

INSIDE MANDELA'S HEART: LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE FOR AFRICA

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Abstract

Political analysts are wont to argue that, the mass in a democracy are like boats on the volatile sea without a guide and that leadership shapes society and consequently determines leadership expectations. This is an argument to the effect that the process of leadership recruitment makes or mares a democracy. In African democracies, there is a disconnection between the rulers and the ruled leading to political economic distress of African nations. This paper argues that, African nations can truly develop only when the leadership question is rightly settled. Drawing lessons from the Madiba Mandela, we argue the thesis that, without comprehension, mental magnitude, spiritual depth, selflessness and incorruptibility; the core indigenous African leadership qualities that defined the Mandela persona, our long walk to democratic consolidation will ever remain a distant dream. A conclusion is here argued that, there is need for a revolution in the aims and methods of power engineering, so that the basic aim becomes the promotion of socially, economically and politically important desires of man; the promotion of wisdom in leadership by rational means, not by knowledge means. Such is argued as the new Africa of the Twenty-First Century. That African leaders must not only possess the capacity and ability to appreciate and grasp the salient details as well as most of the practical and temporal implications of a given problem or situation, they must be prepared to lead and live by personal example as did the Madiba.

Keywords: African Leadership, Madiba, Mandela, Governance, Power

Introduction

You know I am not very happy with Nigeria. I have made that very clear on many occasions. Yes, Nigeria stood by us more than any nation, but you let your selves down, and Africa and the black race very badly. Your leaders have no respect for their people. They believe that their personal interests are the interests of the people. They take people's resources and turn it into personal wealth. There is a level of poverty in Nigeria that is unacceptable. I cannot understand why Nigerians are not angrier than they are. What do young Nigerians think about your leaders and their country and Africa? Do they teach them history? Do you have lessons on how your past leaders stood by us and gave us large amounts of money? You know I hear from Angolans and Mozambicans and Zimbabweans how your people opened their hearts and their homes to them. I was in prison then, but we know how your leaders punished western companies who supported apartheid. What about the corruption and the crimes? Your elections are like wars. Now we hear that you cannot be president of Nigeria unless you are a Muslim or Christian. Some people tell me your country may break. Please, don't let it happen.²⁵

The Mandela quip above is a representative state of leadership crisis in many African nations. In most continental African nations, there exist a huge gap between the anticipated gains of democracy and democracy dividends on ground. Good governance has marred the over many years of the different independent African nations due largely to eliocentrism (pandering to the interest of the elites), ethnic jingoism, religious fanaticism, corruption and electoral manipulations. Political analysts are wont to argue that, the mass in a democracy are like boats on the volatile sea without a guide and that leadership shapes society and consequently determines leadership expectations. This is an argument to the effect that the process of leadership recruitment makes or mares a democracy. The paper

²⁵ Nelson Mandela, 2007 interview reproduced as quoted by Jim Unah in *Sunday Mirror*, vol. 3 No. 54, December 22, 2013

argues that, there is a disconnection between the rulers and the ruled, and that the African nations can truly develop only when the leadership question is rightly settled. Drawing lessons from the Madiba Mandela, we argue the thesis that, without comprehension, mental magnitude, spiritual depth and selflessness and incorruptibility; good leadership qualities that defined the Mandela persona, our long walk to democratic consolidation will ever remain a distant dream. A conclusion is here argued that, there is need for a revolution in the aims and methods of power engineering, so that the basic aim becomes the promotion of socially, economically and politically important desires of man; the promotion of wisdom in leadership by rational means, not by knowledge means. Such is argued as the new Africa of the Twenty-First Century. That African leaders must not only possess the capacity and ability to appreciate and grasp the salient details as well as most of the practical and temporal implications of a given problem or situation, they must be to lead and live by personal example as did the Madiba.

African Leadership Recruitment Crisis in History

“The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigeria character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which is the hallmark of true leadership...” (Achebe, 1966:50)

In *Politics, Leadership and Development in Nigeria*, a former Minister of Education (1979) and Health (1995), says this of the Nigerian leadership crisis,

Nigeria is one of the unfinished national projects of the twentieth century. To consummate the enterprise, much needs to be done and resolved. The leadership question is in my mind, one of the key issues ... Politics, the art of

winning and exercising power provides the platform for the leadership and development challenges in Nigeria (Madubuike, 2008:3)

Understanding the current crisis in Nigerian polity entails a critical and diachronic analysis of our socio-cultural history. It is the argued position of Bewaji (2003) that, the present Nigerian leadership is a carry-over from the leadership style of the colonial ruler-group who did not mix with the indigenous Nigerians. He states further that, at independence the inheritors of power were (Nigerian) rulers who descended from an elite group who were distant from the people they governed. These products of Western educational centers claim that their own peoples were uneducated, poor illiterates and common masses. It is not any wonder that in their ignorance, they became aliens in their own countries thus instituting a culture of leadership dislocation in Africa.

In African indigenous societies, there are clear-cut methodologies of instructing youths in the ethos and mores of their culture. There are also careful mechanisms for nurturing and elevating people to take leadership positions in the traditional societies. Those to whom leadership will devolve (albeit hereditary) are carefully selected, groomed and instructed in the ways of the culture of their societies in wait for the esteemed positions they are prepared to assume. In fact, it was the responsibility of all the leaders of thought in societies to properly bring up those who would lead.

It is instructive to note that, this traditional leadership culture gave birth to the great civilizations which tamed the Nile, created the Great Desert Art and engineered their economies through groundnut pyramids in Kano, developed the cocoa industry in the west, prospered the Tiv of central Nigeria with yam bans and energized the nation with coal in Eastern Nigeria.

Unfortunately though, these giant strides died with the colonization and enslavement of Africa, creating a leadership vacuum which all forms of charlatans now fill by default.

Leadership in Africa was not without long periods of tutelage. For years and years leaders identified were schooled in the traditions of the people and carefully tutored and nurtured to assume leadership. It thus means that, sustainability of governance entails a carefully developed leadership recruitment process to ensure that leadership is imbued with humility, knowledge and wisdom.

Unfortunately though, some (many) of those who preside over African nations, the neo-colonialists represent the direct opposite of African leadership expectation. They can rightly be said to be more dangerous to their societies and the cultures and civilizations than the alien white folks that they replaced and whose ignorance can be pardoned. A peep into our leadership history shows that, in polygamous families, those who initially went to the white man's school were first, the children of wives that were not very loved/liked by the husbands; second, children who were regarded as lazy and who showed a proclivity toward indolence; third, children who showed evidence of being cantankerous, disrespectful, disobedient and dishonest, and last, slaves and or dregs of the society who in the thinking of the house holders were sent to the white man's school to waste and die away as invalids.

It was this crop of people without leadership credentials that eventually inherited the reins of power. Power for them became the end in itself primarily, and secondarily a means of accessing state funds for personal selfish use. These rulers with poor preparation soon reduced themselves to what Soyinka referred to as wasted generation but which I prefer to call wasting generation who as it were, opiumise the people with democracy, politics and elections in order that they are left alone to pursue public interest for private advantage.

Unfortunately, it was this poorly processed and unprepared category of the society that became the inheritors of leadership at independence. These emergency leaders were in the words Bewaji:

- i. unable to understand the concept of public life and public property, as they were not disposed to use public property, especially public funds, with diligence and propriety, for only official business but were busy wasting funds and engaging in all kinds of fraudulence;
- ii. unable to separate their private income from public funds, seeing opportunities to serve as opportunities to embezzle public funds with impunity;
- iii. unable to recognize a difference between the tactics and stratagems that gained their societies independence and strategies for developing new states from colonies, hence the same tactics of sabotage, subterfuge and antagonism used to fight for independence, from the foreign overlords as they were called, are now employed against the new enemy, that is, indigenous critics of their uncouth and scandalous behavior in office;
- iv. unable to see that leadership is a call to service , hence, operating with the same mentality of alienation and separatism of the "educated elite", so that having attained public positions means being even more special and alien, and e) unable to understand that their countries are part of a big world in which it is survival of the fittest.
- v. Consequently, they were not prepared for the task of nation-building (Bewaji: 2003:24)

It is no wonder then to locate why the contemporary Nigerian state is decadent, cerebrally diminutive, innately corrupt, morally bankrupt, spiritually retrograde and culturally retrogressive. Here again the suggestion by Bewaji makes reference to the historical antecedents of contemporary African societies as a basis for understanding the question of leadership poverty in Nigeria. Dialectically, he opines,

“Leadership” is a function of historical transitions over time and space. One cannot talk of “leadership” in cultural, educational and historical vacuum. Nor can one get any clear vision on the notion of “leadership” culture and education without examining the underpinnings and presuppositions of the social metaphysic and the epistemic attitudes and attributes prevalent in the societies under examination. (p24)

In Nigeria today, short-sightedness of the political class, has differentiated us on grounds of ethnic identities and state of origin, religious affiliations and political party lines. Today too, most African societies are ethnically polarized and erupt into warfare periodically – more frequent as the resources for pillaging become more scarce and limited. An encyclopedic Nigerian literary icon, Prof. Chinua Achebe recently lamented the woes of his nation, painting a picture of how the Nigeria-Biafra war which was precipitated by the bile of ethnic hatred, created a clique of military class and political adventurers that ruined the country. In his words;

Since the war, Nigerians have been subjected to a clique of military and civilian adventurers and a political class that have exploited the ethnic divisions in Nigeria. This group, unfortunately, has been completely corrupted, spearheading the enormous transfer of the country's wealth into private bank accounts, a wholesale theft of the national resources needed for all kinds of things - health, education, roads. The result has been that the nation's infrastructure was left to disintegrate unleashing untold suffering on millions of innocent people. (The Guardian, September 15, 2011)

This leadership crisis has within the last fifty years of Nigeria's statehood successfully cloned two monstrous couple into its political and social life namely, contradiction and absurdity, who in turn gave birth to two sets of twins; indiscipline and

lawlessness as well as greed and corruption. In our own Nigeria today, political immaturity, religious bigotry, economic slavery and intellectual parochialism have completely taken over and governed the Nigerian State. It is no contradiction to say then that the outlook of democracy of any kind in Nigeria is poor. This is largely due to the corruptive meaning that the concept of leadership has assumed in Nigerian politics. Indeed, the complete lack of a democratic culture in Nigeria accounts for the not merely stagnation but retrogression of the Nigerian nation state. One recalls here the words of the celebrated Nigerian singer and political critic, Fela Anikulapo Kuti who, in one of his songs denouncing the perpetual interference by the military in civil affairs, said that in Nigeria a soldier goes and a soldier comes. What a sad reality. For Achebe, "there is much the same cynicism about the ability of the military to wipe out corruption and reverse the spiral of political decay. (Achebe, 1996:85). In a more dramatic fashion, another Nigerian musician, Eedrees Abdulkareem captures the state of the Nigerian leadership crisis that has reduced Nigeria to a failed state thus: *Nigeria Jaga jaja, everything scatter scatter, poor man de suffer...* One is forced to add here that, this ugly development has been made easy by Nigerian academics who have presided over the liquidation of the university system in Nigeria and the rise of a culture of anti-intellectualism in the country. What follows is at best captured in the words of W.B Yeats, who in his "The Second Coming" says,

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity (Internet)

The question then is how the African nations that have fallen apart can be pieced together to function aright in the promotion

of the greater number of people. In other words, where do we begin and have the best chance of success? Does the answer lie in changing the system; changing the African leadership style, or in changing the hearts of the African population?

Democratic Consolidation

An attempt to craft a political philosophy to fix the democratic project in Africa, but Nigeria in particular demands an understanding of the concepts under use namely, democracy and democratic consolidation, leadership and leadership crisis/recruitment, knowledge and wisdom. All these concepts will be clarified in relation to the basic questions of the need to consolidate the Nigerian democracy.

Democratic consolidation as a phrase in use entails the art or practice of governance in a given society hanged on a democratic tripod, namely, universal suffrage, the rule of law and the civic will. Democracy as a form of government is distinguished from other forms of government on a single count of *the sovereignty of the people*. That is, the people decide who rules them at all levels through periodic, free and fair elections. Here understood, the concept of democracy not only emphasizes the role of the people as the electorate, but it also situates the people as the drivers of governance before, during and after election of the political leaders. This means that, the people consistently exercise their civic power to set the tone and agenda of government through popular organizations such as trade unions, None Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups, faith based bodies, community associations and interest groups. Democratic consolidation therefore means the sustainability of the art of democratic practice.

This is to say that, democracy cannot be operational without the power of the organized citizenry; hence John Locke summarizes the meaning of democracy as a contract between the people and the rulers. The government according to him is to ensure freedom and security while the sovereignty lies with the people

who may decide to use it against the government if it fails in its responsibility. In a similar vein, Jim Unah (1993:4) upholds that, democracy is a state with unlimited opportunities for adult participation in political life. This means that democracy is a process through which political participation is guaranteed and maximized. Alaba Ogunsanwo corroborates these positions when he describes democracy as “a whole series of processes and cultural values which relates to the selection of leaders at all levels of society, the behavior of groups and individuals vis-à-vis those who hold different views on issues under consideration, as well as the use of power by those the selection process has placed in decision making position” (Ogunsanwo 1994: 139).

Here again, emphasis is placed on universal suffrage with the government merely serving as the executors of the people's will. This definition underscores the basics of democratic consolidation which here understood includes, the people's mandate, ballot power and leadership quality. Democracy has one fundamental objective; how to govern the society in such a way that power actually belongs to the people, and to do so under the rule of law.

Arising from this conception of democracy is the fact of mass participation and accountability of the leadership as acceptable ideals of democratic sustainability. Linz and Stephan articulate this point in their five-point bench mark for democratic consolidation as follows;

- a. the conditions must exist for the development of free and lively civil society, i.e. an arena of the polity where self-organizing and relatively autonomous groups, movements and individuals attempt to articulate values, to create associations and to advance their interests.
- b. there must be an autonomous political society. Political society refers to the arena in which political actors compete for the legitimate right to exercise control over public power and the state apparatus, its core institutions

- being, political parties, legislatures, elections, electoral rules, political leadership and inter-party alliances.
- c. all major political actors, especially the government and the state apparatus must be subjected to a rule of law that protects individual freedoms. The rule of law animated by a spirit of constitutionalism is crucial in ensuring that the elected government and the state administration are subject to transparency and accountability.
 - d. there must be in place a state bureaucracy. To protect the rights of citizens and to deliver other basic services, a democratic government needs a functioning state bureaucracy.
 - e. there must exist an institutionalized economic society. Economic society is defined as a set of norms, regulations, policies and institutions that sustain a mixed economy. (Linz and Stepan, 2002:2)

Linz and Stepan argue further that, democracies cannot be consolidated in command economies because a certain degree of market autonomy and ownership diversity is vital to produce an independent and lively civil society. Likewise, democracies cannot be consolidated where completely free market economies are in place. The main reason for this being that markets require legally enforced contracts, the issuance of money, regulated standards for weights and measures and the protection of public and private property. A democracy, in order to be sustainable, must produce policies that generate government mandated public goods in the areas of education, health and transportation. It must also provide an economic safety net for its citizens and some alleviation of gross economic inequality. While these arguments cannot be easily faulted, it suffices to state that, such an environment that fervors sustainability is possible but only under men and women of mental magnitude, spiritual depth and incorruptible character.

Argued here therefore, the quality of leadership is to my mind, the core of democratic consolidation. Thus, mere transition from

full blown military dictatorship to civil rule is a step in the right direction though, it falls pitifully short of the African average. The reason for this deficit according to Oshiomole “is the pervasive failures in the conduct of free and fair elections, especially since the 1999” (2010: 4) which have always been engineered by leadership myopia as the democratic consolidation agenda in Nigeria is primarily about ensuring free and fair elections.

Evolving a Governance Philosophy for Africa

Unless it shall come to pass that philosophers are kings or those who are now called kings and potentates be imbued with sufficient measure of genuine philosophy ... there will be no cessation of ills for the state nor ... for the human race; neither can the commonwealth, which we have now sketched in theory, ever till see the light of the day. (Plato, 473)

Thinking of Leadership in Africa brings to mind the shepherd analogy which here serves as a crucial requirement of a leadership philosophy that has aided other contemporary peoples of the world and indigenous peoples of Africa to become great. The shepherd is a leader who does not put self-interest above sheep interest, does not rest until the sheep is provided for – not just for the immediate needs, but ensuring the needs of the future are guaranteed also – consequently the shepherd envisions the unknown tomorrow and plans for it. The shepherd is the protector of the sheep and exemplified the virtues of righteousness requisite of followership. In this regard, the shepherd as leader leads by example and does not have to ask for respect before getting it. Using the African democratic average, Bewaji draws the examples from Tanzania and Libya, and we may add South Africa to make a point. While acknowledging the giant strides of these and a few other African countries, the recent profound changes in North Africa and the fragmented political space in Libya and Egypt in particular, it is not far from the truth to say that Africa countries are surely governed less by a people oriented philosophy of development. In many African

states, the democratic culture of inclusive participation, constitutionalism, the rule of law, human rights and accountability; the trampoline of democratic consolidation quickly became cumbersome with tyranny of the minority becoming the order of the day.

A global reflection reveals to us some points of consequence here. Why, if we may wonder, were the countries of the Pacific rim – at the head of which you find a Japan that was badly battered in the Second World War – able to rise from oblivion within a space of four decades to dominate the world technologically and financially, or why USA has been able to blend hetero-ethnicities into a vibrant polity even with the usual unresolved issues of racism, racial profiling, and implications of the American Presidential Elections under president George W. Bush in the state of Florida, among others, are still festering. Why are Russians a proud people, in spite of the collapse of the Soviet Union? Many scholars would easily indicate in concession (concurring with the views here proffered) that it was not the color of the skin, nor the intellectual superiority of the population, nor the climatic generosity of the environment that made the difference. Many will easily indicate and concede that the difference is in the content of the character, knowledge and wisdom of leadership.

Plato's assertion that unless philosophers are kings or those who are now called kings and potentates be imbued with sufficient measure of genuine philosophy as a condition for the cessation of ills of the state speaks to us that leadership must be characterized adequately to so act as leaders to facilitate open dialogue within the polity, and about the meaning of justice, the possibility of a just politics, and the nature of the best human life. The argued point here is that, what entitles one man or a group of men to lead and requires others to follow or to obey is simply the fact that the one is a philosopher(s), a man or women of thought and reason, and the others ordinary persons, common people who, presumably are bundles of appetitive desires. This

leadership philosophy entails self knowledge that takes cognizance of a holistic exposition of the concept of leadership which flows from knowledge to wisdom, grounded in epistemic, metaphysical and moral content.

(I) Epistemic Requirement

Here it may simply be indicated that many factors are called for here. These include the cognitive, intuitive, emotive, dynamic and introspective components. In this regard, we may indicate that there are two sides to this: a) the epistemological base of leadership and b) the epistemological base of followership. First, leadership must originate from the vantage position of “knowledge”. We can see that all the great thinkers are agreed on this, from Confucius, Buddha, Plato, to Jesus, to our own Obafemi Awolowo (1968) and Moses Orshio Adasu (Wuam, 2008). Plato's suggestion that the leader (philosopher king) should attain a level of understanding of the universe, people and him/herself to be fair to all and just in the dispensation of justice fits this leadership qualification. Thus, the leader must be wise, not simply knowledgeable. This is because there is danger in mere acquisition of knowledge, as many persons are specialists in various areas but regrettably poor in most others and unfit for leadership. Hence, the better we conceive of leadership holistically as requiring wisdom, i.e., the art of making the best use of knowledge by exercising good judgment.

It is the capacity to realize what is of value in life for oneself and others or as the end point of a process that encompasses the idea of making sound judgments in the face of leadership challenges or uncertainty. Being a wise leader and exercising good judgment is certainly more than the ability to recycle Wisdom in policy decisions. This entails the ability of the leader to apply wisdom effectively in the practice of governance. Wisdom in this context becomes the vehicle in use to integrate values into decision-making processes. What is being suggested here is that, the leader should be intellectually rounded and epistemologically astute.

(ii) The Metaphysics Requirement

Leadership requires creative abilities of the mind. This prong of leadership philosophy has to do with the ontology of leadership. It has to do with relativities of time, space, context, families, cultures, groups, goals, etc. in relation to leadership recruitment. In many instances, those who turn out to be instrumental in the achievement of progress and development in various historical epochs in human history have been regarded as divine intervention.

It is therefore not out of point to argue a necessary link between leadership and mystical or divine power in the advancement of the common good and there is nothing illogical about it. Bergson's conclusion in this regard is revealing. He says,

...human beings, be they primitive or civilized, revert to supernatural explanations when they face vital events directly affecting them as persons. If primitive peoples seem overflowed with mystical beliefs, the explanation lies in the little control they have over their environment... This demonstrates that mystical explanations appear whenever human thinking pays attention to the "human significance" of phenomena over and above their mere physical nature (kebede , 2003:48)

Notwithstanding the truism of this position, we argue for the purpose of this dialogue that, in history leadership has never been Manna from heaven. It has been human, and full of sacrifices and opportunities for satisfaction of group and personal goals. African leaders, nay Nigeria must take special inventory in this regard that only those who sacrifice get higher glories in life and are the notables who live forever even in death. (Shenge, 2013, 255)

(iii) Axiological Requirement

Under this prong, we must emphasize the normative nature and the norm generating nature of leadership in any society. It is clear that leadership should constitute the embodiment of the very hopes, aspirations, identity, dreams and realities of a society. Baring this, it is clear that there will ensue a drift in society that will be disastrous. It is important in this regard that there should be clear standards and channels for the enforcement of these standards on both the leaders and the led. This is because, when leadership disregards the least of the norms, ethos and statutes of a society with impunity, the signals sent reverberates through the entire fabric of the society, having consequences not easily redressed.

In the Nigerian example, the exigencies of life and the existential situation has not only become so privating, it has created a siege consciousness with the attendant situation of a Hobbesian state of nature in which every other person is at war with every other person. Imagine for a moment a situation in which leadership exhibits a generalized survival, self-preservation, ego-protection and individualistic orientation. At such a level everything must conduce to self-preservation and entrenchment. Imagine a situation where political leadership is construed as an instrument of determining who gets what, where and when. Where politics is a game for determining between "ethnic groups whose members are perpetually at war with each other" and where the winner takes all and the loser ceases to exist literally.

Thus, when we are examining the ethical foundations of leadership we find that leaders are required to allow their consciousness to shift gear into the supernormal mode of cognition, behavior and relationship with the people under acute stress situations. They must not just be normal persons or even ab/sub-normal that we mentioned above. Society expects them to put society interest above self-interest. It is at this stage that the true test of leadership can be determined. This third

stage is where the leader becomes only an instrument for the realization of society's consciousness, where the leadership becomes the tool for the propagation of organic existence of the society. This is where leadership education, orientation and preparation kick in automatically in advanced or civilized societies. Some may call this the spiritual level of leadership, but it is simply the level where that popular saying becomes significant – I am, because we are, and since we are therefore I am.

Unfortunately though, the Nigerian political turf lacks the indices of the leadership qualities enunciated above. Democratic consolidation thus argued does not reside in ochlocracy; the tyranny of the vociferous and noisy minority over the quiet majority but a combination of knowledge and wisdom of the leadership that facilitates good governance; the provision of social amenities, that fulfills election promises, that secures lives and property, that provides shelter, telephones, water, power, jobs, cheap food, good education, and general infrastructure upgrade. Such is a true, just and dedicated leadership that can turn around the people's misfortunes and make Africa the much desired Eldorado. Such is the leadership Model of a giant Icon of peace, democracy and liberty, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, a black man of South African Origin, who was on July 18, 1918, born in the Eastern Cape of royal heritage into a chaotic world where colour bar, racial sentiments and man's inhumanity to fellow man were the rule rather than the exception.

The Mandela Model of Leadership

The argued thesis here is that, sustainable democracy is a factor of how well the leadership transits from knowledge to wisdom. Tolerance, widespread participation, political consensus are necessary conditions for democratic consolidation though, they do not in themselves consolidate a democracy if and when there is no responsible and quality leadership which itself results from self knowledge. The logic of development can only be expressed through the creative application of wisdom that is anchored on

the aims of governance. The post modernist/constructionist theory of leadership education explains this position more clearly. The theory holds that humans are social creations and that their institutions are constructs upheld by humans acting according to their images of reality. This is the leadership style that helped Madiba Mandela in oiling South Africa's young democratic institution to flower when he took over as the first black president in 1994 serving only one term. This model of leadership facilitates behavior and challenges leaders and followers to actively co-construct or co-reconstruct their knowledge about successfully working together to reasonably gratify their politically important desires. For our purpose, it will be useful to indicate the following leadership attributes as important and critical in the articulating the Madiba Mandela Model.

a) Mental Magnitude

When reason is dethroned from the affairs of the being of man, emotions, mediocrity and unimportant desires reign. This inevitably breeds corruption of the mind which in turn leads to greed, bribery abuse and executive lawlessness among other social vices. This suggestion argues the point that, those who aspire to leadership in any society must be those who are ruled by reason rather than appetite. They should in the words of Awolowo, "possess comprehension and mental magnitude" (Awolowo, 1968: 158). This leadership quality is found in abundance in the person and character of Mandela as ably captured by the Nigerian Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka when he says of Mandela that he is the very expression of "humanistic will and political vision ... a symbol of culture and dialogue backed by an unparalleled generosity of spirit". This humane human quality of life freed the Madiba from the tyranny of the flesh and the unexamined life and so from negative emotions of anger, hate, fear, envy, selfishness and greed, and from indulgence in wrong types of food and drink and in ostentatious consumption as well as excessive or immoral craving for sex. In the Nobel Laureate's 1988 collection of poems, the Mandela's

Earth, Soyinka wrote: *Your bounty threatens me, Mandela, that taut Drumskin of your heart on which our millions Dance. I fear we latch, fat leeches On your veins... What will be felt of you Mandela?* He became more like an Icon and globally recognized symbol of his country's freedom. This condition achieved for the Madiba tranquility of the mind and enlarged his conception of what is possible, enriched his intellectual imagination and diminished the dogmatic assurance which may have closed his mind against the dialectical power of history. As it turned out to be, the lessons of history capacitated Mandela to envision a better South Africa that he helped to render great for the general common good of South Africans. This vision was informed by the realities of the historical antecedents of the Orange State and the potentialities and possibilities that the endowments of nature and human resources can transform for posterity.

b) Spiritual Depth

Spiritual depth is a necessary qualification of being human that depicts the Madiba's style of leadership. This is a theory of the meaning and value of human existence. Here used, it serves to underscore the metaphysics of politics. It is the copula conjoining the leader to the led. Used in association with mental magnitude, this leadership quality commands love and the pursuit of the good. In his *The people's Republic*, Awolowo states these principles as love of God and love of one's neighbor presumably alluding to the Biblical injunction in Matthew, 19:16-24 and 22: 36-40. In itself, spiritual depth involves the notion of God from whom love ultimately emanates. This religious love in conjunction with mental magnitude acts as a spark that insures the leader against that which perpetually undermines good governance and rather promote greed and naked selfishness or sickness that makes people loot the national treasury including the monies they do not need on earth. But like President George Washington of America said on the day of his inauguration, "It is impossible to rightly govern our country or the world without God and the Bible" This leadership quality promotes honesty in government business. Honesty necessitates

transparency and fairness. The infectiousness of honesty cannot be underestimated as the character of the leader shapes the demeanor of the followership in many instances. Inside Mandela's heart, this necessary qualification of leadership ruled his person so passionately that the Madiba performed the "miracle" of the improbable democratic transition in South Africa's version of the parting of the Red Sea to set his people free. His long walk to freedom, his power of forgiveness and Pan-African solidarity all add to quintessential personality as a secular prophet, an African Moses leading his people to the promise land from the oppression of white pharaohs. It is no wonder then that the revered Kenyan Scholar, Ali Mazrui once noted, "if in the last half of the twentieth century truly there was one single statesman in the world who came closest to being *morally number one* among leaders of the human race, Nelson Mandela was probably such a person".

c) Self-Knowledge

Socrates is quoted to have said that, he who knows not, and knows not that he knows not is a fool. On the other hand he who knows not, and knows that he knows not, is a wise man. Leadership qualities demands of the leader as much as the led a character of self examination for the purposes of bridging leadership gaps and so arrogate to the leadership or the led omniscience. In Yoruba society, it is said, that, "the young is wise, and the old is wise, is the pillar on which the ancient town of Ile-Ife was built." In an essay, "Olodumare - God in Yoruba belief and the problem of evil", Bewaji discusses the importance of the weakness of Western theistic theology, theocracy and divine rulership espoused in Judaeo-Christian tradition which arrogates to the Supreme Being infallibility, even in the face of counterfactuals as in the Genesis. In Yoruba theology he says,

...it is not regarded as strange for Olodumare, the Supreme Being, to consult His diviners to ensure that things move properly in the affairs of the universe. This would serve as a humbling lesson to humans that they

cannot and should claim what they have not, indicating that they need to encourage consultation and respect for the wishes of the people. (Bewaji, 2003: 16)

The argued point here is that, leadership is serious business and thus requires more than mere passivity. It requires critical thinking, rationally compelling positions, rationally convincing policies and rationally persuasive actions. This means that the leader must have conceptual and concrete thinking skills, he must be able to focus on issues of importance, curious and inquisitive, and must possess confidence in seeking knowledge of the unknown. Like Socrates, Mandela sees self knowledge as a necessary quality of human existence and appropriates self-knowledge as a liberating tool for his people. The charismatic leader of the African National Congress (ANC) used this quality of leadership to build and maintain a devoted following in South Africa. The young Mandela read the writings of Trinidad's George Padmore and Ghana's Kwame Nkruma and through the inspiration of the Gandhian tactics of passive resistance, he played a leadership role in the defiance campaign of 1952 before initiating the "armed struggle" that led to a life sentence in 1964. For him, "the attacks of the wild beast cannot be averted with only bare hands". (Adebayo, 16).

In Mandela's heart therefore, leadership is a sacred trust. It is like the priesthood in civilized, humane religions which no one gets into it lightly or unadvisedly. It demands tranquility of mind and discipline of body and will far beyond the ordinary citizen. For the Madiba, knowledge is information in its altruistic use. Wisdom on the other hand is the integration of knowledge and values to produce wise action. Wisdom for Mandela is thus the power that enables him to use knowledge in governance and management of human beings for the common good. This quality of life may have informed the thoughts of Kofi Annan, the Ghanaian former United Nations (UN) Secretary General and Nobel Peace Laureate to write that, "to this day, Madiba remains probably the single most admired, most respected

international figure in the entire world" (ibid). In contrast to the other African leaders living and dead, the Madiba correctly understands that, he had a date with history, and so he had the power to choose his own part to alter the course of history, to forge a united South Africa and to teach the world that it is possible to return love for hate. This singular act stood him out as the quintessential distillation of the finest of human values; a tower of inspiration, with solomonic wisdom of a sage and creative statesmanship that remains a model in the annals of exemplary leadership.

(d) Incorruptibility and Selflessness.

Democracy signposts human development and the good life that promotes political good, economic independent and virtuous life far removed from the gargantuan paradise of charlantry that characterize the African political and social life. Consequently, it is immediately urgent to understand that leadership needs transparent dedication to the cause of society. This is why in civilized societies one cannot indicate that there are no distinctions between private and public lives of leaders. The "official secrets act" in many third world countries are outdated, counterproductive and antithetical to the interest of the people whose interest is being protected. Leaders must not only be dedicated to the cause of human development, they must transparently act in such manners that will release the fibers of human existence; truth, justice, concern for others and reset them to form the pillars of a New Nigeria in contemporary world. Professor C.S. Momoh. (1993:157) calls this political behavior the Philosophy of Moralism; a doctrine that puts the other before or alongside the self. It holds that honesty, service and concern for the interest of the others ought to be the basis and measure of all actions and policies. Thus, a leader without knowledge and wisdom is like a man going down the dark alley blindfolded, he knows not where he comes from and where he goes to. Here argued, the question of enforcement of morality comes to mind. This is the point at which the principle of self preservation comes to mind. I am here inclined to adopt the position of professor C.S Momoh on this issue that,

the present oath by our public officers during swearing ceremonies is a passive one. What we need is an active oath. An active oath is one followed by an invocation, spelling out what should befall the oath taker if he willfully and deliberately enriches himself, friends or relations by exploiting or abusing his office. (1993:74)

The Madiba lived this quality of life in health and in sickness, in richness and in poverty, in power and out of power. Even though the Madiba and his people found themselves in the cauldron of extreme hate, he preached tolerance, moderation in ideas and actions and in the promotion of peace in the then apartheid enclave and by extension the larger community. Mandela's leadership style teaches us that we need committed, patriotic, selfless and disciplined leaders who have self control and have only one goal: that of benefiting the people they governed. He served his people without drawing personal benefits from the state. Rather, he gave his all in the service of his people. In a voiceover of the film, *Mandela: Son of Africa, Father of a Nation*, Mandela is reported to have said the last word in the film, "Death is something inevitable. When a man has done what he considers to be his duty to his people in his country he can rest in peace. I believe I have made that effort and that is therefore why I will sleep in for the eternity". These poetic words of the iconic leader validate today's reality for he has indeed fulfilled his duty to spread a message of justice for not only his people, but also for all citizens of the world.

Like Jesus Christ and Socrates, he offered his most precious possession, his life, in the pursuit of the good of the majority. His sublime features, chivalry, genial frame, quixotic-temper; dignified deportment and inspiring noble exudation, was such which cuts an almost perfect symmetry with Brutus, in Mark Anthony's description of him as "the greatest Roman of the all, of whom the element is so made, that nature might stand up and say this was the man" (Kola Johnson, 2013:47) Mandela is indeed the greatest African whose capacity to emerge from twenty-

seven years from prison without bitterness broadcast the hope that the power of forgiveness remains the only hope for continental greatness. The Mandela *personae* belong to a very distinguished caste of leader who truly represents a leadership figure that can stand tall as a leader worthy of emulation. He expended his energies in the service of humanity, risking everything including his life to fight for political liberation and actualize the ideal of freedom. No wonder president Barack Obama equated his moral character with that of Gandhi of India at death. He pledges, "so long as I live, I will do whatever I can to learn from him" (Amalu, 3013: p. V)

Leadership Lessons for Africa

Leadership is a function of knowledge and wisdom; it flows from knowledge to wisdom grounded in epistemic, metaphysical and moral content. It has less to do with tyranny of the flesh; negative emotions of anger, hate, fear, envy, selfishness and untruth. These virtues which oiled the heart of Mandela to engage in the long walk to liberate his people have remained scarce commodities in Nigerian leadership culture since independence. In all democracies, knowledge informs a visionary and listening leadership. Abubakar Atiku's public confession and desire speaks the mind of the Madiba thus:

we need good leadership to listen to the rally held in Lagos last Wednesday(14 September, 2005) when thousands of Lagosians walked several kilometers because of the hike in the pump price of petroleum products. When a leader listens, and he is committed, the rest will follow and the leadership does not have to say something several times before he is believed ... a country is developed by people, and people need someone to organize them, to train them, and to motivate them... if the leader is honest and even-handed, in his dealings with people, the people believe I him or her. But when the head is rotten, the rest of the body tends to rot as well... (Makinde, 2007: 365)

What we see here is the need, therefore, for dialogue between leaders and followers, because it is in such feedback mechanism that right can be right and wrong righted. Democratic consolidation as opposed to dictatorial system of government entails mental magnitude, knowledge of the people, system as well as comprehension and the rule of law. Leadership must move away from arbitrariness and impunity that are the hallmark of military regimes. Our commitment to democracy, he says, must not merely be rhetorical; we must practice it and entrench it in all our institutions, especially those institutions that form the bedrock of democratic systems. Leaders must in all their actions demonstrate to their followers that they care for the overall health of the country. Good leadership, he says, must not only bring hope, it must fulfill the hope otherwise they become fraudsters. We must become a country that upholds the rule of law at all times, he concludes.

We may only add here two important leadership characteristics as soluble to leadership crisis in Africa, namely, knowledge of where he (the leader) is going, and ability and capacity to rationally persuade and convince others to go with him. It is then that African leaders can indeed be said to rationally act in consolidating democracy in the continent. Leadership as it were, is not just about the individual, but also about the totality of the persons entrusted with the task of steering the ship of the State with a clear vision and mission, and of taking the citizens to the expected destination. Professor Humphrey Assisi Asobie is definitely right in asserting that, the predicament of contemporary Africa is best conceived not in terms of marginalization, but in terms of the lack of democracy; the people's rule, sovereignty. The task of solving the many problems of Africa, according to him, belongs to the people, organized as social forces and social movements. It does not belong to the state, which is dominated by the elite, and which also constitutes a critical part of the problem. Tilting towards a humanist perspective and drawing from the Madiba's illuminating mind, Asobie espouses in details that,

for a more effective world organization, peoples, not states, should be the main targets of the reform. Maximization of welfare, not the balancing of power, should be a guiding principle. Allies of the future United Nations should be sought among those who favour people's welfare over governmental security, among those who value human rights and development over and above the acquisition of war materials or profits derived from sale of arms and ammunition. (Asobie 2007:71-72)

Leadership therefore needs a clean break away from the wasted and inglorious past and the wasting present generation of African leaders who, like the Arab chieftains on their silken Byzantine divans could not forget the desires and hoarded riches far beyond any possible (Russell 1954) physical need; a shameless and unambitious leadership that does not understand that the emerging international division of labour is slowly but inexorably moving away from manufacturing based on raw materials (which most, if not all African countries no longer have), to service and communication industries based on new technologies, including bio-technology. This scenario is akin to having access to basic services from a point of view of dead people. It portrays the loquacious government officials as engaging in dialogue with corpses in a mortuary; a government system that disregards the poor, while simultaneously, exposes a rotten system that rewards unscrupulous politicians. Like Mandela, our leaders should seek to help the poor and the vulnerable in the society. At the 1995 UN's Fiftieth anniversary in New York in October, Mandela charged on the world body;

what challenges us, who define us as statespersons, is the clarion call to dare to think that what we are about is the people-the proverbial man and woman in the street. These, the poor, the hungry, the victims of petty tyrants, the objectives of policy, demand change. (Guardian, 2013:16)

Democracy is essentially a dialogue between rulers and the ruled, the discovery and articulation of laws for the organization of society in a manner that maximizes the enhancement of human welfare. Its focus is on humanity, rationally and consciously directed at achieving the common good as was the case and goal of politics in the ancient Greek city states. So, the rest of us should not just sit, put our hand under our chin or stand with hands akimbo and wait for good leaders. If we cannot compel greatness in our leaders, we can at least demand basic competence. We can insist on good, educated, leaders while we pray for great ones.

Africans must stand up and be counted as intellectual clinics for the de-entrapment of the mind, culture and values, to effect a cultural renaissance and revolution. This is the sure road to its economic or political development in Africa; a Cultural Revolution, or cultural renaissance. For any quantum change requires new ideas to generate new perceptions of reality. This is the thinking of Ake as quoted by Rugumamu (1999: 18) on the question of sustainable development in Africa. He argues that, instead of screaming and raving about economic and social marginalization, Africa should try and evolve an indigenous economic and development agenda that expresses the aspirations of its people and one that can therefore illicit their support. To this, African democracies are better informed in their engagement with their people with the knowledge that the world would certainly be a better place when political leaders are ready and willing to learn, listen, and virtuously lead by examples.

This much, the revered Aristotle says is the correct functional role of wisdom which acts as social practice (or praxis) that adds to human flourishing rather than only enhancing knowledge or thinking. African leaders must ask for and use wisdom to satisfy the politically important needs and desires of the people on whose behalf they hold power in trust. They must like Mandela, act with courage, principle, sacrifice, forgiveness, love and

reconciliation and non vengeance. A combination of these human virtues are needed in our leaders and the led to foster better understanding between religious sects, ethnic polarities, and political ideologues to allow them fight a common enemy which is Kakistocracy; a government by the worse people in the society which manifests in the forms of moral decadence, exaggerated materialism, greed, corruption and all other forms of evil. The lessons of Mandela's leadership style cannot be more than the lived life of the man himself. Hear him speak when he was sentenced to life in prison in 1964:

During my life time, I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society. It is an ideal for which I am prepared to die. (The Nation, Dec. 10, 2013: 6)

For Mandela, personal sacrifice, selflessness and service to humanity are the building blocks of a strong nation. He lived it and successfully resisted the pressure on him to sit tight and continue in office as the first black president of South Africa and handed over power to the young Thabo Mbeki thus setting an example for other African nations that, the older generation must give way to the younger and allow their nations to move forward. Mandela here was selfless, humane and humanistic human being thus becoming an elder statesman who etched his name in gold. His quintessential essence no doubt finds meaning in the words of the English Romantic Poet, Percy Shelly who forcefully wrote: *The One remains; the many change and pass.* Mandela, in this context, can be said to be the *One*- a great and good man; humble, compassionate and a man for all colours, races, creeds, nationalities, religions and classes.

The will to sacrifice for the greater glory of a nation is what count as lessons from the Madiba Mandela whose magnetic presence in our minds is up in tears with his bones. He refused to reduce

leadership to political messianism in favour of his belief that, it is not how long power is exercised but how it is creatively and humanely used to uplift peoples and societies for the better. Learning from Mandela leadership style further reminds us that, the task of remaking the African continent and its democracy for the benefit of the majority of its people is not in air-conditioned offices, not in the long stretched limousines, the private jets, or the pent houses on foreign beaches that house the property acquired with resources appropriated by a few Africans in privileged positions from the peoples common wealth. It lies in the collective knowledge and wisdom of both the leaders and the led to put right the blunders we have inherited from the decadent political culture of the past generation of African leaders. It lies in creating a kind of leadership rationally designed to bring about a better continent, seeking always, to achieve what is of value in life. The art of governance thus descends from theory to practice, to articulating problems of living, and purpose that critically assesses situation, possible actions and policies from the standpoint of their capacity, if implemented, to promote wiser ways of living.

The challenge drawn from this iconic leader is to create a tradition of patriotic leadership and raise a crop of leaders, bound by common ethos as was the case of Mandela's South Africa. As a true statesman, Mandela thought more of the next generation than the next election. Unlike a typical African politician who thinks of the next election, Mandela, the statesman, thought of the next generation. This will instantiate a regime of responsible leadership that will transform Africa and "build up those who will take our exertions for a better society to higher levels. I am convinced that, through carefully and consciously developed formal and informal programmes of leadership development, we can build a cadre of young Nigerians who are committed to social transformation and genuinely want to work for change". (Fayemi, 2013: 61)

This entails that, our leadership recruitment process should emphasise more the idea of servant leader than master leader. The idea of a leader as a messiah who is extraordinarily endowed to transform his society is fallacious to say the least. More so, those on whose shoulders leadership rest should jettison the concept of leadership indispensability and process the younger generation to whom they can gracefully and willingly cede power to when they mature.

The Madiba Nelson Mandela model of leadership involves the identification of leadership questions, working together to define what the group wants, exploring possibilities for the future and actively creating new behaviors. It requires knowledge of the power of history and philosophy. Here, the leadership and followership engage each other in a dialogue and use what they have heard, seen and felt to co-create new ways of working together that help them achieve their shared goals while creating deeper social bonds and satisfaction. As the encyclopedic Bertrand Russell once said, "the main thing needed to make the world happy is intelligence ...because intelligence is a thing that can be fostered by known methods of education" (reproduced by Falaiye, 1999:17-18). It must however be warned here that, the knowledge and wisdom canvassed as a leadership quality excludes what Alfred North Whitehead calls learning-as-knowledge acquisition model which often creates inert knowledge that does not come to mind when it would be appropriate or useful; knowledge that is stuck in the situation where it was acquired. It is knowledge that makes the individual or leadership to perform well on a test but not be able to apply what they know to "real life" situations. A leader is put on his society by God to function like a gadfly, to spread the good infection of knowledge, virtue and wisdom.

Today, most African countries have been emptied of men of thoughts, stature and deep knowledge thus living its helpless and hapless population in the world of mental pygmies; a continent which greedy men have seized the reins of power and

so, suffocated it with a decadent leadership without the wise use of knowledge. Wisdom is a very practical body of knowledge that has an incredibly useful contribution to help the understanding and improvement of the quality of the leader's policy thrust. This in our estimation is what comes to us as Madibaism; a leadership philosophy grounded on deep knowledge and wisdom, anchored by men and women of stature, virtue and humane spirit as was lived by the Madiba Nelson Mandela who thought of man/woman without colour, race, and embraced coexistence in all forms including banishing inequality and unconditional and redemptive forgiveness. As a leadership philosophy, this approach helped Mandela in his long walk to freedom; he paid the supreme price so that others might be free. This leadership philosophy has helped South Africa. It also has the capacity of helping both leaders and followers to take 'better' and wiser decisions, lead 'better' lives and experience wiser leadership, particularly in areas that involve explicit ethics and values related issue. In our Nigeria, this leadership model can set itself on the road to fulfilling the politically important desires of humanity. This was the leadership philosophy lived by the Madiba, Nelson Mandela, in contrast to Africa's other post independence founding fathers such as Nigeria's Tafawa Balewa, Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda, Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta, Senegal's Leopold Senghor and Tanzania's Julius Nyerere bowed out gracefully at the end of his first presidential term in 1999 setting a standard for future African leaders aspiring to greatness.

Mandela's elegant humanism, deep conviction for good governance, patriotic spirit and dogged belief in the power of redemptive forgiveness has opened spaces in the hearts of many men and women of good will and found functional existential accommodation in many others. As a father – figure personality, Mandela bore the light of redemption with an intensity that scared darkness, and a courage that conquered political blackmail and intimidation without submission. Thus, the passions that animate the person and character of Mandela, the

ideas and individuals that inhabit the mental recesses of this enigmatic figure makes him a clean enough leader to dine with other informed leaders of the world. We may like Martin Luther King say of Mandela that, the moral arc of the universe is bending towards justice in his homage.

In the great Madiba Mandela's redemptive heart are his most celebrated inspirational quotes for lessons in leadership and governance in Africa.

1. Real leaders must be ready [to sacrifice all](#) for the freedom of their people." – *Chief Albert Luthuli Centenary Celebrations, April 25, 1998, South Africa*
2. "I am fundamentally an optimist. Whether that comes from [nature or nurture](#), I cannot say. Part of being optimistic is keeping one's head pointed toward the sun, one's feet moving forward. There were many dark moments when my faith in humanity was sorely tested, but I would not and could not give myself up to despair. That way lays defeat and death." – *"Long Walk to Freedom, The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela" written by Nelson Mandela in 1994*
3. "I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who [conquers that fear](#)." – *"Long Walk to Freedom, The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela" written by Nelson Mandela in 1994*
4. "A leader...is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realizing that all along they are being [directed from behind](#)." – *"Long Walk to Freedom, The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela" written by Nelson Mandela in 1994*
5. "If you want the cooperation of humans around you, you must make them feel they are important – and you do that by being [genuine and humble](#)." – *An interview with Oprah for O Magazine, April 2001*

6. "It is so easy to break down and destroy. The heroes are those who make [peace and build](#)." – *Address at Kliptown, Soweto, South Africa, July 12, 2008*
7. "A real leader uses every issue, no matter how serious and sensitive, to ensure that at the end of the debate we [should emerge stronger](#) and more united than ever before." – *Nelson Mandela's personal notebook, January 16, 2000*
8. "Difficulties [break some men](#) but make others. No ax is sharp enough to cut the soul of a sinner who keeps on trying, one armed with the hope that he will rise even in the end." – *A letter to Winnie Mandela, written on Robben Island, February 1, 1975*
9. "A fundamental concern for others in our individual and community lives would go a long way in making the world the better place we so passionately dreamt of." – *Address at Kliptown, Soweto, South Africa, July 12, 2008*
10. "A good leader can engage in a debate frankly and thoroughly, knowing that at the end he and the other side [must be closer](#), and thus emerge stronger. You don't have that idea when you are arrogant, superficial and uninformed." – *An interview with Oprah for O Magazine, April 2001*

Conclusion

A conclusion is argued that; a new generation of leadership that is required for the twenty-first century Africa is one that is democratic, people oriented, visionary in the sense of being conscious of what direction to follow and what goals to seek as well as capable of inspiring and mobilizing citizens to cooperatively instigate their development. Such is democratic consolidation *sui generis*. After all, Politics is concerned with herds rather than with individuals, and the passions which are important in politics are therefore, those which the various members of a given herd can feel alike. While cooperation within the human community is never perfect, with some members who have fallen below or risen above acceptable standards, and while within the same political clime there are criminal, idiots,

prophets and discoverers, a knowledgeable and wise leader will learn to tolerate the eccentricity of those who rise above the average, and to treat with a minimum of ferocity those who fall below it. These are the lessons we must learn from the Madiba, lessons of humility, tolerance, virtuous life, courage, quintessential discipline and self-denial which placed him in the context of a “Grand Democratic legacy stretching back to Socrates”.

Mandela, it could be said is one leader crafted of gold and delivered to Africa for leadership lessons. He it is, “who walked in faith and hope, who lived in midst of arrows and of death but on whom the world has no hold” (Obama, 2013:52). The good, the bad and the ugly both celebrate this iconic political figure, a true aristocrat. This rightly puts him in the category of Pan African Poets like W.E.B. Du Bois, George Padmore, Martin Luther King, Malcom X and Patrice Lumumba. This man who brought the entire wide world at his feet (with 91 current heads of government, 10 former heads of states, 86 heads of delegation, and 75 eminent persons in attendance at his funeral) is no doubt *a giant of history and the last great liberator of the 20th century.*

(Obama 2013) Political leaders in Africa must not only take leadership lessons from one of history's most iconic political figure like Mandela and ponder on his luminous legacy, they must also borrow a leaf from this colossus and be compelled by their followers to so act or bow out of power. The followership must hold leaders accountable for their promises to us, especially when these promises were the basis on which they canvassed our support and so-called trust otherwise we will be deemed guilty bystanders to the collective oppression of our people. Our crisis torn continent that is engulfed in crisis and all manner of criminalities is today in want of strategic thinking, and only the power redemptive forgiveness and reconciliation hold more promise than the decidedly less charitable route of returning fire for fire. Mandela in his life time belonged in the popular imagination to the category of exceptional leaders who genuinely aimed to move the political system beyond the

rationality of his time and continued to pursue a constructive role in his retirement. It may after all not be an exaggeration for African leaders to converge in a vision of the Madiba Mandela as a benchmark against which political leadership will be measured in Africa.

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