DEMOCRAT TO DEMAGOGUE

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Category: Africa

There is an interesting, though rather distressing, article in the New York Times about Laurent Gbagbo by one of his former supporters:

> *How did the man who was once seen as the father of Ivorian democracy turn to tyranny? Was it the corruption of power? The intoxication of going from having nothing to everything all at once? Only a year before he was elected president, in 1999, I remember him denouncing Slobodan Milosevic, saying: â€œWhat does Milosevic think he can do with the whole world against him? When everyone in the village sees a white loincloth, if you are the only person to see it as black, then you are the one who has a problem.â€ But in the space of 10 years, he became deluded by power, a leader whose only ambitions were to build palaces and drive luxurious cars.*

> *After last fallâ€™s election, Mr. Gbagbo and his wife, Simone, refused to accept the results, in part because they had become evangelical Christians, and their pastors convinced them that God alone could remove them from power. Every day on state TV, fanatical clergymen called Mr. Gbagbo Godâ€™s representative on earth, and the winner of the election, Alassane Ouattara, the Devilâ€™s.*

This issue of Mr Gbagbo being an evangelical Christian is somewhat balanced by this article on Reuters.