Mapinduzi Journal 5
Cultural mixity, migration and youth mouvements

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Introduction

Following our meeting in Ouagadougou in April 2017, we are presenting here a selection of contributions around the topics of *Cultural mixity, migration and youth movements.*

A Summary of the discussions at the meeting illustrates the links between the different topics and the question of governance, which rears its head at every turn.

Samir Abi from Togo sketches a concise picture of the opportunities to be seized in this global world which do not favour young Africans, but which must nonetheless be encouraged. He also shares the editorial he wrote for a German daily newspaper at the Global Forum on Migration and Development, evoking the common history of Togo and Germany: calling for bridges to be built instead of the walls that are coming up.

Christiane Kayser of Luxembourg reflects on the concepts of *métissage*, connection and cultural fusion as interfaces between the local and the global, while at the same time developing a link with the challenges facing young people.

Flaubert Djateng from Cameroon analyses the situation of African youth and the traps that present themselves. He also defines the duties of elder generations in relation to these young people.

Serge Sivya from the Congolese movement La LUCHA describes the bases of their struggle and the identity challenges they face.

Onesphore Sematumba from Pole Institute in DRC illustrates the barriers, ghettos and islets in the east of the country, in particular North-Kivu, but nevertheless manages to find some bridges.

Kennedy Mwema of DRC explains migrations fraught with every kind of danger even within his own country, in particular in the North-East.

Ambroise Dakouo analyses youth protest dynamics in Mali, his native country.

Young British journalist Harry Davies looks at the dynamics of the activism of young people in Great Britain.

Maimu Wali from Niger describes a local initiative that propagates autonomous actions and refuses the traps of charity in her country.

Sébastien Ouedraogo of Burkina Faso reports on the events surrounding the return of 154 compatriots from Libya which took place during the Mapinduzi conference.

We hope that this work will arouse interest and reactions to allow us to examine in more depth the challenges to be met together.

Flaubert Djateng
Christiane Kayser
Bafoussam, Les Barthes, September 2017

Cultural mixity, migration and youth mouvements

Summary of Mapinduzi Unit Meeting in Ouagadougou 18–21 April 2017

1. FROM DAKAR TO OUAGADOUGOU VIA SEGOU: PATH, CERTAINTIES AND QUESTIONS

A path

From our workshops in Dakar (2013), via Ségou (2015) and Ouagadougou (2017), Mapinduzi has further consolidated its bases. This rich and inspiring path has been built on:

- *a firm belief in the power of ideas,*
- *the connections between experiences, practices, etc.*
- *dynamics in interaction with other dynamics in the world,*
- *stakeholders engaged in the processes that are transforming their realities.*

Certainties

In Dakar in 2013, the members and contributors to Mapinduzi observed that "*we want to build our citizenship on the basis of our multiple identities*". This is a conviction shared by all, and at the heart of this conviction there are some certainties:

- *Work on intermingling and roots (acknowledge new references: urban dwellers, new villages, etc.)*
- *What kind of implosions do we need for a defragmentation of our societies?*
- *Nation or community with a common fate?*
- *Identify the fundamentals that mobilise the population in relation to an area, a community or a State*

Questions

"Métissage", intermingling or cultural mixity, is and remains a major advantage in a global world for creating the foundations of shared living. But is it promoted?

These past few years we have noticed that migration around the world, within and between countries is increasing, for populations are fleeing violence and insecurity, seeking out conditions to live in dignity and are increasingly insecure and ill at ease in a neoliberal, global world governed by greed and financial flows. These population movements meet increasingly hostile and violent reactions on the part of the "indigenous" peoples. The building of virtual and real walls is coming back into fashion to exclude some people and imprison others.

In parallel, almost everywhere in Africa, movements of young activists are emerging and even under conditions of oppression are strongly committed to transforming their regions and country. They combat poor governance and corruption, claim their place in systems to be democratised, refuse to flee difficult realities and insist on making a contribution to the decisions for the future of their country. We consider that in a world of regressive separatism which is closing instead of opening up (Brexit, Trumpism, populist movements, etc.) these African movements are a hope and an opportunity for all.

These dynamics should be appreciated according to the structural fragility of the States and also the phenomena linked to economic and/or political crises of defensively clinging to identity. The Ouagadougou workshop was therefore an occasion to examine the manifestations of these challenges:

- What is the situation where you live?
- Are the youth movements open to intermingling and do they combat exclusion and the reflex of falling back on a single identity?
- What are the links between cultural mixity, migration and youth movements?
- What are the answers to our challenges of 2013 (see above)?
- What trends are emerging in your country, region, in general?

2. DEVELOPING THE POTENTIAL OF OUR MIXITY

At both the beginning and the end of the workshop, the participants took part in a very interesting exercise. Each attendee was asked to present, or, rather, show their mixity, of whatever nature it be. We were able to discover the wealth of life narratives, the connections between territories—ethnic group/tribe—along and across borders. While the aim of an exercise like this is to encourage the participants to get to know one another, it also made it possible to highlight how complex the description of the places we belong to is.

In the course of this exercise, most of the participants began to introduce themselves with *"I come from …"*. As the origin is the initial stage of all processes, it has the advantage of giving us reference points, memories and can even give meaning to our future quests.

As we remember this exercise, we postulate that our quest for transformation of our societies should commence with our own knowledge and beyond that, our inter-knowledge. Who we are is never straightforward to define. Similarly, defining *'métissage', mixity, migration –mobility, national identity, diversities, etc.* is more than a simple theoretical exercise of postulating an imagination and a relationship in the collective sense.

One thing is certain, our intermingling and its acceptance should not be reductive. To this end, the participants agreed to postulate that ***"métissage" should be the sum of identities, the reflection of diversities and not their obliteration or reduction.***

3. THE MAJOR TOPICS EMERGING FROM THE DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Migration and the problematic of mobility

Migration in itself is a source of enrichment. Similarly, it is not a new phenomenon. Nor should we neglect the phenomenon of ***"glocalisation"***, that is to say the important role of the diasporas at local and national levels in our country.

But despite a world that is global, certain returns orchestrated by the diasporas, African Youth profits very little from the current dynamics. When we observe the current forms of migration, we should note, as a participant stated, that ***"the problem goes beyond migration; it's a question of mobility"***. For in

fact, outside of migration, the diverse forms of mobility within a country are often a source of conflict or the cause of "killings". It emerges that there are numerous barriers (lack of infrastructure, low security of the people, unsafe roads, etc.). The few "islands of security" that exist in such or such a country are never really adequate to disperse the immense despair. In total, it would be appropriate to create "bridges towards the future".

3.2. The multiplicity of youth protest dynamics

The protest dynamics of young people are diverse, faced by challenges that are structural and cyclical. If we take the case of Burkina Faso, it is important to see how former openings made by democracy have been capitalised on to serve as leverage. The implementation of reforms such as decentralisation, by creating localised spaces for frank and critical expression, have made it possible to lay down, gradually down through the country's history since the 1990s, a progressive dynamic of protest against the established political order. In this, we should avoid seeing current protest dynamics as a panacea capable, after only a few months, of toppling regimes which have been perpetuated sometimes for more than three decades. This is what is revealed by a written contribution from young Europeans that stresses the limits of the mobilisation of British youth in the context of Brexit. It adds that promises not kept by politicians are also apt to weaken the electoral commitments of young people. In any case, we agree not to overestimate or over-interpret youth protest dynamics, which is why the approach contextualised on the basis of the historical and institutional trajectories of each country should allow an understanding of these protests.

3.3. The paradigm of the paradox

By saying that *"all world leaders were young once"* one of the participants pointed out the "idealist" nature of some of the claims of youth. This intervention raises the necessity of going beyond the "charms" of the protest dynamics to ask ourselves: "to what extent should these dynamics be taken seriously"? For in fact, just as much as we may observe that young players are engaged in dynamics for change, we may observe the opposite. This power struggle, also called the "paradigm of paradox" by a speaker, represents a major chal-

lenge to be given consideration, in the sense that it seeks to avoid the idealisation, hasty generalisation and homogenisation of the readings of youth dynamics.

3.4. New threats and deconstruction of the models of society and State

Over the years, the security context in the majority of countries in West Africa—particularly in the Sahel-Saharan strip—has become a major concern. In addition to the usual threats such as armed conflicts and organized crime, which the countries have had to face, we are seeing the emergence of new threats such as the appearance of non-state armed groups and terrorist groups, the rise in cross-border and transnational organised crime, expanding radicalisation, etc.

Today, we are witnessing a phenomenon of deconstruction of the former model of the State and society, in which the principle of secularism is at risk, as well as religious tolerance, etc. Many young people, who are not necessarily in a precarious situation, allow themselves to be influenced/indoctrinated by religious leaders originating from schools in the Arab countries.

These various forms of influence are called "invisible", for they are carried out without open, violent repression, but are rather contained in the coercive register of the social-traditional space. And so we are witnessing a transformation of the artistic and cultural habits of our societies. This concerns the practice of christenings, weddings and other social and cultural ceremonies.

3.5. Putting into perspective simplistic generalisations and hasty readings of the phenomena

Our exchanges revealed that the phenomena of radicalisation and violent, religious extremism do not present themselves in the same way all over the continent. With reference to the context of Cameroon, it emerges from the empirical investigations that religion is not a decisive factor in the jihadist's strategies for hiring and indoctrinating young people. Similarly, young rural dwellers are more likely than young urban dwellers to enrol in criminal economic activities or the jihad.

Now, a reading of these same phenomena, in the Sahel-Saharan strip would, for example, emphasise the religious factor and the historical precedence of the forms of jihad before the modern State was introduced. This is why it is appropriate to work to better decrypt the underlying causes of these phenomena. We should not restrict ourselves to the simplistic and often hasty explanation of the factors of poor governance and poverty, or mere generalisation.

3.6. Poor governance and the fragilities of the States

Almost all of the experiences reported show that countries are faced with challenges that are both structural and cyclical. These countries are in fragile situations that affect the quality of democracy and governance. We even hear that some "powers have lost their legitimacy and are incapable of inspiring hope". Some other participants would highlight the problematic of "discipline" as one of the reasons for weak States and lack of socio-political order. In reality, the promises not kept, the lack of true reform (case of decentralisation) and the weakness of the political leadership hinder the emergence of a strong State capable of promoting the respect of the rules of the Republic. In such contexts of fragility, migrations and mobilities are faced with "gratuitous" violence that is often difficult to explain. Considering such contexts, we cannot prevent ourselves from noting that the presence of foreign missions (as objectionable and linked to exogenous interests as they may be) remain one of the alternatives in the very short term to which the concerned parties cling to establish fleeting stability.

3.7. Youth protest movements: which political stance to take?

Several decades of the exercise of power, poor governance and weak political leadership convince the population that the political offers from all sides are only the reflection of a "dishonest" and "ineffectual" policy. In such a context the protest movements, when they favour alternating parties or changes in regimes are also confronted with the political brokerage of their ideals. If we take the case of Senegal "*The 'Y'en a marre' movement today has become the true opposition to the detriment of the political class which was broken by the principal party in power*".

Herein lies the question of the limits to be exceeded or not. For we should point out that citizen movements are in principle dynamics of civil society. Essentially, it is not the purpose of civil society to struggle to gain political power, but rather to build an anti-establishment "counter-power" aimed at citizen participation, the accountability of the decision-makers and strengthening the democratic institutions. In this context, the example of *"Y'en a marre"* which decides to stand for election to parliament in Senegal is very illustrative. This evolution of logic and of the postures of the movements of young people is an invitation to open the discussions about the transformations or the life cycle of youth protest movements.

3.8. The now preponderant place of the social networks as a means of expression and mobilisation

The social networks are much used by the young people involved in protest dynamics. These new information and communication technologies allow young people to amplify their combat, mobilise beyond state borders and very often lead to rendering the powers in place more fragile. But, we should also point out that the recruiters, too, use the social networks to sign up young people into the criminal economy and the jihad.

3.9. The constitutions of our States faced with political instabilities and ethnic/tribal crises

How do we transform ethnic crises into opportunities to recreate our national identities, our relationship to the State and internal solidarities whether ethnic or political? What place do our constitutions have to achieve political stability? What place do our constitutions have to build true *métissages*?

3.10. Re-thinking a new State

The new forms of threat, the various forms of fragmentation of our societies and the limits of our public institutions show us more—if we were not already convinced—the limits of our States: "our States are stripped naked". An imagination of the State, an imagined State, a State in imagination then

emerges forcefully from the discussions. In fact, several points emerging from the exchanges indicate this quest for a new State:

- A "new political culture" is required,

- There is a necessity to build a real "political leadership",

- The Rwandan model of leadership is impressive to a number of people, but its bases and specific features must be studied more,

- Can a model of leadership in a given country in a given situation be transferred or would it not be more judicious to identify the elements to be appropriated?

- How can "discipline" be integrated as a key factor of governance?

- What are the mechanisms of control and accountability? "Who are the controllers"?

- What kind of education system do we need to build better citizenship?

- What model of "democracy" based on our socio-historical leadership values?

3.11. Methodologies, tools and experience

Intervention in the field of migration is particular. It requires an appropriate, inclusive and proactive approach. During the workshop, shared experiences showed the advantages of using films to document and report on migratory dynamics. We may mention the example of the film made in Cameroon "The desert or the underground". The use of audiovisual materials (among so many others) turns out to be effective in throwing light on migratory dynamics, but also the various forms of conflicts facing young people within the States.

On an analytical level, in-depth work is required to throw light on the history of migrations, as well as the consequences of the first migrants on the definition and imposition of a "seductive image" around migration. "Do not forget the images the first migrants conveyed".

To understand the current phenomena related to the radicalisation, and violent, religious extremists, it is important to adopt a rigorous research approach. Such research should take the empirical data into account and also integrate a dimension of comparison of the realities of several countries: Senegal, Mali and Niger have all faced such threats.

4. QUESTS AND PROJECTS

Apart from the major questions which were extensively discussed, several other points we call "quests and projects" aroused shared interest. Presented in the form of a set of problem issues, the points below encourage further discussion:

◆ What are the factors that determine migrations? How can we promote the contribution migrants make to their host country—in particular in terms of wealth creation?

◆ How do youth movements constitute an alternative to the ambient ethnic fragmentation? Beyond this, what is the role of politics and governance in protest dynamics?

◆ How can we document and explain the contemporary phenomena of slavery—in particular the migrant slave trade in Libya? How can we have an effect on such a phenomenon? Faced with the ambiguity of those who govern on the questions of migration and mobility: what strategies can we adopt to tackle this phenomenon?

◆ How can we multiply the fields of action? How do we switch from emotional mobilisation (humanitarian) to go towards citizen engagement that is political in nature?

◆ Faced with the elitist forms of protest: how can we help young rural dwellers, and other young people who have limited access to the Internet (and the social networks) to become involved in the dynamics of mobilisation and citizenship?

◆ Confronted with the influence of the international partners who encourage the transformation of youth movements into political parties, what strategies can be adopted? How can we defend ourselves against the various forms of manipulation coming from within and without?

- How can we persist in the struggle/protest movement while preserving our values? How can we have access to the resources of the development partners (within the framework of international aid) without alienating ourselves?

- How can we build the legitimacy of the movement in the long term and avoid fragmentation—in particular because of the lack of structure and foundations necessary for all organisations?

- How can we integrate the control systems specific to our traditional societies into the current democratic governance of our States?

- How can we valorise education for young people to promote *métissages*? What are the roles to be assigned to education to promote *métissages*?

- The necessity of finding and promoting what gives us a "common destiny" rather than using the notion of "nation" which can be interpreted in a wide variety of ways?

- How can we protect ourselves/make sure youth movements are not transformed into armed struggles?

- How can we integrate into the construction of our modern States the social rationales and ethnic/tribal relationships to political power?

- What makes jihad phenomena (such as Boko Haram) proliferate and overtake the rationales of *métissage* in our countries?

- What does national identity mean? How do we redefine our complex identities to lend meaning to our national identity? How can we turn our States into frameworks for the promotion of *métissages* and encourage the emergence of new identities?

5. SHARING ENERGIES AND COUNTERING DEADLY DYNAMICS

During the discussions, over and above the values inherent in *metissages*, optimisism and aspirations to better societies, a realism has appeared that has made it possible to emphasise the "current dangers" with regard to the complexity of the phenomena of falling back on identity, terrorism, extremism, etc. which our societies are increasingly confronted with. These deadly dynamics must mobilise more of our commitment and energies to address this. These deadly dynamics are called:

- The risk of manipulating youth movements, transforming them into armed movements and the threats related to the escalation of "gratuitous, commonplace violence", which would endanger peaceful social relations;

- Perverting protest dynamics by the use of money and instant opportunities;

- The current weaknesses of our societies, capable of being penetrated by conflict-mongers of all types, threatening several centuries of civilisation that were nonetheless built on a long process of laying down values;

- The incursion of the religious in the political field and the consequences related to extremism considerably affecting cultural and artistic practices, the various forms of solidarity and pardon that exist in our societies;

- The structural fragilities of our States, characterised by poor governance that endanger national unity and democratic values;

- The danger and the crumbling of the republican and democratic values that lend meaning to our "common destiny";

- The brutality of the cyclical phenomena of insecurity and protest, the periodic crises related to the lack of political and democratic legitimacy;

- The advent of generalised terrorism as a means of political protest and expression and its corollary, violent extremism and radicalisation;

- The criminalising of migration, its commoditisation and the ineffectual political and institutional responses to such phenomena.

6. OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

Several opportunities for action should be the subject of mobilisation and collective engagement:

1. The challenge of transformation. Confronted with the current deadly dynamics and the immense social issues, the construction of new models of society remains a major challenge. It will be a question of reflecting on possible leverage in terms of republican values, democracy and above all, we must start from the cultures of our societies. The challenge being to question the "relatively easy" ideological penetration of our societies. We should question the capacity of our societies to abandon their often secular cultures to adopt recent cultures with no local history and no relation to lived experience. Then the concepts of weak political leadership/fragility of the States should come into play to account for these abuses. But we should also see that the nature of societies who are predisposed to accept such phenomena should be at the centre of the questioning. Then we will speak of "national resignation" to index the responses the politicians cannot give young people who take refuge wherever they can.

2. Rethinking a new State. The idea of rethinking a new State is based on the imperative of rebuilding peaceful social relations, by integrating the national identity, but also ensuring a better promotion of *métissage*. By ensuring anchorage of the new State in the cultural principles of governance, transparency and legitimacy, we may proceed to rediscover ourselves.

3. Developing generational potential. Today, youth movements are already interacting. In this context, we should play our role of elders, through our experience and support, while at the same time making sure we encourage creativity and the explosion of energy these movements carry within them.

4. Creating connections and making ideas fruitful. This means building more bridges between the different dynamics of research, reflection and action. From the spaces opened by Mapinduzi Unit to the cultural innovations of Pole Institute, via Wathi and other African initiatives, what is at stake is the build-

ing of intelligent connections, so that the quests may blossom more and materialise on the basis of common certainties.

5. **Connecting scales and merging energies.** Young rappers from Mali, the movements "Y'en a marre", "Balai citizen" and "La Lucha", already in strong dynamics of inter-exchanges should be supported. Their actions renew the dynamics of African civil societies. Exchanges, sharing through the contributions of the diversities beyond the regional scales should favour *métissages* on a larger scale and make the change in our societies meaningful. Similarly, we must understand that movements and other forms of protest dynamics are today forms of hope in the face of ethnic/tribal fragmentation.

6. **Contributing to reinforcing the political leadership of youth.** Capacity building in young people is an ongoing challenge. And so we should ensure support for initiatives that encourage better knowledge of the societal issues at stake, the complexity of the political and institutional reforms, etc. Conducted on a small scale or larger scale, such capacity-boosting initiatives will help their political leadership to step up and advance their knowledge in the face of the structural and cyclical challenges.

7. **Deconstructing negative images of migration.** Not all young migrants are unemployed or in fragile or precarious situations. Some are graduates, engineers, artists, academics, etc. This is why we should have not one but several readings of migration—in a word, we have to "change the way we look" at the phenomenon.

8. **Mobilise opportunities for support.** Civil society organisations, youth dynamics and the discussion forums they endow themselves with need more than ever to be supported. To this end, we must continue to mobilise support on both a national and international level. However, when opening up to opportunities, it is important to be careful not to compromise or alienate one's own values.

Contributors to this meeting

In spite of our very modest means, Mapinduzi Unit endeavoured to invite researchers and actors young and old alike, from a certain number of African countries (RD Congo, Uganda, Cameroon, Mali, Senegal, Niger and Burkina Faso). We also received written contributions from colleagues who could not attend. This summary was drafted by Ambroise Dakouo, Onesphore Sematumba and Christiane Kayser, and we consider it to be the work of one and all.

The following attended:

Ambroise Dakouo

Abdoulaye Diallo

Flaubert Djateng

Frederick Golooba-Mutebi

Alain Kamdem Souop

Christiane Kayser

Kennedy Muhindo Wema

Sébastien Ouedraogo

Onesphore Sematumba

Serge Sivya

Rose Alodie Toe

Maïmou Wali

The following made a written contribution:

Samir Abi

Harry Davies

Alain Kamwanga Mwepu

Evariste Mfaume

Programme of the Mapinduzi Unit Meeting in Ouagadougou

18–21 April 2017

Mixity, migration and youth movements

In Dakar in 2013, Mapinduzi members and contributors observed:

We want to build a citizenship based on our multiple identities
- *Work on intermingling and roots (acknowledge new references: urban dwellers, new villages, etc.)*
- *What kind of implosions do we need for a defragmentation of our societies?*
- *Nation or community with a common fate?*
- *Identify the fundamentals that mobilise the population in relation to an area, a community or a State*

"Métissage", intermingling or mixity is and remains a major advantage in a global world in order to create the foundations of shared living. But is it promoted?

These past few years we have noticed that migrations around the world, within and between countries are increasing, for populations are fleeing violence and insecurity, seeking out conditions to live in dignity and are increasingly insecure and ill at ease in a neoliberal, global world governed by greed and financial flows. These population movements meet increasingly hostile and violent reactions on the part of the "indigenous" peoples. The building of virtual and real walls is coming back into fashion to exclude some people and imprison others.

In parallel, almost everywhere in Africa, movements of young activists are forming and even under conditions of oppression are strongly committed to transforming their regions and country. They combat poor governance and corruption, claim their place in systems to be democratised, refuse to flee difficult realities and insist on making a contribution to the decisions for the

future of their country. We consider that in a world of regressive separatism which is closing instead of opening up (Brexit, Trumpism, populist movements, etc.) these African movements are a hope and an opportunity for all.

What is the situation where you live?

Are the youth movements open to intermingling and do they combat exclusion and the falling back on identity?

What are the links between mixity, migration and youth movements?

What are the answers to our challenges of 2013 (see above)?

What trends are emerging in your country, region, in general?

Sunday 16 and Monday 17 April 2017

Arrival of the participants at the Hôtel des Conférences (Sunday and Monday before lunchtime) informal discussions

Tuesday 18 April 2017

10:00	Beginning of the work
	Welcome
	Presentation of the participants
	Recap of the ground covered by Mapinduzi Unit and of how the topic for the meeting was identified (Flaubert Djateng)
	Discussions
12:30	Lunch
15:00	**Describing the context**
	Samir Abi: In a world of opportunities
	Presentation by the director of the West African Observatory on Migrations
	Sébastien Ouedraogo: The experience of Alert Migration in Burkina Faso
	Onesphore Sematumba: Eastern DRC, deadly mobility
	Opening to the world and falling back on identity, Pole Institute Goma, DRC
	Proceedings

Wednesday, 19 April

9:00 **Young people speak**

Serge Sivya: citizen movements, tools for building citizenship with multiple identities

The experience of La Lucha citizen movement in DRC

Ambroise Dakouo: youth protest dynamics in Mali: towards the emergence of a counter-power?

Representative of Balai Citoyen (subject to reservations)

Maïmou Wali: Diffa I care, a Nigerien citizen movement

The outlook for young people in Europe
(Harry Davies and others, paper presented in absence)
Proceedings

12:30 Lunch

15:00 **DRC in torment... before a better future?**

Kennedy Muhindo Wema: Between Butembo and the global world: Thoughts of a Congolese journalist on going beyond borders

Evariste Mfaume: Youth movements in Fizi/Baraka in DRC (in absence)

Christiane Kayser: Common destiny: the DRC between exclusion, building of new walls and opening to the world

Alain Kamwanga Mwepu: Ethnic tribal identities, the last way of accessing political and economic advantages (in absence)

Proceedings

Thursday, 20 April

9:00　　　**Africa between promising new dynamics and fundamentalist dangers**

Abdoulaye Diallo: African youth at the crossroads: the case of Senegal

Maïmou Wali: young people and violent radicalisation: Boko Haram in Niger

Flaubert Djateng: The attraction of armed groups for the young people of Cameroon

Proceedings

12:30　　　Lunch

15:00　　　**Frederick Golooba-Mutebi:** Politics and Youth in Uganda and Rwanda

Kamdem Souop: Anglophone crisis in Cameroon: opportunity for emergence of a national identity project

Proceedings

Friday, 21 April

9:00　　　**Which assets should we promote? Which alliances should we create?**

Questions and ideas gathered: *Facilitators' summary*

Discussion and reflection on the next steps

12:00　　　Lunch and departure

Facilitation: Flaubert Djateng and Christiane Kayser

In a world of opportunities

Samir Abi*

The planetary village expected as a result of globalisation has become a reality. But it is not experienced by all in the same way. While it is now easier than ever for people in certain social categories to travel the world to seize the opportunities it affords, it is just as difficult for others to obtain the right to cross a border without falling victim to the security measures put in place by the affluent sections of society. African Youth would appear to be one of the groups that profits least from this "world-become-village".

16th century French writer Michel de Montaigne wrote in his famous Essays: *"Travel forms youth"*. A good number of young people living in the West are given help each year to travel the world and discover the diversity of the population groups living there. Beyond tourism, these young people, who often volunteer for international solidarity actions, are also enriched with an experience they can leverage in a professional context. These opportunities are difficult to find for a majority of young people in Africa whose governments do very little for them. For Africans having had the good fortune to be able to save or be helped by their family who attempt the adventure of travel, visas and all the other travel restrictions are there to remind them that in the world of the 21st century class differences remain. A distinction is therefore drawn between those who can travel wherever they like without a visa or can obtain a visa on arrival at the airport and those for whom travel through the legal channels will never be possible because they were born on the "wrong" continent. Faced with conditions that are often excessively strict to obtain a travel visa, young people have no choice but to attempt the difficult adventure of crossing deserts and sailing on makeshift boats in the seas and oceans for their voyages of discovery.

* Permanent Secretary of the West African Observatory on Migrations

The other paradox of this world can be seen in the proximity created by the New Information and Communication Technologies (NICT) which are not materialising as a facilitation of *rapprochement* among people. While it may be easy to make friends on the Internet, through the social networks (WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.), or even fall in love or have access to offers to meet people living in any part of the world, it is difficult for an African to be able to marry someone and live in another country or another continent. In a global village, it would have been normal for men to get together more easily to share humanist ideals. The experience of diversity would thereby have contributed this beauty of mixtures that we find in young children from mixed race marriages. But far from making the most of mingling and bringing people closer, the neoliberal economic globalisation as promoted is content to facilitate the free circulation of goods and money to the detriment of people. It is much easier to export bananas or coffee from Africa to Europe than to be able to send the farmer who produced them across the sea. Faced with these inequalities, African youth must rise to meet new challenges.

The first challenge to be met is that of self esteem. Very unfortunately the perverse effects of colonisation and the media lead young Africans to believe they are inferior to the rest of the world. Those who govern in the African countries reinforce this idea by having recourse to a policy of begging; axing their project for society on public development aid and not on mobilising the resources the youth of their population offer. Self esteem must be able to lead young Africans to understand that their struggle for survival in such a difficult social context as our African countries is already something of an exploit. Proud to live each day or rather, to survive each day in an inegalitarian context that is marked by injustice. Daily survival in such a context is a struggle against the oppression of a politico-economic system that never ceases to prematurely end the lives of thousands of people all over the world.

The second challenge would then be to start off by making the most of and transforming the context of life in your location. Just as much technological innovation to enable a break with the dependency on imports as experimentation with a new form of social governance to promote transparency and social justice shall be salutory at this level. Lastly, the efforts at local level must ally themselves with mobilisations at a global level to achieve the advent of another form of globalisation. A globalisation in which people will have more value

than money or goods. A globalisation that promotes social harmony and the contributions people make to each other rather than a globalisation which creates antagonisms and facilitates the rise of fascist parties. This is the price to be paid for living in a world of opportunities.

http://www.obsmigration.org/fr/2017/04/dans-un-monde-dopportunites/

African Youth, life blood
or hollow hope?

Flaubert Djateng*

Africa is increasingly being presented as the continent of the future, a continent where countries enjoy two-digit economic growth and a demographic increase that will turn the continent into the largest market in the world in the next forty years. Many business men and women, a plethora of multinationals are going to Africa to control the tools of production: communication technology, transport infrastructure, land, soil and subsoil resources; resources which, under other skies, are managed in order to ensure the quality of life of the population. The rush is stronger and stronger and each of these protagonists is systematically seeking a monopoly. The practices show that in most cases, the agreements signed are not win-win, Africa very often loses out, even if some African individuals do win.

On another level, we hear politicians claim that youth constitutes "the life blood of the nation" but when we look closer, this youth is in danger of losing its vitality. It is youth that suffers the consequences of the poor governance that characterises our countries, it is youth which, not being able to express its despair, goes into exile to seek elsewhere what their continent, even though it is "resource-rich", cannot offer. More than 60% of the population of Africa is under 20. Given their number, young people are automatically a great potential for the continent.

This potential does not seem to be perceived by our leaders. They give the impression they are passing through and we sometime wonder if they are really living in Africa. For questions of health, our leaders seek health care outside their own country. Their children study in Western schools. They drive off-road vehicles and do not suffer from the bad quality of the roads. They

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have large refrigerators and freezers to store their stocks of food and practically all of them have generators to compensate for electricity cuts. Enjoying these privileges, the decision-makers do not seem preoccupied with the basic factors and services that improve quality of life and provide answers to the questions of young people.

To make themselves heard, in some countries voices are raised with claims and demands for better governance, more quality and more accountability. We have had the Arab spring, we have seen youth movements in countries such as DRC with *"La LUCHA"*, *"Y'en a Marre"* in Senegal or *"Balais Citoyen"* in Burkina Faso. In Zimbabwe, in South Africa, in Mali young people are starting to rise up… Although still in small numbers given the fact that the continent has 54 countries, these movements share the same common destiny and they all bring people together. Their preferential instruments are the social networks and the Internet. They are fighting for a better life and a better future in their towns and villages. Neo-colonialist symbols and institutions such as the CFA franc, economic partnership agreements that succeed the structural adjustment programmes, the debt reduction contracts and western development policies constitute the targets of their combats. The dignity of the African and the wealth of African cultures as a complement to and in symbiosis with a globalised world are also important to them. They see themselves as citizens of the world, proud of their roots and united against the fragmentations that make their peoples suffer.

Protests and demands, to what end?

The existence of these activists has raised a wind of hope over the past two decades, but to date, many young people, members or non members of these movements, are still waiting and looking for "change". The social networks have power, but do they succeed in creating real anti-establishment forces against the dictators and other corrupt elites?

The discontent of young people is perceptible all over the continent. But it is difficult to separate their effective involvement in the current movements which are struggling to grasp leadership of the protest. An involvement which would be different from a following based on bitterness, an involvement that

is characterised in relation to opinions and arguments during discussions or decision-making, an involvement that would show that young people are watching the dynamics at work to find their place in them. The tagging along that is currently predominant is so de-structured that it sometimes leads to abuses and can even be violent. The leading discourse is based on "we must" without perceiving at what time the opinions were gathered, ideas discussed and orientations decided. This way of doing things is the seedbed of recuperation and even the misappropriation of objectives. The work to be done is political and the interests at stake are colossal, so we must not be surprised to see that opposite us, on the side of the power in place, everything has been done to infiltrate the movements, either to exploit them or to weaken them.

For some time now we have been seeing the emergence on the continent of other forms of demand that distract young people from their goals while promising them an important place in a society in the image of gurus and manipulators. There are myriad sects all called "Church of Awakening" that rally the energies and forces of young people for mercenary and commercial goals. From another angle, there are the Islamic manipulators who seduce and control young people with the dangerous discourse of radicalisation. These false prophets preach the violent destruction of the State and life in society, of African and Western cultures, education in the broad sense, of constructive values of all sorts. These are Jihadist and Salafist movements, working on deconstruction through concepts such as "the State is not good", "democracy is not good", "books are bad". They are deviances of Islam, which is a religion of peace, and they create a gap between denominations and within the world of Islam.

On the other hand, these other forms of demands offer young people the semblance of an economic and political project; they infiltrate the systems in place and recruit among youth. Their allies are in all the instances of power and use religion as fertile ground for reducing resistance and manipulating minds. With religion, they manage to reverse the power struggles and the hierarchies in the society. For example, a driver who has become an Islamic Imam or leader of an awakening sect is capable of organising prayers, rounding up the "faithful" and for example obtaining power over a Minister. They could put pressure on the Minister and make them feel guilty, rendering the person malleable for making certain decisions.

These radical movements have, in a short space of time, occupied vast real and virtual territories, even endangering certain traditional practices of the peoples handed down for millennia. We often say that cultural change takes time, but due to these fundamentalists we have seen the population experience great disruptions in a short space of time.

Between hope and despair

The current context is conducive to the discouragement of youth. For those who are not defrauded by the false prophets, become their instruments and often die as a consequence; this despair is often expressed as a desire to leave their country. The different phenomena of migration are gaining in importance. So many people perish in the Mediterranean in dreadful conditions their numbers can no longer be counted. Despite these deaths in their thousands, young people continue constantly to be poised to leave. This desire to leave due to disillusionment, lack of opportunities and the violence they are subjected to—structural violence, moral violence and physical violence—, the young people embrace it and remain perseverant and determined. The attitude of parents encourages this phenomenon; we live in a society of departure, where everyone is obsessed with leaving. Our leaders leave for their leisure pursuits, pleasure and services outside the country; young people leave seeking happiness and opportunities on foreign soil. Our countries are impoverished by the loss of their financial and human resources. Our people are also humiliated, for the increase in visa applications has transformed the embassies into places where scorn and arrogance reign, where human beings are not respected.

However, migration should be an occasion for enrichment, because those who travel learn and are able to see differences, to open up to the world, become more creative. Migration should also serve to allow people to mingle and mix and have exchanges that can facilitate a better way of living together.

What can we do?

As a space of reflection that leads to action, Mapinduzi seizes the theme of migration and youth movements, and thereby puts its finger on the central problem issue of Africa in our century. By adding the concept of *métissage* (cultural mixity) Mapinduzi goes against the trends of fragmentation that weaken Africa. We wish to support the efforts to turn identities from factors of exclusion to bridges between people and population groups, factors of integration. *Métissage* proudly assumed is a concept that can facilitate the production of a new identity, and mixity enables the promotion of diversity with the taking into account of multiple identities.

The future of our children is played out not only by the decision-makers and the powerful of this world. It also largely depends on how our youth evolves and on their determination. Young people are the strength of Africa, if they can find their place and resist being sidelined away from their common goals. And we, as their elder siblings, have the task of placing at their disposal our experience and our knowledge.

Education is the most powerful weapon
which you can use to change the world.
Nelson Mandela

Métissages, cultural fusions, cross–fertilisations, triangulations, connections…: the interfaces between the local and the global

Christiane Kayser*

The participants at the last meetings of the Mapinduzi network examined questions of identity, advocated the necessity of going beyond reductionist confinement and declared that *"métissage"*[1] *should be the sum of the identities, the reflection of diversities and not their obliteration or reduction."*[2]

For around twenty years theoretical discussions have been going on, particularly among French-speaking researchers, on the notions of *métissage, créolisation*, hybridisation, etc.

The notion of *métissage* was originally a negative concept related to colonisation and meaning someone or something that was "not pure".

The form *mestis* ("which is made of half of one thing, half of another") has been around since the 13th century. In 1615, the word "métice", borrowed from Portuguese, meant a person born of parents belonging to populations presenting visible phenotypical variations (such as skin pigmentation). The term *métis* was used in particular to refer to the numerous descendents of European and "indigenous" parents during colonisation.

Anthropologist Jean-Loup Amselle, who was one of the first to use this concept in a positive way in relation to African cultures, takes up the term again in a new edition of his work *Logiques métisses* (Mestizo Logics). After remind-

1 Could be translated as "cultural mixity" of sorts but this article tries to explain the complexity of the concept that has no direct equivalent in English.

2 See the summary of the proceedings page 9

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ing us that this is a term used for breeding, he *"now considers this notion to be tainted at the base"*: *"In the course of the history of humanity, biological and cultural métissages have always existed, but today the voluntary practice of cultural métissage forces us to suppose that the entities that are subject to hybridization are pure entities. If métissage exists, it is in fact always second."* (p. 14–15).

This is why he abandons the term in favour of "connections".

"Through recourse to an electronic or computational metaphor, that of the connection, a framework emerges in which local signifiers are juxtaposed with a network of planetary signifiers, thereby allowing one to move away from an approach that understands our global world as the product of a mixture of cultures that are themselves seen as separate universes, and foregrounding instead the idea of triangulation, that is to say, recourse to a third component in order to establish one's own identity. By using the metaphor of connections, we can also show, against the holders of the thesis of contemporary globalisation, that in fact, far from being new, in reality it is a continuity of previous mechanisms of globalisation."[3]

What we continue to call *métissage* is therefore in a way the articulation of the local to the global depending on a plurality of historical periods and geographic areas. This distinction seems to us to be essential to avoid falling into the trap of a-historicism which, in addition, would give precedence to a vision of the world before globalisation where "pure" "races" and communities lived hermetically.

In "The words to say *métissages*: games and stakes of a vocabulary"[4]. Laurier Turgeon summarises:

"Jean-Loup Amselle places *métissage* as one of the very foundations of culture. He opposes "ethnological reason" which consists in separating, classifying, categorising and presenting cultures as homogeneous, closed entities, to "mestizo logic" which refers to a process of cross-fertilisation between cultures and emphasises the "original indistinction or syncretism". Culture is therefore

3 See https://rgi.revues.org/994 Revue 21 | 2004: L'horizon anthropologique des transferts culturels
4 See https://rgi.revues.org/994 21 | 2004: L'horizon anthropologique des transferts culturels

a result of a power struggle between cultures that is negotiated and renegotiated, of traditions continually reinterpreted and remade with external contributions. More recently, Amselle proposed to replace the notion of *métissage*, too marked by biology and by the idea of a mixture of cultures themselves considered as separate universes, with that of "connection", borrowed from computers, which evokes a cluster of continuous interconnections between cultures, a dialectic of multiple interrelations through which cultures are built. He places in the centre of his reflection "the idea of triangulation, that is to say, the use of a third component to establish one's own identity".

Now, since the end of the 20th century the word *métissage* has been enjoying something of a renaissance with a strong positive emphasis. It has been taken up essentially to combat purisms and fundamentalisms of all sorts. It sees itself as a means of characterising and favouring the multiplication of contacts, exchanges and mixtures in the contemporary world. We rarely hear the word "mestizo" (half-breed) as a subject, but often *métissage* which refers to a cultural process. *Métissage* has become a metaphor to express the postmodern world. The expression "cultural *métissage*" defines by default a phenomenon that is omnipresent, multiple and fragmentary in nature, which presents itself as a universal in the contemporary world of globalisation.

This could lead us to the conclusion that it is globalisation that plants the seeds of **métissage**. But that would be forgetting what Achille Mbembe stresses in his book *Critique of Black Reason*[5]: the global world generalises the condition of "Nègre" which, irrespective of the colour of your skin, means the underprivileged of neoliberal forms of capitalism as opposed to a small group of super-rich of all origins.

This army of new marginalised groups is, as we can see in certain phenomena of the past two years (Brexit vote, election of Trump, rise of populist extreme-right parties, etc.) largely open to manipulations in relation to a falling back on identity.

For *métissage* or triangulation always presuppose an identity or rather multiple identities that are experienced in a positive way and accepted. Globalisation in fact promotes difference and "ethnicity". But while it advocates the

5 Achille Mbembe, Critique of Black Reason, Duke University Press, 2017

cohabitation of differentiated societies, juxtaposing and partitioning them, it suggests a refusal of *métissage*; "cultural mixing" can only be envisaged as a loss of authenticity, a diminishing of identity, a (pathological) contamination of cultural values, or even the obliteration of the subject. However, a culture which closes in on and isolates itself is condemned to disappear. Creativity, evolution, innovation in every domain all thrive on the mingling and interconnection from which new things are born.

In English-speaking environments people talk about **"cultural fusion theory"**[6], which could be a positive alternative to acculturation.

For at least a decade, Achille Mbembe and other African thinkers have been developing the notion of "Afropolitanism".

"Today, many Africans live outside Africa. Others have freely chosen to live on the Continent, and not necessarily in countries they were born in. Even more, many of them are fortunate to have experienced several different worlds and have never ceased, in reality, to come and go, and in the course of their movements have acquired heightened sensitivity and an incalculably rich way of seeing things. These are generally people who can express themselves in more than one language. They are in the process of building, sometimes unbeknownst to themselves, a transnational culture I call 'Afropolitan'".[7]

In these "explorers of new borders" Mbembe also includes people who reside in Africa and live in African and mixed cultures, irrespective of the colour of their skin.

In today's world, where real and virtual mobility affect the majority of the population, it becomes more urgent than ever to reject mimicry, to consciously embrace one's multiple identities and at the same time explore the potential of cross-fertilizations.

Multiple identities are here to stay, denying them and seeking to define a uniform "national identity" imposed on everyone seems to me to comprise enormous risks of fragmentation and violent identity-based conflicts. The current situation of the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon—which is highly complex,

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6 See Cultural fusion theory: An alternative to acculturation. Stephen M. Croucher & Eric Kramer. Journal of International and Intercultural Communication, Volume 10, 2017 – Issue 2

7 Achille Mbembe, l'Afropolitanisme, http://africultures.com/afropolitanisme-4248/

Christiane Kayser

going beyond questions of language and even its historical roots—illustrates this hypothesis.[8]

On the contrary it is a question of defining together common destinies to be built and the bases of a fertile solidarity which is defined outside of charity, a significant obstacle to respecting others.

And young people in all this? Do they have alternatives to fleeing to other lands, to migration that is forced upon them by the lack of a future at home? Which is appropriate, Afro-pessimism or Afro-optimism?

It seems to me to be essential that young women and men, whether in Africa or elsewhere, themselves think and define their future and that of our globalised societies. As Felwine Sarr puts it so well in the introduction to his brilliant work "Afrotopia":

"The discourse on Africa today is dominated by this double movement: faith in a radiant future and consternation before a present that seems chaotic…. The temptation is great, in this context, to give in to disaster-mongering or to blissful optimism, its inverted double…

In these conditions, why articulate an idea relating to the present and the future of the African continent? Because societies establish themselves first in their imaginings… It is therefore a question of extracting oneself from a dialectic of euphoria or despair and of undertaking an effort of critical self-reflection, on one's own realities and situation in the world: thinking oneself, representing oneself, projecting oneself… Afrotopia is an active utopia which has set itself the task, within the African real, of flushing out the vast spaces of the possible and fertilizing them."[9]

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8 See also on this subject the article by Alain Kamdem Souop in the French version of this publication (www, peaceworkafrica.net) which supports another hypothesis.

9 Felwine Sarr, Afrotopia, Paris 2016

Citizen mouvements, tools for building citizenship with multiple identities

The case of the Struggle for Change (La LUCHA) citizen movement in DR Congo

Serge Sivya*

1. At the origin of La LUCHA, outraged youth

La LUCHA was started in 2012, at the initiative of a group of young people outraged by the situation of the country in general, and by the outlook of a confused future for youth, in particular. At the time we were students or recently graduated and we could see the difficulties our elders were having finding jobs or succeeding in the private, often informal sector. In the civil service, salaries are very low and unreliable. And even then, it was rare to hear of a "job offer". The words "retirement" seemed to have been wiped out of the vocabulary of the older generations. In other words, the people who reach retirement age keep on working until they die as there is no efficient social security system. When they die, they are usually replaced by their own children, in a sort of "hereditary civil service". NGOs only employ young people who have had a good education or whose families are well-connected. Most young university graduates end up as security guards, shopkeepers, taxi drivers or perpetual job seekers. This is what is awaiting us, too!

Our first concern was naturally to denounce this system that alienates youth, and demand policies that promote jobs for young people. But very quickly, we understood that the problem ran deeper. Poor governance, corruption, the

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problems related to our obsolete education system, the callous attitude of the authorities in relation to the questions in the general interest including the provision of basic social services; that was what we had to deal with. Our strategy: make citizens more aware of their rights and more demanding towards those governing, so that they feel responsible and accountable.

Each problem we looked at led us to the same conclusion: there is a problem of governance. Whether during the "GOMA WANTS WATER" campaign (to demand that the authority in charge of water distribution guarantee access to drinking water in households in a town on the edge of Lake Kivu) or after the actions to demand the rehabilitation of the urban road system, the same conclusion emerged. Another option chosen by La LUCHA is recourse to non-violent action as a protest method, in a country and a region ravaged by decades of violent conflict, and where it is almost a principle that to make yourself heard or respected you have to kill, rape, destroy, pillage, and terrorise.

2. La LUCHA and "métissage"

Around the problem of youth unemployment we managed to federate numerous sympathisers. In a town where the universities and higher education establishments each year pour more than a thousand graduates onto a job market incapable of absorbing even 10% of them, denouncing endemic youth unemployment was bound to receive a loud echo, just like the social demands on questions of drinking water, roads, security, etc. For the first time, the citizens of Goma were able to come together around demands concerning problems in their daily lives, in a non-violent way, and especially far from the usual considerations of identity. In this town, people are used to meeting on the basis of ethnic group and identity: there is the church of the Wanande, an Adventist NGO, a political party of people from Bukavu, etc. Identity is always about an exclusion. People who nonetheless have a lot of interests in common as citizens of a town, province or country, separate themselves by their ethnic community, religious affiliation, place of birth, etc.

In Goma, the ethnic fragmentation is concocted in tribal societies called "mutuelles" supposed to be spaces for the promotion and enriching of culture; instead of which, these groups, whose rationale is exclusion, mutate into places

of radicalisation of the young generation and "sounding boxes" for the politicians. The meetings of these societies are most often held on Sunday afternoons. Fortunately, La LUCHA also holds their meetings each Sunday afternoon. Which spares young members of La Lucha from indoctrination by these "mutuelles".

For La LUCHA, the milestone is the Congolese Nation, which constitutes (or should constitute) a sort of common sense of destiny. Contrary to the armed groups for example, which each claim to be from such and such a tribe, right from the beginning La LUCHA has imposed on itself the vision of a national struggle with an African calling. A struggle of all the citizens for their rights, beyond differences in terms of ethnic group, region, gender, social category, and philosophical or political convictions. Is this integration favoured by the fact that our movement started in an urban setting, in a "cosmopolitan" environment? This is a hypothesis that should be verified. The fact remains that never in its history has the movement emphasised identity in the narrow sense of the word, but rather the value and dignity that are intrinsic to all human beings, to all Congolese citizens. The same applies regarding the notion of "Gender": in La LUCHA, girls and boys; men and women consider themselves equal without forcing this equality to correspond to the passing fashion. They have the same responsibilities and meet the same requirements on a personal level. In the street, during actions, and during reflection and strategic planning, we are together as citizens of the same country, equal and driven by the same determination.

As we said above, we are acting together, as young Congolese and African people, who are affected in a more or less similar way by the different problems of our society. We face the same difficulties (unemployment, obsolete education system, etc.), the same enemies (poor governance and the resignation of our peoples), and we have understood that we must tackle them together. We do not have a choice: we must unite around a common struggle otherwise it is our future which is at stake. This is our *métissage*!

An integrating vision as a factor for mobilisation:

◆ We share the same history;

◆ A similar destiny. Our futures are linked;

◆ When we have a broad terrain for recruitment, we have a great opportunity for mobilisation;

◆ The pride of belonging to a group that advocates inclusion and combats all forms of fragmentation;

◆ The credibility it lends (inclusion is a value defended by many movements all over the world);

◆ Creates independence vis-à-vis heavy ethnic, religious and social obstacles;

◆ Favours performance by promoting meritocracy;

◆ And takes reality into account (we cannot delude ourselves about wanting to change in a restricted group).

3. The trap of a new identity built in opposition to another

The impulse to activism around the same challenges to be met creates a kind of new identity. An identity of activists. Within La Lucha we have developed common reflexes and shared values that distinguish us from others. The others are those who are not activists not because they are resigned to the desperate situation of the country, or because they are trying to accept chaos. The others are those who do not understand us and those who find that our commitment threatens their interests. Among the latter we find politicians from the leading class and their acolytes, certain civil servants from the legal system, security agents. Some of them call us jealous or "young people being manipulated".

It is not rare to observe that certain activists develop a kind of repugnance which, if it is not channelled, can drag us back down into hatred and thereby favour divisions, or even violence. A young person who has been unfairly condemned does not forget the judge who pronounced the sentence and runs the risk of retaining anger or even resentment against him; it may happen that

a student who was chased out of university because of their citizen commitment does not forgive the academic authorities, someone who lost their job because they were a member of La LUCHA may remain bitter against their employer and they all run the risk of ganging up in a destructive way against the "system" incorporated by these people. Activism will have created another division. Here is a new challenge we have to be aware of and against which we must act.

Yes, we must defend ourselves against those who manipulate us or fight us. But we must maintain a constructive, non-violent approach.

Let us never forget that among others, the great Nelson Mandela showed us that it is not hatred, bitterness, small-mindedness and division that will allow us to win the struggle for change in the long-term. But rather a long-term vision and strategy with objectives of integration that enable alliances with the majority of the players and the emergence of new ways of sharing our lives.

Deadly mobility: moving around in Eastern DRC

Mapinduzi, Ouagadougou, April 2017

Onesphore Sematumba*

A few years ago, at an international meeting in Brussels on the question of land ownership in DRC, Congolese experts and civil society players, laid down diagnostics in terms that were moving in their simplicity. A participant from Butembo, a university professor who has since become Provincial Minister of Mines felt that the problem of land ownership in this northern part of the province with a high population from North-Kivu was due to the migration to the north of the population from the Masisi and Rutshuru territories who are competing for land that is becoming increasingly scarce. This unsupervised shifting *(glissement)*, he continued, was the basis for conflicts arising between the "autochtones", the indigenous Nande population, and the "allochtones" from neighbouring territories. When it was the turn of the delegate from Ituri, the district next to Beni, which has since become Ituri Province, he ascribed the problem to the shifting of the Nande from North-Kivu to their area. They in turn had become "outsiders", and were accused of hegemonic behaviour, competing for land, political power and business in general. When it was my turn to speak, I wanted to ask questions. What if this was a case of confusing the problem with the solutions? And what if, in DRC, each group had its outsiders, in a strange role play where being an outsider or an insider were statuses that could be lost or acquired depending on whether you move away from the area the others want to confine you to, to the extent that any attempt at mobility, the search for better living conditions or, quite simply, the search for a bit of peace can turn into a nightmare?

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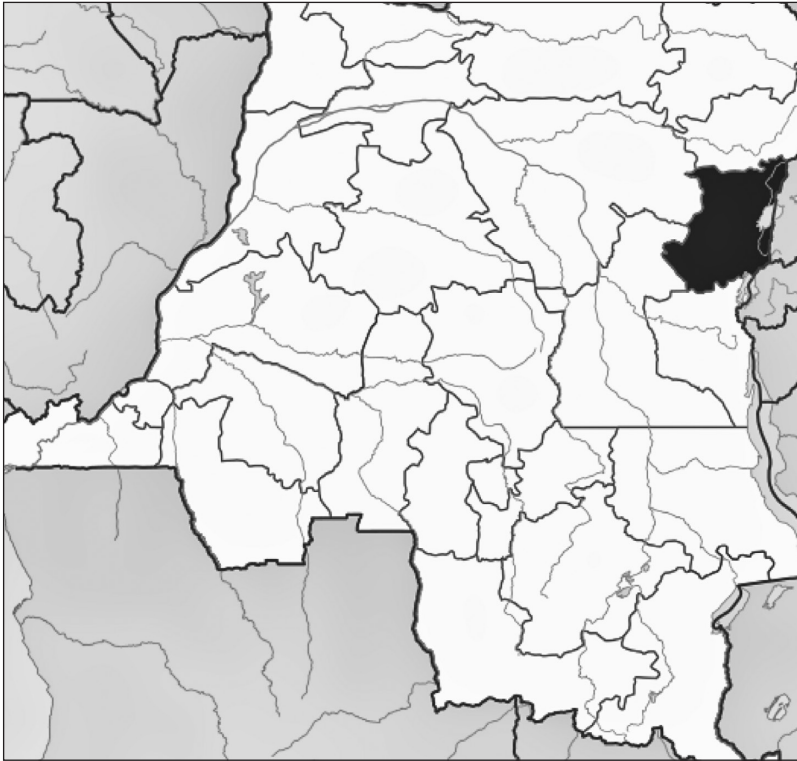
DRC, Nord–Kivu province

Young Africans cross a number of deadly "seas" in search of an Eldorado they imagine lies on the other side of the Atlantic. This is the case of those who brave the sea of sand and heat of the Sahara to end up shipwrecked in the shadows of Libya. This is also the case of those who brave the waves of the Mediterranean and end up at the bottom of the pitiless waters for the most unlucky and in precarious camps in Italy for the others. But we forget all those who die on the road inside their own country. They have no qualifications other than their physical strength; land is the source of wealth that allows them to thrive. They move to find some, acquire it and farm it. Their sea is troubled by violence that has become endemic, which has exacerbated suspicions towards others. From Rutshuru to Boga, in Ituri, mobility is fraught with danger. People lose their lives, assimilated to the bandits who have been cutting throats in the transit area for several years, committing crimes that go unpunished.

Onesphore Sematumba

Those who reach their destination begin the hard life of the outsider, that is to say, the life of a foreigner in their own country. Or almost.

How can we escape this trap and enshrine mobility as a normal solution to the current challenges facing young people and less young people instead of being a deadly undertaking in North-Kivu and in DRC in general where the lands have become ghettos? What are the bridges, existing or to be created, for breaking these chains? Such is the focus of my thoughts in this session of Mapinduzi.

1. Barriers

By barriers, I mean anything that hampers mobility, any obstacles to the passage from one place to another, of people towards other people, from the North to the Far North, from North-Kivu to Ituri, etc. Barriers may be of several different kinds. I will mention only the most obvious ones.

1.1. Infrastructure barriers

It is a well-known fact that in DRC there is a severe lack of communication routes. The roads left by the Belgians have greatly deteriorated or have been reclaimed by nature. For the area we are concerned with, there is no trunk road to connect the town of Goma in the south to the northerly towns of Butembo and Beni (in NK) and Kisangani, in what is currently the province of Tshopo. This route, or what is left of it, can only be used along "stability sectors", to paraphrase an illustrious modern-day humanitarian from the UN, Mr. Martin Kobler, author and initiator of the concept of "stability islets" in DRC.

The stability sectors comprise the rare kilometre that can still be driven on, that is to say, next to nothing. For example, to cover the 350 km between Goma and Beni takes from 2 to 3 days of travel in the high dry season, slightly longer in the rainy season. Even for the most efficient vehicles, trying to travel this road is something of a self-sacrifice. In comparison, the some 350 km round trip Goma-Kigali-Goma can be done in 6 or 7 hours depending on the number of police barriers along the route and the delay at the border.

1.2. Security barriers

Between the rare stability sections, individual bandits *(coupeurs de route)* or organised bands racket, pillage and kidnap the passengers perched on FUSO trucks or cramped into Toyota mini-busses. Those who survive cannot escape the different "reports" that have to be paid for at each official security barrier, where several agents from State departments (there may be as many as 12 in certain places: FARDC, T2, ANR, DGM, Environment, P2, SAESCAM, Anti-fraud, etc.) or members of militia groups that take the place of a local State, openly hold them to ransom.

1.3. Identity ghettos

North-Kivu is a continuous area of more or less 60,000 km² with a population estimated at 6,655,000 forming a mosaic of 8 ethnic groups located on territories, which I would call traditional nations that Belgian colonisation institutionalised in certain places, by reinforcing the ethnic chiefdoms they believed to be there. But this space is scarred in the middle by Virunga national Park, a UNESCO world heritage site, that a Belgian prince is trying to save and preserve from all kinds of predators.

This park has become a sanctuary for several armed militia groups, both foreign (FDLR-FOCA and others) and local (Maï Maï). The section of the park that crosses the road towards the northeast has become so dangerous it is only used twice a day, with a military escort, between the cities of Kiwanja and Kanyabayonga, that is to say, the last town in the North with a predominantly Banyarwandan population and the first large town in the Far North which has a predominantly Banande population. Here we have just named the two communities whose elites wage a merciless political and economic competition through local, provincial, national and even regional networks.

This strip of the national park therefore constitutes a sort of natural boundary to the ethnic territories, to the extent that voices are raised regularly to divide the province into two following this line, which would enshrine the ethnic ghettoisation of the governance, which is currently taking place in Kasaï where the new provinces created in 2016 are giving rise to fratricidal strug-

gles between the Tshokwe, the Lulua and the Luba who are chasing each other out; each group feels the others should move to their new province. The noise of the violence between the partisans of chief Kamuina N'sapu and the government in Kinshasa is drowning out this dimension of the Congolese problem, for the moment…

1.4. Educational islets

For a long time, school has been the melting pot *par excellence*, the open milieu where contacts are made on bases other than ethnic identity, belonging to a clan, etc. Today, we are witnessing the phenomenon of total collapse. I will not mention here the collapse of the quality of training dispensed in our schools and universities which have become open-air scams. I am speaking of the destruction of the school as a melting pot, a place for mingling and mixing; I am speaking of those schools frequented by brothers, sisters and cousins from kindergarten to university. Of schools created hastily in villages and under trees, where children, teenagers and young adults are subjected to and grow up in an "ethnically homogeneous" school and academic community. It all started from a good intention, in theory, that school had to be brought closer to the end user. In DRC, there are no longer any grants for students so all academic expenses, the cost of the syllabus, copyright for the teachers who write the syllabuses, thesis supervisors, taking ordinary exams, taking resits, are all paid for by the parents.

Then the system started to run amok, universities sprouted up like mushrooms in a Congolese forest, with the end result that young people mixed up tribal land and national territory, young people who are more or less educated but know nothing of friendship and the *métissage* created by frequenting people from other population groups, who will never know the added value of an identity like the elders from ISP Bukavu when you come from an area bordering Uganda, etc.

And in urban settings where different communities mix, school, especially university, is frequented by the children from the neighbourhood, brawls between ethnic groups regularly prevail over the eloquence competitions in makeshift amphitheatres, as is the case in certain universities in Goma which shall not be mentioned here.

With so many barriers, crossing from the North to Ituri, going through the Far North, on a background of great insecurity characterised by the odious massacres of the Nande people in the region of Beni, is something of a tough obstacle course. For a long time, the Congolese government, through their spokesperson, accused the Ugandan rebels of ADF camping on the foothills of the Rwenzori mountain range, of having perpetrated the massacres in the context of international jihad, the ramifications of which were felt right to Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, etc. In this context, crossing this area, with a machete in your rucksack and handicapped by ignorance of the local language, is a perilous endeavour. Many people have paid with their lives.

2. Bridges

The picture I have just painted is certainly very bleak, but there are glimmers of hope, small bridges that need to be buttressed and, also, major works to be started to help youth avoid following a path that leads to collective suicide.

2.1. Youth movements

Whether we call them "citizen" movements or associations of X and Y, youth movements are a breath of fresh air among the great mass of those who are going to seed in their tiny certainties, who reproduce fragmentary schemas dictated by inward-looking attitude, lack of economic opportunities and ignorance. The current regime in Congo is certainly very repressive. The Congolese people are certainly afraid, everything is most certainly precarious and the political class as well as civil society are certainly dishearteningly mediocre. But there is hope when we see those young people who, beyond their ethnic origins, place their protests at the level of the communities, demanding access to basic services (water, electricity.) or accompanying the population victims of State malfunctions and mafias as was the case last week, when young people organised a sit-in to claim the reimbursement of the savings of the victims of microfinance institutions. They cannot carry all the demands of the population but, in the medium term, they can act as sentries so that institutions such as the Parliament and the government make laws and policies that

secure the mobility of the population and allow them to settle in any part of the national territory.

These young people are not well understood, even and especially by their families and friends who find them bold (one does not brave Authority, you don't talk back to the father), they need to be accompanied and supported, in particular through exchanges of experience with other members of citizens movements who have more or less succeeded in making more or less significant changes.

2.2. An alternative school

The Congolese education system, as we said, is no longer a place for *métissage* and socialisation beyond the ethnic community. The training itself is limited to the memorisation and restitution of concepts instead of being a place where ideas, critical thinking and the invention of possible solutions can thrive. Pole Institute devotes a whole programme to training young university students through the concepts of alternative university at the weekend and holiday university in August to follow programmes aimed at social transformation with and by young people.

2.3. The press

More and more free media are resolutely engaging in the promotion of peaceful cohabitation among ethnic communities and denouncing abuses, encouraging the expression of the ordinary population and not that of the authorities in place as is often the case. This is what radio Pole FM does from Goma. And it is certainly not an unlucky accident if, at the recent LUCHA manifestation, three journalists had their equipment confiscated: a white reporter-photographer, a journalist from Okapi, the UN radio station and a journalist from Pole FM. The latter was even assaulted, choked and slapped.

North Kivu: migrations fraught with every kind of danger

Kennedy Mwema*

I.   INTRODUCTION

When you listen to the news on the international media, particularly European television, not a day goes by, especially in summer, without a report on the tragic end of hundreds or even thousands of migrants fleeing abject poverty in Africa (and/or Asia) to reach the Eldorado of the old continent. Most of these unfortunate travellers end their lives drowned in the Mediterranean. Some lament the wretched fate of these poor migrants. Others mock those who believe that bread grows on trees in Europe, it depends on the consideration, without thinking about the real motivations or the true reasons that drives thousands of people to take the route of exile and/or exodus. One thing that is true is that each one does indeed have a reason.

   These images floating on the waves of the Mediterranean, quickly make us forget the plight of so many of our compatriots, the peoples of Kivu seeking a better life, fleeing the insecurity that has become chronic, precariousness and the scarcity of land… Those who try to go and settle elsewhere know the suspicion with which they will be greeted. It is not so easy. It may happen, when you go to Kinshasa, the locals use language such as "you, the people from the east", (as if the eastern part of the country wasn't part of DRC) or "you people form the hinterland". But even closer to home, in the same province, the Far North is opposed to the North (in French Grand Nord and Petit Nord). In my town of Butembo worse has happened. Migrants have been lik-

* Journalist, Butembo, DRC

ened to assassins. All it took was for some not to know the local language or to stutter a Swahili with doubtful tonalities… What is more, they came from the South to the North …

In the last quarter 2016, young people manipulated underhandedly by politicians imposed terror on the town. It was at the time when the massacres were increasing in the neighbouring town of Beni and any outsiders crossing through Butembo ran the risk of being lynched. On 24 August 2016, the sun rose on the town like any other day. But there was a palpable tension. A few days ago, some convoys of mini busses carrying people suspected of being Hutu migrating towards Ituri province were intercepted and sent back by the angry population. They were accused by who knows who of being guilty of massacres in the town of Beni and the surrounding area. On that day, therefore, two poor innocent women were burned alive in a travel agents, right in the centre of town, quite simply because they were suspected of being Hutu migrants[1]… It was only realised afterwards, and too late, that these innocent victims alleged Hutus were in fact: one was Bukavu and the other from Equator and they had no relation to migrants. The facts were there, people were killed because they were accused of belonging to a group of migrants. And as if that were not enough, the next day, another man who was also suspected of being a Hutu migrant was also burned alive in another neighbourhood of the town near the airport…. Only the media at least played a role, of reminding the agitated young people to assume their responsibilities and reject xenophobia.

Our aim in this analysis is neither to defend the migrants or even less to say they are right. But we simply want to understand how top-ranking government players manage this situation, with a certain late lightness that hides a certain evident will to manipulate the situation and perhaps take advantage of it. The situation deserves a closer look and a sober approach to the question of the migrations internal to North Kivu in particular and/or between the neighbouring provinces of a single country.

1 Read about the tragedy on http://www.bfmtv.com/international/rdc-deux-femmes-lynchees-et-brulees-vives-par-une-foule-en-colere-1030011.html

II. ISN'T MIGRATION A RIGHT?

The situation is so serious it moves the region's politicians. To stem the tide of people passing through Nande soil, the governor of North Kivu Province had to produce a circular *"prohibiting the circulation of unknown people"*[2] throughout North Kivu, in particular in Beni territory. But ill-intentioned people interpreted this message to suit their purposes. The situation seemed to calm down until the Hutu populations decided, of their own accord or under the influence of certain political players, to go and besiege, in mid-May, the governorate of the province with makeshift banners, expressing their right to live wherever they like. The governor of the province even had to defend himself, with a tone that was unusually harsh, in a press conference exclusively focused around this question on 20 May.

There are several legislative texts governing migrations because for eons, migration, has been a right. The constitution of DRC itself, in article 30, stipulates so clearly: *"Any person inside the country has the right to circulate freely, set up residence, leave and come back, under the conditions fixed by law."*[3] This idea is supported, of course, by the obligation to have a law on internal population movements. However, it so happens that in DRC there is a lack in this sector. A specific law on population movements is indeed required. The elected representatives of the Republic have plenty of material on this subject. But we believe, it is our humble opinion, that in the first instance we have to shake off the reasoning of "ghettoisation", of believing that we are connected only to the land. The notion of identity must go beyond that of territory, as Alain Mambanckou puts it so well: *"it would be vain to restrict oneself to territory, to ignore the multiplication of interferences, and thereby, the complexity of this new era which binds us to each other, far from geographic considerations"*.[4]

In the wake of the consequences of this affair of the "Hutu migrants", the elected representatives of the Ituri parliamentary caucus claimed responsibility for the situation. In a press release quoted by the press in Kinshasa, the elected representatives of Ituri spoke in strong terms. For example, these

2 Circular memo No. 01/551/CAB/GP-NK of 28 May 2016

3 Article 30 of the Constitution of DRC, paragraph 1

4 A. Mabanckou, Le sanglot de l'Homme Noir, Fayard 2011, P. 59

migrants are described as "Rwandans", connecting, all in one go, the migrations to a project of balkanisation of the DRC. We can read in it for example statements such as: *"The Ituri parliamentarians affirm their determination to oppose any schema and any person who tries to balkanise DRC by making use of Ituri province as a trigger"*[5].

The trap would be to believe this story only began yesterday. Wrong! According to the inhabitants of Irumu territory, the Hutu began to migrate en masse to this territory towards 2010. But the large scale migrations with a new label changed from "Hutu" to "Banyabwisha" which have become amplified since 2015. A journalist who worked on the question explained to us that this people currently represents more than 5 thousand families and lives in the small villages around the centres of Boga, Burasi and Tchabi. They grow crops in fields acquired in return for money from the traditional chiefs of the region and do not steal anything. They grow their crops and sell them in the markets in the region of Irumu centre and Bunia. They build schools where their children study…[6]

III.   WHAT IF IT WERE A POLITICAL QUESTION?

It is important to ask ourselves legitimately, why this question only becomes important again on the eve of an election. Already in May 2016, the provincial assembly of North Kivu examined the question. In its plenary session of 27 May 2016, the question was largely discussed and a recommendation was even issued to suspend the movement of these "unknown" (?) people. The provincial Minister in charge of the administration and public order even had to be able to *proceed in a timely manner to identify*[7] them. Given the repercussions of the situation, almost a year later, it seems that this recommendation as well as the circular memo of the governor of North Kivu province have never been implemented.

5 Christine Tshibuyi, https://actualite.cd/2017/05/22/deputes-de-lituri-sopposent-a-migration-hutus-vers-province/ viewed on 23 May 2017 at 10 09'

6 Exchanges with a journalist from Bunia on the question

7 Circular memo No. 01/551/CAB/GP-NK, 28 May 2016

There is a strident lack of political will to resolve this affair once and for all. On the other hand, it emerges that the politicians want to exploit the question to attract sympathy, and possible voters… The next elections are therefore, in our opinion, one of the stakes that strike fear in more than one politician and there are no holds barred to prepare for them politically. Must we believe, then that this time, the question will be taken seriously? Perhaps, for in his press review, the governor of province was slightly more formal. A control commission will be set up to go jointly with the authorities of the neighbouring province to identify these thousands of families. *"I cannot accept the situation or keep quiet when my voters leave to go somewhere else"* declared the governor of North Kivu in a press conference.[8]

IV. AMBIGUITY MAINTAINED BY THE STATE

What does it cost a State to organise the movements of its own citizens on its own soil, inside its own borders? Because in fact, we no longer understand the contours of this question of migration which goads the demons of xenophobia. We believe you have to read the history of the region to understand that while it is true that the Hutu and the Nandes do not have a high enough opinion of each other, it cannot be said that they have lived in animosity. There has been adversity certainly, concerning the exercise of political power between the two largest population groups of North Kivu but also on the management and use of land. But the Nandes lived on Hutu lands without too many problems for many a year. This has never been a problem. Besides, cohabitation was formerly peaceful between the two peoples. In his lifetime, Monseigneur Emmanuel Kataliko wrote to his colleague Monseigneur Faustin Ngabu and affirmed: *"In the Lubero territory, Nande, Hutu and Tutsi lived together that I christened or confirmed myself, as in the parish of Luofu. The adventist school centre of Rwese-Lukanga welcomed tribes from all the provinces of the Congo for their secondary studies, and even Hutu and Tutsi from Rwanda, without there being any tensions related to any ethnic or tribal membership"*[9]

8 Press conference of the governor, 20 May 2017, Goma on the question of Hutu migrants

9 http://benilubero.com/un-message-du-feu-mgr-kataliko-qui-a-tout-dit-et-predit/ consulté le 23 05 2017 11H01

V. CONCLUSION

The question of Hutu migrants must be taken seriously. Today, we don't know where the depopulated villages are that they come from in Masisi or Rutshuru to go to Ituri. And yet they carry documents, mission orders and Congolese voters cards that act as identification documents. So they are not "unknown population" because they are identified as such. If we continue to treat them thus, with this complicit lack of seriousness, this will revive the conflicts related to nationality and the question of land which have undermined peaceful cohabitation between the peoples of the east. North Kivu is already unstable enough without allowing a problem to prolong itself towards Ituri which tomorrow will be unmanageable, especially since even the recent history of Ituri is tainted with terrible conflicts. And it is not only Ituri which will suffer… the far North Kivu until now slightly spared, could well be plunged into inter ethnic conflicts.

Youth protest dynamics in Mali: towards the emergence of a counter–power?

Ambroise Dakouo*

Introduction

On the African continent, the struggles for democratic openings at the beginning of the 1990s set the stage for the young generation, who invested "the streets like new terrains for expression and rallying". Over the past few years, the commitment of young people through various forms of mobilisation, has taken on considerable amplitude. These mobilisation actions have led to socio-political and institutional changes at various places all over the continent. Analysis of the protest dynamics shows a political configuration that largely involves African youth. This dynamic also reveals fractures and malfunctions in the African States, on a social, political and institutional level.[1]

After decades of democratic construction, the current conditions of emergence of new forms of threats (non-state and terrorist armed groups, the rise in cross-border and transnational organised crime, the expansion of radicalisation, etc. in the Sahel-Saharan area more particularly in Mali) and the consequences related to poor governance mean that once more the sub-Saharan states are confronted with crucial challenges.

On this subject, Alexandre Marc, Neelam Verjee, and Stephen Mogaka contend that *"The triggers of youth violence in West Africa are manifold. They tap*

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1 Muxel Anne, (2000). *L'expérience politique des jeunes*, Paris, presses science po.

* Researcher. National coordinator of the Alliance for Rebuilding Governance in Africa (ARGA) in Mali.

into reservoirs of resentment caused by several factors, including the failure of corrupt and patrimonial states to function on behalf of youth, the associated absence of opportunity, a sense of frustration and alienation, a desire for recognition and esteem, an intergenerational crisis, and elites' manipulation of youth."[2]

In fact, the post crisis context in Mali, characterised by the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, signed on 15 May and 20 June 2015, offers an angle of observation of the dynamics of the young Malians. This context is also marked by numerous acts of corruption and poor governance (purchase of presidential aircraft, purchase of military equipment, the affair of adulterated fertilizer sold to farmers, the revelations related to the fraudulent public service contracts and the loss of income notified by the Office of the Auditor General). The emergence of forms of youth protest should be seized in this negative climate of the continuous calling into question of political governance.

However, despite the "charm" of the protest actions in which young people are the players, the capacity of young people to erect themselves as a real anti-establishment force should be submitted to rigid criticism. This preoccupation leads us to express the following questions: what are the fields and the forms of protest of young people in Mali? To what extent do the current forms of protest make young people a serious counter-power?

The scientific literature production on the dynamics of young people is abundant and continuous. The theoretical constructions are extremely pertinent and make it possible to seize, here and there, in various contexts, how young people relate to politics, democratic life, employment, violence, within the sphere of associations, citizenship, etc.

In his book about politics and youth movements in Francophone Africa, Badra Alou Traoré shows that the transformations and socio-economic mutations that engender a diversity of problems and phenomena increase the complexity of the institutional responses for promoting youth, which can be divided into three rationales: i) Youth policy is handled by a specific Ministry; ii) Youth policy cuts across several ministerial departments; and iii) imple-

2 Marc Alexandre, Verjee Neelam, and Mogaka Stephen, (2015), *The Challenge of Stability and Security in West Africa*, AFD/World Bank, Washington, DC, p.17.

mentation of the reform of decentralisation leads to a sharing of responsibilities between central government and local authorities.[3]

At a conference of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), sociologist Ibrahima Touré from Gaston Berger University in Saint-Louis (Senegal) analysed the new collective dynamics of young people in the public sphere. In an article entitled "Youth, social mobilisation and citizenship in West Africa. Comparative study of the protest movements "Y'en a marre" in Senegal and "Balai citoyen" in Burkina Faso", Ibrahima Touré shows that scientific works about these forms of social mobilizations of young people are on the increase, but the procedures they adopt are descriptive and rarely of a comparative nature. The author thinks that *"the analysis models of actionnalism and political process (…) demonstrate that whether they are allied or not, these movements are expressive of the democratic vitality of the continent. They can be looked upon as real anti-establishment forces; individually and collectively, depending on the present opportunities and constraints, they involve the citizens in new systems of value. Their ultimate purpose is not only to create conditions for a total political reformation, but to favour social change for development."*[4] In sum Ibrahima Touré feels that the model of analysis of political opportunities implies that the political context (constraints and opportunities) determines whether or not social movements are structured.

The sociology of youth tells of a continuous change in the approaches and definitions that allow us to seize, as they present themselves to be perceived, "youth dynamics" in particular in the context of the permanent instability in West Africa. In this sense, we formulate the following hypotheses: the crisis in Mali, by discrediting politicians, favoured the emergence of the protest dynamics of associations of young people regarding practices in the governance of public affairs; while young people may have become an anti-establishment force in the context of reconstruction in Mali, this cannot be generalised

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3 Traoré Badra Alou (2007), *Politiques et mouvements de jeunesse en Afrique francophone: Le cas du Mali*, Harmattan, Paris, p.11.

4 Touré Ibrahima (2014) TOURE Ibrahima (2014), *"Jeunesse, mobilisations sociales et citoyenneté en Afrique de l'Ouest. Étude comparée des mouvements de contestation "Y'en a marre" au Sénégal et "Balai citoyen" au Burkina Faso"*, CODERSRIA.

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to all the regions—only the youths of Gao and Bamako (to a certain extent) seem to have achieved this status.

We consider, in fact, that the analysis of the young people from the twin dimensions of structure and cycle, should offer a better perspective to grasp, beyond any passing trends, the validity and depth of the forms of political protest.

1. History of youth protest movements

In Mali, young people played a major role in the struggle for a pluralistic democracy. 1991 constituted a veritable turning point in the life of the Malian nation. In the wake of a popular revolution completed by a military coup d'Etat, Mali achieved democracy through the instauration of an integral multi-party system. Mali's accession to democracy was possible through the collective commitment of several political players, civil society and young people whose student movements were in the front line of the demonstrations and protests against the regime of general Moussa Traoré.

At the origin of this popular revolution was an international historical context favourable to the democratisation of the States and a disastrous domestic socio-economic situation coupled with serious privations of liberties. It was the combination of all of these factors and of the cumulated politico-civil and military movements that enabled the struggle against the regime of Moussa Traoré to prevail.

The action of Malian youth remains decisive for the success of the struggle. The student movement, AEEM, by joining the political associations (CNID, ADEMA, AJDP, JLD, called Democratic Movement), positioned itself at the spearhead of the democratic combat. AEEM organised "a series of strikes and demonstrations" which destabilised and toppled Moussa Traoré's regime.

After general Moussa Traoré had been deposed, young people took part in the People's Salvation Transition Committee (CTSP) which was set up. Oumar Mariko, leader of the student movement affirmed their positioning: *"We are a union organisation independent of all political parties […] we nonetheless intend to influence the changes underway. We must mark with our seal the decisions born of the change because we are concerned about the future of this country".*

From 29 July–12 August 1991, the CTSP organised the National Conference with all the components of the nation of Mali. One of the principal conclusions of this conference was the draft Constitution. Through this Constitution, which was approved by referendum on 12 January 1992, Mali inaugurated the III Republic and laid the foundations of a pluralistic democracy.

The analysis of the history since 1991 shows a political configuration that largely involves youth. For Anne Muxel[5], we must understand the commitment of young people through concrete actions, as forms of mobilisation which reveal the fractures and malfunctions in society.

2. Attempted definition of a typology and domains of action of youth organisations in Mali

To sketch the typology of the youth organisations, we looked more at the way they operate, their field of action, intervention methods and targets. From this investigation results emerge that inform us about the structure and governance of the organisations in the different regions of the study.[6]

Typology of the organisations

The types of youth organisations encountered were very generally associations. They represent 85.6% of organisations. Platform-type organisations (network, federation) represent 11.8%. Cooperative and non-governmental (NGO) organisations each represent 1.3% of the youth organisations. This great disparity leads us to wonder about the reasons that push young people to create associations rather than other types of organisations.

At this level two major explanations can be mustered to take account of the disparity. First of all, law No. 04-038 of 04 August 2004 relative to associations is very easy to understand and apply. Referring to this law, (article 2), we can define an association as: *"the convention by which several people permanently pool their knowledge or activities with an aim other than sharing profits.*

5 Anne Muxel, op. cit. (2000).

6 The study in question was carried out in four regions/districts (Kayes, Timbuktu, Gao and Bamako).

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It is governed, regarding its validity, by the general principles of law applicable to contracts and obligations".

The terms and conditions described by the aforementioned law are anything but cumbersome. Article 3 stipulates that *"associations of people may form freely without prior authorisation or declaration, but will only have legal status if they comply with the provisions of Article 6 of this law".* Similarly, the public authorities do not hinder the creation of youth associations, which means confirmation of registration can be obtained very often within a reasonable time. Secondly, once formed, an association can mobilise resources from public development aid. To this end, the success of several associations in the domain of development projects acts as an incentive to other young people.

Domains of action of youth organisations

The graph below identifies the preferential domains of intervention of youth organisations.
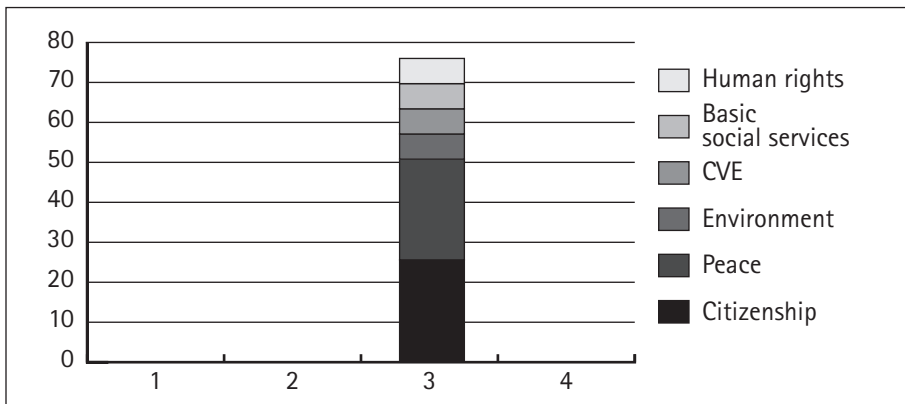

Graph 1: Preferential domains of intervention of youth organisations.

Analysis of this graph shows that the preferential domains of intervention of youth organisations are citizenship; Peace/Social harmony/Reconciliation; the environment; combating violent extremism; access to basic social services; and human rights. Such a result confirms the hypothesis that young people are interested in the current issues affecting the country related to the processes of reconciliation and reconstruction.

As the post-crisis context in Mali challenged the problematic of peace, it is of no small concern to observe that there are numerous sources of funding in this domain. Does this mean that the existence of such opportunities directs the positioning of the youth organisations in order to capture "peace resources"? Such a postulate should not be excluded, as we know that the post crisis period in Mali was characterised by massive support from the development partners in favour of initiatives of dialogues and inter and intra-community meetings. Overall, it is the taking into account of the double context of opportunity—funding and action in terms of local and/or national interest—that allows us to grasp the positioning of the youth organisations.

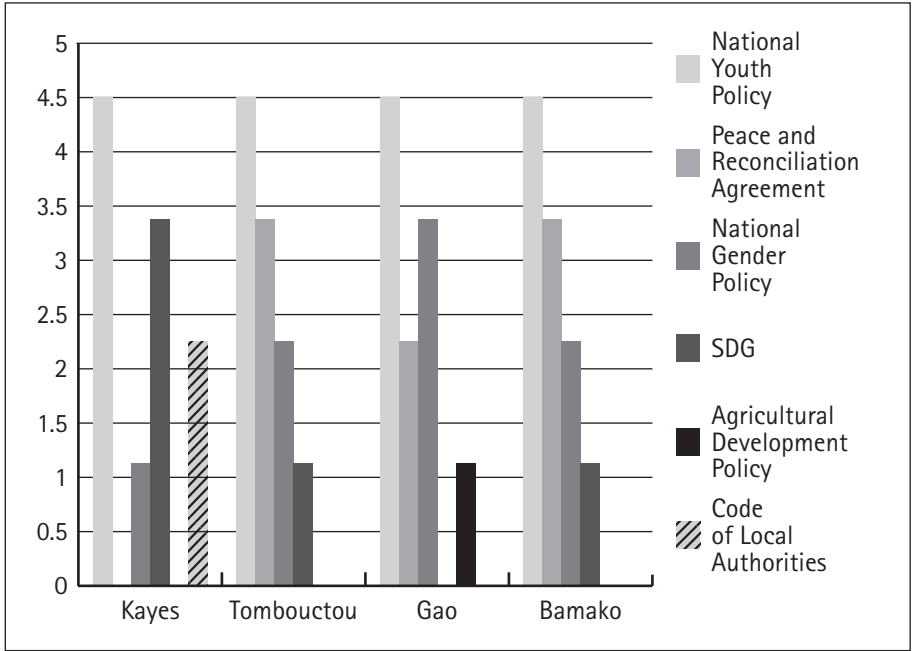## References to national and international policies

Reference to national and international policies is a major indicator for understanding the extent to which youth organisations integrate political orientations into their actions. Today, public policies occupy an important place in the governance of public affairs, so that many domains of public action are subject to a policy definition. In this context public policies make it possible to orient,
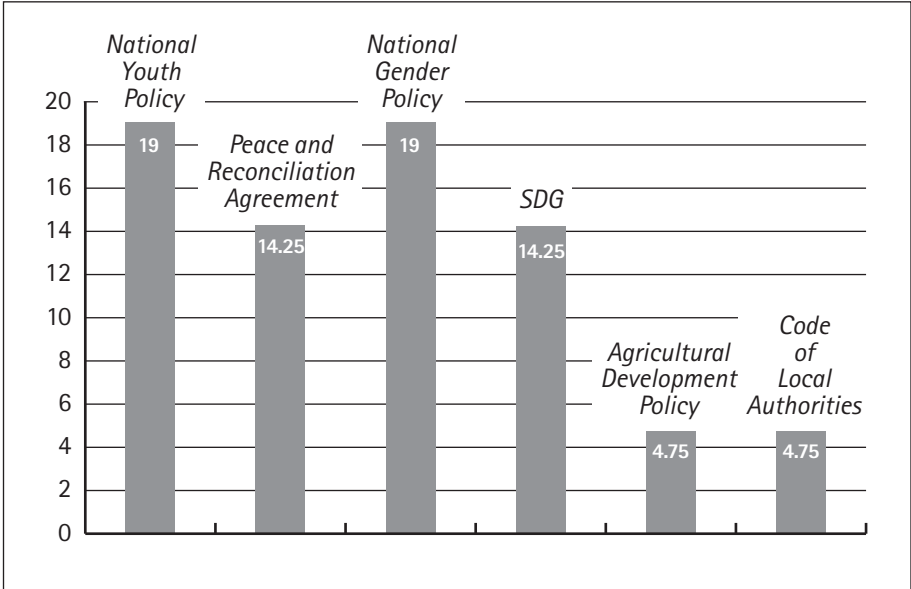
Graph 2: National and international policies referenced by young people

contextualise and propose a series of actions aimed at resolving such and such a national concern. International development goals are sometimes aligned with national policies. Very generally, this alignment favours the mobilisation of public development aid resources and the concentration of efforts to provide a sustainable response to the given problematic. From this perspective, taking into account national and/or international policies means contributing to the response to the challenges facing public action.

When we read this graph, we can see that the policies young people refer to most are the National Youth Policy and the National Gender Policy. Next, we note that importance is given to the Peace and reconciliation agreement. The only reference to international policy remains the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Graph 3: National and international policies referenced by young people in each region

However, there is a slight disparity at the level of the regions. In all the regions, the agreement was cited, except in Kayes. This particularity of Kayes is also confirmed in the fact that this is the only place the Code of local authorities

was mentioned. We also note that the agricultural development policy was mentioned only in the region of Gao. As for the SDG, they were mentioned in Timbuktu and in the district of Bamako.

Despite these results, it should be pointed out that reference to national and international policies is not always systematic in the interviews with young people. Very generally, when we analyse the productions of young people—project documents, activity reports, reviews, etc.—national and international policies are not given much space at all.

Since it was adopted in 2010, the NGP has been widely circulated. This could explain the rate of reference to this policy. However, apart from the national gender policy, no speaker referred to law No. 2015-052/ of 18 December 2015 introducing measures to promote gender in access to nominative and elective functions. This law is nonetheless recent. In addition, it represents a major step forward for the promotion of gender in Mali.

The national peace and reconciliation agreement in Mali was widely publicised. Today, the contents of this agreement are theoretically known to the majority of the civil society organisations. The rate of reference to the Agreement can be explained by the extensive communication around the document. Added to this, support from several technical and financial partners for civil society organisations within the framework of the dissemination of the agreement, and implementation of certain actions mentioned in the Agreement, can also explain the fact that young people are largely familiar with this document.

3. Fields and forms of youth protest in Mali

Whether in the cultural—artistic, political and social domain, young people in Mali are engaged in protest actions against the current political leadership. There are various illustrations of this.

Youth protest dynamics in Gao

Faced with the unilateral increase in the price of transport in the city of Gao in 2015, the three youth movements in the town (*patrouilleurs*, *patriotes* and *Nous pas bouger*) rallied to block the decision of transport companies NOUR,

SONEF and BINKE. The young people for example spontaneously stopped coaches from entering and leaving over a period of a few days. They demanded that the transport companies bring down the Gao-Bamako route to its initial price. The journey had been increased from 19,000 to 25,000 CFA Francs.

Following the protest movements, SONEF, NOUR and BINKE dropped their prices, From 25,000 to 20,000 CFA Francs, which is a reduction of 5,000 francs. According to a youth leader in Gao, this drop "is not sufficient", but constitutes a "step forward" in the negotiations with the transport companies, which are continuing.

Deadly demonstrations in Gao

On Tuesday 12 July 2016, security forces opened fire at a demonstration organised by youth associations from local civil society in Gao, killing at least three people and leaving several injured. The Malian government reported "three dead and some injured among the demonstrators and the security forces", in a press release published the same day. Note also that the demonstration had been prohibited by the authorities due to the state of emergency. The demonstrators were protesting against the establishing of interim authorities.

The introduction of interim authorities is a provision of the national peace and reconciliation agreement. It aimed to denounce the use of interim authorities in the North, supposed to begin that Friday. Part of the Algiers peace agreement, the provision stipulates the temporary replacement of local elected representatives by representatives of the government, ex-rebellion and pro-governmental armed groups in the five administrative regions of the North of Mali.

Master Soumi: the artistic form of protest against the governance of public affairs

Master Soumi is a young rapper from Mali. He does not hesitate to use his art to denounce the abuses of governance of public affairs in Mali, in particular through tracks such as "Hakilidjigui ", "Gwèlèkan" and "Dougoumassira".

"I'm not afraid of anyone, and I'm going to speak out about the truth no matter what the cost".

"Our capital was given a facelift just because Holland was to visit Mali" explained the rapper while asking questions including: *"I ask the government if the security provisions for the summit will remain even after the meeting, to protect your average Malian. I would like to know if the work of enhancing and cleaning will also continue".*

The young rapper denounces mainly the problems of poor governance, pointing the finger at the President of the Republic as well as his government. He speaks first of all of the politicisation of Islam by politicians who use it to dupe the population by organising conferences in the mosques. Corruption which is increasing in magnitude in Mali is also mentioned, in addition to the unkept promises made by the President of the Republic during the 2013 presidential election campaign, including the creation of 200,000 jobs for young people, combating corruption and recalling ambassadors who do not take proper care of Malians abroad.

According to Master Soumy, our wealth is divided up like a cake among the leaders. On another level, the rapper touches the problem of the readmission of undocumented Malians living in Europe that the government wants at all costs to cover up. He also speaks out about the difficulties facing Malians from France.[7]

The rapper Penzy, who received death threats

The young rapper Penzy, real name Tahirou Hanguiné Touré, wrote a single called "Ko ne kan da dé", or "I should shut my mouth". In this track, the rapper denounces poor governance. The track follows on from another one called "O ma ne kouminai", also composed in the same register of condemnation.

Because of these stances, the rapper received a number of anonymous death threats. For the rapper, these threats will not silence him. He says he is singing for Mali and its people.

7 Diarrah Salif, maliactu.net (10 January 2017), "Nouvelle chanson: Master Soumy crache la vérité sur la mauvaise gouvernance malgré les menaces". http://maliactu.net/mali-nouvelle-chanson-master-soumy-crache-la-verite-sur-la-mauvaise-gouvernance-malgre-les-menaces/

Ras Bath, a new phenomenon of protest

Mohamed Youssouf Bathily aka Ras Bath is a young Malian commentator. He is very popular for his tirades on a private radio station in Bamako, in particular in condemning poor governance.

In August 2016, at a demonstration following the arrest of commentator Mohamed Youssouf Bathily aka Ras Bath, the situation degenerated. One person died, there were many wounded and considerable material damage. The commentator had been arrested during the night of 14 August 2016 for "public insult".

In reality, Ras Bath capitalises on and acts as spokesman for Malian youth in crisis living "major discomfort" in the face of the lack of job opportunities, poor governance, etc. For journalist Diala Thieny Konaté *"young people who effectively took part in the events of March 1991 feel they have been deceived and abandoned by politicians practically all of whom have gotten brazenly rich from corruption and embezzlement of public property. Not only have they become wealthy with public money but they have also been incapable of handling the major problems of the young people and Malians in general. Schools have been in a state of total decrepitude for more than three decades and they only train students to a low level. In parallel, unemployment, for which there are no official figures, plunges youth into total despair"*.[8]

Trop c'est trop movement: "We want health care… the doctors must return to the hospitals"

To denounce the unlimited doctors' strike which lasted several weeks in Mali in 2016, the movement *"trop c'est trop"* organised several meetings. To make itself heard, the movement decided on a sit-in on the podium of the Boulevard de l'Indépendance, right opposite the labour exchange. On the social networks, the members of the movement invited the Malians to take part in this sit-in, the aim of which was to save the sick who were slowly dying in the hospitals for lack of medical care. Monday 27 March 2017, when the work of the conference began, around twenty young people agreed to meet in front of the

8 Konaté Diala Thiény, (18 August 2016), "Ras Bath, le symbole malheureux d'un vrai malaise". http://maliactu.net/mali-ras-bath-le-symbole-malheureux-dun-vrai-malaise/

labour exchange. The demonstrators had banners with the words: "health is a right", "school is a right", *"trop c'est trop"* etc. They also had a megaphone, and chanted slogans such as: "we want health care", "the doctors must return to the hospitals" etc.

According to Malick Konaté, one of the spokespeople of the movement, the choice of place was no accident. *"The President of the Republic and the ministers went along this route to the palace. It is also situated opposite the labour exchange, where the union leaders are located. Both parties would be challenged. We are killing two birds with one stone"* explained Malick Konaté.

Still according to Konaté, this sit-in is neither against the government, nor against the doctors' union. He explains that it is just a way of applying pressure for the players to engage fully to end the suffering of the sick who are not being cared for.[9]

Protests on the social networks

With the advent of the social networks, we are forced to acknowledge the fact that information has become more democratic. It is no longer possible to censor information by closing down or putting pressure on the TV channels, radio stations or newspapers. Today Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have become fully-fledged communication channels. They are beginning to compete with the traditional media. From now on, we use them as a means of expression to condemn bad government. Access to the Internet and the new information technologies have enabled the emergence of a movement of bloggers and web-activists. These latter, by using the new media, often escape the control of the State.

Censorship as a response to youth activism

On 17 August 2016, following a demonstration to demand the release of entertainer Ras Bath, Mali experienced its first ever suspension of the social networks. Ras Bath, the day before his audience, called for a mobilisation on

9 Kene A., Delta News, (5 April 2017), "Mouvement trop c'est trop: Nous voulons nous soigner … les médecins doivent retourner dans les hôpitaux". http://maliactu.net/mali-mouvement-trop-cest-trop-nous-voulons-nous-soigner-les-medecins-doivent-retourner-dans-les-hopitaux/.

Facebook. Minimising the consequences of such an action, the extent of the mobilisation took the authorities by surprise.[10] Despite the censorship, young people were able to use other "free applications", but they also condemned this government censorship.

Conclusion

In Mali, young people played a major role in favour of the advent and construction of the democratic process. The analysis of the history since 1991 shows a political configuration that largely involves the young generation as a first-ranking actor.[11] However, the political and institutional responses have not really been commensurate with the expectations of the majority of the young people.

Faced with the "fragility" of the Malian State, young people sufficiently integrated the challenges[12] confronting them and reproduced increasingly well-argumented discourses for their demands and protests.

The permanence of the campaigns on the social networks (Facebook, etc.) and the marches organised by the young people in Bamako, against the reve-

10 These past three years, a new form of protest has emerged on the social networks. Young people are on the look out daily for acts of poor governance which they immediately condemn. Faced with this criticism, the disillusioned authorities often use inappropriate adjectives, showing their disdain for this form of protest. For example, one authority has already used the term "Fassodewn Jugu", which, in bambara, means: the bad children of the Republic. In August 2014, in a tweet, the Minister of Communication and spokesman of the government, called "Bitter" those who demanded accountability regarding the acquisition of a new presidential aircraft. According to the press, the aircraft was purchased irregularly. This attitude of Minister Mahamadou Camara raised a fracas on the net with the hashtag #TeamAigri. Two years later, the Minister of communication Mountaga Tall described the reaction of the surfers as "gutter-level discussions".

11 Dakouo Ambroise (2015), "La conquête du pouvoir au Mali par les jeunes au lendemain du coup d'Etat du 22 mars 2012", in Sissoko Tiefing (dir), La jeunesse malienne: entre autonomie, mobilisation et exclusion, 2015, Harmattan.

12 Young people represent almost 60–70% of the population of Mali. Each year, 300,000 young people enter the job market; many of them do not succeed in finding decent jobs. Because of this, despite average annual economic growth of 4.5%, unemployment is rising. (Sustainable Human Development Observatory (SHDO), (2013). Impact of the 2012 socio-economic and political crisis on the Millennium Development Goals. Bamako). Today, the lack of jobs is particularly acute for young people between 15 and 35 among whom the unemployment rate is estimated at 40–45%. (World Bank (2014), "Promoting State legitimacy, stability and cohesion in sparsely populated areas, Mali: a case study", Report/ 26 June 2014, p.26).

lations of corruption, the incoherence of political decisions, etc., are an indicator of the internalisation of their role, as actors of change.

The weak connection between the actions of young people, the quest for opportunities to leave fragile situations behind or consolidate a job it was difficult to obtain and also political interference, further weaken the emergence of the young generation as a real anti-establishment force (with the exception of Gao and Bamako). On the one hand, the proliferation of youth associations set up to take part in the work of building peace and democratic citizenship reveals the constant commitment of young people. On the other hand, the abundance of the "association network" at local and regional level, is not always synonymous with real dynamism. In reality, the weakness of associative management, the low capacity to contribute and the lack of a two-party system weakens the governance of the youth organisations and very often anticipates their decline.

Despite the challenges they must rise up to meet, young people should be considered from a new angle, to understand the cyclical ambiguities in which they find themselves, but also to grasp the awareness that progressively structures their political commitment.

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British youth activism: challenges, concerns and hopes

Harry Davies*

In recent years, British politics has been shaken up by the Scottish independence referendum, the rise of Jeremy Corbyn and, of course, Brexit. Young people have been woken up.

A number of populist parties has risen to the fore, even if many have fallen away of late; UKIP in Britain; Podemos in Spain; Syriza in Greece; National Front in France and, in the States, Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders both addressed a public appetite for transgressive political voices.

Before this, youth engagement in British politics was at a low. Millions across the world marched against the Iraq War but they failed to deflect the government. Our members of parliament were caught in the expenses scandal, some spending our taxes on personal gains.

The Liberal Democrats courted the youth vote by promising not to raise university tuition fees, only to go back on that pledge once they entered the coalition, once again in the face of the protests of young people. Politicians seemed not to care about our objectives, refused to listen to our voices and parliamentary politics offered VERY little alternative representation. Mainstream press also seemed intent on painting our legitimate concerns and protests as petulant, ignorant and essentially pointless.

In this climate, Jeremy Corbyn was nominated as a candidate for Labour leader. A dark horse backbencher, nobody expected him to succeed. Nevertheless, Corbyn offered an alternative that promoted 183,000 people to join the Labour Party. Most were young and many had never engaged in political action in their lives. Largely due to an excited young following, he became and still is the leader of the opposition.

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Scotland had experienced its own surge in political youth engagement a few years before with the Scottish independence vote. The minimum voting age was reduced to 16 from 18: 100,000 under-18s signed up to vote, 80% of the newly-eligible. Almost three quarters (71%) of them voted for independence. The referendum drew a record 3.6 million voters, more evidence that people engage when they are offered A CHANCE FOR genuine change.

Then, there was Brexit. Despite early suggestions that LESS THAN A third of 18–24-year-olds came out to vote, more recent data suggests it was over two thirds, a staggering 75% of whom wanted to remain in the EU. For a notoriously apathetic demographic, this was huge.

These are exciting spikes in the political engagement of young people but the fear is how sustainable they are. Brexit happened. Scottish independence did not. Jeremy Corbyn is rapidly losing the faith of the majority of those who were originally so impressed by him. There have been large marches against Trump, against Brexit, in support of immigrants. This sort of mass-mobilisation is a new and exciting trend but the absence of clear goals and organisation raise fears that their short term failure will lead to greater and more stubborn disenfranchisement.

As the Conservative party faces little to no opposition from struggling Labour, young people protest without a unifying banner.

Young people have found other pathways. Many have incorporated the ethos of metissage into their political action, principally in their reaction to the refugee crisis.

The French government closed the Jungle, the largest refugee camp in Europe, in Calais. The British government offered asylum to only 2,000 people as European countries looked for solutions.

The thousands who have travelled across Europe to offer their services from France, Greece and Italy show how this runs in clear opposition to the exclusionary stances taken by the leading parties of our nations.

Much maligned social media have been an arena where marginalised voices have grown louder and political awareness and action have been formed and strengthened. There is always the concern that people become keyboard warriors while leading apathetic real world lives but this, I believe, is exaggerated.

The story of Cal-Aid, a British-based NGO that worked to help those in Calais, is a good example of the power of social media. They raised over £200,000,

breaking GoFundMe's record and becoming the Jungle-specific charity by sharing images and stories of what was going on.

This work was begun by three siblings under the age of 25. They used modern means to actualise real change, speaking to young people, who are most aware of how to use social media to greatest effect. Its power has been seen across the world, during the Arab Spring, throughout the protests Turkey, in Black Lives Matter protests internationally and so too in the UK.

Identity politics and single issue causes do offer a promising and different arena for engagement. There has been an upward trend in the general awareness of the importance of causes such as race equality, feminism, LGBTQ+ rights and the environment. Young people are at the forefront of this. The proportion of climate-change deniers shrinks as the age of the demographic gets YOUNGER, while awareness of concerns related to race, sexuality and sexism rises.

As new means of analysis and areas of discussion occur, more issues are identified. For example, the essentialising of concerns in accordance with skin colour or gender or another characteristic.

Privilege has also been identified as another target for young activists, whether it is wrestling with their own or educating others. An understanding appears to be developing, though not without difficulty, that many causes intersect and progress of one should not come at the cost of another. In essence, an understanding of metissage also seems to be forming as a mutual understanding of the need for inclusive political action arises.

Social media have contributed to new progress made here as well. Twitter especially has allowed groups and individuals with concerns in these areas to link up internationally, have their opinions affirmed and experiences shared. Thus, people have grown bolder in expressing themselves as members of unified though dispersed groups. These groups are thus recognised as valid and even commercially important, so media and products have emerged as a result and in support of them. This is a sphere young people understand and where they operate with fluency.

Recent successes of groups such as Galdem, a media group set up by and for young women of colour offer promise for those wanting to create change for usually marginalised groups. Now larger media groups are working to include

their voices and explore issues that are alien to a predominantly white male media elite.

Institutional racism, the gender-pay gap, LGBTQ+ abuse and environmental damage are still very much in evidence but now plenty of indicators show we are going the other way.

Seeds of hope suggest real change can be achieved by the work, faith and organisation of political youth action.

There is a willingness to resist false patriotism and reactionary nationalism epitomised by Trump and Brexit and fomented by the media.

At present, however, this enthusiasm is limited by the fact it is expressed in performative action which takes precedence over the more laborious tasks of solid analysis, planned strategy and well-considered tactics.

In the absence of organisational bodies and clear leadership, youth movements must work to address these issues if their mobilisation is to result in sustainable change as opposed to frustration or worse, total disenfranchisement.

Bridges, not walls!

Samir Abi*

More than a quarter of a century after it fell, the Berlin wall remains in the collective conscience as one of the most poignant facts of the last century. The shame it aroused and the ostentatious joy that accompanied its demolition will always remain in our memories. When the wall fell, in 1989, I was still young, living in Togo and admiring Europe, its values of liberty and democracy. And like many young Togolese people, Germany was the country I admired most.

It was a question of chance that the German colonisers had called my country "Togo". Following in the footsteps of the other European nations in conquering lands in Africa, Chancellor Bismarck sent Dr Gustav Nachtigal to negotiate **"Cooperation treaties"** with the royalty living on these lands which the Germans later called "Togoland". Thus began the history of the country called "Togo" from which I currently hold a passport. While Togo later became a French colony, a love of the Germans has never left the land which still feels indebted to them for the main national highways, the railways, the capital Lomé and their urban planning projects. With the points of their bayonets, the German troops brutally repressed all the people living on these lands who refused to sign "cooperation treaties" with the "invaders", the European migrants of the time. In spite of this, the Togolese people have a deeply-ingrained memory of the rigorous way the Germans worked and their pragmatism in the autonomous management of the "model colony" which "Togoland" was to their eyes.

As an heir to this experience, I was inspired by the World Forum on Migration and development in Berlin, Germany, to share this moment of our common history with the German people. The recent past has also made Germany the European country which provided the Togolese people with the most support when struggling for democracy in the 1990s. Fleeing the repression of these years of guns and terror, the Togolese opposition members found refuge in Germany where they ceaselessly continued the combat for the respect of the will of the Togolese people for democratic elections. From refugees, they became migrants who contribute an annual 10% of the GDP of Togo by their money transfers. The memories that marked this common history are giving way to bitterness of the experience by many Togolese today faced with the walls Germany is putting up with Africa.

The policy of expelling Togolese people who fail in their application for political asylum and the massive refusals of visas requested by Togolese citizens who want to go to Germany quickly dispelled the myth of a love story between the descendants of "Togoland" and Germany. The political *rapprochement* between Lomé and Berlin has also dampened the ardours of Togo for Germany. The will of the German government to establish itself economically in Africa without taking into account democratic governance and the respect of human rights by the African governments they sign "cooperation treaties" with is continuously denounced by civil society in both Germany and Africa. The new **"Marshall Plan"** Germany is proposing to certain African countries is further proof that we are returning to the era of colonial conquest where the search for economic opportunities is the keyword of the cooperation between European and African countries.

But faced with the new "Berlin" walls that are being erected on the African continent because of the funding granted by the European Union and countries such as France, Spain, Italy and Germany to African countries to block the mobility of the Africans on their land, the need is being felt anew for the protest rallies that made the fall of the Berlin wall possible in 1989. In this sense, the role of journalists in Europe as in Africa is paramount. Through pen, voice or pictures, they have the tools for enlightening public opinion and vanquishing the ideas propagated by fascist groups and parties who create conflict situations between peoples to conquer or conserve power. And so it was our duty to contribute to this work launched by the German newspaper Taz

(die tageszeitung) to help tear down the "Berlin walls" with the might of our pens. May these words inspire others to create more bridges between nationalities and lifestyles all over the world.

"Circle of Action and Reflection"

Maïmou Wali*

The Circle of Action and Reflection for Innovative Local Development in Niger called CERCLE.DEV, is a group of volunteers dedicated to Nigerien youth with the ambition of inciting and supporting young girls and boys in citizen actions focused on social mobilisation and local resources.

CERCLE.DEV emerged during the period when the sect Boko Haram was extending its operations in the region of Diffa in Niger in 2015, a time which saw the installation of several camps of displaced persons with humanitarian needs for more than 70,000 people including women and children living in situations of insecurity.

Faced with this major challenge, in January 2016 volunteers from CERCLE. DEV initiated an operation to collect clothes, blankets and food for relief for the victims of the phenomenon of Boko Haram. This initiative was a first in a context where humanitarian actions are usually initiated by the international organisations.

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The collection operation called **"KARA"** in Haoussa language, meaning assistance in English, started through rallying messages on the social networks. The rally call was very quickly a great success and Nigerien youth joined the cause with the multiplication of collection operations in the other regions of the country (Agadèz, Zinder, Maradi and Tahoua).

The initiative gradually reached the headlines on facebook and spread to the diaspora in the sub-region, Europe, Asia, the United States and Canada. A facebook page was dedicated to the event with more than 2,500 young people, girls and boys, signing up for a movement which developed under the name of "Diffa I care".

The 100% citizen youth movement with the guiding principle of voluntary work, served as a framework for exchanges, for building links of solidarity and a trigger for an impulse towards citizen actions in Niger, with the support of artists, the press, enterprises, transport and cell phone companies, economic operators, civil society organisations, local authorities, customary and administrative authorities and goodwill.

The delegations of young girls and boys from different horizons converged on Diffa in May 2017 to support the displaced population in the different camps despite the context of the security situation in the region.

The movement collected and distributed more than 100,000 garments of all kinds, 70,000 pairs of shoes, 40,000 blankets, 55,000 kitchen utensils, 200 mattresses, 1,500 items of school equipment and 4 tonnes of cereals.

There were more than 35,000 individual donors, 10 enterprises, 10 national and international NGOs, 10 youth structures and 2 travel firms, as well as the local authorities.

The major challenges of this experience remain preserving the citizen originality of the movement, developing the connexion between young people and breaking down the differences.

Breaking definitively with the rationale of holding out your hand, and creating dynamics of social mobilisation and local resources for autonomous local development!

"Voluntary" return of 154 unfortunate Burkinabés from Libya

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Mapinduzi Unit met in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, from 18–21 April 2017 to discuss the topic of "Cultural mixity, migration and youth movements". On Wednesday 19 April, thanks to the association "Alert Migration", country focal point of the West African Observatory on Migration, the participants of the meeting were able to witness the conditions of the return from Libya of 154 unfortunate Burkinabés. Among the 154 migrants were seven (7) women and some children; the people in the group were between the ages of 17 and 35. Organised by the International Migration Organisation (IMO) as part of its programme for assistance with voluntary return and reintegration, (ARVR) this return was welcomed by the majority of the migrants. While some returned with a minimum kit (suitcase, bag, phone), others were virtually destitute, judging from their appearance

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* Journalist, Butembo, DRC

(shirt and trousers donated by the IMO). These unfortunates confirmed through their testimony the hard living conditions, in particular the sale and slavery black Africans are a victim to on African soil, the growing insecurity in the streets of Tripoli (constant risk of kidnapping, abuse and sequestration) and even African diplomats in office are the victims of threats. The migrants, still suffering from shock, told the bitter tale of their misadventure and no-one was indifferent to what they were saying. "I could eat you raw" said one Libyan. "Chase them out of our country" being something they heard all the time. The association Alert Migration is always present at the voluntary or forced return of migrants, assists them on arrival, reassures them along with IMO and government organisations (such as CONASUR). It pushes for the respect of the rights of the migrants and the members of their family and to this end provides a package of services (advocacy, radio and television broadcasts, awareness raising caravan, gadget production, etc.) for the customary, administrative, political and religious authorities, opinion leaders, directors and civil society organisations. This young organisation hopes to create permanent frameworks for meetings and exchanges, to raise awareness and also train young people on migrants' rights for we are convinced that the more information young people are given, the less likely they are to take risks in their mobility or even migration projects.

Cultural mixity, migration and youth mouvements
Summary of Mapinduzi Unit Meeting in Ouagadougou
18–21 April 2017

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