Journal of Social and Political Sciences

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Democracy and Traditional Bantu Governance: Towards a New Paradigm of Economic and Social Development in Africa

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Abstract

This study attempts to demonstrate the limits of Western participatory democracy, with a view to proposing Bantu-inspired political governance consistent with African cultures. For the past ten years, people have been rising up in Western countries to denounce the failings of their democratic systems: democracy has become an autocracy or a plutocracy. However, Western governments continue to impose their political model in Africa, while failing to meet the vital needs of their people. It is therefore urgent to think of a new type of political governance, much more concerned with the lives of citizens. Traditional Bantu governance constitutes a model to be revisited and updated, in a world where citizens feel exploited by governments. Our objective is to propose a political theory based on consensual governance and the well-being of citizens, in accordance with the traditions of ancient Africa. It is necessary to affirm that the solution to the problems posed by current Western democracy can only come from alternative political models, experienced by other traditions in the world, notably by the Bantu traditions in Africa.

Keywords: Africa, Participatory Democracy, Traditional Bantu Governance, Socio-Economic Development

1. Introduction

The 21st century, with the proliferation of media, is strongly marked by political debates surrounding the future of participatory democracy. Among politicians and political scientists, the question of social governance is now central. However, the issue of the best political system is locked into the management of public opinion by the media, without an analysis of governance models and alternative political regimes. Political governance has become an entity of quest and conquest of political power, that is to say, a closed vicious circle in which powers are organized and exercised, in institutional and practical forms, far from concern for the well-being of the people. This is a psychopathology of power (Ronald E. Puhek, 2025). Among the researchers who critically analyze Western democracy, Christopher Achen and Larry Bartels (2016) propose an alternative and provocative perspective based on the human nature of democratic citizens. Several scholars also attempt to deepen democratic theory by proposing different models of democracy (Warren, 2017). However , these debates are increasingly less productive. Model-based strategies encourage theorists to overgeneralize the place and functions of ideal and

typical features of democracy, such as deliberation and elections.

This study of social philosophy aims to rediscover the African sources of people's governance. We propose a political theory based on consensual governance and the well-being of populations. Faced with the exhaustion of the current model of democracy, inherited from the modernity of power in the West, it is salutary to think, with a fresh eye, of an alternative model of political governance to the models officially practiced by the nation-states of the world today. This is the Bantu aristocracy, which we define as the political regime of competent servant-governors, that is to say, the regime of people (Bantu) capable of governing in a consensual manner, and of leading the governed to their well-being, beyond the game of political. The Bantu chief is a servant-ruler, characterized by the primacy and priority he gives to serving others. It is as a servant that he is elevated to the rank of political leader.

2. Methodology

Our methodology is that of the comparative study of political systems. We attempt to compare two systems of political governance, namely Western democracy and the traditional Bantu system of governance, based on studies of political science.

Comparative politics is one of the major sub-disciplines of political science, using comparison as its central analytical tool. It is one of the fields of political study that relies heavily on the comparative method to explore politics within and between countries. Comparative politics emphasizes comparison and case studies as its methodology.

Compared to other sub-disciplines of political science, comparative politics is defined by its methods and methodologies. This is clearly demonstrated by Arendt Lijphart, who states that "comparative politics is the only sub-disciplinary field, among the many disciplines that usually make up political science, to have a methodological rather than a substantive dimension" (Lijphart, 1971, p. 682). Comparativists agree that comparison is the fundamental objective of studies in this field. The goal is to examine, classify, and sometimes even select political institutions, structures, and processes from a range of existing alternatives. The main interest of comparative politics lies in the fact that it allows for a comparative understanding of the diversity of ways in which political institutions operate.

Thus, the main objective of comparative politics lies in "understanding and explaining differences between countries' policies" (Kopstein and Lichbach, 2014, p. 2). It is evident that, despite the challenges facing comparative politics, this field of study remains the most reliable source of objective, systematic, comparative and reliable description of the political processes at work in the countries of the world. The role of comparativists is to process and interpret the various data generated by putting them into context.

The comparative analysis resulting from this work allows us not only to understand, but also to improve and evolve existing political institutions, procedures, and systems . Comparative politics is a dynamic, responsive field that reflects the fluidity of political boundaries. It has evolved to also incorporate the analysis of the informal dimensions of politics, thus enriching political science.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Limits of participatory democracy

Many academics define participatory processes as a tool for strengthening democracy and legitimacy. As we know, actors in participatory processes have mutual expectations regarding their roles. However, political actors, once established, often fail to meet these expectations.

The list of studies presented here is not exhaustive, but it takes into account research on the critique of Western participatory democracy. Recent studies on democracy show that this political model is losing ground, in particular

in its Western variants. Certainly, the crisis of participation is inherent in the institutionalization of democracy (Laski, 1933). But Western democracy is today the center of fundamental criticism from researchers and popular protests. Zakaria (1997) already spoke of the "rise of illiberal democracy." Colin Crouch (2004) calls it "post-democracy" and Pierre Rosanvallon (2008) "counter-democracy."

Basically, the main problem of participation in the democracy is its very nature. It is now It has been established, with the uprising of Western peoples, that electoral victory is not a reliable indicator of democratic quality. The "yellow vest" protest movement launched in France in November 2018 remains the most beautiful illustration of this. For years, this movement has been calling for a citizens' initiative referendum and an improvement in taxation. This movement challenges the neoliberal system held by the ultra-rich, who control democratic change and the judicial system. The question that arises at this level is the following: how to measure the qualitative reliability of a participatory democracy?

A study by Foa and Mounk (2016) on democratic practices in several countries showed that popular support for democracy is declining. Some studies show that The United States is a "defective democracy." Alexis de Tocqueville (1965), in *Democracy in America* (1835), already spoke of the American government in terms of a "dictatorship of the majority." According to Ronald E. Puhek (2025: 13), the pathology of power affects the current US president, his team, and Republicans in Congress to varying degrees: " *The goal of too many candidates is not to hold office, but to exercise power, the power to decide. Making decisions appeals to them less than the power they feel in making them."*

The crisis of democracy is not limited to Western countries, but is emerging in Japan (Yazawa, 2015) as well as in the Philippines, a former American colony. The term "people's democracy", Who is the concept from former socialist countries (North Korea, Vietnam, China), is characterized by a single party. Among these countries, China is undoubtedly the most important. It is not only the most populous country, but also, soon, the world's largest economy, while it opposes the Western model of democracy.

Today, there "dictatorship of the masses" (Coin & Lim, 2016). This phenomenon indicates that, unlike military dictatorships, it is not pure oppression by consent of the majority, but of the survival of the system. As we can see it, THE debate on participatory democracy is rich in paradoxes. David van Reybrouck (2016) defends the idea of an anti-electoral democracy; Pierre Rosanvallon (2008) and Jason Brennan (2016) argue for a counter-democracy. And the arrival of t h e Internet And its media social has leave alone believe that everyone w h o accesses to t h e information should promote participatory democracy. But it quickly became clear that social media is controlled by a few giant multinationals, whose main interest is to generate profits, or even to lead to a form of user addicted, as well as to the control of peoples. Therefore, social media, which were supposed to overthrowing authoritarian regimes only makes those regimes more authoritarian and paranoid (Gayo-Avello, 2017). The gradual weakening of representative democracy has opened the way to alternatives, offering citizens more opportunities for political engagement (Peter, 2011). If citizens suspect corruption in the political decision-making process, legitimacy is eventually lost. Thus, if citizens perceive their influence on policymaking to be low, their legitimacy may also be low. In democracies, elections should be the key mechanism for ensuring citizen participation. However, they rarely provide citizens with effective opportunities to influence policymakers. They aim to allow them to choose between several intermediaries who promise to come together and represent their interests.

How, then, can the presence of direct democracy impact the perception of a regime's legitimacy? This question refers to the fundamental aspects of personal identity (values, rights and freedoms, sovereignty) which require major changes in the Company.

James Scott (1999) argues that four conditions are necessary for an authoritarian state, and, disregarding the analysis just conducted, we can say that democracies in the West are now autocracies. First, his original subject of study: "the administrative organization of nature and society." Modern technology and activist government make this subject readily accessible. Second, there is an "ultramodernist ideology": a belief in progress through science, technology, and governance. This is consistent with progressive ideology, including its anti-populist bent and ease

in using democracy to seize power. Third, there is an authoritarian state willing to use the weight of the state to impose its vision of life. The growth of the state makes this increasingly likely, as does Scott's fourth condition: a weakened civil society (family, religion, and civic organizations) is beneficial to the state wishing to implement its plans.

3.2. Traditional Bantu governance

The term "Bantu", derived from the word for "people" in several so-called Bantu languages, was first proposed by Bleek, who In 1851 laid the foundations for the comparative study of Bantu languages. This term has been universally used since (Greenberg, 1999). Why this return to the African past? Charles Darwin was the first scientist to publish a modern theory of the evolution and origin of humanity. He was also the first to designate Africa as his place of origin. Over the past hundred years, research has demonstrated his accuracy, confirming many aspects of Darwin's seminal work (Leakey, 1999).

Here we present the organization of Bantu societies of the past, according to anthropological studies conducted, in order to demonstrate its relevance today. The aim is to defend the idea that this political organization is superior to participatory democracy, insofar as it operates according to consensus.

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

Year alternative scenario was proposed by Guthrie (1962). While agreeing with Greenberg and others we the center of origin of the Bantu languages, he proposed the Katanga region, located in the south of the Democratic Republic of Congo, in tea middle of tea equatorial forest, as tea region from which Bantu-speaking populations were spreading. However, some authors have highlighted the reductionism of thesis assumptions we tea basis of has single large population migration related to language propagation and molecular ecology has emphasized the relevance of local migration processes (Lwanga-Lunyiigo, 1976; Ehret, 2001; Schoenbrun, 2001). Population genetic studies have clarified the dynamics underlying the current distribution of Bantu populations at the regional and sub-continental levels (Mitchell, 2010).

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

Authority is in has sense crystallized into defined characters that command specific groups: the socio-political life is constituted by tea total life of the group. This life integrates directly any economic, artistic, religious or social activity of each member of the group. The people speaking the Bantu languages, coming out of prehistory, following long migrations due to an increase in the population, the mastery of agricultural and metallurgical techniques, have created social entities more or less wide to perpetuate life. As much as myths and legends

represent Bantu' genesis in time and space, their ideas, their beliefs, all the riches of their intelligence, so social structures are the living expression of their external, political organization.

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

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

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

In the tribe, each group, each community, each village has its leader. When a community grows, it splits in turn into small communities, with their respective leaders. Thus, the chieftaincies are independent of each other, politically. However, they remain linked by kinship ties (clans, lineages, families). There is therefore no central authority with a highly structured administrative and judicial apparatus as in royalty. The chief's roles are: the direction of religious ceremonies, the arbitration of palavers, the conduct of war, the organization of commerce.
The tribe comprising several thousand people was the largest political unit among the Sotho and Nguni (Zulu, Ndebele, Xhona…) of Southern Africa. In these two groups (Sotho and Nguni), the leader was all-powerful, but an overly authoritarian leader quickly became unpopular: he was abandoned to go to another leader more lenient and more just.

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

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

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

In pre-colonial times, the Kongo had created a vast political entity: the Kongo Kingdom. The Bemba, they were politically organized within a multitude of separate head units, on the tribal territory. Aim here and there, there

was an administration, an economy, leaders of lineage and clan, especially the national consciousness to perpetuate, through the structures put in place, the glory of distant ancestors.

4. Discussion

As we have shown, modern democracy is less and less able to solve the problems of social peace. And the organization of traditional society among the old Bantu seems to be a model for thinking about a new post-democratic political regime. We call this model *Bantucracy* (Boundja 2021), which is based on traditional Bantu governance. Tea Bantu political system is based we four levels of relationship: tea relationship of man with God and ancestors, the relationship of man to the world, the relationship of man with other human beings, and the relationship of the man with himself. Political leaders take these four forms of relationship into account.

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

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

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

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

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

Ace a result, power relationships in Bantucracy are subject to two requirements, namely, connectivity, which means that conditional connections of power reach all participants in the community, and that of cohesion, which requires that participants are grouped into clusters whose internal power links are positive and the external links are negative. These are the two requirements that constitute community coordination. The requirement of

connectivity refers to the flow of powers from one participant to another, while the requirement of cohesion refers to the regrouping of participants in power, from one pole to another. Both require act between them. The flow of power affects the grouping of participants and the latter, on the path of power.

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

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

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

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

4.1. Tea Chief (Mfumu)

The Bantu Chief follows divine right, natural law, civil laws and custom. It is these four normative pillars that give the African prince his credibility. Claude Tardits rightly points out:
"All African rulers, whether they were at one time or another qualified as divine or not, have an obligation, that of acting so that the population and the livestock of which it lives are fruitful, so that the watered lands keep their fertility and that starvation is averted. They fulfill these obligations by recourse, direct or indirect (...) the failure, whatever the age of the king, can entail its elimination (Tardits, 1990, p. 38).

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

This study focused on the political systems of fourteen populations in Uganda and Tanganyika that occupy a continuous territory stretching from northern Lake Albert to Lake Tanganyika: the eight chiefdoms of Bantu, namely Buganda, Busoga, Bunyoro, Toro, Ankole, Buhaya, Buzinza and Buha, Busukuma, which is a federation of 47 small chiefdoms, and five polysegmentary societies: Amba (under Toro guardianship since the beginning of the century), Gisu, Kiga, Alur and the Lugbara. The Alur have an intermediary organization between the poly-segmental society in the strict sense and the multi-kingdom. The investigators employed two methods: the classic descriptive method and the questionnaire survey of chiefs. For all oven categories of distinguished chiefs (county chiefs, sub-county chiefs, parish chiefs, headmen), 1156 questionnaires were completed, which provide information on the education, career and status of chiefs. AI Richards, who presents the survey and draws the

conclusions, gives an analysis of the political systems of the Bantu Inter-lacustrine which, from a historical point of view, are actually pre-feudal and must be compared to the European political systems of the 9th and 10th centuries, rather than those of the Middle Ages proper. By analogy with the facts of Europe, African systems that have their equivalent in a still "tribal" Europe are considered feudal.

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

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

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

It invests by ordinance the Federal Chancellor, following his election by the Federal Parliament; he invests, always by ordinance, the governors of the counties. Mfumu raises high military jobs and appoints senior magistrates on the proposal of the High Council of the Judiciary. It promulgates the laws and treaties in the twenty days following the transmission to it, either by the office of the federal parliament or by the office of common house, according to the nature of the law. In case of reservation on his part, he appeals to the constitutional court for a check of the conformity of the law or the treaty. If the constitutional court declares compliance, Mfumu promulgates the said law or the treaty. MFumu guarantees tea solidarity of traditional peoples and counties. It may, when tea circumstances so require, declare a state of emergency either nationwide or over a county. Mfumu can also put federal governance and finances under federal tutelage in case of threat by said county of national unity and solidarity.

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

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

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

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

Said word-action is granted by God to tea elect to create and guarantee tea life of tea Bantu. Indeed, the prince, without being founder of the power, participates and pursues the act of creation by restoring, in the time and the geographical space, the harmony and the balances of the principality, all this in order to guarantee the life of men and ensure their perpetuation.

The purpose of power is, in a simple way, taught to any successor appointed in interviews with his old master in power.

5. The challenges of traditional Bantu governance

The issue of good governance of peoples is topical today. Current events, in a sense, express what escapes expiration. But the current state of governance is, in many ways, a celebration of the decline of political and economic liberalism, a funeral celebration of mercantile democracy. In such a context, where the governance of men, like currency, is subject to the fluctuating speculation of stock market values and the probabilistic play of financial markets, humanity has slipped far from its essence, to vegetate in moral recession. From now on, the world seems to be gathered in a new order, namely that of the inability of rulers to curb crises of all kinds. It is a unanimity of incompetent politicians, a unanimity matched only by the usurping luxury of couch grass. With the media dramatization of political and economic crises, artificially-appearing pandemics, armed conflicts and their attendant funerals, it would be more accurate to say that the dawn of the Western model of society is behind us. Being realistic today would mean accepting the liquidation of liberalism and capitalism, in order to open up to a governance of good people, for the good of the people.

We posit the Mbongui (the Common House), as the political and economic system, for the renewal of the Congo and the world. Whether the State and the Nation are conceived in terms of Mbongui or Common House, this supposes that living well together is based on the sharing of knowledge and assets, that individual well-being resides in the fact of giving and, therefore, of giving oneself. In this way, the Common House is not the addition of individual goods, but the participation of individuals in the Mbongui, as in a work of community interest, and this participation is a gift of self. The Common House is therefore the measure, understood as the intersection of the quality of the quantity of an action in which the citizen gives himself for the collective good. It is in this measure that the articulation between the universal and the particular should be situated: an individual act can have a universal and ethical scope, when it is oriented towards the Common House, towards the gathering in the One of living well together. The universality of human development, in the Mbongui, is realized as a particularity in the social action of individuals, as a singularity removed from selfish determinations centered on the individual, and carried towards the common good. The singularity of an individual action, by aiming at the common good, refers to the community interest. The Common House is, in this way, the space where each citizen can exist in an ethical manner, in the primary sense of a habitual stay of the good life, with and for others, in just institutions. A human act is ethical, when it aims at the common good, and allows the best integration of citizens in a community of shared life.

Sharing assets and knowledge, by giving oneself, is the movement towards novelty, which can only enter into social effectiveness if it is assumed by a renewed humanity. The renewal of humanity, advocated by the mbongui system, comes about through new actions to be taken, in the face of new possibilities of existence that open up to us. The man who enters into the posture of a new humanity (Kimuntu), recognized as an index of human development, adopts a specific way of acting. He declines his identity where his historical action and the truth of what he is are articulated. This articulation is the criterion that allows the recognition of the development process. The ethical novelty in man, Kimuntu, is not the fruit of an ontological transformation, but it comes from the new way of rooting oneself in the firm ground of traditional values, of actualizing the possibilities of action not exhausted in the ancestral past, with a view to extending them into a future bringing well-being by all and for all. It is, fundamentally, a way of living, which is rooted, at every moment, in the commitment to bring about a desired and desired world, starting from us. Indeed, human development, in its full form, the integrative figure of all better life, will not happen without us. Its future, as it is inscribed in the promise carried by our wish-images of a good life, is entrusted to our active consent, to the commitment of our freedoms: human development is our task and our praxis. Thus understood, the mbongui, as an appropriate framework for human development, follows the movement of a certain humanization of man, so that any understanding of human development and any understanding of the humanity of man takes place within the historical framework determined by cultural identity, territorial singularity and social praxis. The meanings of the human being are organized, from the point of view of development, in a structural field where they are ordered to the idea that one has of man, and to the purpose that

one gives to his existence. To develop means, in this sense, to grow and humanize oneself, that is to say to move towards what one considers to be the ethical and moral realization of oneself, within a human community. Consequently, renewal, here, suggests the idea of a creatio ex vetere, of an actualization of ancestral wisdom, in the domain of the governance of men. What characterizes the mbongui as a new system of governance consists, precisely, in the fact that it brings to modernity and to the concrete universality of the Nation-State, the model of traditional governance of the indigenous Bantu peoples.

This governance, in its very essence, is centered on the person of the Chief (Mfumu A Congo), who is the embodiment of justice and truth, the guardian of the land and the lieutenant of the creative power of Nzambé. Indeed, since the creation of the world and to deploy his governance over men, Nzambi a Pungu entrusted to the men he freely chose, this power over the land, so that the Mfumu A Congo institution is founded on authority, both as a vision and as a practice. Mfumu A Congo, without being a governor, is the guarantor of divine law, natural law, civil laws and custom. It is these four normative pillars that give the Mfumu A Congo institution its credibility and legitimacy. The obligation of the Mfumu A Congo, concretely, is to promote and defend life. In other words, each new birth is considered by him as something that increases the thickness of the Mbogui's life and, conversely, every death is a diminution of life. But why this unbreakable link between political power and life?

It is the recognition that human beings, animals, plants, minerals, as well as sovereign power itself, come from the same divine Source. And, more profoundly, life in the universe comes from this Source, from Nzambé or from the invisible elsewhere, so that the role of the Sovereign is to govern the living in the sense of their harmonious return to the common Source. Consequently, before being consecrated, the chosen one of Nzambé and the ancestors, the Mfumu A Congo, first undergoes initiatory training. Initiation into the bomfumu is the way and the time by and during which the chosen one scrutinizes the depths of the eternal river of the bomfumu, and acquires the capacity to wash there, and to swim there for life. The Bantu-indigenous power, granted by Nzambé and the ancestors to their chosen one, is speech; this speech means, in its essence, speech-action. The Mfumu's speech-action is the Mfumu's entire life. Initiation consists of revealing to the chosen one the bomfumu code of speech, centered on mastering the art of "speaking" and judging, and mastering the conduct of one's own life as a Mfumu. However, Nzambé, who has conceded power to the Mfumu, remains master of the reality and effectiveness of the Mfumu's power. The Mfumu's speech-action (and therefore his life and power) only brings positive results when it remains in harmony with the will of Nzambé and the ancestors. His speech-action must have two traits: it creates life and continuously establishes itself as a shelter for his people. For this reason, Mfumu strives to remain in harmony with Nzambé and the ancestors. Thanks to this rigorous ethic, he elevates himself and becomes the intermediary between Nzambé and his people. Furthermore, the mbongui, as a Nation and State, is constituted by the Code of the alliance. Every society, as we know, constructs the imaginary of its reference, on which a sustainability can be based, not material and physical, but symbolic. Life and the reproduction of life are linked to the constitution, by society, of a discourse of supra-political legitimacy, which founds life and the reproduction of life. And the identity foundation of a civilization is directly inscribed in a vital cycle, the preservation of which is essential to social and political balance. The mbongui therefore unites, in the code of the alliance, the spheres of being and duty, of nature and society, of the cosmic order and the human (ethical) order. The mfumu offers its content to the ancestors and to Nzambé, so that they maintain it in its place, among men. Everyone must respect the code of the alliance in their relationships with others and with the world. It is not a question of belief, but of a deeply implicit conviction. It is through experiences that a conviction is translated. It is a lived meaning and not a conceived one. As a principle of the mbongui, the code of the alliance defines, at the origin, the ethical and moral ideal of the relationship between man, the ancestors and Nzambé. The code of the alliance, by its symbolic value, is the constitutional pillar of the Theo-political order of the mbongui: the mbongui is there so that the code of the alliance is realized; the code of the alliance must be realized so that the world is habitable in harmony.

6. Conclusion

The Bantu political system that we propose is a form of governance by the people, from the bottom up. In Bantucraty, the prince is the protector of the people. The protective function of the prince has its origin in the "shelter" character of the Bantu power. The primary mission of a prince is to protect life, to perpetuate it; God and the ancestors, who gave them that power, did the same to them. As soon as a prince is enthroned, he becomes

the leader of all the people, including thieves, liars and assassins. It does not operate a selection between good and bad, those to keep and those to reject. The protection it affords to all cannot be equated with any complicity with the perpetrators; protection is related to life. When an assassin, even if caught we tea spot, is threatened in his life and enters tea prince's residential court, his life is safeguarded and now protected. This guarantee does not amount to an amnesty; the culprit remains liable to judgment and punishment, except those which are prejudicial to his survival.

The protection of the Bantu prince also covers human rights. It has the authority to determine and specify the rights of each, the authority to defend the rights and to sanction violations. The Bantu princes structured this authority, gave it body by tea establishment of tea judicial institution. Within the Bantu institutional power, the body of administrators assumes, among others, the judicial function.

It is established that the "shelter" character of the people of Bantu power has generated the judicial system. In order to be closer to the people, the judicial system has been structured and decentralized; he has thus meshed the Bantu territory. Any decision of justice pronounced in the principality can be the object of a last resort before a prince. He examines the appeal and pronounces his decision without further appeal. In practice, being close to the concerns of the population, mfumu (chiefs of territorial constituencies) play the role of last resort.

Author Contributions: All authors contributed to this research.

Funding: Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Informed Consent Statement/Ethics Approval: Not applicable.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted Technologies: This study has not used any generative AI tools or technologies in the preparation of this manuscript.

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