

**CRITICAL COMPARISON OF LEADERSHIP QUALITIES: LOUIS XIV AND MANUEL JOSEF IN *MASTERS OF THE DEW***

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**Abstract**

Leadership or more precisely, the manifestations of the qualities of a ruler or a leader affect the lives of the governed in every society in the world, and Africa is no exception. The term, leadership does not only comprise the qualities of a leader but also the socio economic and political situation of the people been governed. Therefore, the significance of good leadership has always been over emphasized. This work is a critical profile of the leadership qualities of an important historical character, Louis XIV of France of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and Manuel Josef, the protagonist, in *Masters of the dew*, a work of African Caribbean Literature. The examination of both figures intends to highlight the double-face of leadership, and also acknowledge how the leadership styles of both characters are reflected in contemporary leadership in Africa. This work will base its analysis on a sociological approach. This will enable the concept of leadership to be well analyzed and understood in this communication.

Key words: Leadership, Literature, Sociological approach, Africa

**Introduction**

Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth therefore; A society without a leader is captioned as a body floating on water, not knowing where the waves will take it to. In the world as a whole, the term leadership is over emphasized and over analyzed. Every country of the world has a leader in one way or the other guiding them in governance and policy making. According to Cohen, W.A in his book- *The Art of a Leader*, Leadership is the act of influencing others to their maximum performance to accomplish any task, objective or project. Another scholar, Richard and Engle defined leadership as a term that articulates vision, embodying values and creating the environment within which things can be accomplished.

The word “leader” was first mentioned in the year 1821. Later on, it was combined with “ship” denoting “position”. The word “leader” originated from old English “lædere” meaning “one who leads” agent noun from “lædan” meaning- to guide, bring forth. According to Richard Kelly, in his article titled – *The Etymological root of leadership, lead and leader*. He stated that there has been an evolution of leadership, thereby making the concept to shift from controlling people and progress to a more enabling style. According to him:

the new style entails that leadership involves cultivating self-awareness, self-discovery and understanding the impact of its style of leadership on the people he/she governs.

Leadership involves motivation and encouragement toward achieving a common goal. It also involves critical guidance towards a reasonable task that will bring a reasonable result. It also involves decisions,

creating and articulating a clear vision, establishing achievable goals and providing followers with the knowledge and tools necessary to achieve those goals. It also requires individuals to possess certain key traits, such as: strong communication skills, charisma, assertiveness and empathy.

Previous empirical study on leadership has been carried out in different dimension. Grint, K (2005) explored the foundation of good leadership by elaborating the relationship between leaders and subordinates and also the roles that leaders play in the dynamics of organizational life. According to Chemers Martins, Leadership is a group rather than individual phenomenon. It is widely understood as the process of social influence through which a group member enlists and mobilizes its members in attainment of a collective goal. (Chemers, 2001, p.376). However, in his study of historical development of Leadership style, he exposed that an integrative of current knowledge about leadership will make leadership to be effective. This implies knowledge of current leadership qualities that manifest around the continents. Furthermore, he also analyzed the concept of Leadership as an emergent social response to a collective need, a response that develops out of the transactional relationships between a would be leader and others who share the collective goal.

In another development, the Marxist theory on Leadership believes that leaders are more transactional and they hold stronger belief in their own capacity than the will of others. Ulam (2013) presented the Marxist pattern of Leadership in his work. His analysis focused on different styles and practice of Marxist pattern of Leadership. However, Catano et al (2001) also explored the concept of leadership in relation to volunteer organizations. They presented a research on leadership based on Marxist theory of leadership. This research was carried out with 212 Canadian volunteer leaders from an international social/ charitable organization. They found out that Volunteer leaders were more psychologically involved and committed to their organization than comparable leaders from unions.

However, according to the vision of John Maxwell, a leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way. The leadership question has become a recurring issue in the discourse on the world's project. The question implies if the governed/citizens benefit from the qualities of their leaders? Is the leadership quality of their leader affecting them positively or negatively? However, In Africa today, our dream and hope of a good leader has remained largely unfulfilled; therefore a call for a focus on leadership is timely and important.

Africa has been undergoing different socio-economic and political crises due to the individuality of their leaders. These crises generated by political, social and economic instability have bedeviled Africa. This calls our attention to the problems of leadership in our continent. In other words, the issue of insecurity, economic recession, violence, increasing crime waves is all attributes of the problem of leadership in Africa. But as much as these leadership problem exist, how has the leader played a role in resolving is critical issues? How far has the qualities of the leader influenced the lives of the governed? However in this work, using a comparative methodology, we are going to portray two different leadership qualities of: Louis xiv of France in 18<sup>th</sup> century and Manuel Josef in *Masters of the Dew* in Caribbean African Literature. The leadership comparison between the two characters will help to portray their leadership qualities and how it will impact the contemporary leaders to work efficiently based on the lessons learnt from their character comparison. Furthermore, we will use the Marxist theory to analyze the qualities of the two characters. Basing it on a sociological approach, the impact of the qualities will be brought to light.

### **Summary of the life and leadership qualities of Manuel**

*Masters of the dew* is a socialist realist novel written in 1944 by the prominent Haitian communist Jacques Roumain. The protagonist of the novel *Masters of the dew*, Manuel, son of Bienaimé and Délira, came back from his sojourn in Cuba, where he worked in a Sugar cane plantation for 15 years found his village (Fond-rouge) devastated by drought, famine and hatred. The inhabitants hated each other, tearing each other apart for the land. While the drought causes the misery of people in Fond-rouge, Manuel gave himself the mission to find the water and bring it to the village. To do so, he found an

accomplice; a lover called Annaise, a beautiful Haitian woman who came from the clan of Dorisca, killed by Savior, uncle of Manuel. Manuel preaches the reconciliation between the inhabitants of Fond-rouge. He instructed Annaise to talk to women so that they can convince their husbands to participate in the coumbite when he finds the water.

While searching, Manuel found the water in a white earth like chalk, planted with malangas. Everyone was happy for this good news except the bad guy, Gervilen, who wants at all costs to avenge his father Dorisca. One evening, while Bienaimé was not there, Manuel was going to a meeting with Larivoire, old man and notable of Fond-rouge. Arriving at the latter's, he was well received. He advocated reconciliation, concord and living together between the inhabitants. Gervilen was offended and threatened to avenge his father.

Returning home, Manuel was stabbed by Gervilen. He dragged himself on his stomach until he arrived his hut. After his burial, Annaise showed the inhabitants the place where the water was. They took her to the village. So life began again at Fond-rouge.

Manuel, the protagonist in the *Masters of the dew* is the catalyst for the revolutionary change. He is a social activist who advocated for peace and sustainability in Fonds-rouge. Manuel can be described as a good leader. He was a leader who devoted his life to the reversal of situation in Fonds-rouge.

According to a leadership scholar, Peter Northouses, he defined leadership as “ a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Manuel was a unique example of such character.

He is one who carries everybody along. The following leadership qualities are evident in Manuel:

1. Organized and prepared – Manuel has the ability to unite ideas with actions. He does not dream dreams, however, he worked actively in the shaping of his society le fonds-rouge. The price Manuel had to pay during the period of slavery in the sugar plantation in Cuba was well pointed out by the Author.

Quand, sous le matraquage des gardes ruraux, il sentait ses os craquer, une voix inflexible lui soufflait: Tu es vivant, tu es vivant, mords ta langue et tes cris car tu es un homme même pour de vrai, avec ce qu'il faut là où il en faut. Si tu tombes, tu seras semé pour une récolte invincible. “haitianoMaldito, Negro de Miedra” hurlaient les gardes. Les coups ne faisaient même plus mal. À travers un brouillard parcouru de chocs fulgurants, Manuel entendait comme une source de sang, la rumeur inépuissable de la vie. (34-35)

Although, based on the whips of the rural guards, he felt his bones creak, an unyielding voice whispered to him: You are alive, you are alive, bite your tongue and swallow your cries because you are a man, a real man who has what a man must have and at the right place. If you fall, you will be sown for an invincible crop. "Malditohaitiano, Negro de Miedra" shouted the guards. The body does not hurt anymore. Through a fog with flashing shocks, Manuel could hear the persistent sound of life in his blood.

Manuel was determined to pass through difficulties just to see that he saves his people. This trip to Cuba turned him into an organizer and an activist full of experience.

2. Ability to inspire and carry others along: we can see this leadership quality in Manuel when he asked his lover Annaise to assist him in mobilizing men and women for the development of the land. He also stressed the role of women in community development.

Quand J'aurai déterré l'eau, Je te ferai savoir et tu commenceras à parler aux femmes. Les femmes c'est irritable, Je ne dis pas non; mais c'est plus sensé aussi et porté du côté du cœur et la raison c'est du pareil au même, tu diras: cousine une telle, tu as appris la nouvelle? Quelle nouvelle? Elle répondra. On répète comme çaque le garçon de Bienaimé, ce nègre qui s'appelle Manuel a découvert une source... et comme on est fâchés, la source restera là sans profit pour personne. (87)

When I dig up the water, I'll let you know and you'll start talking to the women. Women are irritable, but they have more sense and listen to their heart. You will say: my cousin, have you heard the news? What news? The answer will be: The son of Bienaime, this Negro named Manuel has discovered a source ... and since we are not at peace, the source will remain there, and will be of no benefit for anyone.

He also stressed on the importance of unity and end to unnecessary fights. He can also be called a peaceful leader.

3. Creativity and innovations- Manuel returned to fonds-rouge and met his native land in a pitiable condition. There was drought, famine and joblessness. Manuel despite his severe criticism of Cuba he retains from his migratory experience key knowledge and especially a critical awareness that he uses in solving the problem of drought. He worked hard to discover a water body which will irrigate the whole island.
4. Visionary: Manuel was a man of vision. He looks beyond today and tomorrow. He is a leader who had the future in mind.

Manuel can also be seen as an agent of social transformation. He transformed the village from a static and resigned village into a dynamic village where civic engagement and collective action is the order of the day. Manuel was not only a wonderful leader but the Deus ex machina (saviour) for the people of fonds-rouge. The tragedy of the commons was of serious concern to him. He came back to fonds-rouge, restored peace and liberated the land but was killed by his enemies who opposed his revolutionary and development activities.

### **The life and leadership qualities of Louise xiv of France**

Louis xiv of France was the most influential leader of France. It was the despotism of his rulership that ushered in the most sublime of all earthly drama – the French Revolution. However the debut of his life is necessary to be unveiled. Louis xiv was born on September 1638, in Saint- Germaine, France. He was christened: Louis- Dieudonné , French for ‘‘Gift of God’’. His mother was the Hapsbury Spanish Queen Anne of Austria, and his father was Louis xiii, king of France.

At age 4 (1643) Louis xiv lost his father, as a toddler, he succeeded his father to the throne. He became a leader to 19 million French citizens and a highly unstable government. He was practically tutored on how to govern his state through the help of his god-father, Minister Cardinal Jules Mazarin. Mazarin tutored in history, politics and arts.

In Louis xiv early years as a young leader under tutoring, he faced a civil war, which was caused by the Parliament of Paris rebelling against the chief minister, Mazarin. Throughout the long war, Louis xiv suffered many hardships, including poverty and starvation. When the war ended, Mazarin, his mentor and chief minister continued in mentoring him and also he built an elaborate administration as Louis xiv stood by and observed him closely.

As a young king without adequate direction, he ultimately chose duty over in 1666, he married the daughter of the king of Spain, Marie- Therese of Austria. The marriage ensured ratification of the peace treaty that Mazarin had sought to establish with Hapsburg Spain.

At age 20, after the death of his god father/chief minister Mazarin, Louis xiv fully assumed his duty as the king of France and quickly he reformed France according to his own vision.

### **Leadership qualities of Louise xiv and Manuel**

Authentic leadership is defined as when “followers have a realistic perception of their leader’s behaviour” (Northouse,2010, p.205)

Louis xiv was an absolute leader, there was no questioning of his legitimacy as a ruler because he was a true born king of France, truly ordained by God to be the king of France. This notion of divinity led Louis xiv to create himself in the image of a deity with undisputable power. He chooses the sun as his sigil, after the Greek god Apollo, god of peace and art, giver of life, regulating everything with the rise and set of the sun. This suited his leadership style perfectly. As an absolute leader, nothing was accomplished without his approval. He also established a routine of rising and retiring at regular times to signify the start and end of the everyday court. During his reign, he set up his own government to support absolutist politics and leadership style. He was quoted saying:

“ up to this moment, I have been pleased to entrust the government of my affairs to late cardinal, it is now time that I govern them myself. You (secretaries and ministers of state) will assist me with your counsel when I ask for them. I request and order you to seal no order except by my command. I order you not to sign anything , not even a passport without my command; to render account to me personally each day and favour no one” (Steingrad,2007) .

Also he was well known for his bold and infamous statement

“ L’Etat, C’est moi”

Which signifies: the state is me. He was extravagant and he built several châteaux that depressed the Nation of France.

Louis xiv appointed the nobles himself and not by the strength of the church. He was the epitome of an absolutist leader, comparable to a modern dictator. In as much as he was a practical dictator, his style of leadership helped him to achieve his amiable decisions efficiently.

However, Louis xiv was an authentic leader, he possessed certain character traits, skills and background that made him suitable to his leadership role. He was a prudent, moderate and a reserved leader. He is always a master of his emotions, tongue and thoughts. He was seen as a personality whom God gave the ability to be a great king. He worked tirelessly to centralize and tighten the control of France and its overseas colonies which was decentralized by the Chief Minister. Also, through his finance minister, Baptiste Colbert, he implemented reforms that reduced deficit and brought the growth of France.

Consequently, Louis’s charismatic nature made him easier for him to connect with his subjects. He was a noble leader in that he was trained in politics, military strategy, diplomacy, economics etc. from his young age of 4. However, his natural born traits combined with his eloquent skills made him an authentic leader that’s sets paces.

In another development, Louis xiv was also a determined leader who is rigid in his decisions. His indisputable rigidity led him to be quiet and unwilling to compromise when it comes to matters on conflicts. He went to war with Spain to ensure his wife’s succession, then again towards the end of his reign because it was disputed whether his Bourbon line or a Hapsbury prince from Bavaria should to the throne of Spain. Another of his rigid character was showcased when he revoked the edit of Nantes, thereby making the Protestants in France to flee to other neighbouring cities. He ordered the destruction of of Protestants churches, the expulsion of Protestants clergies forcing all citizens to embrace catholic.

Another of his indisputable character was how he sets pace for the leaders after him. His reign set the standard for Monarchies and aristocracies in Europe for decades to come. He was the ideal monarch, charismatic in nature and also he maintained the aristocracy of his state. He also managed the different sector the economy of France. He created a huge success for the economy which made France to prosper for nearly 8 years and grew to become a strong international force. He was passionately involved in Arts and Culture of France. He appreciated arts, music and literature. He appointed himself Patron of the Academic Française, the body that regulates the French language.

He launched the war of evolution (1667), war of reunions (1683-1684), Dutch war (1672-1678). Through these wars, he acquired new territories for France.

“Do not follow the bad example that I have set for you” a dying Louis told his heir.” I have often undertaken wars too lightly and have sustained it for vanity, do not imitate me, but be a peaceful prince”. Louis xiv was indeed a despotic leader, which he himself is fully aware of.

**The Critical Comparison of Louis xiv et Mauel Josef**

Louis xiv	Manuel Josef
Louis xiv was a legitimate born ruler of France. His parents were crown king and queen France. According to history, his birth was ordained by God. He was educated in all aspects of arts, politics, history and economics.	Manuel was not born a king. His parents were not educated so he had no academic background. He was just a farmer.
At a young age, he encountered an unstable government when his father died.	He came back from his fifteen years sojourn at Cuba and encountered a home town filled with famine, hatred and drought.
He started exhibiting his leadership style right after the death of his father as a young king	He started practicing his leadership style after his fifteen years sojourn at Cuba
Louis xiv had one wife with numerous concubines which portrayed him as an unstable leader	Manuel had only Annaise as his soul mate.
Louis xiv was always in conflict with his city and other neighbouring state.	Manuel preached reconciliation and peace between the habitants of fonds- rouge
Louis xiv was a despotic leader who doesn't regard the outcry of his citizens. He revoked the edict de nantes, thereby making the protestants to lose their Christian faith.	Manuel was a peaceful leader with vision and dignity. He stressed the importance of peace and unity. He also put to an end the disaccord between his family and their enemies.
Louis xiv was an absolute leader. His yes is yes. No counter response from any of his subjects. His everyday saying is 'l'Etat, c'estmoi'- I am the state. He owns the state and he doesn't regard any other opinion from his cabinet.	Manuel had the ability to carry others along. He seeks their opinion and mobilizes his people to help in the development of the land.
Louis xiv died regretting his life style. He was not loved by his people. His death was celebrated.	Manuel died as a Hero. After being stabbed, he still preached peace and reconciliation. He is the deus ex machine of his people.

Having seen the two sides of the coin as regards to the two different leadership qualities of Louis xiv and Manuel Josef, we are convinced that their Leadership styles were quite different from each other. Coming down to our contemporaries leaders, we can delude that each leader's character affects the citizen he governs. An African leader with a character like Manuel Josef will help his state to grow in every aspects of development. A leader with the leadership qualities of Louis xiv will make his state to always be in debt. There won't be any maximum development in his state.

**Conclusion**

Manuel can be seen as a leader occupying the position described as Deus ex machine. He returned to his land for the redemption of his people. He is the unexpected messiah for the people of fonds-rouge. He is also a Marxist hero who taught his community how to work together for the collective good of all. The triumphant conclusion of the novel where the land is irrigated can be seen as a great achievement for Manuel who championed the course but did not live to see it actualized. Louis xiv who is known for a particular statement- l'état, c'est moi was so powerful and domineering. He revoked the edict de Nantes. He was also a notorious and an egoistic leader who sought magnificence in all things. He was an insatiable man, a woman could not satisfy for a long time. He viewed himself as a direct representative of God. He chose the sun as his symbol which earned him the name 'sun king'. He died in regrets of his life.

This paper is centered on the critical comparison of the life and leadership qualities of Louis xiv in 18<sup>th</sup> century French literature and Josef Manuel in *Masters of the dew* a Caribbean literature. We also examined the impact of their leadership qualities on their people. We have also suggested that our present African leaders should emulate the leadership qualities of Manuel Josef so that the people of the African state will feel the positive impacts of leaders with the qualities of Manuel. We also appeal to the leaders with the qualities of Louis xiv to have a change of heart for our collective good. You will agree with me that Africa is in need of Deus ex machina.

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