AFRICA DEVELOPMENT AFRIQUE ET DEVELOPPEMENT

Papers from the
2017 & 2018–2019 CODESRIA's Meaning-making Research Initiatives (MRI)

Articles issus des
Initiatives de recherche pour la construction du sens (MRI) de 2017 & 2018–2019

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Vol. XLVI, No. 4, 2021

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Acknowledgements

Remerciements

Ways of (De)constructing and Shaping a City: Urban Shifts and Materiality in Dialogue with Global China in Lusaka, Zambia

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Abstract

Lusaka's ongoing construction boom and shifting urban landscape are seen as closely linked to a significant level of Chinese involvement, especially with regard to the building process. Although Chinese features in the cityscape are pervasive and have increased in recent years, visual reflections of this can be misleading. They do not reveal the extent to which global China is playing a part in altering the built environment and trajectories in a city marked by rapid urban growth, spatial inequality and uneven development. With a focus on the main and simultaneous trends that characterise Lusaka's evolving urban morphology: densification, land-use change and sprawl, we explore if and to what degree Chinese capital (whether public or private) and participation contribute to producing a different kind of urbanity (in terms of direction and product). By unpacking the construction process, we argue that initiatives with some level of Chinese involvement largely plug into pre-existing patterns, replicate tendencies of urban development and, as such, constitute an integral part of the city-making process. From this perspective, Chinese influence on urban development processes needs to be understood through a "logic of supplementarity" – present and absent, identifiable and imperceptible – but as constantly operating within the core.

Keywords: urban transformation, construction industry, Africa–China relations, Chinese influence, materiality, Lusaka

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Résumé

L'expansion du secteur immobilier que connaît Lusaka et l'évolution du paysage urbain sont considérées comme étroitement liées à une implication massive de la Chine, notamment en ce qui concerne la construction. Bien que les caractéristiques chinoises dans le paysage urbain soient omniprésentes et en augmentation ces dernières années, les images visuelles de cette situation peuvent être trompeuses. Elles ne révèlent pas dans quelle mesure la Chine globalisée joue un rôle dans la transformation de l'environnement bâti et des trajectoires dans une ville marquée par une croissance urbaine rapide, une inégalité spatiale et un développement inégal. En nous concentrant sur les tendances fortes et synchrones qui caractérisent l'évolution de la morphologie urbaine de Lusaka, notamment la densification, les changements d'affectation des sols et l'extension urbaine, nous cherchons à vérifier l'effectivité et l'étendue des formes de participation et de capital chinois (public ou privé) dans la production d'un type d'urbanité différent (en termes d'orientation et de résultat). En examinant le processus de construction, nous soutenons que les initiatives bénéficiant d'un certain niveau de participation chinoise se calquent sur des modèles préexistants, reproduisent des tendances du développement urbain et, de ce fait, font partie intégrante du processus de création de la ville. De ce point de vue, l'influence chinoise sur les processus de développement urbain doit être comprise à travers une « logique du supplément » (présente et absente, identifiable et imperceptible) mais agissant toujours au sein même du noyau.

Mots-clés : transformation urbaine, industrie de la construction, relations Afrique-Chine, influence chinoise, matérialité, Lusaka

Introduction

Mr Liu receives us in his office, which is dominated by a massive wooden desk and an imposing leather chair, seemingly disproportionate to his rather short stature.[1] The barren white walls and neon lights contrast with an attempt to convey a more traditional Chinese look, marked by a set of carved wooden armchairs, a collection of Chinese vases, as well as a fully automated and equipped tea table around which we conduct our interview. Except for a framed depiction in copper of elephants in the savanna, and the mandatory presidential portrait of Edgar Lungu, nothing betrays its geographical location: Lusaka.

Xiao Liu is a relatively small-scale private building contractor with a parent company based in Nanchang, owned by his father-in-law. They first entered the Zambian market in 2011 after acquiring a tender to construct a library under the umbrella of an already established company

in the country, which on paper served as the legal contractor and managed all the official correspondence. This first project offered the necessary stepping stone to build capacity in learning and understanding the local environment, which helped them win further government projects for schools and other private undertakings.

A few years ago, he bought three residential units in the east of Lusaka. He demolished one to build his current three-storey building, which serves as his office space and residence, with the rest of the property dedicated to living quarters for his Chinese employees and the storage of building material. From the outside, the aesthetic of the main structure is reminiscent of residential buildings in urban villages in southern China. It sits rather strangely in the midst of a neighbourhood that is largely characterised by single-storey dwellings. The interior and exterior have been designed with a specific purpose in mind: to attract interest from potential clients.

Throughout Lusaka, the numerous construction sites and ubiquity of billboards advertising a variety of building materials signal a city in the process of considerable physical change. As part of this broader and sustained construction boom, Chinese economic actors have become a visible feature of the urban landscape - directly, as contractors, developers and suppliers of building material, or indirectly, as entrepreneurs setting up their own business(es). Overall, Chinese FDI stock in Zambia rose from USD 134.7 million in 2003 to USD 3.5 billion in 2018, when the country was among the top five destinations for Chinese foreign direct investment in Africa.[2] Next to China's primary interest in copper extraction, Zambia's tremendous need for infrastructural investment, the availability of Chinese state-backed concessional loans, and wide-ranging opportunities in real estate, have translated into a growing footprint of Chinese state-owned and private construction companies on Zambian soil.

Sitting at the intersection between a specific manifestation of global China, surely noticeable, and shifts within a particular urban context, this interplay speaks to a combination of different conceptual ideas. It calls for a 'reimagin[ation of] China beyond China' (Lee 2017: xiv), alongside the need to adopt flexible readings of space when 'anchor[ing] explanations in an understanding of capitalist transformation' (Mohan 2013: 1268). In reference to 'globalisation with Chinese characteristics', Henderson et al. refer to 'vectors of transformation' which, 'unlike "development" with its implicit assumptions about progress [...] can run in multiple directions' (2013: 1243). Yet, in their analytical framework, the diffusion of 'elements of Chinese culture and values and visions of modernity' (ibid.: 1239) is simply posed as a premise. From an urban perspective though, the existence, nature

and salience of Chinese characteristics need to be assessed independently and read against broader questions of urban development and material shifts in the built environment. This requires not only a combined analysis of varieties of capital and urban production, but also an enquiry into the different levels of involvement. As such, next to debates about a so-called Chinese urbanism (Hulshof and Roggeveen 2014; Harrison and Yang 2015), or the formation of hybridised landscapes (Lu 2000), it is crucial to consider the extent to which localised (or vernacular) realities determine the direction and shape of what and how urban space is produced.

In recent years, some of these aspects have been reflected in research by urban scholars in connection with select Chinese-led initiatives in different parts of the continent. For instance, the materiality of Kilamba Kiaxi, a new town development outside the Angolan capital, Luanda, has alternately become an object of dissent (Gastrow 2017) or has indirectly generated forms of lived appropriation (Buire 2017). In Johannesburg, resistance by the local municipal government to the implementation of the Modderfontein New City Development led to a complete overhaul of the original plan and vision (Ballard and Harrison 2019; Brill and Reboredo 2019). Drawing on a comparative analysis of two Chinese-financed and -built infrastructures in Ethiopia and in Uganda, Goodfellow and Huang illustrate how, 'through financing and expertise, "Chineseness" enabled and mediated these political projects [before] political realities then diluted this Chineseness' (2020: 16).

Regarding the role of Chinese companies within the Zambian construction industry, previous research has offered insights into the inner workings of Chinese businesses and their position within the sector and in relation to other players. This includes publications on entry mechanisms and market participation (Burke 2007; Bastholm and Kragelund 2009), level of uniqueness (Kragelund 2009), as well as imperatives of accumulation, regimes of production and managerial ethos (Lee 2017). However, except for a recent paper by Li and Siame (2020), focused on the nature and impact of Chinese (and South African) investments on Lusaka's urban development, little has been said about the material production itself and the ways in which the different building projects involving Chinese contractors resonate with ongoing urban shifts. This is the focus of this article, and more specifically the question of whether Chinese participation (in its broadest interpretation) in construction contributes to the production of a different kind of urbanity. In other words, we aim to explore the level and nature of Chinese influence in altering the built environment and urban trajectories in a city that is largely characterised by rapid urban growth, spatial inequality and uneven development.

In essence, we seek to critically engage with the realities of city- building in Lusaka, through assessing the place and relevance of a Chinese influence. With Derrida's deconstructionist approach in mind, we examine the Chinese involvement in the built environment through a "logic of supplementarity", in which the supplement is regarded not as being exterior and added, but already at work in the origin (1967). Through a method of (un)writing the text(ure)s of the built environment, the physical manifestation of global China within this urban context then ceases to exist as a set of binaries and becomes a constituent and intertwined part of the city-making process (Dittgen and Chungu 2019). Contrary to Li and Siame, who portray Chinese investments as having substantially shaped Lusaka's current development trajectory (2020: 332), we argue that Chinese undertakings, while enabling forms of urban production, largely plug into the city's pre-existing patterns and tendencies of urban development.

Our study is based on empirical research, using data largely collected during four week-long fieldwork visits between the end of 2017 and the beginning of 2020. Apart from field observation at various construction sites, we conducted a total of thirty-six qualitative interviews with building contractors, developers, business-owners (Chinese and Zambian) and representatives from various regulatory bodies and the city council in Lusaka.[3] This is combined with a longer-term perspective, as one of the authors, Chungu, practised architecture and urban design in Lusaka since 1994. Owing to his Chinese proficiency, tertiary experience in China and professional skills in the built environment, he regularly worked with Chinese contractors throughout the years.

The article unfolds as follows. We begin by situating the various Chinese-produced spaces and projects within a shifting urban landscape, looking at the ways in which Lusaka's built environment and urban configuration have evolved over time. The next section unpacks the different phases of the building process, from the early stages of design to the completed built form, differentiating between levels of influence and involvement. By taking a closer look at the drivers and effects of self-initiated projects by Chinese companies (and one in particular), the final segment explores how these entrepreneurial logics intersect with urban development trajectories.

Chinese Manifestations Amidst Dynamics of Urban Change

To date, Lusaka has known a total of five city plans, none of which has materialised as originally planned. Initially a small town, by 1931 Lusaka was envisioned as a garden city to fit its status as the new administrative capital of Northern Rhodesia (Collins 1986; Home 2013). Although never

implemented in its entirety due to the global economic depression at the time, that plan nonetheless segregated planned European and unplanned African zones, and proved inadequate from the outset in terms of residential, commercial and industrial provisions (Njoh 2007: 157–159).

Fast forward to present times, the most recent iteration is Lusaka's 2030 vision master plan. Approved in 2009, it was prepared by JICA (the Japan International Cooperation Agency) and largely focuses on addressing the fragmentation of land use, unmanageable levels of congestion and the overall degradation of infrastructure (Lane 2017: 38). However, given the lack of capacity within the Lusaka City Council, coupled with its institutional fragmentation and the absence of finance, this plan has carried little weight in guiding the direction or nature of urban change. Similarly, despite increasing numbers of plans and proposals for local development initiatives, there is a 'limited degree of implementation of the various [proposed] planning initiatives […] for diversifying and reviving the flagging Lusaka economy' (Hampwaye 2008: 202). Without any coherent vision, the council's current roles mainly evolve around regulatory processes, such as approving building plans and, to some extent, development control.

Urban development, while politically supported, happens without any clear guidelines. Many aspects remain fluid and negotiable on a case-by-case basis. All of this unfolds in a city that has experienced rapid urban growth over the past twenty years, with its population more than doubling from 1.07 million in 2000 to an estimated 2.7 million people in 2020.[4] This increase is paralleled by changing socioeconomic dynamics, spatial transformations and alterations in the built environment. Between 1990 and 2010, Lusaka experienced a 233 per cent change in urban land use, with 'over 70 per cent of the expansion resulting from the growth of high density residential land use (planned and unplanned), [as well as] commercial and industrial areas', alongside '40 per cent of the city classified as unplanned residential land use' (Simwanda and Murayama 2018: 273). A comparable transformation occurred from the 1970s to the late 1980s, but these shifts were driven by government and state-owned enterprises. This recent surge, however, is the result of a diverse collective of public and private actors, among whom the Chinese are perceived as key players.

Instead of simply mapping out the geography of Chinese-produced spaces in Lusaka (in its various forms and iterations), we outline this phenomenon in relation to broader urban characteristics and tendencies. In his book, *African Cities*, Garth Myers (2011) provocatively titles his first chapter 'What if the postmetropolis is Lusaka?', as a way to think about urban dynamics and change from a specific urban context in southern Africa. Myers reads Lusaka (and other cities in Africa more generally) in

relation to five vignettes: postcolonialism, informality, governance, violence and cosmopolitanism (2011: 27–28). While these themes aim to capture the 'restructuring, deconstruction, and reconstruction of space' amidst broader urban experiences in Africa (ibid: 24), our focus here is more specific and primarily centred on the material shifts within the built environment.

Overall, three main and simultaneous trends characterise Lusaka's evolving urban morphology: densification, land-use change and sprawl. The last one seems increasingly uncontrollable as built-up areas expand in all directions beyond the official city boundaries and spill into smaller, more rural districts. Alongside a gradual outward expansion, there is also a tendency towards densification, especially in existing low-density areas with large- sized plots on which land-use value can be maximised.

The population growth rate of more than 4.9 per cent over the last decade has been driving the real estate market. Residential construction is therefore the most prominent and tangible use of land. This in turn has created opportunities for commercial developments, increasingly in the shape of shopping malls. If the changes in the residential sector are mainly driven by locals, often through self-built initiatives, commercial developments are largely dominated by South African entities, in addition to fewer foreign firms from other countries. Within this context, Chinese investors have also become increasingly active across different land-use typologies, although with limited connections to other stakeholders (UARE 2018), and have sought to take advantage of these opportunities in different ways.

A spatial reading of Chinese-associated undertakings in relation to the three above-mentioned trends reveals that their contribution as drivers of a particular form of urban change is not straightforward. Chinese state-funded projects often stand out, in terms of footprint and as illustrative examples of bilateral co-operation. Motivated by specific infrastructural needs and commissioned by the Zambian government, these projects are, from inception to close-out, packaged and implemented by Chinese entities on a turnkey model. Local input, beyond co-ordination efforts, is minimal and often limited to the determination of the location.

Projects of this nature in Lusaka include the Lusaka East Multi-Facility Economic Zone (MFEZ), the National Heroes Stadium, the Kenneth Kaunda International Airport upgrade, the Levy Mwanawasa Hospital, and institutional housing for the police, air force and other security wings of government. Developments on brownfield sites, such as the Chelstone police housing project, have sparked a general increase in building density within their immediate areas. Greenfield projects are predominantly located on the outskirts of the city and, as such, contribute to a more general urban sprawl.

At the same time, these developments usually include bulk infrastructure, such as roads, which increases accessibility and subsequently encourages further developments (Simwanda and Murayama 2018: 268). In the case of the Twin Palm Air Force housing project, for example, Twinpalm Road was upgraded and extended, linking the south-east part of the city to the airport in the north-east, which triggered heightened levels of development in the area.

Lusaka's housing deficit presents a potential market for residential development, and yet only a few large-scale projects have been realised, whether by Chinese, local or other foreign investors. Apart from the recent high-profile Kingsland City development (to which we will return at a later stage), few private Chinese investors have ventured into this market. Prior to Kingsland, the biggest Chinese-led residential project was Silverest Gardens Estate, located around 25 kilometres from the CBD in Chongwe district but marketed as part of Lusaka. The estate comprises 472 bungalow-style houses similar to those elsewhere around Lusaka. Units are sold off-plan and buyers are expected to pay through mortgages, a largely unviable housing finance option in Zambia, due to enormous interest rates and low levels of formal employment and income. Since its launch more than five years ago, the Silverest project has developed incrementally, to limit risk, mirroring other local projects.

Chinese involvement in Lusaka is also noticeable in the expansion of commercial activities. From clothing, housewares sold at markets, all sorts of products peddled on the streets, to television sets and mobile phone covers in Indian-owned shops, Chinese products are present all over Lusaka. Yet there is no corresponding footprint in the built environment. Low-end wholesale and retail in Lusaka is dominated by Indian-Zambians who occupy most of the space in the inner city and in the Kamwala area, also referred to as the 'second- class CBD'. After the liberalisation of the Zambian economy in the 1990s and the demise of state-owned supermarket chains, Zambia's retail landscape changed with the arrival of South African-owned shopping malls along with a myriad of chain stores (Miller et al. 2008). A welcome development for the local elites, these commercial spaces have largely remained out of reach for most of the population apart from offering work opportunities. Notwithstanding a geographical broadening of retail offering, the CBD and Kamwala continue to attract small shop-owners and people with low incomes from around the city and beyond. Apart from the recent emergence of a few 'China Malls' (Chinese-owned wholesale/retail shops) around the city, there are only a small number of Chinese shops in the inner city, and established Indian-Zambian-owned businesses remain dominant.

In parallel, Lusaka has been experiencing a slow resurgence of its manufacturing industry in the past few years, which had largely collapsed after the economic liberalisation in the 1990s. The Chinese-styled and -developed MFEZs were envisioned as a way to attract new Chinese investors to enter the local manufacturing industry through the special tax conditions applicable to the zone. In practice, though, the special economic zone near the airport is still mostly empty with only a handful of companies in operation. Instead, a different trend has emerged, with Chinese investors setting up factories all around the city, in the established industrial areas and new greenfield sites on agricultural smallholdings. This recent entry into manufacturing can be attributed to a number of factors, including the rising costs of production in China and untapped opportunities in Lusaka.

The Chinese footprint, while pervasive,[5] cannot easily be linked to specific parts of the city. Overall, private Chinese investment and initiatives, largely spread throughout the agglomeration, tend to be located in more affluent and established residential areas. Outside a few exceptions, most of the Chinese private investors in Lusaka (from retail to manufacturing) own small to medium-size businesses which often mirror the activities of local establishments. With the majority of Chinese living on their business premises, as in the case of Mr Liu, there are no notable or specifically Chinese residential typologies that stand out as influential in terms of urban change.

Similarly, Chinese involvement in the hospitality sector is spatially scattered. The first two restaurants,[6] today either forgotten or ignored by many, were established in commercial areas. More recent ones are found in affluent, old, residential areas of Lusaka (such as Longacres, Kabulonga and Roma, all predominantly low-rise and quiet suburbs east of the CBD). In almost all cases, old bungalow buildings have been converted for this purpose as well as for accommodation for the Chinese proprietors and workers. Across the city, north of Kabulonga, in Kalundu and Roma, a wide range of establishments (Chinese, Turkish and Zambian-owned) operate from within converted houses. While many of the new restaurants are increasingly located within shopping malls, these rarely include Chinese restaurants.

As for hotels, several have been developed by Chinese in various residential areas, from upmarket neighbourhoods like Roma to low-income areas such as Matero, in the west, and Kabangwe, in the north. In the evenings, large groups of Chinese people frequent casinos, especially the Marina Casino in Roma, adjacent to the Golden Peacock Hotel. The Chinese-built complex is part of an international chain, with branches in China, Mozambique, Malawi, Madagascar, Ivory Coast and Zambia. Housed in two rectangular

buildings painted yellow and gold, the hotel resembles medium-sized hotels in China and adds to the growing offer of up-market establishments in the city. The development of hotels and other accommodation facilities, such as guest houses and lodges, in residential areas is part of a broader phenomenon that emerged after 1996, following the sale of all residential houses to sitting tenants. It is the private ownership of these residential properties on large pieces of land that created these opportunities for change. Casinos, on the other hand, are a new addition to the city's landscape and can directly be tied to the Chinese influence. Some are situated in old existing buildings, such as the old Great Wall Restaurant, others in newly built structures, such as the Golden Peacock and several others around the city.

With the Chinese presence in Lusaka becoming more visible, one could ask why Lusaka has no Chinatown or major cluster of Chinese activities. For some scholars, the current spatial dispersion is a reflection of local adaptation or even integration (Yan, Sautman and Lu 2018), while others link the practice of locating work, residence and recreation in the same space to feelings of anxiety (Wu 2014). Another plausible explanation is that, in Zambia, lifestyles are to a large extent home-based, directed towards the plot of land and the house, which could either be interpreted as a form of isolation or adaptation.

A few spatial clusters have nonetheless started to emerge. The Great North Road, recently refurbished and expanded, is increasingly considered a prime location for commercial and warehouse developments, due to its connection with the Copperbelt and Northern provinces, and Congo and Tanzania, further along. With the residential expansion in this area and its critical role as a transit corridor, interest is growing from Chinese entrepreneurs to invest along this route. This has translated into the recent development of two additional shopping malls, warehouse space for rent, and the opening of a hotel, called 'Chinatown', by a Taiwanese businessman, combining hospitality and warehouse facilities.

Despite being scattered throughout different parts of the city, Chinese self-initiated projects are often motivated by a locational logic and a search for growth potential.[7] Kalingalinga, for example, a high-density and upgraded informal area in the east of Lusaka but adjacent to wealthier neighbourhoods, has seen increased land-value speculation. Since 2012, many of the residential units along the main artery (Alick Nkhata Road), have been demolished and turned into shopfronts. While this phenomenon is largely led by Eritreans and to a lesser degree by locals, smaller numbers of Chinese entrepreneurs started to make their appearance in 2014.[8]

A few developments, such as the Kamwala Market and the JCS Food Market, indicate Chinese influence in the commercial landscape. Lusaka's

oldest market, Luburma Market (popularly known as Kamwala Market) was redeveloped in 2002 under a public-private partnership (PPP) deal between the Lusaka City Council and China Hainan Limited. Under a controversial sixty-five-year lease agreement, old, dilapidated structures were replaced with a ring of simple mono-pitch buildings around the old core, which to date remains the same (Mweemba 2015; Stien 2013). This outer core has small shop spaces leased to mainly Zambians who pay rent to China Hainan, which manages the market. Although this is a Chinese-operated facility, Chinese shopkeepers have gradually disappeared from it, and, apart from products on sale, the only visible Chinese marker is the barely noticeable name of China Hainan on the wall.

In contrast, the JCS food market, another recent spatial cluster adjacent to the Lusaka Central Sports ground, has distinctly Chinese aspects. At first, the facility, also referred to as JCS Food Town, was used as the wholesale depot and sales point for mushrooms produced by Jihai Agricultural Company, operating in the Lusaka East MFEZ. Over time, the open warehouse (part of a larger structure) has been transformed into a market space, one side dedicated to the sale of vegetables, fruit, seafood, meat and other staple foods, the other set up as a food court with a number of food stands around a shared eating area. While the market is operated by Zambian tenants, the food section is run by Chinese entrepreneurs, serving different Chinese cuisines (see Figure 1). Most patrons are Chinese, whether workers from construction sites or Huawei engineers, but this location is also gradually becoming popular among locals and other foreigners. The site has been expanding since 2017, with additional commercial structures, and there are plans to build a gym and a hotel. The managing director envisions this facility as a multicultural space and not one that is merely perceived as Chinese.[9]

Layers of Influence, Degrees of Involvement

Almost opposite the JCS Food Market is the construction site for the nearly completed Longacres Mall and Business Park. It is fenced off by a temporary perimeter wall adorned with images of projects by China State Construction Engineering Corporation in different geographical locations (either completed or planned). The rendering of the Longacres development itself can easily be missed among all the other depictions. While transient, set up only for the duration of the construction phase, these visualisations contribute to establishing a cognitive association with Chinese expertise. Nonetheless, the entire mall has been designed, supervised and managed by Zambian consultants and funded by the Public Service Pensions Fund, with the Chinese company hired as the building contractor.

Figure 1: One side of the JCS market is dedicated to food stands specialising in cuisines from different parts of China

Photo: Mark Lewis, January 2020

Projects such as the Longacres Mall (costing USD 72 million), the Society House Business Park in the CBD (USD 100 million), the NIPA Library (USD 10 million), the Engineers Institution of Zambia Offices (USD 3.5 million), Indo-Zambia Bank Head Office (USD 5 million) and the Urban Express Hotel (USD 2.5 million), among others, are all examples of projects funded by Zambian entities (public and private), designed by local firms and constructed by Chinese construction companies. Even though the Chinese are merely the building contractors, the majority of these projects end up being attributed (at least in public perception) to Chinese influence and its direct impact on urban change. What is usually not pointed out are the locally driven visions and forms of funding (Huang and Chen 2016) or the contribution of local professionals. In most cases, from these large projects to small residential developments, urban change in Lusaka is mainly driven by local dynamics with the involvement of local stakeholders.

Understanding the Chinese involvement in shaping the built environment requires engaging with the driving forces and temporalities as well as the role of local stakeholders. The production of the built environment at any scale can be gauged as an interactive and complex process, which is formative and constructed out of loosely orchestrated constellations of key individuals and organisations (Cuff 1989: 433). Different interests by

different players create a complex web of interactions whose intended goal is the physical creation of the material setting for urban life (Low 1996: 861). These actors interact in myriad ways, each making a contribution to the production process with varying degrees of influence. Understanding the essence of these actors, their motivations and the roles they play in this process is cardinal in revealing the nature and degree of Chinese impacts or influence on urban change more broadly.

Dana Cuff (1989) put forward three distinct approaches, which help characterise these processes and the social production of the built form. The first one is framed around vernacular building, a slow evolution of forms based on the social patterns, technologies and economy of the people who shape the physical environment. The second unfolds through organisational management, in which the production of the built environment does not involve the users, but rather a cast of bureaucrats, committees and entrepreneurs who place a product on the market. In this instance, the market drives the production of the built environment, set in a context of public bodies, private interests and regulations. The third typology evolves around the creative individual and refers to propositions made by planning and design individuals or professionals who articulate what they believe to be quality places (Cuff 1989). Cutting across these three approaches is not only the influence of promoters and/or financiers, but also a common aspiration in Lusaka to modernize (Wragg and Lim 2015).

To assess the Chinese role and influence in the material production of the built environment in Lusaka, several questions must be answered: Who are the promoters or clients and what do they intend to do? Who is financing the project? What is the method of procurement or process of building? The framework stipulated in the Zambia Institute of Architects (ZIA) Act [Cap 442 of the Laws of Zambia] provides a useful guide in understanding this process. The Act advances six interrelated stages: inception, concept, design development, technical documentation (which includes the tender phase), construction and close-out. This is the organisation management approach, which involves a collective of players who wield degrees of influence over the vision, process and outcome. Here, the design team led by architects add a layer of influence, which determines the outcome. The use of the earmarked space is subject to other influences beyond this technical procedure. The determination of any specific Chinese influence therefore depends on the type of project and nature of its funding as opposed to the presence of Chinese people or visibility of Chinese cultural markers. What we, thus far, have loosely called a Chinese project can refer to any one of the following: Chinese state-funded project with the Zambian government as recipient (bilateral cooperation); Chinese as contractors on any project;

and Chinese private firms as promoters. Each of these categories follows different guidelines in terms of vision and implementation process.

In Zambia, the architectural industry is dominated by local architectural firms who undertake most of these projects. To practise architecture in Zambia, one needs to be licensed under the provisions of the ZIA Act. Foreign architects executing a project in Zambia are required to enter into a joint venture with a local architect. In addition, a registered and licensed local architect is required to approve and sign off all drawings that are submitted to the council for building permission in accordance with the building regulation provisions. This scenario grants local architects considerable influence in directing the nature of buildings and, consequently, also in terms of urban change more broadly.

However, this is only true where architects are included. In projects commissioned by the public sector, SOEs and reputable private entities, the organisational management approach based on the ZIA framework is used, placing the direction and influence of change on a professional team of design consultants and technocrats who represent different client organisations. In this scenario, Chinese firms are involved as building contractors and provide a service for profit in much the same way as any other business. It is in this role that the Chinese presence in the production of the built environment is dominant, particularly with regards to high-value projects. In terms of general building, civil works and road construction,[10] data shows that Chinese companies are largely dominant within the higher value projects, whereas the lower value projects become the operating ground for smaller Zambian firms with more limited financial means.[11] This being said, and as pointed out by Kragelund, the official figures are incomplete given that, among the small- and medium-scaled Chinese private companies, only a few are registered with the National Council for Construction and these are mostly working for private customers or as sub-contractors for the bigger Chinese companies (Kragelund 2009: 655). Mr Liu initially fell within this specific group but has since upgraded. Rivalries become visible during the tendering process, with competition among Chinese companies and frequent allegations of corruption. In a sector plagued by bribery, whether by Chinese, other foreign or local firms, this serves to secure the tender, but has no direct influence on the design or nature of the project, apart from attempts to bribe architects to reduce specifications and save on costs.[12]

A notable impact that can be tied directly to the Chinese presence in the construction industry is the increased use of certain materials perceived as 'modern'. This particularly refers to materials such as composite aluminium cladding and reflective glass for external use, and porcelain and ceramic tiles for interiors, as well as other contemporary fittings and fixtures. These materials are used in most projects, whether Chinese-funded or not. Access

by local architects and developers to these materials and a large variety of other products, which are manufactured in China, has had a visible impact on the aesthetics of the built environment. The fast pace of urban development and change in major cities in China and other Asian countries is predominantly associated with the emergence and multiplication of new high-rise buildings clad in these shiny materials. To many people in Lusaka, this notion of the 'ultra-modern' is what the future should look like.

In contrast, Chinese-financed projects arising out of bilateral cooperation are entirely designed in China, often without taking into consideration the local context and ignoring the ZIA Act. The primary focus is on technical design prowess and modernisation communicated through elaborate computer-rendered images and animations. Consequently, 'modern' materials are used on most new buildings and in the refurbishment of old ones. They fit into aspirations of modernity and many promoters/clients request design proposals for ultra-modern structures with the expectation that these materials will be used. A number of Chinese private investors who sell construction materials (see Figure 2), as well as building contractors, have taken advantage of this trend. For the builders, knowledge about and accessibility to Chinese factories have become important and play an influential role in lowering costs, by cutting out the middleman in retail, as well as gaining influence at the tender stage and during construction.

Figure 2: Zambian and Chinese employees at work in the Good Time Steel plant, a Chinese company that mainly produces steel from scrap material. While the use of steel in construction has increased, this input (in this case linked to a Chinese company) remains largely invisible once the project is completed.

Photo: Mark Lewis, January 2020

Whereas public projects tend to have an average to high design quality, for Chinese-owned private projects it is generally lower, suggesting a cost-saving approach. This is further reflected in the overall quality of the materials used and the workmanship of the buildings. With exceptions, most of the building developments by private Chinese investors are similar to other developments around the city that are self-built, without hiring a team of design professionals, as is required by law. Other than the presence of Chinese characters on buildings and billboards, the buildings themselves are nondescript, forming part of what has been called 'a chaotic and ugly urban change' (Simwanda and Murayama 2016). Similar to the predominant perception of the 'Made in China' items in the local markets, many of these buildings are referred to as Gong'a (*gong-er*), local slang for 'fake', often to point out the generally poor quality of construction. Chinese materials therefore fall within a wide spectrum of associations, from desired to rejected, depending on the nature of the project.

Towards a 'Logic of Supplementarity'

Apart from the shifts within the built environment itself, the landscape of change is also partially communicated and transmitted through advertisements on billboards. While most of these simply display the services or products on offer, some of them are more creative in terms of messaging and branding. One company, SunShare, with its simultaneously unassuming yet highly ambitious catchphrase, 'For your noble life', stands out in particular. Present in Zambia since 2010, this Fujianese family business has gradually expanded its foothold and investment portfolio in the city.[13]

The company started as a retailer of imported building materials and soon turned to manufacturing them locally, as well as selling furniture, bathroom and kitchen designs, in addition to branching out into agriculture, fish farming and, most notably, property development. They first built a shiny, glass-clad, ten-storey office tower, which also hosts their headquarters, across from East Park Mall and Arcades Mall, in the emerging commercial precinct near Manda Hill. The tower, which dwarfs its surroundings in size and design, was conceptualised as a symbol of modernity and a tangible illustration of SunShare's architectural capabilities and ambitions. To launch the opening of the tower in December 2017, SunShare held a widely advertised penthouse party on its top floor, attended by local celebrities and corporate personalities. Envisioned by the managing director as 'a world-class central business social venue for global customers and business elites' (*Lusaka Times*, 2017), the idea has since been put on hold and the space is currently used as a pompous and over-sized private office.

The completion of the tower set the stage for new directions and projects. In 2017, plans were announced for the construction of Kingsland City, a mixed-use development on 583 hectares of land, structured as a public-private partnership between the Zambian Air Force and SunShare Investments in connection with other Chinese construction companies. Located in Twin Palm (about 12 kilometres from central Lusaka), in the middle of what was once a nature reserve (also known as Forest No. 27), the development is imagined as the beginning of a new city, operating in parallel to the existing one. Our visit in January 2020 immediately preceded a site inspection by the Air Force commander and full delegation, checking on the progress of the USD 1.4 billion development.

We were received by a young Zambian property consultant, who first explained the different building phases on the maquette before showing us the unit options (from two- to three-bedroom flats to three- to six-bedroom free stands), constantly resorting to a vocabulary of 'international standards' and 'Western' lifestyle aspirations. Structured around principles of 'live, work and play', Kingsland is projected to be equipped with a shopping mall, sports complex, complete scholarly infrastructure from international kindergarten to 'world class' university, a hospital, police station, a central business district with office parks, banks and restaurants, a golf course and even a theme park to attract tourists (see Figure 3). The residential part, fully conceptualised in China, follows the architectural expression of modern minimalist design, of simple rectilinear buildings with big windows, placed within a natural setting. The first 250 units (out of a planned total of 2,500) were ready for handover, with the second phase intended to be more affordable, with houses priced at USD 30,000.[14] On our way back to the city, we drove past a large billboard announcing the development of a luxury hotel, SunShare's latest high-profile project, promoted as the 'new landmark of Zambia', the 'highest building in Zambia' (with twenty-seven floors), and similarly labelled as the 'beginning of your noble life'. What is apparent is that none of these projects or activities, from building material all the way up to the glitzy tower, make any reference to China, but are always nested within a language of high quality and modernity.

By inscribing particular features into Lusaka's urban landscape and introducing a previously largely absent built verticality into the new commercial centre, SunShare's spatial footprint is distinctive and indicative of broader urban trends. Examples of novel spaces such as Kingsland City have emerged in many of the major cities across the continent (Watson 2014; Van Noorloos and Kloosterboer 2017), often combining aspirations of modernist urban planning in unspoiled (yet controlled) natural surroundings, while depicted as focal points of economic development and tourism (see,

for instance, De Boeck and Baloji on the Cité du Fleuve in Kinshasa, 2016: 249–255). Locally, Kingsland is similar to other conceptualisations (either completed or planned) of new urban-themed and self-contained satellite towns, as well as South African-influenced lifestyle estates.[15]

Figure 3: View of the maquette inside the Kingsland City showroom, which displays the project's different development phases

Photo: Mark Lewis, January 2020

Despite efforts 'to keep the real city at bay' (ibid: 250), through physical and metaphorical barriers, Kingsland actually connects to the real and living city by tampering with the delicate balance between natural setting and built-up land. While hailed by government-aligned voices as Lusaka's new paradise and praised for avoiding the trappings of debt-financed development (Tembo 2018), the project has, since the beginning, been marred by controversy. In addition to being financially inaccessible to most of the population, there have been allegations of corruption, in particular relating to how the Chinese investors obtained control over state-protected land.

What is even more striking is that Kingsland sits on top of Lusaka's few groundwater aquifers, and the partial bulldozing of the forest and subsequent urban development is putting additional pressure on underground water reserves, with the risk of causing severe water shortages and contaminations due to porous sewage systems (Mafa and Mukela 2019). In February 2020, after the Chalimbana Headwaters Conservation Trust and nine traditional leaders

sued Zambia Air Force Projects Limited and Kingsland City Investment, the court of appeal granted an injunction to stop works on the project. In response, the state denied not complying with the law regarding Environmental Impact Assessments prior to the onset of the development process (Mbewe 2020a, 2020b), leaving doubts about the continuation and status of the project. However, in May 2021, development at Kingsland was still ongoing.

Although SunShare pursues a more elaborate visual and architectural ambition than most other Chinese developers and construction companies, the bulk of self-initiated development projects are guided by the same principle: land-value gains and varying degrees of speculation. The high cost of property and largely inaccessible mortgage market have not only translated into a rental market estimated to be as high as 80 per cent, but also led to an increase in self-building and DIY. Furthermore, recent analyses by real estate groups indicate a gradual densification in existent residential areas, to maximise land-use value from property, and a glut of supply in the middle to upper market, triggering a decline in rental prices.

The highest demand and most attractive yields are located in the lower-middle market (UARE 2018; Eliott 2020), alongside continued interests in commercial developments. Chinese players have responded to these realities in different ways. When asking the SunShare managing director about the future direction of the company and nature of projects, he mentioned that, following research, they had started looking into low-cost housing (potentially in partnership with the Zambian government), after realising that the low-end of the housing market showed the highest demand and development gains.[16]

Another example is the development of a self-financed shopping mall by a Chinese developer from Zhejiang province along the Great North Road. The business model for the 18,000 square metre commercial facility, initially planned to be finalised by mid-2020, aims to attract shopkeepers and collect rentals. The promotional flyer, with project description and computer-modelled renderings, clearly states in large red font, in Chinese and in English, that 'people who have no desire to make money, please avoid' (*duì zhuànqián méiyou yùwàng de rén, qing huíbì*). Due to our base in Johannesburg, one of the collaborators enquired whether we might know of potential South African tenants interested in conducting business in Lusaka and who might be looking for commercial space (stating that in their mall, they would benefit from a three-month rental holiday during the first year). Given that South African businesses in Lusaka are associated with the high-end market, while Chinese-run commercial activities as closer to the lower end, this request was aimed at raising the profile of their mall.

As part of the increasing scholarly research in urban-related matters tied to the Chinese presence in Africa, there is an emerging interest in urban theory. Next to Li and Siame's (2020) use of urban assemblage and polarisation to explore Chinese (and South African) influence on shaping Lusaka's growth, Murphy et al. view 'Chinese impacts on Africa's urban development processes [as] operat[ing] through three overlapping consumption, production and infrastructure regimes' (2018: 123). Similarly borrowing from assemblage theory, more specifically the regime concept, the latter's analysis is premised on approaching 'cities as constituted by socio-spatial assemblages of heterogeneous materials, […] agencies, rules, routines, norms, practices, and values that "impose a logic" upon a system and thus guide its evolution' (Murphy et al. 106, 113). While concluding that Chinese impacts on development processes in Africa are contingent on city-specific dynamics, and Sino-African relations are symptomatic rather than primary drivers of phenomena such as urban splintering (ibid.: 122, 123), their overall theoretical framing does not allow a dissociation between dynamics that influence the (urban) system and those that are inherently part of it.

In the absence of 'wider forces that might determine what assemblages are possible or not possible', assemblage theory provides 'no theoretical guideposts for telling us how to tease out significant relationships or distinguish between the trivial and the important' (Storper and Scott 2016: 1126–1127). In the context of Lusaka, this can be interpreted in the following manner. Most of the above-mentioned bilateral projects have to varying degrees become identifiable landmarks and associated with China, but they mainly respond to a logic of concessional loans and have arisen as part of bilateral agreements. Their relevance from a loans perspective and in terms of putting additional financial pressure on the state coffers, thereby influencing the extent and feasibility of public works going forward, certainly cannot be underestimated. However, when read against broader trends of urban production and processes in Lusaka, Chinese players, whether as service providers (for building materials or contractors for pre-conceived projects) or developers of self-initiated projects, have largely replicated and plugged into pre-existing dynamics and urban trajectories, irrespective of the direction this might take. Driven by short-term profit as opposed to a grand strategy or urban vision for Africa (Huang and Chen 2016), Chinese construction companies in Lusaka are thoroughly enmeshed with city-making processes. As a result, instead of placing too much emphasis on global China, a primary focus on local dynamics and contextualised specificities allows to adequately assess the level of Chinese influence in the shaping of the city's urban development.

Conclusion

In recent years, Chinese features have become a tangible part of Lusaka's shifting urban landscape, as spatial markers and with regard to the building process. However, mere visual impressions can be misleading and do not reveal the extent to which global China is shaping the city's built environment. Assessing the nature and degree of this influence is not a straightforward exercise and requires unpacking the essence of Chinese involvement. In her book, *The Specter of Global China*, Ching Kwan Lee explores whether Chinese state capital is a different kind of capital. Focused on Chinese investments in mining and construction in Zambia, she argues that it is 'under certain circumstances […], bringing unique potential and perils to [domestic] development, and presenting government and workers with different kinds of bargains than global private capital' (Lee 2017: xii). In this article, we reformulated and adapted this question by asking to what extent Chinese capital (whether public or private) and participation (can) produce a different kind of urbanity (in comparison to pre-existent and concomitant urban trends).

In practice, it means weaving this specific manifestation of global China into a broader urban framework. This involves exploring the geography of 'Chinese' spaces in relation to the predominant mechanisms that are currently shaping Lusaka's urban morphology (such as densification, sprawl and land-use change), in addition to untangling the configuration of 'Chinese' construction projects. While adding complexity to the city's urban environment, throughout the article we argued that initiatives with some level of Chinese involvement, whether residential and economic spaces or construction projects, largely plug into pre-existing patterns, replicate tendencies of urban development, and, in this manner, constitute an integral part of the city-making process. Altogether, this phenomenon needs to be considered against the reality of a rising debt crisis at a national scale, the absence of a clearly defined masterplan at city level and a considerable South African influence in terms of urban aspirations and lifestyle. More broadly, it points to Derrida's '*double* reading', in which 'the *second* reading […] deconstructs the meanings that have been determined and identified during the *first* reading' (Kakoliris 2004: 283). As a result, forms of Chinese influence on urban development processes can (then) be understood through a 'logic of supplementarity,' as present and absent, identifiable and imperceptible, but operating within the core as opposed to existing in parallel. As such, while Goodfellow and Huang refer to the Chineseness of infrastructures from a temporal perspective, as gradually diluted and

'subsumed into the local context' (2020: 16), in our case the question of Chineseness is linked to the entire construction process and the city as a whole. At the same time, this (deconstructionist) approach is not reduced to studying the manner in which global China is impacting Lusaka's urban landscape, but enables wider explorations into questions about the nature of urban change and trajectories, whether in this specific case or elsewhere.

Acknowledgments

Notes

† As this article went into press we received the devastating news of Gerald Chungu's sudden passing on 1 July 2021. A creative architect and designer, critical scholar, and above all outstanding human being and dear friend, his laughter, passion and presence will be sorely missed.

1. Except for interviewees who are in the public domain, we have used pseudonyms throughout the article.

2. Information drawn from the China Africa Research Initiative at Johns Hopkins University: http://www.sais-cari.org/chinese-investment-in-africa, accessed on 28 February 2020.

3. This article forms part of a larger research project looking at forms of Chinese influence and urban shifts in Johannesburg and in Lusaka. It combines analytical research methods with visual photographic explorations through the collaboration with photographer Mark Lewis.

4. Data from United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2019.

5. In a 2017 paper, drawing on multiple primary datasets, Hannah Postel estimated the Chinese population in Zambia between 13,000 to 22,000 people, far below the much higher and frequently cited number of 80,000 to 100,000 (Postel 2017: 157).

6. Sichuan Restaurant is hidden away in a large warehouse-type building in Lusaka's Showgrounds; the Great Wall Restaurant, now renamed Casino and featuring traditional Chinese architecture, is located on the outskirts of the CBD.

7. This was repeatedly mentioned during interviews with Chinese businessmen.

8. Interview with a local real estate agent operating in the area. Lusaka, January 2020.

9. Interview in Lusaka, 19 January 2020.

10. We are not looking at construction works linked to mining activities as these fall outside the scope of our study.

11. Chinese firms make up 31 out of 49 companies (or 63 per cent) under the Grade 1 category (defined by a contract value of over USD 3 million). As the project contract value drops, so does the presence of Chinese companies, falling to 34 per cent in Grade 2 (contract value between USD 1.3 to 3 million) and completely absent in the lower grades (Source: National Council for Construction, Register of contractor profiles, January 2020).

12. Interview with a former director at the National Council for Construction (December, 2018), in addition to own experience as a practising architect in Zambia.

13. The parent company in China, Fujian Kaiyuan is a manufacturer and trader of building materials.

14. For phase one, prices range between USD 50,000 for the smallest unit (two-bedroom flat) to USD 450,000 for the largest free-standing unit (of 6 bedrooms). Even phase 2, which the developer refers to as 'affordable', is clearly out of reach for the average Zambian citizen.

15. The development of Nkwashi Town, 36 kilometres east of Lusaka, by Thebe Investment Management is one such example. It is wholly owned and largely managed by Zambian nationals, with the planning and design work conducted by local architects. According to the developers' website, 'Nkwashi will include more than 9,460 residential plots, as well as hundreds of acres of green areas and parks, nine schools including an International School and an American University with a Teaching Hospital' [https://nkwashi.com, accessed on 20 May 2020].

16. Interview in Lusaka, January 2020. Without stating this openly, it appears that research-based analysis and sales-dependent planning informed the decision towards more 'affordable' units for the second phase of Kingsland City.

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(Re-)Telling the War Story, Healing the Wounds: A Bibliotherapeutic Reading of Ahmadou Kourouma's *Allah is Not Obliged*

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Abstract

The devastation associated with both civil conflicts and wars takes physical and emotional efforts to heal. There are works of African literature that have analysed war trauma, testimony and healing of emotional wounds utilising psychoanalytic perspectives. This article attempt to deepen analysis of such works using a bibliotherapeutic reading of Ahmadou Kourouma's *Allah is Not Obliged*. This article adopts a psychoanalytic perspective of testimony and memory to analyse reading the war story, its traumatic impact and healing potential. This article fills a gap in the intellectual understanding of the role of literature (i.e., bibliotherapeutic) in healing the wounded souls. We employed a qualitative methodological approach by which a literary analysis of the novel is done. The literary text is complemented with an analysis of secondary materials related to civil war in Africa. *Allah is Not Obliged* testifies about war trauma and healing process among child soldiers through sharing of personal stories and experiences connected to war. The various warring countries captured in the text are a metaphor for his patients – sick bodies in need of medical attention. Sicknesses are strong metaphors for social deviations. Additionally, the novel stressed the importance of writing, telling, and language as methods of traumatic flashback and bringing healing to child soldiers. We contend that reading *Allah is Not Obliged* can provide the reader with help in dealing with trauma of war.

Keywords: war, child soldier, trauma, insight therapy, psychoanalysis, healing

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Résumé

La dévastation associée aux conflits civils et aux guerres demande beaucoup d'efforts physiques et émotionnels pour en guérir. Il existe des oeuvres de la littérature africaine qui ont analysé les traumatismes de guerre, le témoignage et la guérison des blessures émotionnelles en utilisant des perspectives psychanalytiques. Cet article tente d'approfondir ces analyses à travers une approche bibliothérapeutique de *Allah is Not Obliged (*Allah n'est pas obligé) d'Ahmadou Kourouma. Cet article adopte une perspective psychanalytique du témoignage et de la mémoire pour analyser la lecture du récit de guerre, son impact traumatique et son potentiel de guérison. Cet article comble une lacune dans la compréhension intellectuelle du rôle de la littérature (c'est-à-dire de la bibliothérapie) dans la guérison des âmes blessées. Nous avons utilisé une approche méthodologique qualitative par laquelle une analyse littéraire du roman est effectuée. Le texte littéraire est complété par une analyse des matériaux secondaires liés à la guerre civile en Afrique. *Allah is Not Obliged* témoigne du traumatisme de la guerre et du processus de guérison chez les enfants soldats à travers le partage d'histoires personnelles et d'expériences liées à la guerre. Les différents pays en guerre évoqués dans le texte sont une métaphore de ses patients : des corps malades qui ont besoin d'une prise en charge médicale. Les maladies sont de fortes métaphores des déviations sociales. En outre, le roman souligne l'importance de l'écriture, de la narration et du langage en tant que méthodes de traitement des flashbacks traumatiques et de guérison des enfants soldats. Nous soutenons que la lecture de *Allah is Not Obliged* peut aider le lecteur à faire face au traumatisme de la guerre.

Mots-clés : guerre, enfant soldat, traumatisme, thérapie comportementale et cognitive, psychanalyse, guérison

Introduction

Destruction, violence, victimisation and suffering are the chief manifestations of war and humans and the environment are both perpetrators and unfortunate victims. From interstate wars, where conventional battle tactics are employed, to intrastate wars, where there are unconventional battle tactics, human suffering and hopelessness characterise the advent and prevalence of armed conflicts. While scholarship on war has paid close attention to the several civil wars that have permeated many states, not many, to the best of our knowledge, have discussed literature from a therapeutic perspective as far as Ahmadou Kourouma's *Allah is Not Obliged* is concerned. Therefore, our main task in this article is to examine the effects of a bibliotherapeutic reading on the healing process of the war victims based on the story contained in the novel. To achieve this aim, we have paid serious attention to conceptualising

some of the key concepts employed in the article such as the framework of psychoanalytic theory of testimony and post-war memory. Thereafter, we examine how writing about and telling war stories can provide the necessary tools for healing the trauma of war victims. Finally, we analyse the bibliotherapeutic implications of *Allah is Not Obliged*.

Contextualising Liberia's Civil Conflicts

The civil war in Liberia captured by Kourouma is heavily punctuated with the prevalence of child combatants. Scholars are in perfect consonance that children have long been actors in warscapes (Denov 2010; Eichstaedt 2009; Gates 2011; Podder 2011; Rosen 2005; Zyck 2011). Specifically, the pre-industrial age is fraught with the constant conscription of children into military ranks. Denov (2010:21) argues that the Crusades, Napoleonic Wars, America's war of Independence and Civil War, and even the Children's Crusade in 1212, were fraught with children in armed conflict. Nevertheless, it is arguable that children conscripted into the military during the pre-industrial age evolved into expert combatants because they were allowed to learn the rudiments, rituals and rules of battle. Besides, the battles of the pre-industrial age were governed by well-defined objectives and ideologies. According to Rosen (2005:11), pre-industrial nations went to war for clear political reasons and such battles were spatially and geographically defined. They were fought in specified battlefields, had a form (a beginning and an end), and were fought for clear political ideologies. Rosen (2005:11) termed these pre-industrial battles as 'traditional wars'. On the contrary, wars in modern times have changed the entire scope of battles. In addition, civil wars initially sprouted from a political discontent, dissension and the desire to displace constitutionally elected governments through wanton violence. As these wars stretched on, different political ideologies began to emerge, and warlords began to conscript their own armies until there was no singular reason for the war. Such wars obeyed no conventional battle tactics as they targeted civilians. They became formless and instituted violence as a way of living.

What should be added is that at the core of intrastate wars is the demand for children. Children, more than adults, are the prime targets of such wars because of their enormous potentials in war spaces. In 'Why do children fight? Motivations and mode of recruitment', Gates (2011:29) discusses the 'mechanisms' and the 'noninstrumental factors such as norms and emotions' that superintend the recruitment and retention of children. According to him, child soldiers offer cheap compensation for rebel military. In such wars where there is a prevalence of unconventional battle tactics, children, when recruited as fighters, populate the military and they are cheap to command

given their gullibility. Children also offer 'cheap labour for rebels with limited resources' (Gates 2011:35).

In his introduction to *They Fight Like Soldiers; They Die Like Children: The Global Quest to Eradicate the Use of Child Soldiers*, Dallaire (2011) stresses that children are recruited as soldiers because they are regarded by rebel warlords as a viable weapon system. Dallaire was a former commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMR) and a peacekeeper in Rwanda. He witnessed the 1994 genocide in Rwanda where over eight hundred thousand (800,000) persons lost their lives. He also witnessed the armament and militarisation of children. He fiercely contends that because children are accessible, vulnerable, have 'simple sustainable requirement' (Dallaire 2011:10), and an incredible capacity for barbarism, they become prime targets of recruitments in war-torn territories.

Moreover, available evidence indicates that children are recruited not only by armed insurgent groups, but also by governments, especially when such a government runs low on military personnel during civil conflicts. In her introduction 'Child soldiers, iconography, and the (il)logic of extremes', Denov (2010:1–19) contends that the nature of warfare, the prevalence of failed states, the increase in civil conflicts, the proliferation of light weapons and the presence of globalisation and transnational network have greatly contributed to the demand for children as soldiers during wartimes.

The global effort to put an end to the use of children in war began in 1996 when Graça Machel (a former child soldier) presented her report – 'The effect of armed conflict on children' – to the UN's General Assembly. Machel highlighted the causes of most civil unrests, the reality of child soldiers and the need for the UN to make calculated attempts at bringing an end to the recruitment of children as combatants. The report stirred governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and humanitarian organisations to research the prevalence of children in armed conflicts.

Two currents of thought have flanked the debates and continued research of children involved in armed conflicts: that children engaged in armed conflicts are dangerous psychopaths who ought to be prosecuted for their actions; and that children involved in armed conflicts are hapless victims of mindless warlords and broader political contexts who need to be protected. Proponents of the former school contend that children who are active participants in armed conflicts do so wilfully and have lost their part in civility; as such, they pose a grave threat to civil society. It is important at this point to review the argument of Denov in this regard.

According to Denov (2010:6), proponents of this school consider the child combatant to be fully responsible for their actions. In their discourses of

Africa, Western media and international reporters present the savagery of wars fought on the continent as a site for the breeding of mindless and blood-thirsty children. Civil conflict reports, such as the terrors and the irredeemability of child soldiers, have 'influenced the language and thought of policy makers' in some Western States (Denov, 2010:6). An example is the United States' 10-year detention of the Canadian minor, Omar Ahmed Sayid Khadr, who allegedly threw a grenade that killed a US soldier in Afghanistan. Khadr's trial, conviction, and sentence sparked outrage from civil rights groups and the United Nations Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict.

The second current of thought has been championed by NGOs and humanitarian organisations. These bodies intellectually locate children within broader spaces of undemocratic governments, failed independences and civil unrests. Through scholarship in children's participation in war and powerful iconographies, these bodies have successfully presented children as victims whose innocence has been ruthlessly exploited by mindless warlords and war-torn spaces. They argue that wars have been a constant occurrence throughout history – from organised wars to civil conflicts in many post-colonial states to the global threat of terrorism – and that children have always been helpless and gullible. In *Armies of the Young*, Rosen (2005:20) perfectly aligns with this intellectual current to argue that during the Holocaust, Jewish child soldiers joined armed resistance as a means of protection. Given that such groups were a form of resistance against the genocide they were faced with, getting conscripted became a matter of absolute necessity as salvation lay within the group's ideology and militarisation.

Creative writers are not left out of this intellectual campaign. Through their outputs, they have assumed humanitarian standpoints in their debates against the recruitment of child soldiers. Constructions within their intellectual-cum-creative campaigns portray children as traumatised, weaned off innocence, pitiable and in need of protection.

As in the Sierra Leonean decade-long civil war, issues that contributed to the causation of the Liberian war have appealed to war scholarship and writing. Scholars have approached the Liberian conflict from various angles. Some have adopted the ethnic model, which argues that the Liberian civil conflicts were a direct consequence of ethno-communal disharmony (Rosen 2005:9). Another school of thought has championed a 'greed-and-grievance' (Rosen 2005:9) model to the cause of the armed conflicts. This approach claims that the cause of the Liberian civil conflicts is deeply rooted in the greed for mineral resources like diamonds and oil among the country's political leaders on the one hand, and in the grievance of the Liberian masses over the economic exclusion which they suffered on the other hand.

In 'The Liberian civil war: new war/old war', Bøås (2005) attempts to 'diagnose' the cause of the war much like a physician would diagnose a patient. He adopts an integrative model in his 'diagnoses' of Liberian society. He dismisses the popular 'Charles Taylor approach' – championed by international media and international governments and organisations – which emphasises the role of Charles Taylor in fuelling conflicts in the West African region. According to Bøås (2005), the causations of Liberian civil conflicts initially drew from the nation's turbulent eighteenth century history.

Bøås (2005) cites two important factors that presented themselves as the foundations of the civil conflict: the politics of indigenous exclusion and the prevalent neo-patrimonial system of governance. He traces the beginning of the politics of indigenous exclusion to the period when repatriated freed slaves (Americo-Liberians), with the support of the US, displaced the 16 indigenous peoples and controlled the Liberian economy and administrative systems for over a century. Under a one-party state, every political and economic office was shared between Americo-Liberians and US officials. By the 1920s, Americo-Liberians began to consolidate their political and economic holds of the Liberian nation by widespread practice of patron-client relationships 'that provided social order and stability through the maintenance of a social structure that ensured that Americo-Liberians stayed in power' (Bøås 2005:78). These political situations stirred discontent, distrust and hatred between the indigenous peoples of Liberian and the repatriated free slaves.

By 1979, Liberia had begun to dance to the music of hate and resentment, which the indigenous peoples had for the Americo-Liberians. In April, the nation experienced its first coup d'état as 17 men, led by Samuel Doe of Krahn descent, overthrew the government with a single political ideology that sought to restore political power to native Liberians. At the success of the coup, the majority of the Liberian population heaved a sigh of relief and looked out for a government that would fully represent the 'pulse' of the 16 indigenous groups in Liberia.

Sadly, the reverse was the case as the indigenously led government quickly relapsed into the same patrimonial system of the previous government. Corruption, theft of state resources and abuse of human rights characterised the new government. As a result, ethnic groups became polarised, and this led to a proliferation and patronage of magic and secret societies. Discontent and disillusion with the government loomed large and young people fought unyielding frustrations. It was therefore not a surprise when, on the eve of Christmas in 1989, a small group of rebel army led by Charles Taylor invaded the Liberian border and recruited over four thousand Liberians into

its rank (Bøås 2005:80). The direct consequence of this action was a roller coaster of conflicts that would span over two decades.

Following the advent of civil violence and armed conflicts in Liberia, several international and national bodies, engaged in the quest for peace in Liberia, became major actors of the war. The immediate interventions of Nigeria and the Economic Community of West African States, the indirect involvement of the US and the UK, plus their indictment of Charles Taylor as a major supporter of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF – Sierra Leone's largest rebel group) and his trade in Sierra Leonean 'blood diamonds', and the stiff sanctions on Charles Taylor by the United Nations (UN) contributed to further conflagration of the Liberian civil conflict that saw the recruitment of children into rebel groups.

Psychoanalytic Theory of Testimony and Traumatic Memory: Defining the Framework

Reading literature as testimony is predicated on the psychotherapeutic practice between psychoanalyst and client, symbolising the relationship between author and reader. Freud's (2010) psychoanalysis from the psychoanalytic theory helps to explain trauma and testimony of war, which are, of course, integral issues in healing emotional wounds. Psychoanalysis is an insight therapy that emphasises the recovery of unconscious conflicts, motives and defences through techniques such as free association and transference. According to Freud, most psychological trauma are traceable to the effect of some particularly disturbing event (e.g., war) . And by means of psychoanalysis techniques (e.g., hypnosis or free association), the psychoanalyst is able to promote insight into the root of the patient's trauma. In particular, unconscious conflicts are brought into consciousness so they can be integrated with the needs and motives the patient is aware of. In psychoanalysis, the analyst attempts to probe the murky depths of the unconscious to discover the unresolved conflicts causing the patient's trauma.

In Kourouma's *Allah is Not Obliged*, Birahima, the protagonist and narrator (i.e., the psychoanalyst) functions as a therapist attempting to release the traumatised patients (readers) from the disturbing events of war and help them to escape from trauma. Birahima offers a Freudian therapy based on the articulation and narration of the past (i.e., testimony about Liberian civil conflicts), a 'talking cure' that will aid the readers to deal with and to challenge their trauma. Liberian civil conflict victims and readers continue to live with war experiences that could not and did not advance through its completion, have no ending, achieved no closure and hence, as far as they are concerned, continued into the present. The narration (testimony) of

the Liberian civil conflicts gives it a beginning and closure, and thus allows victims and readers to achieve a sense of closure. In psychoanalysis, two people, the analyst (i.e., author) and the patient (e.g., war victim or reader), are trying to understand the traumatic experience of one individual, the patient (e.g., victim or reader). Usually, the author of a war story perceives unresolved conflicts in the war victims before they do, and then the author tries to explain them to the victims/readers in the form of an interpretation (testimony/narration). Interpretation refers to the analyst's (i.e., author) attempt to explain (testify/narrate) the inner significance of the patient's (e.g., war victim/reader) thoughts, feelings, memories (e.g., war memories) and behaviours (Weiten 2004:612). Because the author communicated the traumatic experience of traumatised victims (which they are unwilling to tell) to a wider audience, the narration of the past war memory then becomes a testimony to serve as a traumatic flashback and to disseminate historical awareness among spectators and readers.

In *Allah is Not Obliged,* the protagonist and narrator Birahima is also the author who testify to the repulsions that war victims have experienced, and thus helps them to transform their non-verbal memory of the war into narrative memory. The process of reading *Allah is Not Obliged* is tortuous and challenging; having readers psychologically relive their traumatic experiences through reading is likely to result in strong emotions. This release of tension is what Freud called 'catharsis' and it is frequently associated with healing and recovery.

It is worthwhile to question how Freud would understand the child soldiers in *Allah is Not Obliged*, and whether healing can be achieved through its reading. The dreams of child soldiers, for instance, owing to their experiences, are saturated with frightening symbols and actions that represent powerful impulses that have overpowered psychical censorship. Such dreams are governed by the principle of repetition compulsion, which permits the forceful replaying of harrowing experiences that aim to eventually mount overpowering tension on conscious somatic processes. The constant attack of the unconscious on the conscious, even years after the sufferer may be said to have moved on, can induce emotional wounds, neurosis or even physical illness on the sufferer.

Theory of Testimony and Post-war Memory: Writing, Telling and Language as a Strategy for Healing War Trauma

Kourouma's *Allah is Not Obliged* engages war scholarship through the eyes and sensibilities of a child. The novel theorises the implications of socio-political unrests on the sanity and sanctity of children. Through its protagonist and

narrator, Kourouma assumes the role of a physician who examines the socio-political 'pulse' of warring groups and its impact on the lives of children. The various warring countries captured in the text are a metaphor for his patients – sick bodies in need of medical attention. Sicknesses are strong metaphors for social deviations. Consequently, there is need for physicians who are skilled in the restoration of health through scientific procedures like medical histories and diagnosis. We must acknowledge that the deliberate re-casting of historical effects that culminate in civil conflicts is akin to the medical history that is collected and documented during medical diagnosis. Such a medical narrative helps the physician to correctly diagnose the cause of an illness.

Allah is Not Obliged tells the story of child combatants. In a broader context, the text is committed to an intellectual campaign that seeks to end the recruitment and use of children as weapons of war in civil conflicts. Precisely, the text examines the vulnerability of children in war-torn spaces and how violence compromises their innocence. Birahima's narration is fraught with childhood memories and reflections that play a foremost intellectual role in Kourouma's campaign to end the use of child soldiers.

Interestingly, third generation writers are beginning to explore childhood narration in their works. Prominent examples of works that are shaped by this style include Hisham Matar's *In the Country of Men* (2005), Uzodinma Iweala's *Beasts of No Nation* (2005), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2003), among others. We must acknowledge, at this point, that child narration plays a crucial role in its ability to convey emotions that are untainted by bias or ideology. Bainto (2011:27) contends that child narratives 'embody the presence of violence and serve as a reflection of history and on the link between memory and history'. Through Birahima's narration, the reader gleans that he is unsure of his age, 'didn't get very far at school' (1), 'has killed lots of guys with AK-47' (3) and is traumatised by the spirits of the innocent people he has killed at his tender age.

The story is set in a village that is located somewhere on the Guinean/Ivorian border, in war-torn Liberia and Sierra Leone. The second half of the novel's opening sentence is worth contemplating over: 'Allah is not obliged to be fair about all the things he does here on earth' (1). This statement forms the crux of Birahima's narration and depicts how a child considers tragic situations that surround life in a war-torn society, how easy it is for a child to conclude that the vicissitudes of civil life is solely the design of the Great God. Birahima portrays his life as 'pretty fucked up' (5). Somewhere between the ages of 10 and 12, Birahima's mother, who has been severely sick, eventually dies from the pains and torture resulting from a botched circumcision procedure.

Kourouma masterfully reveals the inherent gullibility and vulnerability of children in the novel. Birahima is the object of a creative campaign against the innocence of children that are caught up in armed conflict. From the opening of the story, the reader is brought to terms with the subtle manipulation of Birahima's memory and mind. First, the young boy is made to believe that his mother's suffering is a direct result of her sorcery. The gullibility of children is exemplified herein when Birahima hates his own mother after hearing rumours of her sorcery. As a result of his reactionary and intense emotion, Birahima suffers a psychological shock that sickens him and drives him into becoming a street kid – 'a proper street kid that sleeps with goats, and nicks stuff to eat from fields and concessions' (Kourouma 2006:20). This is his first experience of an emotional tussle that scars his mind – and by extension, Kourouma's first creative hypothesis that the inherent gullibility of children makes them easy pawns in the hands of manipulative situations and individuals. Although Kourouma's hypothesis was that war can compromise the mind of children, this would be a simplistic approach unless we consider that children are entirely under the influence of their social environment without any cognitive capacity to process information from their immediate environment.

Following the death of Birahima's mother, his extended family holds a congress where Mahan, Birahima's aunt, is voted as his new caretaker. Birahima subsequently leaves his hometown with Yacouba – a money doubler, fortune-teller and sorcerer – in search of his other aunt who lives in Liberia. The travails of the duo – their inevitable experience of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean wars; their conscriptions into, and dismemberments from, various armed groups; their acculturation into hard drugs and violence as ways of living; and their resilience throughout their long search – are firm attestations to the vulnerability and the violation of innocence that children experience during civil warfare.

Birahima gets his first conscription into the fighting squad of Colonel Papa le Bon as an 'ambush kid' (71) where he was given an old AK-47. His duties, with other child soldiers, 'were to stand in the middle of the road and signal for trucks and convoys to stop' (71.). Given this situation, it is easy to attest that child soldiers, in the hands of warlords, are recruited as weapons of war. Their facelessness and cheap availability, together with the possibility of their death at the war front, does not diminish the military resources of the group. To ambush efficiently, Birahima has to smoke hard drugs to douse his fears and to embolden him in the face of death. Of course, rebel groups have squads of child fighters and Birahima realises that many such children, like him, are in search of their parents and loved ones.

Relevant to this article, close attention shall be paid to the funeral orations that Birahima writes for children who lose their lives to civil wars. Through these funeral orations, Kourouma conveys his thesis over the state of children who are involved in armed conflicts. Birahima regards fallen child-fighters as heroes who deserve a funeral oration on account of how they hazard their lives in armed conflicts. Concerning children that die in battle, he writes:

> Child-soldiers are the most famous celebrities of the late twentieth century, so whenever a child-soldier dies, we have to say a funeral oration. This means that we have to recount how in this great big fucked-up world they came to be a child-soldier (Kourouma 2006:83).

Birahima's first funeral oration is said for Sarah, a girl soldier who is shot in the leg and left to die in the jungle. According to Birahima, Sarah's earlier life was heavily punctuated with neglect. As an orphan, Sarah is forced to live in an orphanage where the Liberian civil war meets her. With four nuns of the orphanage dead, and with nowhere else to go, Sarah has no other choice but to join the child soldiers of Colonel Papa le Bon's army. A close consideration of Sarah's story validates humanitarian and civil organisation's claims that children are sometimes forced to fight because rebel groups offer them protection from other rebel group or from starvation or from death. Of course, for Sarah, refusal to join Colonel Papa le Bon's army means death. Furthermore, even if she manages to escape being killed by a stroke of luck, Sarah has nowhere else to return to – no family, no home, no orphanage. The only choice left to her is to join the rebel group 'family'.

Kik suffers a fate that is similar to Sarah's experience. Like the central character, Agu, in Uzodinma Iweala's *Beasts of No Nation* (2005), his village comes under rebel attack while he is at school. Houses are razed down, throats are brutally slit and people are raped and maimed. All the members of Kik's family are killed. The narrator paints a strong picture of the hopelessness that surrounds children whose parents are killed in civil conflict:

> And when you've got no one left on earth, no father, no mother, no brother, no sister, and you're really young, just a little kid, living in some fucked-up barbaric country where everyone is cutting everyone's throat, what do you do? You become a child-soldier of course, a small-soldier, a child-soldier so you can have lots to eat and cut some throats yourself; that's all your only option (Kourouma 2006:90).

Children who are suddenly orphaned or are left without a place to call home have no choice but to seek refuge in the open arms of rebel groups. The fighting groups, on the other hand, conscript such children freely and offer

them protection. In most cases, child soldiers get better privileges than adult soldiers. In fact, some rebel groups, like the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO), treat their child soldiers so well that they get 'lots to eat and you could even make money' (Kourouma 2006:100). With such rewards beckoning at children who are trapped in the 'valley of starvation and hopelessness' (2006-100), children have no choice but to give up their innocence and civilities in exchange for life of violence.

Apart from the militarisation that children are forcefully put through in rebel groups, new conscripts are also initiated into savagery and barbarism as a way of living. Birahima makes mention of a special fighting squad in the RUF called the lycaeons. These were child soldiers who were 'given the most inhuman jobs…like putting a bee into someone's eyes' (174). Conscription requirements into the lycaeons demand a show of patricide and cannibalism as proof of bravery and worthiness. Birahima recounts, in his funeral oration for Siponni, similar initiation conditions that willing children have to satisfy in order to be recruited into Johnny Koroma's (another rebel warlord in Sierra Leone) army.

Birahima submits a very strong theoretical insight into the philosophy that governs the initiation demands. Through parricide, he narrates, children are able to prove that 'they'd given up everything, that they didn't have any ties on earth, any other home except Johnny Koroma's family' (199). The fulfilment of such a condition was a way of securing the loyalty of child soldiers and a way of creating a bond between the rebel group and individual soldiers. Of course, the child combatant who successfully attains such a rank in the rebel group commands lots of respects, wields lots of privileges and is undoubtedly loyal to the group even in death.

The Bibliotherapeutic Implications of *Allah is Not Obliged*

The anguish of human beings, the fragmentation of self, anxiety, pain and trauma that Terry Eagleton (2010) believes to exist throughout the recorded history of humankind is examined in *Allah is Not Obliged* by adopting the psychoanalysis perspective.

Like a disease, civil conflicts conquer communities and ravage the sanity of children who are caught within it. Characterised by socio-economic disintegration and a break-down of cultural beliefs and norms, war spaces are also governed by a culture of savagery, wanton carnage and a culture of violence. Rebel groups are the drivers of such war-torn spaces. Under the leadership of warlords or organised sponsors, these groups are usually in a quest to cease power and gain territorial control. To do so, they need soldiers, and children prove to be a veritable source of cheap manpower and unreserved loyalty.

Beyond demobilisation, disarmament and re-integration into civil life, child soldiers are in desperate need of somatic healing, which would permit the discharge of the unpleasant energies that constantly launch lethal attacks on their awareness. Birahima initiates a healing process when he reaches a decision to 'write down [his] adventures from A to Z. To recount them in clever French words from *toubab*, colonial, racist, colonising French and big Black Nigger African Native words, and bastard nigger pidgin words' (214). Birahima's decision to write down everything he has previously experienced in the on-going armed conflict is a powerful therapy for his wounded psyche and this demands deliberate recalling and retelling of his unpleasant experiences. In the process of recalling, Birahima actively engages his memory and allows the repressed thoughts, actions and wishes that have been stored in his preconscious to find expression.

Although Birahima is caught up in a web of horrendous socio-political events that violates his innocence, moral sanity and religious piety, he is quick to embrace his new life as a child soldier and gladly accepts violence as a way of living. However, there is a sustaining anchor to which his humanity clings: it is the hope that he would one day find his aunt. Hope is also a representation of his resilience. Pressing through the horrors of war without a clear sense of purpose would have been extremely fatal on his psyche. As Birahima journeys along, his sanity, his logic and his redemption are fastened on to an unshakeable hope that one day he would reunite with his aunt. He even saves money and buys gifts that he intends to give his aunt when he would finally find her. Of this hope, Birahima narrates:

> I wanted to save some money; I didn't want to piss away everything I earned on drugs, like other child soldiers. With my savings, I bought gold and I kept the gold in one of the grigris that I wore. I wanted something to give my aunt when I finally got to meet her. *Faforo!* (Kourouma 2006:100).

Unlike Birahima, many other child soldiers who joined and considered these rebel groups as 'family' eventually died in war. The ability to keep hope alive in the midst of tough psychological distress is a potent strategy to heal the wounds that scar the ego.

When Birahima discovers that his aunt is dead, he cries his 'heart out' (211) because his endurance of previous harrowing experiences has been in vain. His hope and spirit are quashed by the news as there is no longer reason to stay as a recruit of the rebel group, no more reason for fighting. His predicament deserves to be pitiable because dismemberment from rebel groups does not spell freedom from the war. Psychologically, there is a greater war that stirs. For at the heels of dismemberment, disarmament and re-integration lies the dragon monster of post-traumatic stress. Victims of

post-traumatic stress battle a new kind of trauma that disorders their mental processes by a forceful replay of their actions of savagery through means as dreams, hallucinations, hysteria, and the like. Luckily for Birahima, his cousin, who is a doctor, offers him a path out of the war and out of his emotional trauma when he asks that Birahima tell him 'everything… everything…seen and done…how all this happened' (214–15). Birahima thus enters into a therapy process that initiates his own healing.

Another strategy of healing that Birahima adopts is his language. Rebel groups are a site for the transmogrification of children into wretched sociopaths. Upon conscription, child soldiers enter into militarised spaces where their sanities are violated and where they are indoctrinated into a culture of violence and carnage. Such practices shatter the psyches of children and heighten somatic processes through a suspension of their reasoning and morality faculties. Through language, Birahima manages to put his mind at ease in order to tell a truthful and compelling story. In an introduction of himself, he said that 'I don't give two fucks about village customs anymore, 'cos I've been in Liberia and killed lots of guys with an AK-47 (we called it a "kalash") and got fucked-up on knaif and lots of hard drugs' (3).

Birahima's disregard for village customs represents his social and cultural deviance. Of course, his deviance is a manifestation of the altered topography of his mental process. Pressed with enormous energy from hard drugs, his super-ego, which is the seat of acceptable morality and language etiquette, is kept on freeze. As such, his actions are characterised by deviations. Many children who are trapped in this situation enter an emotional crisis state where they become slaves to their trauma and finally succumb to it. But Birahima negotiates his path out of his internal trauma via an adoption of his linguistic activity as an outlet for the traumatic energies from his unconscious. Following the breakdown of the superego and ego, obscene words that carry intense energy from his unconscious dominate his linguistic activity. Such words are raw and offensive and are symbols of his unconscious wishes.

In 'Swearing: a biopsychosocial perspective', Vingerhoets, Byslma and De Vlam (2013:2) argue that swearing is associated with neurological and psychological disorders. According to them, swear words are means through which intense emotions are let out. Birahima recounts that he is 'disrespectful', 'rude as a goat's beard', and 'swear[s] like a bastard'. Furthermore, the researchers contend that swearers who use taboo words present with serious emotional problems that are beyond them. Birahima, and indeed the other child soldiers whose stories he tells, are caught in the same emotional trajectory.

But Biharima's salvation from the 'devils of his unconscious'(122) is expression through his linguistic activity. He admits that he does not swear

like civilised persons, because swearing among civilised persons has its forms and serves some social, interpersonal and civil functions. On the contrary, swearing among emotionally disordered persons, like child soldiers, pays no homage to civility but rather serves to inhibit pain and lessen emotional tension. Little wonder his story is heavily punctuated with swear words that carry scatological, malevolent and sexual implications – words like '*faforo!* (my father's cock)', '*gnamokode* (bastard)'. Although Birahima's use of swear words represents the wounds of his mind and embodies his somatic distortions, which are realities of his militarised experience, they serve as a veritable source of emotional escape and pain inhibition.

Conclusion

Ahmadou Kourouma's *Allah is Not Obliged* is a strong creative treatise that presents a detailed account of how immediate and remote political factors contribute to the vulnerability of children in a war situation. Using the psychoanalytic theory of testimony and post-war memory in the analysis of the novel, the study underscores the implications of reading, listening and writing in the healing of war wounds and trauma. Indeed, our discussion of the major issues in the novel emphasised children's gullibility in war times, the violation of their innocence and the need for their protection. Second, we also observed that the recipe for civil conflict, especially in Africa, is deeply etched in the political encroachment that many African states suffered at the hands of Europeans and that the broader contexts of international politics, directly or indirectly, fuel conflicts that are characterised with the militarisation of children. In this connection, Kourouma's *Allah is Not Obliged* represents a classical example of a war novel that is imbued with cross-disciplinary strengths and lessons that can facilitate healing and reintegration. In fact, the novel encompasses political, historical, philosophical, sociological, anthropological and literary studies. Third, we argued that reading and writing about conflicts and wars have the potency to heal psychological wounds and the trauma associated with them. Indeed, through reading, writing and listening to stories related to wars and violence, especially their consequences in society, former child soldiers and combatants can reinvigorate their hope for a new beginning in life and initiate a therapy of self-healing. Fourthly, we observe that former child soldiers and combatants who were hitherto initiated into the culture of violence can be given an opportunity to discharge the lethal impulses that had been repressed in their unconsciousness and facilitate healing of trauma through the free flow of thoughts, ideas and emotions.

On the basis of the aforementioned observations, we recommend the following. First, there is the need for former child soldiers and combatants

to be reintegrated into the society through the process of bibliotherapeutic reading of war novels that would assist them through the healing process. Second, since some civil wars in Africa have their roots in colonialism, we recommend that former child soldiers and combatants in particular and other Africans in general will benefit a lot from reading about the different strategies employed by former colonial administrators to instigate conflicts and wars in the continent. Third, since literature can mirror the past, we recommend that former child soldiers and combatants be exposed to quality literature that would provide healing for their trauma and emotion. Fourth, since healing can assist former child soldiers and combatants to discharge their bottled-up anger, fear, emotion and tendency for violence, we recommend traumatised persons be encouraged to embrace reading and writing as part of their healing process. Lastly, our major contribution to knowledge lies in our understanding that bibliotherapeutic plans are a veritable part of post-war strategies of rehabilitation and reintegration and that reading and writing about wars facilitate healings for traumatised victims of war and violence.

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Pathways out of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: The Dissonance Between Interventions and Social Norms

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Abstract

The fight against the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in Zimbabwe has tended to focus on the need to enact and effectively implement laws, policies and programmes. While these interventions are important, negative norms and attitudes towards children who are victims of CSE continue to be embedded in the Zimbabwean society. This study examines how the dissonance between legal and formal institutions on the one hand and social norms and attitudes towards CSEC on the other undermines interventions against CSEC. This is because in order to be effective; laws, policies, programmes and institutions need to largely emerge from and be consistent with society's underpinning relationships, aspirations and norms. The fight against CSEC in Zimbabwe can take a meaningful trajectory if these negative norms and attitudes towards children who are victims of CSE are transformed.

Résumé

La lutte contre l'exploitation sexuelle commerciale des enfants (ESCE) au Zimbabwe a eu tendance à se concentrer sur la nécessité de promulguer et de mettre en œuvre efficacement des lois, des politiques et des programmes. Malgré l'importance de ces interventions, les normes et les attitudes négatives à l'égard des enfants victimes de l'ESC continuent d'être ancrées dans la société zimbabwéenne. Cette étude examine la manière dont la dissonance entre les institutions légales et formelles, d'une part, et les normes et attitudes sociales envers l'ESCE, d'autre part, compromet les interventions contre l'ESCE.

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En effet, pour être efficaces, les lois, les politiques, les programmes et les institutions doivent largement émaner des relations, des aspirations et des normes sous-jacentes de la société et être en cohérence avec celles-ci. La lutte contre l'ESCE au Zimbabwe peut prendre une trajectoire significative, si ces normes et attitudes négatives envers les enfants victimes d'ESC sont changées.

Introduction

The commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) – defined as 'the commodification and coercion of a child to perform sexual acts' in exchange for money or other forms of payment (Bang et al. 2014: 17) – is a conscience-wrenching problem that has become a pandemic feature of Zimbabwean society (ECPAT 2014; ZNCWC 2014). Various constituencies across the country have made distress calls to the government and other actors to take steps to eliminate CSEC. For example, in April 2019, a concerned resident of the Chiredzi community in Masvingo petitioned Parliament to take action against CSEC (Mafirakureva, 2019). The government, civil society organisations and other actors have implemented sporadic interventions to combat CSEC. However, the solution to CSEC has remained depressingly elusive. It is the primary responsibility of states to protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including taking steps towards the recovery and reintegration of victims. However, other actors such as civil society, families, communities and the business community also have a critical role to play in the fight against CSEC.

Multiple pathways and guardrails of protecting and emancipating children from CSE have been proposed by various segments of society. These include the establishment of mechanisms of reporting CSEC that are accessible, confidential and anonymous; the elimination of religious and cultural beliefs and practices that are harmful to the rights and wellbeing of women and children; the training and deployment of social workers; the provision of robust social services in communities; the establishment of effective and efficient mechanisms of recovering and re-integrating victims into their families and communities; the provision of material and other forms of support to victims, children at risk and their families; the reforming, harmonisation and effective implementation of laws; the provision of birth certificates to children; the arresting, prosecution and deterrent sentencing of perpetrators; the closure of illegal bottle stores, bars and shebeens; the conduct of regular investigations and patrols by the police; the placement of victims in children's homes and rehabilitation centres; the conducting of awareness campaigns and group therapy programmes and the provision of medical, psychosocial, legal and counselling services.

Emphasis has been placed on the establishment and implementation of legal and institutional pathways out of CSEC. While these interventions are important, they are severely weakened by society's negative norms and attitudes towards children who are victims of CSE. There is consequently a dissonance between legal and formal institutions on the one hand and social norms and attitudes towards CSEC on the other. These norms and attitudes are also embedded in those institutions – such as civil society, government institutions, religious organisations, the private sector, the media and community leaders – that have the responsibility to play a leading role in protecting and emancipating children from CSE, which exacerbates the problem. These attitudes and norms are characterised by the further victimisation of children 'for supposedly making a conscious choice' to engage in sex work.

These children are generally characterised by society as 'innate deviants' who are bereft of socially sanctioned dreams and aspirations. It is not surprising that some potential respondents refused to take part in this study on the reasoning that it is 'a waste of time and resources' to talk about CSEC. Others said that it is vile to even talk about CSEC. Simon (not the participant's real name; this study uses pseudonyms throughout), who is a religious leader, stated that children who engage in commercial sex work 'are the Biblical Philip's proverbial Nazareth…nothing good comes out of them'.

This study seeks to examine how society's institutionalised norms and attitudes towards CSEC, particularly the victims, undermine legal and institutional interventions against CSEC. The main argument is that unless legal and institutional interventions against CSEC are built on and reinforced by foundational relationships and shared norms and attitudes that value the protection and emancipation of children from CSE, their capacity to stem the tide of CSEC will remain limited. This has been evidenced by the implementation of episodic, poorly resourced and ephemeral interventions against CSEC.

While various stakeholders are willing to protect and promote children's rights, there is a comparative deficiency when it comes to extending protection to victims of CSE. When children are affected by problems such as natural disasters, diseases and hunger – that is, factors that are considered external to and therefore uncontrollable by victims – society tends to mobilise resources and offer what support is deemed necessary. However, this is not the case with children who are victims of CSE because the voices of these children are 'seldom heard' (Hoot et al. 2006: 129). It is against this background that this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- Can formal institutions and legal reforms be effective in the fight against CSEC if social norms and attitudes towards the victims do not change?

- How can the dissonance between social norms and attitudes towards CSEC and legal and institutional interventions against CSEC be eroded and reduced?

The study is anchored to the hypotheses that legal and institutional responses to CSEC cannot be effective and lasting without eroding and reducing the dissonance between these responses and social norms and attitudes towards CSEC. A positive shift in the norms and attitudes of society towards CSEC is critical if this is to be overcome.

Methodology

This study was funded by the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). The researchers are grateful to CODESRIA for this funding. The study was conducted in Mabvuku, Epworth, Hatcliffe, Dzivarasekwa, Caledonia and Beit Bridge communities in Zimbabwe, which are high density urban communities. These communities were selected because of the prevalence of CSEC. The study was conducted over 14 months.

The study uses methodological and ethical approaches that are child-focused and sensitive, recognising that children are 'reflexive participants' who 'are central informants of their own life worlds (Christensen and James 2008: 5pp). Its methodology was designed with the understanding that it must be appropriate for the participants and their social, political and cultural contexts. It was also designed in a way that children were not mere respondents, but participants who played an active role in the interpretation and shaping of the research process. The methodology encapsulated multiple data collection techniques that are child-centred. This allowed the capturing of children's language, experiences and perspectives. It also allowed flexibility in the collection of data and the triangulation of research findings. A planning and training workshop was conducted during the first phase of the study. It was during this workshop that the researchers were trained and familiarised with all components of the research process. The semi-structured Interview Guide and the Code of Conduct were validated during the workshop.

Desktop research was conducted during the second phase. Existing data on CSEC in Zimbabwe were gathered from varied sources such as newspapers, books, research reports, government documents and journals. This was followed by field research that was conducted using three methods: a reconnaissance study, observations and in-depth interviews. The reconnaissance study was used to informally gather information about various aspects of CSEC in Zimbabwe. These include what children and communities think about CSEC, where and why CSEC is prevalent, what makes children vulnerable to CSE, the practices that are involved in

CSEC, the experiences of children who are victims of CSE and existing interventions against CSEC.

The reconnaissance study enabled the researchers to gather information that was difficult to gather through formal interviews. It also enabled the researchers to form and build relations with children, community members and leaders, sex workers and government institutions. The reconnaissance study was followed by observational visits to bars, nightclubs, *mashabhini* (shebeens) and brothels. The objective was to gain an appreciation of the 'ecosystem' of CSEC, with a focus on where and how it takes place, the practices that are involved and societal attitudes towards CSEC. Focused observation was directed towards the victims, the perpetrators and the facilitators or collaborators of CSEC. Rich data were gathered through this method.

The observational site visits were followed by in-depth interviews. The interviews were conducted with victims and survivors of CSEC; sex workers; the media; parliamentarians; community members and leaders; civil society organisations working on children's rights; the police; the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare; truck drivers; and the owners, staff members and patrons of bars, night clubs, brothels and *mashabhini*. The sampling of participants was dependent on the characteristics of the context such as access and vulnerability of participants. Purposive and snowball sampling methods were used to recruit child participants and sex workers because of the characteristics of this population. Criterion sampling was used to recruit community leaders and participants from civil society organisations and government institutions. Their experience and engagement with CSEC was used as the key criterion. Different methods were used to access participants, especially child participants. Child participants were accessed through referrals, key informants and civil society organisations and government departments whose work focuses on children's rights and wellbeing. Communities were accessed through community leaders.

The participants were chosen because of their capacity to provide valuable information and perspectives for the study. Children who are survivors of CSE provided experiential information about the circumstances that made them vulnerable to CSE, their experiences with CSE and how they escaped from CSE. Sex workers were chosen because of their special knowledge about CSEC and their capacity to help the researchers to gain access to child participants. Community members, civil society organisations, truck drivers and the owners, staff members and patrons of bars, night clubs, brothels and *mashabhini* provided information about the factors that make children vulnerable to CSE, the places where CSEC takes place, the perpetrators of CSEC, what society thinks about CSEC and the interventions against CSEC.

The Zimbabwe Republic Police, especially the Victim Friendly Unit, has a special responsibility in the fight against CSEC. The Unit was established to police sexual crimes that are committed against women and children. Police officers provided information about what is being done by the police in the fight against CSEC, the challenges that the police encounter in this fight, the areas where CSEC is prevalent, and what makes children vulnerable to CSEC. Parliamentarians provided information about the causes of CSEC and what Parliament has done and should do to effectively fight against CSEC. The inclusion of diverse participants enabled the study to appreciate the ecosystem of CSEC from diverse perspectives. In total, 126 participants were interviewed – 52 child victims of CSE and 74 other stakeholders. These participants provided enough information to fully examine and understand the phenomenon of CSEC in Zimbabwe. After interviewing 126 participants, the researchers realised that the research project had reached data saturation stage. Any further collection of data would yield redundant information. Table 1 shows the categories of participants and the number of people who were interviewed per category.

Table 1: Interviews

Category of participant	Nber of participants
Victims of CSEC	52
Survivors of CSEC	2
Parliamentarians	2
Police officers (Victim Friendly Unit)	10
Sex workers	12
Truck drivers	3
Community leaders	4
Community members	18
Civil society organisations	2
The media	1
The Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare	2
Owners and staff members of bars, night clubs, brothels and shebeens	18
Total number of interviews	**126**

Research Ethics

It is important to establish and observe research ethics, especially when conducting research with children who are victims of CSE. Researching on CSEC raises social, religious, cultural, ethical, legal, methodological and

practical dilemmas. Before undertaking this research project, the researchers attended a workshop in Harare, Zimbabwe, organised by CODESRIA. During the workshop, it was emphasised that all research projects should observe research ethics and that when conducting research that involves children, researchers should seek informed consent from the parents or guardians of the participants (Laws and Mann 2004; Twum-Danso 2004). However, this ethical requirement is difficult to apply to research projects on CSEC. This is because some of the children do not have parents or they are often located geographically far from their parents or guardians. But for those who have, seeking consent from their parents or guardians can cause many risks for them. Under such circumstances, informed consent should be sought from the children themselves. This explains why, during the planning phase of this study, the researchers sought to establish whether children who are victims of CSE can be interviewed, and whether they are capable of giving informed consent.

Scholars have debated whether children are capable of giving informed consent. King and Churchill (2000: 42) argue that parental consent should be waived in circumstances where request for it might put the child at risk of harm. Rittenhouse and Felicini (2015) argue that when conducting research with children who are victims of CSE, their participation should always be based on informed consent. They further argue that although researchers can provide full information about the research, it is not possible to guarantee that children will understand it, even where clear and simple language is used. The consensus among scholars is that children can be capable of giving consent, but it is difficult to tell whether the consent is informed (King and Churchill 2000; Morris et al. 2012). Bourke and Loveridge (2014) argue that it is not possible to fully obtain informed consent from children because they are unlikely to comprehend the complex nature of the research; they therefore believe that children should be offered on-going opportunities to express informed consent and dissent.

Other scholars argue that the ability of children to give informed consent should be assessed on a case-by-case basis because it depends on the peculiarities of the research context and each child's experiences and expectations (Graham et al. 2013; King and Churchill 2000; Morrow and Richards 1996). However, whether the consent is informed or not, child participants must be made fully aware that their participation is voluntary and that they have the right to change their mind, to withdraw from the interview and to answer questions selectively (King and Churchill 2000; Mishna et al. 2004). It is important for information to be provided to children in ways that are appropriate to their age, competencies and cultural contexts (Ruiz-Casares and Thompson 2016).

The researchers established that most studies on CSEC conducted interviews with children. For example, in their review of studies conducted in sub-Saharan Africa, Hounmenou and Her (2017) found that 52 out of 72 studies conducted interviews with child victims. Likewise, the Zimbabwe National Council for the Welfare of Children (ZNCWC) conducted a study on CSEC in 2014. In this study, children were interviewed without having sought consent from their parents or guardians. The study argues that 'acquiring parental/guardian permission is not a reasonable requirement given the characteristics of the population under study' (ZNCWC 2014: 9). Perschler-Desai (2010) interviewed victims of CSEC during a research project on teenage prostitution in Southern Africa; and Hoot et al. (2006) interviewed 70 children during a study on CSEC in Ethiopia without parental consent.

It was against this background that consent was sought from the children who participated in this study, and not from their parents or guardians. In the consent-seeking process, the children were provided with all the information about the research. They were informed that participation is voluntary, confidential and anonymous, that consent is an ongoing process and that they reserve the right to withdraw from participation at any stage of the interview process and to decide to answer certain questions and not others. They were also informed about the purpose of the research and how the information will be stored, used and disseminated. The researchers noted that the children easily understood expert terms such as 'voluntary participation', but they could not easily understand terms such as 'confidentiality' and 'anonymity'. In order to address this problem, the researchers explained these terms using more familiar and context-specific terms. A multi-stage ethical clearance approach was adopted in order to safeguard the rights, wellbeing and interests of participants. Official government clearance was sought and obtained. Clearance and informed consent were also obtained from local authorities, the police and community leaders in the areas where the interviews were conducted.

There are multiple risks associated with research on CSEC. Children who are victims of CSE may experience psychological and emotional trauma during and after interviews (Twum-Danso 2004). For this reason, a number of ethical guardrails were used to ensure that children were adequately protected from any harm that could arise as a consequence of their participation in the study. First, all researchers who conducted interviews had prior knowledge and experience of conducting research with children. The researchers also received rigorous professional training on how to conduct research with children who are victims of CSE, including how to identify signs of discomfort and trauma and what to do should participants show these signs. These steps were stipulated in a comprehensive Code of Conduct, which was developed and validated during

the planning and training workshop. Second, a child-friendly semi-structured interview guide was used throughout the interviews. However, the researchers were encouraged to be flexible because general guidelines lack the capacity to address the complexity and reflexivity of working with vulnerable populations (Pittaway et al. 2010: 78). Third, the researchers mapped out and developed a register of governmental and non-governmental actors whose work focusses on providing support and services to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. The register was used to establish referral pathways. A psychologist was engaged to identify and handle the social, emotional and psychological issues that arose during interviews. A budget was set aside to deal with such eventualities, especially to facilitate referrals. Fourth, the lead researcher monitored and evaluated the entire research process to ensure that research ethics were strictly observed by all the researchers. Fifth, where necessary and possible, the victims were accessed through government departments, civil society organisations, key informants and parliamentarians who previously engaged or assisted them. Sixth, the research questions were framed and asked in line with the principles and practices of childhood research.

Theoretical Framework

This study uses concepts of social mobilisation as its theoretical framework. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF 2015) defines social mobilisation as the process that engages and motivates a wide range of partners and allies at national and local levels to raise awareness of and demand for a particular development objective through dialogue. It seeks to facilitate change through a range of players engaged in interrelated and complementary efforts. The World Health Organization (WHO n.d.) defines social mobilisation as the process of bringing together all societal and personal influences to raise awareness of and demand for health care, assist in the delivery of resources and services and promote sustainable individual and community involvement.

WHO further argues that social mobilisation involves collaboration between members of institutions, community partners, organisations and others to reach specific groups of people for intentional dialogue aimed at facilitating change through an interdisciplinary approach. Social mobilisation has been mainly used in health promotion, especially in the fight against pandemics. Since the 1990s, it was used for the prevention of AIDS and the global campaign for the eradication of polio (Chaturvedi 2013). Social mobilisation can be used to mobilise different constituencies of society to actively participate in the fight against CSEC, and especially to change norms and attitudes towards CSEC.

Findings

This section discusses the findings of the study. Using the responses from participants of the study, it focuses on exploring mainstream norms, values and attitudes towards CSEC and how they affect interventions against CSEC. The major finding in this study is that societal norms and attitudes towards CSEC can either promote or erode legal and institutional interventions against CSEC. In a landmark speech on 'The spirit of liberty' the American judge and philosopher Justice Learned Hand stated that:

> I often wonder whether we do not rest our hopes too much upon constitutions, upon laws and upon courts. These are false hopes; believe me, these are false hopes. Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can even do much to help it. While it lies there it needs no constitution, no law and no court to save it (Learned Hand 1944, cited in Lewis 1949: 68).

Norms play a fundamental role in building societies. In their famous book, *How Democracy Dies*, Levitsky and Ziblatt (2018) highlight the significance of norms or unwritten rules in the wellbeing of society. They define norms as 'shared codes of conduct that become common knowledge within a particular community or society – accepted, respected, and enforced by its members' (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018: 23). They also argue that 'all successful democracies rely on informal rules that, though not found in the constitution or any laws, are widely known and respected' and that 'like oxygen or clean water, a norm's importance is quickly revealed by its absence' (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018: 67).

Societal Attitudes Ttowards CSEC in Zimbabwe

There is a tendency to believe that negative attitudes towards child victims of CSE are predominantly held by members of society who are relatively uneducated and may lack awareness of human rights issues and who are susceptible to the influence of negative cultural and religious beliefs and practices. Conversely, actors in civil society, government institutions, intellectuals and human rights activists tend to be regarded as comparatively progressive as far as their attitudes towards CSEC are concerned. These actors tend to take a leading role in the fight against CSEC, including the conduct of awareness campaigns to change attitudes towards CSEC among grassroots populations. However, this study found that bluntly negative attitudes towards children who are victims of CSE are also embedded in these constituencies of society. This makes it difficult for them to play a meaningful role in the fight against CSEC.

In her study of CSEC in Southern Africa, Perschler-Desai (2010: 112) states that 'even representatives from women's and children's organisations often believe that the children, especially girls, are to blame for "immoral" behaviour'. This is a profound observation because it exposes a deeper and hidden problem that characterises the fight against CSEC. To put it bluntly, most of the institutions that advocate for child victims of CSE are comprised of individuals who hold the children responsible. Clearly, normative transformations must take place within many of the institutions leading the fight against CSEC.

Selected Interviews

The interviews in this section illustrate the mainstream beliefs and attitudes towards CSEC, particularly towards the victims, by individuals working to combat CSEC.

Moyo

Moyo works for the Zimbabwe Republic Police in the Victim Friendly Unit. The Unit was established to proactively and reactively police crimes of a sexual nature that are committed against women and children. It seeks to do this in a manner and environment that is conducive, private and friendly to victims. Moyo was trained to deal with victims in a friendly, professional and confidential manner. Moyo believes that women and children should be protected, by every means possible, from sexual abuse and other forms of violations. However, he believes that children who are victims of CSE are not 'genuine victims' because they 'actively and openly hunt for clients'. He stated that he would rather spend the whole day drinking beer or working on his farm than to 'waste time and resources' protecting children who have 'consciously' made the decision to go into prostitution with the objective of raising money. He confessed that the training that he went through did not change his attitude towards children who are engaged in sex work. He also stated that there is little to zero willingness within the police to investigate and arrest perpetrators of CSEC because of the belief that the children are to blame. He said to the researcher 'do you think that there is any serious police officer who would want to spend the whole day patrolling a neighbourhood in order to protect zviTokwe Mukosi [a term used in Masvingo, especially in Zaka, to refer to children engaged in commercial sex work]'. He continued to say that:

> we have received many reports about that problem. We have read stories in the media. The issue has been raised in the Parliament. But police officers are not willing to go into communities to investigate and to arrest the men who are having sex with zviTokwe Mukosi. In fact, many of our police officers live

in the communities where zviTokwe Mukosi operate. They know who these zviTokwe are and they know the men who are having sex with zviTokwe, but they can hardly do anything about it because the zviTokwes have made a personal and irrevocable choice to take the path of prostitution.

Tinotenda

Tinotenda works for the Zimbabwe Republic Police. She believes that the fight against CSEC should not be a priority for the police. She stated that:

> If I am to write down my work schedule in order of priority, I would put the fight against child prostitution at the bottom of the list, if at all I can put it on my list. This is because the country has been economically distressed for close to two decades now. As the police, we do not have the resources which enable us to do our work. We have to do the best with the sparse resources we have. We do not have the vehicles and fuel to attend to criminal activities which threaten to destabilise the country. How can we then use the sparse resources to fight against child prostitution? If you go to every town across this country, especially where long distance trucks operate, there are thousands of underage girls who are into prostitution. Imagine the resources which are required to patrol all these areas. These children have become a shame to themselves and the society.

Precious

Precious lives in Epworth but she comes from Zaka, Masvingo. She believes that the men who perpetrate CSEC are actually the victims. She stated that:

> if you drive along the Roy-Chiredzi highway, you will see a hive of zviKwasine [a term used to refer to children engaged in commercial sex work] who waylay truck drivers who transport sugar from Tongaat Hullet [a sugar producing company] to its markets around the country and beyond our borders. Some of the drivers do not want to have sex with zviKwasine, but the zviKwasine aggressively and persistently persuaded them to the point where they have to give in. Most of the zviKwasine use threats and charms to persuade the drivers to comply. The drivers are the victims, not zviKwasine. Most of these drivers have families to take care of, but their money is now going to zviKwasine. Most of them are being infected with HIV/AIDS.

Matilda

Matilda works for an NGO that focuses on children's rights. The NGO is one of the stakeholders engaged by the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Services to provide specialised services to child victims of CSE. Matilda stated that she is committed to protect and promote the rights of

children, especially against sexual abuse. However, she stated that children who are into sex work are largely to blame for their situation. She said that she cannot openly express this view because it may cause her to lose her job. She also stated that:

> to be honest, many of the people and NGOs which are implementing interventions against CSEC believe that the children are to blame. Some of them try to help because of the need to get funding from donors. But of course, they will not tell you that they do not believe in what they do. In the end, they defend the children publicly, but blame them privately.

John

John works for one of the government ministries whose work focuses on the welfare of children. The ministry is a key player in the fight against CSEC. John believes that children should be protected against all forms of abuses, especially of a sexual nature. However, he believes that children who are into sex work are 'inherently recalcitrant' and that they should not be empathised with. He stated that because of the nature of his work, he has to participate in efforts to help children who are victims of CSE. However, he participates in these efforts 'with his lips and not his heart' because he believes that the children are to blame and that they can hardly be assisted because of their behaviour. He claimed that government is aware of the problem but it feigns ignorance because it does not have the willingness to 'fight a useless and infinite battle'. He also claimed that this is why the leaders of Katswe [an NGO] were harassed after reporting that children as young as 9 years old are victims of CSE.

Anesu

Anesu is a member of parliament. He believes that parliament has 'better thing'" to do than to discuss CSEC because 'these children are creators of their own situations'. He stated that when a motion on CSEC was moved in parliament, he 'did not pay even a grain of attention' to the debate because he believes that it is 'not parliament's business' to deal with the problem of CSEC. He stated that it was clear that then Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Services was unwilling and uncomfortable to discuss this issue in parliament. He further stated that the Minister eventually issued a Ministerial Statement due to pressure from 'overzealous' opposition parliamentarians who had moved a motion on the subject and demanded that the Minister should issue a statement. He believes that the interventions by the Ministry 'will not go anywhere' because they are 'not implemented out

of zeal', but as 'a mere public relations exercise' because the Ministry should be seen as 'doing something' about the phenomenon. He claimed that only a 'handful' of parliamentarians believe that these children are victims and that resources should be allocated towards the fight against CSEC.

Spiwe

Spiwe is a community member who is based in Beit Bridge. She believes that children who are into prostitution are 'demon possessed' and should 'live in their own society' because they are a 'disgrace incarnate' to society. She believes that the children are to blame for their 'abhorrent' behaviour.

Joseph

Joseph is a chief. He believes that there are no external factors, even extreme poverty, that can force children into prostitution. He believes that children are going into prostitution because prostitution 'is in their blood'. He stated that the children who are engaged in prostitution should be 'shunned' by the larger society because they can 'spoil' good children.

Thelma

Thelma is a businesswoman in a high-density suburb in Harare. She said that:

> these children often ask us [business owners] to allow them to strip dance at our premises or to give them free beer. They tell us that they are on demand and that they can bring more business to us. They do everything they can to get clients. Our patrons end up sleeping with them. We do not blame our clients; we blame the children. Our parents taught us that we have to work hard if we are to make it in life. That is what inspired me to start my business. But these days, these children do not want to work with their hands. They want to use their bodies to get quick money. They are not worthy to help.

Anna

Anna is a sex worker. She stated that some children always request her to 'recruit them into the industry'. She believes that it is 'a mission impossible' to try and get the children out of prostitution because 'prostitution is in their veins'. She further stated that:

> in this area [Epworth], it is normal to see children who are into sex work. That is why the society tolerate it, including the police officers who live in this area. No-one thinks of wasting their time fighting against this issue. Most

of the unregistered business places where these children work from are owned by government officials, including members of the police force.

Tariro

Tariro lives in Mabvuku. She sells fruit and vegetables. She stated that:

> we must make a distinction between children who are sexually exploited and abused against their will and those who are into sex work. Those who are into sex work are willingly selling sex. They visit hot spots in search for clients. Someone comes, take them, have sex with them and pay them for the service. How can people report the client to the police when the children themselves are willingly participating? The moment a child sells sex, she is literally saying that "I am no longer a child, I am an adult".

Vimbiso

Vimbiso works for the media. She has covered a number of stories on CSEC. She believes that the media should play a leading role in the fight against CSEC, especially in raising awareness in Zimbabwean society. However, she believes that while the media has played a commendable role in researching and raising awareness on CSEC, it has promoted and entrenched stigmatisation and victim-blaming attitudes through insensitive and poor reporting. She stated that:

> the fourth estate has done more damage than good when it comes to the fight against CSEC. This is because many of us in the media fraternity consciously or unconsciously hold negative attitudes towards the children who are victims of CSE. I have heard of many complains from children's rights organisations in respect of how the media tends to cover stories of children who are into sex work. The media tends to take the blame to the door of child prostitutes and not those who are abusing and exploiting them.

These case studies show that victim-blaming and ostracising attitudes towards child victims of CSE are shared by individuals, groups and institutions across the economic, political and social spectrum. They debunk the view that human rights organisations, government institutions and other supposedly enlightened individuals and institutions do not hold such attitudes towards the victims. These attitudes may be wholly or partly rooted in cultural, religious, patriarchal and traditional norms, expectations and practices. Most African countries are replete with traditional, religious and cultural beliefs and practices that promotes structural violence against children (ECPAT 2014). In Zimbabwe, 'vulnerable children are often the victims of harmful cultural and social practices' (Muyengwa 2014: 5). Similarly,

Galtung (1990) argues that societies are characterised by 'cultural violence'. This refers to any aspect of culture that can be used to legitimise direct and structural violence against some members of society. To effectively fight against CSEC, it is important to look at the cultural structures of society and how they either enhance or harm the welfare of women and children. It is important that harmful practices are eliminated.

However, it is erroneous to believe that cultural beliefs and practices are always harmful to children. One of the notable findings of this study is that respondents believed Zimbabwe had historically been characterised by norms, beliefs and practices that enhanced the protection of children against sexual and other forms of abuses. Although the family, being the basic unit of society, has the primary responsibility to up-bring, protect and nurture children, broader society was traditionally involved in assisting families in the protection, nurturing, and upbringing of children. It provided a safe, supportive and stable environment for children. Children were not regarded as belonging to the family, but to the larger society. However, it is believed that the collective approach to the protection and promotion of the wellbeing of children has partly or wholly dissipated. This explains why CSEC has emerged and spread, and why it is increasingly difficult to address. These views were expressed by 83 percent of the adult participants. The participants reasoned that in traditional Zimbabwean society, children were protected from (commercial) sexual exploitation, not because of interventions by government, civil society or any altruistic actors, but because of the broader attitudes and norms that were shared, accepted and religiously respected by community members. For example, Tapiwa stated that:

> Traditionally, children were protected from sexual abuse by an ecosystem of unwritten norms, not by codified law or formal institutions. The Zimbabwean society had a collective moral fibre which placed responsibility for the protection and nurturing of children in the hands of society. This moral fibre has completely depleted. We can use laws and state institutions to try and protect children from falling victim to commercial sexual activities. But these interventions cannot produce results if the moral fibre is not restored. This is because to be effective, laws and institutions should be built on the values, needs and aspirations of society.

Another respondent, Rudo, stated that:

> Traditionally, people worked together as brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers and grandparents to raise children and make sure that every child is protected and cared for. Children belonged, not to their immediate families, but to the larger community. The welfare of the child was everyone's responsibility. Those who abused or exploited children were heavily sanctioned by the community.

> But in today's community, the responsibility is no longer communally shared. The stable, secure and loving environment which used to exist outside the family unit is not only gone, but it has been replaced by a vulturistic culture of neglect, violence, exploitation and iniquitous abuse of children.

Speaking during a National AIDS Council meeting in May 2018, chief Nyakunhuwa said that relatives and communities should work together and provide guidance and support to children, especially those who come from child-headed families. He said that traditionally, members of the extended family and the larger community shared the responsibility of protecting, nurturing and upbringing children and that this protected children from sexual abuses (Mubaiwa 2018). However, instead of nurturing and taking care of children who are vulnerable the dominant 'culture' of contemporary society is to either neglect or abuse them.

Some participants stated that, traditionally, society emphasised the need for community members, despite the circumstances, to earn income through hard work and other morally acceptable ways. But in contemporary Zimbabwean society, people are overwhelmingly concerned with getting money, including through means that are deemed morally unacceptable. Some participants stated that they know of parents or relatives who have 'sold' their children into prostitution so that they can raise money for the upkeep of their families. Other participants expressed the concern that there has emerged a strong 'culture of individualism' in Zimbabwe, which inhibits concerns for broader societal problems such as CSEC. For example, Mutumwa stated that:

> We are living in a *zvangu zvaita* or *zvangu ngazviite* economy. It is an economy in which everyone is concerned with their immediate circumstances and needs. There is very little to zero concern for others and for the future. The *zvangu zvaita* economic principle tells you that if those children who are being commercially sexually abused are not yours, then there is no need to worry. It also tells you that if you can directly benefit from the exploitation of those children, then why not. It is an economy which leaves little or no room for altruistic behaviour.

In all the areas where the interviews were conducted, the interviewees emphasised that the owners and managers of local bars have developed a 'culture' of using the children to attract customers.

How do Norms and Attitudes Affect Interventions?

The preceding section established the mainstream norms and attitudes towards CSEC, particularly towards the victims themselves. This section critiques how these attitudes and norms affect efforts to prevent and eradicate CSEC.

Recovery and Reintegration of Victims

The recovery and reintegration of victims into their families and communities, as opposed to placing them in children's homes, is one of the long-term pathways of getting them out of CSE. However, as is evident in the presented case studies, this study found a major challenge relating to societal blaming and stigmatisation of child victims. These victim-blaming attitudes and norms make it difficult for CSE child victims to be accepted by their families and the larger society. Perschler-Desai (2010: 120) also noted that 'community responds to child prostitution in a generally negative way, often rejecting the children, which leads to further isolation'. Likewise, in a research project conducted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 64 percent of child interviewees expressed the view that society has neither tolerance nor sympathy for them (Hoot et al. 2006). Consequently, many of these children believe nobody cares for their wellbeing, which, in turn, is likely to lead to a sense of resentment toward broader society. This resentment is often characterised by bouts of anger, violence and the tendency to hurt themselves or others. For example, Memory stated that:

> I hate all the people around me except my friends. I can easily get angry and fatally assault someone with a brick or an empty bottle because I am angry with the way society treats me. I do not think that anything good can come out this society because it is so cruel.

Ninety-one per cent of the victims stated that they do not want to be placed in children's homes or be taken back to their families because of how they are perceived and treated. Grace, a former victim who was reunified with her family by the government, stated that:

> I never found peace and love since I came back to my family. No one in this community wants to associate with me. This is painful. Parents in this community have told their children not to play with me. I went back to school but everyone avoids and mocks me. I am therefore planning to run away and go back where I was.

Similarly, Joyline stated there was a time she decided to quit sex work. She went back to her rural home but her parents and the community found it difficult to trust and accept her. She went back to sex work. Of the community members who were interviewed, 82 per cent stated that they will not accept or they will hardly accept former child prostitutes as bona fide members of their family or society because of the fear that they can 'recruit' other children into prostitution and other deviant acts. For child victims who have their own children, this issue becomes far more complex.

It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that some child participants expressed that commercial sexual engagement offered them the love and protection that they failed to get from their families and communities. For example, Thelma stated that 'there are some good clients out there who have done to me what my parents and family failed to do'. Patricia also stated that:

> Growing up, I never knew the meaning of love and protection. I never had someone who could listen to me. All I knew was abuse and hate. I started to experience love and protection from time to time when I joined this industry [commercial sex work]. Yes, I still get abused and hurt, but at least there are times that I get the love and protection which I so desperately needed.

She stated that even if, by the sheer twist of fate, the chance to go back and live with her family members arises, she will not take it because 'it is better to be killed by strangers than to be killed by my own people'.

Studies recognise the importance of child participation in the development and implementation of interventions to prevent and eliminate sexual abuse and exploitation (UNICEF, 2009). This is because the views of children themselves matter. However, the researchers observed that while child participation can be promoted at the level of prevention, it is difficult to promote at the level of recovery and reintegration of victims. It is easier to engage children who are at risk than those who are already into sex work, especially those who regard themselves as 'battle worn'. The stigmatisation of child victims tends to cause them to develop mental health problems and a negative self-image from feelings of shame, guilt and powerlessness. These factors affect their capacity and willingness to engage, trust others and build healthy relationships. In other words, laws, policies and programmes to promote child participation may be put in place, but social attitudes of blame, neglect and stigmatisation play a major role in preventing meaningful and effective victim participation in the development and implementation of pathways out of CSEC.

Arresting, Prosecution and Sentencing of Perpetrators

Reporting, arresting and sentencing perpetrators of CSEC is important because it sends a message to society that CSEC is unacceptable and heavily punishable. Government should therefore 'enforce the law and pass sentences that are deterrent to would-be-offenders' (Muyengwa 2014: 30). In 2014, Oppah Muchinguri, who was the Minister of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development, 'vowed' to take action against CSEC. She implored government to institute harsher sentences against convicted perpetrators, stating that 'if the country has stiff mandatory sentences for livestock theft, what about those who abuse children?' (*The Dailynews* 2014).

In 2015, senators, in their bid to end child marriages, demanded that government should enact laws that approve castration as punishment for anyone who sleeps with a child below the age of 18 (Netsianda 2018a). In January 2018, Bulawayo High Court Judge, Justice Francis Bere, made headlines when he stated that government should enact a law which requires convicted child sex offenders and paedophiles to be castrated (Netsianda 2018b). Under the Criminal Law Codification and Reform Act (Chapter 9: 23), sex with minors (below the age of 16) is considered rape. In July 2017, government proposed to amend Chapter 9: 33 of the Criminal Law Codification and Reform Act to impose a minimum of 60 years jail term for people convicted of raping children under 12 years, as well as the disabled (Mushava 2019). However, the proposal 'slipped through the cracks' until April 2019, when it was revived. The Mandatory Sentencing for Rape and Sexual Offences Bill is currently being debated. If it is passed, those convicted of raping minors under the age of 12 years will be jailed for a minimum of 60 years (Towindo 2019).

However, the fight against CSEC requires the political will to arrest alleged offenders. Eighty-two per cent of the adult participants stated that there are two main challenges that make it difficult for offenders to be arrested. First, community members are generally not willing to report offenders to law enforcement agencies, other governmental institutions, community leaders or non-governmental organisations. Second, there is little or no commitment within the police force to protect children who are victims of CSE. As a result, there is lack of willingness to investigate and arrest alleged offenders. John stated that:

> the police knows the areas where child prostitution takes place and the people who are responsible for it. They also know the children who are being abused. But they simply do not have the willingness to arrest the offenders and to protect the children. This is mainly because of the belief that the children are to blame.

During his contribution to a motion on CSEC in parliament, former Parliamentarian James Maridadi expressed the same sentiment:

> Mr. Speaker, what we need to do as Parliament is to instruct the police to go tonight and make sure that those girls that are being abused are picked. It is not like we do not know where they are. In Mabvuku, I have gone to every household where they live and I know where they live. I have made a report to the police but nothing has been done (Parliament of Zimbabwe 2017).

There are four main reasons why there is little or no political will to investigate, arrest and prosecute alleged perpetrators of CSEC. First are the victim-blaming attitudes that some members of the police force have

towards child victims of CSE. As long as these attitudes remain, it is difficult to see how the police can make significant progress towards the elimination of CSEC. Second, in the context of decades long economic hardship, the fight against CSEC is perceived as a non-priority; deploying sparse resources towards policing CSEC tends to be perceived as improper use of resources. Third, combatting CSEC is perceived as an endless and unsustainable fight; it is considered too widespread and therefore difficult to conduct effective investigations and police patrols. Fourth, CSEC is not considered to be of political importance because the problem does not threaten the interests of the political elite. Law enforcement agencies tend to intervene in strategic situations that are considered an existential threat to government and the political elite. There is consequently very little willingness (particularly among victims, sex workers and community members) to report the perpetrators. Many of the cases of CSEC – this study found 96 per cent – go unreported despite the fact that most of the adult perpetrators are known, especially by community members, business owners and managers and sex workers. Instead of reporting, community members often casually talk about CSEC, thus the practice becomes somewhat tolerated.

However, some efforts have been made by government and non-governmental actors to promote the reporting of alleged offenders. For example, the Victim Friendly Unit has established anonymous mechanisms of reporting. These include suggestion boxes, hotlines and direct reporting to Victim Friendly Unit Coordinators. The Unit has also adopted a multi-sectoral approach towards the management of child abuse. Ten police officers who work in the Unit participated in this study. All of them stated that while these efforts witnessed increased reporting of abuses against women and children, the reporting of CSEC has remained very low. Sixty-three per cent of adult participants expressed the view that negative attitudes towards victims of CSEC is the main reason for the underreporting of perpetrators; 37 per cent stated that underreporting is prevalent because the Victim Friendly Unit is unfriendly/perceived as unfriendly when it comes to handling cases of CSE.

Victims often choose not to report because of the fear of reprisals, victim-blaming, embarrassment and ostracisation by their families and communities. They also fear that they may be arrested. These fears primarily come from the belief, based on their experiences, that they are criminalised and stigmatised by society. In fact, the victims are afraid and unwilling to present themselves not only before the police, but state institutions in general, including health facilities. While presenting a motion on CSEC in Zimbabwe, Pricilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga stated that:

> When I said to them [victims of CSEC], I want you to come and meet Members of Parliament, they said *tinotya*, *tinozosungwa* [we are afraid of getting arrested] instead of them saying that they want to see Members of Parliament because they will be able to help me and find me a place to go and stay (Parliament of Zimbabwe 2017).

Only 6 per cent of the community members who participated in the project stated that they would report CSEC; 90 per cent believed that reporting CSEC was a waste of time. This belief is mainly based on the view that the children themselves are to blame for aberrant behaviour. It is also based on the belief that the police and other responsible authorities are not willing to take action against perpetrators. It can be argued from the findings of this study that society's norms and attitudes towards CSEC, particularly the victims, are a major impediment in efforts to extricate children from CSE. It is therefore difficult to see how the fight against CSEC can be effective without a change in these attitudes and norms.

Norms and Political Will

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 4) requires states to protect and promote the social, economic and cultural rights of children to the maximum extent of their available resources. It is therefore important that states allocate as much resources as they can towards the fight against CSEC. This is because while laws, policies and programmes to counter CSEC may be put in place, greater political will is important for effective implementation and adequate allocation of resources. The majority view among interviewees is that the government does not have the political will to fight against CSEC, primarily because of victim blaming and stigmatising attitudes. Others believe that this is partly because of lack of resources.

For example, in September 2017, an organisation called Katswe Sisterhood featured the case of a 9-year-old girl victim of CSE on Star FM radio station. The child, using the pseudonym 'Lady B', narrated her experiences. The government's immediate response was to accuse Katswe Sisterhood of peddling falsehoods and, within days, the leadership of Katswe was arrested. Opposition Parliamentarians Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga and James Maridadi reached out to Katswe Sisterhood and visited the affected children and areas. Outraged not only by the apparent lack of political will to deal with the problem, but also by the government's accusatory response to the organisation, Misihairabwi-Mushonga tabled a motion in Parliament demanding action:

> I raise this motion with the heaviest of hearts. This motion speaks about children who are reported to being abused under the guise of selling sex.

The reason why I am upset about this particular motion is that KATSWE brings this out. What happened to KATSWE? Firstly, Social Welfare swoops on KATSWE not to ask them where these children are and where this is happening. They swoop on KATSWE to say, why are you bringing out things like this? Immediately they [KATSWE] are picked up and they are arrested for publishing falsehoods. As we speak right now, KATSWE has become the criminals. KATSWE has now been banned from doing work in those communities (Parliament of Zimbabwe 2017).

Both Maridadi and Misihairabwi-Mushonga demanded that the Minister of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare make a Ministerial Statement about what the government was doing to fight against the problem. In his contribution to the motion, Maridadi stated:

Mr. Speaker, when I was taken by this organisation called Katswe Sisterhood to go and see the children who are being abused, every woman in the house after listening to their testimonies including Hon. Misihairabwi–Mushonga and the former Deputy Minister of Health, Mai Tsungirirai Hungwe, started crying. I tried to console Mai Hungwe and I could not. In the process of trying to console Mai Hungwe, I also started crying and could not be consoled. My heart sank, I was so angry with myself and everything. I was angry with even the Almighty, the creator of heaven and earth that how do you create a man who is 45 years old, who takes a nine-year old girl to a room and have sex with her and thinks he will get satisfaction (Parliament of Zimbabwe 2017).

The government soon responded. On 8 September 2017, the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Services deployed task teams to Epworth, Caledonia, Hopley, and Hatcliffe communities in Harare to conduct investigations and to identify and profile child victims and survivors of CSE (Kakore2017). The Ministry removed 73 children from Hopley and Epworth (Government of Zimbabwe 2017). The Ministry placed the children in a safe house and established a one-stop service centre to deal with their needs. They were later transferred to Domboshava Training Centre or placed in children's homes where they continued to receive rehabilitation services. The Ministry engaged different organisations to provide services, which included therapy, training, medical examinations, psychological support, counselling and assisting the children to get birth certificates.

The cabinet also gave the Ministry the directive to establish a national, inter-ministerial taskforce responsible for creating an environment that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of children so that they cannot be vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse. The Ministry also conducted vulnerability assessments of families of the affected children to provide social protection services to vulnerable households. It also trained childcare workers in affected communities. Awareness campaigns about sexual abuse

and exploitation of children were conducted in Harare. However, 91 per cent of the people who participated in this study expressed the view that these interventions were not well-intended. They believe that they were implemented because government was under pressure from different sections of society. They believe that the interventions 'will not go anywhere' because the government does not have the commitment to fight against CSEC.

Conclusion

Various interventions to prevent and eliminate CSEC have been implemented in Zimbabwe. However, these interventions have been largely sporadic. Emphasis has been placed on the need to enact and effectively implement laws, policies and programmes and to take a collaborative approach by various stakeholders. However, while these interventions are useful, they are constantly undermined by the attitudes and norms that society has towards CSEC, particularly the victims. These attitudes undermine the willingness of different stakeholders, including the government, to enact and robustly implement pathways out of CSEC. The fight against CSEC can take a meaningful trajectory only if these attitudes are changed.

The laws, policies, programmes and institutions that are not rooted in societal norms and aspirations tend to be ineffective. As long as the social attitudes and norms remain the same, it is difficult to see how various interventions can contribute towards the prevention and elimination of CSEC. Institutional approaches are part of the 'hardware' infrastructure that responds to CSEC. However, for these approaches to be effective, they must emerge from and be reinforced by the infrastructural 'software' of underpinning relationships and shared norms, attitudes and expectations. In many cases, this societal 'software' is more expansive and influential than the formal systems of society. In order to effectively respond to CSEC, there is need to reduce and erode the dissonance between the formal systems of society and its norms and attitudes towards CSEC. Social mobilisation plays a critical role in this process, especially if it is directed towards changing society's norms and values towards CSEC.

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Transcultural Memory in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda War Commemorations

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Abstract

This article draws from debates on the transcultural turn in memory studies, exploring the multiple ways in which memory unfolds in post-war contexts and across cultures. Using interviews, ethnography and secondary sources, it builds on research critical of how specific post-war experiences in African societies are framed and subsumed into global memory practices and transmission, particularly in the global North. The article finds that, while on the surface memorials and rituals appear to be influenced by Euro-American-centric memory transmission practices, a deeper examination of commemorations in Northern Uganda reveals that processes of commemorating the past are complex and multi-layered. It argues that indigenous gatekeepers and keepers of memory are engaged in a dynamic process of creating something new out of the ruins of the past (Mbembe 2020). Local contexts allow for the examination of nuanced experiences and practices that should also be part of the knowledge of universal experience, leading us to rethink the relationship between what are referred to as universal models of remembering and their appropriation at the local level. This study proposes thinking differently about what constitutes this hybridity, especially local actors' strategic use of their available resources to meet their memorialisation needs and to find meaning in mnemonic rituals and spaces, in post-conflict countries.

Keywords: Commemoration, gatekeepers, indigenous memory, knowledge production, transculturality

Résumé

Cet article s'inspire des débats sur le tournant transculturel des études sur la mémoire, en explorant les multiples façons dont la mémoire se déploie dans les contextes d'après-guerre et à travers les cultures. À l'aide d'entretiens,

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de l'ethnographie et de sources secondaires, il s'appuie sur des recherches analytiques portant sur la façon dont les expériences spécifiques d'après-guerre dans les sociétés africaines sont encadrées et subsumées dans les pratiques et la transmission de la mémoire globale, particulièrement dans le Nord global. L'article constate que si, à première vue, les monuments commémoratifs et les rituels semblent être influencés par des pratiques euro-américaines de transmission de la mémoire, un examen plus approfondi des commémorations dans le nord de l'Ouganda révèle que les processus de commémoration du passé sont complexes et à plusieurs niveaux. Dans cet article, les dépositaires et les conservateurs autochtones de la mémoire sont engagés dans un processus dynamique de création de quelque chose de nouveau à partir des vestiges du passé (Mbembe 2020). Les contextes locaux permettent d'examiner des expériences et des pratiques nuancées qui devraient également faire partie de la connaissance de l'expérience universelle, ce qui nous amène à repenser la relation entre ce que l'on appelle les modèles universels de la mémoire et leur appropriation au niveau local. Cette étude propose de penser différemment ce qui constitue cette hybridité, notamment l'utilisation stratégique par les acteurs locaux des ressources dont ils disposent pour répondre à leurs besoins de mémorisation et pour trouver du sens dans les rituels et les espaces mnémoniques, dans les pays post-conflit.

Mots-clés : Commémoration, dépositaires, mémoire indigène, production de connaissances, transculturalité.

Introduction

The twenty-first century is facing an 'epistemic and systemic crisis' that affords scholars an opportunity to 'rethink thinking' in global knowledge systems (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018: 3, 2020; Kebede 2004). The crisis is driven in part by the need to examine the world through an eclectic lens informed by cultural transmutability and heterogeneity, which requires a deflation of hegemonic knowledge. This is particularly relevant to mainstream scholarship on memory studies, a multi-disciplinary field (Roediger and Wertsch 2008) that has evolved in the past two centuries and has been shaped by a global environment of colonialism and imperialism. As such, it – like other fields in the Social Sciences and Humanities – has been dominated by the 'epistemicide' of non-European and non-Anglo-American knowledge systems. Customarily, European and Anglo-American post-war and post-Holocaust mnemonic practices and literature are placed at the centre of what is considered 'human heritage rather than a thought from one geographical centre' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018: 3).

    In this article I analyse memory making in a non-western context. I focus on the memorialisation of crimes committed by the Lord's Resistance Army

(LRA) in the 1990s and early 2000s in Acholiland, Northern Uganda. The article considers mnemonic practices and knowledge that unfold in local contexts as important agents of memory. It then contributes to evolving debates in memory studies that de-centre the nation-state as the singular agent of memory (Erll 2011; Rothberg 2009), and to the scholarship on decolonisation that argues for the plurality of epistemology in global discourses (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018; Adesanmi 2012; Chakrabarty 2008), memory studies included.

This article draws from debates on transcultural and multidirectional perspectives in memory studies (Bond and Rapson 2014; Rothberg 2009). Using interviews, observation and secondary sources, it builds on research that is critical of the ways in which African societies are framed and subsumed into global mnemonic practices and transmission. While on the surface, mnemonic sites and rituals appear to be influenced by Western-centric mnemonic transmission practices, a deeper examination of community commemorations in Northern Uganda reveals that mnemonic processes are complex and multi-layered. There, the gatekeepers and keepers of memory are involved in 'recyclage', meaning that their commemorations are spheres where different actors engage in a dynamic process, creating something new out of the ruins of the past, in the present (Mbembe 2020).

Michael Rothberg paraphrases Richard Terdiman's definition of memory as 'the past made present' (Rothberg 2009: 3). He posits that memory is a 'contemporary phenomenon, something that, while concerned with the past, happens in the present through labor or action'. But in Northern Uganda the present is shaped by a dissenting move from the dominant way of memory-making, consisting of a subversion of indigenous modes of memorialisation. This dissidence allows local actors to reverse the established order of principles and values in top-down commemorations that become possible through strategic appropriation and resignification. In response to this, Werbner observes that, in the context of postcolonial Africa, 'memory as public practice is increasingly in crisis' (1998: 1).

The article explores how different Ugandan actors mobilise the tragic past to shape knowledge and practices in local commemoration. The actors include 'gatekeepers' and 'keepers of memory'. The 'gatekeepers of memory' include those who work for Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) or are involved in International Criminal Court (ICC) cases as lawyers or translators. The 'keepers of memory' are survivors of the LRA war and participate in commemorations as the main custodians or owners of this tragic past. Yet, these categories are not binary. In this context, where victimhood is broadly defined and many in this region suffered from the

war, the roles are blurry and complex and sometimes inhabited by the same person. For example, many gatekeepers working in memorial centres as guides might also be victims of the war that is memorialised in those spaces, not to mention perpetrators and bystanders of the atrocities that occurred during the conflict as well. I label people gatekeepers or keepers of memory depending on the position they occupied at the time of the interview. Memory-keepers were identified based on their individual stories of victimhood. Considering this, how do the keepers negotiate their place in these commemorative practices? What do mnemonic practices produced in these local contexts mean for global discourses on memory?

Rethinking Memory Studies Frameworks in a Global Context

Until the 2010s, when transcultural memory debates emerged, much research was focused on the state as the main agent of memory, and on Euro-American mnemonic experience (Halbwachs 1925; Nora 1989; Winter 1998; Olick et al. 2011). Within transcultural scholarship these works have been criticised for their view of 'culture' as a monolith (Erll 2011: 7), even in works that tried to break away from 'a strict nation-focus' (ibid). This is regarded as a limitation because it ignores lower-class and non-Western practices of remembering victims (Said 2000), marginalising histories of colonialism and slavery within global knowledge production in memory studies (Rothberg 2009).

Hence the new generation of scholars have challenged 'the old-fashioned container-culture approach' (Erll 2011: 8). For instance, they argue that instead of fixating on '*lieux de mémoire*' ('sites of memory') established to transmit the past, scholars should pay attention to the dynamism and malleability of mnemonic transmission conveyed by '*noeuds de mémoire*' ('knots of memory') in collective memory, which go beyond 'the imagined community of the nation-state' (Rothberg 2010: 7). These knots can be found in communicative memory, which 'lives in everyday interaction and communication' and is accessible by those who lived through shared traumatic events in a particular period (Assmann 2011: 11). In his analysis of debates on how group memory evolves, Nicolas Russell concludes: 'In order to understand how groups remember collectively, we need both cross-cultural and culturally specific concepts of collective memory' (2006: 801). According to Wolfgang Welsch, because of globalisation and other modern factors that encourage movement and interaction in a society, the transcultural lens considers that 'cultures today are in general characterized by hybridization' (Welsch 1999: 5; Bisoka 2019). Thus, memories travel beyond national borders where crimes happened with people, media as

'carriers' of those pasts (Erll 2011:11). This continuous travel results in the transformation of mnemonic experiences, practices and are mobilized by various actors for political and other reasons (Mwambari 2021).

Eva Willems, paraphrasing Elizabeth Jelin, terms it 'a non-linear approach to memory that takes into account the plurality of voices that give meaning to the past and incorporates the way in which these meanings can change according to their historical and cultural context or their ideological and political purpose' (2019: 103). It is through this recognition of the fluidity of collective memory transmission, the mobility of mnemonic experiences and the plurality of experiences across cultures that commemoration practices in Northern Uganda can be examined. This allows us to revisit and rethink knowledge production on the dead, as well as their place and relationship with the living in African societies.

Debates on Dealing with Commemoration in African Post-war Societies

The Eurocentric canons that have dominated scholarship on the dead in Africa have privileged a generalisation of African societies as constantly in conflict and unable to imagine and create their future (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2014). There is a lack of analysis in some studies and NGO campaigns of the deeper historical factors that have shaped the recent violence, which are rooted in colonialism and slavery. Through this lens African societies are characterised as in need of rescue by global humanitarian and political elites. Two examples can help illuminate this marginalisation within global discourses.

First, the portrayal of Africa as a place of violence can be found in scholarship and among international policymakers who Mahmood Mamdani called 'spin doctors of modern culture' (Mamdani 2009: 5). Former British prime minister, Tony Blair, for instance famously remarked that: 'The state of Africa is a scar on the conscience of the world. But if the world as a community focused on it, we could heal it. And if we don't, it will become deeper and angrier' (2001). Blair's statement characterised how African societies are perceived within the 'global coloniality of power' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2014: 187) that shifts African societies, their experiences and knowledge about them to the periphery.

Second, alienation is also evinced in how the memorialisation of the dead are perceived in debates. Scholarship on post-war Africa features largely in social anthropology, in which various aspects of death rituals and their meaning for the living are discussed through lenses that seek memory practices akin to those of Western societies (Lee and Vaughan 2008).

Non-Western cultural practices are missed, silenced or ignored, relegating them to the periphery of what is considered the universal experience of commemoration. A study on Kinshasa in the 1990s during its civil wars concluded that the Congolese were so overwhelmed by the ubiquity of death that they found it difficult to perform their elaborate indigenous rituals to mourn the dead as their ancestors did (De Boeck 2005, cited in Lee and Vaughan 2008: 342). However, survivors of such violence cannot be spoken of merely as being overwhelmed by death or not memorialising because commemorations are not taking place in Western style. There is a dynamic memory culture that is overlooked when one's search is fixated on official sites and rituals. As this article shows, commemorations take place but sometimes in less overt ways, with different actors shaping the process and through multiple sites and avenues. Commemorations are interwoven with the everyday business even in the so-called 'failed states' (Ikpe 2007). Just like people find different ways to navigate everyday life, they also find new means of mourning their dead and conducting burials in multi-layered rituals that a 'distant beholder' (Olonisakin 2020) might miss and therefore declare non-existent.

This negative framing has triggered African societies' dismissal as 'less than' (Zeleza 2019: 18), and the othering of death experiences has then led to a particular perception of post-war memorialisation that is rarely part of the global memory studies discourse. Even when it is included, the most notable scholarship takes on an integration approach and selectively focuses on memorials, monuments and the rituals that mirror those in Western spaces. This is reflected in literature on Rwanda, South Africa and others that is concerned with what is familiar and often physical and tangible to distant beholder researchers (Gobodo-Madikizela 2012; Ibreck 2012; Jessee 2017; Longman 2017; Mwambari & Owor 2019; Purdeková 2017; Rosoux 2007). Therefore, methodologically, it is important to take the context of each local experience as a crucial part of rethinking how conflicts are researched in Africa during and after crises (Mamdani 2009; Ismail and Alao 2007; Mwambari, Purdeková and Bisoka 2021), and the complexity of how multiple post-war mnemonic practices evolve beyond Western contexts or models. It involves recognition of new ideas and approaches in studying unfolding mnemonic practices, for instance an understanding of memory as a dynamic and multicultural phenomenon (Kotzé, Els and Rajuili-Masilo 2012), as explored in next sections. These patterns can also be observed in literature that examines other post-conflict contexts, like Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia, Burundi and many others (Weah 2019; Purdeková 2017). The next section provides a brief context of the conflict and then analyses the unfolding of memory.

The Northern Uganda Conflict in Brief

After the National Resistance Movement (NRM) liberation war ended in 1986, violence continued in some parts of Northern Uganda despite the promise the NRM had made for a peaceful and prosperous Uganda (Peterson 2016; Walsh 2015). This was partly because of a 'pacification' campaign launched by the NRM/A in the north (Branch 2011; Weschler 2012; Meert 2020; Fisher 2020; Allen and Vlassenroot 2010; Dolan 2009; Amone and Muura; Tshimba 2017; Finnström 2008). The Amnesty Act was finally passed in 2000. Over the following several years, owing to programmes such as *Dwog Paco*, a radio show that publicised the Amnesty, combatants from the LRA gradually began defecting and returning home in greater numbers and taking part in reconciliation processes (Baines 2007; Porter 2016) and transitional justice mechanisms that turned 'artificial' (Macdonald 2019; Kim and Hepner 2020).

In 2006, representatives of the LRA and Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) convened a series of negotiations that would come to be known as the Juba Peace Talks. Although the discussions eventually deteriorated, the process nevertheless yielded a Cessation of Hostilities agreement between the LRA and the Government of Uganda (GoU). The agreement marked the end of the Ugandan phase of the LRA war, though the rebel group has continued its activities in an attenuated form in neighbouring present-day South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. However, even with the war over, according to Mugero Jesse of the International Justice Monitor, approximately 50 per cent of families in Acholiland still reported at least one missing person in 2012 (IJM 2018). Former child soldiers also turned to other illicit activities that resulted in ongoing insecurity (Divon and Owor 2021).

The history of the Acholi and the different challenges they have faced spans decades and is as expansive as the knowledge production about it globally (Mwambari 2019; Curtis 2019: 6). Several reasons can explain this phenomenon, but three stand out. The first was the LRA's use of child soldiers to fight in the war, and the second was that this war became popular within the Western-centric humanitarian industry that evolved with the war (Komakech 2012; Komujuni and Büscher 2020). However, it is the third factor that made it a popular war – Invisible Children, Inc., an NGO which manufactured a global tunnel vision of the war for its own benefit (Daley 2013; Weschler 2012). Its campaigns dominated the global news and Internet, and appealed to young people by using modern technology, including the hashtag #Kony2012. Its founders and supporters played into a Eurocentric narrative that paired Africa and death in the vernacular like Blair's sentiments did.

#Kony2012 attracted criticism in the form of essays, academic articles and video messages, from Ugandans and non-Ugandans in and out of Africa. Nigerian-American author, Teju Cole, reproduced a series of tweets in his essay published in *The Atlantic*, remarking: 'The white saviour supports brutal policies in the morning, founds charities in the afternoon, and receives awards in the evening' (2012). Famed Ugandans, such as Rosebell Kagumire and Angelo Izama, responded, while the renowned Ugandan professor Mahmood Mamdani and Ethiopian-American novelist Dinaw Mengestu offered facts on the war and post-war realities, rejecting the attempt to feed an incomplete narrative of an African country into the global collective memory. Even with these efforts, Invisible Children was one of the best post-war 'spin doctors' to emerge out of Northern Uganda.

Methodology

My analysis is drawn from twenty-five interviews conducted in 2018 and 2019, during three visits to Northern Uganda, and virtual interviews (due to the Covid-19 crisis) conducted between February and June 2020 (Mwambari et al. 2021). I also use insights from commemoration ceremonies I attended (which attracted between 50 and 250 participants), such as those in Mucwiini and Parabong, memorialisation ceremonies in Gulu, Kitgum and Lira, designed to serve a variety of interests, and visits to local marked and unmarked memorials. I analysed ceremonies that focused on the dead and those that focused on the missing, and the place of indigenous practices within these processes.

I have included insights from workshops that focused on themes such as the International Criminal Court (ICC), where the politics of collective memory was discussed in the context of ongoing local and justice-related challenges for the victims of the LRA war and many others. I benefited, too, from discussing memory issues with experts, local researchers and leaders of victims' associations. Our discussions centred around recovering 'knowledge stored in their language, practices, rituals, proverbs, revered traditions, myths, and folktales' (Chilisa and Tsheko 2014: 223). The interviews quoted in this article are mostly from victims of the LRA and in some cases the UPDF.

I use 'we' or 'us' in some places, referring to the translator and myself, as in many places I worked with research facilitators or translators since I do not speak Acholi or other local languages the interlocutors sometimes used. In addition, the names of the interviewees have been changed to maintain anonymity. This study also acquired ethical clearance as part of a larger multi-year project on the politics of memory in Uganda.

Gatekeepers and Keepers of Memory as 'Carriers' of Memory in Kitgum and Lukodi Memorials

In 2011, the National Memory and Peace Documentation Centre (NMPDC) was officially opened in the same compound as the Kitgum District Headquarters. According to one of the NMPDC's local guides, Olaroker, the Centre's mission is to 'integrate history, education, culture, remembrance and human rights into one space where memories live and where memorialisation interfaces with the past, present and future contexts' (Interview, 2020). The Centre boasts a seasoned staff, the majority of whom are locals and some of whom have attended several commemorations around this region.

Upon entry, one is greeted by a guide and an exhibition of photographs going up the staircase as part of the design of the building, revealing the brutality endured by the people of Northern Uganda. The events and images are given a logical chronology to allow the visitor to map the conflict from the beginning to the end. At different points, the guide emphasised that at some massacre sites it is not clear whether a single party committed the crimes or both parties were responsible for the killings.

My conversations with the staffers and guides about the massacres followed the same script and mostly relied on similar accounts that were given by the respondents about the events. Although the purpose of the conversations was manifold, they uncovered two important points. The first was an emphasis on this mnemonic site as a place of education to construct cultural memory (Assmann 2006) in the specific context of Northern Uganda. The second was that the stories the site tells underscore the centrality of local histories, and continuously rehearse different narratives of the violent past that unfurled over time and its divisive nature among members of different clans who had known each other as neighbours.

Since the violence divided families – especially in cases where children were sent to kill their families or members of neighbouring clans – members of the same family could have different recollections and traumas of the war. The guide also spoke of young girls, who were forcefully taken into the bush to become child mothers during the war, who had photographs showing the cruelty they experienced (Baines 2017). Consequently, the Memorial Centre acts as a reservoir for these traumatic events, which are repeated and framed with the language as well as the gendered and local cultural context of the war (ibid). The Centre creates routes (Erll 2011: 11), through which individual memory travels to become part of the collective story of the past told about the war and its aftermath.

The NMPDC has also made an effort to exhibit indigenous implements that hold varied significance in Acholi culture, related to violence or practices of reconciliation (Finnström 2010; Tshimba 2015). For instance, the Agulu Rut (the twin pot), which is historically used for storing twins' umbilical cords, reminds the people of the Chief of Paimol whose twin brother was massacred at Nakamora. The Kweri Nyom (the dowry hoe) is exchanged as part of dowry ceremonies in Acholiland, but the particular one on display was used to murder the child of the clan chief of Padile in 1993. Another item is the Opoko (reconciliation bowl) for Mato-Oput (reconciliation), donated by the clan chief of Pabo (Olaroker, Interview, 2020).

Despite the emphasis on indigenous memory processes, the design of the building, the organisation of materials and the narrative around them during the tour gave the impression that the Memorial Centre had been built to mimic other memorial museums of past violence. At the end of the tour in Kitgum, I met Laker, a local guide, and I asked why the Centre felt like it was designed to fit international standards of constructing collective memory. She told me:

> Yes, it is. In fact, during training some staff members were sponsored to visit the Genocide Memorial in Kigali, Rwanda to learn how a similar Centre works. (Interview, 2018)

This visit to Kigali was confirmed by three other sources, including a former staff member and two other gatekeepers of memory working for NGOs, whom I met during commemoration events. Otim, a local guide from Gulu, told me that the trip was to learn 'how memory was being done in Rwanda', and its role in educating the youth about what happened in the past (Interview, 2018 ; Purdeková & Mwambari 2021).

On the other hand, there is a significant difference between the NMPDC and the Kigali Memorial Centre. 'Unlike Rwanda's Kigali Memorial Centre,' said Okullu, an interviewee I met at a workshop in Gulu, 'the Memorial Centre in Kitgum makes an effort to tell both sides of the story' (Interview, 2019). Whereas in the Kigali Memorial Centre the Rwanda Patriotic Front's crimes are not included, in Kitgum it is not forbidden to discuss controversial massacre sites or highlight instances in which victims clearly identified the UPDF as the main culprit of the cruelty against civilians (ibid). However, the guide was quick to point out that most of the crimes committed by the UPDF are not always memorialised like those of LRA, but there are no aggressive forces to silence such narratives as he saw in Rwanda's context. Hence, although there is an element of fashioning the Kitgum Memorial Centre after other mass-violence museums that play a

big role in global dark tourism (Sharpley and Gahigana 2014), the local historical context and cultural attributes of the Acholi are taken seriously and embedded within the narrative and visitors' experiences, to attempt to fit indigenous mnemonic practices into global practices. The experiences of the staff members who visited Kigali might have shaped how they perceive **of** memory construction and, in some ways, they became 'carriers' of the genocide memory beyond Rwandan borders (Erll 2011: 12), but they remained conscious of the unique attributes of the practices in their contexts.

The other memorial centre I visited is in Lukodi, located in a small building within the vicinity of a school (JRP 2011). The guide was originally from Lukodi, a survivor of the massacres, who lost relatives and lived in a camp within the area during the war. Colour photographs of victims are displayed in a small room and organised to allow the visitor to follow the narrative of how the violence transpired. The Lukodi Centre is also designed to tell the complex history of this war and the path to reconciliation, targeting the young generation and visitors. The guide emphasised that localised mourning practices were still exercised in private places even though gatekeepers (religious, NGO and victims' association leaders) planned the communal commemoration events. The consistency of these commemoration events depends heavily on the availability of funding, as explained in the next section.

Overall, there are three categories of gatekeepers, determined by different factors, who have a sustained influence on existing mnemonic practices and continue to shape what the world knows about the massacres. The first group of gatekeepers comprises NGO employees, whose main duty is to fundraise, and build and manage sites, as is the case with Kitgum and Lukodi. NGOs compete for the same funding and have similar goals of constructing mnemonic practices of past atrocities in this context. NGOs possess tools to document the life histories of survivors and construct knowledge about these spaces of memory, and they hire most of their staff from the Acholi community, though also from other regions of Uganda. NGOs are the most influential intermediaries between the victim associations, narratives on local massacre sites, and the external world. Their insights shape the reports that are shared via online platforms and through audio and visual documentaries. They also have a significant presence on radio stations and in national newspapers, where they shape what is remembered and how. However, the memories produced by NGOs are highly selective and designed to cater to the NGOs' different needs (such as international funding) rather than telling the actual history of the massacres or stories of survivors. Thus, the relationship between what is gatekept and kept as memories is complex and dynamic.

The second element that has empowered and diversified gatekeeper proliferation in the Northern Ugandan context is the trial of former suspected LRA commanders at the ICC in the Hague and in Kampala. The ICC's intervention is considered 'distant justice and is required to give victims closure' (Clark 2018: 25). But for some victims it is not even justice, given that the ICC deals only with LRA crimes because their mandate does not include crimes committed by the UPDF. However, as Okal – a Kampala lawyer – revealed, the process was possible with the help of local survivors' testimonies (Interview, 2018). Okal gave an example of how she travelled all over Amaru district collecting stories from survivors about LRA Commander Dominic Ongwen, and her traumatic experience of listening to those stories and visiting sites where he committed the violence (ibid).

Okal told me how teams working with local and international lawyers became instrumental in shaping what is remembered about the massacres and in reviving mnemonic practices around them. These people form the second category of gatekeepers who are also 'carriers' of these pasts to the ICC and other forums. Auma, also a lawyer based in Kampala, mentioned that they criss-crossed the affected regions conducting interviews (sometimes with the same people) about specific dates and insisting on being given details of the places where massacres were committed, which at times interviewees could not recall accurately (Interview, 2019). The interviews were then shared with international lawyers to apply their legal interpretations and therefore were transformed and transported in that process to become the property of the international court and its archives.

The third and most crucial category of gatekeepers is the leaders of victims' associations. An interviewee and victims' association leader from Gulu, named Odong, explained that most leaders are survivors themselves, who rose to leadership either by founding the organisations or by being chosen due to their education or the respect they had earned among fellow survivors (Interview, 2018). One of the few women victims' association leaders I met at a workshop explained that she had been chosen because she had invited women to form a victims' association not only to talk to the ICC, but also to initiate self-help activities. This third group are both gatekeepers and memory-makers, who exercise their power even in post-conflict contexts that seek to suppress their agency to transform their societies (Olonisakin and Okech 2011; Ali 2017; Mwambari 2017; Munyi, Mwambari and Ylönen 2020). Thus, through the process of creating and crafting narratives of the past and different stories about the local context, the actors have become important carriers of the past, just like the guides at the Kitgum museums discussed above. They shape what is known in the global discourse about these communities in this dynamic process of producing knowledge about the past.

Commemorations as Complex Sites with Multiple Meanings and Practices

Commemoration ceremonies have multiple meanings and are where the gatekeepers and keepers of memory interact. These ceremonies in Northern Uganda are generally called 'Prayers', which reflects how they unfold. They resemble Christian church services, and in some locations Catholic and Anglican priests conduct them together or separately. The priest delivers biblical verses and his own interpretation, and the interpretation is often linked to past crimes but also emphasises reconciliation and the importance of maintaining peace (Riaño-Alcalá and Baines 2011). Once these religious ceremonies are over, mostly male politicians and community leaders use these platforms to promote the interests of the groups they represent. These include local leaders who link commemorating the past with the development needs of the community, and women leaders who voice their concerns.

A ceremony I attended in Mucwiini took place near the site of the Mucwiini Polytechnic Massacre, where a memorialisation project was being built, though it was not yet open. Similar development projects were referenced in interviews at massacre sites in Lira and Gulu districts. Speeches that linked mourning practices to the economic development of the area expressed gratitude to the government and development partners from the global North but insisted that more needed to be done. A speaker at one of the events expressed his frustration:

> I haven't seen much development coming out of these commemorations. Schools and vocational institutions have been established in some sites, but they have not been of much benefit to the local communities. Victims and their relatives still have to pay for school. In many cases, children do not go to school. They spend most of their time at the trading centres. (Odong, Interview, 2019)

Women's organisation leaders and their members also used these spaces to challenge their male counterparts to be more inclusive in these ceremonies. This theme first emerged through songs from women's groups who claimed they were continuously marginalised because of their class status and gender-based discrimination in their community. Akena, a woman group leader from Mucwiini participating in one of the commemoration events, told me:

> Most of the women are poor and whenever we went to commemoration events, we were not allowed to speak about what happened to us during the war. The men spoke about our experiences, but they did not allow us to speak. I then talked to some of the women and we started to organise a self-help group that made handcrafts and sold them to visitors. Many of the women are widows from the war. (Interview, 2018)

At the Mucwiini commemoration in 2018, only men presided over the prayers and gave speeches. The only woman visible in this ceremony was a young lady whose role was to lead the music between the prayers and speeches. Towards the end of this particular ceremony, an elderly woman sent a message to the religious leaders and the victims association leading the prayers, requesting an opportunity to speak during the ceremony. Permission was granted, but she was allowed to speak only at the end of the ceremony, after it had been formally concluded.

Aber, who is a women's group leader in the same community, mentioned how she had rallied and organised her members a day before to rehearse a song she had composed about her husband (who had been killed in that community by the LRA) and others who were being remembered in that ceremony (Interview, 2018). She shared how women view their agency in the community context:

> When things start to get out of hand, women come together and deliberate on how to get back to the norm. That is why we thought that we should speak to the bereaved families through the mourning song we presented, and to remind these families that we should now move ahead from the past. (ibid)

Another member of that group expressed the frustration of being allowed to sing only when prayers had been concluded and how only a few people paid attention to their words. She expressed how important the lyrics were. She emphasised:

> Those songs reflect the way our people died, brutally. One old man was beaten, all the while begging for mercy and seeking to know what he had done to deserve such cruelty. He even offered that the rebels should take whatever they wanted but they kept beating him, and his wife too. The children who were murdered were smashed on trees and house pillars, while others were beaten using axes. That is what we came to sing about. (Amarorwot, Interview, 2019)

For another, this platform was a space to mourn her husband. These ceremonies, to her, were important in order to move on. She told me:

> These prayers relax my heart. I lost my husband during the massacres and when I pray and listen to the preaching, it calms me. This also takes away the painful memories from my heart, teaches us and protects our children. Those are the reasons why we attend the prayer services. (Aloyo, Interview, 2018)

These Prayers have evolved into spaces where communities 'knotted intersections' of their histories that cut across their lived experiences of loss and survival (Gilroy 1993 cited in Rothberg 2010: 8). In telling their stories they co-produce knowledge of their collective history of violent past and aftermath. They asserted their agency that is often overlooked in conversations in post-conflict contexts (Mwambari, et al, 2021).

Tension Between Religious and Indigenous Practices of Mourning the Wartime Dead and the Missing

While some of these survivors saw these commemorations as useful avenues through which to make different kinds of demands, others found them alien to indigenous mourning practices. A former local leader and victims' association member in Lira stated that remembering happens through rituals done by the family as well as the community. He expressed concern that when the dead are not adequately commemorated 'they become a bad omen to their living families'. In indigenous practice, they believe that the dead are still present and that they visit the living through spiritual encounters (Interview, 2019). Another study on Northern Uganda found it '… abundantly clear that, at the micro-level, individuals and communities clearly connected the world of the dead and the world of the living, entangling the material with the spiritual in their notions of justice and post-conflict repair' (Kim and Hepner 2020: 282). Thus, for some, remembering the dead in commemoration ceremonies only, as if they were dead and no longer part of everyday life, was not acceptable. They also objected to the role of cultural leaders at these ceremonies being replaced with politicians or religious leaders who fund and politicise these events or turn important locations for remembering the dead into tourism sites (Koc, Interview, 2019).

We interviewed Ladwar, a young woman living in Barlonyo and a victim of the Northern Uganda war, which had claimed her father and aunt. After realising that the youth spent much of their time idling at the trading centre, she launched a drama group for them, which performs at various events. Their sombre compositions align with the ceremonies and memorial events, and describe how the rebels attacked the camps, in a bid to remind people about what happened. Other songs focus on the restoration of peace (Riaño-Alcalá and Baines 2011). For Ladwar, some cultural leaders who had previously believed in the indigenous process of remembering the dead had transformed themselves into religious leaders and corrupted the process to claim a leadership position in the community (Interview, 2020).

Billie, also from Barlonyo, was working for an FM radio station involved with commemoration. He organises gatekeepers and keepers of memory to educate the public on what happened in the past and why commemoration is important. His analysis was as follows:

> Religious leaders conduct the sessions with the steering mandate alternating between the Church of Uganda and the Catholic church each year. There are about eighteen sites in Northern Uganda, all under one leadership umbrella,

whose representatives attend these events, such as the Acholi, Lango, Teso and West Nile. The site leaders organise the events and mobilise funds. The chairperson of the Barlonyo site is the one who ultimately decides who can participate in or organise the events. At the beginning, food would be provided but now they just provide sodas and water. The number of visitors has also dwindled. In the past, the ceremony attracted people from all over the country. This is a day where we pray for healing. (Interview, 2020)

Toolit, a former Barlonyo local leader at the time who also worked as a medical doctor, gave his own analysis of what has changed:

> Celebrating the dead is vital in our culture. When celebrating the dead, the clan leader calls for a family meeting, designs the budget and requests the family members to contribute to the event. The clan leader and head of the family invite people from different clans, religious leaders and other community members. They then kill a black bull under a tree. The members of the grieving family tie a white cloth around their heads as a sign of mourning and remembering the dead. However, these practices have been abandoned and shunned as 'bad practices' because of religion. For Barlonyo and other massive sites, the cultural aspect has been abandoned too. The drama group also sings songs of peace, love and reconciliation. At first the organisers used to provide the transport for people from different parts of Lira and even beyond Lira district which brought in many visitors but this has since stopped and consequently reduced the number of visitors. People also lay the flowers on the graves, then the head of a cultural institution or sometimes a guest of honour is invited to give the speech. (Interview, 2020)

Another Barlonyo local, Woko, who was introduced as an influencer in that town, explained that he and many others he knew in his community stopped attending or even encouraging people to attend these events because they no longer used indigenous practices that they considered to be vital in dealing with those who had died or disappeared during such violence (Interview, 2020).

Nyaburu, one of the interviewees in Lukodi, was 20 years old when rebels attacked her village, and she lost her husband and brother during the massacre. She complained that she is no longer able to commemorate her late husband and brother due to how commemorations are organised nowadays:

> According to our cultural traditions, when we are celebrating the lives of the dead, we have to kill a bull and sprinkle the blood on the grave to appease the spirits of the dead relatives. This is however not the case when we are celebrating the dead here. The religious leaders conduct prayers and preach the word of God. (Interview, 2018)

Finally, this tension between religious ceremonies and indigenous practices of remembering the dead is evident in specific commemorations of the missing, which are organised by local and international gatekeepers as well as keepers of memory. On the International Day of Missing Persons in 2015, over 800 families turned up to commemorate their loved ones. Some of the families shared their sentiments, emphasising the importance of remembering, saying that though the pain would never leave them until death, it was a good thing that the public knew about it. They appreciated the fact that the event had been organised, at least for them to remember their loved ones, if not for anything else (International Committee of the Red Cross 2017). In another similar study, 'pain-related' stories were told. The study quoted one of the families from Acholiland:

> It is very important to have someone confirmed dead and buried in the compound (at the family home). It is better than the thought that the person is still alive somewhere, which sometimes shifts to a fear that the person is dead. This is so painful, so we are never settled. We are always living in unrest. There is hope, but the hope is always accompanied by the worries and the sad feeling that the person is dead. There is no closure. (Hollander 2016: 298)

In Lukodi, one of my interviewees, Olum, explained the importance of remembering his missing relatives. He took us to a field and showed us the site of one of the IDP camps in Lukodi. Olum talked about his brother, who had been abducted as a teenager, and how they remembered him:

> The LRA ambushed us at night while we were sleeping and took some boys, among whom was my brother. After attaining peace, many boys started to return but my brother did not. My mother and grandmother searched at the World Vision Centre where the rescued boys were taken but we did not find him. (Interview, 2019)

He told us that they memorialised him not only in ceremonies but also whenever they tell friends and other family members about him. He said he can feel it in his spirit that his brother is still alive and has kept his brother's personal belongings in the hope that he will return. Olum's conviction is based on a cultural belief that elders can gather and call the names of those who have gone missing and feel whether the person is still alive. If they feel that the person is alive, the family is told to wait for him to return. These indigenous beliefs exist elsewhere in Uganda, as a means to solve social problems. It has been documented that over 70 per cent of Ugandans believe in indigenous practices as a way of solving complex social problems (Peterson 2016). In most commemorations the memory of the missing is kept alive through stories. These bodies retain power among the living (Kim and Hepner 2020: 833).

Scholars have written on this spiritual dimension of Acholi culture and the relationship to their dead (Atkinson 1994; p'Bitek 1971). An article about the legacy of earlier waves of violence in the 1980s, when President Museveni was capturing power, observed '… that apparitions frequently haunted survivors at night, appearing in dreams or knocking at doors, often asking relatives to find their remains and bring them home for proper burial' (Hepner, Steadman and Hanebrink, 2018: 137). The proper burial includes indigenous rituals to appease the spirits to end this form of presence that the missing maintain among the living. An example was given in this study:

> In one village ghostly fires and cacophonous voices could be seen and heard from a distance around a mass grave of NRA soldiers. In another, young children ran screaming from school where a pit latrine had been used as a grave, complaining of spirits beating them about the head. At a site where NRA soldiers had been buried en masse, a borehole could be observed pumping water, or sometimes blood, itself, at dusk. People walking along the road at night might even pass a ghost or see uncanny, white-skinned babies perched in trees. (ibid: 137)

These researchers concluded 'the dead are not vacated in Acholiland but retain a presence and an agency among the living' (ibid; Elgerud and Kim 2020: 598). These experiences are also reported in other contexts, such as in Peru (González 2013; Willems 2019, especially chapter 5; Baines 2010b) or Eritrea (Hepner 2020). This is important to understand, because those who go missing also possess a kind of agency through what their families describe as spiritual attacks or visits. Their presence and agency are felt by some more than others. Erin Baines, a long-time researcher in Northern Uganda, writes:

> In northern Uganda, women are more susceptible to spirit possession, disrupting their reproductive abilities: babies are still-born, young children die of inexplicable illnesses, purposeful murderous acts, or accidents; women become infertile; and men, impotent. The next generation is threatened as a result of the ruptured moral fabric unless some action is taken. Individuals who fought in war or lived in the military camps are seen as vehicles through which the unquiet spirits of the war dead can enter and afflict entire communities. (2010: 423)

I spent time with survivors in different contexts, trying to understand why these Christians who were so invested in Christian practices and prayers still believed in how the missing and the dead should be discussed and their spiritual attachments to the living. For example, at one point before the Parabong commemoration, I asked one of the organisers, Abel, who had been baptised, if he believed in the indigenous beliefs about the spiritual visits. He told us a story:

> When I became a Christian, I stopped believing in such practices. Then our whole family converted to Christianity. At one time a relative died and we brought her body inside the house. It did not take long for us to realise that those who warned us were right – an uncle passed on soon after we buried the relative. (Interview, 2019)

Transculturality and the Plurality of Mnemonic Discourses in Northern Uganda

As can be gleaned from the preceding discussion, there is an ongoing marginalisation of indigenous rituals, especially spearheaded by religious gatekeepers who have imposed religious and non-indigenous practices of burying and remembering the dead. These changes were introduced during colonialism to undermine indigenous practice and knowledge of commemoration. On the other hand, through songs, dance and other artistic expression, survivors perform the old ways of mourning the dead, carried from the precolonial period. This is also manifested in how they treat the bodies of those who were buried after they were found in the bush, as the stories of interviewees discussed above reveal. In this context 'the needs of the dead bring issues of socioeconomic justice to the forefront as survivors request various forms of memorialization; and in a similar vein, the graves become physical representations of community suffering' (Kim and Hepner 2020: 832).

Cultural beliefs and artifacts are exhibited at the memorial centres of Kitgum and Lukodi to emphasise the uniqueness of the violence and recovery. This assertion is not to essentialise African burial rights or ways of remembering, but rather to draw attention to the diversity created by combining the indigenous with borrowed practices. Thus, what we have is a new culture of mourning, which goes beyond mimicking Eurocentric approaches but co-exists in this recycling of experiences (Mbembe 2020).

Second, as mnemonic practices and ideas travel and interact in these contexts, we witness a transcultural experience in which memories travel to later generations through these sites, to schoolchildren, to visitors and also through international processes of justice. Within these travels and frictions there are agreements and tensions among actors. Within the communities themselves, interviewees also attested to the existence of rituals at the family level in addition to collective commemorations. This reveals in itself a form of 'internal hybridisation' within mnemonic processes.

Third, rather than viewing these local commemorations as mimicking Western ceremonies, or seeing the survivors as having to choose between one or another or terming these contexts as 'overwhelmed by death' and resorting to

truncated European practices, we find that memory transmission is complex, and different cultures borrow from each other both locally, during Prayers, but also across borders for the gatekeepers who want to study how memory is done in Rwanda. There is an ongoing negotiation between the perspectives of both gatekeepers and keepers of memory. They are interdependent in how they create knowledge about the past, express contemporary needs, and envision the future, ultimately creating something new.

Conclusion

This study on communities in Uganda proposes thinking differently about mnemonic rituals and spaces, and their hybridity. Instead of viewing hybridity primarily from its 'origins', the idea is to consider it from the way in which local actors strategically use the available resources to meet their needs in remembering and finding meaning in mnemonic rituals and spaces. This is a true decolonised approach, which refuses to evaluate the actions of non-Western societies from a certain complex and search for purity (mimicry or not). Instead, these actions are constituted from the strategic mobilisation of available resources (from the North or from the South) for the needs of local communities in mourning. Future research would be wise to focus on the nuances that exist in these mnemonic practices, which are often hidden and indeed ignored in international literature.

Acknowledgements

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Les luttes de positionnement autour des mosquées en Côte d'Ivoire : guerres idéologiques, conflits de leadership et de contrôle des fonds

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Résumé

En contrepoint des travaux de recherche sur les musulmans en Côte d'Ivoire, cet article privilégie une approche par l'espace en s'intéressant au bâti qui symbolise au mieux les adeptes de la foi islamique, c'est-à-dire la mosquée. Dans ledit lieu de culte, il met le focus sur un aspect peu évoqué de la vie des communautés musulmanes dans la littérature scientifique : les palabres dans les mosquées. En effet, de par sa centralité dans la vie communautaire musulmane, la mosquée n'est pas à l'abri des conflits d'intérêts multiformes. Cette situation fait d'elle un espace à enjeux de la société. Cet article, loin d'être exhaustif, en fait son objet d'étude en en dressant une typologie. Suivant une démarche sur la longue durée, il retrace le contexte pluriel de l'éclosion de ces frictions communautaires et en présente les protagonistes. Il évoque le rôle des pouvoirs publics (État, pouvoirs traditionnels, instances en charge de la vie communautaire musulmane) dans la survenue et/ou la gestion de ces crises ainsi que celui des fidèles. Aussi analyse-t-il les logiques religieuses, politiques, socio-culturelles et surtout économiques qui sous-tendent ces conflits.

Mots-clés : mosquée, nationalisme, réformisme islamique, patrimonialisation, bureaucratisation, Côte d'Ivoire.

Abstract

As a counterpoint to the research on Muslims in Côte d'Ivoire, this article takes a spatial approach by focusing on the building that best symbolizes the followers of the Islamic faith, namely the mosque. In this place of worship, it focuses on an aspect of the life of Muslim communities that is rarely mentioned in the scientific literature: palavers inside the mosque. Indeed, due to its centrality in the life of the Muslim community, the mosque is not

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immune to conflicts of interest. This situation makes the mosque a space where society is at stake. Far from being exhaustive, this article focuses on it by drawing up a typology. Following a long-term approach, it traces the plural context of the emergence of these community frictions and presents the protagonists. It evokes the role of public authorities (State, traditional authorities, bodies in charge of Muslim community life) in the occurrence and/or management of these crises as well as that of the followers. It also analyses the religious, political, socio-cultural and, above all, economic logics underlying these conflicts.

Keywords: mosque, nationalism, Islamic reformism, patrimonialization, bureaucratization, Côte d'Ivoire

Introduction

Surveillés et cooptés par les autorités politiques depuis la période coloniale (Triaud 1974a ; Koné 2014), les musulmans ont pendant longtemps évolué dans une sphère strictement privée et cultuelle en Côte d'Ivoire. En phase avec cette situation, les travaux de recherche sur le fait islamique en Côte d'Ivoire ont rendu généralement compte de la pénétration et de l'évolution de la religion musulmane suivant les relations entre musulmans et État (Miran 2001 ; Fofana 2007 ; Bamba 2009 ; Binaté 2012 ; Koné 2013). En dehors de ces « travaux généraux », très peu d'auteurs se sont intéressés à la mosquée en tant qu'objet d'étude (Koné 2014 ; Miran 2016a). Pourtant, la mosquée fait partie de ces institutions éminentes, car l'Islam inscrit la communauté des priants dans un territoire dynamique qui la façonne autant qu'elle le produit. Indicateur principal de la présence musulmane dans un espace donné, la mosquée n'est pas seulement un lieu de culte où les fidèles peuvent se réunir pour y accomplir leur devoir religieux. Elle est également un lieu de fraternisation et de socialisation (Allès 2009 ; Traoré 2019).

En dépit des idéaux de cohésion sociale et de paix qui y sont véhiculés, la mosquée est régie par des interactions qui nourrissent et produisent la violence (Farag 2009 ; Hamadou 2010 ; Diallo 2018). De par sa centralité dans la vie communautaire musulmane, la mosquée ne saurait échapper aux conflits d'intérêts multiformes. Cette situation fait de ce lieu de culte un espace-enjeu de la société. Ainsi, les querelles de mosquées occupent une place prépondérante dans la compréhension des reconfigurations de l'islam. En règle générale, deux types de conflits prennent forme au sujet de la mosquée[1]. Il s'agit d'une part des compétitions internes entre musulmans, avec parfois des implications exogènes, et d'autre part des divergences entre acteurs religieux musulmans et acteurs non religieux (État, municipalité, populations riveraines, etc.) relativement à la gestion de la mosquée. En l'espèce, les

premiers types de conflits retiennent exclusivement notre attention. Ce choix s'explique par le fait que ces types de conflits permettent de mieux évaluer les situations de sociabilité conflictuelle autour des mosquées.

La présente étude vise à classifier et à analyser les conflits qui ont surgi en Côte d'Ivoire au sujet du contrôle des mosquées depuis le décloisonnement de la vie politique – et par ricochet, du milieu associatif musulman – jusqu'aux déboires électoralistes de 2010 avec leurs incidences dans les luttes de mosquées. Autrement dit, l'étude fait une typologie des querelles de mosquées ainsi que des logiques qui les sous-tendent. Cette étude s'appuie sur des données bibliographiques, des articles de presse et des enquêtes de terrains menées entre 2019 et 2020 à Abidjan et à l'intérieur de la Côte d'Ivoire (Bouaké, Korhogo, Daloa, Yamoussoukro, Bouna, Touba). Le choix de ces villes a été fait à la suite d'une recherche prospective à la Direction générale des cultes et au siège central du COSIM à Abidjan. Les observations de terrain ont été assorties d'entretiens semi-directifs auprès de catégories sociales différentes : imams, leaders d'associations islamiques, muezzins, journalistes, fidèles musulman(e)s, etc.

La triangulation – ou recoupement – a été la principale technique de traitement des données. Elle a comporté deux volets essentiels : la triangulation simple et la triangulation complexe (De Sardan 2008). La première a consisté à croiser les différentes informations recueillies afin de ne pas être prisonnier d'une seule source. La seconde, quant à elle, a permis de croiser les points de vue des informateurs, c'est-à-dire de les replacer dans leur contexte pour mieux cerner le rapport de l'informateur au problème traité. Le présent travail s'articule autour de trois axes. Le premier axe fait un rappel historique des conflits de mosquées avant 1990. Le deuxième axe met le focus sur l'impact de l'arrivée d'une nouvelle cohorte de diplômés arabophones dans la survenue des conflits de mosquées. Le troisième axe analyse la renégociation des classes sociales et l'irruption des luttes politiques dans les mosquées.

Survol historique des querelles de mosquées
Des divisions ethnico-nationalistes…

Jusqu'au début du XIXe siècle, l'islam était globalement cantonné dans la moitié nord de l'actuelle Côte d'Ivoire. Dans cette partie du territoire, la gestion de l'imamat obéissait à la règle selon laquelle l'autorité islamique était dévolue exclusivement à des familles maraboutiques (Marty 1922). Cependant, vers la fin du XIXe siècle, la conquête coloniale française chamboula la cartographie musulmane de la colonie de Côte d'Ivoire. En effet, à partir de 1882, les colonisateurs, dans le but de renforcer leur personnel administratif et militaire, firent appel à une main-d'œuvre (Triaud 1974b). En plus de cette

main-d'œuvre, des populations originaires du Nord ivoirien et de certaines colonies de l'Afrique-Occidentale française (AOF) vinrent s'installer en Basse Côte d'Ivoire dans le cadre de la politique d'exploitation coloniale (Delval 1980, Cissé 2007 ; Loucou 2012). Constitués majoritairement de musulmans, les immigrés furent les véritables artisans de la diffusion de la foi musulmane dans les régions méridionales de la Côte d'Ivoire.

Contrairement aux régions anciennement islamisées du Nord, celles du Sud ne s'inscrivaient pas dans la sphère d'influence des familles maraboutiques. Ainsi, la gestion de l'imamat dans les mosquées implantées dans cette partie du territoire nécessitait la mise en place de nouvelles techniques de gestion de l'autorité islamique. En règle générale, la dévolution de l'imamat se faisait selon un système d'alternance entre les communautés ethniques qui avaient contribué au financement du lieu de culte[2]. Les conflits surgirent dans la mosquée lorsque ce « contrat religieux » n'était plus respecté parce qu'une communauté tentait de caporaliser le pouvoir religieux[3]. Dans les années 1930, les dissensions nées de ces modes d'accession à l'imamat avaient des connotations ethniques. Elles eurent pour point centripète l'ouest forestier.

S'il est vrai qu'ils ne constituèrent pas les seuls acteurs, les Odienneka et Worodouka furent les protagonistes des conflits ethniques. Exemples probants : en 1934, un problème de choix du jour de la fête du Ramadan divisa les musulmans de la mosquée principale de Gagnoa (Triaud 1974b ; Launay & Miran 2000). Les Worodouka, qui prétendaient aussi à la direction de la communauté, refusèrent de s'aligner sur la date arrêtée par les Odienneka. En 1956, un différend surgit de nouveau entre Odienneka et Worodouka relativement à la succession de l'imam de la mosquée de Gagnoa 1. Cette fois-ci, les Worodouka, rejoints par des non-Odienneka (Maliens, Korhogoka…), s'opposèrent à la nomination de l'imam proposé par les Odienneka (Triaud 1974b). En 1965, un incident similaire éclata à la mosquée de Dignago dans la sous-préfecture de Guibéroua (Miran 2001). Là encore, Odienneka et Worodouka étaient les protagonistes.

À l'examen de ces dissensions, au moins trois analyses peuvent être faites. D'abord, les conflits mettaient au jour la composition ethnique des musulmans présents dans les régions concernées. Autrement, ils ne les auraient pas opposés. Ensuite, les discordes montrèrent que la question de l'imamat, en raison du prestige social qu'il conférait et de ses avantages pécuniaires, était l'enjeu principal des conflits. Enfin, les désaccords étaient le fruit de la lassitude des Worodouka vis-à-vis de l'impérialisme chauvin des Odienneka. Lors de la crise de 1965, cette réalité transparaissait clairement dans la correspondance adressée par les Worodouka au préfet du département

du centre-ouest à Daloa. Ils se plaignaient du fait que «les deux premières personnalités du village étaient devenues des Odienneka sans compter que le Secrétaire délégué et la Présidente du Comité du PDCI [le Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire] étaient de la même ethnie» (Miran 2001:140).

Outre les divisions ethniques, des clivages à relents nationalistes apparurent dans les mosquées. Ils virent le jour à partir des années 1960 dans le contexte de l'immigration et du déchaînement du rejet de tout ce qui n'était pas autochtone (Miran 2001). Dans les mosquées, le sentiment xénophobe se traduisit par des désaccords entre autochtones ivoiriens et étrangers. Ainsi, en 1966, un conflit éclata à la «mosquée dioula» de Treichville (avenue 8 rue 15). Il opposa Ivoiriens et Voltaïques à la suite de la disparition de l'imam Yaya Cissé, originaire d'Odienné. Contrairement à une pratique courante d'alternance, les Ivoiriens écartèrent l'imam adjoint, Moussa Sanogo, un Voltaïque, au profit de Matié Diakité, un ressortissant d'Odienné (Launay & Miran 2000). Un autre exemple : en 1970, une scission apparut au sein des musulmans de Rubino (sous-préfecture d'Agboville) entre Maliens et Ivoiriens (Miran 2016b). Il y eut des actes de vandalisme.

S'il est vrai que les dissensions à relents nationalistes étaient une réalité propre à toute la société ivoirienne d'alors, elles n'en demeuraient pas moins la preuve de la survivance de vieilles rancœurs entre musulmans ivoiriens et étrangers. Pendant longtemps, en effet, les musulmans originaires de la sous-région avaient une hégémonie quasi totale sur l'autorité imamale au Sud. Acteurs majeurs de l'édification des mosquées dans la région méridionale de la colonie de Côte d'Ivoire, les Sénégalais furent les premiers imams des villes comme Grand-Bassam, Aboisso, Abidjan (Marty 1922). Au Centre, précisément à Bouaké, les Voltaïques, en particulier ceux de l'ethnie Dafing, avaient le monopole de l'autorité imamale[4]. L'influence des étrangers fut telle qu'ils étaient parfois à l'initiative de la scission communautaire.

Dans les années 1950, au mépris des règles de succession, les Soudanais refusèrent de céder l'imamat aux Ivoiriens à la mosquée de la mairie I à Adjamé[5] (Abidjan). En 1963, dans le village de Moussadougou, sous-préfecture de Lakota, des Maliens et des Voltaïques se séparèrent de la communauté musulmane locale en raison, notamment, de l'origine nationale des fidèles (Miran 2001:136). Durant tous ces conflits, l'attitude de l'administration coloniale ne fut pas univoque. Elle vacilla entre diplomatie et fermeté. La première méthode eut pour pivot le marabout sénégalais Seydou Nourou Tall, petit-fils d'El Hadj Omar Tall (Garcia 1997). Avec la caution de l'administration coloniale, il tentait de réconcilier les protagonistes. La seconde méthode, la fermeture de la mosquée, était une mesure conservatoire en attendant que la communauté se réconcilie.

… aux crises doctrinales

De son vrai nom Mahamadou Kamagaté, Tiékoro Kamagaté fut officiellement le précurseur du wahhabisme en Côte d'Ivoire (Miran 1998). À l'issue d'un pèlerinage en Arabie saoudite il décida, en 1946, d'épurer l'islam de ce qu'il considérait comme ses souillures. Après en avoir informé l'imam de la grande mosquée de Bouaké, il y anima un prêche au cours duquel il fustigea des pratiques, telles que le *maouloud* (Binaté 2017), le culte des saints, la thaumaturgie… (Froelich 1962 ; Robinson & Triaud 1997) Jugés comme un affront fait aux marabouts, acteurs majeurs de l'islam ouest-africain, les propos de Tiékoro créèrent des frictions au sein des musulmans. Elles opposèrent les traditionalistes (bras ballants) aux wahhabites (bras croisés). Berceau du wahhabisme, Bouaké fut naturellement la ville qui connut la plus longue confrontation.

Sans entrer dans les détails de cette crise qui est bien renseignée dans la littérature portant sur l'Islam en Côte d'Ivoire (Haïdara 1988 ; Miran 1998 ; Binaté 2012), il convient de noter qu'elle se déroula en deux phases et connut son épilogue en 1953 avec le choix d'Anzoumana Sylla comme imam, grâce à l'intervention de Félix Houphouët Boigny (Binaté 2012). À l'instar de Bouaké, des escarmouches eurent lieu dans d'autres mosquées de la Côte d'Ivoire. De façon générale, la décennie 1970 représente l'âge d'or des crises doctrinales. Excepté Bouaké et Abidjan[6], de nombreux centres urbains furent le théâtre des querelles doctrinales à cette période. Danané donna en quelque sorte le ton en 1972. Dans cette localité située non loin de la Guinée, Lamine Diallo, un wahhabite, décida soudainement de se dissocier de l'unique grande mosquée pour prier à sa façon avec un groupe différent (Miran 1998).

Cette attitude séparatiste provoqua l'ire des traditionalistes et engendra des tensions entre les deux camps dans la ville. Les autorités politiques durent intervenir pour maintenir l'ordre. Des dissensions apparurent également dans d'autres centres urbains. Elles se traduisirent par de violentes altercations verbales dans les mosquées. Ce fut le cas à Zouan-Hounien en 1974 et San Pedro en 1975. Souvent, les dissensions prirent la forme de véritables affrontements. Dans les localités de Dahira (Issia), Gonaté (Daloa), Mahapleu (Danané), Téapleu (Zouan Hounien), des mosquées wahhabites furent détruites par les traditionalistes (Miran 1998). On assista même à l'exercice de la violence physique contre des imams, notamment à Dabou. Aucun trouble grave ne fut cependant déploré comme à Sikasso ou Bobo-Dioulasso (Amselle 1985 ; Otayek 1994). Des crises idéologiques eurent lieu également dans les mosquées du Nord.

En 1972 à Korhogo, l'imam central, Siriki Fofana, proféra des propos comminatoires à l'encontre des wahhabites : «La mosquée sunnite ne sera *pas construite ici à Korhogo. Korhogo appartient aux citoyens de cette ville. Ce n'est pas pour les étrangers. Vous pouvez construire une mosquée à Bouaké parce que c'est une ville où les étrangers se sont rencontrés.* » (Labazée 1993:137) La dissuasion n'ayant pas abouti, la mosquée wahhabite, en construction, fut saccagée[7]. À Touba, le projet d'édification de la mosquée wahhabite se heurta à l'intransigeance des traditionalistes, si bien que les autorités préfectorales durent intercéder[8]. La situation ne fut pas différente à Ouangolodougou. Dans cette cité transfrontalière, les traditionalistes détruisirent la mosquée wahhabite construite dans la cour de la concession de Sinamory Konaté, un des pionniers du nouveau courant religieux[9]. Deux remarques sont à faire ici. Avec les crises doctrinales, les querelles de mosquées n'étaient plus des cas isolés. Elles touchèrent dorénavant tout l'espace cultuel musulman ivoirien. Aussi, à l'opposé des crises ethnico-nationalistes, où les dissensions tournèrent généralement autour du non-respect des règles de succession à l'imamat, les conflits doctrinaux portèrent sur la maîtrise du type d'islam pratiqué dans la mosquée.

En effet, l'une des préoccupations majeures des communautés musulmanes après avoir bâti un lieu de culte est d'avoir un imam qui partage les mêmes références ethnoculturelles et surtout spirituelles (Miran 2006). Avoir un imam de son courant religieux permet de contrôler le type d'islam pratiqué dans la mosquée. Clairement, les wahhabites n'avaient pas fait scission tant qu'ils avaient eu le contrôle du type d'islam pratiqué dans les mosquées traditionalistes. La question de la conception de l'islam fut si importante chez les wahhabites qu'elle fut parfois le nœud gordien des dissensions entre membres de cette communauté. À titre d'exemple, dans les années 1980, estimant que la femme de l'imam Konaté Sékou, imam de la grande mosquée wahhabite de Ouangolodougou, n'était pas voilée, une partie de ladite communauté décida de se séparer de la communauté mère en officiant la prière solennelle du vendredi dans sa mosquée, auparavant mosquée secondaire[10].

En sus, le contrôle de la mosquée assurait la gestion des fonds communautaires. Or la mise en place d'une communauté wahhabite équivalait à la construction d'une nouvelle mosquée, par ricochet de la division de la communauté mère. La communauté wahhabite qui se constituait générait des profits, à travers dons et quêtes, parfois au détriment des traditionalistes[11]. Là résidait l'enjeu économique de la crise doctrinale.

Conscients de ce fait, les traditionalistes refusèrent la construction de mosquées wahhabites, *a fortiori* l'érection d'une mosquée traditionaliste en wahhabite. L'âpre dispute qui se déroula autour de la grande mosquée

de Koumassi en 1985 en fut un exemple (Miran 2006). Alors que la communauté qu'il dirigeait ne se reconnaissait pas dans son interprétation de l'islam, l'imam de la grande mosquée de Koumassi adhéra subitement au wahhabisme. Les premières mesures qu'il prit, notamment le changement du trésorier, redessinèrent toute la gestion financière de la mosquée.

Enfin, la crise avait des implications sociologiques. Les wahhabites, en créant leurs mosquées, ambitionnèrent de développer une identité sociale différente de celle des autres musulmans : port du voile pour les femmes, du pantalon « sauté » pour les hommes, langage corporel (port de barbe pour les hommes), structures éducatives (*medersa*), organisation des mariages, funérailles, etc. Ce fut aussi contre cette société jugée sectaire que les traditionalistes luttèrent :

> Ce que proposaient les wahhabiyyas comme mode de vie était opposé à la réalité dans nos sociétés. Nos parents n'ont jamais vécu ainsi. On ne peut pas vivre dans une société tout en refusant de collaborer avec les personnes vivant dans cette même communauté. On n'a pas besoin de s'enfermer sur soi-même pour mieux pratiquer sa religion. L'islam, ce n'est pas seulement la vie dans sa communauté. L'islam, c'est la vie dans sa communauté, mais aussi la vie avec les autres communautés[12].

Au demeurant, quoiqu'elles eussent ébranlé tout l'espace cultuel islamique ivoirien, les divisions idéologiques, géographiquement, étaient plus concentrées au Sud. On a pu soutenir (Miran 1998) que la généralisation des conflits dans la seule partie méridionale s'expliquait par la faible présence des wahhabites dans les régions plus anciennement islamisées du Nord. Il faut aussi noter qu'il est possible que la présence séculaire de l'islam au Nord du pays ait favorisé la tolérance religieuse à l'égard des wahhabites tandis qu'au Sud, zone d'islamisation récente, les traditionalistes étaient plus zélés[13]. Cette situation était elle-même à mettre en lien avec la stratégie des wahhabites. Du Nord (zone d'influence des familles maraboutiques) au Sud (« localités de rencontres »), l'engagement des wahhabites fut variable[14]. Il en alla de même de la réaction des traditionalistes.

Entre bureaucratisation, patrimonialisation et rupture générationnelle dans la mosquée

Les conflits de compétences

Au début des années 1980, les dynamiques apportées dans l'espace cultuel par des cadres musulmans et des jeunes scolarisés aboutirent à l'éclosion d'une nouvelle forme de gestion des mosquées, les comités de gestion[15]. Partie de la CMR (Communauté musulmane de la Riviera) en 1982 (Touré 2008), cette entreprise de bureaucratisation de la mosquée se propagea à

un rythme varié sur le territoire national selon le dynamisme des acteurs qui l'initièrent. Au total, elle comprend trois grandes instances : le conseil temporel ou «comité de gestion» (questions matérielles), le conseil spirituel (affaires islamiques) et le conseil des sages[16] (conseillers). Cette séparation du pouvoir est décidée afin d'instaurer une gestion inclusive de la mosquée et de parer à d'éventuels risques de conflits[17]. Cet objectif n'est pas toujours atteint lorsque l'une des instances estime sa souveraineté bafouée. On parle, dans ce cas, de conflits de compétences.

Les conflits de compétences sont des dissensions qui surgissent dans la mosquée lorsqu'une des instances dirigeantes outrepasse ses prérogatives en adoptant des mesures susceptibles d'impacter négativement le domaine de compétences d'une autre instance. Est symptomatique de ce type de conflit la crise de la grande mosquée d'Attecoubé en avril 1991. En 1978, les musulmans de cette commune entament la construction d'une mosquée centrale. Ils l'achevèrent en 1984. Quelques années plus tard, dans le souci de veiller sur l'enceinte, ils décidèrent de bâtir une maison pour le gardien. Lors de la construction de ladite maison, un problème survint. Le responsable du conseil spirituel, l'imam principal, Moussa Koné, rejeta le devis estimatif des travaux présenté par le conseil temporel. Ce dernier outrepassa le veto de l'imam et bâtit deux maisonnettes. Vexé, l'imam profita du décès du gardien pour s'emparer des clés ; arguant que le bâtiment servira à l'hébergement de ses visiteurs. Pour s'y opposer, le conseil temporel changea les serrures de la porte. Koné fit de même.

Dans le but de mettre un terme à ce tour de passe-passe, le responsable du conseil des sages, Bafétégué Coulibaly, entama des pourparlers avec le conseil temporel. Ce fut sur ces entrefaites que l'imam convoqua à la police le président du conseil temporel (Diaby Sékou) et le trésorier (Boua Dembélé). Ce fut la goutte d'eau qui fit déborder le vase. Même si les autorités policières demandèrent aux protagonistes de régler le problème à l'amiable, le comité de gestion exigea la destitution de l'imam. Se servant d'antécédents, il reprocha à l'imam d'être «très impulsif, bagarreur, rancunier, intolérant» et surtout «inculte quant à la connaissance exacte de la *sharia*[18] (loi coranique)». Malgré les tentatives de réconciliation des autorités politiques (maire) et religieuses (Conseil des imams d'Abidjan), la tension ne baissa pas. Finalement, le conseil temporel remplaça l'imam principal par son adjoint, Bakary Chérif.

S'insurgeant contre la décision du comité de gestion, Moussa Koné tenta de diriger encore les prières. Le refus de l'imam d'obtempérer entraîna des échauffourées entre partisans des deux groupes. De fait, les autorités

procédèrent à la fermeture de la mosquée et ordonnèrent aux protagonistes de trouver un compromis. Au-delà des raisons évoquées, la crise avait essentiellement des enjeux économiques. Le comité de gestion reprochait à l'imam d'empiéter sur son domaine d'exercice. Le guide religieux réclamait, en effet, la totalité des quêtes qui étaient destinées au fonctionnement de la mosquée. Pourtant, pour le comité de gestion, il ne devait, à aucun moment, s'occuper de la gestion financière de la mosquée ni réclamer un salaire. Cette vision des choses n'était pas partagée par l'homme de Dieu : « *[…] ils veulent que moi, je m'occupe que de prier pendant qu'eux bouffent dans mon dos*[19] ». Des divergences apparaissent aussi entre instances de la mosquée quant aux logiques d'insertion de la mosquée avec le « monde extérieur » (Muriel-Gomez 2009).

Des comités de gestion tentent d'ouvrir la mosquée à des modes de fonctionnement estimés propres aux sociétés occidentales. En 2010, la mosquée de N'Dakro, à Bouaké, fut confrontée à un conflit de cette nature. À l'origine, l'initiative du comité de gestion de prendre désormais une part active dans la rédaction des interventions publiques de l'imam (sermons, conférences[20], etc.). Cette innovation, qui portait sur la forme des discours, c'est-à-dire la structuration des textes et non sur le fonds, fut perçue comme une stratégie de mise sous tutelle du conseil spirituel. La polémique qui en naquit instaura une guéguerre entre l'imamat et le comité de gestion. Elle se manifesta par le refus des imams de s'associer aux décisions du comité de gestion. Après moult tentatives d'explication, le comité de gestion parvint à faire adopter la nouvelle disposition. À la différence du premier cas, ce désaccord n'avait aucune motivation économique. Il révélait une lutte d'influences entre des groupes sociaux issus de systèmes éducatifs différents : le conseil temporel (majoritairement passé par l'école laïque) et le conseil spirituel (fruit de l'école islamique).

Les conflits patrimoniaux

Les conflits patrimoniaux sont des dissensions qui apparaissent à la suite de malentendus nés d'une tentative de gestion « patrimoniale » de la mosquée. Ici, la mosquée est considérée comme un bien familial, une propriété privée. Les conflits patrimoniaux ont essentiellement des enjeux économiques. L'ampleur que prennent ces types de conflits est consubstantielle aux potentialités économiques de la mosquée. Plus les enjeux économiques sont énormes, plus le conflit prend des proportions inquiétantes. Les conflits de compétences incluent deux cas de figure. Dans le premier cas de figure, la mosquée est bâtie sur une propriété familiale. En 2015, ce type de désaccord éclata à Yamoussoukro, à la mosquée Ibrahima Sylla, du nom de l'imam central défunt de ladite ville.

Dans cette mosquée domiciliaire, l'imamat était détenu par la famille Sylla, en l'occurrence Mohamed Sylla, fils aîné de l'imam Ibrahima Sylla. Ce dernier nomma comme adjoint l'un de ses ex-élèves, Coulibaly Dramane (un Sénoufo). À la mort de l'imam Mohamed Sylla, contrairement à la pratique courante de succession, ses frères cadets refusèrent de transférer la direction de la prière à l'imam adjoint. Ils arguèrent que la mosquée est un « *bien familial* » et qu'à ce titre « *ils avaient le monopole du choix de l'imam*[21] ». Un groupe de fidèles, principalement des fonctionnaires, protesta contre cette manière de dévolution du pouvoir religieux. Il la jugea aux antipodes des prescriptions islamiques. De fait, il y eut des violences verbales et physiques dans la mosquée. Les partisans de l'imam adjoint en profitèrent pour lancer une initiative de construction d'une nouvelle mosquée[22].

Dans le second registre, la mosquée ne se trouve pas sur une propriété familiale, mais le terrain sur lequel elle est bâtie porte le nom d'un particulier. Ce type de conflit prend couramment son origine dans le procédé d'acquisition du terrain à usage de culte. En règle générale, les terrains devant servir à la construction des mosquées étaient achetés sans crédit sur financement collectif de la communauté. Ce financement se faisait de façon participative. En l'absence d'associations formelles, l'attribution de la propriété du terrain était faite au nom d'une personne pour le compte de la communauté ; le plus souvent l'imam[23]. Une telle stratégie était plus simple, car l'usage du bâtiment était rarement signalé à l'avance aux autorités en charge de la question. Après la disparition du titulaire, il s'est trouvé des cas où les descendants ont revendiqué leur droit de propriété. Déjà en 1984, ce genre de confusions concernait les communautés musulmanes de Grand-Bassam, d'Adjamé-Williamsville et de Koumassi-Nord (Miran 2001).

Au début de l'année 2010, un conflit de cette nature existait au sujet de la grande mosquée wahhabite de Korhogo. Il est bon de rappeler que le wahhabisme prospéra véritablement à Korhogo parmi les marchands. L'un d'eux, Bakary Coulibaly, est considéré comme le principal précurseur. Grâce aux profits réalisés dans le commerce, Bakary Coulibaly alla en pèlerinage à La Mecque au cours de l'année 1964-1965. À son retour, il fit construire une mosquée dans la cour de sa concession familiale. Au vu de l'augmentation des adeptes du nouveau courant religieux, Bakary Coulibaly et un groupe d'amis parvinrent à obtenir un terrain au quartier Bananforo. Sur ledit lot mis au nom de Bakary Coulibaly, ils firent construire la première grande mosquée wahhabite de Korhogo en 1975. Dans cette mosquée wahhabite, un conflit surgit en 2010.

Officiellement, le conflit éclata au sujet de la succession à l'imamat. En raison de l'âge avancé et de la santé fragile de l'imam principal, Ousmane Koita, son remplacement fut souhaité. Conformément à la loi non écrite,

son adjoint, Bazoumana Coulibaly, devait être choisi. Pourtant, Djibril Koné, imam adjoint à la mosquée Firdaws, fut préféré à lui :

> Il faut dire que Bazoumana Coulibaly voulait être imam dans deux mosquées [allusion faite à la mosquée de la Lumière et à une mosquée financée en 2009 par un mécène arabe et offerte à Bazoumana]. Et puis, c'est l'imam Djibril qui respectait les vieux. Dans une famille, celui qui respecte les vieux est plus favorisé[24].

La mise à l'écart de Bazoumana entraîna des dissensions. Ainsi, deux factions se constituèrent avec des relents de liens de parenté. La première était composée d'Abderrahmane Coulibaly (fils aîné de Bakary Coulibaly), de l'imam Oumar Camara (imam principal de la mosquée Firdaws et beau-frère de Bakary Coulibaly) et de l'imam Djibril Koné (gendre de Bakary Coulibaly).

La deuxième faction avait pour figure de proue l'imam Bazoumana Coulibaly, neveu de Bakary Coulibaly[25].

Dans ce conflit, ce ne sont pas les compétences religieuses de l'imam Bazoumana Coulibaly qui étaient en cause. Après avoir séjourné au moins 20 ans en Arabie saoudite, Bazoumana fait partie du cercle restreint des docteurs en Islam en Côte d'Ivoire. Ce conflit mettait plutôt en relief la question de la patrimonialisation de la mosquée. Le témoignage de l'un des protagonistes, Abderrahmane Coulibaly, est révélateur de cette analyse :

> *Grâce au commerce, papa avait beaucoup d'argent. Il a mis son argent au service de sa religion, l'islam. Il a construit beaucoup d'édifices pour sa communauté. Il a fait tout ce travail sans soutiens extérieurs, c'est-à-dire sans l'aide des hommes politiques ou des Arabes. Dans la ville de Dikodougou* où il partait faire le commerce aussi, il a fait de nombreuses écoles coraniques. Ça été la même chose dans d'autres villes du pays. Ici à Korhogo, ça a été la même chose. Papa a tellement travaillé pour la communauté que Moustapha Doukouré, un des proches de papa, voulait qu'on mette le nom de papa sur la mosquée [il s'agit de la grande mosquée, la « mosquée de la Lumière »]. Mais j'ai refusé. […] Papa gérait la mosquée avec ses amis. Après son décès, j'ai gardé le même rythme de gestion. C'est pourquoi quand on a choisi Djibril comme imam, on a exigé qu'il prenne le fils de l'imam Ousmane *Koita dans le conseil des imams pour tout le service que Koita nous a rendu. Je suis le comptable principal de la mosquée*[26].

L'usage récurrent du pronom personnel « je » et de verbes comme « exigé », « refusé » laisse transparaître clairement le monopole qu'Abderrahmane et ses proches exercent sur la mosquée. Les tensions qui découlèrent de ce désaccord furent si inquiétantes dans la ville que la chefferie cantonale s'autosaisit du dossier.

Son verdict fut sans appel : Bazoumana devait rejoindre sa mosquée[27]. Cette querelle avait aussi un enjeu économique majeur en raison des espaces annexes à la mosquée, salle de purification des morts, école confessionnelle islamique, qui engrangèrent d'importantes devises.

Les conflits générationnels

Les conflits générationnels sont des conflits qui opposent deux « générations ». Dans le cas d'espèce, le terme génération ne fait pas référence à une cohorte d'âge, encore moins à une catégorie sociale (jeunes et vieux). Ces types de conflits mettent en opposition des agents religieux aux profils éducatifs différents. Il s'agit, le plus souvent, de personnes passées par l'enseignement islamique traditionnel et de celles qui ont été dans les nouvelles structures de formation islamique (*medersas*, écoles confessionnelles, universités islamiques). Nonobstant, il serait trompeur de croire que les conflits générationnels portent sur des questions doctrinales. Il n'en est rien. Ce qui est mis en avant dans cette forme de conflits, ce sont les compétences religieuses, voire intellectuelles, des protagonistes[28]. En 2010, un conflit de cette nature naquit à la grande mosquée du quartier haoussabougou de Korhogo.

En raison de son parcours éducatif, c'est-à-dire l'école coranique traditionnelle, et de sa conception de l'islam, l'imam principal de ladite mosquée faisait le sermon de la prière en congrégation du vendredi exclusivement en langue arabe. Le prône n'était donc pas traduit en langue locale. Face aux critiques des fidèles, l'imam principal confia l'office de la prière du vendredi à son adjoint, un diplômé des universités islamiques arabes. Le problème survint lorsque celui-ci alla en pèlerinage à La Mecque. Un vendredi, alors que l'imam principal faisait le sermon selon son habitude, un autre arabisant, qui n'était pourtant pas membre du gotha imamal, tenta de l'éjecter du minbar pour y prendre place. Il estimait que le sermon n'a d'utilité que lorsqu'il est compris par les fidèles[29]. Cette réaction entraîna un tollé dans la mosquée. Il y eut des voies de fait entre partisans et opposants de l'imam. À partir de cet évènement, un calme précaire régna dans la mosquée. À la moindre occasion, les tensions se ravivèrent. De la sorte, la mosquée finit par être baptisée *kologbèrin missiri*, c'est-à-dire la mosquée des « guerriers » en langue malinké.

Ce qui est important à souligner ici, c'est le rôle non négligeable des fidèles dans la crise. Il est clair que la revendication du contestataire était partagée par un nombre important de fidèles. Autrement, la crise n'aurait pas atteint une telle envergure. Dans l'optique de trouver un dénouement à la crise, l'imam principal saisit la chefferie cantonale de la ville. Celle-ci prit position en sa faveur. Étant considéré comme le fautif, le contestataire

fut astreint à un certain nombre de conditions avant d'avoir accès à la mosquée : «*il ne devait plus s'arrêter dans la première rangée de la mosquée pour faire la prière ; auquel cas, il ne devait pas être dans le périmètre* réservé aux imams adjoints et muezzins[30]». La saisine des autorités coutumières dans une affaire de mosquée montre à la fois l'influence de ces derniers et la porosité des frontières entre islam et traditions locales à Korhogo, une localité fortement marquée par les pratiques initiatiques.

Le conflit générationnel peut également opposer des agents religieux issus du même système éducatif. La question de la compétence religieuse ne demeure pas moins au centre des dissensions. À la fin des années 2000, à Bouaké, un groupe de jeunes commerçants décida d'organiser la prière solennelle du vendredi dans l'enceinte du foyer du carnaval, un espace destiné à abriter le siège central de la mairie. Dans cette « mosquée plein air », ils firent appel à un trio d'imams pour l'office du culte : Camara Mohamed, Ben Massa Touré et Diallo Aboubacar. Ces derniers y officièrent de façon alternative, lors de la prière en congrégation du vendredi. Au début de la décennie 2010, le maire d'alors, Fanny Ibrahim, dans le but de «libérer» le site leur octroya un terrain à usage de culte au quartier houphouetville[31].

En charge de l'autorité islamique, la section locale du Conseil supérieur des imams (COSIM) fut chargée de la mobilisation des fonds et de la conduite des travaux en vue de la construction de l'édifice cultuel qui devait y être bâti. Sa section locale s'en occupa. À la fin de la construction de la mosquée, la section locale du COSIM, contre toute attente, proposa Adam Kourouma comme imam au grand désarroi du trio d'imams qui dirigeait antérieurement les prières sur l'ancien site. Le COSIM s'en expliquait : «*il fallait un imam permanent dans cette nouvelle mosquée pour assurer journalièrement les prières et animer spirituellement et socialement le lieu de culte alors que les trois étaient déjà imams dans d'autres mosquées*[32] ». Mais il ressort de l'analyse du conflit que ce sont les profils des trois guides religieux qui dérangeaient.

Habité en majeure partie par des fonctionnaires et abritant de nombreux services de l'administration publique, le palais présidentiel de la ville, des représentations des ministères, le quartier houphouetville est un quartier résidentiel. À ce titre, la mosquée d'Houphouetville représente à peu près, dans la ville de Bouaké, ce que représente la mosquée Salam dans la cité administrative du Plateau à Abidjan (Miran 2016a). Au regard de ces réalités, la direction de la prière dans cette mosquée exigeait le choix d'un imam aux profils particuliers. Pourtant, à la différence des « trois imams » qui s'exprimaient difficilement en français, l'imam Adam Kourouma remplissait parfaitement ces critères. Polyglotte, il parle couramment le français et

l'anglais[33]. Tous ces éléments militèrent en sa faveur. D'où le choix porté sur sa personne.

Bénéficiant du soutien des commerçants du centre commercial, les imams « éjectés » refusèrent de prier dans la nouvelle mosquée. Ils obtinrent, plus tard, un espace au quartier du commerce. Le vendredi de l'inauguration de cette « mosquée plein air », l'imam qui officia ce jour, rapportant les péripéties de la crise, fondit en larmes. Des malédictions furent par la suite proférées par lui contre ceux qu'il considérait comme des usurpateurs[34]. Précisons qu'outre la question de la compétence, ce conflit avait des implications économiques. Autrement, comment comprendre que des imams officiant déjà dans d'autres mosquées aillent jusqu'à formuler des malédictions contre leurs coreligionnaires ? En réalité, l'aire de prière du palais du carnaval était le lieu de culte de la quasi-totalité des cadres musulmans travaillant dans la zone administrative de Bouaké. La présence de ces derniers dans cette mosquée était gage de dons substantiels.

La mosquée, de la renégociation des hiérarchies sociales à une arène politique

Les conflits d'hégémonie

Les conflits d'hégémonie sont des conflits qui surgissent lorsque la gestion exclusive de l'imamat par une famille maraboutique est remise en cause par une autre famille maraboutique. Ce type de conflits a lieu dans les mosquées où l'imamat est détenu exclusivement par une famille maraboutique, notamment au Nord. Conformément à une coutume locale, la gestion de la mosquée centrale, dans cette partie du territoire, obéit à la règle selon laquelle la direction de la prière est dévolue à une famille maraboutique. Malgré l'évolution de la société, ces coutumes sont toujours d'actualité. En raison de son corollaire de frustrations, ce *statu quo religieux* entraîne, dans certains cas, des situations conflictuelles. En général, la crise intervient dans deux circonstances. Dans le premier cas de figure, l'autorité religieuse de la famille en charge de l'imamat est contestée par une famille maraboutique concurrente.

À Mankono, le problème imamal provoqua une division entre les familles maraboutiques Karamoko et Fofana en 2005. Depuis 1766, l'imamat dans cette localité est du ressort exclusif de la famille Fofana[35]. Mais à la faveur de circonstances exceptionnelles, la fonction d'imam fut occupée trois fois par la famille maraboutique Karamoko : Karamoko Gaoussou Kanseko (?), Ahmadou Karamoko (1856-1859) et Karamoko Anlyou[36] (1957-1981). Dans chacun de ces cas, l'imamat est revenu automatiquement à la famille

Fofana après la disparition de l'imam intérimaire. Ainsi, en 1981, après le décès de Karamoko Anlyou, l'autorité islamique est revenue à Mamadou Fofana Madiguibéné. Soudainement, en 2005, à la mort de l'imam principal, les Karamoko exigèrent l'instauration d'une règle d'alternance du pouvoir religieux. L'intransigeance des Fofana face à la requête des Karamoko donna lieu à des violences physiques. Pour exprimer leur mécontentement, les Karamoko entamèrent la construction de leur mosquée en 2006[37].

Dans le second cas de figure, l'autorité spirituelle de la famille imamale est remise en cause par la famille qui en est revêtue. Ce fut le cas en 2016 à Bouna. Dans cette localité située au nord-est de la Côte d'Ivoire, l'imamat était préalablement du ressort de la famille Camara. En 1761 Issiaka Cissé, un érudit en provenance du pays mandingue, fut sollicité pour assurer la direction des musulmans après avoir porté secours au roi des Abron[38]. Ainsi, à la suite d'un accord symbolique, les Camara transférèrent l'imamat aux Cissé. En 2016, lors d'une mission annuelle de recherche du COSIM sur l'histoire de l'Islam en Côte d'Ivoire, les Cissé se présentèrent historiquement comme les premiers imams de la ville ; éludant ainsi l'imamat des Camara[39]. Cette déclaration jugée comme un affront engendra un conflit entre les deux familles. Les Camara en profitèrent pour déposséder les Cissé de l'imamat central. Ils revinrent, plus tard, sur leur décision, à l'issue de négociations menées par les autorités locales[40]. Ce conflit mettait au jour, en filigrane, la question de la redistribution des fonds communautaires. L'affaire de la mission du COSIM n'était qu'un artifice.

Les conflits moraux

Ces conflits surviennent à la suite de fautes commises ou censées être commises par l'imam. Il s'agit de fautes dites professionnelles. Mais, ces fautes sont généralement extérieures à l'exercice de la fonction de l'imam, c'est-à-dire à la pratique de la religion *stricto sensu*. Elles portent sur le comportement ou des actes commis par l'imam dans sa vie de tous les jours. Par conséquent, ces conflits peuvent très vite revêtir le caractère de « problème de personne ». Les conflits moraux opposent toujours l'imam à au moins un des acteurs de la mosquée. Ils peuvent également opposer les membres du conseil imamal. Ce fut le cas à la grande mosquée de la commune de Marcory à Abidjan. En 2010, Konaté Bakary, imam principal de ladite mosquée, est cité dans une affaire d'adultère. Il lui est reproché d'avoir eu de manière régulière des relations amoureuses avec la troisième épouse, dame Senou Adjaba, de l'un des donateurs de la mosquée, Saar Adama[41].

Ces accusations sont démenties par l'homme de Dieu. Pour lui en effet, il serait victime d'une machination ourdie par ses détracteurs, notamment son

adjoint et le président du comité de gestion. Nonobstant ses dénégations, l'imam fut suspendu par le COSIM. Cette décision créa une friction au sein des fidèles. Certains en profitèrent pour en découdre avec l'imam adjoint. De la sorte, lors d'une de ses sorties de la mosquée, il subit des jets de pierres de la part d'un groupe de femmes acquis à la cause de l'imam principal[42]. Le conflit qui éclata fin 2016 à la grande mosquée de Broukro en est un autre exemple. L'imam adjoint Koné Djakaridja fut accusé d'adultère et d'avoir revendiqué la paternité d'un enfant né hors mariage. En l'absence de preuves irréfutables, il ne put être destitué. Vexés par cette décision, des fidèles refusèrent de le prendre comme imam[43]. Malgré les négociations, ces derniers rallièrent la mosquée du quartier voisin, Ahougnansou.

Les conflits moraux sont fortement teintés de subjectivité pour deux motifs. En raison, d'une part, du caractère vague du délit « faute professionnelle », et d'autre part, de l'absence d'une instance indépendante en charge d'évaluer la faute. À titre illustratif, dans les années 2000, un groupe de fidèles tenta de destituer Saïd Sylla, l'imam central de Yamoussoukro, arguant qu'il était borgne. Pourtant, selon les normes islamiques, la requête était irrecevable eu égard au caractère *a posteriori* du défaut évoqué[44]. Pour éviter de telles situations, le COSIM a institué depuis 2012 une Charte de l'imamat et des mosquées. Dans cette charte, la superstructure se réserve la responsabilité de la destitution des imams[45] (Titre III, Article 23).

Les conflits politiques

Il s'agit de divergences de natures politiques qui se transposent dans les mosquées. Ces conflits ne se manifestent que lorsque l'imam a une orientation politique officielle différente de celle d'un nombre important de ses fidèles. Les enjeux de ce type de conflits sont difficiles à identifier. Ils peuvent être politiques, économiques, idéologiques, etc. À l'issue de la crise postélectorale de 2011 qui porta Alassane Ouattara à la présidence de la République, les imams réputés, à tort ou à raison, avoir été favorables à l'ex-président Laurent Gbagbo, furent marginalisés. Certains furent évincés de leur poste. L'imam de la mosquée centrale d'Attécoubé, Bakary Chérif, en paya les frais. Ancien vice-président du CSI (Conseil supérieur islamique), Bakary Chérif créa le 30 avril 1995 le FOI (Front de la *Oumma* islamique).

Dès sa naissance, le FOI succomba à la séduction du pouvoir. Ces responsables devinrent les véritables partisans du pouvoir et ne s'en cachèrent plus. Dans un entretien avec des journalistes, Bakary Chérif affirmait sans ambages : « *je suis PDCI, je mourrai PDCI*[46] ». En 2002, tout le long de la crise militaro-politique, le soutien de Bakary Chérif au pouvoir d'État ne s'amoindrit pas. Ainsi multiplia-t-il les déclarations en faveur du président

Laurent Gbagbo. À la fin de la crise postélectorale, les fidèles lui reprochèrent son accointance avec Nady Bamba, l'épouse non officielle de Laurent Gbagbo[47]. Profitant de la légitimité édulcorée de Bakary Chérif, le COSIM le démit de ses fonctions d'imam, mettant ainsi fin à la concurrence qui l'opposait à l'organisation des imams.

Si dans les zones sous contrôle de la rébellion, les données collectées ne révèlent pas de luttes de positionnement de ce type autour des mosquées, il ne faut pas en déduire qu'il n'y eut pas de dissensions de cet ordre. À la différence du Sud, les dissensions de ce genre au Nord étaient surtout psychologiques et verbales : injures, menaces de destitution. Pour avoir accepté une voiture offerte à lui par le pouvoir [de Laurent Gbagbo], l'imam central de Yamoussoukro, Saïd Sylla, fut l'objet de nombreuses critiques. Mais, l'exemple le plus probant des divisions religieuses sur fonds politiques fut celui du « *maouloud* de la discorde » en 2011.

Mis sous l'éteignoir depuis l'arrivée de Boikary Fofana à la tête du COSIM en 2006, l'imam Idriss Koné dit *Koudouss* tenta de remettre au-devant de l'échiquier islamique le CNI (Conseil national islamique) (Kamagaté 2018). Ainsi, en février 2011, il annonça par l'entremise de la télévision d'État que le *maouloud* se tiendrait dans la nuit du 14 au 15. Ce communiqué suscita une controverse au sein des musulmans, d'autant plus que le COSIM, seul organe habilité à annoncer les dates des fêtes islamiques, avait annoncé auparavant sur la radio Al Bayane la date du 15 au 16. Dans la même déclaration, le COSIM avait décidé de surseoir à toute manifestation publique pour, dira-t-il, ne pas mettre la vie de ses coreligionnaires en danger (Miran 2015:227).

Koudouss, quant à lui, invita les musulmans à se rendre massivement dans les mosquées pour commémorer la nuit d'adoration, démentant ainsi les rumeurs selon lesquelles il était dangereux de s'y rendre. De fait, le champ des mosquées en Côte d'Ivoire se trouva divisé entre les partisans du COSIM et ceux du CNI, même si le mot d'ordre de l'association de Boikary Fofana fut plus suivi. Optant pour la date du CNI, le ministre de la Fonction publique de Gbagbo décréta la journée du 15 février 2011 chômée et payée. *Koudouss* célébra le *maouloud* dans sa mosquée Bilal de Yopougon (Port Bouët II) en présence du ministre de l'Agriculture de Gbagbo, Issa Malick Coulibaly (Miran 2015 : 228). Faisant allusion à la présence discrète de Boikary Fofana à l'hôtel du Golf, quartier général d'Alassane Ouattara, *Koudouss* ironisa : « *Moi, je n'ai pas fui pour aller dans un hôtel. Je n'ai pas abandonné ma communauté et mes fidèles*[48] ». Ces propos couvaient sous les cendres d'une lutte de leadership entre les deux figures de proue de l'islam en Côte d'Ivoire : Boikary Fofana et Idriss Koné dit *Koudouss*.

Conclusion

Les luttes de positionnement autour des mosquées en Côte d'Ivoire s'inscrivent, en réalité, dans le prolongement des dissensions des années antérieures. Elles ont revêtu des caractères divers en fonction des acteurs et du cadre spatiotemporel. Dans les années 1930, les querelles de mosquées avaient des connotations ethniques et xénophobes tandis que dans les années 1970, elles avaient une nature idéologique. Depuis les années 1990, dans le contexte de la libéralisation du milieu associatif ivoirien, les conflits autour des mosquées ont pris plusieurs directions, rendant ainsi la question beaucoup plus complexe.

Les facteurs des différends au sujet du contrôle des mosquées sont divers. Du point de vue exogène, il s'agit généralement de différends politiques transposés dans la mosquée et de divergences liées à l'affiliation doctrinale. Quant aux facteurs endogènes, les conflits naissent couramment du non-respect des règles de succession à l'imamat, des mésententes relatives à la gestion des fonds générés par l'édifice religieux, et parfois du statut social que confère l'imamat. De tous ces facteurs, l'enjeu économique semble être le plus important, même s'il ne faut pas y limiter les raisons des querelles de mosquées.

Notes

1. Cissé Djiguiba, recteur de la mosquée du Plateau, directeur de la radio Al Bayane, le 6 janvier 2020 à Abidjan (Cocody).
2. Youssouf Coulibaly, vice-président du COSIM Treichville et président local du CNI (Conseil national islamique), le 12 février 2020 à Abidjan (Treichville).
3. Bachir Ouattara, imam adjoint à la mosquée de la Riviera Golf, chef du Département promotion imamat et mosquées, le 20 janvier 2020 à Abidjan (Cocody).
4. Touré Abdoulaye, chargé du recensement des mosquées dans la région de Bouaké au compte du COSIM, membre du secrétariat de l'association de la communauté Dafing de Bouaké, le 30 octobre 2019 à Bouaké.
5. Gaoussou Kamara, secrétaire général de la grande mosquée Adjamé, le 8 février 2020 à Abidjan (Adjamé).
6. Ces deux localités avaient déjà été touchées par la crise doctrinale dans les années 1950 et 1960. Dans la décennie 1970, les wahhabites avaient déjà acquis une assise économique et démographique importante dans ces villes.
7. Abderrahmane Coulibaly, fils aîné du pionnier du wahhabisme à Korhogo, le 11 novembre 2019 à Korhogo.
8. Fadiga Mamadou, imam principal de la mosquée du quartier TP, président local du Conseil des imams sunnites (CODIS), le 20 août 2019 à Touba.
9. Morifing Ouattara, imam adjoint à la grande mosquée de Ouangolodougou, le 27 novembre 2019 à Ouangolodougou.

10. Sanogo Mamadou, imam de la nouvelle grande mosquée sunnite de Ouangolodougou, le 24 novembre 2019 à Ouangolodougou.
11. Cissé Mamadi, imam des étudiants de l'INPHB, le 27 octobre 2019 à Yamoussoukro.
12. Sylla Ousmane, imam, membre de la LIPCI, représentant COSIM Odienné, le 13 août 2019 à Odienné.
13. Vamé Diakité, imam et chargé des affaires sociales de la communauté wahhabite d'Odienné, le 12 août 2019 à Odienné.
14. Bamba Ali, imam de la mosquée sunnite du marché de Touba, pionnier du wahhabisme à Touba, le 27 août 2019 à Touba.
15. Koné Abdoulaye Blacky, président du comité de gestion de la mosquée de la Riviera Golf, le 17 janvier 2020 à Abidjan (Cocody).
16. Berthé Yaya, président du comité de gestion de la « mosquée de la Lumière » de Korhogo, le 11 novembre 2019 à Korhogo.
17. Koné Abdoulaye Blacky, président du comité de gestion de la mosquée de la Riviera Golf, le 17 janvier 2020 à Abidjan (Cocody).
18. *Fraternité Matin* du 2 août 1991.
19. *Fraternité Matin* du 2 août 1991.
20. Koné Brahima, président du comité de gestion de la mosquée de N'Dakro, le 11 octobre 2019 à Bouaké.
21. Saïd Sylla (Seydou), imam central de la Yamoussoukro, président du COSIM local, le 22 octobre 2019 à Yamoussoukro. Ces informations ont été confirmées par Lacina Sylla et Abou Sylla, membres de la famille Sylla, le 23 octobre 2019 à Yamoussoukro.
22. Coulibaly Dramane, imam principal de la nouvelle mosquée du quartier SOPIM, le 25 octobre 2019 à Yamoussoukro.
23. Touré Abdoulaye, chargé du recensement des mosquées dans la région de Bouaké au compte du COSIM, membre du secrétariat de l'association de la communauté Dafing de Bouaké, le 30 octobre 2019 à Bouaké.
24. Oumar Camara, imam principal de la mosquée Firdaws, le 10 novembre 2019 à Korhogo.
25. Sylla Adama, imam de la mosquée sunnite de l'ONG Bienfaisance, le 7 novembre 2019 à Korhogo.
26. Abderrahmane Coulibaly, fils du pionnier du wahhabisme à Korhogo, le 11 novembre 2019 à Korhogo.
27. Bazoumana Coulibaly, imam de la mosquée Nawawi, le 9 novembre 2019 à Korhogo.
28. Dosso Mamadou, directeur de cabinet du président du CNI, imam principal de la mosquée du quartier rouge d'Adjamé, le 22 janvier 2020 à Abidjan (Adjamé).
29. Ouattara Amara, secrétaire général du comité de gestion de la mosquée du quartier haoussabougou de Korhogo, le 17 novembre 2019 à Korhogo.
30. Cissé Vananbi, imam adjoint à la grande mosquée de Korhogo, vice-président du COSIM local, le 12 novembre 2019 à Korhogo.

31. Ouattara Dabila, vice-président du comité de gestion de la mosquée de N'Dakro, chercheur privé sur l'histoire de l'islam en Côte d'Ivoire (auteurs de deux ouvrages), le 17 octobre 2019 à Bouaké.

32. Idriss Sidibé, imam à la grande mosquée de la zone de Bouaké, secrétaire général du grand imam de Bouaké, président de la section Bouaké du forum des confessions religieuses de Côte d'Ivoire, le 28 octobre 2019.

33. Adam Kourouma, imam de la mosquée du commerce, le 29 octobre 2020 à Bouaké.

34. Sow Ibrahim, fidèle musulman, commerçant au centre commercial, le 25 octobre 2019 à Bouaké. Il a été témoin oculaire des faits.

35. Gaoussou Fofana, secrétaire principal de l'imam central de Mankono, le 23 décembre 2019 à Mankono.

36. Alassane Karamoko, imam adjoint à la mosquée de Tonhoulé, le 21 décembre 2019 à Mankono.

37. Madou Karamoko, imam adjoint à la mosquée Mouêla (mosquée des Karamoko), le 15 décembre 2019 à Mankono.

38. Cissé Ibourahima, imam central de Bouna, le 8 septembre 2019 à Bouna.

39. Morimoussa Camara, imam de la mosquée Siaka Koné à Abobo, membre du lignage Camara de Bouna, le 19 février 2020 à Abidjan.

40. Morimoussa Cissé, journaliste à la radio Al Bayane de Bouna, le 15 septembre 2019 à Bouna.

41. *Allo Police*, n° 034 du 19 au 25 avril 2010.

42. *Allo Police*, n° 034 du 19 au 25 avril 2010.

43. Ibrahima Diomandé, président du comité de gestion de la mosquée de Broukro, le 2 octobre 2019 à Bouaké.

44. Cissé Mamadi, imam des étudiants de l'INPHB, le 2 octobre 2019 à Yamoussoukro.

45. Ousmane Diakité, secrétaire exécutif national du COSIM, le 14 janvier 2020 à Abidjan (Treichville).

46. *L'héritage*, 27 septembre 1996.

47. *Fraternité Matin*, 22 juillet 2011.

48. *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan*, 17 février 2011.

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Faire du terrain en période de crise anglophone au Cameroun : enjeux sécuritaires, défis éthiques et bricolages méthodologiques

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Résumé

Les crises politiques endémiques et la récurrence des situations de violations de droits l'homme dans de nombreux pays africains les transforment en « terrains difficiles » pour des chercheurs qui choisissent d'aborder des sujets politiquement sensibles. Ce texte, bien que reconnaissant la relativité de la notion de terrain difficile ou dangereux, s'intéresse spécifiquement au contexte du Cameroun en considérant ce qu'on a appelé la « crise anglophone » comme l'élément de contexte constituant la difficulté du terrain. Notre recherche visait à problématiser les convergences et divergences sur l'enseignement de l'histoire du Cameroun des deux sous-systèmes anglophone et francophone, en tant que lieux d'une construction contrastée des mémoires. Ce texte est un retour réflexif sur une expérience de terrain d'une équipe de recherche « francophone » et « anglophone » en contexte de crise anglophone. Il vise non pas à donner une recette du terrain, mais à contribuer à la discussion sur la pratique de la recherche qualitative en milieu difficile africain. Notre réflexion prolonge le questionnement sur l'adéquation des outils traditionnels de collecte de données en terrain difficile et la nécessité des bricolages méthodologiques en tant que stratégie d'adaptation. Notre expérience

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confirme que le travail de terrain auprès de populations vulnérables bouscule les certitudes méthodologiques et éthiques des chercheurs et les contraint au pragmatisme et à l'innovation. Notre contribution permet aussi de mesurer l'importance de la poursuite de la recherche sur les aspects éthiques de la recherche en sciences sociales en Afrique, où nombre de pays ne disposent pas encore de codes éthiques formalisés.

Mots-clés : crise anglophone, terrain difficile, enjeux sécuritaires, défis éthiques, bricolages méthodologiques, Cameroun.

Abstract

Endemic political crises and the recurrence of situations of human rights violations in many African countries turn them into "dangerous" fields for researchers who choose to tackle politically sensitive topics. While recognizing the relativity of the notion of "difficult" or "dangerous" field, this paper looks specifically at the context of Cameroon where the ongoing "Anglophone crisis" is construed as making our field dangerous. Our research aimed to problematize the convergences and divergences between the francophone and anglophone educational sub-systems on the teaching of the history of Cameroon as tools of the construction of contrasted memories. The paper is a reflexive review of the challenges of our fieldwork experience in a context marked by an armed conflict in Cameroon. It does not aim to give a recipe from the field, but to contribute to the discussion on the practice of qualitative research in a dangerous African context. Our reflection pursues the questioning of the adequacy of traditional data collection tools in a dangerous field and the need for methodological bricolages as an adaptation strategy. Our experience confirms that fieldwork with vulnerable populations upsets the methodological and ethical certainties of researchers and forces them to pragmatism and innovation. Our contribution also enables us to measure the importance of continuing research on the ethical aspects of social science research in Africa, where many countries do not yet have formalized ethical codes.

Keywords: dangerous fields, security challenges, ethical challenges, methodological bricolages, Cameroon, Anglophone crisis.

Introduction

Si les ouvrages de méthodologie qualitative en sciences sociales enseignent comment élaborer et planifier un projet de recherche, le terrain de l'enquête a sa propre matrice normative et sociale, qui détermine le processus de recherche et qu'il est intéressant d'investiguer (Holloway 1997). En effet,

le terrain, surtout le terrain difficile, provoque souvent des bricolages méthodologiques qui façonnent à nouveaux frais l'objet de recherche et la nature des données produites. Comme l'écrivent Ayimpa et Boujou (2015:16) :

> On ne choisit pas impunément d'enquêter aux marges de la société, sur un objet tabou, avec des personnes condamnables ou en contexte de contestation politique ou de traumatisme post-conflit. L'anthropologue peut s'attendre à ce que de telles situations d'enquête soient chargées d'une violence potentielle ou effective menaçante pour l'enquête.

C'est bien ce dont notre équipe de recherche a fait l'expérience et voudrait ici rendre compte, afin d'enrichir la littérature croissante sur les retours d'expériences de terrains difficiles (Boumaza & Campana 2007 ; Bizeul 2007 ; Romani 2007 ; Kane 2012 ; Riedke 2015 ; Boujou 2015). Par ailleurs, en raison de la nécessité, comme le remarquent Assogba (2007) et Locoh (1997), d'adapter les théories et méthodologies construites au Nord aux contextes africains, il est important de documenter la pratique du terrain en Afrique. «Ce qu'il faut remettre en cause, ce ne sont pas tant les méthodes que les concepts qui les ont inspirées et les démonstrations ethnocentrées que certaines méthodes étaient censées valider.» (Locoh 1997 : 13) En outre, la pertinence de ce travail se justifie en raison de la multiplicité de situations d'urgence, de conflit ou de postconflit qui viennent questionner les canons de la recherche qualitative en «terrain difficile» (Boumaza & Campana 2007:6). Selon ces derniers auteurs, la construction d'un terrain difficile a une dimension subjective, la perception du danger et de la difficulté étant variable.

Dans l'introduction à un volume consacré aux défis émotionnels et éthiques de la recherche de terrain en Afrique, Thomson, Ansoms et Murison (2013:1) affirment :

> La littérature académique rend rarement compte de «l'histoire derrière les résultats», c'est-à-dire des défis éthiques et des écueils émotionnels auxquels vous, le chercheur, êtes confronté avant, pendant et après l'expérience sur le terrain. Ces bourbiers ont un impact potentiellement réel sur le processus de recherche et ses résultats. Ils méritent une attention appropriée, non seulement pour comprendre le biais inévitable dans la position des chercheurs sur le terrain et pour évaluer la qualité des résultats de la recherche, mais aussi pour illustrer le fait que la façade de «validité scientifique et de neutralité» cache souvent une approche pragmatique qui a façonné le processus de recherche empirique. Reconnaître cela ne dégrade pas la qualité et la valeur des données empiriques ; [une telle reconnaissance] place plutôt les résultats de la recherche sur le terrain dans un contexte sociopolitique plus large, quelle que soit la discipline universitaire qui a produit les résultats.

Dans l'ouvrage d'où est tiré l'extrait ci-dessus, l'accent est mis sur la région des Grands Lacs et les thèmes traités incluent l'éthique, l'anticipation du contrôle et de la surveillance gouvernementaux, le travail avec les communautés touchées par les conflits, la gestion des attentes des informateurs, la confiance, l'interprétation des mensonges et de la désinformation et l'établissement de relations de recherche significatives. Il en ressort que la vulnérabilité des enquêtés détermine le contenu de ce qu'ils partagent avec le chercheur. Flexibilité, adaptabilité, et patience s'imposent alors pour relever les défis du terrain. En effet, construire une relation de confiance avec ses informateurs dans un contexte marqué par la violence, les conflits, la peur et l'insécurité prend du temps (Thomson, Ansoms & Murison 2013 ; Johnstone 2019), une denrée dont le chercheur ne dispose pas toujours.

Comment enquêter en « terrain difficile » (Boumaza & Campana 2007 ; Ayimpa & Boujou 2015) ou en « *dangerous fields* » (Peritore 1990, Kovats-Bernat 2002, Nilan 2002, Naz 2002) ? Si cette question à laquelle notre équipe de recherche a été confrontée n'est pas nouvelle en sciences sociales, elle peut revêtir des contours nouveaux selon les contextes. C'est pourquoi il nous a semblé opportun, au regard des accents propres à notre contexte, de la problématiser à nouveau frais, d'autant plus qu'elle est peu abordée dans la littérature francophone et en contexte africain (Thomson, Ansoms & Murison 2013).

L'objectif principal de notre projet de recherche était d'investiguer l'enseignement de l'histoire au Cameroun dans les deux sous-systèmes, anglophone et francophone, considérés comme lieux de construction contrastée des mémoires. Dans la phase de planification de la collecte de données, nous avions retenu comme méthodes l'observation, les entretiens semi-directifs, l'administration d'un questionnaire et la recherche documentaire. Les difficultés problématisées dans le cadre du présent article sont essentiellement, mais pas exclusivement, celles qui ont émaillé la conduite des entretiens semi-directifs et l'administration des questionnaires aux cibles anglophones dans les zones anglophones. En effet, dans le souci de prendre en compte les spécificités linguistiques et géographiques du Cameroun, où le français et l'anglais sont les deux langues officielles, la collecte des données a été menée dans 9 villes, dont 6 dans la partie francophone du territoire et 3 dans la partie anglophone. Parmi les 6 villes francophones fréquentées, 3 sont situées dans la zone septentrionale (Maroua, Ngaoundéré et Kousséri), 2 dans la région du Centre (Yaoundé, Obala) et 1 dans la région du Littoral (Douala). Les trois villes ciblées dans la zone anglophone se trouvent dans le Sud-Ouest (Kumba, Limbé, Buea). Étaient considérés comme cibles pertinentes pour l'enquête les enseignants ayant suivi une formation d'historien ou d'historien-géographe à

l'université et les élèves des établissements secondaires des deux sous-systèmes anglophone et francophone. Parmi les enseignants, 75 étaient issus du sous-système francophone et 32 ressortaient du sous-système anglophone. Quant aux élèves, 83 d'entre eux fréquentaient le sous-système francophone alors que 38 allaient dans le sous-système anglophone.

Qu'est-ce qui fonde la caractérisation – voire la construction – de notre terrain, du moins en partie, comme « difficile » et « dangereux » ? Principalement le contexte actuel d'une crise sociopolitique marquée par la violence dans les régions anglophones du Cameroun. Il est toujours délicat de parler de l'histoire en train de se faire, surtout lorsque cette histoire est rattachée à des mémoires douloureuses et à des revendications identitaires et politiques. La construction et la polarisation des identités anglophone et francophone au Cameroun sont tributaires de l'histoire coloniale et de la gestion du double héritage colonial après la réunification en 1961 (Koning & Nyamjoh 1997, 2003 ; Konings 1996 ; Tiewa & Vubo 2015 ; Tapuka 2017 ; Anye 2008 ; Nkot 1999 ; Nyamjoh 1999 ; Jua & Konings 2004).

La crise anglophone, telle qu'on la connaît aujourd'hui, surgit au courant de 2016 (Pommerolle & Heungoup 2017), mais est portée par une trame qui se tisse depuis 1961. La crise débute par une grève d'avocats anglophones qui contestent la « francisation » du droit et de la justice. La répression d'une manifestation pacifique organisée à Bamenda le 8 novembre 2016 envenime la situation. Les enseignants rejoignent ensuite les manifestations pour des raisons similaires, entraînant les étudiants, d'où un nouveau cycle de violences et d'émeutes avec leur lot de blessés et de morts. Du Nord-Ouest où elles commencent, les contestations s'étendent au Sud-Ouest. Les mots d'ordre sécessionnistes se diffusent, tandis que les incidents violents de part et d'autre se multiplient, mettant en péril les initiatives initiales de dialogue. Progressivement, la crise se mue en conflit armé entre l'armée camerounaise et une constellation de milices ambazoniennes (Petrigh 2019).

Dans un tel environnement, l'équipe de recherche a été confrontée à la dangerosité – voire la quasi-impossibilité – de collecter les données dans les zones anglophones, d'une part à cause des problèmes d'insécurité, et de l'autre du fait de la peur, de la part des enquêtés, de s'exprimer sur des questions sensibles d'histoire politique. Quels sont les défis sécuritaires et éthiques auxquels nous avons été confrontés et quelles sont les stratégies adoptées pour les relever ?

Telle est la question principale qui structure la présente contribution, subdivisée en trois sections : la première plante le décor conceptuel, la deuxième illustre les défis éthiques et sécuritaires rencontrés sur le terrain et la dernière se penche sur les stratégies déployées pour y faire face.

Cadre conceptuel et théorique

Le concept clé qui structure la présente contribution est celui de « terrain difficile », qui impose souvent aux chercheurs de procéder à des bricolages méthodologiques de circonstance. La littérature sur la gestion des terrains difficiles ou dangereux s'est beaucoup enrichie ces deux dernières décennies, surtout dans les milieux anglo-saxons, de travaux sur les défis méthodologiques propres aux enquêtes dans les sociétés en proie aux violences (Nordstrom & Robben 1997 ; Johler, Marchetti & Scheer 2010). Obtenir des données fiables dans des contextes où règne l'insécurité et où les droits de l'homme ne sont pas respectés reste un véritable défi. Selon Hall-Clifford et Cook-Deegan (2019:9), ces défis doivent être explicitement abordés dans le rendu de la recherche lorsque le contexte limite la collecte de données, lorsque les méthodes adoptées pour atténuer les risques peuvent influencer les résultats ou lorsque les expériences peuvent être utilisées pour édifier les futures générations de chercheurs.

Deux des plus récentes publications sur l'enquête de terrain dans des contextes marqués par la violence et la guerre sont d'un intérêt certain pour la présente contribution (Bliesemann de Guevara & Bøås 2020 ; Kušić & Zahora 2020). Ces deux ouvrages ne se contentent pas de répéter qu'il existe un écart entre la théorie et la pratique du terrain, mais illustrent ces écarts par une relecture critique d'expériences personnelles de terrain en termes de défis, dilemmes et échecs. Il s'agit d'un prolongement et d'un enrichissement d'une littérature tout aussi croissante sur la positionnalité, la réflexivité et l'intersectionnalité qui met en exergue les asymétries inhérentes à tout travail de production de connaissance.

Dans l'introduction au volume édité par leurs soins, Berit Bliesemann de Guevara et Morten Bøås notent qu'il « rassemble plutôt les récits francs et (auto-)critiques de chercheurs de terrain qui ont pris le courage de réfléchir publiquement à certaines de leurs erreurs et de nommer les dilemmes du travail de terrain dans des contextes violents et fermés – des dilemmes que nous pouvons nous préparer à affronter, mais que nous ne pouvons pas résoudre » (Bliesemann de Guevara & Bøås 2020 : 20). Enquêter sur la violence ou en temps de violence expose aussi bien le chercheur, ses collaborateurs que les enquêtés à des risques et dilemmes de plusieurs ordres (Cook & Holden 2006). Les principaux sont les suivants : maîtrise et confusion, sécurité et risque, distance et proximité, sexualité et sensibilité.

Tous ces défis, illustrés de plus en plus par des expériences personnelles de chercheurs, montrent que :

> Même les chercheurs les plus préparés ou les plus expérimentés ont trimé avec l'idée de contrôler le processus de recherche sur le terrain dans un contexte fermé ou violent, et comment cela a affecté les plans de travail sur le terrain, les données générées et les personnes impliquées. Les exemples montrent également qu'il n'y a aucun moyen d'empêcher les chercheurs dans les domaines d'intervention d'avoir à prendre des décisions en déplacement, peu importe leur degré de préparation à entrer « sur le terrain », et les auteurs discutent de la façon dont ils ont relevé ces défis, pour le meilleur ou (dans certains cas) pour le pire. (Bliesemann de Guevara & Bøås 2020:23)

Certains auteurs, par exemple, soulignent la difficulté de conduire des interviews dans des contextes répressifs (Markus Göransson 2020). D'autres se penchent sur la problématique de la négociation, sur le terrain, des questions d'identité et de positionnalité aggravées par les soucis de sécurité qui obligent parfois le chercheur à sous-traiter la collecte de données (Bouju 2015 ; Sharp & Kremer 2006 ; Homan 2016).

Le volume édité par Kušić et Zahora (2020) vise à rompre le silence qui entoure l'expérience de l'échec sur le terrain tant dans la formation sur les méthodes de recherche que dans les publications scientifiques. Il s'agit de combler cette lacune en abordant le travail de terrain comme site de co-production de connaissances et d'échec inévitable. L'originalité du volume de Katarina Kušić et Jakub Zahora réside dans la problématisation sans complaisance de l'expérience de l'échec sur le terrain. Cette problématisation :

> […] permet d'être plus transparent sur de nombreux facteurs matériels et émotionnels qui façonnent notre recherche […] des conventions académiques de longue date qui forment des subjectivités académiques, et offre l'occasion de remettre en question l'obsession des universitaires pour la productivité et le récit de recherche désincarnée. (Kušić & Zahora 2020:2-3)

Selon ces auteurs, l'échec est inhérent à tout processus de recherche en sciences sociales parce que la production de connaissance est nécessairement collaborative. L'échec peut se situer au moins à deux niveaux : la volonté de maîtrise du déroulé de notre enquête et le souci de la représentation objective de la réalité. Ainsi : « Les histoires que nous racontons sont nécessairement marquées par l'échec : elles sont incomplètes, situées et imprégnées du pouvoir de notre propre interprétation » (Kušić & Zahora 2020:4 ; v. aussi Dariusz & Kostera 2010). En problématisant l'échec comme expérience de terrain, il est question de remettre en question l'idéal de l'enquêteur comme navigateur désincarné dans les méandres du social.

L'échec sur le terrain peut aussi se vivre dans le domaine des connexions émotionnelles quand on se sent incapable de « se mettre dans la peau de l'autre », quand on éprouve les limites de tout effort d'empathie. Clark

(2012) déplore l'oubli des défis éthiques et émotionnels dans les cours de méthodologie, lesquels sont souvent concentrés sur les aspects techniques, comme l'élaboration des questionnaires et des guides d'interviews. Face aux défis éthiques et émotionnels sur le terrain de recherche, il préconise une approche situationnelle, car si les codes éthiques sont utiles, ils peuvent s'avérer limités du fait de la complexité du terrain. Les défis éthiques récurrents concernent l'objectivité du chercheur, la relation entre l'intervieweur et l'interviewé, la question de la représentation et des récompenses, la question de la neutralité du chercheur, souvent confronté à des situations d'injustice sociale (Hemmings 2009 ; Maeckelbergh 2016 ; Armbruster & Lærke 2010).

Widdowfield (2002) part de son expérience des émotions, comme la colère et la frustration qu'il a ressenties devant les injustices en faisant du terrain sur l'accès à l'habitat dans les quartiers pauvres de Newcastle en Angleterre. L'auteur note qu'en général, les émotions ressenties par le chercheur et leur impact sur les travaux entrepris figurent rarement dans les récits de recherche. Cela peut refléter des doutes quant à la crédibilité académique et la validité de l'inclusion d'une discussion sur ses émotions dans les comptes rendus de recherche (Benett 2004 ; Fernandez 2005 ; Heathcote 2016 ; Widdowfield 2000, Naz 2012).

Ayimpa a enquêté sur la violence anti-sorcières au Kinshasa et postule que l'étude de la violence ou en contexte de violence entraîne des défis qui rendent la neutralité axiologique difficile. Pour l'auteur, la difficulté à pratiquer la neutralité axiologique rencontre celle à pratiquer l'empathie et « les principes méthodologiques se heurtent à ceux de la morale. » (Ayimpa 2015:65) Murphy, pour sa part, aborde les défis éthiques et émotionnels liés à une ethnographie de la souffrance humaine en général et du traumatisme en particulier. Sa recherche portait sur les récits de vie des aborigènes de la « *stolen generation* » en Australie. Elle souligne l'importance de l'empathie et de « l'éthique de l'écoute » dans la collecte de données (Murphy 2015 ; Theidon 2001).

Mais Jean Copans (2015) souligne, quant à lui, les limites des réflexivités méthodologiques, éthiques et empathiques face aux nécessités d'une réflexion conceptuelle propre. Pour lui, « l'instance éthique n'a de sens que si elle accompagne *et non précède* la "construction" conceptuelle voire même tente de s'y substituer. » (Copans 2015:174) Or il ne s'agit pas de capituler devant les défis, voire l'échec, mais de les aborder comme une résistance à l'impératif de production qui appelle à l'innovation méthodologique.

Les défis sécuritaires et éthiques

Dans le cadre de la présente analyse, les enjeux sécuritaires et éthiques sont liés et ne sont donc pas traités séparément (Wood 2006). Dans la plupart des pays occidentaux, tout projet de recherche scientifique doit passer par une évaluation du comité éthique de l'institution dont dépend le porteur du projet. Au Cameroun, « il existe deux instruments juridiques du ministère de la Santé publique (un arrêté de 1987 et une décision de 2009) qui encadrent la recherche impliquant des êtres humains dans le pays » (Kedoté *et al.* 2017:68). Cependant, exception faite des recherches en médecine, pour lesquelles des comités bioéthiques existent, éthique et recherche ne sont pas souvent associées. C'est le cas de la recherche en sciences sociales, pour laquelle aucun organisme officiel ne contrôle la conformité éthique des projets de recherche. L'éthique est structurée par la notion de responsabilité (Collignon 2010:69), notion au cœur des enjeux de notre recherche.

Dans les régions anglophones, la recherche a mobilisé des associés de terrain, recrutés sur la base de leur connaissance et de leurs affinités avec la région et le terrain de l'étude. Un « francophone » ne pouvait pas, sans courir un grand risque, aller enquêter dans les zones anglophones sur la question de la construction de la mémoire historique. Les enquêteurs anglophones ont donc été privilégiés pour le travail de terrain dans ces régions. Mais cette option s'est révélée n'être pas une panacée. Plusieurs situations vécues par nos enquêteurs interpellent sur la responsabilité éthique de la sécurité des personnes et des données.

Au sujet de la sécurité des enquêteurs, par exemple, nos agents de collecte de données Mark, Edmond et Sandra devaient effectuer une descente de terrain dans la zone de Kumba pour interviewer des enseignants qui avaient accepté de les recevoir. Deux jours après qu'ils soient partis de Buea, où un membre de l'équipe de recherche s'était rendu pour les recruter, ce dernier a reçu un appel de Mark. Il s'était bien rendu à Kumba, mais avait été pris comme cible d'une attaque perpétrée par des individus qu'il identifie comme un groupe d'Ambaboys (rebelles). « *Est-il blessé?* » s'inquiète la membre de l'équipe qui le supervisait. Si oui, est-ce grave ? A-t-il réussi à se mettre à l'abri ? Rapidement, il lui explique au téléphone que pour des raisons de sécurité, il serait imprudent d'en parler au téléphone. Elle lui suggère de lui faire signe dès qu'il jugera le contexte adéquat et lui propose de lui faire parvenir de l'argent pour s'extraire de la zone. Une semaine plus tard, elle est toujours sans nouvelles de lui. Elle prend le risque de l'appeler malgré son avertissement de ne pas le faire. Il ne décroche pas, bien que sa ligne soit ouverte. Après deux tentatives infructueuses, elle raccroche. Deux jours plus tard, elle essaie à nouveau. Cette fois-ci, la ligne n'est plus ouverte.

Elle panique. Ne sachant par quel moyen le joindre, elle appelle Edmond, l'assistant de recherche qui l'avait recommandé. Il promet de se renseigner. Le soir, Edmond l'appelle pour la rassurer. Il a pu parler à quelqu'un qui a vu Mark la veille. Il est bien portant, il est dans son village. Elle est soulagée. Peu importe l'échec de la mission. Il est sauf. Elle s'en tient à cela et demande aux autres de rentrer sur Douala.

Cette expérience de terrain met en exergue des défis d'ordres sécuritaire, éthique et émotionnel. Sur le plan sécuritaire, il est question de la sécurité des enquêteurs. Si un des collaborateurs ou un des agents de terrain se trouvait pris dans une embuscade ou tout simplement en danger de quelque manière que ce soit, quelle serait la responsabilité de chacune des parties ? À ce questionnement, les organismes de recherche dans les pays du Nord répondent qu'il est de la responsabilité du chercheur principal de prendre toutes les mesures possibles et nécessaires afin de garantir la sécurité des données, ce qui s'étend à des considérations d'anonymisation et de garantie de la sécurité des participants à l'étude. Il doit être capable de s'assurer d'avoir obtenu le consentement libre et éclairé, c'est-à-dire en toute connaissance de cause des risques et sans aucune pression extérieure, de chaque participant (Collignon 2010). L'enjeu éthique à ce niveau repose donc sur la capacité du chercheur à agir de manière responsable sur le terrain, c'est-à-dire en tenant compte des risques auxquels sont soumis les enquêteurs et les données. Cela implique sa capacité à informer clairement les partenaires de tous les risques auxquels ils s'exposent en acceptant de contribuer à l'étude.

Le défi sécuritaire est accolé à la notion de risque. Ce risque se manifeste lorsqu'on implique des populations et catégories sociales méprisées, abandonnées ou stigmatisées dans l'enquête. Ainsi, une situation locale d'extrême tension politique ou d'exacerbation des haines religieuses, et susceptible de basculer à tout instant dans l'expression d'une violence plus ou moins brutale, constitue à l'évidence un risque objectif, tant pour le chercheur que pour les sujets enquêtés (Ayimpam, Chelpi-den Hamer & Bouju 2014:27 ; Ayimpam 2015). Du fait d'un contexte de conflit armé et de revendications politiques, le chercheur peut être contraint de déléguer la collecte de données à des tiers (Tenevic & Weber 1992). C'est, par exemple, l'expérience de Morten Boas au Mali dans un contexte sahélien marqué par l'insécurité et des prises d'otage visant spécifiquement les Blancs (Boas 2020). Mais cette délégation soulève un certain nombre de questions relatives à la qualité des données : dans un contexte hautement insécurisé, à qui faire confiance en matière de données et d'informations ? À qui faire confiance pour obtenir des conseils de sécurité judicieux ? Et comment l'argent influence-t-il nos relations de recherche ? La vulnérabilité économique des partenaires locaux les pousse

souvent à prendre des risques que le chercheur lui-même n'est pas disposé à prendre. D'où la nécessité de problématiser honnêtement la place de l'argent dans les rapports de pouvoir sur le terrain.

En effet, les attentes des enquêtés peuvent aussi être matérielles et, ici aussi, il revient au chercheur d'évaluer convenablement la situation, surtout quand la recherche se déroule dans un contexte de précarité économique de la plupart des cibles. Le récit suivant en est une bonne illustration. Dans le cadre de notre première enquête à Yaoundé, 5 enseignants approchés via un forum d'anciens normaliens ont accepté de répondre à notre questionnaire. Le rendez-vous est pris dans un restaurant. Mais au moment d'entamer les échanges, ils ne souhaitent pas être enregistrés. On leur fait remarquer que pour des enseignants, ayant eux aussi fait l'expérience de la recherche, c'est surprenant. Ils persistent dans leur refus. Le dictaphone est rangé et l'enquêtrice sort son calepin en vue d'engager les échanges. C'est alors que l'un d'entre eux demande quelles sont les conditions de rémunération. On leur fait remarquer qu'ainsi qu'ils le savent, il n'est pas éthique de payer pour avoir des informations, car cela pourrait biaiser leurs réponses. C'est alors qu'ils me révèlent qu'ils savent que l'enquêtrice travaille avec le Codesria et que le Codesria est un organisme qui finance généreusement tous les projets qu'il organise.

Nous avons affaire ici à des logiques transactionnelles d'ordre matériel qui interviennent rarement dans la récolte de données en Occident. Se pose non seulement la question des limites éthiques de telles transactions, mais aussi de leur impact sur la qualité des données récoltées dans ces conditions. En effet, la transaction donne l'impression que l'enquêté vend ses données ou que l'enquêteur les achète. Il est arrivé que l'initiative d'offrir un cadeau à l'enquêté soit celle de l'enquêteur et non une réponse à une exigence préalable. Une telle démarche participe de la stratégie d'approche d'une catégorie d'enquêtés comme les retraités, les personnes vulnérables, les enseignants vivant en situation de précarité économique, etc. Ces gestes sont souvent très appréciés des enquêtés, qui par la suite se montrent très coopératifs dans la récolte de données. Il existe, bien évidemment, une autre catégorie d'enquêtés n'exigeant aucune contrepartie matérielle de l'enquêteur. Faute de panacée, il revient à l'enquêteur d'apprécier chaque situation en veillant à ce que la transaction, là où elle s'impose, ne porte pas atteinte à la qualité des données.

Kovats-Bernat (2002) soutient que les méthodes classiques de collecte de données peuvent s'avérer inefficaces sur un terrain dangereux. Alors s'imposent des stratégies plus informelles qui remettent en question l'éthique conventionnelle, reconfigurent la relation entre l'anthropologue et

l'informateur, et forcent à l'innovation dans la collecte de données dans des circonstances dangereuses. Il préconise une approche pragmatique. Kovats-Bernat observe que les codes d'éthique de la recherche stipulent que les anthropologues ont des obligations d'ordre sécuritaire envers les personnes qu'ils étudient et les personnes avec lesquelles ils travaillent. Mais, selon lui, dans la réalité, la responsabilité est partagée puisque les interlocuteurs du chercheur connaissent mieux le terrain que lui, d'où la nécessité d'une « éthique localisée » (Kovats-Bernat 2002:215). Pour cet auteur, il ne s'agit pas d'abandonner les codes d'éthique classiques, mais d'envisager l'adoption d'une éthique plus situationnelle, surtout si elle peut réduire les risques.

L'autre enjeu est celui de la sécurité des données. Par exemple, nos assistants d'enquête rapportent des situations dans lesquelles les données récoltées ont dû être dissimulées pour échapper à la vigilance de la police nationale ou des rebelles ambazoniens. En effet, dans ce contexte, posséder des questionnaires sur des évènements tels que la réunification du Cameroun comporte un risque majeur, de saisie des données ou de représailles contre l'enquêteur, comme l'illustre bien l'épisode suivant. Dans le cas de la présente recherche, une enquêtrice fait remarquer que son choix d'utiliser la version numérique du questionnaire, plutôt que la version papier pour mener les enquêtes, a été capital pour sa sécurité sur le terrain. D'après elle, son choix d'utiliser la version numérique plutôt que la version papier du questionnaire pour mener les enquêtes lui a probablement permis d'échapper à un enlèvement. En effet, le véhicule qui la ramenait sur Douala aurait été stoppé par un groupe d'individus qui, selon elle, étaient des ambaboys (rebelles). Étant donné que les « ambazoniens » se battent contre l'administration publique et s'attaquent à tout symbole incarnant ou rappelant les institutions étatiques, elle explique que la possession des fiches d'enquêtes traitant d'un sujet d'histoire aurait pu être considérée comme une provocation, un refus de sa part de respecter le boycott de l'école imposé par les rebelles dans cette région depuis le début des conflits. Une telle accusation, au mieux, lui aurait valu d'être retenue de force en vue d'une rançon, au pire, d'être massacrée.

Ce récit nous ramène aussi à la question de savoir comment sécuriser et transporter les données en situation de risque. Partant du cas d'un travail de terrain en Chine, Joniak-Lüthi (2016) aborde les défis méthodologiques et éthiques liés à la recherche de terrain dans le contexte de régimes autoritaires et répressifs, où même les chercheurs sont sous surveillance. Le chercheur est confronté à la méfiance sociale et à la peur générées par l'autoritarisme ambiant. Ce type de contexte engendre de multiples silences aussi bien de la part de chercheurs locaux que des enquêtés. Dans des contextes répressifs, les méthodes classiques sont limitées : l'utilisation du papier, du stylo et

d'enregistreurs dans les interviews devient contre-productive ; l'observation participante de la part d'un étranger en Chine est généralement suspecte. Il convient alors de prendre le temps d'expliquer aux parties prenantes le caractère académique de la recherche, pour établir des relations de confiance et pour reconnaître que le souci de ne pas exposer ses informateurs à des risques irraisonnables déteint sur l'analyse des données. Cependant, l'interprétation et l'analyse des données consistent aussi à faire parler les silences et les peurs (Joniak-Lüthi 2016 ; Geros 2010). Peritore (1990), à partir de son expérience de terrain au Brésil, fait remarquer que le travail de terrain en Amérique latine peut être dangereux pour le chercheur et l'enquêté. Des méthodes de collecte de données plus discrètes comme les entretiens discrets, l'observation discrète des participants, etc. s'imposent.

L'enjeu sécuritaire dans un contexte de conflit armé peut aussi concerner l'entourage familial de l'enquêteur, comme l'illustre cet autre récit. Au terme de l'enquête, une des assistantes anglophones que nous nommerons Sylvia décide d'apporter des cadeaux à sa famille dont elle est sans nouvelles depuis 9 mois. Elle prévoit d'y passer une semaine. Deux jours plus tard, elle a la surprise de recevoir un coup de fil de ses parents et décide d'annuler son déplacement. Ses parents, informés de son projet, l'en ont dissuadé, estimant qu'au regard du contexte, un tel cadeau pourrait être mal interprété. En effet, au sein de leur communauté, les conditions de vie sont particulièrement précaires depuis le début des conflits. De plus, les familles ont perdu le contact avec certains de leurs membres et ne peuvent plus compter sur leur générosité. Dans ces conditions, ses parents lui ont expliqué qu'ils craignaient, si elle leur envoyait des cadeaux, d'être l'objet de la méfiance ou de suspicion de la part des autres villageois.

Intégrer ces risques au processus de recherche c'est, entre autres, se poser la question de savoir jusqu'où aller dans la course aux données. Dans le cas d'un terrain difficile, jusqu'à quel point prendre soi-même des risques ou exposer des enquêteurs à des risques dans le but de collecter les données ? Ce sont des questions qui se posent tout au long de la recherche dans le cadre des ajustements méthodologiques.

Il est de la responsabilité du chercheur de faire une évaluation exhaustive des risques et de prendre des décisions appropriées. La principale stratégie utilisée pour relever ce défi a été de retirer les agents de terrain des zones à risque et, lorsque cela était possible, de les faire accompagner sur le terrain par des agents de sécurité. En effet, les agents de terrain ayant ensuite décidé de repartir poursuivre les enquêtes, la chercheure a embauché deux gendarmes qui ont accepté de les accompagner, mais en tenue civile. Cette seconde fois, l'enquête s'est mieux passée que la première fois.

Les stratégies d'adaptation

En situation de difficulté d'accès au terrain, les stratégies d'adaptation peuvent être de plusieurs ordres : changement de sujet, mais sur le même terrain ; changement de terrain avec le même sujet ; changement de sujet et de terrain, etc. Par exemple, Johannes Gunesch et Amina Nolte racontent comment, pour des raisons de sécurité, ils durent abandonner le projet de leur terrain en Égypte en faveur d'une étude de la diaspora égyptienne (Gunesh & Nolte 2020).

Certains auteurs, comme nous l'avons vu, postulent la nécessité en terrain de violence d'adapter les méthodes classiques ainsi que l'éthique conventionnelle de la recherche (Cassel 1980 ; Kovats-Bernat 2002) pour pouvoir collecter des données fiables. En s'appuyant sur son expérience du Mali, notamment l'éclatement de la guerre dans le Nord en 2012 qui rendit temporairement leur terrain inaccessible, Haberg et Körling (2015:142) affirment :

> Nous considérons que le fait d'être confronté à l'impossibilité d'accéder au terrain conduit à s'interroger sur les conceptions anthropologiques conventionnelles du « terrain » et des « relations d'enquête », entre autres, celle de considérer automatiquement l'enquête de terrain comme seule source légitime d'information ou celle de réduire la discipline anthropologique à la méthode de l'observation participante.

Dans notre cas, la prise en compte des enjeux sécuritaires n'a pas facilité la conduite des entretiens dans les zones anglophones. Plusieurs stratégies ont cependant été déployées pour garantir la qualité des données : premièrement, la mobilisation des sources documentaires, la diversification géographique des terrains pour des besoins de triangulation, et l'enquête auprès des cibles anglophones en zone francophones.

Les entretiens individuels, bien qu'étant utiles pour notre recherche, ne sont pas la seule source de données mobilisées. Les manuels scolaires officiels et non officiels d'enseignement de l'histoire dans les deux sous-systèmes éducatifs ont constitué une source accessible et complémentaire de données. Une partie de nos données est donc issue de la comparaison des manuels d'histoire des deux sous-systèmes anglophones et francophones, avec des critères objectifs : périodes, séquences et thématiques mises en avant, moment du début et de la fin de l'enseignement de certains sujets, nombre d'heures assignées à différents thèmes, contenus, etc. L'objectivité des critères repose sur le fait que l'étude peut être reproduite en utilisant les mêmes critères, avec la possibilité de comparer les résultats. Partir de ces sources documentaires permet d'établir une base de comparaison des deux

sous-systèmes et de répondre à notre question de recherche. Les résultats des entretiens viennent en complément à ces données documentaires.

Au sujet de la diversification géographique, appréhender la diversité des points de vue est un impératif pour répondre à notre question de recherche. L'hétérogénéité de l'échantillon et des lieux géographiques des entretiens a été un atout dans ce sens. Cette diversification permet de se concentrer sur la construction des mémoires. Elle a par exemple permis de voir qu'à l'intérieur même du système francophone, la construction de la mémoire chez les enseignants et les apprenants n'était pas homogène, ce qui éclaire sur l'hypothèse de la construction contrastée des mémoires entre deux systèmes d'enseignement marqués par des différences. Il a été aussi possible de relever des micro-histoires propres à des régions particulières.

La diversification a concerné les élèves dans cinq régions du Cameroun, Centre, Nord-Ouest, Sud-Ouest, Littoral, Septentrion. Par ailleurs, un des effets des situations politiques conflictuelles est le déplacement interne des populations. Cela a donc permis d'avoir accès à des enseignants provenant des zones de conflits déplacées dans les zones francophones. Quelques-unes des cibles anglophones ont pu être enquêtées par voie numérique (téléphone, email, WhatsApp) comme stratégie plus sécurisante et sécurisée pour l'enquêté. Cela illustre bien l'importance des nouveaux médias dans les bricolages méthodologiques en terrain difficile (Sunderland 1999 ; Côté 2013). Mais la stratégie majeure pour faire face à l'inaccessibilité des zones anglophones a été d'enquêter sur le sous-système anglophone en zone francophone. Le mutisme observé par la totalité des répondants anglophones sur le sujet de la crise anglophone – une actualité dont les liens avec la mémoire de la réunification des parties anglophone et francophone du Cameroun, dont traite notre enquête, a pourtant été établie et médiatisée dans l'espace public – participe également de cette atmosphère délétère. Par crainte de représailles, des enseignants francophones et anglophones pratiquent l'autocensure dans leurs pratiques enseignantes et se montrent préoccupés des effets de l'embrigadement pédagogique dont ils sont victimes sur la construction mémorielle de leurs apprenants.

Loin d'être exceptionnels, les mécanismes institutionnels de contrôle de la profession enseignante prennent au quotidien des formes variées. Ainsi, des enseignants d'histoire, répertoriés dans le fichier de la police pour le caractère « subversif » de leur enseignement, se révèlent être, de la part de leur hiérarchie, l'objet d'intimidations, de mutations disciplinaires et d'ostracismes. Mises en lien avec la brûlante actualité politique camerounaise, de telles manœuvres de coercition expliquent la réticence, voire le refus de nombre d'enseignants anglophones contactés, de participer à la présente enquête.

Conclusion

L'objectif de cet article était de proposer une réflexion sur les questionnements et défis qui se posent en terrain difficile, ainsi que quelques stratégies, déployées dans le cadre de notre terrain marqué par le conflit armé dans les régions anglophones au Cameroun. Le terrain soulève des défis de plusieurs ordres : éthiques, sécuritaires, émotionnels, transactionnels, méthodologiques, etc.

Notre réflexion prolonge le questionnement sur l'adéquation des outils traditionnels de collecte de données en terrain difficile. Au-delà des principes, le chercheur africain en terrain difficile, marqué notamment par des conflits, reste un produit de sa propre société. Ses positionnements idéologiques et affectifs peuvent déterminer le choix et le traitement de son sujet de recherche. Deux des membres de notre équipe de recherche sont ressortissants des deux régions anglophones en proie aux violences et sont, par ailleurs, activement impliqués dans la recherche d'une solution à cette crise. Au départ, l'équipe leur avait confié la récolte des données dans les zones anglophones, du fait de leurs affinités avec les cibles concernées. Mais eux aussi ont buté sur la résistance des enquêtés anglophone à s'étendre sur le sujet sensible du rôle de l'enseignement de l'histoire dans la construction de la mémoire collective au Cameroun.

Notre contribution permet aussi de mesurer l'importance de la promotion de la recherche sur l'éthique de la recherche en sciences sociales sur le continent, où nombre de pays ne disposent pas codes éthiques formalisés. Les comités éthiques existants, par exemple, limités essentiellement à la recherche en santé au Cameroun, ne prennent pas en compte les recherches en sciences sociales (Kedoté *et al.* 2017). Il convient non seulement de promouvoir des comités d'évaluation éthique, mais aussi de susciter un débat sur l'éthique de la recherche. Cela est d'une importance particulière dans un contexte où le travail de terrain est partiellement sous-traité, et ce d'autant plus qu'il se fait auprès de populations qui, d'une manière ou d'une autre, se trouvent vulnérabilisées (Tenevic & Weber 1992). La culture éthique participe aussi de l'enjeu sécuritaire.

Le travail de terrain auprès de populations vulnérables bouscule les certitudes méthodologiques et éthiques des chercheurs et les contraint au pragmatisme dans l'innovation. En étant sensibles aux défis sécuritaires, éthiques et émotionnels, nous sommes bien loin des prescriptions positivistes d'un Durkheim qui préconisait de traiter les faits sociaux comme des choses (Durkheim 1894). Il en est de même pour la neutralité axiologique de Weber, qui exige que le chercheur ne transpose pas des jugements évaluatifs ou ses propres valeurs dans la recherche. (Weber 2003:97) Les crises politiques

endémiques et la récurrence des violations de droits l'homme dans beaucoup de pays africains les transforment en « terrains difficiles » pour des chercheurs qui choisissent d'aborder des sujets politiquement sensibles comme le nôtre sur la construction des mémoires collectives dans le domaine de l'éducation.

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Caractérisation de *Carapa Procera* DC et ses services économiques en milieu diola (Basse Casamance – Sénégal)

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Résumé

La crise environnementale des années 1970 a frappé de plein fouet la Casamance. Face à la paupérisation en zone rurale, la biodiversité végétale a permis aux populations de survivre. Certaines espèces ont alors pris une importance particulière dans la vie des populations. *Carapa procera* est l'une de ces espèces d'où l'importance de disposer d'informations fiables sur le peuplement et les services qu'il offre aux communautés. Cette étude se propose de contribuer à l'évaluation des peuplements de *Carapa procera* en Basse Casamance. Pour ce faire, une caractérisation biophysique et socio-économique a été faite dans la zone d'étude par le biais d'un inventaire exhaustif des pieds de *Carapa procera* et d'enquêtes socio-économiques. Les résultats ont montré que dans les différentes localités étudiées, les caractéristiques dendrométriques étudiées révèlent une faible régénération et un vieillissement des peuplements. Cependant, l'arbre et sa graine sont des sources de revenus essentielles pour les femmes et les ménages de ces localités d'où l'intérêt de protéger et de reconstituer ce peuplement à travers le reboisement.

Mots-clés : Caractérisation, biophysique, services écosystémiques, *Carapa procera,* Basse Casamance.

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Abstract

The environmental crisis of the 1970s hit Casamance hard. Faced with pauperization in rural areas, plant biodiversity has enabled populations to survive. Certain species then took on special importance in the life of populations. *Carapa procera* is one of these species, hence the importance of having reliable information on the population and the services it offers to communities. This study intends to contribute to the evaluation of the populations of *Carapa procera* in Lower Casamance. To do this, a biophysical and socio-economic characterization was carried out in the study area through an exhaustive inventory of *Carapa procera* plants and socio-economic surveys. The results showed that in the different localities studied, the dendrometric characteristics studied reveal poor regeneration and aging of the stands. However, the tree and its seed are essential sources of income for women and households in these localities, hence the importance of protecting and restoring this stand through reforestation.

Keywords: Characterization, biophysical socio-economic, *Carapa procera*, Lower Casamance.

Introduction

Contexte

En Basse Casamance, *Carapa procera* DC a une grande importance de par la diversité des bienfaits matériels et immatériels qu'elle procure aux communautés locales. Elle revêt une importance socioculturelle majeure pour les communautés locales. Plusieurs usages sont faits avec ses différentes parties. L'huile, faisant l'objet de transformation par certaines femmes, est connue pour ses vertus multidimensionnelles (médicinales, médico-magiques, insecticides, insectifuges, etc.) et est très prisée par les populations. Elle est commercialisée au niveau des différents marchés locaux et son prix ne cesse de grimper face à une demande croissante qui se heurte à ses difficultés d'accès. En outre, l'huile de *Carapa procera* connaît un regain d'intérêt dans la pharmacognosie notamment, en raison du développement des produits naturels dits «bio» et équitables. Outre son huile, il y a également les feuilles, les écorces et les racines, qui sont également utilisées dans la pharmacopée traditionnelle. L'espèce est présente principalement au Sénégal dans les régions sud-ouest et sud-est. La région de Ziguinchor, bénéficiant d'une pluviométrie supérieure à 1 000 mm/an, présente des conditions écologiques favorables au développement de cet oléagineux. Les différentes parties de l'arbre, des racines aux écorces, servent à la préparation de divers produits (médicaux, cosmétiques…). De nombreuses propriétés

médico-magiques de l'arbre et des savoirs locaux sont à l'origine de modes de gestion traditionnels des peuplements, souvent relictuels, de *Carapa procera*.

À cela s'ajoute le fait que son exploitation, qui du reste est très discrète, implique essentiellement des vieilles femmes à cause de considérations d'ordres mystiques.

Problématique

Les pertes de la biodiversité à cause des changements climatiques de nos jours sont une préoccupation mondiale. Il est noté un peu partout au Sénégal, une déperdition des ressources forestières qui n'a pas épargné *Carapa procera*. En outre, la Casamance, région où l'espèce est le plus rencontrée, a été le théâtre d'un conflit armé de plus de 30 ans causant d'énormes dégâts aussi bien sur la population que sur les ressources de la zone. En effet, entre 1995 et 1998, l'armée sénégalaise a lancé des ratissages des bastions rebelles, occasionnant un abandon massif de près de 12 pour cent des villages dans la région de Ziguinchor (Robin 2006:7). Ces populations séparées de leurs terres, leurs principales sources de revenus, sont privées de leurs moyens d'existence, dont l'essentiel provient de la pêche, de l'arboriculture, du tourisme et de l'exploitation des produits forestiers (ANSD 2017, République du Sénégal 2013:71-72).

Ces dernières années, avec l'accalmie observée et dans le contexte du développement territorial, il importe de s'intéresser à la façon dont les populations peuvent davantage tirer profit des écosystèmes naturels pour s'épanouir socialement, spirituellement et économiquement.

À ce jour, le potentiel de production d'huile de *Carapa procera* reste inconnu. Malgré un intérêt multidimensionnel, peu de recherches semblent néanmoins avoir été faites sur les potentialités, les modes d'organisation et d'accès, les savoirs locaux véhiculés par *Carapa procera* ainsi que les perspectives de valorisation. Au-delà des services d'approvisionnement, de régulation, socioculturels… l'état actuel de *Carapa procera* et l'identification des formes de contraintes et/ou d'intensification en cours pourraient contribuer à une valorisation plus efficace, pour soutenir un développement durable des terroirs.

Pour y parvenir, il est nécessaire d'avoir une connaissance plus poussée du potentiel et de la capacité de production des produits forestiers non ligneux. Cette étude, ciblant particulièrement *Carapa procera*, soulève des questionnements dont les réponses devraient donner une opinion plus avancée sur la contribution de cette espèce dans la zone, particulièrement sur les femmes.

L'atteinte de cet objectif passe nécessairement par de nouvelles options de valorisation de l'activité, qui ne saurait se faire, entre autres, sans une

bonne connaissance du potentiel de production, gage d'une bonne gestion des ressources et partant de là, d'un développement durable.

Dans quel état se trouvent les peuplements de *Carapa procera* en Basse Casamance ? La régénération est-elle assurée ? Les populations arrivent-elles à en tirer des profits ?

Objectif général

Cette étude se veut une contribution à une meilleure connaissance de l'état des peuplements de *Carapa procera* et des services écosystémiques que les populations de la Basse Casamance en tirent.

Objectifs spécifiques

Il s'agit concrètement de :

- Connaître les distributions structurelle et spatiale ;
- Connaître l'état de la régénération
- Évaluer les services écosystémiques de *Carapa procera*.

Cet article s'articule autour des trois parties essentielles que sont le matériel et les méthodes utilisées dans cette étude, les résultats obtenus et leur discussion en plus d'une présentation de la zone d'étude, de l'espèce et de la sociodémographie.

Présentation de la zone d'étude

L'étude a été conduite au niveau de 4 communes rurales de la région de Ziguinchor (figure 1) à savoir les communes de Mlomp (Blouf) et Thionck-Essyl dans le département de Bignona et celles de Mlomp (Kassa) et de Djembering dans le département d'Oussouye.

La commune de Thionck-Essyl est entourée par la commune de Mlomp (Blouf) qui est limitée à l'est par la commune de Mangagoulack, à l'ouest par la commune de Kafountine, au nord par la commune de Diégoune et au sud par la commune de Mlomp (Kassa). Quant à cette dernière, elle est limitée par les communes d'Enampore et d'Oukout à l'est, les communes de Kafountine et de Djembering à l'ouest, les communes de Mangagoulack et de Mlomp (Blouf) au nord et les communes d'Oukout et de Djembering au sud. Enfin, la commune de Djembering est limitée à l'est par les communes de Mlomp (Kassa) et d'Oukout, à l'ouest par l'océan Atlantique, au nord par la commune de Kafountine et au sud par la République de la Guinée-Bissau.
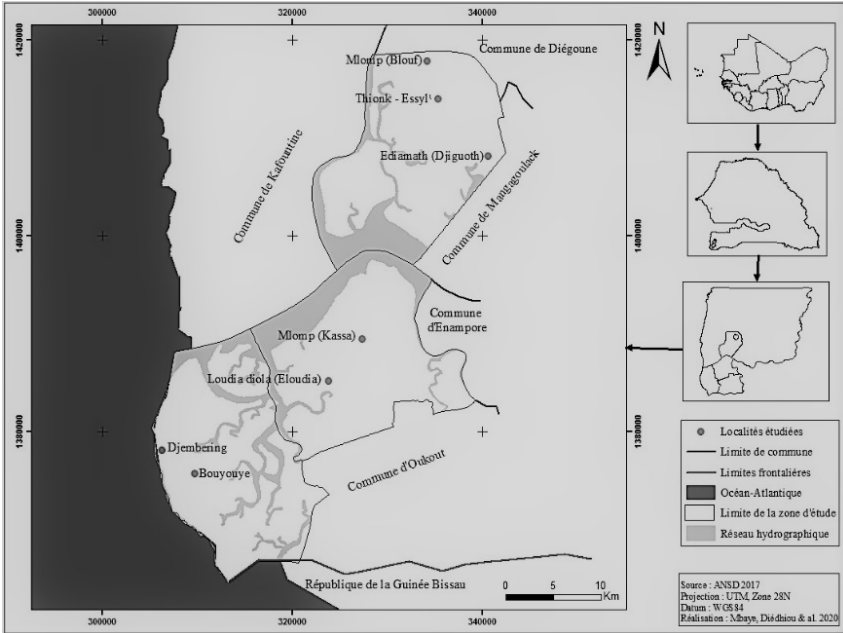
Figure 1 : Localisation de la zone d'étude

Dans chacune de ces communes, 2 villages ont été choisis, sauf pour Thionck-Essyl, dont le village constitue à lui seul la commune du même nom. Il s'agit des villages de Mlomp (Blouf) et d'Ediamath pour la commune de Mlomp (Blouf), de Mlomp (Kassa) et Loudia Diola pour la commune de Mlomp (Kassa) et enfin de Djembering et Bouyouye pour la commune de Djembering. Le choix de ces villages est basé sur la présence de peuplements de *Carapa procera* et la pratique effective de son exploitation pour ses valeurs d'usage culturelles et économiques.

Présentation de Carapa procera DC
[décrite en 1824 : Prodr. (A. P. de Candolle) 1:626]

Taxonomie et nomenclature de l'espèce

Carapa procera est un arbre de la famille des *Meliaceae.* On peut trouver les synonymes suivants : *C. guineensis* Sweet ex A. Juss. ; *C. touloucouna* Guill. et Perr. ; *C. gummiflua* C. DC ; *Granatum surinamensis* (Miq.) Kuntze.

Ses autres appellations sont : *Carapa procera* (français) ; *Andiroba* (portugais) ; *Crabwood* (anglais) ; *Bou Kounoung* (Diola).

Distribution géographique et habitat de Carapa procera

Carapa procera se rencontre dans les galeries forestières de la zone soudano-guinéenne d'Afrique de l'Ouest (Berhaut 1979 ; Kenfack 2011 cité par Sanogo 2015:48). L'espèce est présente de la Guinée à l'Ouganda en passant par la forêt congolaise (Figure 5.A). Au Sénégal, *Carapa procera* est présente au sud (en Casamance et dans les galeries forestières du Sénégal oriental). C'est une plante qui a besoin de peu de lumière au jeune âge pour son développement (Guillemot 2004:4). *Carapa procera* se développe sur des sols à drainage superficiel ; sa densité est faible dans son habitat naturel avec moins de dix arbres par hectare (Fisch *et al.* 1995:195). Sur la base de son aire de répartition, *Carapa procera* a été classée espèce de préoccupation mineure [LC : Least Concerne en rapport avec les critères de classification de l'Union internationale pour la conservation de la nature (UICN)] par Sacandé *et al.* 2012 cités par Sanogo (2015:48).

Présentation botanique de Carapa procera

Carapa procera est un arbre de taille moyenne dépassant rarement 15 m de hauteur (Figure 2.B). Ses feuilles disposent d'un rachis long de 30 à 60 cm et portant 5 à 6 paires de folioles opposées ou subopposées (Berhaut 1979 ; Eyog-Matig *et al.* 2006 ; Wolf *et al.* 2010 cités par Sanogo 2015:48). C'est un arbre avec une frondaison serrée et épaisse donnant beaucoup d'ombre. Les feuilles sont composées, paripennées, de couleur vert foncé et grasses au toucher. Les inflorescences sont de longues panicules, glabres ou pubescentes, composées de petites fleurs unisexuelles blanches rosées et odorantes. Les fleurs sont en racème paniculé axillaire long de 25 à 40 cm. Les fruits sont de grosses capsules anguleuses larges de 6 à 10 cm et contenant 12 à 15 grosses graines trigones (Figure 2.C). La graine renferme une amande oléagineuse. Dans la région de Sikasso au Mali, la floraison de *Carapa procera* se déroule de janvier à mars et les fruits sont à maturité d'avril à mai (Sanogo *et al.* 2015:49). L'arbre adulte produit environ 200 kg de graines d'après Beguin et Guillemot (2005) cité par Sanogo (2015:49).

La forêt, une source de revenus pour parer à la pauvreté

La forêt est indispensable, comme l'eau, à la vie sur terre et au développement des activités humaines. Elle participe entre autres à la régulation et fournit des bénéfices capables d'amortir la pauvreté des communautés. Et Bauer (2010:1), se basant sur McConnell (2010), montre que 1,2 milliard de personnes vivant dans des pays en développement dépendent des forêts

pour survivre. Cette idée a été reprise de façon plus globale par la FAO qui estime qu'en 2015, 25 pour cent de l'humanité tire ses ressources de l'exploitation des forêts. Ces dernières constituent ¼ des revenus des ruraux.
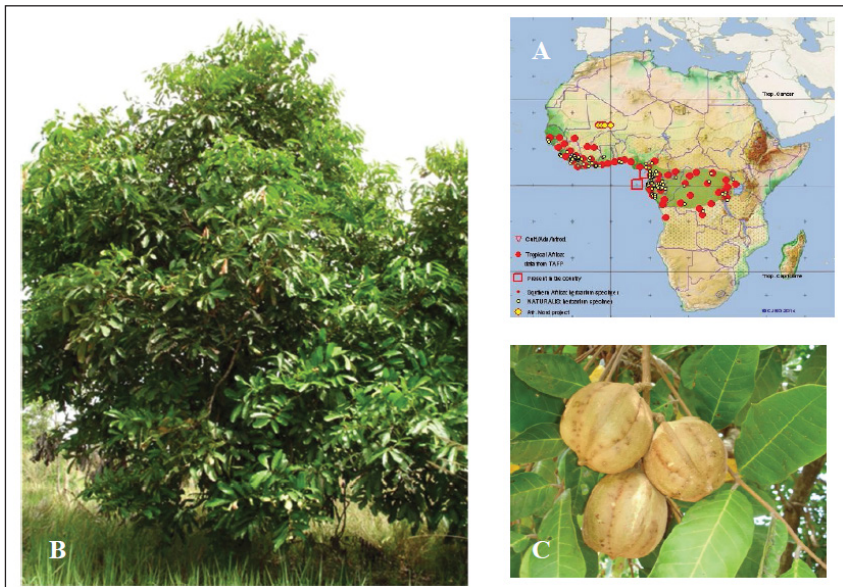
Figure 2 : Distribution géographique, arbre et fruits de *Carapa procera*

(A) carte de distribution de *Carapa procera* en Afrique ;

(B) arbre en pleine feuillaison ;

(C) fruits en cours de maturation.

Source : CJB African Plant Database, 2012

En Afrique subsaharienne, où la pauvreté est profonde, les populations locales ont le plus souvent recours aux bénéfices que leur offrent les forêts pour satisfaire les besoins fondamentaux (éducation, santé, nourriture). Déjà en 2017, la directrice de la division de la FAO chargée des politiques et des ressources forestières, Eva Müller, citée par Bertrand (2017:4) notait que «Les populations autochtones et les communautés locales […] ne peuvent imaginer leur vie sans la nature.»

Ce constat constitue une réalité pour le Sénégal où, à côté du travail de la terre, l'exploitation des produits forestiers constitue le véritable moyen de subsistance des habitants du monde rural. À Ziguinchor dans les départements d'Oussouye et de Bignona, la forêt constitue une source sure pour l'économie des ménages à travers l'exploitation de *Carapa procera*.

Conservation et menaces sur Carapa procera

Selon Beguin & Guillemot (2005) cité par (Sanogo 2015:49), *Carapa procera* est en danger d'extinction en Afrique de l'Ouest. Les principales menaces qui pèsent sur cette espèce sont la faiblesse de la régénération naturelle, le défrichement des galeries forestières, l'assèchement précoce des cours d'eau, le vieillissement des peuplements, les ravages des rongeurs et le ramassage des graines. (Jansen *et al.* 2004:571 ; Weber *et al.* 2010:344)

Les espèces du genre *Carapa procera* sont d'une importance socioculturelle et médicinale reconnue sur l'ensemble de leurs aires de distribution (Guèye *et al.* 2010:357). En effet, toutes les parties de la plante sont utilisées en médecine traditionnelle (Malgras 1992, cité par Guèye *et al.* 2010:359 ; Weber *et al.* 2010:344 ; Dembélé *et al.* 2015:11). L'huile est la plus utilisée, devant les extraits de feuilles et d'écorces. Ces dernières années, on assiste à une demande croissante de l'huile de *Carapa procera* comme insecticide naturel dans la culture du coton biologique au Burkina Faso et au Mali (Dembélé *et al.* 2015:2). Pour une gestion durable de la filière huile de *Carapa procera*, il est impératif d'envisager des mesures de protection des peuplements naturels de l'espèce et de développer sa culture dans les terroirs villageois.

Données sociodémographiques

À l'échelle départementale, Bignona est plus peuplé en valeur absolue avec 252 554 habitants contre 48 332 habitants pour le département d'Oussouye. Par contre, en raison de l'étroitesse de sa superficie, la densité est plus forte à Oussouye (54 habitants/km²) qu'à Bignona (48 habitants/km²) (Figure 3).

Du point de vue de la composition ethnique, les Diolas constituent le groupe majoritaire avec 57,8 pour cent de la population. Ils cohabitent avec d'autres groupes ethniques, dont les Mandingues (11,1 %), les Pulaars (10,5 %), les Ouolofs (3,9 %), les Manjacques (3,5 %), les Balantes (2,9 %), les Mancagnes (2,4 %), les Sérères (2,7 %), etc. (ANSD, 2015:12) La population est majoritairement jeune, car les moins de 30 ans en constituent 70 pour cent. Le sex-ratio est en faveur des hommes soit 105 hommes pour 100 femmes (ANSD, 2015:21). Dans les localités étudiées et selon l'échantillon, les données d'enquête donnent un pourcentage de 54 pour cent de femmes et 46 pour cent d'hommes dans le département de Bignona, contre 42,9 pour cent de femmes et 57,1 pour cent d'hommes à Oussouye. L'âge des chefs de ménage enquêtés varie entre 25 et 95 ans. La tranche d'âge 55-65 est majoritaire (29,4 %) dans l'échantillon enquêté à Bignona. À Oussouye, les chefs de ménage sont plus jeunes avec une domination de

25-35 ans (30,3 %). L'âge moyen des personnes enquêtées dans les ménages de Bignona est de 57 ans. Le constat est fait à Oussouye où les personnes âgées de 45 à 95 ans représentent 51 pour cent de l'échantillon.
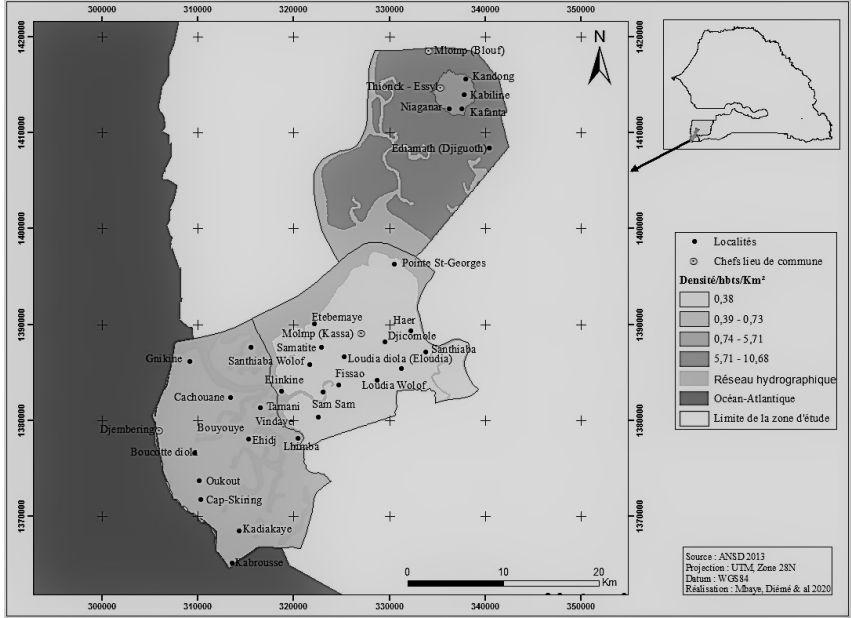

Figure 3 : Densité des habitants par km²

Matériel et méthodes
Technique d'inventaire

Les pieds de *Carapa procera* sont domestiqués et se retrouvent essentiellement dans la plupart des villages étudiés autour des habitations à l'exception de Bouyouye. En conséquence, il était quasiment impossible d'installer des placettes pour les relevés de végétation. Dès lors, l'option de faire un inventaire exhaustif des pieds de *Carapa procera* par le biais d'un recensement pour chaque village a été choisie. Cette méthode a consisté à sillonner toutes les terres de la zone d'étude afin de répertorier tous les pieds de *Carapa procera* et de prendre un certain nombre de leurs paramètres dendrométriques. Elle a permis en plus de prendre les points GPS de pieds de *Carapa procera* par localité, hormis ceux se trouvant dans les lieux sacrés où l'accès est exclusivement réservé aux populations initiées.

Mesures dendrométriques effectuées

Elles ont essentiellement porté sur les paramètres dimensionnels suivants :

- Le diamètre à hauteur de poitrine (1,30 m) mesuré à l'aide d'un compas forestier a permis d'estimer la surface terrière et la structure horizontale des peuplements de *Carapa procera* selon la répartition des arbres suivant les classes de diamètre ;
- Le diamètre croisé du houppier, qui est la projection du houppier au sol, a été évalué à l'aide d'un ruban mètre dans deux directions (longueur et largeur du houppier). Il a permis de calculer le recouvrement ou le couvert ligneux ;
- La hauteur des arbres estimée à l'aide du clisimètre (dendromètre sunto) pour établir la structure verticale des peuplements ;
- La hauteur de la première branche a été mesurée à l'aide d'un ruban mètre pour déterminer le niveau de ramification ;
- La régénération du peuplement des *Carapa* a été estimée par un comptage des individus de diamètre tronc à 1,30 m inférieur à 5 cm.

Méthode d'enquête socio-économique

L'exploitation de *Carapa procera* a fait appel à plusieurs intervenants dans le cadre de cette étude. Trois groupes cibles ont été identifiés, c'est-à-dire les ménages interrogés à travers des questionnaires individuels, les acteurs directs concernés par l'exploitation et les personnes-ressources.

La taille de l'échantillon des ménages à enquêter a été faite à partir d'une enquête préliminaire appliquée de façon aléatoire sur 30 personnes dans une des communes de l'étude, à savoir Thionck-Essyl. Ce travail préalable a permis de déterminer la proportion *p* de répondants qui connaissent et utilisent *Carapa procera,* mais aussi d'identifier les localités et les groupes-cibles associés à l'exploitation de cette espèce.

À partir de ces résultats, la taille de l'échantillon (voir tableau 1) a été déterminée en appliquant la formule de Dagnelie reprise par Gbemavo *et al.* (2014:71) et Assogba *et al.* (2017:20) :

$$n = \frac{U_{1-\alpha/2}^2 * p(1-p)}{d^2}$$

n la taille de l'échantillon à considérer dans l'ensemble de la zone d'étude. **$U_{1-\alpha/2}$** est la valeur de la variable aléatoire normale aléatoire pour une valeur de probabilité de **α** (α = 0,05 ; U1-α/2 = 1,96) et **d** la marge d'erreur fixée à 5 %. **p** est la proportion d'individus connaissant et ayant fait usage de l'espèce *Carapa procera.*

Ainsi, l'utilisation de cette méthode a permis d'obtenir une proportion de *p (83 %)* d'individus ayant un rapport quelconque avec *Carapa procera*. De ce fait, la taille de l'échantillon est déterminée avec une marge d'erreur de 5 pour cent (tableau 1) et répartie en fonction du poids démographique de chaque village de l'étude.

En ce qui concerne les usages liés aux produits de *Carapa procera*, des questionnaires ménages adressés aux chefs de ménage dans chaque localité ont été appliqués.

$$Taille\ \acute{e}chantillon = \frac{Poids\ ou\ pourcentage\ par\ village}{Population\ totale\ interrog\acute{e}e\ par\ village} x100$$

Tableau 1 : Échantillonnage des villages de l'étude

Villages	Populations par village (n)	Effectif interrogé par village (% par village X nombre de personnes interrogées : 100)
Thionck-Essyl	8 388	41
Mlomp Blouf	2 659	13
Ediamath (Djiguoth)	406	2
Mlomp Kassa	5 531	52
Loudia Diola	317	3
Djembering	2 619	94
Bouyouye	229	8
Total	**20 149**	**213**

Source : données ANSD 2013 ; calcul : Mbaye *et al.* 2019

Des entretiens sous forme de *focus groups* ont été réalisés auprès des personnes-ressources pour compléter ou confirmer l'information reçue dans les ménages. Ils ont concerné les chefs de village, délégués de quartier et des notables de chaque localité.

L'évaluation a intéressé les services écosystémiques de *Carapa procera* et elle prend en compte les critères qualitatifs et fonctionnels. Il s'agit d'établir la valeur potentielle de *Carapa procera* sur les services qu'il rend aux populations. Nos données d'enquête ont permis d'identifier les quatre catégories de services regroupés selon le classement du Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005, cité par Ngom *et al.* 2014:2 ; Mbaye *et al.* 2018:10), mais notre évaluation porte uniquement sur les services d'approvisionnement. Le choix porté sur ces derniers se justifie par la diversité (âge, sexe, catégorie socioprofessionnelle) des agents qui en bénéficient, ainsi que par la variété notée au sein de cette catégorie de services. Cette évaluation est basée sur les études antérieures menées sur les services écosystémiques en général et ceux de la Basse Casamance en particulier.

Traitement de données

Les données collectées lors de l'inventaire forestier ont été saisies et traitées sur un tableur Excel et ont servi à l'élaboration des graphiques. Il est aussi utilisé pour calculer les paramètres dendrométriques des peuplements de *Carapa procera*. Les formules ci-après sont utilisées pour procéder au calcul de ces paramètres. Les analyses factorielles de correspondances ont été réalisées avec le logiciel XLSTAT.

L'analyse fréquentielle

L'analyse fréquentielle est une méthode qui consiste à apprécier la distribution des espèces à travers les relevés. La fréquence de présence renseigne sur la distribution d'une espèce dans un peuplement. Elle s'exprime en % et est estimée par la formule suivante de Roberts-Pichette et Gillespie (2002), cités par Ngom (2013:61) :

$$\mathbf{F = \frac{Nri}{Nr} X100}$$

F = fréquence de présence exprimée en pourcentage (%) ;

N_{ri} = nombre de relevés où l'on retrouve l'espèce i et

N_r = nombre total de relevés.

Dans cette étude, elle a servi à apprécier la distribution des individus dans les classes de diamètre ou de hauteur.

Les classes ont été déterminées à l'aide de la règle de STURGE. Elle permet d'établir le nombre de classes pour un échantillon de taille n selon la formule ci-après :

• règle de STURGE : Nombre de classes = 1 + (3,3 log n).

L'intervalle entre chaque classe est obtenu ensuite de la manière suivante :

• Intervalle de classe = $(X_{max} - X_{min})$/Nombre de classes avec X_{max} et X_{min}, respectivement la plus grande et la plus petite valeur de X dans la série statistique.

La densité

La densité est le nombre d'individus par unité de surface. Elle s'exprime en nombre d'individus par hectare (ind./ha). Elle est obtenue par le rapport de l'effectif total des individus dans l'échantillon par la surface échantillonnée.

$$Dob. = \frac{N}{S}$$

avec Dob = Densité observée, N = effectif total d'individus dans l'échantillon considéré et S = surface de l'échantillon en hectare (ha).

Le recouvrement ou couvert ligneux

Le couvert ligneux est la surface de la couronne de l'arbre projetée verticalement au sol. Il est exprimé en mètre carré par hectare (m².ha.$^{-1}$). Le couvert ligneux est calculé avec la formule ci-dessous :

$$C = \frac{\sum \pi \left(\frac{d_{mh}}{2}\right)^2}{S_E}$$

avec C = couvert ligneux; d_{mh} = diamètre moyen du houppier en mètre (m) ; S = surface de l'échantillon considéré en hectare (ha).

La surface terrière

La surface terrière ou recouvrement basal désigne la surface de l'arbre évaluée à la base du tronc de l'arbre. Elle est exprimée en mètre carré par hectare (m².ha. $^{-1}$). Elle est donc obtenue à partir de la formule suivante :

$$S_t = \frac{\sum \pi \left(\frac{d_{0,3}}{2}\right)^2}{S_E}$$

Le taux de régénération du peuplement

Il est donné par le rapport en pourcentage entre l'effectif total des jeunes plants et l'effectif total du peuplement (Poupon 1980, cité par Ngom 2013:63) :

$$TRP = \frac{\text{Effectif total des jeunes plants}}{\text{Effectif total du peuplement}} \times 100$$

Dans ce cas précis, est considéré comme régénération tout individu ayant un diamètre à 1,30 m compris entre 0 et 5 cm. C'est-à-dire les individus qui ont un diamètre à hauteur de poitrine inférieur à 5 cm.

L'effectif total du peuplement regroupe aussi bien les jeunes plants de la régénération que les plantes adultes de *Carapa procera* ou les individus de diamètre à 1,30 m supérieur ou égal à 5 cm.

L'analyse factorielle des correspondances (AFC)

L'analyse factorielle des correspondances est une méthode d'ordination non contrainte (unimodale) qui permet dans notre cas d'évaluer les similitudes entre les localités sur la base de leurs paramètres dendrométriques mesurés. C'est une méthode descriptive (Lebart & Fénelon 1971 ; Mercier *et al.* 1992 ; Legendre & Legendre 1998, cités par Diédhiou 2013:21), qui a pour objet

de résumer l'information contenue dans un tableau de données en écriture simplifiée sous forme de graphique ou plan factoriel. L'AFC s'applique au traitement des tableaux de contingence, qui croise deux caractères qualitatifs en donnant pour chaque combinaison l'effectif concerné (Ngom 2013:61).

La fréquence de citation (FC)

Pour chaque catégorie d'usage, est calculée la fréquence des citations, qui indique les différentes utilisations de chaque service dans la zone. Une valeur proche de 0 indique que le service est peu utilisé, et plus la valeur est proche de 100, plus le service est utilisé par les populations. Elle se calcule par la formule suivante :

$$FC = \frac{\text{Nombre de citations d'un service}}{\text{Nombre de répondants}} X100$$

Niveau de fidélité (NF)

En s'inspirant de l'utilisation du niveau de fidélité en ethnomédecine (Alexiades & Sheldon 1996 ; Cheikhyoussef *et al.* 2011 et Ugulu 2013, cité par Camara 2018:107), le niveau de fidélité sera défini (NF) pour une espèce par rapport à différentes catégories d'usages.

$$NF = \frac{\text{Nombre de citations de l'espèce pour une catégorie}}{\text{Nombre de citations de l'espèce pour toutes les catégories}} X\,100$$

Valeur d'usage (VU)

Pour chaque espèce citée, une valeur d'usage (*Use Value* ou UV), définie par Phillips *et al.* (1994), cités par Ngom *et al.* (2014:5), a été déterminée. La valeur d'usage est une manière d'exprimer l'importance re lative de chaque espèce pour la population dans les usages des parcs agroforestiers. C'est l'indice le plus approprié pour estimer l'importance des espèces pour les populations. Elle permet de déterminer de façon significative les espèces ayant une grande valeur d'utilisation dans un milieu donné (Dossou *et al.* 2012:4).

$$UV \xrightarrow{\frac{\Sigma u}{n}} \longrightarrow \quad U = \text{nombre de citations par espèce ; n= nombres d'informateurs}$$

Résultats

Distribution spatiale des Carapa procera

La figure 4 ci-dessous montre la répartition spatiale des pieds de *Carapa procera* dans les quatre (4) communes étudiées selon leurs effectifs.
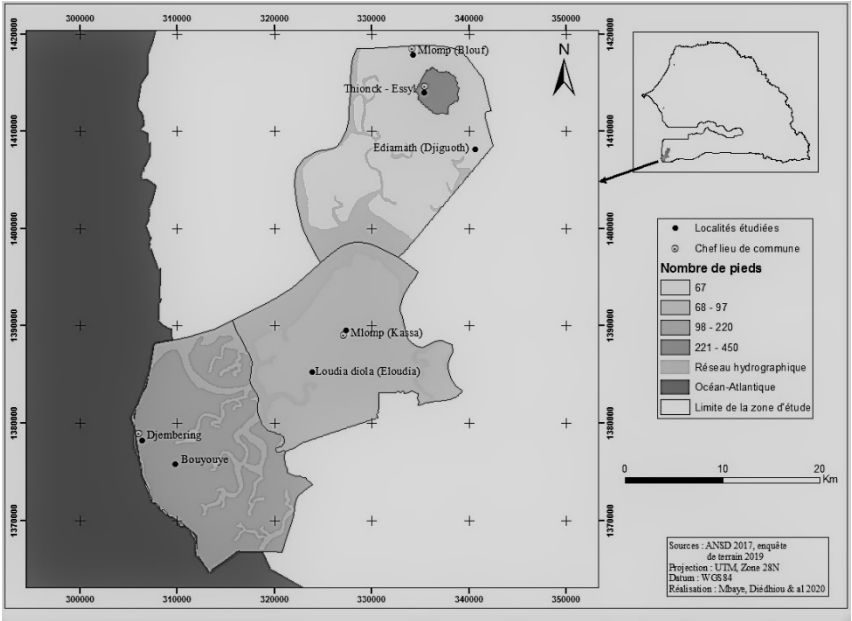
Figure 4 : Répartition spatiale des pieds de *Carapa procera* dans les communes étudiées en fonction des effectifs.

L'analyse de cette figure montre que la commune de Thionck-Essyl, avec près de 450 individus, renferme le plus grand nombre de pieds de *Carapa procera*. La commune de Djembering vient ensuite, avec environ 220 pieds de Carapa. Elle est suivie par la commune de Mlomp Kassa, qui elle, compte 97 individus de *Carapa procera*. Par ailleurs, la commune de Mlomp Blouf a le plus petit nombre de pieds de *Carapa procera* avec seulement 67 individus.

Distribution des Carapa procera selon les paramètres mesurés

La figure 5 est une analyse à factorielle de correspondances (AFC). Cette AFC donne une inertie totale de 95,78 % (84,77 % pour l'axe F1 et 11,01 pour cent. pour l'axe F2). L'axe F1 porté par le taux de régénération totalisant 62 pour cent. de l'information. Tandis que l'axe F2 est porté par la hauteur moyenne des arbres, qui a un score de 70 pour cent. Le recouvrement ou le taux de couverture participe, à hauteur de 32 pour cent. et 23 pour cent. respectivement, à la formation des axes F1 et F2. Cette inertie (95,78 %) est suffisante pour tirer le maximum d'informations des peuplements de *Carapa procera* dans la zone d'étude.
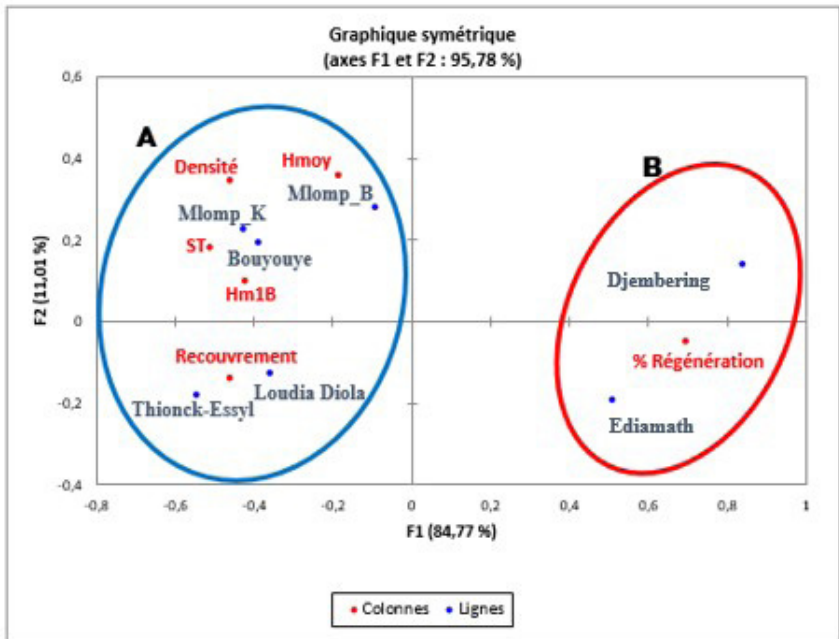
Figure 5 : Analyse factorielle de correspondances sur la matrice 6 paramètres x 7 villages

Il ressort de cette figure 5 que les peuplements de *Carapa procera* sur la base des paramètres dendrométriques mesurés forment deux grands groupes distincts (A et B) selon l'axe F1, qui explique 84,77 pour cent. des informations. Le groupe A est composé d'une part, suivant l'axe F2, des villages de Mlomp Kassa, Mlomp Blouf et Bouyouye, caractérisés par des densités importantes de *Carapa procera* de gros sujets (surface terrière et hauteur moyenne importantes) et une hauteur moyenne de la première branche élevée, et d'autre part, du sous-groupe composé de Loudia diola et Thionck-Essyl, caractérisé par un recouvrement important, c'est-à-dire des individus de *Carapa procera* avec une couronne bien développée. À l'opposé de ce groupe, suivant l'axe F1, se retrouvent les localités de Djembering et Ediamath. Ces sites se caractérisent par un taux de régénération plus élevé. Ce taux de régénération cache des disparités. En effet, ses localités sont caractérisées également par des densités très faibles.

Paramètres structuraux des peuplements de Carapa procera

Le tableau 2 montre les variations de quelques paramètres structuraux en fonction des villages étudiés. Il en ressort de façon générale que la densité des *Carapa procera* est faible, quelle que soit la localité considérée. En effet, seul le

village de Bouyouye dans le département d'Oussouye a environ deux individus à l'hectare (2 ind./ha). La régénération (individus de DBH inférieur à 5 cm) est également faible, avec moins de 30 jeunes pieds dans chacun des villages. Le taux de régénération est plus élevé à Ediamath (50 %) et Djembering (42,9 %), alors que Mlomp Kassa (5,1 %) et Bouyouye (6,5 %) en ont les plus petits. Ces deux localités, avec les plus forts taux de régénération, sont par ailleurs ceux ayant des petits nombres de pieds de *Carapa procera*.

Pour ce qui est de la surface terrière (ST), qui renseigne sur la grosseur des troncs des arbres à hauteur de poitrine, il ressort que les plus gros arbres sont rencontrés à Thionck-Essyl (0,11 m²/ha), Bouyouye (0,11 m²/ha) et Mlomp Kassa (0,1 m²/ha). Le recouvrement ou surface occupée par les couronnes des *Carapa procera* sur la surface totale du terroir renseigne sur l'envergure des *Carapa procera* dans les villages étudiés. On constate que Thionck-Essyl renferme les pieds de *Carapa procera* les plus majestueux (43,1 m²/ha) alors que Djembering en a les plus petits (4,07 m²/ha).

En ce qui concerne la hauteur moyenne (Hmoy) et la hauteur de la première branche (Hm1B), le constat est que les villages du département d'Oussouye, comme Mlomp Kassa (11,96 m), Bouyouye (11,45 m) et Djembering (11,36 m), ont les individus de *Carapa procera* les plus hauts, qui sont également plus bas-branchus. En effet, la hauteur moyenne de la première branche y est plus petite sauf pour Djembering (2,07 m).

Tableau 2 : Quelques paramètres structuraux des peuplements de *Carapa procera*

Villages	Densité (ind./ha)	Taux de Régéné-ration (%.)	ST (m2/h)	Recouvre-ment (m2/ha)	Hmoy (m)	Hm 1B(m)
Thionck-Esssyl	0,39	7,1	0,11	43,1	10,77	2,06
MlompBlouf	0,1	9,7	0,03	12,44	10,62	1,52
Ediamath	0,29	50	0,05	23,48	6,8	1,58
MlompKassa	0,27	5,1	0,1	19,4	11,96	2,07
LoudiaDiola	0,58	11,3	0,07	34,5	10,1	1,52
Bouyouye	1,58	6,5	0,11	21,06	11,45	0,74
Djembering	0,22	42,9	0,02	4,07	11,36	0,08

Source : Mbaye *et al.* – données d'inventaire 2019

Structure horizontale

Elle a été appréciée à deux niveaux. D'abord de façon générale, en considérant les départements comme unité spatiale, puis de manière plus restreinte, les villages, suivant les départements.

À l'échelle du département

La figure 6 ci-après montre la structure horizontale des peuplements de *Carapa procera* ou la distribution des arbres selon leur diamètre à hauteur de poitrine d'homme en classes de diamètre pour les départements de Bignona et d'Oussouye.
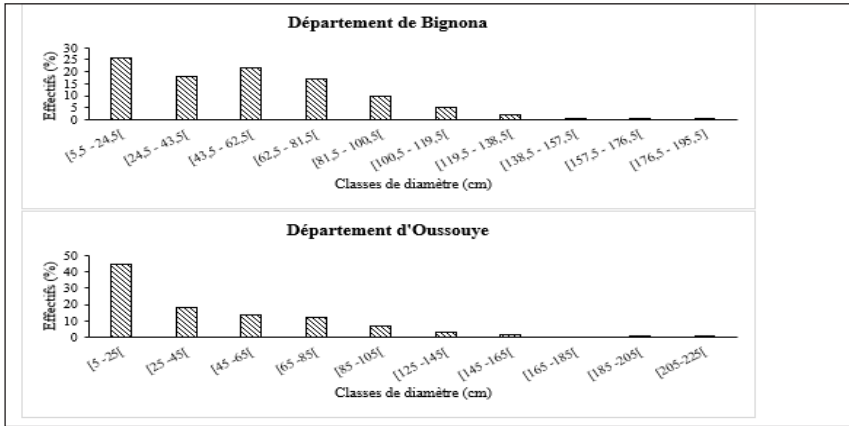

Figure 6 : Structures horizontales des peuplements de *Carapa procera* dans les départements de Bignona et d'Oussouye

L'analyse de la structure horizontale des peuplements de *Carapa procera* montre que 25 pour cent des individus rencontrés à Bignona et 45 pour cent à Oussouye ont des diamètres à hauteur de poitrine d'homme inférieurs à 25 cm, donc de jeunes sujets, avec toutefois des arbres de plus de 2 m de diamètre à Oussouye, qui sont de gros arbres. Les classes de diamètres intermédiaires sont aussi bien représentées à Bignona qu'à Oussouye. Mais on note que la classe [165-185] est vide, ce qui signifie qu'aucun individu de cette classe n'a été rencontré.

À l'échelle des villages

À l'échelle des villages, la représentation horizontale de *Carapa procera* dans le département de Bignona au niveau des 3 villages étudiés signale d'énormes différences, démontrées à travers la figure 9 ci-dessous.

Les villages du département de Bignona

La distribution des pieds de *Carapa procera* en classes de diamètre dans les villages étudiés du département de Bignona est présentée au niveau de la figure 7 ci-après.
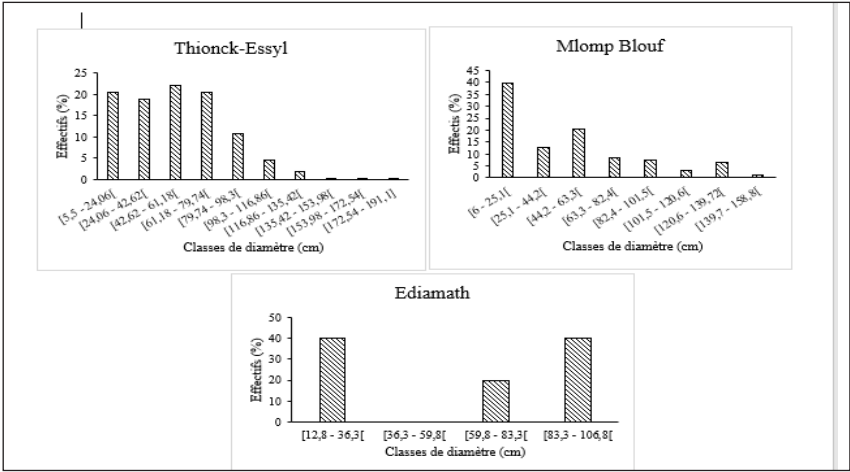
Figure 7 : Structures horizontales des peuplements de *Carapa procera* dans les villages du département de Bignona

En regardant de plus près la représentation horizontale des *Carapa procera* dans le département de Bignona au niveau des 3 villages étudiés, on note d'énormes différences. En effet, on constate une faible présence avec seulement trois classes, dont deux font 80 pour cent. du peuplement. À Thionck-Essyl et Mlomp Blouf, la structure est irrégulière avec un repeuplement notable, mais la gestion des grands sujets paraît problématique vu leur faible présence (moins de 1 %). À Ediamath, il ne reste que des reliques de *Carapa procera* avec un renouvellement de l'espèce quasiment inexistant.

Les villages du département d'Oussouye

Les structures horizontales des peuplements de *Carapa procera* dans les villages du département d'Oussouye étudiés sont présentées par la figure 8.

Dans le département d'Oussouye, la répartition des individus de *Carapa procera* est plus ou moins régulière, des petites classes aux grandes classes de diamètre, avec des structures en « L » à Loudia Diola et Bouyouye. Ces dernières font état de la présence de peuplements de *Carapa procera* dont la régénération se fait bien. Par contre à Djembering, un réel déséquilibre apparaît dans la distribution des individus et surtout l'absence de gros arbres, par comparaison avec les autres villages. En effet, même le plus grand sujet, dans cette localité, ne fait pas 80 cm de diamètre à hauteur de poitrine, alors qu'à Bouyouye, des individus de plus de 2 m de diamètre ont été rencontrés.
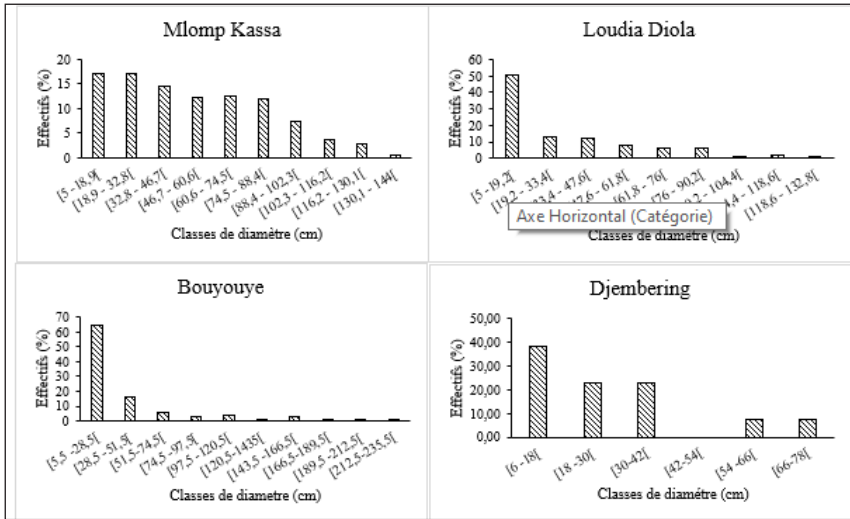
Figure 8 : Structures horizontales des peuplements de **Carapa procera** dans les villages du département d'Oussouye

Structure verticale

À l'échelle du département

La figure 9 ci-après montre la distribution selon la hauteur ou la structure verticale des peuplements de *Carapa procera* pour les départements de Bignona et d'Oussouye. Les arbres sont classés en différentes classes de hauteur.
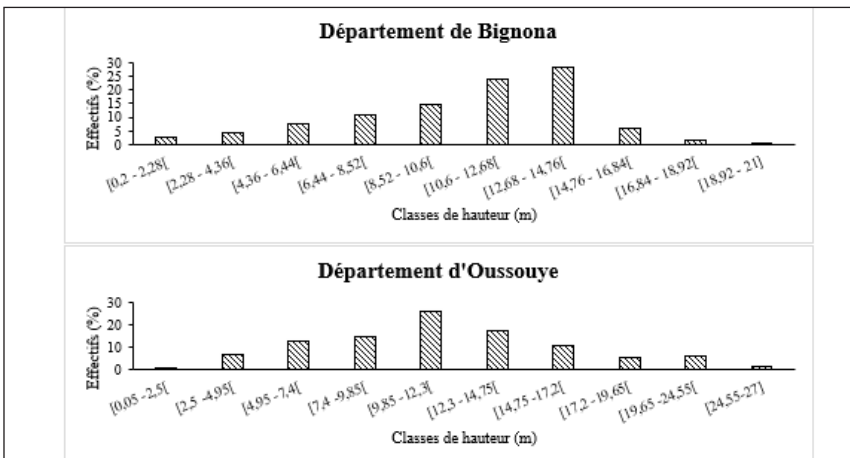

Figure 9 : Structures verticales des peuplements de **Carapa procera** dans les départements de Bignona et d'Oussouye

La distribution verticale ou la hauteur des pieds de *Carapa procera* (figure 9) dans les deux départements étudiés dégage une allure de cloche un peu asymétrique vers la droite à Bignona. Cette configuration révèle que les individus des classes moyennes sont plus représentés, mais surtout que la régénération des *Carapa procera* ne se fait pas correctement. Les grands sujets sont aussi rares, et cela dénote le vieillissement du peuplement. Cependant, la situation semble moins grave pour le département d'Oussouye. Les grands pieds de *Carapa procera* sont rencontrés dans le département d'Oussouye (27 m), alors qu'à Bignona la hauteur maximale est de 21 m.

À l'échelle des villages

- Les villages du département de Bignona

La répartition des pieds de *Carapa procera* dans les classes de hauteur pour chacun des villages étudiés du département de Bignona est présentée sur la figure 10.
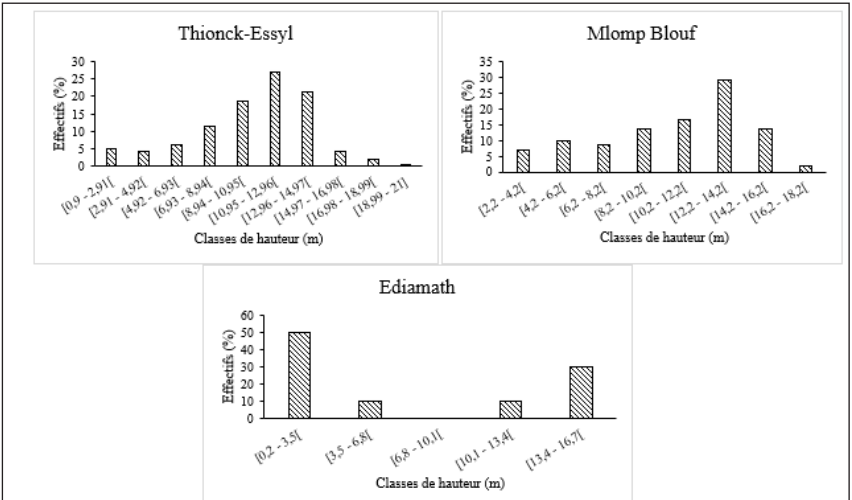

Figure 10 : Structures verticales des peuplements de *Carapa procera* dans les villages du département de Bignona.

La structure de classe asymétrique à droite pour le département de Bignona dans l'analyse globale est plus nette ici quand on prend spécifiquement les villages séparément. En effet, elle est plus perceptible à Thionck-Essyl et Mlomp Blouf, alors qu'à Ediamath, non seulement il n'y a pas beaucoup de pieds, mais la classe centrale manque et ses voisines immédiates sont les plus faiblement représentées. Les deux classes extrêmes sont les plus représentées,

et c'est plus inquiétant quand on constate le nombre de *Carapa procera* dans le village. Cela révèle tout simplement un réel problème de régénération du *Carapa procera*, car toutes les jeunes pousses n'arrivent plus à l'âge adulte. Thionck-Essyl abrite les plus grands sujets de *Carapa procera* (21 m) suivi de Mlomp Blouf (17,5 m) et Ediamath (16,5 m).

- Les villages du département d'Oussouye

La figure 11 présente les structures verticales des peuplements de *Carapa procera* dans les villages étudiés du département d'Oussouye.
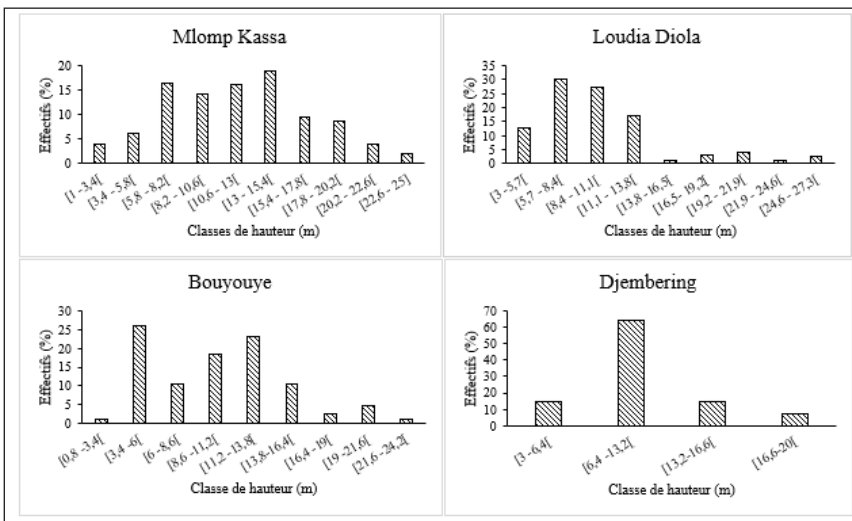

Figure 11 : Structures horizontales des peuplements de *Carapa procera* dans les villages du département d'Oussouye

L'analyse de la figure 11 montre que la distribution des *Carapa procera* dans les classes de hauteur renferme des situations diverses d'un village à l'autre, mais globalement la régénération est faible. En effet, les individus des différentes petites tailles sont moins représentés, ce qui ne favorise pas un renouvellement du peuplement dans les différents villages. On note une situation moins alarmante à Mlomp Kassa et Bouyouye, mais à Loudia Diola, le recrutement est moins problématique que le maintien des peuplements, qui subissent beaucoup de pertes pour les sujets de 13,8 m et plus. Le village de Djembering a le plus faible peuplement, représenté seulement en 4 classes avec en majorité des pieds de *Carapa procera* de hauteur inférieure à 13,2 m. Les arbres les plus grands ont été rencontrés à Loudia Diola, avec des hauteurs avoisinant les 27,3 m.

Au-delà de la caractérisation botanique, les peuplements de *Carapa procera* ont une valeur écosystémique importante. Cet aspect est analysé à travers la typologie des services écosystémiques offerts par *Carapa procera*, l'indice de fourniture des services écosystémiques, les fréquences de citation (FC), le niveau de fidélité (NF), les valeurs d'usage. Une telle démarche a permis d'apprécier l'utilité de *Carapa procera* ou de ses différentes parties pour les populations de la zone d'étude.

Évaluation des services écosystémiques

Les enquêtes socio-économiques effectuées ont permis l'extraction des divers services écosystémiques qui nous intéressaient, de même que les valeurs d'usage procurées aux communautés.

Typologie des services au niveau des différents sites de l'étude

Le tableau 3 présente les différents services écosystémiques liés au *Carapa procera* rencontrés dans la zone d'étude. Dans les départements de Bignona et d'Oussouye, on compte 21 services, dont 6 services d'approvisionnement, 5 services de régulation, 7 services culturels et 3 services de support de la biodiversité. Au niveau de Thionk Essyl, on retrouve 18 services fournis, répartis en 6 d'approvisionnement, 4 de régulation, 7 culturels et 3 supports de biodiversité. À Mlomp Blouf, on retrouve 15 services, dont 6 d'approvisionnement, 4 de régulation, 4 culturels et 2 supports de biodiversité. À Djembering, 12 services, dont respectivement 4 d'approvisionnement, 4 de régulation, 3 culturels, 2 supports de biodiversité. À Mlomp Kassa 14 services répartis en 4 d'approvisionnement, 4 de régulation, 5 culturels, 2 de support de la biodiversité sont répertoriés. Enfin à Bouyouye, on dénombre 17 services avec 6 d'approvisionnement, 4 de régulation, 5 culturels et 3 de support de la biodiversité.

Indices de fourniture des services écosystémiques

L'analyse des indices de fourniture de services offerts par *Carapa procera* dans les différents villages des communes de Thionck-Essyl, Mlomp (Blouf), Djembering, Bouyouye et Mlomp (Kassa) montre une fourniture de services écosystémiques assez importante.

L'évaluation des indices montre que les populations rencontrées dans ces villages tirent beaucoup de bénéfices des services offerts par *Carapa procera*. Les services d'approvisionnement et culturels ont un indice de 0,7, l'indice de régulation est de 0,8, et le support de la biodiversité capitalise l'indice le plus élevé 0,9 (Figure 12).

Tableau 3 : Typologie des services au niveau des différents sites de l'étude

| Types de service	Services potentiels de Carapa procera	Thionck Essyl	MlompBlouf	Djembering	MlompKasa	Bouyouye
Approvisionnement	Alimentation	X	X	X	X	X
	Bois (matière première pour l'artisanat)	X	X			X
	Bois de chauffe	X	X	X		X
	Ombrage	X	X	X	X	X
	Pharmacopée	X	X	X	X	X
	Biofertilisants	X	X		X	X
Total des services d'approvisionnement		5	5	4	4	5
Régulation	Maintien d'une fonction hydrologique (infiltration)	X	X	X	X	X
	Séquestration de carbone atmosphérique	X	X	X	X	X
	Régulation de l'érosion éolienne et hydrique					
	Régulation du sol	X	X	X	X	X
	Atténuation des variations climatiques et leurs effets	X	X	X	X	X
Total des services Régulation		4	4	4	4	4
Culturel	Esthétique et sentiment d'appartenance	X	X	X	X	X
	Libation	X			X	
	Autel	X				
	Envoûtement	X	X		X	X
	Mauvais esprits	X				X
	Esthétique	X	X	X	X	X
	Patrimoine immatériel	X	X	X	X	X
Total des services culturels		7	4	3	5	5
Support	Habitat	X	X	X	X	X
	Reproduction					X
	Maintien de la diversité biologique	X	X	X	X	X
Support de la biodiversité		**2**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**3**

Source : Mbaye *et al.*, enquêtes 2019.
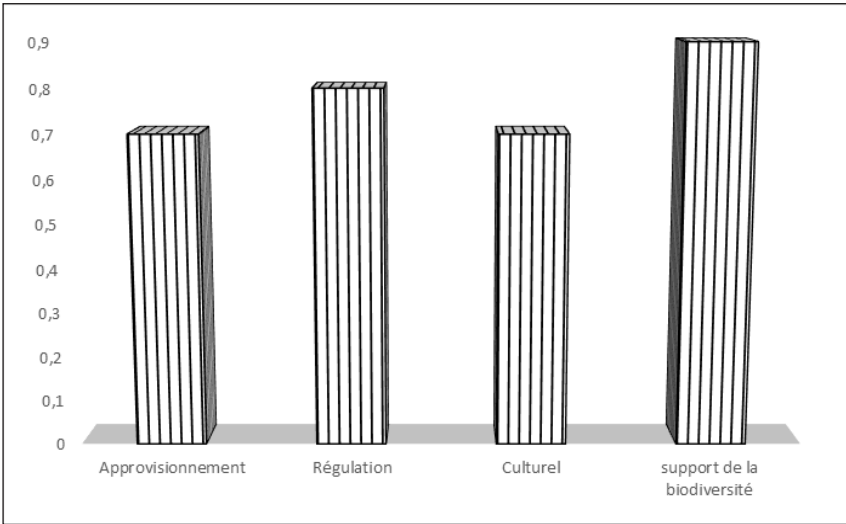
Figure 12 : Indice de services fournis par rapport au potentiel du *Carapa procera*.

Toutefois, considérant la répartition des services dans les différents villages, ces services cachent de profondes inégalités. En effet, nous constatons que les villages de Thionck-Essyl et Bouyouye bénéficient de plus de services écosystémiques, avec respectivement 19 et 18 services utilisés. Alors qu'à Djembering, le cumul de tous les services donne 12. Et ces disparités se creusent davantage si nous nous intéressons à la variation des indices de services fournis dans chaque village.

Fréquence de citations (FC)

L'analyse des données a permis d'identifier plusieurs services potentiels d'approvisionnement de *Carapa procera* fréquemment utilisés par les populations de la zone d'étude. Cette variété de services est constituée de bois (d'œuvre et de chauffe), des écorces, des feuilles, des racines, des fruits, des fleurs et des pétioles. Pour chaque service, nous analysons sa fréquence de citation (tableau 4), dont les valeurs sont obtenues à partir de la formule rappelée plus haut en méthodologie.

L'analyse de la fréquence de citation montre les parties les plus utilisées de l'arbre. Ainsi, avec un score de 97 pour cent. des 213, les fruits constituent la partie la plus utilisée de l'arbre. En fait, les fruits, au-delà de leur valeur économique, ont des implications socioculturelles, sanitaires et spirituelles. Le bois mort, avec une fréquence de 47,42 pour cent. arrive en deuxième position. Cette fréquence élevée s'explique par l'usage du bois en tant que combustible et, mais aussi dans la charpenterie.

Tableau 4 : fréquences de citations des services dans la zone

Services d'approvisionnement	Nombre de citations	FC
Bois	101	47,42
Ecorce	95	44,6
Feuilles	68	31,92
Racines	35	16,43
Fruits	207	97,18
Fleurs	3	1,41
Pétioles	23	4,32
Nombre de répondants	213	

Source : Mbaye *et al.,* enquêtes 2019

L'écorce, les feuilles et les racines ont une fréquence de citation de 44 pour cent., 31,92 pour cent., et de 16,43 pour cent.. Ces trois services sont le plus utilisés dans la pharmacopée pour soigner certaines maladies. Les pétioles et les fleurs présentent les plus faibles fréquences de citation, soit respectivement 4,32 pour cent. et 1,32 pour cent. Leur usage est restreint à la fabrication de cure-dents et d'insecticide dans les rizières. Ainsi, une analyse plus poussée des citations de chaque catégorie de services a été réalisée en s'intéressant au niveau de consensus des populations sur l'usage d'un service.

Niveau de fidélité

Le niveau de fidélité des sept services composant la catégorie de services d'approvisionnement de *Carapa procera* affiche d'importantes diversités et une forte corrélation avec le nombre de citations des services (Figure 13).

Au regard du graphique de corrélation ci-dessus (Figure 13), le constat d'une forte relation entre le niveau d'utilisation et la fidélité se dégage. En effet, nous remarquons que plus le service est cité, plus le niveau de fidélité est élevé et inversement. Ainsi, les fruits affichent un nombre de 38,9 pour 207 citations alors qu'elle est > 1 pour 3 citations.

Le niveau de fidélité exprime la satisfaction des acteurs ou bénéficiaires à tirer profit d'un produit. C'est pourquoi les niveaux de fidélité les plus forts s'observent avec les fruits (38,9), tandis que les plus faibles sont enregistrés avec les fleurs (0,56). Ce qui est cohérent avec la fréquence de citation.
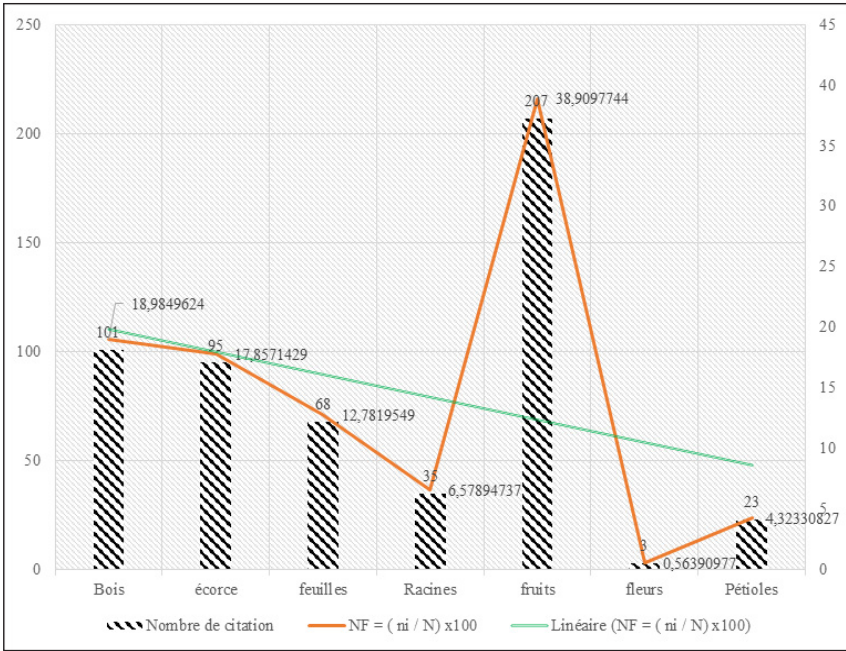
Figure 13 : Corrélation entre niveaux de fidélité et citations des services potentiels de *Carapa procera* dans la zone

Les valeurs d'usage

Les services écosystémiques procurent aux communautés diverses utilités selon l'expression de leurs besoins. Elles varient en fonction des communautés et des villages. En effet, dans notre zone d'étude, les services écosystémiques du *Carapa procera* sont utilisés dans tous les villages dans lesquels nous avons mené nos enquêtes. Ainsi, afin de mieux comprendre le niveau d'utilisation des services offerts par *Carapa procera*, une évaluation de la valeur d'usage a été faite pour chaque service et dans chaque village, sur la base de la formule qui met en rapport le nombre de citations de chaque service et le total de répondants (Figure 14). Plus la valeur d'usage d'un service est élevée, plus l'importance de ce service pour la communauté est exprimée.

L'analyse des valeurs d'usage des services écosystémiques de *Carapa procera* montre non seulement une variation dans leur utilisation, mais une disparité d'usage selon les villages. Ainsi, nous notons une domination dans l'usage des graines dont des valeurs supérieures ou égales à 1 sont obtenues à Loudia Diola, Djembering et Mlomp Kassa avec respectivement (1 ; 1,07 ; 1,01), alors qu'à Thionk-Essyl, Mlomp Blouf et Bouyouye, des valeurs respectives

de 0,92 ; 0,93 et 0,87 ont été obtenues. Avec des valeurs très faibles (0,04 et 0,01), les fleurs sont très peu utilisées à Thionck-Essyl et à Djembering. Pour les écorces, nous constatons une utilisation plus élevée à Thionck-Essyl, 0,73, Mlomp Blouf, 0,73 et à Bouyouye, 0, 87, alors que ce service n'a fait l'objet d'aucun usage à Loudia Diola et est faiblement utilisé à Djembering, 0,24.
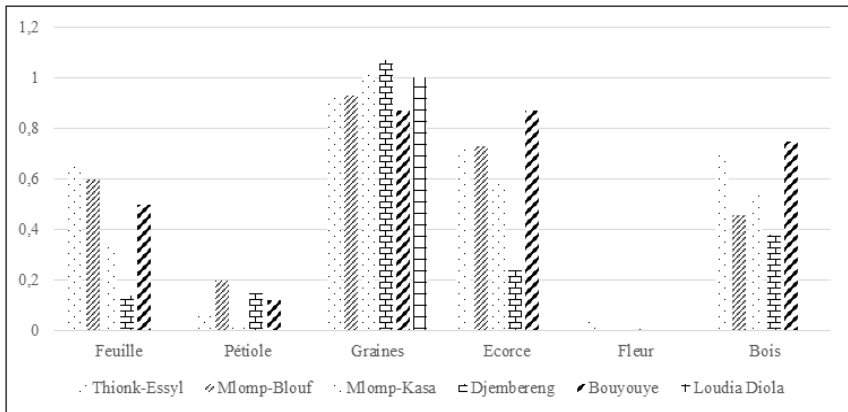

Figure 14 : valeurs d'usage par village

Cette disparité d'utilisation des services écosystémiques de *Carapa procera* entre les villages est d'autant plus importante si l'on considère les valeurs d'usage pour l'ensemble de la zone étudiée.

L'évaluation des valeurs d'usage des services écosystémiques de *Carapa procera* pour l'ensemble de la zone où nous avons mené notre étude montre que l'usage des graines est le plus élevé, suivi du bois et des écorces, avec respectivement 1 ; 0,5 ; 0,37. La valeur accordée à l'usage des graines s'explique par l'apport économique issu de la monétarisation de l'huile tirée de la transformation des graines. En effet, pour la plupart des ménages, dans cette zone, la commercialisation de l'huile est un moyen de subvenir à certains besoins de la famille. Quant au bois, la valeur accordée à son usage se justifie par son utilité dans la construction, l'artisanat et la menuiserie. Grâce à la résistance du bois issu de *Carapa procera*, il est utilisé comme bois de charpente, de « *kadiandou* », et pour la confection des tabourets. Les autres services tels que les racines, les feuilles, les écorces, les feuilles sont plus appréciés dans la pharmacopée.

Discussion

Distribution spatiale de Carapa procera

Le peuplement de *Carapa procera* est inégalement réparti dans la zone d'étude. C'est ainsi que dans le département de Bignona, notamment à Thionck-Esssyl, les résultats des inventaires attestent une densité plus élevée par rapport aux autres localités (0,39). En effet, l'effectif plus élevé des pieds de *Carapa procera* à Thionck-Esssyl pourrait s'expliquer par le caractère familial de l'arbre. Son exploitation par autrui nécessite impérativement l'accord des propriétaires. Aujourd'hui, de plus en plus, avec la prise de conscience de l'intérêt de l'arbre, quelques rares familles commencent à en planter pour pouvoir être autonomes.

Par contre, dans la commune de Djembering, dans le département d'Oussouye, et plus particulièrement dans le village de Bouyouye (1,58 individu/ha), la densité assez élevée de *Carapa procera* s'explique par la présence d'une forêt avec un peuplement de *Carapa* assez remarquable. En effet, dans ce village, le peuplement de *Carapa procera* se trouve en dehors des concessions, contrairement aux autres localités. Cependant, dans les deux communes de Mlomp Blouf et Mlomp Kassa, respectivement dans les départements de Bignona et d'Oussouye, les faibles effectifs inventoriés s'expliquent par le fait qu'une bonne partie des pieds se trouve à l'intérieur de sites sacrés. Or, l'accès aux lieux de rituels initiatiques (bois sacrés) ainsi que les sanctuaires sont strictement interdits aux profanes, ce qui constitue une limite pour le travail d'inventaire dans ces deux communes.

Notons que pour le cas spécifique de Mlomp (Blouf), l'essentiel du peuplement se trouve dans ces bois sacrés uniquement réservés aux hommes initiés.

Par ailleurs, Ediamath, deuxième village de ladite commune, se distingue par une faible densité du peuplement à *Carapa* (0,29 individu/ha), et la majorité des individus rencontrés sont localisés dans la brousse proche. Quant à la commune de Mlomp (Kassa), l'impossibilité d'accéder aux pieds de *Capara procera* est liée au fait que beaucoup de ces arbres abritent des autels.

Paramètres structuraux des peuplements de Carapa procera

Les résultats des analyses sur les paramètres structuraux des peuplements de *Carapa procera* montrent de façon générale que la densité de *Carapa procera* est faible, quelle que soit la localité considérée. La régénération est également faible, avec moins de 30 jeunes pieds dans chacun des villages. La faible densité et régénération obtenue à partir de la présente étude pourrait provenir des effets des conditions environnementales des sites de récolte ou

même de certaines caractéristiques physiologiques des arbres-mères (Sanogo 2015:80). La faiblesse de ces paramètres pourrait être due au fait que la quasi-totalité des graines qui tombent est ramassée, ce qui laisse très peu de chance pour la régénération de l'espèce. En effet, les graines de *Carapa procera* sont utilisées pour la fabrication d'huile.

Pour ce qui est de la surface terrière (ST), qui renseigne sur la grosseur des troncs des arbres à hauteur de poitrine, il ressort que les plus gros arbres sont rencontrés à Thionck-Essyl, Bouyouye et Mlomp Kassa.

Le recouvrement ou surface occupée par les couronnes des *Carapa* sur la surface totale du terroir renseigne sur l'envergure des *Carapa* dans les villages étudiés. Les pieds les plus majestueux ont été rencontrés à Thionck-Essyl, alors que Djembering en a les plus petits. En ce qui concerne la hauteur moyenne (Hmoy) et la hauteur de la première branche (Hm1B), le constat est que les villages du département d'Oussouye, comme Mlomp Kassa, Bouyouye et Djembering, ont les individus de *Carapa* les plus hauts, qui sont également plus bas-branchus. Au vu de ces résultats, il apparaît que le peuplement de *Carapa* est vieillissant et menacé de disparition. Cela corrobore d'ailleurs les résultats de Beguin et Guillemot (2005), cités par Sanogo (2015:49), qui ont montré que *C. procera* est en danger d'extinction en Afrique de l'Ouest du fait d'une surexploitation des arbres. Néanmoins, notons pour le cas de notre zone d'étude que les menaces qui pèsent sur *Carapa* sont plus liées à la faiblesse de la régénération naturelle, au défrichement cultural des galeries forestières, à l'assèchement précoce des cours d'eau en saison sèche et au vieillissement des peuplements. D'ailleurs cette espèce figure parmi celles qui sont protégées par les communautés. En outre, suite aux actions des déprédateurs (rats sauvages en particulier) et au ramassage des fruits contenant de l'huile par les femmes en milieu rural, la régénération naturelle de *Capara procera* est aléatoire sur ses sites naturels. (Jansen *et al.* 2004:580 ; Weber *et al.* 2010:346)

Les services écosystémiques liés au Carapa procera

Les catégories d'usages les plus rencontrées dans ces peuplements de *Carapa procera* sont la pharmacopée, la conservation des sols, la fourniture de bois de chauffe et de service. Ces résultats sont en accord avec ceux de beaucoup d'auteurs. Les travaux de Diarassouba *et al.* (2008:82) et de Dossou *et al.* (2012:44) montrent respectivement que les usages du karité (*Vitellaria paradoxa*) dans la pharmacopée traditionnelle en Côte d'Ivoire et les bénéfices tirés des feuilles, écorces, fruits et racines dans la forêt marécageuse d'Agonvè au Bénin sont similaires aux usages de *Carapa procera* en Basse Casamance. Par ailleurs, la vente des produits de l'arbre constitue également

une importante source de revenus pour ces populations rurales. Selon Gning *et al.* (2013:5623), au fil de la saison sèche, les ligneux deviennent un appoint alimentaire quasi indispensable, en milieu malinké, donc une source de revenus pour les populations qui les commercialisent. C'est la même idée que nous retrouvons chez Camara *et al.* (2017:227) qui rappellent l'importance de la contribution économique de *Elaeis guineensis* dans le bien-être des populations de la Basse Casamance. Il en est de même au Niger où les ligneux contribuent de 50 à 70 pour cent. à la satisfaction des besoins alimentaires humains et animaux et à 80 à 90 pour cent. de la pharmacopée, selon Laminou *et al.* (2017:357) Les populations rurales ont des connaissances traditionnelles sur les ligneux, particulièrement *Carapa procera*. Les arbres leur procurent ainsi divers produits à usage pharmaceutique. Pratiquement, toutes les parties des arbres allant des feuilles aux racines en passant par les fruits et l'écorce sont utilisées pour soigner, soit les hommes, soit les animaux. L'usage des arbres dans la pharmacopée a été développé par plusieurs auteurs. Laminou *et al.,* (2017:362-362) ont recensé quelque 38 espèces ligneuses utilisées dans la pharmacopée traditionnelle pour le traitement de plusieurs pathologies et autres maladies ou infections.

À l'instar de plusieurs autres espèces forestières, *Carapa procera* fournit des services socioculturels remarquables, comme l'ont montré les travaux de Rabiou *et al.* (2017:49 ; Habou *et al.* 2020:242), qui donnent une idée de l'importance de la pharmacopée traditionnelle contre 25 maladies répertoriées. De plus comme l'ont souligné Weber *et al. (2010* : 39.), l'huile extraite des graines revêt aussi d'importantes fonctions médico-magiques. Elle est utilisée contre l'envoûtement et pour éloigner les mauvais esprits, et servait à la conservation des morts jusqu'à l'enterrement avant l'existence de morgues dans les villages, toutefois cette pratique tend à disparaître.

Conclusion

En définitive, on peut retenir de cette étude que de façon générale, les peuplements de *Carapa procera* dans les départements de Bignona et d'Oussouye sont dans une dynamique de vieillissement et que la régénération est très faiblement assurée. Cependant, la situation est beaucoup plus inquiétante dans la zone de Bignona et ceci est lié au fait que les pieds de *Carapa procera* bénéficient d'un meilleur statut de protection dans le département d'Oussouye. En effet, aussi bien les plus grands que les plus gros individus de *Carapa procera* se retrouvent à Oussouye. Par ailleurs, les besoins en produits de *Carapa procera* ne cessent d'augmenter, et cela augmente la pression exercée sur l'espèce.

Ainsi, la faiblesse de la régénération pourrait être imputable à l'importance économique de l'huile de *Carapa procera* produite à partir des graines, limitant ainsi les chances de renouvellement des peuplements. Il devient donc urgent que les populations prennent conscience du danger que courent ces arbres qui leur apportent beaucoup sur le plan économique autant que social, afin d'éviter sa disparition dans leurs terroirs respectifs en protégeant les jeunes pousses, voire, mieux, en effectuant carrément des reboisements.

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Youth Employment and Large-scale Agricultural Land Investments in Africa: Mixed Methods Insights from Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines the linkage between youth employment and large-scale agricultural land investment (LALI) in Africa with a focus on Nigeria. There is no consistent direction regarding the effects of LALIs on employment in the literature. While some studies found a positive effect, others opine that LALIs could have a deteriorating effect. This study contributes to the discourse by carrying out a comparative analysis of youth (un)employment in communities with and without LALIs. A mixed methods analysis is engaged in the study. The quantitative data is estimated using the difference-in-difference and propensity score matching techniques, while the qualitative aspect is carried out using key informant interviews and focus group discussion. The quantitative result shows that the presence of LALIs in the communities leads to a 1.24 percentage reduction in the amount of wage earned by the youth, but was only significant at 10 per cent. On the employment of youth conditioned upon the presence of LALIs in a community, the study finds a reduction in the number of hours worked by six hours, which was also only significant at 10 per cent. From the qualitative analysis, the study finds varied wage levels across the sample. These findings raise concerns regarding the type of employment provided by LALIs. Hence, to curb youth unemployment and create decent jobs, LALI recipient countries could promote better bargaining power for the host communities to negotiate better employment.

Keywords: agriculture; land; investments; employment; households; Nigeria; youth

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Résumé

Cette étude examine le lien entre l'emploi des jeunes et l'investissement dans les grands projets agricoles (GPA) en Afrique, avec un accent particulier sur le Nigeria. Dans la littérature, il n'existe pas d'orientation cohérente concernant les effets des GPA sur l'emploi. Pendant que certaines études ont trouvé un effet positif, d'autres estiment que les GPA pourraient avoir un effet négatif. Cette étude apporte sa contribution au débat en effectuant une analyse comparative de l'emploi et du chômage des jeunes dans les communautés avec et sans GPA. Une analyse de méthodes mixtes est engagée dans l'étude. Les données quantitatives sont estimées à l'aide des techniques de doubles différences et d'appariement des coefficients de propension, tandis que l'aspect qualitatif est réalisé à l'aide d'entretiens avec des informateurs clés et de discussions de groupe. Les données quantitatives montrent que la présence des GPA dans les communautés entraîne une réduction de 1,24 pour cent du montant du salaire gagné par les jeunes, mais n'est significatif qu'à 10 pour cent. En ce qui concerne l'emploi des jeunes tributaire de la présence des GPA dans une communauté, l'étude révèle une réduction de six heures du nombre d'heures travaillées, ce qui n'est également significatif qu'à 10 pour cent. D'après l'analyse qualitative, l'étude révèle des niveaux de salaire variés dans l'échantillon. Ces résultats soulèvent des inquiétudes quant au type d'emploi fourni par les GPA. Par conséquent, pour réduire le chômage des jeunes et créer des emplois décents, les pays bénéficiaires de l'initiative pourraient promouvoir une plus grande capacité de négociation pour les communautés d'accueil, pour qu'elles puissent négocier de meilleurs emplois.

Mots-clés : agriculture ; terres ; investissements ; emploi ; ménages ; Nigeria ; jeunes.

Introduction

This article investigates youth employment in Nigeria concerning how large-scale agricultural land investments (LALIs) offer employment to youths in host communities. This study relies on a comparison of communities with and without LALIs to understand their role in job creation for the growing youth population. Most of these LALIs target the agricultural sector, which remains the largest sector in most African countries, and has the potential of transforming local communities, individual lives, and national economies. Furthermore, the agriculture sector employs more than 65 per cent of the active labour force in Africa (Africa Development Bank-AfDB 2014). In addition, agriculture provides excellent support for the African people ranging from food supply to medicinal herbs (Aigbokhan and Ola 2015; Osabuohien 2014).

Our definition of unemployment is in line with the International Labour Organization (ILO 2020) that unemployed persons comprise all persons of working age who were without work; that is, those who were not in paid employment or self-employment or currently available for work, during the reference period. Employed persons are those engaged in some kind of paid job or self-employed and are currently working. The African Union (2006) conceptualised youth as persons who are between the ages of 15 and 35 years. Thus, youth employment is defined as individuals from 15 to 35 years who are engaged in some kind of paid job, self-employed or currently working. Youth unemployment, thus, refers to those who have no such engagement.

Focusing on the youth population is essential, considering that Africa hosts about 19 per cent of the global youth population (Central Intelligence Agency-CIA 2018; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs – UN-DESA 2015). It is also projected that the youth population in the region as a proportion of the total population is 75 per cent, with over 60 per cent being younger than 25 years (AfDB 2018; Anyanwu 2014; Hilson and Osei 2014). The challenge of youth unemployment in Africa is therefore a serious and sensitive issue, which is impacted further by a number of diverse reasons. Some of these reasons include: first, the youthful population is usually cognizant of and active in issues pertaining to social injustice, which may result in feelings of neglect from benefits that they would have derived from natural/societal resources. Second, a youthful population could be an endorsement for social vices and civil unrest if not well managed (Osabuohien, Efobi et al. 2020). The increasing population of youths, coupled with high unemployment and poor economic conditions, could increase the likelihood of civil tensions, war, and misery. For example, the Ugandan and the Sierra Leonean wars were among those in Africa cited as being particularly define by young combatants as a result of unemployment (Bellows and Miguel 2009; Osabuohien, Olokoyo et al. 2020; Vindevogel et al. 2013).

To tackle unemployment and create jobs in the African region, some countries are taking steps to improve the attractiveness of the agricultural sector, through capital inflow and enterprise development, for youth participation (*African Business* 2017; Bluwstein et al. 2018). The expectation is that with the presence of agricultural investments, there will be productive utilisation of land, and the spill-over effect is that employment opportunities will be created either directly or through the utilisation of the support services of smaller businesses, among others (Engström and Hajdu 2018). However, the extent to which these efforts yield sustainable outcomes depends on the

impact of LALIs, as the investors require such lands for the location of their enterprise. This prediction is in agreement with studies that have found a positive employment effect from the presence of LALIs (e.g., Barbanente and Aisbett 2016; Khadjavi et al. 2017; Nolte and Ostermeier 2017). We work with the operational definition of LALIs as taking possession of and/ or controlling a scale of land for commercial/industrial agricultural (Food First and Information and Action Network – FIAN 2010) or a situation where locally used large tracks of land are leased or sold for agricultural development (food cultivation and agro-fuel production). These LALIs are potential sources of employment and rural transformation (Osabuohien et al. 2019; Osabuohien, Efobi et al. 2020).

On average, the land-poor have most to gain from agricultural investments, at least in terms of employment opportunities. In contrast, Stickler (2012) reveals that large-scale agricultural activities generate low employment and low earnings in Uganda; and that when people have smallholdings, they are worse off. Similarly, Brown (2013) reiterated that LALIs could deprive local people in the form of low labour retention as farming becomes mechanised. Aigbokhan and Ola (2015) indicate that LALIs are associated with high capital-intensive production with few labour demands. In the same vein, agricultural products may not be meant for host countries and host communities, whereby it can create retail job activities for the local people. Okuro (2015) also noted that large-scale land acquisition might further jeopardise the welfare of the poor by depriving them of the safety net function that this type of land and water use fulfils. Osabuohien et al. (2019) examined the effect of LALIs on female labour outcomes in Tanzania and indicated they created jobs for the female population in the areas of direct employment as farm labourers in the LALIs and other opportunities, like contract employment.

From the literature, there is inconsistency in the employment effect of LALIs. While some studies (Barbanente and Aisbett 2016; Khadjavi et al. 2017) found a positive effect, other studies (Brown 2013; Stickler 2012) maintained that LALIs have somewhat deteriorated the employment fortunes of the local people. As a thrust from the literature, to appreciate the effect, there is the need to do a comparative study of communities with and without LALIs and with a mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) approach. This article, therefore, provides recent insights into the debate. Thus, the questions this article seeks to answer include: to what extent has the existence of LALIs delivered on employment creation to the households in host communities in Nigeria? How do labour hours in the agricultural sector differ from the non-agricultural sector for households in communities

with (and without) LALIs? What is the nature of the employment provided by LALIs to individuals in host communities? The study does this at a national scale comparison using the Living Standards Measurement Study-Integrated Surveys on Agriculture (LSMS-ISA)[1] data and a case study of some farms in three states – Ekiti, Kwara, and Ogun.

Nigeria presents an interesting context to study the relationship between LALI presence and youth employment for the following reasons. First, Nigeria is among the top 20 LALI recipient countries worldwide, and the top 10 in Africa. Other countries in Africa (e.g., Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Zambia) that are LALI destinations have received much research attention, whereas comparatively little has been done for Nigeria in terms of the LALIs' implications (especially youth employment). Second, youth unemployment in Nigeria is about 14 per cent, and it is projected that the youth population will grow by 60 per cent by 2030 (UN-DESA 2015). As a result, there is a need to understand how LALIs impact this population group in Nigeria.

Theoretical framework and methodology

In this section, the framework for the analysis and methodological approach used for this study are covered.

Theoretical framework

This article relies on some theoretical predictions to understand the effect of LALIs on unemployment. The different theoretical approaches all share the view that the effect of land acquisitions is strongly influenced by the type of land tenure system in place. In particular, in the context of weak land tenure systems, large-scale land acquisitions can lead to the transformation of a resource from an open access/communal property regime to a private property system. Whether and how this change benefits rural households and smallholders in particular is disputed.

The 'enclose theory' stipulates that as land that was communally owned moves away to private ownership, this could lead to displacement of smallholder farmers and lower welfare by losing critical community economic opportunities. The theory underlines that mostly where property rights are not well defined or are less regulated landowners could contract land to LALIs without notice to smallholders using such land. This is what Cohen and Weitzman (1975) described in their study as a consequence of enclosure, which is also being verified by other studies in on the effects of LALIs in sub-Saharan Africa (Anseeuw et al. 2012). Thus, displacement of smallholders

would lead to decrease welfare, labour mobility out of agriculture, and less access to water and food. Thus, the enclosed model concludes that a shift from communal to private property will lead to the displacement of smallholders, which could lower the standard of living and job opportunities.

Another theory – evolutionary theory of property rights – postulates that as LALIs are rushing for land acquisition in communities where there is traditional land tenure, this puts pressure on land that would lead to a shift from communal ownership to private ownership. The evolutionary theory of land rights as summarised by Platteau (1996) stipulates that in a market such as the one for agricultural land in sub-Saharan Africa, a spontaneous transition from communal to private property occurs as soon as the national and international commercial pressure on rural land creates new market opportunities. Thus, as land assumes scarcity value, the demand for land certifications rises, and this helps to achieve tenure security for smallholders or landowners. There will be witnessing land markets where landowners could allocate lands and earn rents. There will be efficient allocation of resources triggered by the creation of a land market, which should further allow for efficiency in cropping choices and rapid capital accumulation in smallholder agriculture (Platteau 1996). Thus, the evolutionary theory has it that there is movement from communal to private property and that once land assumes a scarcity value, its demand increases, strengthening the land security for smallholders (Platteau 1996).

A third theory – the welfare enhancing theory – is premised on similar outcomes of the evolutionary theory of property rights (Deininger et al. 2011). However, it differs from evolutionary on the assumption that property rights are well established and enforced. Thus, for property rights being well established, land investments would lead to mutually beneficial outcomes for LALI investors and smallholders or landowners. Hence, some benefits illustrated by this theory include land rental and contract farming, wage earnings as people provide labour for the LALIs, spill-over of technology from LALI to smallholders, infrastructure benefit, market access, and other labour opportunities. This theory assumes to work after a property right is in place and, thus, our study hypothesised that property rights in the communities are well established. The theory assumption is that when rights are well defined, the market functions competitively, and information is accessible to all involved parties, the relationship between smallholders and investors can be welfare enhancing for all parties without the need for regulatory intervention. Therefore, the welfare-enhancing theory, as espoused by Deininger et al. (2011), assumes that the property rights system is already well established and enforced. Thus, land investment

can lead to mutually beneficial outcomes for both investors and smallholders or community members. The conceptual framework that this article builds on is represented in Figure A1 (in the Appendix), where it is presupposed that some form of land tenure system does exist in the communities.

LALIs could offer employment to the local people as LALIs have encouraged the inflow of land investors as a veritable tool for development based on agreed terms between the investors and landowners (Friis and Reenberg 2010; Haberl et al. 2009). In LALI contracting, the LALI firm and the community are the parties. Communities, where there are youth groups that can fight for youth rights, could play a part in LALI contracting (Ariyo and Mortimore 2012). In the LALI's negotiation, the youth will have a loud voice as they collaborate with community leaders and landowners for their concerns to be taken into consideration. Where there are some disagreements, the government intervenes to solve the impasse. Some land tenure systems are not suitable for local people to benefit from LALIs if there is no government intervention. Wily (2011) noted that customary claims are not usually accorded the same legal protection of property rights, which makes local land users susceptible to expropriation. The community (or youth) could benefit (from employment) where the government has developed capacities to handle such land deals. Cotula et al. (2009) acknowledged the potentials of land investments but warned that these might not be handy if host governments (or community leaders) fail to build capacities to negotiate better terms for their people.

In LALI contracting, the LALI firm and community leader (landowners) agree on relevant terms. For the community to gain some benefits, the leaders should negotiate better for the members of the community. There is better negotiation with the involvement of youth in the land contracting deal. The LALIs' presence brings some benefit to the community, including both direct and indirect employment generation. With the LALI firm sited at the community, it offers direct employment to the people by engaging drivers, farm labourers, administrative staff, and mechanics; rents are paid to landowners and individuals deal with the company as retailers or suppliers. Some indirect employment opportunities include[2] contract farming, out-grower schemes, and social amenities built by the LALI company. In addition, corporate social responsibility of the LALI company comes with employing some casual staff, and infrastructures that are put up require labour.

Another indirect employment is the inflow of capital into the community (for instance, improved seeds, technology, machinery, and fertilisers), which greatly improves agriculture in the community. Ali et al. (2015) indicate that commercial farms (LALIs) provided benefits to neighbouring smallholders

in terms of technology, input market access, and resilience to crop shocks in Ethiopia. Hence, to reduce youth unemployment, host countries could establish better bargaining power for the community to ensure that the employment of the people in the location where LALIs are situated is given priority attention.

Method of analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative data are used to achieve the objectives of the article.

Quantitative technique and data description

The study engages in data from the LSMS-ISA conducted by the World Bank in collaboration with Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). The LSMS-ISA data for Nigeria covers the 36 states of Nigeria plus the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The data is grouped into community, households, and agriculture for the two segments (i.e., post-planting and post-harvest) of the survey. For this study, the community and the household levels data are used, which involved merging the two sets of data for the Wave 1 (2010/11) and Wave 3 (2015/16). There are 500 enumeration areas (EAs) sampled from a total of 774 local government areas (LGAs) in Nigeria (including urban and rural areas) in the 36 states and FCT. The analysis is done at the household level, while information on the EAs (e.g., EA codes) is used in categorising communities with LALIs and those without it. Thus, for this study, a community is used synonymously with an EA. The essential thing about the LSMS-ISA data is that information about the location (i.e., codes for EA and LGA) as well as codes for households is unique in data files in both Waves. Noting that most of the LALI investments that were used in categorising the communities occurred in 2012, 2013, and 2014, the data is correctly set up for the application of the difference-in-difference (DiD) technique.

Definition of Variables

The measure of the youth is based on the African Union's (2006) concept of youth as persons who are between 15 and 35 years of old (Osabuohien, Efobi et al. 2020). The literature informs the variables included in the primary regression model. For instance, Asiedu (2004) concluded that the education of individuals, within the location of LALIs, is a significant determinant of the employment capacity. Also, Asiedu et al. (2011) stated that the health situation of individuals in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

located areas would affect the productivity of FDIs since healthy workers are more productive than sickly ones. Thus, the education and health status of the individual are included as variables. The variable LALIs are the presence of land investors in the community where the individual resides where 1 is for communities where a land deal occurred, and 0 otherwise.

Other control variables for the quantitative analysis are: right to land, distance to bank, presence of financial institution, non-agricultural shocks, agricultural shocks, access to credit from the financial institution, and food consumption-dietary diversity.[3] The selection of these variables is informed by the literature (Osabuohien et al. 2015; Osabuohien, Olokoyo et al. 2020; Herrmann 2017; Herrmann et al. 2018). The names, definitions, and summary statistics of the variables are presented in Table A1 in the Appendix.

Estimation technique

The primary estimation technique for the quantitative analysis is the DiD.[4] This estimation technique is a vital impact evaluation technique that estimates the counterfactual for the change in outcome for the population (i.e., households) in communities with LALIs by calculating the change in outcome for the households in communities without LALIs. This estimation technique takes into consideration any differences between the two groups that are constant over time.

The DiD technique is applicable when an intervention is random, conditional on group fixed effect, and time fixed effect. In this case, the *intervention* of interest is the presence of LALIs in communities that are represented in the LSMS-ISA dataset. For the DiD estimation to be successful, both groups of interest should have similar time trends, and there is no anticipation of policy intervention or regional shocks that will make the groups non-comparable. We are confident of overcoming this challenge since the communities of interest are exposed to the same macroeconomic atmosphere and general economic policy.

When applying the DiD technique, there are two *states of affairs, S* = 0; 1 (in our case, communities with LLIs =1 and those without it = 0) This can be expressed in equation (1) as:

$$W = \begin{cases} 1 & if S=1, t=1 \\ 0 & \text{if otherwise} \end{cases} \tag{1}$$

From equation (1), the relationship of interest can be depicted as:

$$Y_{st} = \alpha + \varrho W_{st} + \gamma_s X_s + \tau T_t + \varepsilon_{st} \tag{2}$$

The time-invariant fixed effect and the common time trend can be differenced out and expressed as:

$$\tilde{Y}_s = Y_{s1} - Y_{s0} = \varrho(W_{s1} - W_{s0}) + \varepsilon_{s1} - \varepsilon_{s0} \tag{3}$$

From above, the DiD is written as:

$$Y^{DiD} = \tilde{Y}_1 - \tilde{Y}_0$$
$$= Y_{11} - Y_{10} - (Y_{01} - Y_{00}) - \varrho(W_{11} - W_{10} - (W_{01} - W_{00})) + \varepsilon_{11} - \varepsilon_{10} - (\varepsilon_{01} - \varepsilon_{00}) \tag{4}$$

Equation (4) can be abridged as:

$$Y^{DiD} = \rho + \varepsilon_{11} - \varepsilon_{10} - (\varepsilon_{01} - \varepsilon_{00}) \tag{5}$$

Thus, the DiD is given as equation (6):

$$\Upsilon^{DiD}$$
$$= \rho \tag{6}$$

Qualitative Approach

The qualitative approach is carried out with fieldwork using key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). A purposeful and stratified sampling method was employed in selecting the LALIs used in the study. Kwara State was selected due to the fact that the state has one of the highest concentrations of LALIs, especially those with foreign investors. However, the choice of Ogun State is due to the increasing number of domestically owned LALIs. This is occasioned by the strategic location of Ogun State, which is between Lagos State (the commercial hub of Nigeria) and other countries in West Africa, namely the Republic of Benin. Hence, the state enjoys the positive externality from the population and commercial thrives of Lagos. The third state from which our sample is drawn is Ekiti State, which also has LALIs, some of which operate on a commercial basis like those in Ogun and Kwara.

The non-probability sampling technique (purposive sampling) was adopted in selecting the respondents for the structured interview. This technique was used because the probability of other stakeholder groups cannot be determined. Hence, individuals were left to choose whether to participate in the study or not. The respondents comprise workers at the farms and youth groups from within the community who do not work on the farms, noting that this study focuses on youth employment. The

workers include: (a) the farm workers (who work directly on the farm), (b) their supervisors, (c) the farm managers, and (d) other staff (e.g., accountant/cashier, drivers). The respondents are duly informed that their responses are solely for research purposes and assured of the confidentiality of their identities. Each respondent fills out a questionnaire, which includes demographic details, educational status, household details, employment details, income details, expenditure details, welfare details, and questions about the farm.

The FGDs are conducted among the farmworkers in small groups of between four and six workers, and youth groups in the communities. The interviews and focus group discussions allow the workers to speak freely on other issues of concern about employment-related issues within LALIs. The notes from the qualitative data are transcribed, identified, and analysed through thematic analysis. The thematic analysis focuses on the respondents' perception of the LALIs' contribution to employment, nature of employment, wages, and other welfare-related outcomes.

Empirical results

The results obtained from the empirical analysis are reported and discussed in this section.

Results from quantitative analysis

The study first presents the percentage proportion of the youth that reside in communities with LALIs and those in communities without LALIs who are currently working. We find from Figure 1 that the youth living in communities without LALIs report a higher proportion of economic engagement compared to those living in communities with LALIs. In effect, 41 per cent of the youth living in communities without LALIs report that they were economically engaged. In comparison, only 39 per cent of those residing in communities with LALIs report similar economic engagement. Though these differences are seen, they were not significantly different when subjected to the test of comparison of means. It is essential to highlight that these differences are mere descriptive statistics and do not imply a causal relationship between LALIs and youth employment in these communities.
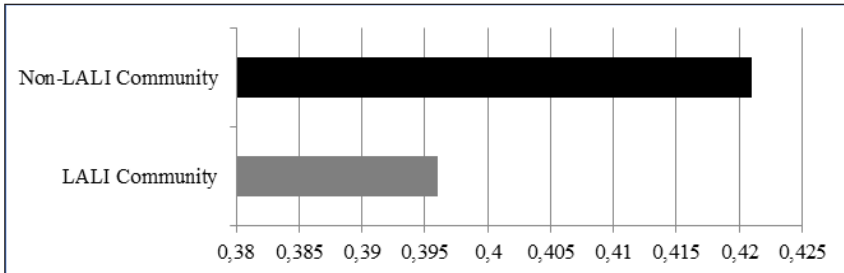
Figure 1: Percentage of the youth working in communities with (without) LALI presence

Source: authors' computation from LSMS-ISA

Second, we present the non-parametric regression to understand – without imposing any parameter restrictions on the relationship – the trend analysis of wages and the number of hours worked across the age of the youth in communities with and without the LALI presence. In Figure 2 (segment a), it is evident that the youth who live in communities with LALIs see increased wages compared to those who live in communities without LALIs, especially within the age range 20 to 34 years. For the older youth who live in communities with LALIs, we find that the wage gap closes compared to their counterpart who lives in communities without LALIs. For the youth who live in communities without LALIs, they experience no such wage differential across age. Despite this, these wages are lower than their counterparts who have the opportunity to work in LALIs.

Figure 2 (segment b) shows a different pattern when considering the number of hours that the youth who live in communities with (and without) LALI presence. Figure 2b shows that there is a clear difference in the number of hours worked for the youth who live in communities with LALIs compared to those who live in communities without LALIs. For the youth in the former communities, we find that they work a shorter number of hours compared to the youth who live in communities without LALIs. This difference is significant, implying that it is likely that the youth work a limited number of hours in communities with LALIs compared to when living in communities without LALIs. Interestingly, despite that youth in communities with LALI work shorter hours, they earn more than the youth in communities without LALIs.

Table 1 reports the DiD results when considering LALI presence in household communities and its causal effect on wages, the number of hours worked, and the actual employment status of the youth in Nigeria. The results show that the presence of LALIs in the communities of households in Nigeria results in a 1.238 percentage decrease in the wages earned by youth. This effect is not significant at the traditional 1 per cent and 5 per cent levels but rather at the 10 per cent level.
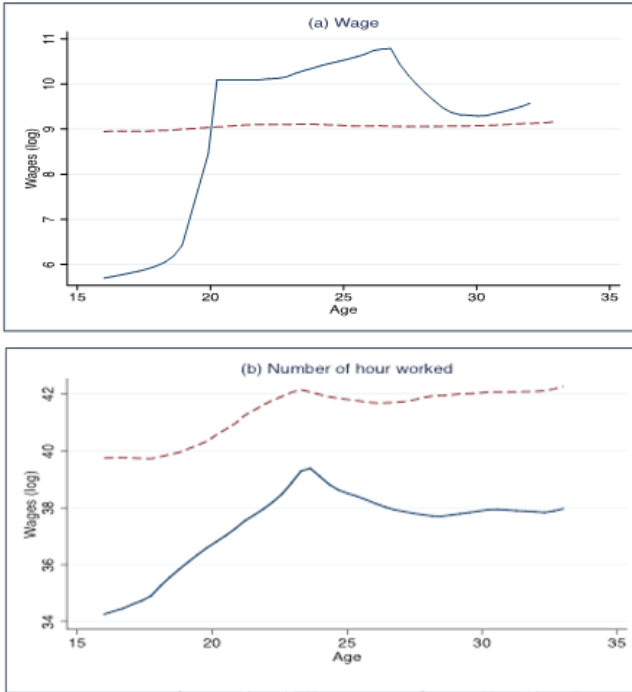
Figure 2: Wages and number of hours worked by youth across LALI locations
Communities with LALIs ———   Communities without LALIs ------
Source: authors' computation from LSMS-ISA

For the number of hours worked by the youth and the presence of LALIs, we find from Table 1 that compared to living in communities without LALIs. There is a reduction in the number of hours worked by the youth by about six hours as a result of the presence of LALIs. Likewise, this effect is only significant at the 10 per cent level, but not at the 1 and 5 per cent levels. The above finding is similar to Barbanente and Aisbett (2016), who established that LALI regions show significant decreases in agricultural work hours. Moreover, this fall has been somewhat offset by increases in the average wage work hours and the proportion of households having any wage work hours.

The result may be seen from the perspective that the presence of LALIs could lead to the corporate or absentee acquisition of land, which may be based on internal social divisions in the communities with LALIs (White 2012). For instance, in such communities, the lands are owned and controlled by the older generation, whose authority matters in determining the benefits that transcend to others who do not have control over such resources. More so, these LALIs are characterised by paying low wages for

labour input (Osabuohien et al. 2019). Such low wages are disincentives for youth engagement or labour input in the investments of these foreign investors, and there are incidences of rising youth migration caused by the presence of LALIs (FAO 2014).

Table 1: LALI presence and outcome variables

Variables	How much was your last payment? (Naira in log form)	Number of hours worked	Worked in household, own or other enterprises
LALI	-1.238*	-6.484*	-0.132*
	(0.748)	(3.267)	(0.056)
Right to land	-0.271***	-0.193	-0.021*
	(0.091)	(0.542)	(0.012)
Distance to bank	-0.030***	-0.048*	0.002
	(0.006)	(0.029)	(0.001)
Presence of financial institutions	0.373**	1.643**	-0.046**
	(0.166)	(0.931)	(0.021)
Non-agricultural shocks	0.1775*	-0.167	0.020*
	(0.093)	(0.551)	(0.012)
Agricultural shocks	-0.5347***	-2.002***	-0.003
	(0.096)	(0.555)	(0.012)
Access to credit from a financial institution	0.338	-1.193	0.008
	(0.245)	(1.672)	(0.036)
Food consumption – dietary diversity	-0.53***	-2.113***	0.073
	(0.112)	(0.658)	(0.014)
Constant	9.127***	38.620	----
	(0.187)	(1.059)	
R2	0.116	0.015	----
Observations	1135	3535	8,131

Note: the values in parenthesis are the standard errors; the superscripts *, **, and *** are significant values are 1, 5, and 10%.

The estimates of the last outcome variable also suggest that compared to the youth who live in communities without LALIs, those in communities with LALIs tend to have a lower probability of working. This result is also not significant at the traditional significant levels of 1 and 5 per cent, but only

at the 10 per cent level. The other control variables suggest that distance to banks, presence of financial institutions within the community of the youth, agricultural shocks, and food consumption – measured as dietary diversity – are important covariates in determining the wage rate of the youth. At the same time, for the number of hours worked, the presence of financial institutions, agricultural shocks, and dietary diversity are relevant covariates. Their presence only informs the probability of working of a financial institution.

Results from qualitative analysis

The qualitative results are examined with a focus on employment provision, wages, hours worked, probability of working, and perception of the community on LALI youth employment. The reports from the farmworkers at the sampled LALIs, as well as the youth in the communities of interest, form the findings for this qualitative sub-section. Table 2 provides a summary of the sampled LALIs for this study and shows their respective employment details.

On employment in the sampled LALIs, those in Ado-Ekiti employ up to 500 workers, Ota LALIs employ up to 600 workers, and LALIs in Omu-Aran engage up to 140 workers. All the LALIs in this study engage youth workers as both tenured and casual staff. Some of these LALIs also receive students on their Industrial Training (IT) programme to work with them from time to time. While the tenured staff require some form of education to qualify for employment, the casual staff require no form of education, making it easy for the rural, uneducated youth to be eligible for jobs on the sampled farms, like their educated counterparts.

In-depth interviews with some of the LALI workers revealed that there are more women than men engaged in soft skills such as harvesting vegetables and peeling of cassava. In contrast, there are more men than women who are involved in the labour-intensive aspects of farming, including clearing and harvesting of crops. This is similar to what Ahlerup and Tengstam (2015) noted, whereby on the average land, the poor (mostly women and other landless men) have most to gain from agricultural investments, at least in terms of employment opportunities. The findings from the qualitative study further revealed that youth are also employed on contracts for specific jobs (such as planting and harvesting) per time. The youth work during peak harvesting periods of a given crop. The employment provision by LALIs tends to increase at peak periods, depending on the time of farming activities carried out on the farm. In Table 2, it is observed that the proportion of youth employment concerning the total number of workers was highest

in Ekiti State, followed by Kwara State, while it was lowest in Ogun State. Aigbokhan and Ola (2015) noted similar concerns that the LALI deal by Presco Industries in Edo State mainly employed contract workers.

Table 2: LALI description and employment information

Details	LALIs		
Location	Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State	Ota, Ogun State	Omu-Aran, Kwara State
Geopolitical zone	South-west Nigeria	South-west Nigeria	North-central Nigeria
Number of workers	Up to 500 workers	Up to 600 workers	Up to 140 workers
Percentage of youth to total employment	45.00	28.57	40.00
Wage range*	₦35,000– ₦ 94,000 ($98.59–$264.79)	₦15,000– ₦70,000 ($42.25– $197.18)	₦16,000– ₦100,000 ($45.07– $281.69)
Incentives	Live animals (fish or chicken) bonuses (if the target is exceeded)	Farm products can be sold at discounted prices to members of staff	Live animals (chicken); 1%–5% commission on bulk purchases (chicken 200kg; eggs 200 crates)

Note: *the average exchange rate was of ₦355 to US$1 at the time the fieldwork was conducted. The wage is per month.

The average wages of workers on the farms per month were between ₦15,000 (US$42.25) and ₦100,000 (US$281.69). In terms of the minimum salary across the sampled farms, the highest minimum salary was ₦35,000 (US$98.59), while the highest maximum salary was ₦100,000 (US$281.69). Working hours were an average of nine hours per day for farmworkers. During our tour of one of the farms, we met one 400 Level student from the Faculty of Agriculture, Federal University of Agriculture, Akure, Ondo State, who was about commencing her IT attachment training for six months. She mentioned that she receives a stipend of ₦5000 (US$14.08) per month. Even though she thought the pay was little, she was eager to start because she was more concerned with the practical knowledge

to be gained than anything else. Concerning other employment benefits, we observed that only a few of the farms provide any form of the pension plan for its tenured workers. The other farms have no form of pension. Thus, a lack of job security could be ascertained (Aigbokhan and Ola 2015). While some of the farms offer incentives to their workers, particularly at the end of the year during the holiday season, the value of the incentives is considered inadequate to substantially improve the morale of the employees.

Interviews with key informants in the communities of the LALIs and FGDs with youth groups revealed that local farmers rarely source for employment from the LALIs, as they prefer to operate on their own. However, they are sometimes available to carry out specific tasks for the LALIs if called upon. Further, a respondent remarked that about 30 per cent of workers in most agricultural farms are youth. The youth in the community noted that the employment procedure is generally based on the policy of the LALI, which includes placing of adverts to reach the public. The LALIs employ on fixed-term, outsourcing, or contract basis.

'The level of youth involvement in the agricultural sector can be rated as low, particularly among the educated class', said one of the respondents. An average youth in the community lacks the desire to participate in farming or other agricultural activities. One of the farm attendants in his mid-twenties alluded to his choice of employment bordering on the unemployment problem ravaging the youth's constituency. Another youth who spoke to us said, 'The meagre pay, coupled with the unfriendly odour from the environment of some farms, is another contributing factor that discourages the youth from having a desire to work in the agricultural industry'. However, it was noted that the youth in the communities have associations that protect the interest of their members as well as LALI workers who are a part of their community.

On the issue of incentives for the workers, we were made to understand that only a few of the LALIs provided bonus packages at the end of the year, while pension is not provided for the workers. The youth groups mentioned that the wages and salaries ranged from ₦15,000–₦50,000 (US$42.25–US$140.85) depending on the designation, level, department, and qualification of the worker, as well as the size of the farm. The above concern is similar to the findings noted by Aigbokhan and Ola (2015). Concerning the level of impact of LALIs to the youth association, the youth leader in Ota stated that employment generation, food availability, and communal development were some of the benefits enjoyed by the community. The youth leader from the Omu-Aran community said that

LALIs could do much more than what they have done so far with respect to employing more youth in the community at the supervisory and managerial positions. The above can also be achieved by taking up some community projects and granting scholarships to indigene youth as well as increasing the amount paid to workers.

Conclusion

This article was principally motivated by the need to provide further empirical insights on the nexus between employment and LALIs, especially in Africa where increasing records of LALIs have been witnessed during the 2010s. This research endeavour is deemed relevant due to the fact that the agricultural sector in a host of African countries still provides employment to more than 65 per cent of the active labour force, on the one hand, and that Africa has one of the most youthful populations of the world, on the other. Thus, the challenge on how to provide employment for the growing youthful population in Africa has remained a crucial issue and subject of interest across the continent. To enhance the creation of jobs for the youth, many African countries are taking the initiative of making the agricultural sector more attractive by attracting investments. Thus, this study proffers the answer to the research question of how LALIs affect youth employment in Africa using the case of Nigeria. The choice of Nigeria is motivated by the fact that the country is one of the highest 20 LALI recipient countries globally and also one of the highest 10 in Africa; however, there is a dearth of empirical research that examines the implications of LALIs, particularly on youth employment.

While some studies (e.g., Barbanente and Aisbett 2016; Khadjavi et al. 2017) found a positive effect, other studies (e.g., Brown 2013) maintained that LALIs have a deteriorating effect on employment. This study contributes to the literature by carrying out a comparative analysis using samples of households (youth) in communities with and without LALIs using a mixed methods approach in order to unravel the employment effect of LALIs. The relevance of the mixed methods approach is based on its sequential data collection strategy whereby data collected in an iterative process in the first phase (quantitative data) can be further validated by the data in the next phase (qualitative data).

The results from the DiD shows that the presence of LALIs in the communities of results to 1.24 percentage reduction in the amount of wage earned by the youth, which was significant only at the 10 per cent level. On the issue, if youth employment (using the number of hours worked by the

youth) conditioned upon the presence of LALIs in a community, the study finds a reduction in the number of hours worked by about six hours, which is also only significant at 10 per cent. The results from PSM have a similar pattern with those of DiD where youth in communities with LALIs earn 2.15 per cent lower wage rate and work nine hours less than compared to their counterparts in communities without LALIs.

Based on the qualitative analysis, the study finds varied wage levels paid to workers across the sampled LALIs ranging between US$45.07 and US$281.69 per month with average working hours of nine hours per day (generally between 7:00 am and 5:00 pm). The above raises concerns about the type of employment provided by the LALIs. Similarly, the employment intensity across the selected LALIs ranges between 0.11 and 0.55 employment per hectare; the variation was as a result of the difference in the level of processing that takes place in the sampled LALIs.

The findings of this study are essential as LALIs could offer some form of employment opportunities directly to the members of households in the communities. Hence, to curb youth unemployment, the LALIs' recipient countries could establish better bargaining power for the host communities to ensure that the employment of the people in the location where LALIs are situated is given priority attention. The employment creation can also emanate through other avenues such as contract farming or out-grower schemes, which are not covered in this study but can be taken up as an agendum for further research.

Notes

1. Other African countries with recent LSMS-ISA data (after 2010) include: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Tanzania, and Uganda. More details are available online at http://surveys.worldbank.org/lsms/our-work/data/data-table (accessed 12 February 2019).
2. Indirect employment opportunities are essential, but it is outside the scope of the present study and can be examined in future research.
3. It is important to note that the preliminary analysis from the data for this analysis does not show any significant correlation between access to credit and the distance to a financial institution (-0.048 non-significant correlation), and agricultural shock and food consumption (0.041 non-significant correlation).
4. Propensity score matching (PSM) was also used; however, the PSM estimation technique and results are not presented due to space constraint. It is available upon request.

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Appendix
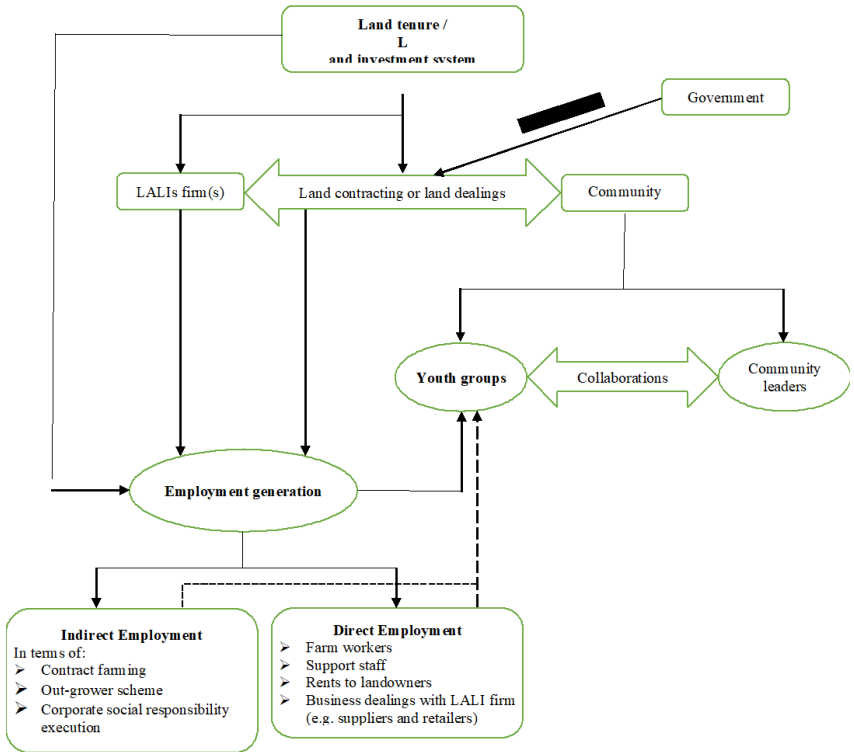
Figure A1: Youth employment and LALIs nexus

Table A1: Variable names and definitions

Variable name	Description of the variables	Mean	SD	Obs.
Right to land	This measures the quantity of agricultural land that the household has rights over and can use for agricultural purpose.	0.691	0.462	36,172
Distance to financial institution	Number of hours from the household to the closest bank.	4.222	9.648	57,181
Presence of financial institution	A dummy if there is a financial institution in the community of the household.	0.929	0.255	57,181
Non-agricultural shocks	A dummy if the household resides in a community that has experienced any of the following: health epidemic, disease breakout, changes in food prices, infrastructural breakdown, and job lay-offs, among others.	0.387	0.487	54,309
Agricultural shocks	A dummy if the household resides in a community that has experienced any shock that affects the agricultural sector, such as changes in agricultural input prices (e.g. fertiliser), weather variability, and pest and crop diseases.	0.378	0.485	54,309
Access to credit from a financial institution	A dummy if any member of the household has credit from a financial institution.	0.040	0.197	57,216
Food consumption – dietary diversity	The summation of the household 7-day recall of the consumption of the following food items: cereals, white tubers and roots, vegetables, fruits, meat, eggs, fish and other seafood, legume nuts and seeds, milk and milk products, oils and fats, sweets, spices, condiments and beverages. This variable is normalised by 12, such that the value runs from 0 (low diversity) to 1 (high diversity).	0.395	0.414	57,216

Large scale agricultural investment	This is a dummy variable, where households reside in communities with LALI occurrence are classified as 1 and those in communities without LALIs are classified as 0.	0.006	0.080	57,295
Wages	How much was the last wage payment of the average youth from working (Naira).	27153.01	197769.9	9,113
Hours worked	This is the average number of hours that the household youths have worked in a paid employment.	40.62	17.32	21,866
Worked in household, own or other enterprises	This is a dummy of the youth in the household has worked for payment in household owned enterprise, or those enterprises owned by other individuals.	0.413	0.492	52,886

Note: information on LALIs was obtained from LMGO (2017). We included mainly the LALIs that are concluded. Also, we made further efforts to confirm them from reports and interactions during the fieldwork.

Source: authors' compilation using information from LSMS-ISA.

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AFRICA DEVELOPMENT
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Vol. XLVI, No. 4, 2021

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