Statism and the Growth of Authoritarianism in Sub-Saharan Africa

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ABSTRACT

Statism or Realism proffers that the State is the main actor in politics, and, therefore, the Referent Object. This belief appears to be the predominate basis of governance in Sub-Saharan Africa, despite the region’s efforts towards mainstreaming democratic principles in governance. There are several other progressive schools of thought that inure society with authority superior to that of the State on the basis of Rule of law. The resulting polarity of power presents problems for aligning State Security influenced by realist securitization theories and Societal Security influenced by the United Nations Development Program’s Human Development Report since 1994 and the Welsh School of Security Studies.

In this analytical, correctional research approach, I will show that the States seem to apply mechanical and substantive modalities through authoritarian control over society, since the State is the sole provider of security, making the citizens less significant in the eyes of the ruling elite, Security Forces and Police Services with delegated State powers. Although the Constitutional frameworks of the common law, English Language speaking nations in Africa provide that sovereignty emanates from the citizens and, therefore, the repository and custodians of all laws, the concept of Statism or Realism ignores such provisions analytically, legislatively and constructively.

There is considerable disregard for the citizens as the custodians of power which has led the State to create National Security institutions, backed by legislation and public policy, whose primary pre-occupations are the rendition of protective and intelligence services to perpetuate the regime’s control over the citizens.

There are also researchers and political scientists that seem to legitimize the emasculation of the larger members of Society, since they are deemed as part of the existential and imminent threats to State power. The history of democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa provides to date, blatant lack of the Rule of Law, Justice and Equal Protections, where citizens compete against the State interests.

This introductory study contextually teases out from the literature on security studies, the thrust of the Copenhagen and the Welsh School’s approaches towards governance; to demonstrate that, the pursuit of authoritarian rule in Africa is rather a deviation from both Schools of Security Studies, with recommendations for change towards a more measurable deliverables of the Human Development Report of 1994 and its progeny of progressive international development policies.

Keywords: Authoritarianism, National Security, Realism, Statism, Sub-Saharan Africa.

I. INTRODUCTION

In this introductory analytical, correctional research paper, and using Ghana as a case study, I analyzed the negative effects of the concept of Statism as a governance approach in almost all the Common Law English Language speaking nations in Africa vis-à-vis their civil liberties. In attempting to link governance to security theory, I make the charge that a more inclusive governance system and controls would have developed in Sub-Saharan Africa if the principles underlying human security have been pursued as public policy rather than pursuing the concept of Statism or Realism (Hansen, 2000; Eriksson, 1999). In the published literature on Security Studies, some researchers have blamed the Copenhagen School, (CoS) as, having perhaps, helped to truncate the growth of best democratic practices in Sub-Saharan Africa, by giving a sort of an excuse for why the State as the Referent Object ought to project strength, i. e.: military; and...
power, i.e.: economic and political; over its citizens. Notice that, the causal issues surrounding the development of authoritarianism in Africa are more complex and go beyond the mere display of brawn or Machiavellian maneuvers, or any intellectual discussions of security studies (Huysmans, 2004a; Wilkinson, 2007; Williams, 1998).

II. THE BURDEN OF REALISM AND STATISM ON NATION-STATES

Realism in international politics relates to the pretenses of the nation-state that, its actions are motivated by communitarian and universal concerns; rather than egoism and its national interests. That is to say, realism as a political approach is predicated on subterfuge, but which may be cloaked as either over-riding egalitarian or moral conduct on the part of the State, for the greatest number of people and for the greatest good, which actually isn’t so. The political concept of Statism, assumes that the political authority of a given State has legitimacy to conduct the economic, political and social affairs of the nation. The combination of Realism/Statism in governance provides that, the State is the main actor (Referent Object) in international politics because of the State’s control over economics, military, and politics as well as society (Snyder, 2004).

A. The Copenhagen School Approach to Security Studies

The CoS approach to securitization studies emerged as an alternative analytical thought in the Western military Industrial complex and, contextually, attempted to label the securitization processes in those nations from first, the military standpoint and second, lassiez faire. It had little or no intention, perhaps, to see the CoS principles being adopted as the intellectual basis of thinking and designing national security architecture in the developing nations (Huysmans, 2004a; Williams, 1998; Buzan & Hansen, 2009). Contrary to those who presume that the nations in the developing world are, perhaps, not aware of securitization concepts, ought to know that security studies have been in effect in a number of these nations in Sub-Sahara Africa since the early 1990s, just about the same era when the various theories in international relations and human security considerations became focal themes in security studies. Some of these nations’ personnel studied securitization theories through the establishment of military academies in Ghana, Egypt, South Africa and other nations such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and China recently. To some extent, CoS does appear to encourage rather as an unintended consequence, the suppression of citizens in favour of State interests in developing nations with nascent democracies by default (Huysmans, 1998b; Williams, 2003). It is therefore not uncommon to see national governments in the developing nations cloaking issues that are not security issues per se, but which are “raised above the ‘normal haggling of politics’" and securitizing those issues (Buzan et al., 1998: 29). For example, Ghana has had a contentious debate about whether or not the quantum of money spent on Presidential travel per year by the current President of Ghana, should be considered ‘national security matter’ or a regular national budget line item since it is a charge on the taxpayer? Certainly, such an expense cannot be considered a national security issue alone since it has a dual character that concerns budgetary allocations as well. Although the details of that budget line allocation may not be available to everybody, the Parliamentary sub-committee on foreign affairs or national security has the duty to know the cost of presidential travel per annum. In Nigeria, a comparator nation to Ghana publishes the cost of both domestic and international travels by its President (www.vanguardngr.com, accessed 3/20/2022). It is interesting to also note that there have been different challenges to the realism approach practised in Ghana and other Common Law nations (Williams, 2003; In Aradau, 2004:2).

In all fairness, the Copenhagen School assumes a duality of security purposes, which are mainly State Security on one hand and Societal Security on the other hand (Buzan, 1991:19). There seems to be unavoidable internal inconsistency with the Welsh School when Buzan (1991:19) segmented security into five dimensions including military, economic, political, environmental and societal security as part of the ‘desecuritization’ process. This appears to have been a belated addendum attempt to either expand or inure the initial analysis with broad based, human-centric dimensions about which national security ought to be concerned. In Ghana and in most nations, control over the military, economic and political affairs as well as the environment and the generalities of societal security, by and large, are in the exclusive domain of the State (Aradau, 2004; Vileikeine & Janusauskiene, 2016; Eroukhmanoff, 2018). These dimensions per Buzan’s enlargement of State security under CoS, appear to have transported the Copenhagen School to the philosophical parity with the Welsh School and the Human Development Report of 1994 (Huysmans, 2004b). It is also fair from analysis of the literature on securitization and desecuritization hypothesis to assume that, the power over these five dimensions appears to have influenced the thinking that the State is the only entity capable of managing the divergent interests impinging on those dimensions, and, therefore, making the State the Referent Object as a practical matter (Waever et al., 1993:24, In Hama, 2017:4). Again as a practical matter, in mature and industrialized economies, the control over the general stream of business, the economy, political affairs and societal concerns are not solely in the hands of...
government but dispersed in the hands of the government, investors, industrialists, the middle class and the working classes (Williams, 2003).

B. Attacks by Other Researchers Against CoS

Due to some of the limitations of CoS as addressed, a considerable number of researchers, compatriots of Buzan and Ole Waever and later generations of researchers have undertaken a critical review of CoS. For example, Williams (2003) attacked CoS that, “it is a politically irresponsible and lacking any basis from which to critically evaluate claims of threat, enmity and emergency” (Williams, 2003: 11 – 31; In Charrett, 2009:10). Despite the duality and the pragmatism shown by CoS and mentioned earlier, there is a disproportionate preference for State security as being superior to Society security by both the traditional approach and the Copenhagen School and their progeny of researchers and proponents of this concept of security (Buzan 1991:19; Waever, 1993:24; Buzan & Waever, 2003:70). The understanding that the State is the sole provider of security and that the securitization processes depend solely on what the State denotes as security is in fact, what security is, does not sit well with progressive, more modern researchers (Eroukhmanoff, 2018; Badong, 2009).

C. Perception of Security by African Government Leaders and Agents

I have earlier reported that the Copenhagen School of Security Studies is a school of academic thought with its origins in international relations. In Africa and in most parts of the world, however, before the emergence of CoS, there existed the conventional notions of Security in international relations during the not too enlightened colonial administrations in Africa. During this epoch, the State was not only perceived as the Referent Object, but was deemed to be the only Referent Object by those who subscribed to the doctrine of realism in politics. There appears to have been the bastardization of Ole Waever’s, perhaps, basic, Securitization analysis that, ‘security is a speech act’. That is to say, the State taking matters in the political space and labeling it as a “national security matter”, ends the discussion over that matter in the political domain and inures the State with enormous power over the socially constructed threat (Buzan & Waever, 2003).

Admittedly, the Copenhagen School (CoS) has given a rich intellectual basis for universal pedagogy in security studies as well as in policy formulation (Aradau, 2004). Although there are researchers who believe that among the causes of authoritarianism in Africa, CoS cannot be blamed for the negative effect it might have produced on the lack of development of human-centric democratic governance system in Ghana in particular, and in many other nations in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Part of this belief rests on the position that, the type of securitization theory espoused by CoS is too arcane, too obscure to be known, studied or, applied by these governments (Krebs, 2022). Even if these nations dismiss the charge of authoritarianism for benevolent dictatorship as an alternative, due to the periodic elections in which the citizens participate every four years, the limited democracy the citizens of Ghana and other nations in Sub-Saharan Africa actually enjoy cannot be written off so easily (Bluwey 1998; Bond 2006; Hama 2017; Aradau 2004; Williams 2008:98). By ‘periodic democracy’ I mean to say that the only time the citizens appear to be engaged by central government or the State in decision making about the challenges that confront the State and the citizens, is during popular elections when the views of the citizens appear to count (Bluwey, 1998). Immediately after general elections are over, the citizens are encapsulated into cocoons of silence, of fear and intimidation, and social exclusion, all of which defeats the principles underlying the Human Development Report of 1994 and the principles articulated by the Welsh and the Copenhagen Schools of Security Studies (Estivill, 2006; Bond, 2006; Peace, 2001). In most cases, laws are introduced in Parliament with zero to little knowledge of them by the citizens. With each Parliamentary sitting, year-in-and-year-out, the so-called democratic governments in Sub-Saharan Africa nibble away at the liberties of the people unapologetically and without a wide and prolonged public discussions of the implications of the new Acts of Parliament on the people (Barry, 1998). Other authoritarian activities by sitting Africa Presidents have included extending presidential terms of office with what is generally understood as rubber stamp legislative bodies, as seen in Guinea, Cameroun and Sudan leading to coup d’états and upheavals, or in Ghana leading to the passage of the E-Levy, which is a type of consumption tax on either pristine or already taxed income. Such conduct, though not completely attributable to the negative effect of Securitization approach under CoS, an appreciable portion of such conduct can be blamed on the practice of Statism, the political excesses and the egoism of those personalities in power (Haynes, 1993; Williams, 1998; Huysmans, 2004a).

III. THE POSITION OF CoS ON SECURITY ANALYSTS VIS-À-VIS SECURITY ACTOR

Another troubling position, though not succinctly or clearly stated, is the allegation that appears to have been advocated against the CoS’ alleged support that the State is far more important that, it ought to be protected against the machinations of the citizens (Hama, 2017; Aradau, 2004). It is further stated that the
proponents of CoS cautioned that, ‘the role of the securitization analyst should not be confused with that of the Security actor. The analyst does not decide what constitutes a justifiable threat or what should or should not be securitized’ according to CoS authors. (That is to say, even if the chief security actor abrogates parts of a valid constitution for the term of office of a President, for example, no security analyst should raise a finger or a voice?). This is because, according to Buzan, ‘the objective of CoS is to understand the modus operandi of existing security actors and not to normatively judge their actions (Buzan et al., 1998:33–35). Perhaps, this admonition was a piece of timely advice to researchers in the then emerging field of security studies to be mindful of the ‘powers there be’ in order not to get themselves into trouble with the State as they study the conduct of the State, or perhaps, it should be an errata in the footnote of security studies. At any rate, it appears to be inconsistent with how security analysts the world over, who are not on the government payroll, behave.

The main security actor in the nations of the developing world is not even the Minister of National Security, or the Inspector General of Police, or even members of the Joint National Security Committee. It is the President of the nation. Often the President is the Chairman of the Joint Security Committee (Ghana’s National and Intelligence Agencies Act, 2020 (Act 1030); 1992 Ghana’s Constitution, Article 83–85). When such a personality has diabolical and egoistic aspirations as a leader, who wishes to hang on to power, everything, every conduct, which could be as innocent as stepping onto the portrait of the President on a discarded and disused newspaper, can be considered a breach of national security protocol. Today, being disrespectful towards the President of, for example, Ghana, is a criminal offence, a type of misdemeanor which a section of the Ghana Police Service has not been tardy in implementing (Essel-Lamtey, 2021; Haynes, 2006; DW: Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah: Visionary, authoritarian ruler, and national hero 2016). If security analysts should not pay attention to what the president or his subordinates may choose to securitize, then, of course, there is no point in having multi-party democracies with the representative government in the first instance.

A. Conflict between National Security and Domestic Security

I have elected to use Ghana, as it is now obvious, as a case study in the interest of focus and brevity. Permit it to be said that, although most observers agree that Ghana is at the cusps of deep immersion into the democratization process of the society, there have been many instances of governmental neglect of its mandate to the people, such as merit based public service appointments and jobs, which retards the immersive processes into the wholesale democratic nation (Human Development Report, 1994). Often, such employment opportunities are doled out to appointees based on identity politics, filial and ethnic relationships and prior professional and even sexual affiliations (Ghanafeed.com, 2022; Estivill, 2006). In other situations, public institutions operate as regime forces intimidating the citizens for the benefit of the government in power. One such case is the results produced by the operations of Ghana’s National Security Ministry since the commencement of the 4th Republican 1992 Constitutional rule. The operatives of the National Security Ministry as well as other high police organizations and agencies such as the National Investigations Bureau, have given cause for concern due to the manhandling of citizens in recent times. For example, there was a case of manhandling of a reporter from a national television station CitiNews, for taking photos of vehicles imported for service but left in an open lot to the vagaries of the weather for months on end in a so-called security zone. Men led by a Colonel from the 64th Infantry Brigade, stormed the offices of the Television Station, CitiNews and arrested the two reporters (Serebour, 2021; Brodeur, 2007). Such institutions have also, historically, placed the citizens in inferior status to the State is the President of the nation. Often the President is the Chairman of the Joint National Security Committee. It

Other legislations that hold the citizens in inferior status to the State are Ghana’s National Security and Intelligence Agencies Act, 2020 (Act 1030) together with its National Security Strategy, 2020. Both of these legislations re-enforce the notion that the State is the Referent Object, and the citizens must be subservient to the State interest, which in turn, emasculates the people (Buzan, 1991). The National Security Strategy goes as far as to list the citizens as enemies of the State and against whose machinations or potential assault on the State interests must be guarded (Liddell Har, 1967). The practice and operations of the national security ministry in a nation like Ghana or even in the more populous nation of Nigeria, are informed by such philosophical appreciation of the relationship between the State and the citizens. “The compendium National Security Strategy to 2030 of 2020 labels the “domestic security landscape” as problematic with the following statement that:

‘The domestic environment of Ghana is by itself as a society is a source of a number of threats to national security and stability. The nature and characteristics of the Ghanaian society, its diversity in demography, ethnicity, languages, cultural values, belief systems, the lack of a national youth
To claim that the domestic environment of Ghana itself appears to inspire the type of conduct that is not consistent with the norms of the society, presumes a strong standing force of some kind, or domestic terrorists, manoeuvring to attack the State interests (Huffman, 2015). If the very architecture of Ghanaian society is itself a security threat to the National Security apparatus or operatives and government, it appears there is very little wonder that the National Security and Intelligence Agencies view Ghana by itself and by extension the people of Ghana, as existential threats to safety, peace and tranquility, under the concept of Statism. Therefore, it justifies why Act 1030 of 2020 makes the State the Referent Object to protect the State from the machinations of the citizens of Ghana (Norman, 2021:11–12). Herein lies the State’s schizophrenia in how it appreciates its citizens, which is no different from a father saying his children are his enemies.

Granted, Sub-Saharan Africa has many threats in its lists of both existential and imminent risks to interstate and intra-state security. These include a long list of bad and corrupt governments which is prevalent in the region, the recent successes of Boko Haram and other terrorist activities in the Sahel and Maghreb against government interventions in countries such as North-Eastern Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Chad (Jedidigah et al., 2020; Rufai, 2017). Although the governments in the three mentioned nations have also achieved some spectacular results in the fight against violent extremist organizations, such successes on the part of the insurgency and failures on the part of the government, have the tendency to color feelings or perceptions of external and internal insecurity in the region. These are in addition to the proliferation of Light-weapons and Small arms, human trafficking, armed robberies, narcotics drug smuggling and money-laundering (Norman, et al., 2014). To the citizens, such coloration may be reflective of the perception of both objective and subjective security, which may yield to the extrapolation that the State is weak in providing security to the population. Or that, the State of Nigeria, for example, is using the real threat of Boko Haram to steal from the public purse. Nigeria is reported to have spent USD $2 billion in the fight against Boko Haram, only to discover that most of such amount has been siphoned off by its internal security operatives at both the federal and state levels (O’Grady, 2015). It is to be noted that, the quality of such perception may be affected by information overload, sensationalism, memory capacity and the hierarchy of importance of the information received (Valeria Csepe, 2004; Jiaqi Wang, Ruyin Long, Hong Chen and Qianwen Li, 2019; Janusauskiene, 2019). To the State, such a crime profile provides the very definition of national security threats against the State’s police powers, even if it is the State itself and its agents that are causing the threat, as in the many cases of official corruption (Aradau, 2004:1; National Security Strategy, Ghana, 2020:4–14).

It is, therefore, between these polarities of views that CoS approach assumes its dominant position in the conceptualization of what security is in a developing nation like Ghana. Here, every aspect of the human experience, functioning and capabilities are, to a respectable extent, under-developed and developing and the State has almost unfettered power to disrupt individual development or support it. In many instances, the State has used its powers to frustrate the business development or purpose of its opponents without repercussion to the State, because it sees itself as the only provider of security. Such a conservative view of security is a limited view of what security really is: A shared responsibility between the State and the citizens.

IV. REGIONALISM, IDENTITARIANISM AND XENOPHOBIC IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

Another focal theme developed by the CoS was regionalism. Although this thinking was geographically limited in many respects and appears to have had European regionalism in mind, it is worth bringing it up in the discussion of statism and the growth of authoritarianism in Sub-Saharan Africa (Charrett & Catherine, 2009:9–11). There are pockets of regional collaboration in West Africa, Southern African nations and among the nations of the north of Africa. Recently, the African Continental Free Trade Agreement was promoted by the AU and has had immense success in pooling the nations together in anticipation of improved trade and commerce. The overarching institution for continental security thinking is the African Union. Laudable as the call for regionalism is, even if it is only for the European Union, it has been noted that there are negative implications that have bedeviled European identitarianism and integration (Miller & Rensmann, 2010; Horowitz & Noiriel, 1992). Identitarianism is a prevailing socio-political philosophy in many nations in the European Union. As a working philosophical approach, it is designed to attack, intimidate, harass and exclude both legal and illegal immigrants from the European space (Holmes, 2009; Fligstein et al., 2012; Fjader, 2014). Xenophobia as an outward demonstration of hatred towards foreigners is embedded in Identitarianism dogma. In Africa too, despite the various regional associations, Xenophobia as practiced in Continental Africa has long been articulated in an overarching Pan-Africanist political
philosophy, chartered by the African Union (Aremu, 2015; Asamoah, 2014; Fligstein et al., 2012; Holmes, 2009). This is what I call, ‘Afroxenophobia’, which finds expression as a stand-alone but silent, howbeit, salient pillar of African Identity thought. During the struggle for national independence by the various African nations, aspects of Afroxenophobia were often violently demonstrated and directed at the colonial administrators (Oppong, 2002; Peil, 1974). Permit again that, even though regionalism as a function of security studies is a focal theme, its validity is often challenged by instances of vigilantism and xenophobia (Minkenberg, 2001; 2003).

A. CoS’ Articulation of Social Constructivist Approach to Security

The last focal theme of the CoS is the social constructivist approach to security which underscores the need to study identity, migration and security to assess the effects of migration. This looks to understand European identity on one hand, and migration as a socio-economic security concern on European security on the other hand, due to Islamic, Asian or African critical opinion held by continental Europe. The conflation of these themes with securitization processes of the State with regards to regionalism and issues of integration, despite, perhaps, the good intentions of CoS in advocating regionalism and integration, probably contributed to the intellectual basis for the growth of identitarianism in Europe, although this thought is subject to further studies. This development in the European socio-political thought, by extension, crossed the Atlantic Ocean to the United States of America particularly during the Trump administration and infected other nations across Africa and the world such as New Zealand and Australia, such as South Africa and Ghana. It aroused wicked identitarianism as a reaction to integration to foreigners and minorities in those nations (Hjerm, 1998; Fligstein, Polyakova, Sandholtz, 2012; Holmes, 2009; Bajaj, Ghaffar-Kucher & Desai, 2016). Unlike Eurocentricism as pursued by the adherents of Generation Identity, the development of Afrocentricism or Pan-Africanism was not initially motivated by anti-immigrant fervor but the need to correct the wrongs of the international (perhaps, white) community against the people of African descent resulting from slavery, racism and discrimination and to promote Black pride (Norman, 2020; Mwaiikagile, 2008). Added to the social pressures are economic dynamics. Due to economic pressures on governments everywhere, ‘immigration has recently become a salient, front burner issue in both the advanced and developing nations’. This appears to ‘suggest a rejection of globalization, and ethnic diversification’ but also the third focal theme of CoS as articulated in 1989, 1993 and 1998 (Charrett, 2009; Hjerm, 1998; Miller & Rensmann, 2010; cited in Norman, 2020).

V. AUTHORITARIANISM IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

In discussing Ghana’s authoritarian impulses, it is important to bear in mind that, part of such a development in the political landscape of Ghana pre-dated CoS to a large extent (Duffield, 2001; Bigo, 2002; Bradbury & Kleinman, 2013; In Fisher & Anderson, 2015:132-134). These researchers saw securitization processes by African governments as extensions of Western governments, or aid organizations or bilateral conditionalities in international relations. That is to say, the concept as applied universally is lopsided in favour of the Western economies with military-Industrial complexes and superior technology that can decide what national security imperatives are and, therefore, push such decisions down to those African governments who then deliver such information to their citizens as proxies. For example, since 9/11, terrorism has been part of the security threats of all African nations, whether those nations have ever suffered or experienced a terror incident or not (Fisher & Anderson, 2015:133). Haynes (1993) writes that “Ghana has been in the forefront of political change in Sub-Saharan Africa since gaining independence in 1957. The first state in the region to be free from colonial rule and soon after that fate, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah’s regime turned the country into a one-party system marked by government authoritarianism until it was overthrown in 1996”. Researchers and historians also consider the period between 1982 and 1992 as an authoritarian era for Ghana, during which there were a handful of political administrations that were ruled by legislation and by military fiat and decrees, after the suspension of the national constitution. It was reasoned that the fundamental national fiscal and economic structure of Ghana was catastrophically fractured (Asamoah, 2014). The seemingly never-ending World Bank and IMF inspired Structural Adjustment Programs and other economic burdens placed on African economies and their populations, create a great deal of stress leading to a series of coup d’états in Sub-Saharan Africa starting with Ghana in 1966. Such coup d’états continued, at least in Ghana, through 1978 and 1989. These developments were inconsistent with good governance (Norman & Avisah, 2015). The coup planners justified their usurpation of power on the basis of the deterioration of the fortunes of the populations, and that in order to provide security to the population they had to take up arms in defence of the State. Here again, the soldiers took a paternal view of the situation and supplanted themselves as the only ones that could deliver security to the people, although such thinking was severely flawed. Soldiers are not particularly gifted as administrators and have a lot of shortcomings due to a mismatch of training, professional assignments and specialization (Aryeetey, 1996; Bernstein & Putnam, 1993; Blanchard et al., 1996; Bluwrey, 1998). Some have argued
that between reform and structural adjustment programs, perhaps, authoritarianism was an inevitable artifact of governance, because leadership; on behalf of the State; considered itself as the sole entity that could provide security (Haynes, 1993). Since then and since the re-start of constitutional and democratic governance, there have been periods of authoritarianism even during the administration of democratically elected leaderships with the parliamentary majority as seen in Sudan, Malawi, Ghana, Kenya, Togo, Cameroun, Central Africa Republic, Guinea and Sierra Leone, to mention but a few. This raises the vexatious question of whether the national parliaments are merely a rubber stamp for the ruling governments, where one party has majority.

A. The Welsh School and the Human Development Report

The Welsh School, like the Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Program of 1994, places humans as the Referent Object in securitization studies and international relations. The State is presumed to be in a fiduciary relationship with the citizens as the keeper and provider of both State and Societal security, including freedom from fear, want, and the ability to pursue useful enterprises in their functioning and capabilities (Sen, 1993; Booth, 1997; cited In Hama 2017). The Welsh School is also known as the ‘emancipatory realism’ school within security studies, which is linked to critical theory. That is to say, it aims to change society from the conventional approach to the status or position of the State in relation to Society. It rejects the narrow or conventional approaches to thinking about State and Society Security, whereby the State is not necessarily the Referent Object, but Society. It takes a sensible and broad base approach to security studies and encompasses all the values of both State and Society security united in a common purpose of safety, peace and economic prosperity. In this respect, the Welsh School of security studies tries to link discipline (Security Studies) with the theories such as securitization, emancipatory realism, desecuritization, etc to the actors, and the policies that emanate from these; as well as the values to be bargained in societal exchange of values from one and the other to the other. The name emancipatory realism in simple terms pertains to economic, social and political rights, a broad based approach to social equity and equality, regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, economic status, religious beliefs and so on (Booth, 1997).

These are values that are captured in the national constitutions of almost all the nations in Sub-Saharan Africa. The challenge is the operationalization of the ways and means to allow or make it easier for the citizens to experience these values or the fruits of these values in the lives of the people. In the case of Africa, it appears to be a pipe dream for the majority of the populations of Africa that live on less than $2.00 USD a day. The Welsh School seems to mirror how human beings behave in society, where they give a part of their freedoms in democratic systems to an elected legislature, in return for State protections and acceptable restrictions on their freedoms. Such exchange of both positive rights and negative rights-claims for the strong arm of the State to protect the citizens, are captured in the respective constitutions of the nations of Sub-Saharan Africa. To add to this reality, Hama (2017) borrowed from Brown (2010) that, “the State is the institution within which individuals come to realize that constraints which appear to be externally imposed are actually the product of their own will” (Brown, 2010: 4). That is to say, freedom and oppression are realities that exist at the same time in the same ecosystem and, that “security and oppression are two sides of the same coin” (Neocleous, 2005:5). As a matter of fact, African governments act often dictatorially because the citizens allow it in a paternalistic way that the leadership knows best, whether or not it has actual or inherent powers for a particular abusive conduct.

I submit here that, rather than looking at the decision of society to surrender a portion of its freedoms to the State for security, it is a more mutually beneficial exercise to consider reciprocity as the basis of dealing between the State and the citizens. In this situation, societal benefits and the burdens are exchanged in equal value in the form of Hohfeldian (1919) rights-claims for equal value in security protections against the mundane and serious crimes in society such as armed robberies, terrorism, and even inter-personal violence (Andersson, 2013; Ayn Rand, 1957:1085; Hohfeld, 1919). Additionally, and speaking about Sub-Saharan Africa, the Welsh School intimates that the State sometimes uses force against its own citizens, or hides behind vigilante groups to do their bidding, a situation which is fairly common among African nations, the use of political vigilantes (Abrahams, 1998; Fleisher, 2000). It is, therefore, not acceptable to continue to make the State the Referent Object. The State-centered notions of security have received criticism from other researchers amongst whom are Eriksson (1999), Williams (2008) and McCormack (2010), due to allegations of injustices, State suppression of civil liberties and the absence of the rule of law (Kpebu Vs. Attorney General [2015] GHASC 114 (01 December 2015). Besides these observations, the constitution of Ghana, like those of the Common law nations of Sub-Saharan Africa such as the Republic of Sierra Leone, Gambia, and Nigeria to mention but a few, expressly make the citizens the Referent Objects. Despite this legal or legislative fact, there are laws on security in Ghana that ignore such entrenched provisions in the constitution and promulgate legislation that still makes the State the Referent Object. The discussions below would focus on what appears to be a parallel legislative framework to the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, for example, on the issue of who the Referent Object is between the State and the citizens.
B. The Human Development Report

The Human Development Report, HDR (1994:13) brings into the international discourse and diplomacy the humanitarian values that were not visibly present in the CoS approach. The HDR warned in preparation for the World Summit for Social Development in March of 1995 and organized by the UNDP that, “the world can never be at peace unless people have security in their daily lives. Future conflicts may often be within nations rather than between them-with their origins buried deep in growing socio-economic deprivation and disparities”. The events around the world since this ominous pronouncement was made have vindicated the writers of that report. The Copenhagen School’s analysis of security was from the point of view of the State, which in reality was limiting, if not callous, as intellectual thought, because per the articulation in the HDR, human security equates to national security, just as development was an essential part of both State and human security. Arms and military build-up led only to arms race which depletes the resources available to provide for the society but, which goes into the purchase of weapons that quickly became obsolete and useless. The new dimensions of human security include the following: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security. All of these dimensions point to the enhancement of personal security which aims at providing freedom from fear, diseases, want and from social exclusion. The Commission on Human Security defines it to be:

“…to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity” (CHS: 2005: 4).

For CoS to be a complete intellectual articulation of what national or State security is, it ought to be augmented with the values provided by CHS/HDR framework on human security. Although there appears to be an attempt to claw back humanistic values missing in the initial articulation of the securitization theory, Buzan made a belated effort to introduce the desecuritization concept in which he also expanded the reach of the State to provide for economic and other social needs of the citizens (Buzan, 1991:19). Both the Welsh School and the HDR tried to express the world’s collective humanism which the CoS appeared to have ditched in favour of State power in the earlier stages of its securitization theory.

C. Theorizing Security Studies in Sub-Saharan Africa and Development?

I admit that Africa as a whole has not articulated its own securitization theory, but “plays the proxy” of other more powerful, militarily and economically speaking, nations (Bigo, 2001; Fisher & Anderson 2015). Rather, it has adopted what the Western world has provided for its national interests, the projection of its military prowess, and its economic thrust. The wholesale adoption of securitization theories from the Western Military-Industrial nations, it appears, was done without deep reflection of the type of security framework that will support the national developmental aspirations of these African nations, whether those nations are Anglophone or Francophone. Although generally, most observers consider a nation like Ghana as running an agrarian economy and perhaps, enjoying a resilient food security status, Ghana has actually not been a true agrarian or food secure economy for decades. For example, ‘between 2017 and 2020, Ghana spent an estimated total of Ghc6.874 billion (about USD$6 billion) on the importation of rice, in addition to other food items such as Ghc3.993 billion for Fish, Ghc1.881 billion for Chicken (processed), Ghc487 million for Meat, Ghc281 for Vegetables and Ghc184 million for Poultry’ (Kyerematen, personal communications, 2021). This disclosure was made by the Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr. Alan Kyerematen, on the 16th of December, 2021 when he appeared before the Parliament of Ghana to inform the parliament of existing bans on certain food imports. Certainly, as to be expected, the Ministry of Agriculture in Ghana sings a different tune about food security in Ghana, touting the productiveness of the Ghanaian farmer.

The lack of a nationally defined security theory compels researchers on the continent to take wholeheartedly the securitization theory as advocated by Buzan et al., and as adopted by these countries. The national researchers rely on research positions and findings arrived at by others in their previous colonial masters’ institutions. There is hardly ever known idea, but merely conformation research being reproduced by sometimes faculty and then by students. This discussion considers the universality of the securitization theory as the basis for the respective African nations’ national security architecture. The application of the securitization theory in the various nations with unique governance systems may reveal interesting adaptations of the securitization theory that may not be universal or exemplary outside of those nations. In the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, and in the context of Ghana, we take from Buzan et al what securitization is. It is: “… the inter-subjective and socially constructed process by which a threat to a particular Referent Object is acknowledged and deemed worth protecting …” (Buzan et al., 1995:24–25;
Waever, 1995:51). A search of the literature did not reveal any attempt by the various Sub-Saharan African nations defining what securitization is and even what national security ought to be.

VI. THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFLICT WITH STATE REALISM ON SECURITY

The State of Ghana is so committed to the realist notions of security, that it has not considered that, perhaps, there is a possibility that it could lead to a clash between an Act of Parliament and the Constitution of Ghana. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana states that “…all powers of government spring from the sovereign will of the people”. This is repeated in Article 1(1) that,

“the sovereignty of Ghana resides in the people of Ghana in whose name and for whose welfare the powers of government are to be exercised in the manner and within the limits laid down in this Constitution” (1992 Constitution of Ghana, Art. (1) (1).

Among the limits laid down in this constitution is the prohibition against the subjugation of the rights of society when it comes to society security by State Security interests. This is to say Article 1(1) of the 1992 Constitution is an entrenched provision. This seems to be a position which cannot be taken away from the citizens without compliance with the modalities of Article 290 (1)-(6) of the Constitution. Article 290 states the conditionalities under which even the Parliament of Ghana can amend an entrenched provision of the Constitution such as Article 1(1). It denotes that the laws of Ghana “reside in the people of Ghana in whose name and for whose welfare the powers of government are to be exercised in the manner and within the limits laid down in this Constitution”. Set against the Constitutional provision is the National Security and Intelligence Agencies Act, 2020 (Act 1030) which still holds the position that the State is the Referent Object. The preamble to the Security and Intelligence Agencies Act of 2020, (Act 1030) says it is:

“AN ACT relating to the National Security Council, to provide for the establishment of regional and district security councils, to specify and coordinate the activities of the agencies responsible for the security of the State and to protect and preserve the unity and stability of the State and to provide for related matters”.

From the point of view of the parliament of Ghana, it appears that the purpose of Act 1030 is solely for the benefit of the National Security Council and its contingent regional and district security councils. To this extent, it is merely a procedural document, with a few substantive provisions for the National Security Ministry and none for the citizens. It is not specifically designed to cater for the interests of the citizens but rather the State, therefore making the State the Referent Object. Although on the face of it, the National Security and Intelligence Agencies Act, 2020 (Act 1030) appears to be in consonance with the Constitutional mandate, the thrust or focus of it favours the State as the Referent Object for whose interests Act 1030 of 2020 was passed and assented into law. Perhaps, the preamble of Act 1030 may explain why National Security Operatives have historically handled conflicts between the State and the citizens, by the preponderance of the publicly available evidence and the historicity of past events, in favour of the State. For example, the “Justice Emile Short Commission of Inquiry in Ayawaso West Wuogon By-elections Violence of 2019”, and the “Three Member Ministerial Committee of Inquiry into the Unfortunate Occurrence at Ejura in the Ashanti Region of July 2021”, to mention but a few, saw that the position of the State to attack innocent citizens expressing their civil liberties. Ayawaso was about citizens taking part in a by-election, through voting. Ejura was about the citizens taking part in a public demonstration to present their grievances, which is permitted under the Public Order Act 491 of Ghana. None of these two events should have resulted in violence against the citizens if the State saw the citizens as the Referent Objects. Such outcomes increase the citizens’ perception of insecurities in Ghana, and may make them feel insecure even though the reality may be far from such a perception. Both of these events probably point to the presumption that Ghana vacillates between authoritarianism and parliamentary democracy but not universal democracy for the people of Ghana. That is to say, there is a Parliament system in place in Ghana, but it appears, that the parliament exists for the benefit of the regime.

VII. CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have demonstrated that the understanding of Statism, as part of realists thought on Security Studies in Sub-Saharan Africa with respect to international relations, has contributed to creating a system of governance which is in favour of authoritarian principles. It is not by accident that although many of the nations in Sub-Saharan African run expensive national presidential and parliamentary elections every four or five years, depending on the nation, are not able to create more inclusive and egalitarian society. In
nations like Ghana and others in Sub-Saharan Africa, there is little regard for the promotion of human security at the expense of State security. Despite the impact of the Human Development Report and its progeny of international social programs to enhance human freedoms and security such as; the International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, Millennium Development Goals, and the Sustainable Development goals, despite the respective national knowledge and awareness of these programs or goals, human security and therefore, personal security is still viewed as inferior to State security in Ghana and most of the rest of the nations in Sub-Saharan Africa. The national reticence to elevate human security above State security appears to stem from the State’s fear of its citizens. From one regime to the other, a considerable number of the national Presidents have been alleged to have exploited the nation for the benefit of their benefits, men whose only concern is for their families (only men have been Presidents in Ghana since its independence in 1957), and cronies. It has been alleged that they have used the Presidency as a Carte Blanc pathway to the acquisition of real estate holdings in Ghana and elsewhere, built large caches of wealth and endowed their families and associates (without remorse or even the fear of God) even though they boasts of their relationships with God. Without any disrespect, by their own enterprises, many of these leaders could not have achieved such rapid financial growth and wealth accumulation, but for their proximities to the national purse. ‘The historicity of Ghana’s past and present political landscape, suggests a persistently paranoid leadership when it comes to national security, apropos matters such as human rights, criminal justice, state’s police powers and the presumed threats to the parliamentary system. It appears the various African leaderships are aware that they are indeed, poor managers of the economies they oversee and surround themselves with men that can silence the opposition within a twinkle of an eye. Such awareness puts them in a vulnerable position against the potential uprising of the citizens. To pre-empt any possible challenge to their positions, those leaders, if not all of Africa’s current leaders, tend to be suspicious of their citizens and do all they could to intimidate the citizens into submission. A “persistently paranoid” leadership is one that promulgates vague laws on universally established domains of State and Society’s symbiotic dependences as if the two sides of the nation are disparate entities with dissimilar interests. Some of such laws are the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2008, (Act 762), the Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2008, (Act 749), and The Emergency Powers Act, 1994, (Act 742), which were designed as proactive legislation to stop the citizens from attacking the State and siphoning the wealth of the State. But it is also well documented that the biggest group of people that siphons off the national wealth are the political leaders and posses or proxies. The fact that government leaders are often the main culprits for siphoning national revenues: embezzling large sums of public funds; public procurement abuses; practising over- and under-invoicing and other import vices in cahoots with the so-called accountable institutions and professions such as bankers; accountants big and small; lawyers; customs officials and licensing officials, appears not to have dawned on the various legislative houses that passed such laws (Treisman, 2000; Van Rijckeghem & Weder, 2001; Norman, 2014; 2021). These laws on terrorism and money-laundering were crafted without regard to what terrorism is or who the actors in money laundering are (Tiefenbrun, 2003; In Norman, 2014). Ghana appears to be patently and latently afraid of losing all of its democratic gains to another coup d'état and does all that it is in the State’s power to perpetuate political control and domination over the citizens, through the use of dilution of job roles, posting of alleged enemies to remote areas of the nation, providing no tasks or duties to the person perceived as recalcitrant and being passed over for promotion. The idea that the State is ‘the’ Referent Object is taken rather literally by the leaderships of these Sub-Saharan African nations, to lord it over the citizens and to use that to craft laws on National Security that emasculates the majority members of the population.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. To the Citizens

The right to disobey unjust laws, to conduct nonviolent demonstrations and civil disobedience is part of the inalienable rights of the people of every nation guaranteed by the respective national constitutions (Henry David Thoreau, 1849). In the case of Ghana, such rights are guaranteed in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, but elsewhere, by the Magna Carter of 1215; English Bill of Rights, 1689; U. S Bill of Rights, 1791 and regulated by our collective notions of normative ethics, morality, and acts of supererogation.

Specifically, the national laws concerning personal rights to civil disobedience, pertain to, for example, Article 21(1) (d) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the implications of Article 21(1) (d) of the 1992 Constitution vis-à-vis the Public Order Act, 1994 (Act 491). In addition, Article 20 (1) of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR); Article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); Article 11 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR), Article (1)(j) of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. This right is worth defending despite the consequences.
B. To Government and its Agencies

The people of the respective nations deserve more than the mere co-existence with their neighbors. They deserve the right of Agency, to be able to do the things they want to do, together with the things they have to do, in order for them to reach their highest potential. Providing cushy jobs to associates without merit that is not objectifiable and independently verifiable, nulls individual initiatives, destroys the national sense of scholarship because it devalues education, experience and creativity. Giving jobs to your cronies, your family members, in-laws, cushions and nephews is probably the worst thing that could happen to the morale of a nation than the violent overthrow of the government. This is because although the conduct is pernicious, its effects are deep resentment of the central government, demoralization of others, identity politics on the principle of “an eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth” and the reciprocity of bad deeds in return for equal bad deeds to your members when power changes hands. Living high on the hog, whiles your kinsmen suffer daily in pain, in shame, and without the economic ability to transcend their economic status is, probably, the most rustic way to emasculate a generation.

C. To Parliamentarians

Unless your elevation to Parliament was purchased by the leader of your party who happens to be the President, it is unconscionable to surrender the power entrusted in your care by your constituencies’ to the Presidency or the ruling Party, without the consent and concurrence of the members of your constituencies.

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