

BERTRAND RUSSELL'S "SCIENTIFIC GOVERNMENT" AS A MODEL OF GOVERNANCE FOR AFRICAN STATES

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Abstract

Currently, we are experiencing a crisis of governance in Africa. The underdevelopment of the continent of Africa is not unconnected with this crisis. This paper seeks to contribute to the discourse on the burden of governance in Africa from the prism of philosophy. The focus is on the fecundity of Bertrand Russell's scientific government at resolving the crisis of governance in Africa and placing Africa on the path of sustainable development. The paper proceeds from a preliminary discourse on the burden of governance in Africa. Drawing lessons from Ambrogio Lorenzetti's fresco of the allegory of good and bad government, it proceed to a discourse on the African condition within the context of governance through a discourse on Russell's idea of scientific government to an examination of the propensity of Russell's thought at pointing the path that Africa can follow to get out of the woods of the crisis of governance. In his The Scientific Outlook, Bertrand Russell argued that a government is scientific in greater or less degree in proportion as it can produce intended results. For him, the greater the number of results that a government can both intend and produce, the more scientific it is. The paper argued that Africa is where it is today because governance in Africa has been less scientific in proportion as it has failed to reasonably will or intend results on the one hand and produce intended effects on the other hand. By effectuating a mutual elucidation of the crisis of governance in Africa and advancing Russell's "Scientific Government" both as a interventional philosophy as well as a model of governance for modern African states, this paper found out that historically, governance in Africa has been largely characterized by fraud and has assumed a selfish dimension that is void of altruism. The paper concludes that it is unimaginable what philosophy can do for Africa at this crisis point if African will allow philosophy to do for her, what it has done for the West.

Keywords: Africa, Governance, Government, Russell, Scientific Government.

Introduction

A critical look at the African political space reveals an apparent dearth in good and qualitative governance. It is this dearth that informed the characterisation of the problem of African development as the crisis of governance by the World Bank.¹⁴ The apparent inability of the state and individuals that are saddled with the responsibility of stirring the ship of states in Africa to adequately meet the needs of its citizens accounts for why the most part of the nation states can be referred to as failed states. Quoting Ologbenla, Ndukwe, O. K, *et al* corroborated the above when they aver that:

The inability of African leaders to harness the nations vast resources and reserves towards socio-economic development continuously call to question the composition of the fabrics of governance in Africa. There seems to be a total collapse of ethical governance with the abuse of every moral norm of administration and loss of conscience towards rightness and objectivity in policy. It is a truism that the quality of governance in a country directly affect the level of stability, economic growth and development that a country enjoys. Bad governance results to underdevelopment...in Africa.¹⁵

Conversely, rather than use the instrument of government and the national resources to better the lives of its citizens, government and governance in the most part of Africa is privatized and individualized as an instrument of actualizing selfish interest and further accentuating personal gains and prosperity to the detriment of the masses. While it feels safe to argue that good governance is in short supply in Africa, it imperative to answer the question of what constitutes good governance in contradistinction to bad or evil governance. To answer the above concern, the fresco of Ambrogio Lorenzetti¹⁶ that was painted between 1337-1339 and pasted in the three walls of the Sala dei Nove in

¹⁴ See the World Bank study on sub-Saharan Africa entitled “Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth” (Washington: World Bank, 1989) for a detailed analysis of the crisis of governance in Africa and how it has dovetailed into the problem of underdevelopment in Africa.

¹⁵ Ndukwe, O. K *et al* “Governance and Political Crisis in Africa: Implications for Economic Growth and Development” *Studies in Politics and Society*. Vol 7, 2018; Pg. 38.

¹⁶ Ambrogio Lorenzetti was an Italian painter (the younger brother of Pietro Lorenzetti) who lived between 1285/1290 and June 9 1348 in Siena. he is one of Siena’s most accomplished and original artists (see Prazniak Roxann’s *Siena on the Silk Road: Ambrogio Lorenzetti and the Mongol Global Century, 1250-1350* for a more lucid discourse on the works of Ambrogio Lorenzetti). He was known for his painting and frescoes amongs which are

the Palazzo Publico of Siena in the present day Italy is instructive. This fresco is referred to as the allegory of good and bad government. In his painting, Lorenzetti showed the nature of good and bad government with figures that represent the qualities that rulers ought and ought not to have. It further showed the implications of both types of government on the lives of the citizens in the state. Within the context of good government, he showed a dignified ruler dressed in rich robes and sitting on the throne. This ruler is surrounded accordingly by figures representing the virtues of courage, justice, magnanimity, peace, prudence and temperance. Below the ruler is a line of citizens linked together with a rope that is tied to the ruler's waist that in effect, symbolizes a harmonious relationship and link between the ruler and the citizens. On the right side of the painting, Lorenzetti showed the implications and effects of this type of government on the people within the context of the city and the countryside. As concerns the city, it is well ordered and wealthy, artisans are seen plying their trade, merchant are also seen buying and selling goods and in one place, a group of dancers joined hands in a circle amongst others. In the country side, peasant cultivate the ground and gather in harvest without restriction and to quote the inscription on the fresco as accounted for by David Miller, "without fear everyman may travel freely and each may till and sow, so long as this commune still maintain this lady sovereign, for she has stripped the wicked of all powers".¹⁷

Lorenzetti's Fresco on the second front depicts a bad or evil government with a demonic ruler surrounded by vices like avarice, cruelty and pride, a city under military occupation and a barren countryside devastated by ghostly armies and to quote the inscription held by the figure of fear in the fresco, "because each seeks only his own good, in the city, justice is subjected to tyranny; wherefore along the road, nobody passes without fearing for his life, since there are robberies outside and inside the city gates".¹⁸

A reflection on Lorenzetti's fresco within the context of governance in Africa and more specifically in Nigeria reveals an apparent representation of the bad

Annunciation (1344), Madonna and child (1319), Investiture of Saint Lois of Toullouse (1329), and the allegory of the good and bad government (1337-1339). David Miller made recourse to the lorenzetti's allegory of the good and bad government in the opening lines of his work entitled *Political Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* in his attempt to demonstrate what political philosophy is all about.

¹⁷ See Miller, David, *Political Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford: University Press, 2003), Pg. 2.

¹⁸ Miller, David, *Political Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, Pg. 2.

government painted in the fresco despite the fact that the fresco was made as far back as almost seven centuries ago. In the Nigerian political space, avarice hold sway and to argue that the country is not under some kind of siege by such manifestations of insecurity as the Boko Haram insurgency, the killer herdsmen, armed bandits amongst others is to do so in the promotion of ignorance and an exercise in futility. That all these have bred fear amongst citizens is also a statement of fact.

Upon further reflections, the awareness of the fact that good government is virtuous while a bad or evil government is vicious becomes apparent. It is also crystal clear that good government displaces and renders the wicked powerless while bad government breeds injustice and fear. Furthermore, it is also apparent that while a good government is concerned with the overall good of the people (in the city and in the countryside) and is geared toward the public good, bad government is tyrannical and cruel. Yet another instruction that one receives from Lorenzetti's fresco is that while such virtues as courage, justice, prudence amongst others will allow the ruler the latitude to work toward delivering the good of human flourishing to the people, and also allow "ordinary people to work, trade, hunt, dance and generally do all those things that enriches human existence",¹⁹ such vices as injustice and avarice breeds poverty, fear, insecurity and even death. It is on the basis of the above that one can argue that "it really makes a difference to our lives whether we are governed well or badly, we cannot turn our backs on politics, retreat into private life and imagine that the way we are governed will not have profound effects on our personal happiness".²⁰ Hence, the need to interrogate the African condition and to see how the framework that Russell advanced can be articulated to find relevance in the task of bringing Africa out of the woods of the crisis of governance.

Governance: The African Condition

The Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance as captured in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report avers that the continent has experienced governance improvements over the past decade. According to this report, out of the 37 countries to have demonstrated improvement in overall governance since 2006, nine have progressed by more than +5.0 points and, of these nine, five feature in the top half of the overall governance rankings in 2015. However, few countries have registered progress in all four dimensions of

¹⁹ Miller, David, *Political Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, Pg. 2.

²⁰ Miller, David, *Political Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, Pg. 2-3.

governance (safety and rule of law; participation and human rights; sustainable economic opportunity; and human development) and, more alarmingly, 16 countries register a negative trend in overall governance. Even those countries that feature in high ranking positions (e.g. 'the top ten') demonstrate elements of fragility: countries such as Ghana and South Africa, for example, have registered significant deteriorations, and even Botswana showed a marginal level of governance 'regression'. In fact, only three countries in the entire continent (Namibia, Rwanda and Senegal) have shown improvements across all four Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) governance categories, while the other seven in the top ten have deteriorated in at least one of the four categories, and all seven have shown a decline in the domain of safety and rule of law. Consequently, over the past decade, the continent has only scored a one-point improvement since 2006 – from an average score of 49 to 50.²¹ The question that readily comes to mind is the question of how these index or statistics have translated into a better quality of life for Africans. While an interrogation of the above report is not considered necessary, a mention of the same is considered idea.

The picture of governance and government and its effect on the quality of human lives in Africa is crystal clear to everyone who cares to see- in fact, one does not need such reports as the one presented by Mo Ibrahim to come to terms with the African condition within the context of governance. One can argue within the context of African states that the post-colonial state has woefully failed in achieving material advancement of the ordinary people of the continent while those who manage the state and their cronies continue to enjoy unfettered access to state resources through a well-oiled patron-client system. This situation has earned states in Africa such adjectives as 'the rentier state', 'the prebendal state', 'the predatory state' and 'the kleptocratic state', and these nomenclatures stresses the irrelevance of the state to the ordinary citizen. This represents the heart of the crisis of governance rocking the states in Africa.²² An assessment of governance within the context of African reveals that African leaders have failed to steer the continent in a way that positively impacts on the material conditions of the

²¹ See the High Level Policy Dialogue Report entitled "the Function of Governance in Africa: Is a new Concept of Governance the Key to Accelerating the Prosperity Agenda? Held between 29-30th September in Accra-Ghana for a detailed exposition of the governance index in Africa.

²² Animashaun, M. A "State Failure, Crisis of Governance and Disengagement from the State in Africa" *Africa Development*, Vol. XXXIV , Nos 3 & 4, 2009, Pg. 48

people while civil liberties of the citizens are still assaulted, sometimes with impunity, by the state and its agencies.²³

Corroborating the above, Kataoka averred that countries in Africa are sometimes called “fragile states.” They are fragile because they lack a legitimate foundation for their authority and their level of governance is low.²⁴ The African condition reveals that “at present, only a few countries in Africa have a single-party dictatorship or a military regime, but this does not mean the rest are free of problems. Nepotism, corruption, and scandals are ubiquitous in Africa. A bureaucratic system has been established, but positions of influence are monopolized by a handful of figures as if they were private assets. The bureaucracies thus fail to function according to the modern European models upon which they are based. Moreover, Africans do not feel their governments treat them fairly and equally or that they enjoy sovereignty and a guarantee of equal rights under the law.²⁵ The above is a statement of fact and the apparent political apathy in the most part of the African states gives credence to the above assertion. Governance has not been about the people neither has it has not been geared towards the good of the people.

The African condition reveals that despites its endowment with huge material and human resources, Africa still have their citizens caught between the jigsaw of underdevelopment and a kind of poverty that is debilitating. Africans still grapples with such problems as lack of infrastructural facilities, insecurity of lives and properties amongst others. Corroborating the above within the context of Nigeria which can also be taken to mirror the African condition, Yagboyaju and Akinola worded that in Nigeria, the situation is a “tale of poor governance, insecurity and poverty in the midst of plenty”.²⁶ For Uzodike, “many African governments have remained either criminally blind to, or unable to redress, the harsh realities of life for most of their citizens. Basically, no other region of the world has been as poorly led and governed by so many leaders for so long”.²⁷

²³ Animashaun, M. A “State Failure, Crisis of Governance and Disengagement from the State in Africa” *Africa Development*, Pg. 48.

²⁴ Kataoka, S. *The Plight of African State and Good Governance*. The Japaness Institute of International Affairs, Pg. 10.

²⁵ Kataoka, S. *The Plight of African State and Good Governance*. Pg. 10.

²⁶ Yagboyaju, D. A and Akinola, O. A “Nigerian State and the crisis of Governance: A Critical Exposition” in *Sage Open*. July-September, 2019; Pg. 4.

²⁷ Uzodike, U. O “Leadership and Governance in Africa” *Afrika: Journal of Politics, Economy and Society*. I., 2009; Pg. 2.

Despite the fact that most of the physical infrastructure such as roads, health facilities, transportation, telecommunications, public water supply, and electricity have for long being in the state of moribund , contracts for their repair and rehabilitation, or perhaps the construction of new ones have provided opportunities for the enrichment of the political class.

At the micro level, from the North-Western fringes to the North-eastern front, from the South-Western fringes to the South-South, from the South East to the central states of the Middle Belt of Nigeria, there is poverty and starvation, infrastructural decay, lack of good roads, water supply, health supply, health care services, killings and wanton destruction of lives and property resulting from insecurity hold sway. The above situation is both factual and coheres to the actual state of affairs. Again, the above cannot be separated from the crisis of governance in the country. This is because; good or bad governance affects the quality of lives of the people.

At the macro level, that is, at least in Africa, the condition is the same as “things are not working in Africa”.²⁸ Commenting further, Ali Mazui avers that “from Dakar to Dar es Salam, from Marrakesh to Maputo, institutions are decaying, structures are rusting away”.²⁹ In *The African Condition: A Political Diagnosis*, Ali Mazui reveals an account of the African condition that aptly captures the prevailing realities. He accounted for the African condition in terms of three paradoxes: the first is the pathology of technical backwardness which ramifies the fact that Africa is one of the best endowed continents of the world in terms of resources while being at the same time, the least developed continent. The second paradox is that the richest inhabitants of Africa are non-Africans- here, one finds more white millionaire per head of the white population of the continent than there are black millionaires in relation to the number of black around (the pathology of maldistribution) while the third paradox is the pathology of fragmented economy which stipulates that despites being rich in resources, the continent is so fragmented that it includes the majority of the poorest nations of the world and poverty stricken societies.³⁰

In the same vein, “underdevelopment is a real fact of life. It is a state of mind as much as a state of real poverty. The prevalent emotion of underdevelopment is a

²⁸ Ali Mazrui's *The African condition: A Political Diagnosis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), Pg. 70.

²⁹ Ali Mazui *The African condition: A Political Diagnosis*, Pg. 70.

³⁰ See Ali Mazui, *The African condition: A Political Diagnosis*. Pg 70-89.

sense of personal and societal impotence in the face of disease and death, of servility toward men whose wealth and decisions govern the cause of the events, of hopelessness before hunger and natural catastrophe. It is to be precise, a state of alienation and deprivation which is neither human nor inevitable”³¹. It must also be noted that African have severely suffered the effect of bad and clueless government with one of its negative impact being the loss of Africa’s skilled manpower to the developed world, a phenomenon popularly referred to as the brain drain syndrome.³² All that is crystal clear from the above analysis is the fact that the government of states in the African political space have failed. These governments have not willed programmes and projects that have direct bearing on the lives of the masses, and should they intend such programmes and projects, they have not been able to produce intended results.

As we stay the discourse on the African condition of governance, we do so not because of want of ideas to sustain the argument heretofore; rather, we do so to allow us the latitude to fully engage on, and to give the oxygen of publicity to the framework that the encyclopedic Russell advances for governance. We sum this section in the following lines:

The problem of the African continent is not the absence of resources but lack of appropriate governance framework to harmonise the resources in a way that can gradually bring about development. The lack of governance framework has made prosperity and poverty, affluence and affliction, development and underdevelopment, security and insecurity to exist side by side in many countries in Africa.³³

Russell’s notion of “Scientific Government”: An Exposé

Bertrand Arthur William Russell (1872-1970), a British philosopher of encyclopedic standing articulated his notion of the scientific government in his book published in 1931 entitled the *Scientific Outlook*. In the fourteenth chapter which he titled “The Scientific Government”, Russell accounted for what he referred to as a scientific government. He proceeded from a preliminary

³¹ Emmanuel Ome Quoted in Agundu O.T. “Neo-Liberalism and African Search for A Development Model in the Age of Economic Fundamentalism” In Ihuah, A. S (Ed.) *Philosophy and Praxis: Journal of the Nigerian Philosophical Association (NPA)* Vol. 7, 2016. Pg 31-32.

³² See Odum E. S “Historicising the Politics of Slavery and the African Diaspora” in *Igwebuike: An African Journal of Arts and Humanities*. Vol. 3, Number 4, June 2017, Pg. 14.

³³ Ndukwe, O. K *et’ al* “Governance and Political Crisis in Africa: Implications for Economic Growth and Development” *Studies in Politics and Society*. Pg. 31.

discourse on what scientific government is not to what it is. Russell argued that a government cannot be simply referred to as a scientific government because it is composed of men of science or perhaps, have a scientist for the head of such government or unscientific because it does not contain men of science or of scientific background. Conversely, for Russell, “a government is scientific in a greater or less degree in proportion as it can produce intended results: the greater the number of results that it can both intend and produce, the more scientific”.³⁴ Deducible from the above is the fact that a scientific government is measured in proportion of the degree to which the government in question; is able to, on the one hand, will or intend results and produce the intended results on the other hand. The fact that a government wills or intends results does not confer the status of being scientific on it, it is the ability of such a government to produce such intended or willed results that makes it scientific.

At the kernel as well as the background of Russell’s scientific government is his philosophizing about the scientific society. Taking the exalted position of the philosopher as both a prophet and seer, he envisaged a scientific society which as at the time of his philosophizing is futuristic. In his words:

The scientific society... in the main, (is) a thing of the future, although various characteristics are adumbrated in various states at the present day. The scientific society, as I conceive it, is one which employs the best scientific techniques in production, in education, in propaganda... But in addition to this, it has a characteristic which distinguishes it from the societies of the past, which have grown by natural causes, without much conscious planning as regards their collective purpose and structure. No society can be regarded as fully scientific unless it has been created deliberately with a certain structure in order to fulfill certain purposes.³⁵

While Russell envisaged a scientific society that has been created deliberately with certain structures and purposes, one can argue that the societies that he conjectured as belonging to the future are what we now have in African and the world over. This argument is based on the fact that we now have independent nation-states that are created deliberately and purposefully. Again, at no point in human history than now, has the best and top notch scientific techniques been

³⁴ Russell, Bertrand *The Scientific Outlook* (London: George Allen & Unwix), Pg. 235..

³⁵ Russell, Bertrand *The Scientific Outlook*, Pg. 209.

used in production, education and in all sphere of human endeavours. Russell further stated regarding these societies thus:

As we approach modern times, the changes deliberately brought about in social structures become greater. This is especially the case where revolutions are concerned. The American Revolution and the French Revolution deliberately created certain societies with certain characteristics, but in the main, these characteristics were political, and their effects in other directions formed no part of the primary intention of the revolutionaries. But scientific techniques has so enormously increased the power of government that it has now become possible to produce much more profound and intimate changes in social structure than any that were contemplated by Jefferson or Robespierre.³⁶

Many decades after Russell argued that scientific techniques have increased the power of government and made it possible for government to produce profound and amazing changes to the social structure and by extension the society, it returns true and crystal clear that it is unimaginable what nation-states in the age that can be properly referred to as the age of science can do "owing to the increase in knowledge (occasioned by science), it is possible nowadays to achieve many more intended results than it were possible in former times and it is likely that before very long, results which even now are impossible will become possible. The total abolition of poverty, for example, is at the present moment technically possible; that is to say, known methods of productions, if widely organized, would suffice to produce enough goods to keep the whole population of the globe in tolerable comfort".³⁷

Within the context of his postulation on the scientific government, Russell advanced a discourse on the types of idealist personnel. The possibility of such an advanced society occasioned by increased knowledge for him appeals to these idealists, that is, the energetic and practical idealists. According to him, "most idealists are a mixture of two types which we may call respectively, the dreamer and the manipulator. The pure dreamer is a lunatic, the pure manipulator is a man who cares only for personal, but the idealist lies in an intermediate position between the two extremes".³⁸ Both types of idealists (the energetic and the practical idealists) desire a different world that is better than that which they find

³⁶ Russell, Bertrand *The Scientific Outlook*, Pg. 210.

³⁷ Russell, Bertrand *The Scientific Outlook*, Pg. 235-36.

³⁸ Russell, Bertrand *The Scientific Outlook*, Pg. 236-37.

themselves but cannot push for it. However, the manipulator, according to Russell “feels strong enough to create it, while the dreamers, feeling baffled, takes refuge in fantasy”.³⁹

While it makes sense for one to situate and explain the concept of fantasy as captured in the above quotation within the context of either being carried away by the fame of the political office one now holds or being overwhelmed by the challenges which constitutes hindrances to change in the status quo, Russell argues that “it is the manipulative type of idealist who will create a scientific society and by extension institutionalize a scientific government. To quote him:

... the manipulative idealist differs from the man of merely personal ambition by the fact that he desires not only certain things for himself, but a certain kind of society... it is this element of impersonal desire which distinguishes the idealist from other men.⁴⁰

Russell envisaged the possibility of obstacles and oppositions to the man who desires a scientific society of desires to govern scientifically from those who conversely desire to maintain the status quo. According to Russell;

The man who dreams of a scientifically organized world and wishes to translate his dreams into practice finds himself faced with many obstacles. There is opposition of inertia and habit: people wish to continue behaving as they have behaved, and living as they always have lived. There is the opposition of vested interest: an economic system inherited from feudal times gives advantages to men who have done nothing to deserve them, and these men, being rich and powerful, are able to place formidable obstacles in the way of fundamental change.⁴¹

It must be stated that this obstacles and oppositions are perhaps, more evident today in view of the egoistic tendencies that characterizes the existential nature of man and the vigor with which he pushes to sustain the same. With regards to the ethics of the scientific society which makes it possible for a scientific government to flourish, Russell avers that:

The new ethics which is gradually growing in connection with scientific techniques (in a scientific government) will have its eyes upon the society rather than upon the individual... it will be

³⁹ Russell, Bertrand *The Scientific Outlook*, Pg. 237.

⁴⁰ Russell, Bertrand *The Scientific Outlook*, Pg. 236-37.

⁴¹ Russell, Bertrand *The Scientific Outlook*, Pg. 240-41.

prepared to make individuals suffer for the public good ... but the change will come naturally through the habit of viewing the society as a whole rather than as a collection of individuals... the man who thinks of society as a whole will sacrifice a member of society for the good of the whole with much consideration for the individual's welfare.⁴²

It must be noted that sacrificing the individual for the whole, making the individual to suffer and not having much concern for the individual's welfare as can be deciphered from the above quotation should not be read as a total disregard for the individual in the context of not being concerned with the welfare of the individual in the society. Rather, it should be read and understood within the context a kind of individuality that relegates and perhaps, disregard the public common good while at the same time elevating their individual interest over and against the general public interest.

The Relevance of Russell's Scientific Government to the Crisis of Governance in Africa

Having presented the thoughts of Russell on the scientific government which ramifies the ability of an individual with an impersonal desire heading a government which is able to intend to a greater proportion and achieve intended results, it behooves on the paper at this point as part of its major aims to show the propensity of Russell's scientific government to resolve the burden of governance in Africa as well as the implications of the same for Africa.

A cursory look at Africa, within the prism and ambits of the thoughts of Russell reveals that the most part of governments and regimes are unscientific or far less in degree scientific in their approach to the business of governance. This position is based on the fact that they have failed to will, intend and consequently produce intended results.

While these nation-states are created deliberately with certain structures, political and economic for the purpose of fulfilling certain apparently necessary purposes, they have failed to fulfill such purposes as securing the lives of the people, the provision of basic social amenities like road, pipe born water, electricity, health care, free primary education despite the scientific techniques and scientio-pragmatic approaches available in the age of science and technology to foster the

⁴² Russell, Bertrand *The Scientific Outlook*, Pg. 241-42.

processes of achieving these purposes. It is actually disheartening to discover that in the 21st century, African nation-states which are for the most part the only nations left in the derogatory club of the third world nations lacks good road, pipe born water, good health care facilities amongst others, chiefly because her leaders have failed to intend and produce intended result within the context of governance. The above reveals what Ali Mazrui calls “the pathology of technical backwardness”.

The question that reasonably comes to mind is that of why government and the political class in Africa have not been to intend and produce intended result to a greater degree that can be said to be scientific?. One can boldly argue in response to the above poser that governments and regimes in Africa wills and intend results. One finds them intending results at least, in the polemics, rhetorics and build up to elections. In Africa, one finds beautifully designed action plans and manifestoes to offices that are exceptionally amazing but the problem has been that of implementation. The resulting poser would be that of why it has become increasingly difficult, if not impossible to translate these action plans to reality and produce the intended results? Amongst others, this paper argues that a combination of the lack of political will, the elevation of a personal vested and primordial interest by the political class which culminates into the inability of the heads of government to lay down the “I” for the “we”, and the inability of the Africans to reposition their minds in such a manner that they will be able to always anchor their interest on the dictates of the public common good accounts for why Africans have not been able to will and produce intended results.

The implications of the above is that, if Africa must transcend her present position in an age when science, improved scientific techniques and increased knowledge have accentuated the power of government to the point that it has become more and more possible to produce intended results and trigger changes to the social structure, Africa must move away from political rhetoric and adopt a scientio-pragmatic attitude towards governance. This attitude must as a matter of necessity be built on the philosophy of altruism. This attitude as Russell argues will make it possible to will and produce intended results as well as produce enough goods and infrastructures to keep the whole population of Africa, which has become the world’s epic-centre of poverty and underdevelopment in tolerable comfort as well as bring her out of the woods of underdevelopment.

Derivable as lessons from Russell's scientific government for the burden of governance in Africa is that Africa should reject leaders who in the words of Russell are pure manipulators who care only for personal power and the gains that it can bring to them and forthwith ensure that they are not given access to the reins of power henceforth. Historical records have shown that Africa has been bedeviled with these types of leaders even till the present decade. Conversely, idealist manipulators as Russell calls them, who does not stop at desiring a society different from the one that they find themselves but feels strongly enough to create it should be voted into power and conscientiously supported to steer the ship of African states and deliver the goods of human flourishing to the people.

Drawing from the temper of that is advocated for in Russell's scheme, those to be considered for, and entrusted with the ship of state should be men of courage. They should be men who possess the ability to withstand adversaries and to stand up to the hallmark of personal example and leadership. Men who do not lust for power because of the pomp that it brings, men of courage and those who will not give advantage to politicians (godfathers) who do not deserve them; neither have the moral standing to ask for such position and advantages. Those that should be considered for positions of governance should be the Confucian superior man (*Junzi*) who thinks virtue in contradistinction to the mind of the small man who thinks comfort, personal profit, cherishes land and the bounty that men bestows. The mind of the superior man is conversant with righteousness; cherishes the examples that good men set, comprehend according to right, slow to speech and quick to action; and his person is synonymous with honor, integrity, truth and wisdom. *Junzi* is guided by the philosophy of altruism which is the selfless determination that is geared towards the good and welfare of others.⁴³

This type of leaders, as it is crystal clear in the thought of Russell is not driven by personal ambitions but desire a certain kind of bettered society. This is the kind of leader that can push for, and institutionalize a scientific government in a greater degree by both intending reasonably and producing intended results.

While Russell expects as at the time of writing *The Scientific Outlook* (1931) that "the men of this sort will have a prominent role to play in molding the world in

⁴³ See Riegel Jeffery, "Confucius", *Analects* book IV for an elaborate discourse on the distinction and characteristics of the superior man otherwise referred to as *Junzi* and the small man.

the next two hundred years”,⁴⁴ this paper argues that Africa seems not to have left the tarmac in this regard and hence the imperativeness of positioning “these sort of men” in governance today. It must be noted that “these sort of men” who dream of a scientio-pragmatically organized Africa and desire to translate such dreams to reality must be ready to face the opposition and the sledged-hammer of the defenders of the status quo who have hitherto been beneficiaries of the highly unscientific and unproductive government of the various nation state in Africa. Like I argued elsewhere, leadership is the ability to withstand adversaries. The knowledge of the presence of adversaries and an attempt to move from knowledge to wisdom by the idealist manipulators who are the proponents of a kind of change that is positive is a step in the right direction. The consequent of the above antecedent is that the willingness to sacrifice such adversaries for the good of the society when caught in the conundrum of having to choose the good of the society over and against the interest and good of the adversaries will be quite high and uncompromising.

With the above temper, leaders and heads of governments with a scientio-pragmatic outlook and approach to governance will emerge all over Africa and will elevate the public common good over and above the personal private good. These sorts of leaders will feel strongly to reasonably intend development projects and programmes devoid of primordial sentiments and produce the intended results. These programmes and projects as the case may be would border on self-reliance and the philosophy of “let us do it ourselves for ourselves” with the intent of pushing back the frontiers of over dependence on the West, fight corruption and poverty as well as fanning the ambers of infrastructural development.

Conclusion

As we draw to the conclusion of this reflection on the fecundity of Russell’s notion of scientific government in the face of an apparent crisis and burden of governance in Africa, it is imperative to rehearse a number of positions that have been argued in this paper. We have argued in the preceding paragraphs that the underdevelopment of Africa cannot be divorced from the crisis of governance in Africa. The paper has also argued that the designation of Nigeria and by extension, Africa as the epic-centre of poverty in the world is not unconnected

⁴⁴ Russell, Bertrand *The Scientific Outlook*, Pg. 237-38.

with the failure of the leadership class and those who steer the ships of government. Reminiscencing the fecundity of Russell's scientific government at fixing this situation, this paper have argued that government and governance in Africa has been largely unscientific as it has failed to will and produce intended results because men of personal desires and pure manipulators have held the reins of power. Consequently, the conclusion that is reached in this paper is that, moving forward, Africa must conscientiously ensure that only men devoid of elements of impersonal desires and primordial sentiments, men who are driven by the public common good are allowed access to the reins of power. This has become necessary because it is only "these sort of men" that posses the scientio-pragmatic temper as well as the capacity to both intend and produce intended results to a greater proportion for the good and development of Africa.