

Rethinking Strategy in the Quest for African State Capacity in Uncertain Times

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*What we think, know, or believe in is, in the end, of little consequence.
The only consequence . . . is what we do (Haines, 1995)*

Abstract

The State has been the sanctuary of humans and institutions for centuries. The threats and distractions affecting the primary functions of the Westphalian state in the delivery of its contractual relationship with its inhabitants keep undergoing mutations that are both internally and externally generated and sustained. Through the employment of qualitative research tools, this study rediscovered the neglect of strategy – with its classic and intrinsic values – as the lead reason for state incapacities. It arrives at the recommendation for an invigoration of the study and use of strategy as well as the adoption and living of its rudiments as a central value-system of states in uncertain times.

Keywords: State, Strategy, Survival, Capacity, Resources, and Times.

Introduction

The imperative of governing human systems, with all its complex uncertainties depends on reflection and maneuver to contain the likely disruptive effects of contingent events. In this quest, rules-based regimes (institutions), which are designed with a logic of certainty and predictability operate in potentially chaotic contexts with reference to limited information; a tendency which may render the pursuit of

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rational courses of action an exception rather than the norm. More often than not, interventions to govern human systems count as actions in “muddling through” processes in contexts characterized by flux (Lindblom, 1979). With this tendency, there is no guarantee that governance systems will operate to the optimum. Indeed, it is to be expected that governance institutions stand a great risk of being contextually unhinged and out of sync, with deeper undercurrents, governing that which energizes transformations, the transactions of constituencies, and the determinants of adaptation/reactions to contain the disruptions inherent in risks. Being so, uncertainty is a deep-seated structural formation which does not lend itself to mundane, short-term management options. The latter may be effective only when they are engineered to mimic the dynamics of structural uncertainty. Strategy derives its import from the “ways and means” to respond to these imperatives (Courtney & Viguerie, 1997; Gelderen & Roy, 2000; Bojke & Palmer, 2009; Walker & Janssen, 2003). As viewed by Carl Von Clausewitz in his *On War*, strategy may seem simple but that does not mean everything about strategy is easy (Gray, 1999). Ordinarily, the contextual factors which instruct the first principles to define strategic options lend themselves to easy detection in formalized contexts with mature bureaucratic set ups as is the case in developed states. Backed by deep statistical databases which enable effective control, developed country contexts tend to be efficient in predicting system behavior and the unique conditions and dynamics of evolution (Bryson & Bryson, 2009; Ghertman & Arregle, 1997). Even in the event of “surprises” and crisis situations, such systems have protocols which can be activated to hem in or contain the effects of unanticipated developments within short reactionary time frames. As posited by Sun Tzu, the Chinese strategist, knowing the adversarial context is not negotiable if positive outcomes are priorities. A total appraisal of adversarial happenings and drawbacks constitute a tipping point in the fashioning of a roadmap to contain uncertainties. Mature bureaucratic systems also have efficient learning and information detection, transmission and review protocols which are formally documented. There are also specialized skills sets to micro-manage governance structures at all levels, protocols of skills reproduction, review and transmission (Kalimullah & Nour, 2016;

Piercy, 1994; Gupta & Fogarty, 1994; Bryson & Crosby, 1989; Page, Bryson, Stone, Crosby, & Seo, 2021; Wells, 2012). All in all, developed states have efficient crisis management strategies.

The same cannot be said about most African states for the following reasons. To begin with, African states have fragile and mostly inaccurate or outdated data bases on their human systems (Glassman & Sandefur, 2014; Beguy, 2016; Yeats, 1990); consequently, the deeper dynamics of the continent's human systems and institutional crucibles of social transactions is a mystery. In addition to this, the bureaucratic systems of the continent are colonial relics/set ups which operate with scant reference to Weberian principles of officialdom (Farah, Kiamba, & Mazongo, 2011; Mbaku, 1996; Ganahl, 2013; Warf, 2017). For example, recruitment into public sector institutions is mostly at variance with best practices such as meritocracy and skills competence (Dahlström, Lapuente, & Teorell, 2012; Charron, Dahlström, Fazekas, & Lapuente, 2016; Obong'o, 2013). In cases where these regimes of recruitment do not apply, there is hardly institutional autonomy and professionalism, since public governance systems tend to be constrained in terms of technical and scientific agency in the discharge of their mandates through political (party) interference. Consequently, professional autonomy and institutional integrity is undermined (Burger, 2016; Rogger, 2018; Nyarko, Antwi, & Antwi-Boasiako, 2019). This state of affairs infects institutions with enfeebling consequences which hamper the internal coherence, discipline and pro-activeness of governance structures and also institutional culture of learning and innovation. Further, most African people are free from the regulation of the state. Indeed, in the strict senses, the presence of the African state is mostly felt in its capitals and in urban contexts with rural areas often beyond the reach of rural environs. Such a state of affairs limits the ability of governments to anticipate, preempt and pro-actively contain developments with disruptive consequences.

It is not to be assumed that as a matter of fact the standards of developed states ought to be used to assess the strategic competence of African states. In the ordinary sense, there is no basis for such a measure since there are stark differences in terms of systemic idiosyncrasies, histories,

contextual imperatives and aspirations. Nevertheless, when the chips are down, all states, given the risks and uncertainties at hand, have to resolve the same strategic conundrum associated with pressures exerted by known, unknown and unknowable factors which often work in concert and with no clear-cut patterns. The character of the state relative to resilience in both its population and state-institutions, becomes a key determinant of the outcomes. This said, developed states have relatively more efficient systemic capacities to respond to the said conundrums than African states. It is worth noting that the said efficient systemic capacities of response structures were acquired through learning, through action, and attending to errors. Hence the first step in the quest for similar strategic competence in Africa has to be pursued through a similar praxis. It is with this in mind that this paper sets to address the following: an outline of the instructions of classical strategic thinkers as a philosophical backdrop to reflections of the state's halo of uncertainty, a sketch of the dimensions of strategy, the dimensions of state capacity and how it reflects on the African condition and the recommendations on how the strategic incapacities identified can be resolved.

Instructions from the Classic Manuals of Strategic Governance: A Sketch

This section draws on the teachings of four philosophers of strategic governance: two each from the Orient (Chanakya also known as Kautilya and Sun Tzu) and Europe (Niccolò Machiavelli and Giovanni Botero). Chanakya was a philosopher of Indian descent and said to have authored the treatise, the Arthashastra, dated to be between the 4th century BCE and the 3rd century CE. Among others, he is considered as India's foremost political scientist and economist. His *magnum opus* is a collection of prescriptive analysis of how the Republican governments of ancient India were to be consolidated. His insights were derived from Alexander of Macedonia's successful invasion of a number of independent Republics which had then been set up in ancient India⁴. The only Republic which survived the invasion with his

4 See (Wickramasinghe, 2021; Green, 1991)

instrumentality was the Mauryan Empire. His work was meant to guide India's statesmen on how such external threats could be contained since they were inevitable. The title of his piece, the Arthashastra is derived from the Sanskrit terms (sastra) the science of (artha) wealth, earth or polity (Prakash, 1993: p. 6). He admonished leaders to embody virtue and subject themselves to the law as is expected of ordinary citizens. He also emphasized the stabilizing importance of ethics of rationality in governance and strict codification of law with its equal application in the entire realm of the state. In contemporary terms, his prescription is akin to the popular concept of rule of law or equality before the law. On how the population can be bonded in defence of the state, he noted that the citizenry had multiple loyalties: on the one hand, they have loyalty to the state and on the other, loyalty to limitless associations. The latter are bonded together into jealously guarded autonomous and resilient systems of unity based on customs and traditions, martial codes of conduct, economic alliances, and religious beliefs. He admonished leaders not to interfere in such realms of association. In order to successfully do so, they should gather comprehensive data on the customs and traditions of associations through census. Nevertheless, he also notes that leaders should institute preventive measures to protect individuals from the tyranny of customs and traditions by setting up a Department of Commissioners (Pradeshtarah) for that purpose. Further, he advocated an intricate system of bureaucracy based on strict enforcement of codes of conduct which enacted quality controls. In order to prevent a subjective interpretation of the said codes and reduce the possibility of bureaucratic corruption, he advocated an in-house intelligence system to covertly audit compliance. He also noted the importance of a decentralized bureaucratic system which will empower local constituencies to monitor the level of compliance of public officials with the said code of conduct. With regard to the place of war in all these, he had this to say:

A king who carries out his duties, rules according to law, metes out only just punishment, applies the law equally "to his son and his enemy," and protects his subjects not only goes "to heaven" but "would conquer the earth up to its four ends (Boesche, 2003: p. 23).

This admonition is however conditioned by the requirement that victory can only be assured only when a king is popular with the ordinary people in rural contexts.

He adds:

“If weak in might, [a king] should endeavor to secure the welfare of his subjects and that the countryside is the source of all undertakings; from them comes might” and that the “undertakings” of forts, the treasury, and the army all depend ultimately on the people of the countryside, where are found “bravery, firmness, cleverness and large numbers.” (Boesche, 2003: p. 26)

Sun Tzu, a Chinese General, military strategist and philosopher is well known for his *The Art of War*. The maxim “the supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting” illustrates his emphasis on the need for detailed prior planning before the execution of intent (Giles, 2000, p. 8)⁵. He notes that if a state wages war, it is fighting for its very existence. Therefore, supreme priority must be given to efforts to understand the art of war, and in the event that one breaks out, that knowledge must be translated into victory. With such initiatives, leaders of the states at war who command complete compliance of the citizenry to the extent that they will lay down their lives for the cause of the state are hardly vanquished. In terms of the appropriate emotional condition with which the decision to wage war is to be made, he instructs that leaders should never do battle out of anger since their anger will eventually dissipate. However, the destruction it may cause the state may never be fixed. Rather, the optimum emotional posture is one based on the knowledge gained from long term observations which guides the efficient deployment of limited resources.

Machiavelli (1469-1527), an Italian philosopher, diplomat, politician, and historian is well known for his work *The Prince* (Connell, 2016) in which he articulated his thoughts on why ethics has no place in

5 This section draws heavily on this citation.

politics. It is for this reason that he is designated as an immoral or evil scholar (Lamus , 2016; Giorgini, 2013). His reflections on politics as reflected in the entire spectrum of his works are shaped by two key concepts: *Virtù* and *Fortuna* (Tarlton, 1999; Borja, 2016; Lucchese, 2015). “*Virtù*” in the sense employed by Machiavelli does not mean behavioral conduct governed by high moral standards. It rather refers to personal attributes which enable flexible leadership: the ability to be ruthless when need be and also to be “good” when the need arises. Such flexibility enables a leader to be a good leader in terms of having the capacity to take strategic decisions for the stability of the state and advancing the goals of the public good. As he put it,

...If a prince conducts himself with patience and caution, and the times and circumstances are favorable to those qualities, he will flourish; but if times and circumstances change, he will come to his ruin unless he changes his method of proceeding (Kahn, 1994: p. 30).

The opposite of *virtu* is *fortuna* which also like *virtu*, is not equal in meaning to an ordinary sense of the word. He conceives it as a chance or luck and all things and events beyond the control of a leader but which can be contained or overcome with *virtu*. Machiavelli propounds an analogy to illustrate the relationship between *virtu* and *fortuna* by using the example of a flooded raging river which sweeps away all – humans inclusive – in its course. The river represents “*fortuna*,” whose power cannot be stopped. However, the destructive effects of its floods can be managed with embankments and appropriate infrastructure and other contingencies. A leader who possesses “*virtu*” cannot stop the power of a raging river but can harness it with forward thinking and strategic planning for the benefit of his people and state.

Giovanni Botero was an Italian Catholic priest, thinker, diplomat and an opponent of Machiavelli in scholarship. He is best known for his work *Della ragion di Stato* “The Reason of State” written in 1589 (Bireley, 2017). He defines the Reason of State as the knowledge necessary to set up, preserve, or expand a stable system of governance over a people.

He notes that such knowledge will enable leaders to fashion the state just as the artisan's knowledge of his craft empowers him/her to shape objects of desire. In this sense, he notes that the main utility of the knowledge of political engineering is the preservation of the *lo stato* "the state" itself. The effective utilization of knowledge, in the sense in which Botero conceptualizes it, has to be governed by prudence: the crafty and expansive exploitation of a wide variety of sources of knowledge for the sole purpose of preserving the state (Hörcher, 2016).

The insights of the scholars cited above demonstrate the common intellectual mastery of developments, the optimization of the value of state resources, the pragmatic and unalloyed professional crafting of options, and the need for a seamless posturing of state actors for the attainment of the set objectives of both states and the support systems of institutions. Be that as it may, any effective design of strategic options ought to take into consideration, the broad dimensions of strategy, the focus of the next section (Black, 1998). It is instructive to note that all thinkers cited here do not consign strategy and its associated combat and war ideals to bloodletting or the battlefield. They have led persuasions aimed at the wellbeing of societies but arriving at that with the intuitions and reigns of strategy.

The Dimensions of Strategy: The Idea and Dissenting Perspectives

Drawing on the history of martial planning, Grand Strategy, admittedly an elusive concept, simply has to do with interventions in pursuit of the core interests of state in times of war and peace. Pitched at the highest level of statecraft, it has historically been premised on the existence and risk assessment of internal and external threats and a needs assessment to inform how such potential/actual disruptions can be overcome. In its strict military sense, the terminology of Grand Strategy is attributed to Liddell Hart who opined that the "role of grand strategy," or simply "higher strategy" "is to co-ordinate and direct all the resources of a nation, or band of nations, toward the attainment of the political object of the war." In other words, Grand/Higher Strategy directs the operationalization of actions of the state towards set objectives in war.

In his thinking therefore, Grand Strategy is encoded with a political objective in a context of war and defined in relation to a foe (Liddell Hart, 1991: pp. 321-322).

Hart's operationalization of Grand Strategy strictly in the martial sense is said to be problematic since the philosophy of the concept has equal relevance in times of peace and the governance imperatives in the civil realm. For example, Luttwak (1987) has concerns about the strict martial interpretation of Grand Strategy with his assertion that the decision-making context of war is in essence different from that required in contexts of low politics in times of peace or civilian affairs of state such as commerce and cultural management. This is so because in civilian matters of state, legal regimes and resilient customs and traditions exist to guide policymakers and policy making to initiate long term interventions without the need to factor in imminent or real threats of attack or destruction. Hence firms for example, engineer Grand Strategies with recourse to interests such as efficiency, profit margins and sustainability of business models given the logic of markets. Hence Luttwak submits that the requirements of Grand Strategy in times of war are entirely different from those of peace and have to be understood differently.

Michael Walzer (Walzer, 2004, pp. 33-50)⁶ makes a similar argument as Luttwak. He cautions against "routinization of emergency" and ponders the moral and ethical dilemmas of perceiving all foreign policy challenges as requiring the full projection of a state power. He thinks so because the governance ethics of policy-making is mostly contingent upon the type of emergency at hand. So, for example large scale war efforts are contexts of "supreme emergency," given the fact that their transactions have to do with existential threats to the state and may require immoral/amoral initiatives. In this respect, Hart's notion of Grand Strategy, accordingly is a "routinization of emergency" a posture that is at variance with the governance culture in normal times of peace.

Obviously, given the notions cited by the jury on the essence of Grand Strategy, its utility is for combat and war as well as times of emergency.

⁶ See chapter 3, Emergency Ethics, in particular.

However, it can be said that it cuts across both the martial and civilian realms. This being so, it can be said in agreement with Luttwak, that

... All states have a grand strategy, whether they know it or not. That is inevitable because grand strategy is simply the level at which knowledge and persuasion, or in modern terms intelligence and diplomacy, interact with military strength to determine outcomes in a world of other states with their own “grand strategies” (Luttwak, 2009: p. 409).

For the avoidance of doubt, “grand” in Grand Strategy ought not to be confused with grandiose, glory or expansionist state ambitions. Rather, it is to be understood as the quest to engineering the resources of state towards capacity building – military or otherwise (Hooft, 2017). Given the multifaceted nature of the state, Grand Strategy naturally is a complex macro level blueprint aimed at achieving long term structural objectives involving a thorough audit of a state’s tangible and intangible assets to inform the steps to marshal the needed resources consistent with the objectives set and to fill gaps. It also has a coordinating dimension which focuses on task specializations, regimes of institutional interactions and mandates as well as reporting schedules. In addition, Grand Strategic planning takes into consideration the regulatory status of institutions which is ascertained through multi-level stress tests to determine the endurance/resilience level of agencies. In the end, such exercises present risk and vulnerability profiles of all institutions involved in the grand strategic planning (Lonsdale, 2016).

As implied in the foregoing, Grand Strategic initiatives also require conscious interventions to align society with set goals. In other words, its formulation and efficacy of implementation is contingent on national consensus or the absence of antithetical resistance to set long term objectives (Bidaguren, 2016; Cerna, 2013; Alford & Greve, 2017). This imperative, however, should not be at the cost of flexibility since the long-term nature of Grand Strategic blueprints requires internal reactive mechanisms of flexibility to respond to the exigencies of dramatic changes of contexts and actors (Groves, 2010; Silove,

2017; Hatch & Zweig, 2001). Grand Strategic initiatives in the sense indicated so far affects state capacity. This section, subsequent with a focus on Africa, highlights how the connections play out.

Grand Strategy and Africa's Quest for State Capacity in Uncertainty

The age-old concept of equality of states presupposes that, states have equal influences on the global stage. However, their abilities to fulfill or accomplish policies and plans for the benefit of their citizenry cannot be the same. State capacity, a contested concept, is basically therefore the sum total of the potential of a state to determine its needs, those of its polity, furnish itself with options and alternatives and discharge its sovereign responsibilities. This capacity is measured and defined by cardinal issues including the relations between duty bearers and the citizens, elected leaders and public officials, and public officials and the rest of the society. The intangibles are complemented by some tangibles – both natural and acquired – making up state capacity. On the international stage, state capacity is defined by the amount of influence it is capable of exerting independently or with its allies (Lindvall & Teorell, 2017; Khemani, 2019; Williams, 2021; Hameiri, 2007; Chuaire, Scartascini, & Tommasi, 2014).

Among the several political dimensions which shape state capacity and efficiency, the structure of relations between political Leaders and the citizenry is key. The citizen owes his place and status simply by being a bona fide member of a society within a state. Statehood is defined not only by territory in International Law but by population as well. As such, the state needs the citizen in order to retain recognition and the citizen needs the state in order to benefit from an established order. The state is led by Political leaders who are mostly put in office by the rest of the citizens to represent and prosecute their interests. This may be through any form of governance; monarchical, theocratic, or democratic etc. No matter the format in use, the relationship between the political authorities and the citizens they lead determines the capacity of the state (Besley, 2007; Noone, Jr., 1976; Alik-Lagrange, Dreier, Lake, & Porisky, 2021). A harmonious relationship, founded on mutual trust,

should result in high productivity and a near elimination of the ills of public service and societal existence. This may sound idealistic but it is possible to achieve to a high degree and be sustained. The opposite also holds true: Where the citizens and political leaders do not trust each other and where there is a lack of harmony in society, productivity in all its natures can neither meet the aspirations of the people nor their leaders (Cingolani, 2013). In addition to this, the pattern of interaction between political leadership and technocratic officials has implications for the nature of state capacity. The tenure of political leaders, especially the elected ones, is often shorter than the duration of service of public officials. Public officials lead government agencies that have the mandate to serve the citizens on behalf of government. For the state to show an ability of fulfilling its obligations to the citizens, the relationship with its agents is paramount. A cordial and formal relationship based on a spirit of complementarity is ideal. A non-regard of public officials could lead to a nonchalant approach to service which in turn will adversely affect state productivity. The inverse also holds true (Scartascini, Stein , & Tommasi, 2008; Wang & Xu, 2018).

The cited dimensions capture the intangible and tangible aspects of state capacity as determinants of Grand Strategy. On the former, the state power and its capacity revolve around both latent attributes. The size of the population and its work-rate, the skill-sets available, the psyche and attitude of the populace, as well as the resilience of societal institutions and cultures all feed into what the state is capable of doing for its citizenry and its contributions to the global community. These are more important in periods of uncertainty when the non-predictability can be only confronted by a network of internally cultivated measures, luck, and the support of external partners. Inter-agency contributions and how effectively synergy is garnered, inter-party dialogues and the commitment stakeholders attach to them, and the overall political commitment all constitute part of the determination of state capacity. The critical mass provides both linkages and opportunities as well as challenges (Pouligny, 2010). With regard to tangible attributes, the natural resource-base of any country determines to a large extent, the wealth and economic status of the citizens (Herciu & Ogrean, 2015 ; Moss, 2012; Smith, 2019). Countries which are endowed with valuable

resources must however be in the possession of the needed technology and plans for sustainable extraction in order to benefit from them. In the absence of an effective strategy for the exploitation of such resources, the resource-curse concept is likely to prevail⁷. The sheer number of citizens and immigrants who are willing and able to work contribute to the productivity of the nation-state. The ability of a state to fully realize its potentials is equally an outcome of the availability, sufficiency, and appropriateness of infrastructure, technology, and markets.

Ever since the European model of the Westphalian State was instituted in Africa at the end of the WWII, the quest for state capacity in the terms outlined afore, has been a major challenge. States on the continent have variously been designated as lame Leviathans, proto-states and shadow states (Callaghy, 1987; Englebert, 1987; Jones, 2013; World Bank Group, 2021 ; Saldinger, 2017; Oarhe, 2013). Being so, the capacity to manage conflicts has been near impossible. Consequently, African states have the reputation of collapsing with the least political shock (Rotberg , n.d.; John, 2011; Reno, 2000). The structure of uncertainty on the question of whether or not the African state will survive another day is manifested through a number of channels.

In terms of politics, the essence of power seems to be access to it for its own sake. As manifested in the zero-sum contests attending the selection of political leadership, by way of, for example elections, the principles of democracy hardly apply (Obi, 2008). The sanctity of political practice, the commitment to its values, and its real beneficiaries are often matters of worry. Intra-party politics can get acrimonious and create factions that weaken the entities especially in African countries. This has led to several conflicts with some ending in outright violence and war. The tendency of deliberately having systems that support the establishment of dynasties within political parties is not far-fetched. Power brokering thus has become a common feature in almost all African democracies. The inter-party contests for political leadership on the African continent has often been marked with suspicions,

7 The African continent's resource related conflicts have led experts to aver that the resources have rather been a curse than a blessing to many of such nations. See (Alao, 2007; Olanrewaju, 2020)

dissent, and expensive acrimonious activities. Internal control and monitoring have often not been assessed as fair and sufficient. Consequently, it is common to find external observers within African countries before, during and after elections, who independently and objectively assess and report on the integrity or otherwise of an election. This situation is due to the aura of uncertainty that often hangs over the election process in emerging and developing democracies. Intra-party relations are also often plagued with uncertainties. Internal contests and conflicts within political parties can be just as vicious as the inter-party contests. Such contests can lead to a weakening of the very foundations of political systems further exacerbating doubts of the survival of institutions. The ability and culture of enforcement of regulations, rules and directives of central authorities determines to a large extent the security of the environment. Consequently, deviations and failures to ensure enforcement no matter the causative reasons, can be sources of worry. This unpredictable phenomenon affects the potency of states especially in uncertain times. Closely related to this is the issue of insecurity of the tenure of office of public officials whose duties may include law enforcement on behalf of elected or appointed authorities. The ensuing acute competition for power within parties for group leadership and the competition amongst the parties for state leadership end in factionalism. Factionalism is not necessarily negative but then it has become endemic with uncoordinated aspirations, thus threatening stability, state unity and cohesion.

The economic might of a country is a key source of state power. And since African states mostly have none, they are weak in this respect. African economic systems are fragile because they are subjected to acute internal and external shocks which work to degrade the human condition on the continent. Stemming from economic volatility due to unstable and dwindling commodity prices on the world market, the governance of welfare by states through the provision of basic human needs has been a major challenge. African governments, in raising funds to make up for revenue shortfalls from low commodity prices mostly rely on foreign aid which comes with conditionalities with much more devastating political and economic consequences in the form of, for example, food riots (Patel , 2009; Giller, 2020).

The fusion of zero-sum politics with socio-economic insecurity has created a complex of crisis with no end in sight. Given that the new global threats have emerged in Africa in addition to the old (McGuire, 2010; Kshetri, 2019; Babatunde, 2014; Collier; Lyman, 2004; Sage, 2010), Africa has no other choice than to respond with a Grand Strategy of its own.

Recommendations

The study has successfully laid the foundation for addressing state incapacities and challenges using the lenses of strategists. It is highly recommended that the study of classical strategy be pursued and lived, not only by the state and public institutions in charge of countering threats to the existence of the modern state, especially the African state, but also by industries and commercial players whose fortunes, not only reflect the image and stature of the modern state, but are also used as a quantifiable measure of its worth. The use of the ideals of strategy needs to be embraced by institutions of learning, civil society organizations as well as traditional leadership. This is more important in the uncertain times that vulnerable and strong states alike find themselves in. An all-of-the-country adoption of strategic thinking and practices should insulate the African state against the vagaries of the times no matter their origins.

Conclusion

The Weberian state model continues to retain its popularity on the African continent. The discharge of the functions and responsibilities of the state to the citizenry, peers, and the global community are not measured by the latent and existing potential of the state. Expectations are to be met despite varying capacities, age, and differing exposures. To hold its own in the face of an unforgiving populace, near insensitive external rating institutions, and an unfair international world order, all forward-looking states need to commit themselves to the optimization of the potentials of their strategists and associated resources. Though Strategy, historically and classically, was meant for the armed services

of states, it should be seen today as holding the key to state-survival in not just the domains of geopolitics and high politics, but also in low politics. The DNA of the state should be its strategic blueprint without which disorder will be the norm rather than an exception.

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