders take these four forms of relationship into account.

According to several accounts that trace the origins of the Bantu tribes, God relatively confers power to men through alliances. The initiative of the covenant with men comes from God. We are not talking about any social constraint or any collective or individual demand that may have led God to take the initiative. God is truly the real source of power. He alone has chosen the men he calls to power. No strength or cunning interfered with the choice. The reasons for the choice belong only to him; we can only understand the consequences. The will of God is translated into a dream. The dream is thus revealed to be an effective means of revealing, in matters of power, the will of God. The call, although addressed to men, is essentially individual. Each future leader receives his message, and each message is surely special, tailored to each personality. The initiative and the choice of God do not eliminate the risk dimension in the Bantu power. It often involves going beyond oneself and one's society.

What does the action of the ancestors represent? The ancestors appeared in the dreams of men are the apparent sign of the will of God. They reassure future leaders: they believe because they know their ancestors and their wisdom. The ancestors are, in fact, the effective link of the invisible world with the visible world. They represent the idea of lineage and succession that fundamentally inspires Bantu power. Election alone is not enough. To perfect the election, God and the ancestors submit future leaders to three days' training. The week in several African traditions lasts four days: the three days of work and a day of rest. The exercise of Bantu power is conditional on an "election" and Bantu formation.

The unity of the Bantu peoples, it must be remembered, is based on the ancestral language called proto-bantu. They must refer to a common kinship exemplified by the term "people" (Samwiri, Lwanga-Lunyiigo, & Jan Vansina, 1999, p. 65). It can thus be said that the place of "people" or Bantu is central to the social and political organization of the Bantu peoples.

In Bantu languages, there is no equivalent word to the concepts of kingdom or Republic. There is only one word for power. Power is called Bokonzi in Lignala, Bumfumu in Kikongo and ubukhosi in Zulu, for example. Bantucracy is not a kingdom or a republic, but a power. The definition of power in a societal context highlights two elements, namely the rulers and the governed as actors, and the different relations of governance that they maintain between them. These two elements are perceptible through the degree of communication between actors and the impact of decisions on each other. It's about recognizing that power is a set of systems whose elements interact.

The relationship of power does not come under the control of the periphery by the center, but it consists in the capacity, by the governor, of a decision which concerns his means of action. It is from the decision of the governor that one can assess the autonomy or dependence of the governed in other power relations, relative to the well-being of all. In other words, a relationship is of a political nature only to the extent that it is likely to be evaluated, after the fact, as a chain of social welfare impacts.

As a result, power relations in Bantocracy are subject to two requirements, namely, connectivity, which means that conditional connections of power reach all participants in the community, and that of cohesion, which requires that participants are grouped into clusters whose internal power links are positive and the external links are negative. These are the two requirements that constitute community coordination. The requirement of connectivity refers to the flow of powers from one participant to another, while the requirement of cohesion refers to the regrouping of participants in power, from one pole to another. Both requirements act between them. The flow of power affects the grouping of participants and the latter, on the path of power.

The learning place of governance is probably the common house. In almost all the traditional Bantu villages, the common hut, built by all the inhabitants in the center of the village, is the place where the “old” as well as the young people met to share their stories, their knowledge of the country and the world, the food too. Living together in the common space was characterized by respect for the other, the exchange of knowledge, the sharing of assets and the reception of foreigners. The common house was the soul of the village.

The new Bantu political system that we propose therefore has as a basic principle, the consideration of the country as the common house, which federates all the human energies of all citizens towards the well-being of each and everyone; he is “all in one”. As a soul of the new country, he lives only by the breath of each and everyone: “he is a part and in all”. The death of a citizen weakens it, the birth of a child or even the naturalization of a stranger vivifies it. The idea of common house, a common box of Bantu (people), disqualifies exclusions, eliminates barriers, institutes nonviolence and dialogue as a system structuring relations between its members.

This proposed new system is based on five key ideas: 1) reconciliation; 2) a leader (Mfumu) instituted in accordance with tradition, mentality and traditional spirituality, which symbolizes unity, he reigns, but does not rule; 3) governance according to modern democratic norms, acquired from the evolution of the world, while promoting participatory consensus, the traditional Bantu-indigenous mode of management of men; 4) respect for the personality of human entities; 5) the reframing of citizen political expression in a system that guarantees political freedom, citizen participation, unity and solidarity of peoples, non-violence and the life of the country.

These five key ideas of the Bantocracy system are highlighted in the Code of the Alliance, a true national pact, which takes the place of constitution. The Bantocracy system induces a new approach at the institutional and territorial level, the common house federal economic, the common house economic (the Solidarity Economy), and in terms of international relations (openness to the world),

with the head the Chef.

4. Discussion

Our discussion is about data from Bantu traditions before colonization. This choice is justified by the fact that we want to propose a solution to the failure of Western-style democracy, which has shown its limits both in Europe where it was born, and in Africa, where it is completely inadequate.

4.1 *The Chef (Mfumu)*

The Bantu Chief follows divine right, natural law, civil laws and custom. It is these four normative pillars that give the African prince his credibility. Claude Tardits rightly points out:

“All African rulers, whether they were at one time or another qualified as divine or not, have an obligation, that of acting so that the population and the livestock of which it lives are fruitful, so that the watered lands keep their fertility and that starvation is averted. They fulfill these obligations by recourse, direct or indirect (...) the failure, whatever the age of the king, can entail its elimination (Tardits, 1990, p. 38).

It is in the articulation between divine right and natural law that the essential role of the sovereign in traditional Africa must be located. The obligation of the sovereign, concretely, is to promote and defend life, so that the growth of its power is proportional to the multiplication of births. In other words, each new birth is considered to increase the power of the ruler, and conversely, all death is a diminution of his power. A. I. Richards (1959) and his collaborators conducted a survey in 1952-1953 on the study of all the problems posed by chieftaincy in Africa.

This study focused on the political systems of fourteen populations in Uganda and Tanganyika that occupy a continuous territory stretching from northern Lake Albert to Lake Tanganyika: the eight chiefdoms of Bantu, namely Buganda, Busoga, Bunyoro, Toro, Ankole, Buhaya, Buzinza and Buha, Busukuma, which is a federation of 47 small chiefdoms, and five polysegmentary societies: Amba (under Toro guardianship since the beginning of the century), Gisu, Kiga, Alur and the Lugbara. The Alur have an intermediary organization between the poly-segmental society in the strict sense and the multi-kingdom. The investigators employed two methods: the classic descriptive method and the questionnaire survey of chiefs. For all four categories of distinguished chiefs (county chiefs, sub-county chiefs, parish chiefs, headmen), 1156 questionnaires were completed, which provide information on the education, career and status of chiefs. AI Richards, who presents the survey and draws the conclusions, gives an analysis of the political systems of the Bantu Inter-lacustrine which, from a historical point of view, are actually pre-feodal and must be compared to the European political systems of the 9th and 10th centuries, rather than those of the Middle Ages proper. By analogy with the facts of Europe, African systems that have their equivalent in a still “tribal” Europe are considered feudal.

From the point of view of social philosophy, the question that arises at this level is: why this unwavering link between political power and life?

The answer to this question allows us to identify the fundamental point on which all political philosophy is built in the Bantu context. It is recognition of the fact that human beings, animals, plants, minerals, as well as sovereign power itself, come from the same divine source. And, more deeply, life in its entirety comes from this source or from an invisible elsewhere, so that the role of the sovereign is to govern the living in the sense of their natural return to the common source. It must be said that political philosophy in the indigenous Bantu context is based on metaphysics of life.

It is logical that the head of the nation, comes from the common box, and established by him. He represents the nation. It derives its legitimacy from ancestral powers, the state and religious moral authority. He is enthroned according to ancient and religious rites. He is sworn on a religious text. It does not exercise executive power, except in the matters hereafter specified and recognized by the Code of the Alliance and the constitutional laws. It acts, in this case, by ordinance.

It invests by ordinance the Federal Chancellor, following his election by the Federal Parliament; he invests, always by ordinance, the governors of the counties. Mfumu raises high military jobs and appoints senior magistrates on the proposal of the High Council of the Judiciary. It promulgates the laws and treaties in the twenty days following the transmission to it, either by the office of the federal parliament or by the office of common house, according to the nature of the law. In case of reservation on his part, he appeals to the constitutional court for a check of the conformity of the law or the treaty. If the constitutional court declares compliance, Mfumu promulgates the said law or the treaty.

Mfumu guarantees the solidarity of traditional peoples and counties. It may, when the circumstances so require, declare a state of emergency either nationwide or over a county. Mfumu can also put federal governance and finances under federal tutelage in case of threat by said county of national unity and solidarity.

It ensures and guarantees the national unity. Also, it is outside the political games. His institution and his exercise of power escape the struggles and criticisms of political parties. He cannot lend his support, or his moral or financial contribution to a political association. His political responsibility cannot be sought in any national jurisdiction. On the other hand, his criminal responsibility can be committed for assassinations, war crimes, crimes against humanity, act of genocide.

As soon as he is enthroned, he cannot, for the rest of his life, pursue any other professional activity. It enjoys full support of common house.

4.2 The Purpose of Bantu Power: To Secure People's Lives

Bantu power is in its essence word. The word of a person is the person himself. As such, it suggests engaging the whole person as a being and acting. The Bantu word is in its essence word-action. The consequences arising from this word-action have a known origin, the person who is the source of the word. In what does the word-action of the prince differ from another? The word-act of the prince is marked. Thanks to the sign on his forehead, the authority of the prince is now in the eternal river of power, with that of the other princes.

Said word-action is granted by God to the elect to create and guarantee the life of the Bantu. Indeed,

the prince, without being founder of the power, participates and pursues the act of creation by restoring, in the time and the geographical space, the harmony and the balances of the principality, all this in order to guarantee the life men and ensure their perpetuation.

The purpose of power is, in a simple way, taught to any successor appointed in interviews with his old master in power. As an example, we reveal the interview on this subject:

After a night of heavy rain, the reigning Mfumu calls his appointed successor, future mfumu to ask him how he spent the night. The youngster answers that he slept deeply. The Chief retorts, "I did not close my eyes". Why? The son Amazed. "Because of the people of others; indeed, when you will be consecrated Mfumu, each morning you will have to ask yourself the following questions: Do the people of others, are they doing well? Is there not an epidemic that threatens them? Do they eat well? Does the earth continue to produce well? Are not their homes threatened by some phenomena, such as rain? Here are the five key concerns of the mfumu each day of his reign. "Father, what other people are who? The son asks the son, future mfumu. "Mfumu governs men. Do not think they are your property. That would be a serious mistake for you. These people belong to God; he entrusted them to you to lead them. My son, I will reveal to you a great secret, a great principle: if you deliberately shed human blood, even far from home, be sure that this blood will strike your house and sink into your house one day. Human blood never pours itself deliberately without return".

The importance and nobility of the prince's office imposes rigor in the choice of a suitor. While distinguishing itself by its severity and its constancy, the Bantu practice diversified the processes to adapt to the situations, which situations were imposed to it. It has, however, validated and preserved the original process of creation.

At the elected potential, it is imperative to give an initiation. It is a long training. In the image of the totality of God's teaching about power, the initiation of Bantu power covers the domains of knowledge in general, of individual and social behavior, of knowledge and practice of rules, principles and uses of power. The key rule in this area is to follow the footsteps of the ancient princes. Initiation extends into the comprehension and interpretation of supernatural phenomena, it being understood that with consecration, the prince becomes an intermediary between the visible world and the invisible world.

5. Conclusion

The Bantu political system that we propose is a form of governance by the people, from the bottom up. In Bantucraty, the prince is the protector of the people. The protective function of the prince has its origin in the "shelter" character of the Bantu power. The primary mission of a prince is to protect life, to perpetuate it; God and the ancestors, who gave them that power, did the same to them. As soon as a prince is enthroned, he becomes the leader of all the people, including thieves, liars and assassins. It does not operate a selection between good and bad, those to keep and those to reject. The protection it affords to all cannot be equated with any complicity with the perpetrators; protection is related to life. When an assassin, even if caught on the spot, is threatened in his life and enters the prince's residential

court, his life is safeguarded and now protected. This guarantee does not amount to an amnesty; the culprit remains liable to judgment and punishment, except those which are prejudicial to his survival. The protection of the Bantu prince also covers human rights. It has the authority to determine and specify the rights of each, the authority to defend the rights and to sanction violations. The Bantu princes structured this authority, gave it body by the establishment of the judicial institution. Within the Bantu institutional power, the body of administrators assumes, among others, the judicial function. It is established that the “shelter” character of the people of Bantu power has generated the judicial system. In order to be closer to the people, the judicial system has been structured and decentralized; he has thus meshed the Bantu territory. Any decision of justice pronounced in the principality can be the object of a last resort before a prince. He examines the appeal and pronounces his decision without further appeal. In practice, being close to the concerns of the population, mfumu (chiefs of territorial constituencies) play the role of last resort.

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