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EDITORIAL

TOWARD A NEW PHASE: Global South from South America

Eloísa Martín, Editor

In this issue, I begin my work as the editor of Global South—Sephis e-magazine. I have the privilege of continuing the work done by Samita Sen and Shamil Jeppie, the previous editors, over the past ten years. The editorial office operated in Calcutta University, India, and had a lively team that led the journal during a decade in a brilliant manner. With the moving of Sephis HQ to the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, the e-magazine also moved South-South, to Brazil. Now, here in Rio, we have the challenge of trying to further the preceding efforts.

Since its origin, Global South—Sephis e-magazine had offered a unique opportunity for regular dialogue and wider participation of scholars, researchers and students based in countries of the south (Africa, Asia, Latin America, Caribbean and Pacific regions), focusing on contemporary and historical events and processes.

Global South first issue was launched in September 2004, on the occasion of the international workshop on “Contested Nationalisms and the New Statism” in Penang, Malaysia, and included contri-

butions by very established scholars, as Partha Chatterjee and Janaki Nair, side by side with –at that time- young researchers and policy makers such as Maria Laura Guembe, Gairoonisa Paleker, Olarinmoye Omobolaji Ololade, and Claudio Pinheiro.

During its existence, Sephis e-magazine has developed South-South networks, in a very interdisciplinary manner. Since the beginning, its coverage integrates the academic agenda and the public interest. This spirit of joining the more experienced and the younger, of combining academic papers, intervention essays and political and professional experiences gave a special mark to Global South and, in this new phase, we want to keep this spirit alive. In this sense, we kept most of the section that characterized Global South, while including new ones.

This issue begins with an interview with Alexandra Arkhangelskaya, on the importance of researching Africa in Russia. We also present a Dossier on Youth in Latin America, with two papers delivered at the UNESCO MOST School that was held in Brasilia, Brazil, in December 2013.



Jesús Gomez Abarca analyzes the youth movements and protests in Mexico during Enrique Peña Nieto government. Sofía Lachimba discusses youth participation in the public sphere in Ecuador. Graziene Carneiro de Souza, advisor of the Brazilian Secretary of Youth, who co-organized the event, completes the dossier with an essay.

As regular articles, the current issue includes a contribution by Kashaf Ganhi, on Nalanda University. His paper illuminates the originality of this institution. Lexington Matonhodze and Tobias Guzura evaluate the impact of the Zimbabwe National Gender Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in that country, raising thought-provoking questions. In a very interesting paper, David Nchinda Keming analyzes the operations of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in Cameroon.

Finally, the section on Across the South contains a photo essay by Felipe Fittipaldi on Ladakh, in the Himalayan border of India, China and Pakistan and the challenges this region is currently facing.

We are now, officially, beginning a new phase for Global South—Sephis e-magazine, from South America. We would like to invite scholars and researchers, both experienced and junior, students, journalists, photographers, policy makers, ONG members, and all those involved in academia and public arena to participate in Global South—Sephis e-magazine. We are opening new sections and we are likely to hear your ideas and share them with our colleagues both in the Global South and North. All in all, as happened during the last decade, Global South—Sephis e-magazine's main goal is to engage in conversations about their many visions of development and history.



LETTER FROM THE SEPHIS CHAIR

MOVING SOUTH

Claudio Pinheiro *

Sephis Programme was established in 1994 as an initiative of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the mandate of encouraging researchers located in the South to expand their scholarly horizons and cultivate links with their colleagues in other parts of the South. Its main objective has always been to support dialogue and collaboration between researchers and institutions, to encourage comparative research, and to strengthen research capacity in the South. Over almost 20 years, Sephis has developed several initiatives that made this mandate achievable — a Ph.D. and postdoctoral grant program; a small grants program (to preserve alternative historical sources, preferably linked to social movements); workshops (for Ph.D. students, mid-career and senior scholars); policy dialogue seminars between academics, activists, and policy makers; lecture tours and faculty exchanges; publications and translations; and an electronic journal. The Programme has also established several collaborative programs with different institutions in the North and South.

Throughout these two decades, the Sephis Programme has evolved into a brand name for South-South intellectual cooperation and policy dialogue between academics, NGOs, governments, and social movements. The most sustainable emphasis of Sephis Programme has been on intellectual capacity-building initiatives, helping to create and maintain an active network of scholars and policy makers with more than five thousand interlocutors around the globe. Several important scholars and institutions point out that Sephis is considered today as one of the most important programs for promoting South-South academic cooperation in the world.

The Sephis Programme has been most successful in addressing cooperation between prominent Southern countries concerning knowledge production outside the South-North framework. But there is still much to be done. There is a huge change in world geopolitics, which also affected the geography of this North-South division and the concept of South. To face this changing situation, Sephis also needs to be reshaped.



If the world has changed into a more multipolar orientation, the idea of academic cooperation should correspondingly be revisited. The debate of international cooperation on knowledge production should be addressed as an essential aspect of the sustainable development agenda in the contemporary world. Talking about the Global South claims for a decentered international initiative, naturally inviting gatekeeping institutions that can think and work across borders. However, especially in the South, this agenda depends heavily on merging efforts with structures of nation-state that work on financing and organising this initiative at local and regional levels. In countries of the South, intellectuals cannot help but have a voice in nation-state politics concerning knowledge production, funding agendas and the demands and problems of under-representation of diversity that affect and structure the South globally.

In those spaces, Sephis has a very important role to play. The Programme needs to foresee the promotion of South-North-South cooperation for development in knowledge production in order to continue to be a synonym to 'Global South' in academics. At this challenging moment, Sephis aims at playing a role in helping to considering South-North-South dialogues to be a key strategy to promote intellectual development in a renewed global geopolitical scenario redefine the structure of international cooperation in knowledge production.

For Sephis, the current geopolitical scenario is, still, more challenging, because Sephis itself moved South. Since 1994, Sephis Programme existed in Holland, in its late period in Amsterdam, settled at IISG. In late December 2012, the Steering Committee decided to move Sephis Programme to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Now, hosted at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Sephis has a new and enthusiastic team. Transferring to Brazil did not only mean moving an address for correspondence, but actually the big challenge of finding new paths and new partnerships to continue with the tradition of Sephis Programme.

I am proud to introduce Global South, the Sephis e-magazine, under its new format, and I would personally like to invite scholars, policy makers, students, journalist and artists to contact the new editorial staff to collaborate with the journal in its new era

* Claudio Pinheiro is Chairman of the Sephis Programme since December 2012. For the last ten years, he has been investing in South-South connections in academics and politics, especially around India and Brazil. His research interests include colonial and post-colonialism, sociology of knowledge, history of knowledge circulation, politics of language and epistemology.



INTERVIEW

RESEARCHING AFRICA FROM RUSSIA: Interview with Alexandra Arkhangelskaya

Claudio Pinheiro, Gabriela Caruso
and Gabriela Mayall *

First let us begin talking a little bit about yourself and your academic trajectory and how you developed interests in African Studies.

Thank you Gabriela, thank you Cláudio and Gabriela, it is nice being here.

My personal story is not that typical of Russian scientists because my parents travelled a lot and they worked overseas and one of the times they went to South Africa and I went with them so I studied in Pretoria Girls High. Than I went to university in South Africa, that's how I grew up in love with Africa as a continent.

When I came back to Russia, I finished my studies there (my Law and International Relations degrees), and I was invited during my PHD at the African Insti-

tute of the Russian Academy of Sciences and I kept researching in the international field focusing in African Studies.



But actually if you regard as a typical trajectory of a Russian Africanist you would see that most of those people that have studied in schools have a question in their heads: "where is Africa and what it is about".

People went to different universities because we have a lot of universities in Moscow and San Petersburg and in others big cities, and they did African Studies, we have a number of institutes that provides courses of African Studies and they graduated from those universities and they came to the Africa Institute. All of them are actually researching in different centers that do African studies in Russia.



So, how was it in the beginning? What do you think motivated the creation of an Institute for African Studies, in 1959, in Russia and what was the agenda by the time and how is it today?

Oh it's very different, the world is changing quite rapidly and you would imagine that the world in 1960's was completely different from what it is now. It was the interest of the Soviet Era and of the URSS interested that actually lied in the African continent, and Africa represented the conquest and the war between the two, the cold war period. That's why the Russian interests were Africa and (actually) not Russian, it was the Soviet Union interest, and that's why Russia supported the struggle and the liberation movements across Africa. And if you go to any African State you'll probably find a lot of Russian speaking elites that where actually taught in Russian Universities. So we actually provided a lot of grants and we brought a lot of people from Africa to study in Russia.

And now? Now is completely different!

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Russia changed its foreign policy trajectory and it kept a more close interest. Additionally we can say that Russia actually withdrew from Africa. In the 90's we can

see a low profile of Russian interest, and then in 2000s in the begging of the millennium, we could see a new interest from the business sector and from the government and we can say that actually started with the establishment of new agreements between the governments, signing a lot of MoUs [Memorandums of Understandings] and the increasing of trading initiatives as well. In 2006, then the president of Russia, Vladimir Putin, went to South Africa, actually he went for the African tournée but the most important one, he went to South Africa, and there signed a lot on agreements and that was the starting point for the new aware of Russian interest in Africa. Then, recently, president, Medvedev when for African tournée, so we can see that there is interest arising again to Africa but its not to that the same extent to those in the Soviet Era Period.

And, how the emerging economic power of BRICS affects the field of African Studies?

Me personally! I would actually love it to be affected cause I'm doing the BRICS research agenda, but I can see that there is more interest now to Africa, because, South Africa is one of the African countries and we as the Institute are trying to push it forward together is the South African embassy to draw the interest to Af-



frican Studies and Africa as a continent, to let the people, the general public to know more about Africa, so we are doing interviews we are doing conferences, workshops, open seminars, we've even opened last year a cinema club that we show Africa films, so we can draw the younger generation to know what Africa is about.

But do you think it was with that economic emergency that we have more resources from business sector to fund this kind of studies?

Of course we hope for that, but I think it is too early to say, because business of course wants us to do some research about some business trajectories and define what is happening on African ground but we encountered problems as well because we don't have a very strong governmental support. Africa is not the priority of the Russian State now, unfortunately, but we can see that the vector is moving, its no that fast, Russia is the biggest country of the world so we are not very fast changing country nowadays. Yes so, I actually hope that it is going to change for the better, that Africa is going to be of more interest of the business as well as the government as well as the public, but nowadays we can see only the bigger companies that are involved in Africa, because there is a lot of problems such

as language differences, not a lot of small and medium income entrepreneurs in Russia know English, and they don't know what Africa is about, we are actually lacking knowledge and we don't have a good image of both of us.

We did a nice research in 2006 In Africa about the image of Russia in Africa and it actually represented a very funny thing that, that Africans don't know much about what its Russia, they don't even know geographically where Russia is! It was about 70% of responders. So we have to improve that the images and we can overcome the language barrier, and the time zones and the distance if there is an interest.

Can I do the last one? You've been circulating a lot within the African Studies agenda, could you frame the difference between interests and images of Africa, contrasting Northern and Southern countries.

How are they different? Is there a difference?

Of course there is a difference, because the rhetoric is a very different from the real thing, and you can find a lot of rhetoric about the South Cooperation but Russia is in a peculiar position when you can not say it is a Southern State and you can not say it is a Northern State as well.



So in that many ways it is very familiar to Brazil nowadays. You can see a dubious position actually of Russia and its politics. In some way it is actually standing for the South, but it is sitting in two chairs now. It is trying to play two games, and that's, for me personally, that's what I am worried about, because we have to decide where to sit, otherwise we will go to fall.

Alexandra A. Arkhangelskaya is Leading Researcher at the National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russia; Researcher at the Centre of Southern African Studies, Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences. Member of the Scientific Council of the National Committee for Research on BRICS, Executive Secretary of Russia – South Africa Dialogue Forum and Senior Advisor, at Kreab Gavin Anderson Moscow. She obtained her PhD in International Relations at the Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences in 2009. She has a degree in Law and International Relations. She lived and studied in South Africa from 1994 to 1999. Member of the Scientific Council of the National Committee for Research on BRICS, Executive Secretary of Russia – South Africa Dialogue Forum. She has more than 30 publications and participated in many international conferences. Today, Alexandra is actively involved in the organization and development of international projects in research, training, legal consultancy and cross-cultural communication.

¹ Claudio Pinheiro is Sephis chair. Gabriela Caruso and Gabriela Mayall are M.A. students at the Institute of Social and Political Studies (IESP), of the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), Brazil.

This interview was made at the Center of Research and Documentation of Getulio Vargas Foundation, Rio de Janeiro, in May 2012.



YOUTH IN LATIN AMERICA

PEÑA NIETO'S GOVERNMENT AND THE MULTIPLE REASONS FOR YOUTH INDIGNATION AND UTOPIA IN MEXICO

Jesús Gómez Abarca *

University of Science and Arts of Chiapas, Mexico

Abstract:

Enrique Peña Nieto's government is deeply marked by protest and mobilizations and for the indignation of Mexican youth, even from his election campaign in 2012, with the emergence of the movement #YoSoy132 and later, in 2013, with the teachers y social movement against structural reforms. In this article I return this pair social movements, to trace clues to understand the role of Mexican youth in the construction of alternatives national and civilizatory projects.

Keywords: Youth; Utopia; Mexico; Social Movements

INTRODUCTION

Urban and rural spaces have developed in scenarios where its habitants, specially youth and other historically excluded groups, are experiencing insecurity, poverty, marginalization, criminalization, social fragmentation, exploitation, inequality, violence and social exclusion. Those issues are the reflection of a multiple domination system¹ that has been in the basis of capitalist modernity, now in its neoliberal phase. To this domination, never full or legitimate, there are historical and contemporaneous social struggles opposing: peasant, indigenous, urban feminist, environmentalists, youth, among others.

Recently, young people² have been the protagonists in a series of social move-

ments emerging in Chili, Brazil, Spain, USA, Turkey and other places in the world, making visible, as well as questioning the unfulfilled promises of liberal democracies through which have questioned the unfulfilled promises of liberal democracies, collaborating at the same time, in the construction of social, cultural and political alternatives. Therefore, in what follows, I analyze the role of youth participation in contemporary social movements from the link between the impacts of multiple domination system on the youth situation in Mexico and a couple of contemporary social movements

ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION AND SOCIAL EXCLUSIÓN

Since the late twentieth century, forms of economical exploitation and



social exclusion of transnational corporations are associated with a new morphology of work that is shown in high unemployment levels, as well as its precarization, outsourcing, sub-contracting and flexibilization. In other words, jobs offered by the market are precarious, since they do not mean safety, with a contract, social security minimal standards, contribution to pension funds, the possibility to personal and/or professional realization. Companies place young people as adjusting work force or as leftovers from the system, a situation that worsens for those who search their first job.

To illustrate the situation, it must be said that more than half of the planet is under 25, in which nine out of ten people live in underdeveloped countries. Latin America has around 108 million young people among 15 to 24 years old, in which 55,6% have access to the formal job market, and 13,9% —7.7 million people — are unemployed, three times the adult rate, and the rest is on the informality or do not study or work³. In Mexico, among the 30 million young people from 15 to 29 years old, 47% which work and the unemployment rates (that considers young people from 15 to 24) is of 9.7%. ⁴According to the National Youth Values Survey in 2012, 26% of the young people interviewed said they received less than 1,821 pesos, while 46.7% from 1,821 and \$5,460, monthly.⁵

The juvenile condition is full of paradoxes, one of the most frustrating is that young people in the region have more education and less access to employment which represents. This represents a fracture in work and education, where the youth abandonment are another issue. Over 60% people leave school before 18 years for different reasons, whether economical, rejection of the educational system, consider that it does not bring them real knowledge or an opportunity to earn better, do not have parental support, among others⁶. Faced with this overall picture of a work y education, much of Mexican youth decide to integrate themselves in the informal sector of the economy, migrate to the USA or engage in illicit activities.

MILITARIZATION AND SACRIFICEABLE PEOPLE

The exacerbation of violence is one of major concerns of Mexican society, in the last years, has been strongly linked to the militarization implemented by Felipe Calderón's government to eradicate drug trafficking. In the alleged war against drug trafficking, youth death rates have increased, since of the 130,000 murders⁷, the majority is of young people. Violence outbreaks have extended to different cities, operating in a functional manner to



the militarization of the country and to the many tentacles of organized crime that dispute for power and territory. In the center, as victims or as victimized, young people are the protagonists of rubbery, arbitrary detention, police violence, kidnapping, murders and disappearances.

The existence of connections among distinct types of discrimination and social exclusion makes us return to the socio-cultural matrix of modernity's civilizational paradigm, defined dichotomously where the white, male, rational, occidental, european, developed, civilized heterosexual and bourgeois model opposes to peripheral categories of women, irrational, young, afro-descendent, indigenous, non european, underdeveloped, primitive, non heterosexual and poor. It is a symbolic system where differences are inequalities in detriment of women, young people, indigenous, afro-descendent, poor and other social types.

An expression of the persistence of this ordering are femicides, a limit condition of violence against women, based in patriarchal structure and impunity that defines the condition of sacrifice of a large majority of population, whose vulnerability is constructed since gender, youth, poverty, social precarity, degradation of justice and institutional corruption as categories. ⁸In Mexico, 6,4 women are

murdered each day, in which 95% rest unpunished. Between 2006 and 2012 it increased in 40%.⁹

THE ECOLOGICAL DEPREDATION

The ecological depredation triggered by developmental projects affect all humanity. Young people, the heirs of the world, are those who face uncertainty and risks, such as the destruction of the ozone layer; winter effect; genetic manipulation; deforestation of tropical forest; toxic remainders; obsolete technology; the effects caused by dams and mines, cornerstones of the extractive model of public and private inversion imposed on the bases of dispossession, promises, and alleged compensations. In Mexico can be considered as a legal "paradise" for more than 200 transnational enterprises that work in the country, dedicated to the extraction of precious minerals that leave behind social restlessness and environment degradation.¹⁰

DEMOCRACY (NOT) REPRESENTATIVE

Liberal democracies have reduced political participation to an electoral culture, reducing the political scope into voting and partisan representation, a serious problem to Mexico, where there is no will nor political capacity to bring answers to multiple necessities of youth trajectories



and where political parties have stopped working as effective political instruments of representation.¹¹ This has produced a distancing from political parties and young people¹², interpreted by conservative views such as political apathy, providing an invisibility of multiple practices, in which young people are constituting themselves as political and culture subjects, in student organizations, nongovernmental, youth cultures, artistical-political collectives and social movements.

The historic delegitimization of some of these practices is based on the prohibition, criminalization and repression of the same through the direct action of the police, the transformation of laws and manipulated using the media. During the last protests, there were shock troops infiltrated that generated violence and escaped to the protection of police force, who then respond against protesters with excessive violence¹³ and on the other hand, the changes made in different articles¹⁴ that authorize the authorities request the geolocation of mobile and social protest to equate terrorism.

THE ROLE OF MEDIA

The role of media in liberal democracies obliges us to rethink the link between information, image and power. Television en Mexico is far from presenting a democratic horizon, defined by the opening and multiplication of possibilities, constituted below the television duopoly —TV Azteca y Televisa— as an apparatus of domination, generating public opinion that incides in the election of governants, whose harmful expressions are the alliances between politicians and television “stars”, as the ostentatious amounts of money spent on Image consulting and production.¹⁵

Mexican television contributes to the criminalization of riots since what Rossana Reguillo names as the “social construction of the enemy”¹⁶, hammering ad nauseum manipulated audiovisual narratives, generating the certainty that rioters are “dangerous anarchists” willing to destroy the cities. On the other hand, vigilance, spying, the harassment and criminalization of communicators and activists is generated through several technologies such as, aforementioned, geo-localization of mobile phones, internet sites, blogs and social networks.

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#YOSOY132

In 2012 Mexico's electoral conjecture had the fraud spectrum around one more time; the mediatical imposition and with that, the return of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) now allied with the Partido Verde de México (PVEM). Even though their candidate Enrique Peña Nieto, after several setbacks in front of the media, on May 11th went to the Universidad Iberoamericana to present his political platform, where he took responsibility for the determination of the repressive actions in the Atenco case, after being questioned by a group of students. The event ended in a surprising way with the candidate leaving by the back door in the middle of a huge security operation.

Several medias classified the rioters as *acarreados* and *porros*¹⁷, with the response of 131 young people in Youtube that they were students, identifying themselves as such and not belonging to any political party. Hours later, thousands of youngsters manifested their support in social networks with the label or has-tag #Yosoy132. That was the start of a movement in which mainly students from public and private universities took part, organized by cells in almost all Mexico, later joined by teachers, academics, children, parents, activists and other social actors.

The main demand of the movement was the democratization of media, as an essential step to the democratization of the country. The movement builds into a long history of abuses against the Mexican people, its worker's struggle, urban, indigenous, peasant and student; questioning the increasing level of violence in which people live in the Mexican territory and the electoral conjecture manipulated by media, defining themselves as nonpartisan, pacific, student based, laic, plural, on social political character, humanist, autonomous, permanent and anti-neoliberal.

Among its actions in the previous days of elections, the numerous marches gained attention with a strong emotional, artistic and cultural aspect; the camping,



performances against buildings; the rallies; the concerts, several activities in public spaces to promote the conscious vote and the organization of the third debate between candidates for the President of the Republic (with EPN's absence). During the electoral journey, vigilant and citizens electoral commissions were formed to photograph polls results, upload them into an Internet page and systematize the irregularities of the process.

In July 1st, when it was declared that EPN had virtually won the elections, frustration was reflected in riots that took place in different parts of the country. As part of the post-electoral agen-

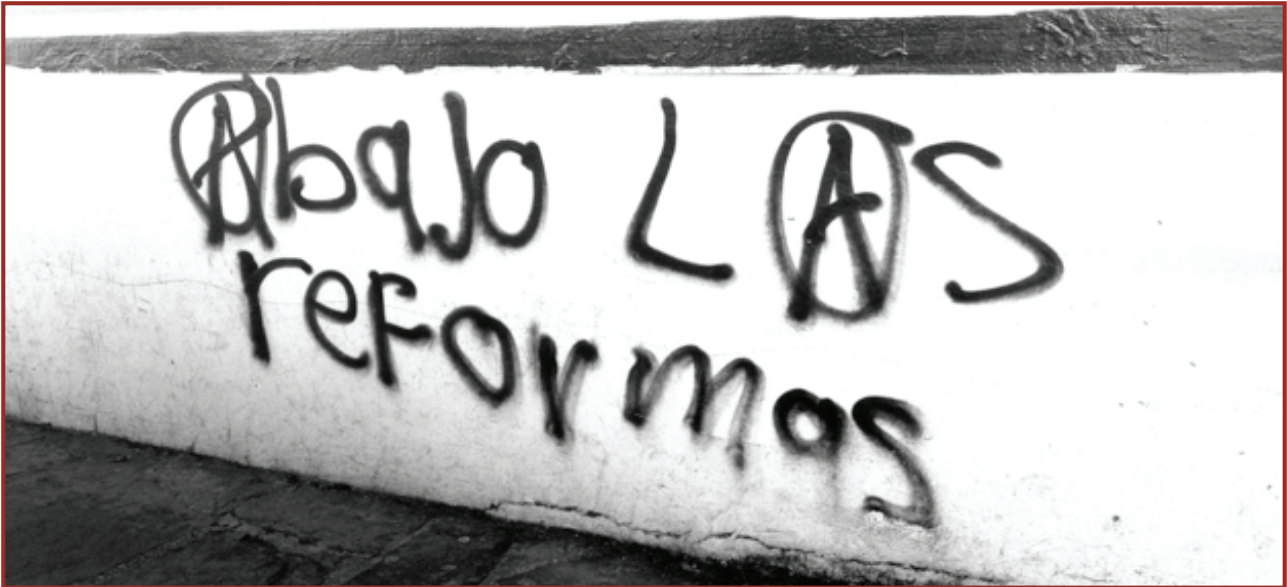
da, #Yosoy132 organized a presidential counter-report and assembled different groups¹⁸ to protest against the imposition of PRI's candidate, in December 1st (1D), having won in a corrupted process and vote buying. Governmental response and the media duopoly could not brake the growing of #Yosoy132 movement, but the 1D was marked by repression of rioters using anti-riot troops, resulting in 14 detained and several injured, with the later decrease of the movement.

REFORMS AND ANTI-NEOLIBERAL REFORMS

With the second work reform signed in the last years of the sixth year of Felipe Calderón as president, the way to a bigger precarization, flexibilization and desestabilization of work was opened, with the educational reform proposal 9 months before the peñista government (that is far from proposing a transformation of the educational system), suspending teacher's union rights with the possibility of suspending their work contracts, from a standardized punitive evaluation, not taking into account the different contexts where it took place. This scenery was joined by several structural reforms regarding tax, budget and energetical that were in his anteroom, waiting for its approval.

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Given the labor reform, opposition was weak, whilst with educational reforms, riots were more intense, especially when the Coordinadora Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación (CNTE) called for an “insurgency” through various actions as marches, rallies, cordoning of buildings, toll collections or campings in the center of some cities. Legislative and executive answer that, until now, being the ruling of conflict and the weariness of the basis, on September 15th was transformed in repression and eviction of campings in DF’s Zócalo. As usual, the TV duopoly supported permanently the fascist campaign of delegitimization of the social movement (arguing that teachers did not want to be evaluated, taking advantage of the misinformation of broad sectors of Mexican society and the discomfort brought by riots) and the legitimating of structural reforms.

In those experiences it was notorious the presence of younger generations

of teachers, but mainly the gradual incorporation of student that will be teachers, the support of #Yosoy132 movement; student organizations; teachers; academics; activists, people who worked in the health sector; parents and other social groups joined with the teacher’s movement against structural reforms. In San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, for example, the participation of students from different levels of education (post grads, university and preparatory) was seen in riots in the streets, in the occupation of schools, occupation of cabins in many roads; analysis forums; front constructions and students coordination’s; supporting shifts in State’s capital and in the country, among other actions.

In negotiating tables, federal government did not backed, frequently inviting teacher’s representatives to go back to their States and negotiate with governments. With the progressive undermining



of the movement, the lack of interest of the major population and the withdrawal of the oaxaqueño contingent, one of the biggest installed in Mexico City, representatives of the teachers movement in different states signed an agreement with their state government. In Chiapas, after three months of a severe struggle, there was not a single change in the constitutional modifications that affected their workers rights, what they managed to obtain was a commitment for an educational project within the social context of the entity; the non administrative-judicial and economical repression; footwear and uniforms to 28 of the states with the biggest marginalization. The seeming result: frustration, few achievements and a worn out basis.¹⁹

CONCLUSION

Mexican youth is experimenting a case of national emergency associated with a civilizational crisis, with high levels of unemployment, work precarization, outsourcing and flexibilization; criminalization of political-cultural dissident practices; protest repression; video-political practices by Televisa y TV Azteca allied with government; discrimination and different levels of violence; multiple risks regarding the environment; extractive projects of Capital and the consequences of global militarization, imposed in the country in recent years.

Therefore, young people together with other social sectors are the most affected in a multiple domination system, that sustains capitalism in its neoliberal phase, with political, economical, cultural and social components, supported by a gendarme or police State. It is not very reasonable to expect that the solution of problems come from those who produce it. It is necessary to think of alternatives where one redefines political power, politics and democracy, not only as an instrument of legitimate domination, but as the ability of a political heterogeneous community, with the participation of historically oppressed sectors.

It is possible to track this new form of political power on track by its several propositions, processes, organizations and peasant movements, indigenous, urban, neighborhood, trade unions, feminist, youngsters movements, environmentalists, solidary economy, urban cultures, land movements, autonomous or alternative communication. Those are historical and contemporaneous struggles that are crediting the construction of a new civilizational project, to overcome the excludent, exploitative, discriminative, adultocentered, patriarchic and predator capitalist paradigm. The current challenge is, as many may recognize, in articulating a large sum of emancipative, libertarian



and recognition demands that emerge for the Mexican territory, Latin America and Caribbean as for different places of the world.

If interpretations of those movements so heterogeneous can be so much as the actors that have joined, one cannot assume that few quantitative gains, lack of a long term political project or the null incidence of reforms and structural conditions, represent a complete failure. Among the contributions of those experiences, one must recognize them as places of struggle in which many young people are positioning (many for the first time in their lives) as political, historical, cultural subjects, building mediation bridges between what one wants to change and the horizons were one is directing oneself. Through these early risers experiences and their own cycles of protest, continue to generate socio-political organization, micro processes that together represent a

significant potential for resistance waiting for a catalyst event.

Through those experiences, young people have been the protagonists of multiple emancipation alternatives in a global context of struggle, particularly through collective actions linked with the performativity of their bodies, the re-appropriation of their projects and life spaces; the re-appropriation of streets and other public spaces as the pedagogical scenery of resistance; the horizontal and rotary forms of organization, the recognition of the diversity of individual and collective subjects that join the group; the dialogical exchange with each other. Not without complexities, challenges, contradictions and paradoxes, mexican youths are increasingly indignant, adding to the construction of utopian possibilities of living in this world.



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YOUTH IN LATIN AMERICA

YOUTH AND POLITICAL ACTION IN ECUADOR

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Abstract: More than half percent of Ecuador's population is under 30 years old, which stresses the State and state officials to grant importance to discourse concerning the development of legislation on youth. This article discusses the youth participation in contemporary Ecuadorian history and its reflections in institutional political processes, as well as knowledge production.

Keywords: Ecuador – Constitution – Law – Social Movement – Youth

Ecuador is an eminently young country, according to the last census in 2010, 56 percent of the population is under 30 years old, this demographic has put stress on the State and state officials to grant importance to discourse concerning the development of legislation on youth, so it is normal to hear phrases like “investing in youth is an investment in development”.



The Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador recognizes the youth as “strategic actors in development”, in this way article 39 states:

The State shall guarantee the rights of young people and shall promote the effective exercise of these rights by means

of policies and programs, institutions and resources that ensure and uphold, on a permanent basis, their participation and inclusion in all sectors, especially in public sector spaces. The State shall recognize young people as strategic players in the country's development and shall guaran-



tee their right to education, health, housing, recreation, sports, leisure, freedom of expression and association. The State shall foster their incorporation into the labor force in fair and decent conditions, with emphasis on training, guarantee of access to first employment, and promotion of their entrepreneurial skills.

According to this focus, young people are considered fundamental actors for the integral development of society, therefore it tries to get rid of the idea that young people are the future of society, affirming, that they are the present and that it is necessary to strengthen the strategic capacity of this group.

The Law of Youth in Ecuador, passed in 2001, defines youth as the population between 18 and 29 years old, however, from the sociological point of view that is the most accepted in Ecuador, the population of "young people" is composed of people between 15 and 29 years old.

It is important to recognize the role played by youth organizations and young people in discussing regulations and public youth policy, as well as in mobilization processes that have marked the most recent decades of Ecuadorian history.

The implementation of neoliberal policies since the 80's has been respond-

ed to with the emergence of new social movements, specifically, the 90's was very effervescent in social action and the most important political focus was the indigenous movement that demonstrated a capacity of mobilization that paralyzed the country. In the fight against neoliberalism distinct groups and movements started appearing with their own declarations and political proposals, this is the case for the women's movement, environmentalists, the student movement and youth organizations.

The participation of young people in these movements during the 90's and 2000's was significant, one that was noteworthy was the higher education student movement, that many times, was the first to go to the streets to demonstrate their disagreement with structural adjustment measures or processes such as the FTAA or NAFTA .

The participation of young people was also present in the essential processes of 1998 and 2008 so that their proposals would be present in the corresponding Constitutions. In 1998 with demands such as conscientious objection, sexual and reproductive rights, and the issue of citizenship, in 2008 the focus was based on the constitutional mandate of youth, prepared by a group of youth organizations



after an intense debate about “the country of our dreams”.

The 2008 Constitution is very progressive on many issues, especially with respect to young people, in general it expands and recognizes other specific rights. For the youth movement the constitutional process of 2007-2008 was very important, not only because of the obtained objectives that translated into specific articles regarding to youth, but also because it was an opportunity to construct a platform for youth organizations that discussed their problems and were able to propose specific articles to be incorporated in the Constitution.

Intense debate between youth organizations expanded the Youth Constitutional Mandate, a document proposed in the front of an assembly that contains various principles and articles, specifically one of the principles statements established that:

Include: There should be one principle that the State recognizes, where the young population is seen as strategic actors in the development of the country, that generate processes of shared learning, promote their strengths, generate new spaces of participation, and contribute to political, social, economic and

environmental processes of the country .

To think of the participation of so many young people in institutional political processes (debate about the Constitution and other laws) as in social movements, in general discourse it is affirmed that young people don't participate, they are apathetic, they are not interested in the reality of their country; This perhaps is due to the type of political participation that is required for the adult centered world, so they demand a greater presence of youth in public institutional spaces.

According to this understanding, political participation, to a lesser or greater extent is related to young people, in some cases it would be a nonexistent practice and in others it would be an exercise in social transformation.

To explain it in a better way, the exemplary information obtained from the First National Poll about Youth and Participation, affirms that, “if between 49% and 55% of the youth have scarce (little by little) interest for national politics, between 71% and 74% express a high level of approach in politics in relation to the affairs in their neighborhoods, their communities and their cities” (Ramírez, 2011:27). Apparently, the traditional concepts that are understood as political participation



are insufficient to explain the reality in which young people live, who are more interested in their daily lives and in their concrete relationships than in participating in abstract and distant politics, unable to respond to their real necessities.

The same survey results highlight the rejection of youth participation in structures like political parties and movements, they are the least trusted institutions for the Ecuadorian youth even when compared to the national police. "Only one out of every four young people would be willing to serve in the military or in organized political structures (movements or parties)".

Generally, as demonstrated in this survey young people are disinterested in participating in traditional political structures, this is also due to the institutional crisis and political parties that have been in Ecuador in the last few decades, those that have converted the country into being famous for overthrowing three presidents and for having 6 different presidents within the same 10 years (between 1997 and 2007).

The classical structures are inadequate in responding to the demands and claims of groups like the youth, who look for representation in other forms of organizations whose practices and principles

are more horizontal and are closer to answering their concrete demands.

Youth participation in Ecuador is shown as a specific area of concern, from the state, academia and the youth organizations, this interest is not only evident because of the number of studies that have been recognized in the state of the art report on the knowledge produced by Ecuadorian youth, not only for the reforms that it has provided in legal fields, by that I mean the recognition of voluntary voting of those that are found between the ages of 16 and 18, hoping in this way to include youth in formal politics and in the productive matrix.

Around the theme of youth participation there are various points for discussion, starting with the fact that there are various understandings of what participation means, many understand it only as public participation, i.e. in the State, however, the practice of youth organizations have realized that they should differentiate between public participation through traditional channels and forms of participation that go beyond the public like demonstrations in the streets to express their voices.

Although the last government has given drive to youth participation, it is un-



settling for them to institutionalize their participation, so state spaces and public channels will co-opt their spaces for participation. While various youth practices have been linked to formal spaces of decision-making and have fought for institutionalization and the incorporation into legal frameworks in every country, other activities are located outside establishments as a practice of transformation and emancipation.

In this way there can be two types of relationships observed between the youth and participation (that could be classified as political), the first relationship is in regards to youth and formal participation and a second is in regards to practices of social transformation.

With respect to the first, the incident within the formal structures has been hard work for the organizations that have specific results, with this I am referring to the recognition of youth rights in the 2008 Constitution of the Republic, however, in the same sense, what is written in the law is not observed in reality through public policies that does not allow these results.

Many times the participation of young people in the formation of public policy ends only being instrumental, so there isn't a process that permits real par-

ticipation, this is also due to that youth organizations are not numerically representative of the young population and are not permanently mobilized on these issues.

With respect to the practices of organized and non-organized youth that overflow traditional parties and that march as a means of transformation and emancipation and manifest themselves in demonstrations that take to the streets, we can say that they are forms of action more widespread but do not hold up over time.

In 2013 particular events that had lead to social mobilization especially in youth, in themes like education, the environment and sexual and reproductive rights, all of their demonstrations are marked as defending human rights.

During the last few years in Ecuador an education reform has been implemented that reduces access to higher education for many young people, they feel like their right is being violated, and they are not offered other alternatives, to this we must add that the majority of young people are either unemployed or under-employed.



The demonstrations related to education have been basically made up of university students, we can't affirm that it has been an extensive process nor sustained but it has served to revive the student movement.

The environmental issue has been the most important in provoking the youth, in the defense of the Yasuní-ITT region.

For more than seven years, Ecuador proposed to leave a substantial amount of oil in the ground in the Amazon region, this proposal, known as the Yasuní-ITT Initiative, that emerged from the civil society, has one central objective: to not take the crude oil out of the ground in three deposits in block 43. The initiative is based on four pillars:

1) To protect the territory and the life of the indigenous communities in voluntary isolation,

2) To conserve biodiversity that is incomparable to any other place on earth (the highest concentration of biodiversity recorded by scientists thus far)

3) To take care of the global climate, maintaining a significant amount of oil underground, omitting 410 million tons of CO2 from the atmosphere,

4) To take the first step towards the transition to a post-oil Ecuador, which would have a demonstrating affect elsewhere.

In return Ecuador waited for the financial contributions of the international community, that should have assumed their shared and differentiated responsibility based on the many levels of environmental destruction caused by many societies around the world.

This proposal has a lot of strength with the support of the Rights of the Environment in the 2008 Constitution, in article 71 that states: "Nature or Pacha Mama, where life is realized and produced, has rights that respect its existence, maintenance and regeneration of its vital cycles, structures, functions and evolutionary processes". Article 73 complements the anterior constitutional outlook: "The State will apply means of precaution and restriction to activities that can produce the extinction of a species, the destruction of ecosystems or the permanent alteration of natural cycles".

However, on the 15th of August in 2013, President Rafael Correa announced the ending of the initiative and exploitation of the Yasuní-ITT, affecting not only the area of the most biodiversity that exists in the world but also putting risk on



the lives of the communities that live in voluntary isolation.

This decision was rejected by the citizens of Ecuador, especially the youth, who occupied plazas and streets demonstrating their disagreement. Since the government made this decision, environmental organizations, indigenous people and young people organized themselves to demand a popular consensus from the Ecuadorian community, to decide as a whole whether or not to exploit these oil fields.

The realization of the popular consensus referring to the Yasuní-ITT is mostly mobilized through organized and un-

organized youth, in the call to march and mobilize social media has played a big role through which information has been shared and organized spontaneously in the defense of the Yasuní-ITT.

The group of young people who have organized specifically around the defense of the Yasuní-ITT, have been called Yasunidos and have employed themselves to collect signatures in order to have a popular consensus. It is important to note that the conflict has lowered in toxicity and now there are less demonstrations as well as the number of youth who are involved.

The other topic that has mobilized young people, specifically young women



were topics related to gender violence and sexual and reproductive rights, the first point is in regards to the “slut walks” and actions surrounded by cases of femicide, the second point, is the debate that is purposefully maintained in the legislative assembly about the comprehensive criminal code, which was related to the action of the practice of decriminalizing abortion in cases of rape.

The decriminalization of abortion in cases of rape was defended by feminist organizations, but the groups that had the most impact were those made up of young people. Despite all of the pressure put on them, the assembly did not decriminalize abortion in the case of rape, however the

public event put the issue into public debate, to which they have been adding other collective initiatives.

As may be evident the political action of the youth in Ecuador has had two fronts, one in formal politics, using the mechanisms of formal participation and the other through social protesting outside of traditional spaces, the second is the most attended by young people in the recent years; however, both cases show little sustained mobilization or organization, so many young people that attend marches like those of the defense of the Yasuní-ITT do not belong to any organization and their participation is more spontaneous and sporadic.



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YOUTH IN LATIN AMERICA

UNESCO MOST SCHOOL IN BRAZIL

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Abstract:

The main purpose of the MOST UNESCO School, which had its sixth edition held in 2013 in Brazil, was to advance the formulation, coordination and implementation of youth public policies as well as strengthen the theme of youth internationally. This article presents the guidelines and results of this effort, and also the related policies of the Brazilian National Youth Secretary.

Keywords: Unesco Most School - Brazilian National Youth Secretary – Youth

The sixth edition of the UNESCO MOST School was held in Brasilia, Brazil, from the 13th to the 18th of December 2013, with its objective being to discuss Youth Participation and Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. Organized by the National Youth Secretary (SNJ/SG/PR), in partnership with the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLASCO), the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO), the Ibero-American Youth Organization (OIJ), UNESCO International, and UNESCO Brazil, the Brazilian edition of the MOST UNESCO School had 80 participants of researchers, youth leaders and managers of Latin America and the Caribbean, researchers linked to youth studies from public universities in Latin America and the Caribbean, representatives of Conjuve - National Youth Council of Brazil, and virtual participants. The selection of the participating re-

searchers and those coming from social movements was made by summons, and those selected for online participation had registered at the Participatory Youth Center website. In addition, the virtual workshop and the panels were broadcast in 17 countries and attended by 927 people who could also take part in the debates.

The Management of Social Transformations Program (MOST) is linked to the Social and Human Sciences Sector of UNESCO. It has a strong commitment to the promotion of international, interdisciplinary and politically relevant comparative research, aiming to reflect and deepen practical, theoretical and methodological knowledge on the relationship between social science research and public policy. Since its inception 27 years ago, the MOST Regional Schools have been consolidated



as a great experience for reflection and dissemination of knowledge between young researchers and young managers from different countries.

However, the main purpose of the MOST UNESCO School in Brazil was to advance the formulation, coordination and implementation of youth public policies as well as strengthen the theme of youth internationally. In order to contribute to the establishment of new networks of collaboration involving reference researchers in the theme of Youth, the National Youth Secretary innovated by including youth leaders of social movements and nonprofit organizations in the course.

The National Youth Secretary believes that sharing experiences and knowledge among Civil Society, Government and Academia enlarges, enriches and enhances the process of formulation, implementation and evaluation of youth public policies. Hence, coordinating and approaching those actors in a way to achieve better outcomes, when the process of development and evaluation are faced with the difficulties of those who access and use public policies, is essential. In this context, reconciliation among representatives of different sectors of society in charge of different functions and roles, which at the same time are complemen-

tary and interdependent, becomes fundamental for the exchange of perspectives that allow strengthening, development and improvements in the cycle of implementation and evaluation of the youth public policies process. According to the Brazilian experience, the participation of civil society is vital to the success of youth's policies and programs.

Representatives of 12 Latin America and the Caribbean countries participated in the course. Renowned specialists of Latin American youth discussed, in proposed panels, youth participation and social development, focusing on the main difficulties juveniles face and how these difficulties differ across Latin America. Participants reflected, contributed and discussed the three main themes, sharing experiences, debating about the concerns of their countries and the challenges of Latin American youth. It was emphasized, primarily, the difficulties young people of Latin America have entering the labor market and the problem of analyzing the condition of those young people who neither work nor study. On one hand, participants pondered the need to recognize youth as a very important stage of life for humans. On the other hand, they recognized the diversity of youth experiences and that the conditions of youths are influenced by the society they inhabit. Par-



ticipants also stressed the indispensability of more youth attentive political participation in the development of public policies and in the decision making on matters regarding youth. Moreover, youth exposure to violence, especially black youth was discussed emphatically as a major problem in Latin America.

Lastly, the young participants rated the importance of creating a network

among themselves to foster further discussion and facilitate the connection between social movements and civil society organizations, academia and youth managers. Furthermore, participants involved in the Brazilian edition of the MOST UNESCO School proved enthusiastic, confident, and willing to contribute more effectively in Latin American spaces that allow discussion and integration of youths in the region.

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ARTICLE

WHERE KNOWLEDGE MEETS THE SEEKER: Nalanda University

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Abstract:

Nalanda University has been established with a vision of being a foremost international institution in India. It begun its academic activities from 2014. The University is posed to be a unique meeting ground for various branches of knowledge from across the globe. The article is an attempt at highlighting some of the primary ideas keeping which in mind the University was conceived, and which the academic community in Nalanda University is committed to pursuing as part of its teaching-learning programme.

Keywords: Nalanda, Xuanzang, University, Historical Studies, Bihar

“The priests to the number of several thousands are men of the highest ability of talent. Their distinction is very great...whose fame has rapidly spread through distant regions. Their conduct is pure and unblamable. They follow in sincerity the precepts of moral law.”

Xuanzang, Si-Yu-Ki¹

The prologue above by the famous Chinese traveler Xuanzang could fit, without raising any doubts, as a reference to an Indian religious establishment or royal court. When Xuanzang passed through north India in the early decades of the seventh century, sometime between 629 and 645, Harshavardhana ruled from Kanauj his celebrated capital city, in modern-day Uttar Pradesh. His empire stretched from northwestern Bengal in the east to the banks of the river Beas in the Punjab, the western limits of the Indian subcontinent. During Xuanzang’s visit King Harsha was

at the height of his power, and the resultant peace and prosperity led to the flourish of Hinduism and Buddhism in his domain. Set in the above context, therefore, the words of appreciation from the Chinese traveler would not read out of place, as referring to a religious establishment or the royal court of the ruler.

However the element of surprise strikes when it is revealed to the reader that Xuanzang was actually referring to Nalanda Sangharama (council of monks) – a reputed centre for higher learning, and not to any temple or court. Nalanda, when



Xuanzang visited it, had gained great fame as a seat of learning. Also known as Nalanda Mahavihara (great monastic centre of learning), the institution attracted scholars from various corners of the globe including, but not limited to, China, Sri Lanka, Tibet and South East Asia. It is located twelve kilometers north to the town of Rajagriha, also called Rajgir, in the current Indian state of Bihar. Translated as the 'royal city', Rajagriha was the capital of Ajatshatru the ruler of Magadha Empire, before it was abandoned in favour of Pataliputra closer to the current capital city of Patna.

As a centre for learning, Nalanda had an astonishing life-span of close to eight hundred years, from the fifth to the close of the twelfth century, with its apogee coinciding with the period Xuanzang passed through this region. Such was the quality of learning imparted at this institution that it seldom ran out of a continuous flow of scholars, which, at times of flourish, is believed to have over 2000 teachers and 10,000 students, figures capable of causing envy to some best-known modern day universities. Its appeal was international.

I became aware of the new Nalanda University project at a time when the Government of India decided to revive the glorious heritage of old Nalanda in the form

of a twenty-first century institution of global learning and research intended to attract the brightest minds, both teachers and students, from around the world to engage in pursuit of knowledge. This, since then, has remained the principle on which the new university has functioned. When the university came into existence through the Nalanda Act, passed by the Indian Parliament in 2010, I was yet to complete my Ph.D. programme in History.

The acceptance of Nalanda University by the international community is evident from the support it has received since its inception from various nations and international bodies. The support from the East Asia Summit member states has been significant in building up a partnership through collaborative efforts, successfully linking regions having historical connections. Drawing on traditions of Asian interconnections, which had been an important pull-factor for old Nalanda, has in a significant way, magnified the visibility of Nalanda University across Asia and beyond. This focus of new Nalanda was primarily responsible for drawing my interest towards this university when I placed my application for a faculty position.



Few years had passed by since the time Nalanda University came to existence on paper. This was precisely the period I had used to secure my Ph.D. degree and move towards postdoctoral research. The latter gave me opportunity to expand the horizon of my research, till then focused on South Asia and beyond stretching from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, beginning shortly after old Nalanda ceased to exist. My postdoctoral research helped me look deeper into different trends of trans-regional connections that existed within Asia, by taking up investigation along lines of travel and pilgrimage within the Muslim civilization. Such an exercise involved studying geopolitical concerns mapped through cultural, social and political interactions.

I consider myself fortunate for the opportunity to pursue my intellectual concerns within the academic community of the new Nalanda University, as one of its founding faculties in the School of Historical Studies. It has been an engagement which brings with it a sense of deep comfort and satisfaction, and the promise of being able to work within the environs of an extremely active centre of knowledge and learning. At the same time it is also rewarding to be part of a rich intellectual environment created with scholarship gathered from farthest corners of the

globe. In many senses it showcases the idea of gathering knowledge beyond barriers, which had been inextricably linked with the existence of old Nalanda.

Right at its inception, Nalanda University, as many would agree with me, has successfully lived up to the spirit of its glorious predecessor. Particularly in bringing together, not only from Asia, but also beyond its borders, an exciting and engaging group of scholars, young and old, to think, debate and deliberate on various branches of knowledge. The physical proximity of the two institutions, set apart by thirty minutes of driving distance, is reason enough to inspire.

On the footsteps of the intellectual traditions of old Nalanda, the new Nalanda University is committed to excellence in research and teaching, with students and faculty from all over the world. In the very first year of its existence the University has been able to live up to its above commitment. This has in turn created a suitable environment where I believe we can build on towards a model for intellectual excellence by allowing ourselves to work on new areas of critical enquiry and research. But where I think Nalanda University will remain special is in the constant effort to take these enquiries right into the classrooms, where students are



given an opportunity to read and learn on various aspects of their discipline, but through a critical eye. Here students also come to learn that new outcomes of critical enquiry are as much exciting and instructive as are the very means and methods by which such investigations are carried out. The journey is as rewarding as the findings!

Engaging with the idea of inter-Asian interactions, as a legacy of old Nalanda, occurs at multiple levels. One of them being the teaching-learning process, which in the Nalanda University does not limit itself only to the classroom. Rather it becomes an exercise where the idea of learning moves beyond the pages of the book, into the surroundings where the new university situates itself. It is visualized as an institution of academic excellence where the modes of acquiring knowledge will also take into consideration untrodden avenues. Students therefore are provided with opportunities to access knowledge systems that spill beyond classroom lectures. This could have been possible only by framing an academic curriculum that would not be subject to a set syllabus. Rather it would allow for broad thematic structures within which the teaching-learning exercise would take place.

In the School of Historical Studies, one of the two Schools with which Nalan-

da University began its journey in 2014, the other one being the School of Ecology and Environment Studies, this is pursued through five broad focus areas – global history, economic history, Asian connections, art history and archaeology. As a faculty focusing on any, or many, of these themes I get to offer courses on, but not limited to, Asian modernisms, maritime networks, histories of circulation, religions of Asia, material culture and politics of heritage. This also provides students with the precious opportunity to engage with multiple disciplinary approaches in course of their study. Such an approach brings in a rich variety of methodological interventions stretching across multiple disciplines like Anthropology, Sociology, Archaeology, Religious Studies, Philosophy, Political Science, Philology and Art History.

This multidisciplinary approach towards the understanding of historical studies directly aids my content and method of teaching. Some of the primary issues that concern my research include multiple ideas of the past, how historical understanding of the past can help read the present, and the various ways in which the present is constituted or constructed by the past. These questions while leading to the formation of new knowledge, also help in interiorizing valuable insights on



our past – those which have remained untapped, yet carry much potential for creating and recreating new understandings of the past.

It needs to be remembered that ancient Nalanda as an institution, contrary to popular perception, did not limit itself only to the study of religion and philosophy. Rather it was a centre of higher learning where knowledge on arts, medicine and sciences were also imparted. This eclectic approach towards knowledge was chiefly responsible for making this institution one of the most sought after in its age. It is this inclusive vision which remains central to the new Nalanda University, as it begins its career and positions itself as a meeting ground for both Asian and the world scholarship. Like all new paths and uncharted terrains, this journey will not be easy. But the challenge is less to make it easy, but more to make it conducive to explore fresh and stimulating resources of knowledge.

It is this international appeal within a non-metropolitan location, in the pilgrimage town of Rajgir close to the old Nalanda ruins in the interior of Bihar, which makes it a unique experience. Going by the tradition of old Nalanda it is a place where the local, the national and the transnational converge. It was evident in the eclectic

scholarship the old institution had drawn from far and wide. Nalanda University too has already started attracting the global community in terms of its teachers and students – its two most important pillars. For new Nalanda University this has not only been a pan-Asian convergence but even beyond that. At one level it is a deep commitment to the idea of an international centre of knowledge. The aspiration to be associated with which has drawn many out of their seemingly comfort zones. Speaking for myself I take it as a priceless opportunity to engage with my discipline through the exercise of teaching and research. Nalanda University visualizes a sustained dialogue between erudite scholarship and lived experience, whereby I stand to gain by exploring new ways of approaching, reading and researching history within the ambits of this truly global inter-Asian university.

¹ Samuel Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, translation of Hiuen Tsiang's *Si Yu Ki*, Volume II, Kegan Paul, London, 1906, pp. 170-71.

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ARTICLE

ARE WE THERE YET?**An Evaluation of the impact of the Zimbabwe National Gender Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in Zimbabwe**

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Abstract:

The year 2014 marks the 10th anniversary of the Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (hereinafter referred to as the gender policy). In celebrating this milestone, it is prudent to evaluate how the gender policy has influenced gender mainstreaming. The paper addresses three fundamental questions viz; what are the changes (if any) that have occurred over the past decade? What are the challenges confronting gender mainstreaming efforts; and lastly what should be done to address the arising challenges? The above questions were answered through an analysis of the various sectors in Zimbabwe. Whilst acknowledging that the gender policy has kick started the mammoth process towards gender equality and equity, the paper recognises the challenges being faced and the great work lying ahead; it thus concludes that indeed Zimbabwe has taken off but is not yet there with regards gender equality and equity in all the sectors in Zimbabwe.

Keywords: Zimbabwe – Gender – Domestic Violence - Health

INTRODUCTION

The impact of the Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (hereinafter referred to as the gender policy) in mainstreaming gender into development has been characterised with mixed fortunes ever since its promulgation in 2004. It should be emphasised that the gender policy has had a profound positive impact economically, politically and socially. Some of the important milestones reached include the re-introduction of a gender oriented ministry namely the Ministry of Women, Gender and Community Development (MoWGCD) in 2005 to champion gender mainstream-

ing into development; the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No 17 (2005) to create a conducive environment for gender equality; the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act (2007); the creation of gender focal points in all line ministries, Women's Parliamentary Caucus, Parliamentary Portfolio Committee, Inter-ministerial Committee on Gender, the UN Thematic group all to ensure gender mainstreaming into development and the recognition of gender rights in the new constitution. Increased representation of women in decision making positions in most sectors, gender parity in primary and lower secondary school attainment, in-



creased economic participation by women (mines, agriculture, cottage and home industry), among others are positive benefits of gender mainstreaming into development. However, the dual system of law, persistence of discriminatory practices, lack of coordination of the gender management system and inadequate implementation of the gender policy are some stumbling blocks hindering the success of gender mainstreaming. Sectors such as Land, Agriculture and Resettlement; Industry, Commerce and Employment; Education and Training; Mining, Energy, Environment and Tourism; Democracy, Human Rights and Justice Delivery; Housing, Water and Information and Media shall be discussed in an attempt to explore the impact of the gender policy. While the gender policy has made significant contribution in achieving development, it will be reiterated that, although laws and legislation have been put in place, it should not be an end in itself. Laws and policies provide the essential foundation for gender mainstreaming, but in reality it goes beyond these and depend more on women's socio-economic empowerment.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The paper uses the Social Relations Approach (SRA) or Framework in analysing the impact of the gender policy. The three

essential components of the Social Relations Approach are: the goal of development as human well-being; the concept of social relations and institutional analysis. Its aims are to analyse existing gender inequalities in the distribution of resources, responsibilities and power and to design policies which enable women to be agents in their own development. Concepts rather than tools are used in this framework in order to focus on the relationships between people, and their relationship to resources and activities, and how they are re-worked through institutions

Looking at the first component of the framework, the definition of development in the Social Relations Approach is about increasing human well-being and not just about economic growth or increased productivity. The core elements of human well-being are survival, security and autonomy. Development interventions must be assessed on the extent to which they contribute to human well-being as well as what they contribute in terms of technical efficiency. Production therefore includes not only market production, but encompasses a wide range of tasks that people perform, in order to reproduce human labour, to survive and to safeguard the environment.



In this framework “social relations are understood as the way in which different groups of people are positioned in relation to resources”. Social relations determine people’s roles, responsibilities and claims, as well as the rights and control they have over their own lives and those of others. Social relations include gender relations, class, ethnicity, and race. Social relations are not static; they can change over time and are influenced by changes at the macro level. The access people and groups have to material and intangible resources are also determined by social relations.

The factors which produce gender inequalities are not found solely in the family but exist across a wide range of institutions, including the international community, the state and the market place. An institution is defined by Kabeer

in March et al (1999) as a framework of rules for achieving particular economic or social goals. Social difference and inequalities are created and perpetuated by institutions. Organisations are defined as the specific structural forms that institutions take. Gender-awareness necessitates an analysis of the way these institutions create and reproduce inequalities.

The Social Relations Approach identifies four key institutions: the state, the market, the community, and the family/ kinship around which an analysis of the impact of the gender policy in Zimbabwe can be evaluated.

CONCEPTUALISING GENDER, GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND DEVELOPMENT

Gender mainstreaming is defined as; the process of assessing the

INSTITUTIONAL LOCATION	ORGANISATIONAL / STRUCTURALFORM
State	Legal, military, administrative organisations
Market	Firms, financial corporations, farming-enterprises, Multinationals, etc
Community	Village tribunals, voluntary associations, informal networks, patron-client relationships, NGO's
Family / kinship	Household, extended families, lineage groupings etc

Adapted from March et al (1999)



implications for women and men of any planning action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs, in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated (ECOSOC, 1997:2).

On the other hand development refers to a, qualitative and quantitative measure of progress in a given community or country at a particular stage. It is the process of expanding freedoms that people enjoy. It entails removing the barriers to human freedom such as poverty, unaccountable government, social derivation, lack of functioning infrastructure, tyranny, repression etc (Sen, 2001). As such the Zimbabwe National Gender Policy launched in 2004 is the overarching instrument designed to guide the implementation of gender sensitive legislation and socio-economic policies, programs and projects. Its overall objective is to mainstream gender in all sectors in order eliminate all political, economic, social and cultural practices that impede equality of all sexes. Therefore, the general goal of gender policies is to achieve gender

equality and equity in all sectors and at all levels taking cognisance of the nexus between gender and development.

Following the above, it therefore stands to reason that, Zimbabwe's gender policy was drawn up and adopted to provide guidelines and the institutional framework to engender all sectoral policies, programs, projects and activities at all levels of society and economy (Kanyenze, 2011 p.225). For purposes of this discussion the assessment of the gender policy impact shall be looked at with bias towards four critical areas which were prioritised by the government namely; education and training, women in politics and decision making, women and health and institutional mechanism for the advancement of women. The National Gender Policy was implemented through the National Gender Policy Implementation Strategy and Workplan (2008-2012). Literature reviewed indicated that while women constitute over 52 per cent of the total population of Zimbabwe, their participation in the economy is confined largely to agricultural production for domestic consumption and labour intensive tasks essential for household survival such as child rearing, fetching water and firewood. The National Gender Policy recognises the fact that women constitute more than 52 per cent of the population of Zimbabwe thus,



their representation and participation in the development process should be commensurate with this numerical reality (National Gender Policy, 2004).

The establishment of an institutional mechanism to spearhead gender mainstreaming into development is the cornerstone of the gender policy. As such, the fulfillment through the creation of the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development (MoWAGCD) in 2005 can be hailed as the key impact of the gender policy. Kanyenze, (2011: 232), noted that, the ministry's mandate is to advance women and to promote gender equality and community and it seeks to address gender inequality in a multi-sectoral and integrated manner. In order to monitor and evaluate progress, Gender Focal Persons (GFPs) and Gender Committees were created. However, there are no feedback mechanisms for quarterly reports submitted to the ministry, inadequate training on gender mainstreaming and the exclusion of the focal persons (GFPs) from senior management and policy planning meetings has reduced the potential impact.

In addition, the Women Parliamentary Caucus responsible for promoting the gender agenda in parliament was formulated, as one arm of the institutional mechanism required to promote

mainstream gender into development. To compliment such efforts, Parliament established the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on gender which assesses progress and monitors the activities and implementation of gender equality and women's empowerment policies in the country. Responsible for coordination are the UN Gender Thematic Group and the Inter-ministerial Committee Gender both of which are chaired by the MoWAGCD. It should be emphasised that the creation of the above stated mechanism all aimed at gender mainstreaming has been a notable impact of the gender policy in Zimbabwe. During the recent constitutional reform process from 2009 to 2012, the Women Parliamentary Caucus was very active in the constitution making process (ZWRNC, 2012:6). Unfortunately by 2009; the Inter-ministerial Committee had not been put in place. According to Kanyenze et al (2011:23), for the committee to be effective it should ensure it provides adequate space for the participation of non-state actors such as the civil society organisations, non-governmental organisation, trade unions and development partners to exercise their role as strategic partners in policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Furthermore, the capacity of the MoWAGCD officers to implement gender



mainstreaming effectively at provincial and district level largely remains limited, thus impacting adversely on the progress of the gender policy. The establishment of Gender Focal Points in all line ministries supported by the MoWAGCD through capacity building programs, has been another plausible impact of the gender policy in mainstreaming gender into development. Their mandate is to mainstream gender in all ministries, however, 'no accountability mechanism has been established by the ministry to determine their effectiveness (Zimbabwe, 2009b: 12). However, there is a draw-back clause that allows for discrimination on the basis of customary law, which is a challenge to women, who more often are adversely affected by customary practices and norms. Thus although policies and legislation have been put in place, it is not an end in itself, achieving gender equality encompass not only the adoption of specific laws but their implementation.

Reduction of gender disparities in the education and training sector has also been another commendable impact of the gender policy. The nexus between education and development cannot be exaggerated. According to Ncube (1987:106), education stands as the major means through which development can be achieved. Echoing the same, the gender policy summarised education as the foundation of eco-

nomie and social development. Through the gender policy influence, net-enrolment ratios (NER) by gender at primary school level, peaked at 98.5% in 2006, decreased to 96% in 2007 and by 2009 it stood at 91% (MDGs Report, 2010). Statistics of the Net-Enrolment Ratio, according to the same source, indicate that at lower secondary there was a near gender parity though it noted that girls comprise only 35 percent of pupils in Upper secondary and secondary school completion is higher for boys. Increase in literacy levels among girls and women is crucial in promoting development since it also reduces child and maternal mortality rate as well as reducing poverty in the long term.

Moreover, in an attempt to address gender disparities in terms of the subjects taken by females and males at high schools, and with the motive of encouraging females to take up sciences and technical subjects, mathematics and science camps have been introduced at selected schools (Zimbabwe, 2009b). At higher institutes of learning the government introduced an affirmative action policy which meant to increase female enrolment. The policy stipulates that, females are allowed to enroll in degree programmes at universities with one or two points fewer than males doing the same degree (Kanyenze, 2011: 223). In line with this motive of in-



creasing women's education at higher institution, the Women University in Africa was established. Although this has created space for females to attain degrees, they remain concentrated in the non-technical programmes such as arts and commerce, few are venturing into science programmes. However this reflects the choice of the subjects they had taken at high school.

Furthermore, the gender policy made a landmark impact by providing facilities and a policy framework to enable girls who fall pregnant to continue with their education. In addressing the problem of pregnant girls and education, the then Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and Culture (MoESAC) put in place Policy Circular No 35, which provided pregnant pupils to return to school after delivery (MoESAC Report, 2005). According to the MDG Report (2010), on Zimbabwe, the literacy rate of 15-24 year olds by gender reached 99 percent for both males and females in this group. Female university student enrolment increased from 23 percent to 37 percent in 2007 (Kanyenze et al, 2011:235). Thus one can argue that, though gender parity has not been reached, particularly at tertiary levels of education commendable improvements have been witnessed.

According to Kanyenze et al (2011:235), the low representation of women at secondary school and university level has also affected their holding positions in both the public and private sector. Hence there is a corresponding relationship between attainment of tertiary education and holding decision making positions. The gender policy has also managed to promote participation and representation of women in decision making positions in all sectors and at all levels. The percentage share of women in parliament increased from 14% in 1990-1995, to 16% in 2005, to 18,5 % in the 2008 elections (14% in the Lower House and 33% in the Upper House (MDG Report, 2010: 21). Zimbabwe has had a female Vice-President since 2005 and had a female Deputy Prime Minister during the duration of the Government of National Unity between 2009 and 2013, President of the Senate, Deputy Speaker of House of Assembly and Judge President of the High Court between 2006 -2010. Considering that 52% of the population in Zimbabwe is female, the above statistics clearly indicate that women are disproportionately represented in politics and other decision making bodies.

In the Defense Forces, the gender policy seems to have had insignificant impact with regard to women holding



decision making positions. Kanyenze et al (2011:228) noted that, there are no women at brigadier general level and above, there are 7% women Colonels, 6% Lieutenant-Colonels, 5% Group Captains, 13% Wing Commanders and 15% Flight Lieutenant. In the Prison Services, there is a brighter picture with 50% women Assistant Commissioners and 19% Superintendents. Generally, the impact of the gender policy in as far as women participation in decision making in all sectors, shows a slight increase. With the exception of a co-Minister at the Home Affairs during the Government of National Unity and an acting Defence minister in 2001 there is an observation that, female ministers are found in what might be termed 'soft' ministries such as those dealing with gender, social services and small-to-medium enterprises. As such there is need for greater qualitative and quantitative representation by women in decision making positions in the public and private sectors. Low representation of women in the public sector in turn influence their participation in all development hence the arguable assertion that, the achievement of MDG No 3 is the sine qua non to attaining all the other MDGs.

Better representation of women in high level and decision making positions assist in getting women into the econom-

ic mainstream. Considering that access to land separated the rich and the poor in the traditional society and continuous to define the economic status of people in both rural and urban areas, the gender policy has had little impact in addressing gender equality regarding land access, control and ownership. Women constitute only 18% of those allocated land under A1 Model and 12% of those under A2, despite the fact that the 2003 Committee had recommended a quota of 40% of land allocations, especially A1 to women and that 40% of the funding reserved for women (ZWRCN, and SARDC-WIDSAA, 2005). Thus the majority of women continue to have secondary-use rights, especially under the communal tenure system. Since 86% of women in Zimbabwe live in the rural areas, where they depend on agriculture for their livelihoods and families, women play a key role in agriculture. However, the lack of gender sensitivity in the implementation of the programme resulted in no significant change in women access to land.

In addition, the policy had shifted from a social justice approach to a political reward system, thus very few women benefited. Apart from politicisation of the land issue, the gender policy failed to eliminate discrimination, as summarised, 'a key barrier to gender equality is the discrimination stemming from dual system



of law, where customary law continue to disadvantage women' (UNDP, 2012). Article 17 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, however the issue of land lies more within the domain of traditional leaders, who are the 'gate-keepers' of patriarchy, hence further complicates access to land by women. Kanyenze (2011) noted that, the marginalisation of women's access to land was perpetuated by gender imbalances in terms of traditional leaders in the rural areas. Zimbabwe has 266 chiefs, of whom 5 are women 474 headmen, of whom 5% are women, meaning that when unmarried women take their husbands to these leaders, only a few may sympathise with them because they are also women.

Moreover, the gender policy has also resulted in mild attempts to demystify the mining sector and also formulate, develop and adopt gender sensitive policies that enhance equitable and equal participation of women and men in mining, energy, tourism and environment. As the custodians of gender mainstreaming into development, the MoWAGCD has encouraged for the involvement of women in the mining sector through the window called 'women in mining' (Maturure, 2008). The Broad Based Women's Economic Empowerment Framework (BBWEEF) of 2012 seeks to empower women in three eco-

nomic sectors which are Mining, Tourism and Agriculture and to eliminate gender discrimination, promote equality between men and women, ensure a comprehensive approach to women economic empowerment and ensure harmonisation of affirmative action programming. However, the formation of such grouping has been on a partisan, thus discrediting by location and freedom to choice of association. Such influence tends to hinder/limit participation of those who would like to benefit from the mining project but are not interested in the politics of the day.

Training media persons to be gender sensitive to facilitate positive portrayal of women by the media has been another area, where the gender policy focused. However, it has not managed to significantly influence Zimbabweans to transform perceptions, beliefs and attitudes. Media plays an integral part in the communication system of all societies. According to Gender and the Media (2011), not only does the media influence and shape policy formulation, it also sways the public conception of gender roles and responsibilities. It should however, be indicated that efforts have been made to discourage the media from degrading or exploiting women especially in the area of entertainment and advertising, and undermining their role and positions in so-



ciety and reinforcing gender oppression and stereotypes. A landmark impact was the Delta Beverages advert, depicting an almost nude woman, which was removed on air on ZTV.

Training personnel to be gender sensitive can facilitate a positive portrayal of women in the media and society at large is another contribution of the gender policy (Zimbabwe, 2009b:16). Civil society and non-governmental organisations have already done commendable work in that direction. Examples include the UNFPA training of media personnel in gender sensitive reporting on HIV/AIDS and the empowerment of women on programmes like Gender Diaries. However, despite such notable impact of the gender policy in gender mainstreaming, the Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe (2011) report illustrates that women remain at the periphery of the news, either appearing in limited roles or simply invisible.

The Health industry is another sector where the gender policy has made notable footprints, following the 'feminisation' of HIV/AIDS. As such the relationship between gender, HIV/AIDS and poverty has been understood in a way that informs policy and encourages the adoption and implementation of practical strategies that empower communities to actively and effectively to the diverse impacts of

the epidemic. However, women have limited control over their sexual and reproductive health, as such the enactment of Sexual Offences Act which criminalises, intentional, deliberate, willing-full and knowing exposure or transfer of HIV/AIDS. Marital rape is also another significant achievement of the gender policy, though it remains very controversial.

Due to poor economic base women are exposed to risky behavior, which increase their vulnerability to Gender Based Violence and HIV/AIDS (Gender and HIV/AIDS, 2009). The enactment of the Domestic Violence Act (2007) can also be hailed as another milestone made by the gender policy. The Act's main purpose is to afford maximum protection to victims and survivors of domestic violence and also to act as a preventative measure on domestic violence. However, the Africa MDGs report on Zimbabwe, noted that violence against women remains a challenge and is sustained by prevailing negative socio-cultural practices, attitudes, values, norms and beliefs as well as weak implementation of laws and policies (MDGs Report, 2012).

Related to health, the gender policy also recognises the fact that water is cross-cutting and that it impacts on all sectors of the society and economy. While the gender has managed to make reforms



in the Water Act to ensure fair access by all Zimbabweans as well as creating awareness of the importance of water through the Sustainable Strategy for the National Water Supply and Sanitation Programme. The strategy recommends measures to enhance women participation including traditionally male-dominated chores such as latrine building. According to Mulenga et al (2007), the Zimbabwe gender policy gives comprehensive strategies for water supply but sanitation is not mentioned. Another challenge of the water policy is the failure to recognise urban informal settlements which are still considered illegal.

In Zimbabwe, industry and commerce is the domain of men who own most businesses in all sectors (Gender Policy, 2004). The levels of women's participation in industry and commerce and business entrepreneurship are low, possibly due to the traditional bread-winning status accredited to men, when it comes to access to employment, women and men usually do not operate on an equal footing. The MDGs Report (2010) revealed that, in 2009 the Public Service Commission had 67% women commissioners, in 2010 women comprise 20% of cabinet ministers and 26% of Permanent Secretaries, while in Government 26% of Principal Directors were women, 33 % Directors

and 28% Deputy Directors. Thus the gender policy influenced policy reforms which saw women attaining senior positions.

Of the Small to Medium Enterprise Revolving Fund that was introduced September 2006 by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, it reflected an improved portion for women (Women and land in Zimbabwe, 2009). The report reveal that, of Z\$ 16 billion (US\$ 164 million) set aside only 27% had gone to women by March 2007. By August 2007 women's projects had received nearly Z\$ 14 billion (US\$ 56 million) which was almost about 44% of the total fund (Ibid). Thus there seem to be change in priority, in favour of women projects which in turn promote sustainable development. During the economic meltdown period 2002-2008, despite the collapse of the formal economy, government policies tended target the formal economy neglecting the informal and communal economies where the majority of people particularly women are located.

CONCLUSION

Having all the above information, one can argue that Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy has impacted positively in gender mainstreaming into development. A number of laws have been implemented such as the Domestic Violence



Act (2007), which seeks to protect women and prevent them from domestic violence orchestrated due to beliefs, attitudes and societal norms prevalent in the patriarchal communal communities. The creation of Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development (MoWAG-CD) as a national gender machinery to spearhead gender mainstreaming efforts reflects government commitment. However addressing gender equality and equity goes beyond the jurisdiction of the MoWAGCD, lack of coherence in terms of design and implementation is required. Good examples are laws pertaining to land, which are fragmented across different ministries and legal documents; there is also no solid coherence on land access, distribution and control, which leaves women with no legal protection whatsoever. In addition, reviewing and updating the National Gender Policy through inclusive process and establishment of the Gender Observatory to monitor its implementation remains crucial. There is also need to review the Electoral Act to ensure it contains the provisions of other international and regional laws on gender that have been ratified by Zimbabwe. Without legislated and effective implementation of a gender equity system, women will continue to be marginalised. Over and above the national gender policy remains largely unimplemented and therefore its objectives unrealised.

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ARTICLE

THREATS TO THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES' OPERATIONS IN CAMEROON

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Abstract:

Generally, interactions between individuals, institutions and nations do not always leave behind positive results. This is because, conflicts are inherent amongst human beings, institutions and so; was the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Cameroon. Though, the threats were not the mission of the UNHCR, but apologetically, unforeseen circumstances endangered its presence in the country. The threats to this cooperation erupted from the interactions of the UNHCR, her employees and suppliers involuntarily compelled the government to mediate. The question addressed here is what were the roots to these threats and what dimensions were employed to mitigate them? This paper only discusses conflicting instances that attempted to mar the UNHCR's operations in Cameroon. It argues that though; the timely intervention of the government was intended to respect the accords it signed with the UNHCR; it nevertheless left non-negligible implications on the country's image on the global stage.

Keywords: Threats, UNHCR, Cameroon, Mediation, Mitigation

INTRODUCTION

Cameroon-UNHCR diplomatic relations took off positively without quarrels that could abrogate it. This situation however did not last as to some extent UNHCR's operations were characterised by disputes. In all the threats, the government was never at the origin but the UNHCR, her suppliers and employees. At the outcome of every threat, the government was obligatorily employed to arbitrate and this in a way fostered their cooperation. At this point, we are interested in the threats that attempted to jeopardise the UNHCR's mission in Cameroon. This prob-

lem is therefore addressed by the following questions: What were the causes of the threats? How were they manifested? How were the threats administered and what impacts had the threats on Cameroon and the UNHCR image on the international scene?

UNHCR-MADAM ABADA EBOGO CONFLICT

One of the very first incidents that threatened the UNHCR operations in Cameroon was the case of Madam Abo-do who was an occupant of Abada Ebogo building. This building harboured the UN-



HCR head office but the lady in question had been sharing the same structure with two previous delegates of the UNHCR. It so happened that upon the coming of a new UNHCR delegate (Osseni Fassassi), he was not prepared to continue to share his office with individuals. The reason for his refusal to share his office with the lady was because of her untimely entry and exit within the premises even at late hours. This uncontrolled attitude of Madame Adobo also became a serious concern to the night watchmen who claimed they had exchanged words on countless occasions each time they tried to control her moves in the vicinity. For security reasons, the guards were not supposed to permit her entry and exit in the location especially at night so as to avoid confrontation with thieves but the lady could not understand this. Of course, the height of the confrontation occurred on the night of 3rd breaking 4th March 1985 at 11pm. According to the night guard, the lady on this date was accompanied by two young men who she instructed to break the UNHCR main gate after his refusal to open and secondly to surrender the keys of the gate so that she could enter and pack her car. As regard this scene, Billong Cyrille (night guard) said: "Dans la nuit du 3au 4 Mars 1985, vers 23 huer, elle m'avait porté des menaces sévères appuyée ou accompagnée de deux jeunes hommes

inconnus, m'obligeant de les ouvrir le portail afin de faire entre leur voiture."¹

Following the above report, the UNHCR delegate immediately pasted a warning notice at the entrance to the location. On the message of the UNHCR boss to the occupants of the building, he warned that the structure was covered by diplomatic immunity. For this reason, access, circulation and packing within the premises was controlled and forbidden to all unauthorised persons who were not of the UNHCR delegation. In his exact word, he said: "La Délégation pour le Cameroun du Haut-commissariat des Nations Unies pour les Refugies rappelle [...] L'accès, la circulation, [...] et interdits aux personnes non autorisées [...]" ²This message was not satisfactory to Madame Abodo who took it as provocation and still resisted the warning notice on grounds that she had shared the same building with two other previous UHNCR delegates. It was because of her continuous resistance that this matter was brought before the minister of external relations for an amicable solution. In a bit to resolve this conflict, the deputy chief of service for accords and treaties at MINREX met with the UNHCR chief on Wednesday 24th April 1985 at 10 a.m. and discussed on Abodo conflict. It was in this meeting as reported by the secretary (Marie-Therese Ngo Eyock) of



the minister of external relations that the minister learnt that Madame Abodo had been living together in the same structure with two previous UNHCR delegates. The ministry was also briefed that the HCR boss had agreed with the lady not to pack within the UNHCR premises and equally to relocate from the structure. According to the UNHCR boss, she admitted this arrangement but deliberately refused to apply as he puts it:

Il aurait eu un entretien avec la dame qui ne manifeste aucune intention d'évacuer les locaux. Elle a même accepte la condition qu'il lui a pose de ne plus garde son véhicule à l'intérieur de la concession. Par conséquent, il n'entend pas exécuter de sitôt les instructions qui lui ont été données (faire déménager la Dame). Il continue à discuter avec la siège de HCR en observant la comportement de la Dame. Il a ajouté que si le HCR insiste sur la solution de départ, il (le HCR) prendra l'appartement actuellement occupe par la Dame a sa charge afin d'éviter un manque à gagner au propriétaire.³

At the closure of this meeting, the deputy chief of service for accords and treaties said he was very happy to have learnt of these developments and promised to brief the minister. Hereafter, we

no longer hold any information about the developments that ensued thereafter. However, it is clear that Madame Abodo accepted the instructions of the UNHCR boss but failed to implement. Obviously, we infer that in order to maintain an excellent cooperation between the UNHCR and Cameroon government, the lady was consequently counselled to evacuate the building.

UNHCR-VEUVE KIHENGA NEE ABIAGUINA WRANGLE

This was one of the renowned threats to the UNHCR activities in Cameroon. This problem stemmed from her dismissal as a house helper by Athar Sultan-Khan (deputy delegate) of the UNHCR in 1985. Following her dismissal, she claimed that her rights were violated and then reported the case to Cameroon's ministry of labour and social insurance. In her report to the provincial inspector of labour in Yaounde, she intimated that:

Par le présent, je viens très respectueusement auprès de votre haute bien vaillance porter plainte contre mon ancien parton ci-dessus nomme bientôt arrive en fin de séjours au Cameroun.
Pour les motive suivants:



- Licenciement abusif
- préavis d'un mois et congés non payés
- non bénéficiaire des allocations familiales
- dommages et intérêts
- refus d'un certificat de travail.⁴

In addition to these, she also alleged that Athar had to pay her a total sum of 684,000FCFA as charges for violating her rights. It seems Kihenga's case was not addressed to the right quarters. This is so because after a careful study of the case by the ministry of labour and social insurance, it was transmitted to the ministry of foreign affairs. In the correspondence by the then provincial inspectorate of labour and social insurance (Jean Marie) to the minister of external relations, he said:

J'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre pour compétences la requête du 16/09/85 par laquelle Mme Kihenga se plainte de son ex-employeur M. Athar Sultan Kan, Adjoint au délégué du Haut-commissaire des nations unies pour les réfugiés qui l'aurait licencié sans lui payer les droits conformément à la réglementation en vigueur.

La requérante réclame:

- Le préavis: 35.000F
- L'indemnité de congés: 31.000F
- Dommages et intérêts: 500.000F

Qui restent à l'appréciation du juge de fonds.

Je vous saurai gré d'user de vos prérogatives pour régler ce différend.⁵

Upon the reception of this letter, Kihenga was summoned by the secretary general of MINREX to get her stance on the matter. In a summons, the Secretary General (Samuel Ekumu Fonderson) of MINREX stated that: "Suite à votre plainte citée en marge, [...] bien vouloir vous présenter à mon Département Ministériel, service des Affaires Contentieuses, porte 128, pour affaire vous concernant."⁶ From this response, it is obvious that she respected the instructions of MINREX. Athar was also called up by the minister of foreign affairs to give his own side of the case. Based on other situations of diplomatic concerns, the UNHCR and MINREX had always jointly resolve matters of this nature amicably. Judging from their previous relationship, it is but clear that the problem was resolved peacefully. This is so because there was never a case throughout our findings that deteriorated the UNHCR's operations



in Cameroon. However, it will be unfair for us to actually draw a line or to state with precision the final end to this case. This is so because, from our investigation, our sources did not reveal the final solution to the problem but it remains clear that the relation was endangered.

UNHCR-MBALLA PROTAIS' DISPUTE

Another conflict that threatened the UNHCR assignment in Cameroon was the Mballa Protails case brought before the Garoua court of first instance. Accordingly, Protails took the oath of office with the UNHCR on the 18th October 1988 and was posted to the sub delegation in Garoua on the 19th October 1988 as an interim administrative assistance. Based on Protails' explanations, he signed a short term contract from the 19th October 1988 to 18th January 1989. Fortunately for him, his contract was renewed on two occasions from 19th of January 1989 to 18th of April 1989 and from 19th April 1989 to the 31st of May 1989. He also added that on the 02nd of June 1989 through a radio message N° GAR/YAO/0183, his colleague Afawubo in Garoua informed the UNHCR delegate in Yaounde that his contract had expired on the 31st of May 1989. The delegate also notes that Mballa Protails services were of good quality and proposed that the HCR delegate in Yaounde should prolong his

contract to one year. This was done and this time in addition to his administrative duties, he had to manage an account to the tune of 35.000.000FCFA destined for the repatriation of some 2,207 Chadian refugees (project 89/AP/CMR/RP/300).⁷

Though Protails succeeded to repatriate up to 2000 Chadian refugees after dehydrating 30.000.000FCFA of the 35.000.000, he was never quite lucky. This is so because in his attempt to travel to Yaounde on the 20th June 1989, Afawubo made an implicating radio message to Yaounde and also deposited a complaint at the judicial police in Garoua that Protails had escaped with all the money meant for the repatriation of Chadian refugees. It was then on the basis of Afawubo's allegations that Protails was arrested in Yaounde on the 24th June 1989 as a thief in violation of his immunity covered by the oath he took in Yaounde on the 18th October 1988. He was then transferred and detained in Garoua on the 09th August 1989 on charges of grievous abuse of confidence. He was later judged and freed on the 15th June 1990 on grounds that the charges levied against him were not well established.

Such a court decision and the fact that Protails was a liberated person gave him the momentum to fight for his rights.



It was on the basis of this that he wrote to the UNHCR delegate in Yaounde claiming the following damages in compensation for violating his rights. These included his monthly salary from June 1989 up to the expiry of his contract, leave benefits, termination letter, dismissal entitlements, transport for his family from Garoua to Yaounde where he was recruited and his certificate of service.⁸ Protais' claims to recover damages caused to him were only focused to the UNHCR boss (D. Tshungi) in Yaounde. He also attempted to woe the minister of external relations to support him in his endeavour. Following Protais' letter to MINREX, he stated: "Je vous prie de trouver en annexe, une requête relative à mon affaire avec le HCR [...]. J'estime que cette requête, pourra éventuellement vous édifier sur tout ma situation."⁹

In respect of the above, the minister of external relations admitted to play his role as a referee and collaborator of the UNHCR. This was on the 16th of January 1991 when MINREX forwarded the case of Protais to the UNHCR delegate in Yaounde. In a correspondence addressed to the HCR delegate on the Protais' affair, MINREX stated: "For a better appreciation of the dispute [...]. Any dues meant for him should be established on cheque in his name and addressed to the ministry of external relations."¹⁰ From the minis-

ter's wordings in the correspondence, one could say that the minister held high esteem on the reaction of the UNHCR but this never materialised. In fact, this was no longer a case to be discussed within the rims of the UNHCR as it was out rightly rejected and declared null and void. The UNHCR boss openly declared that:

Monsieur Mballa Protais a été révoqué après avoir subtilisé une forte somme d'argent dans la coffre de la sous-Délégation, il a été recherché par la police puis appréhendé à Yaounde. Monsieur Mballa Protais a été incarcéré pendant plusieurs mois à la suite de la plainte déposée par la délégation du HCR. Ayant commis forte lourde dans l'exercice de ces fonctions, la requête de Mr. Mballa Protais n'est pas recevable par la Délégation. La Délégation estime qu'elle a été suffisamment lésée et considère cette affaire comme définitivement terminée.

La délégation du Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés en République du Cameroun remercie par avance le Ministre des Relations Extérieures de l'attention qu'il voudra bien porter à la présente et saisit cette occasion pour lui renouveler les assurances de sa très haute considération.¹¹



Based on the response of the UNHCR to the minister of foreign affairs, it is clear that the UNHCR had nothing again to do with Mballa Protais. From the response, the UNHCR did not recognise even any of the allegations as damages and worst still rejected the complaint in its entirety. In this state of affairs, it was now the responsibility of the ministry of external relations to keep Protais abreast of the updates in order to drive Protais hopeless of his claims. To this effect, the Secretary General of MINREX (Chungong Ayafor) by delegation of signature wrote to Protais stating:

Faisant suite à votre requitte de référence, j'ai l'honneur de vous communiqué la position du H.C.R. dans le litige vous opposant à cet organisme.

La délégation du H.C.R. soutien que votre requête n'est pas recevable du fait que vous avait été révoqué après avoir subtilise une forte somme d'argent dans la coffre de la sous-Délégation ; donc suite forte a un lourde dans l'exercice de vous fonctions. La Délégation, qui estime avoir été suffisamment lésée, considère cette affaire comme définitivement terminée.¹²

The above letter was the final comment on the Mballa Protais' affair. This is

so because the fit back to Protais did not even give him the occasion for an appeal. Besides the fact that the UNHCR definitely refused to even receive his complaint meant that his case could no longer be heard within its premises. Worst still, a final judgement was already taken on his case by the court of law. Above all, our sources do not show any further proof of the fact that Protais ever dared to complain again after the minister's final comment. At this point, one wonders why the Garoua tribunal court acquitted Protais on the basis that the case was not established but could not oblige the UNHCR to pay the damages claimed by Protais. This gives us the latitude to draw the line that Protais' actions were really questionable. To round up, though Protais' case did not jeopardise the UNHCR-Cameroon relationship but it at least threatened it. Such a disgusting attitude of Mballa Protais seems to be characteristic of a large fraction of Cameroonian mentality and portrayed a very negative picture of Cameroon on the global stage. No doubt, president Biya's operation sparrow hawk could be a recommendable therapy to Cameroonians of Protais' calibre

UNHCR- BITA KOULOU ANDRE/BIWOLE JOSEPH'S CLASHES

These were also some of the threats to the UNHCR role in Cameroon. In rela-



tion to Andre, he was a UNHCR employee based in the sub delegation in Garoua. According to his complaint to the minister of external relations, the UNHCR owed his six months supplementary hours of service in 1989 and his full salary for the month of February 1990. Upon reception of this case, the minister of foreign relations sent an inquiry to the UNHCR in Yaounde to get its own version of the conflict. In this regard, Jean-Marie Happy-Tchankou (Secretary General of MINREX) by delegation of power, wrote: "Le requérant se plainte de la non perception de son salaire du mois de Février 1990 ainsi que des frais résultant des heures supplémentaires pendant six mois en 1989." ¹³ MINREX also forwarded another mail to Bitá Koulou in Garoua. In this letter, the Secretary General (S.G.) made it clear to Bitá that he had requested the UNHCR to comment on the accusation levelled against it. In the same mail, the S.G. (Jean-Marie Happy-Tchankou) equally cautioned Bitá to present his case to the provincial inspector of labour and social insurance in Garoua which could help him in the exact determination of his rights. In his own words, the S.G. said: "Toutefois, je vous suggèrerais dans la même temps de recourir aux services de l'Inspection Provinciale du Travail du Nord qui vous aideraient dans la détermination exact de vous droits." ¹⁴ Looking at the action of the S.G. of MINREX, it appears Bitá

took his case to an incompetent quarter and this is why he was referred to the provincial inspection of labour. Accordingly, Bitá was supposed to report his case first to the provincial inspection of labour and the labour office would then forward it to the ministry of foreign relations. In all, MINREX heard from both parties involved (Bitá Koulou Andre and the UNHCR) delegation in Garoua. At this juncture, we do not hold any data as to how the case was finally resolved.

Similarly, the "affaire Biwolé Joseph C/HCR" was brought before the minister of external relations by the S.G. (Edouard Akame Mfoumou) at the presidency of the republic of Cameroon on the 23rd March 1990. ¹⁵ Accordingly, Biwolé Joseph was a UNHCR employee but for reasons not revealed to us, he was dismissed. It would occur that after his dismissal, the presidency of the republic was informed of it. As a result, Edouard Akame Mfoumou decided to inquire from the competent minister of foreign affairs to be enlightened of the case. Unfortunately, our sources did not provide us with evidences beyond this level but; we are thankful that cases of this nature have helped in the understanding of the threats encountered in the course of the UNHCR duty in Cameroon.



UNHCR- ELLA NÉE MONEYANG HONORINE/NKOUNTCHE JEAN-CLAUDE QUARRELS

One of the delicate cases that threatened the UNHCR undertakings in Cameroon was the affair “Dame Ella Née Moneyang Honorine C/Nkountche Jean-Claude.” Moneyang was married to Ella Henri Le Grand and the couple invested wealth in a storey building in Yaounde. This couple later underwent an internal rumble that consequently ruptured their harmony in a court de vice. Their divide was marked by the ordinance of the Douala tribunal court following judgement N°103 of 7th December 1981. As the law required, they were supposed to share the wealth they had jointly assembled together. Resultantly, lawyer Pierre-Marie Djoko was named by the Douala tribunal to follow up the sharing and sale of property owned by the former union between Ella Henri Le Grand and Ella Née Moneyang Honorine.¹⁶

Contrary to the court’s decision, Ella Henri Le Grand with the assistance of lawyer David Noufele Simo instead of lawyer Jean- Pierre Djoko as defined by the court; sold the building to Nkountche Jean-Claude in Yaounde. When this came to the knowledge of Moneyang, she through her lawyer (Pierre-Marie Djoko) filed the case to the Yaounde court of first instance. After a careful examination of the case,⁶⁰

the court found that the sale was really fraudulent and law N°169/CIV of 4th January 1990 declared the sale of the building null and void.¹⁷ Before Moneyang could discover and lodge her case in court, the building was already rented and occupied by the UNHCR. Secondly, huge rental sums of money were already diverted to the fraudulent buyer (Nkountche Jean-Claude) instead of Moneyang. Having learnt of these developments, Moneyang after her successful court ruling contacted the occupant (UNHCR) and the minister of external relations to regularise the situation. In a complaint filed to the UNHCR in Yaounde under the courtesy of the minister of foreign relations, she stated:

J’ai l’honneur de vous prier de bien vouloir me faire tenir une copie du contrat de location de la villa que vous occupez au quartier Bastos (Ekoundou), ainsi qu’un état des loyers qui ont été payés depuis votre date d’occupation des lieux jusqu’à ces jours.

Ces documents permettront au Notaire d’évaluer le préjudice que j’ai subis depuis le début du litige qui m’oppose aux deux parties adverses (acheteur et vendeur dudit immeuble) pour un règlement de la situation. Veuillez agréer Monsieur le Délégué, L’expression de ma haute considération.¹⁸



Upon reception of the above letter, the minister of external relations transmitted an attached correspondence to the UNHCR delegate. The minister requested the UNHCR delegate to furnish a copy of the rental contract as well as the state of payment of rents of the building. According to the minister, the requested documents were required by Moneyang's notary public to evaluate the prejudice she had suffered.

In the same light, the minister (Jean-Marie Happy Tchankou) also responded to Moneyang's demand by making it known to her that it was the responsibility of her notary public in charge of the sale of the property from their former union to alert MINREX with the required documents. The said documents included; an updated state of rental payment and the deposit of the said rents to an account to be determined while pending the final sale of the property. He was also required to make statements about both parties and for the deposit of her own share of the benefits.¹⁹ Following this request from the minister, Moneyang again reached out to her lawyer (Pierre-Marie Djoko) again who further approached the UNHCR under the courtesy of the minister of external relations. In Jean-Marie Djoko's letter to the UNHCR delegate, he revealed that:

Madame Ella Nee Moneyang Honorine m'a fait savoir que vous occupez en qualite de locataire, l'immeuble vendu et que les loyers sont verses directement entre les mains du sus-nome, en vertu de l'acte annule sus cite.

C'est pourquoi je vous prierais de bien vouloir me faire tenir l'etat des loyers déjà versees a monsieur Nkountche Jean Claude a ce jours, de virer a mon compte Etude numero 05.00.0312149-3 ouvert a la S.G.B.C., Agence de Douala, les prochains loyers et ceux que vous detenez actuellement a la suite de l'opposition de Madame Ella nee Moneyang Honorine.²⁰

Far from demanding the UNHCR to furnish him with the required information, he also directed the UNHCR to pay the rents into his account created on behalf of Ella Moneyang. Besides, lawyer Pierre-Marie Djoko also sent the required documents as demanded by the minister of external relations for a clearer understanding and for the follow up of the case. The minister again transmitted the attachment of the required letter to the UNHCR. According to letter N°02352/DIPL/D7/SACO, the minister attached rental documents N°8394/DJTPM/TH of 12th March 1991 collected from lawyer Pierre-Marie



Djoko and sent to the UNHCR on 2nd April 1991. After forwarding this attachment to the UNHCR, the minister was worried and wanted a confirmation to be assured that it was not a fraudulent document. It was thus in this venture that the minister of external relations sent a request to the president of the supreme court for a clarification of the document. In the light of this curiosity, the S.G. (Tommo Monthe) of MINREX by delegation of power requested that: "Pour les besoins d'une cause, [...] si l'arrêt N°169/CIV-du 4Avril 1990 rendu par la cour d'appel du centre dans l'es-pèce rappelée en marge aurait fait l'objet d'un pourvoi en cassation." ²¹

After the reception of the above request, the president of Supreme Court wasted no time to furnish the required papers. Following the transmission of the requested documents, the minister of external relations again contacted the UNHCR for the final clarification about the dubious sale and contract of the Ella building to the UNHCR. In reaction to this, the S.G. (Tommo Monthe) of MINREX sent a mail to the UNHCR with an attachment of the Ella's family case. In this mail, he recalled that:

Se référer à sa note verbale n° 02352/DIPL/D7/SACO du 2 Avril 1991 relative au loyer des époux Ella Henri-Legrand,

A l'honneur de lui faire tenir en annexe, pour action, les copies grosses des arrêts n°69/c du 17 Janvier 1986 de la Cour d'Appel de Douala confirmant le divorce des susnommés et n°169/CIV. du 4 Avril 1990 de la Cour d'Appel du Centre annulant la vente frauduleuse a monsieur NKOUNTCH de l'immeuble loue par la Délégation de H.C.R.²²

It seems the attachment clarified the UNHCR and it was really convinced to have rented or contracted a fraudulent deal with Nkountche Jean-Claude's notary public. Having realised this error and the double pressure from MINREX and Moneyang, the UNHCR tipped Nkountche Jean-Claude of these developments. Once informed of the charges by Moneyang and her lawyer, Nkountche Jean-Claude bounced back hesitantly to defend his ownership of the building. In this light, Nkountche Jean-Claude's lawyer (Ebanga Ewodo) declared to the minister of external relations that:

Monsieur Nkountche Jean-Claude dont je suis le conseil m'a saisi des revendications de Maitre Pierre-Marie Djoko gravitant auteur de la liquidation de la communauté des biens des époux Ella, revendications parce qu'émisses en Direction du Haut-commissariat aux réfugiés, ce, certainement pour des raisons



de procédure, ont transité par le service contentieux des Ministère des Relations Extérieures.

Selon les informations fournies à cet effet à mon client par Monsieur le Délégué au Haut Commissariat aux réfugiés, le Ministère des Relations Extérieures a pris position en avalisant les réclamations des Epoux Ella, invitant de ce fait le Haut-commissariat aux réfugiés de verser désormais entre les mains du Notaire sus-nomme les loyers afférents à l'immeuble occupé par cet organisme international.²³

He ended by calling the minister's attention to the fact that, the rental contract that linked the UNHCR and his client (Nkountche Jean-Claude) remained valid and could only be annulled by a new court decision. He went ahead to appeal the court's decision but this was rejected. Coupled with this rejection, the minister of external relations again informed lawyer Ebanga Ewodo of the new developments. In the correspondence he was alerted that, MINREX had instructed the UNHCR based on the Yaounde court of appeal's order to effect the payment of the rental dues to the notary public Pierre-Marie Djoko who was the liquidator of Ella's property. Following this correspondence, the S.G. (Chungong Ayafor) of MINREX declared that:

With reference to the above quoted correspondences on the fore-going matter, I have the honour to inform you that I have been presented with a Yaoundé Appeal Court Order N°37/CAB/PCAY of 16/10/1990 (copy enclosed) rejecting a request for authorisation to furnish a bank caution.

Consequently, in consideration of the clauses of this order, I am informing the authorities of the United Nations High Commission for refugees to effect payment of the rental dues to the notary Public Maître Pierre-Marie Djoko who is the liquidator of the Ella couple's property.²⁴

In the wake of these instructions by MINREX, lawyer Ebanga Ewodo resisted the decision. Sound-witched in the confrontations and complicated claims by both parties, MINREX in a bit to resolve the qualms requested the UNHCR to suspend the rental payments of the building until a new court ruling. This request is seen in the letter forwarded in response to lawyer Ebanga Ewodo's claims to MINREX. Following this letter, Chungong Ayafor by delegation of power informed lawyer Ebanga Ewodo that:

En accusant réception de votre correspondance de référence



relative à l'objet repris en marge, J'ai l'honneur de vous faire connaître que eu regard a l'élément nouveau qu'elle a apporté au dossier (le pouvoir en cassation contre l'arrêt de la Cour d'Appel), mes services compétents ont demandé à la Délégation du Haut-Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les Réfugiés (H.C.R.) de prendre une mesure conservatoire (suspension de paiement de loyer) en attendant que le juge de cassation ait vu son délibère.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur l'assurance de ma parfaite considération. ²⁵

After the suspension of the rental dues by MINREX, the UNHCR was more and more intransigent over the affair. MINREX on the 9th June 1991 instructed the UNHCR to pay the rents to lawyer Pierre-Marie Djoko. Contradictorily to this instruction, barely 10 days (19th July 1991) the same MINREX instructed the UNHCR to suspend the payment of the rental dues to Pierre-Marie Djoko on grounds of a final decision pending court judgement. Left in this frustration, the UNHCR had no choice than to start negotiating for a new location so as to be free from this conflict. With this, the UNHCR succeeded following the correspondence addressed to MINREX stating that: "La délégation profite [...] nouveaux locaux dans le quartier der-

rière usine Bastos, objet du titre foncier N° CS/40801, qu'elle loue de Monsieur Hermann Akono, à partir du 1er Février 1993." ²⁶ Though the conflict was resolved peacefully, nevertheless it threatened the UNHCR operations in Cameroon.

GARGA AOLKAM-UNHCR SQUABBLES

This was one of the burning issues that threatened the UNHCR diplomatic actions Cameroon. This stemmed from the UNHCR's failure to pay its accumulated debts for occupying Garga Aolkam's building. Resultantly, Garga sued the UNHCR before the court of first instance in Garoua for three charges. These charges included the refusal to pay rents, destruction of his property and non-maintenance of the building to pay 780.000, 456.000 and 500.000 FCFA respectively. After examination of the charges, the court condemned the UNHCR to pay a sum of 2.018.809 FCFA to Garga. It was in the wake of these claims that the minister of justice was informed. Reacting to the information, the minister of justice then wrote to MINREX requesting to know its stance in the Garga affair. In his own words, the minister (Adolphe Moudiki) of justice recalled that:

J'ai l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance qu'à la requête de M.Garga Aolkam BP 26 a Poli, la Sous-Délégation du HCR a été atraite,



après sommations règlementaires, devant le Tribunal de Première Instance de Garga pour non paiement d'arrières de loyers effets emportés ou détruits et dommages-intérêts évalués respectivement à 780.000frans, 456,500F et 500,000F. [...]

J'ai prescrit au Procureur General près la cour d'appel du Nord à Garoua de requérir L'incompétence de la juridiction saisie en raison du statut international dont jouit le HCR. Je vous saurai gré de bien vouloir me faire connaître les mesures que vous envisageriez de prendre en vue d'un règlement amiable de cette procédure. [...] ²⁷

After receiving this correspondence from the minister of justice, MINREX contacted the UNHCR sub delegate in Garoua. According to this correspondence, MINREX remarked that on the date of 4th October 1989, in a letter addressed by the procureur de la publique of Garoua, the UNHCR sub delegate to Garoua admitted that the debts were to be paid by CRC occupying the building. In addition, he also accepted having informed the UNHCR delegate in Yaounde who in understanding with the president of CRC were to jointly resolve the matter. From our findings, it would appear that there was a certain

amount of money managed by the UNHCR and CRC. With this sum of money, the UNHCR sub delegate to Garoua expected that CRC should use the money to settle the debt. Of course, there was no agreement that CRC should settle the debt and the Garoua appeal court of first instance through Marcel Oyono Abah, intimated that:

[...] Dans une correspondance en date du 4 Octobre 1989 adressée au Procureur de la République de Garoua au sujet de cette affaire, vous avez soutenu entre autre que les loyers échus de l'immeuble du sieur Garga Aolkam a Poli auraient du être payés par la Croix rouge Camerounaise qui occupait l lieux, et que vous aviez saisi le Délégué du H.C.R pour le Cameroun qui, en concertation avec le Président National de la Croix rouge Camerounaise devra résoudre le problème.

J'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre ci-joint copie d'une lettre en date du 12 Aout 1993 que le vice président de la Croix Rouge Camerounaise a adressée au Ministre de la justice Garde des sceaux, et de vous emander de bien vouloir me confirmer l'existence de la somme d'argent y évoquée et, dans l'affirmative si le règlement a l'amiable est déjà intervenue en faveur de sieur Garga Aolkam. [...] ²⁸



Upon this request addressed to the UNHCR sub delegate in Garoua, he did not forward any answer to the procureur de la publique in Garoua or to MINREX. It is clear that he instead contacted the UNHCR delegate to Cameroon who then presented the case before MINREX. In a correspondence to the minister of foreign affairs dated 29th September 1994, the UNHCR chief to Cameroon noted:

La délégation du Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les Refugies en république du Cameroun présente ses compliments au Ministre de relations extérieures et a l'honneur de l'informer de ce qui suit :

Le tribunal de premiers instance de Garoua a condamné le 16 Avril 1990 par jugement de défaut N° 11/C, la sous délégation du Haut Commissariat pour les refugies de Garoua a payer la somme de FCFA 2.018. 809, dont FCFA 1.736.000 a Monsieur Garga Aolkam Fcfa 186.000 de frais d'acte et Fcfa 96.000 de frais huissier.

Sans aucune intention d'interférer au de statuer sur le fonds du dossier portant sur la non règlement des loyers, la Délégation voudrait attirer l'attention du Ministère sur le fait que ce jugement a été rendu sans respect des immunités dont jouit le

Haut Commissariat pour les refugies en république du Cameroun et en violation des clauses du contrat de bail s'y référer.²⁹

From the above information presented by the UNHCR in Yaounde, it is a clear proof that it was not satisfied with the manner the case was handled because of a number of lapses. One of these weaknesses is that the court did not carefully study the case file claiming that rents were not paid. In the second instance, the UNHCR drew the attention of MINREX to the fact that the court's judgement was carried out in an absolute violation and non-respect for immunity enjoyed by the UNHCR. Lastly, the attention of the minister was also drawn to the fact that, the judgement also violated the rental contract in question. After all these allegations, the UNHCR requested the minister of foreign affairs to intervene with the minister of justice so that the said judgement could be reconsidered. In addition, he requested that an acceptable referee be jointly designed by both parties to study the case scrupulously. In respect of the above plea made by the UNHCR office in Cameroon, the S.G. of MINREX by delegation of powers on the 17th November 1994 tabled this case before the minister of justice. Following the correspondence of MINREX in connection with the recon-



siderations of the court's judgement as requested by the UNHCR, MINREX through Jean Koe Ntonga stated:

J'ai l'honneur de vous faire connaître que j'ai été saisi par la Délégation du Haut Commissariat pour les réfugiés qui sollicite mon intervention dans le litige qui oppose à M. Garga Aolkam.

En effet, la Délégation a été condamnée par le tribunal de première instance de Garoua le 16 Avril 1990 à payer la somme de 2.018.809 FCFA à M. Garga alors qu'elle avait mis à la disposition de la Croix Rouge occupante des lieux les fonds nécessaires à cet effet.

Il apparaît également dans leur plainte que votre appartement a déjà été saisi à ce propos.³⁰

Before this correspondence, the minister of external relations knew that a final judgement on the Garga affair was already drawn and the file closed. One wonders if he was really serious over his request to the minister of justice to exhume an already decomposed case file or he just wanted to fulfil the request of the UNHCR.

In view of the above, the response of the minister of justice was made known on the 30th of June 1995 thus clarifying doubts about the Garga affair. Respond-

ing on behalf of the minister of justice, the S.G. stated clearly to MINREX that he had already discussed with the president of CRC who made very important revelations. According to the S.G. (Joseph Belibi) at the ministry of justice, the president of CRC made it clear that after his discussions with the UNHCR sub delegate resident in Garoua, a sum of 1.350.000 FCFA that figured in the amendment N°2 of project 87/GR/CMR/LS/T of 29th September 1987 was never given to CRC for the settlement of rental arrears.³¹ He added that since the said project, the money had remained in an account managed by the UNHCR. He then ended by stating that the minister promised to inquire from the procureur de la république of Garoua to inform him about the present state of the case. It is thus very essential to recall here that our sources did not go beyond the minister's response. Therefore from the flow of events, the minister's answer could just have been a diplomatic tactic to give hope to the UNHCR. This could be attested by the fact that neither the government nor the UNHCR ever attempted to reawaken or repeal the case.

JEAN-RAMEAU LEKAGNE-UNHCR TUSSLE

Apart from the aforementioned cases, one of the conflicts that equally endan-



gered the UNHCR tasks in Cameroon was the case of Jean-Rameau Lekagne over the succession of Abada Ebogo building occupied by the UNHCR. From our sources, Abada Ebogo was the actual owner of the building who rented it to the UNHCR. It would appear upon his death, a struggle for a success or erupted. In the wake of this conflict, it became difficult for the UNHCR to define the new landlord. In a bit to settle this conflict, the family presented the case before the Yaounde tribunal. After hearing, the court attributed the succession rights to bailiff Jean Rameau Lekagne as attested by ordinance N° 162 of the 8th October 1992.³² In respect of the above ordinance, Jean-Rameau on the 21st October and 13 November 1992 presented his claims to MINREX over the succession of the building. As the new landlord, he requested that the minister channels his file with the supporting proves to the UNHCR so that he could start benefiting from the rental dues. It should be recalled here that after examining his file, MINREX on the 7th of December 1992 sent a correspondence with the supporting documents to the UNHCR.³³ It was now the place of the UNHCR to take action upon receipt of the complaint. We however hold no further clues as to the outcome of the case but; from the response of MINREX, it is very certain that Jean-Rameau's case was valid. To this end,

nothing short was expected of the UNHCR than to start directing the rents to the lawfully recognised Jean- Rameau Lekagne.

BEAT VALENTIN-UNHCR SPLIT

This case was brought to the knowledge of MINREX in an enclosed letter on the 18th of March 1993. As our sources revealed, Beat Valentin was an entrepreneur who was contracted by the UNHCR in the refugee camp of Poli Faro way in 1988. According to the terms of his contract, he had to construct a billboard and a dispensary on behalf of the UNHCR.³⁴ After completion of his contract, the UNHCR did not pay the expected sum prescribed in the agreement. Faced with this, he was harassed by his employees most of whom Chadian refugees who wanted to return to their home country. To Beat Valentin, he had requested the UNHCR on several occasions to complete the payment of the contract to no success. Given this continues failure by the UNHCR; he reported the matter to the high commissioner in Geneva but had no answer.

All these moves met with absolute failure and the mounting pressure from his employees pushed him to present the case before MINREX. Upon the reception of his complaint, the minister seemed not convinced and thus instructed Beat to



deposit the necessary supporting documents to his claims. In a correspondence addressed by the then director of Protocol (Raymond Epote), administrative and consular affairs by delegation of power stated: "J'ai l'honneur de vous demander de [...] pouvant me permettre de saisir le Haut-commissariat des Nations Unies pour les Réfugiés en toute connaissance de cause."³⁵ The minister's letter to Beat Valentin was very significant and didactic enough for Beat to realise the weakness of his case. Having learnt his lessons Beat then forwarded a new mail in conformity to the demands of MINREX this time around with all the required documents to validate his case. In his letter on the 18th of June 1993, Valentin said:

Suite à votre lettre cite en référence, j'ai l'honneur de vous fournir les pièces ci-dessus demandées:

1°- Une photocopie de contrat entre UNHCR et moi.

2°- Une photocopie du Procès-verbal de la Réunion du 25/03/1988

3°- Une photocopie du Procès-verbal de la Réunion du 28/03/1988 entre le sieur Jean Pierre RUGHON et moi.³⁶

This letter was supported by the required documents as instructed by the minister testify that the UNHCR was really indebted to Valentin. It was as a result of the convincing proves tendered by Valentin that the minister then informed the UNHCR of these charges. In view of the minister's correspondence, he said:

Selon les déclarations de M. Beat et au vu des pièces versées au dossier, le HCR reste lui devoir la somme de 1.052.000frs CFA. L'intéressé dit avoir saisi sans résultat le siège du HCR à Genève et la délégation à Yaounde. Cette situation l'a mis en conflit avec ses employés qui, n'ont pas perçu leur rémunération. Le Ministre des Relations Extérieures voudrait connaître la version des faits du HCR et éventuellement les dispositions qu'il compte prendre pour résoudre ce problème.³⁷

From the above complaint sent to the UNHCR by MINREX, one would understand that Valentin's case was really founded otherwise the minister would not have engaged in a fraudulent venture. However we question the attitude of the UNHCR personalities involving the UNHCR in such a disgusting case as to why they would fail to complete their own part of the contract. At this juncture, we were not able to lay our hands on the UNHCR's



reaction to the minister's complaint and the final resolution of the conflict. Nonetheless it should be mentioned of worthiness that Valetin's case unlike many others really threatened the UNHCR operations. Given this situation, it is thus very essential that we establish an assessment of the UNHCR's actions in Cameroon from 1982 to 2011. It is essential to underscore here that such threats were incomparable to the positive aspects of the UNHCR mission in Cameroon. In all, there was never a direct conflict between the government and the UNHCR but that the government only intervened to arbitrate over cases either invited by the UNHCR, its employees or its customers.

CONCLUSION

The above explanations provide evidences of the threats that dared to mar the UNHCR operations in Cameroon. Based on the facts viewed, it is elemental to state that the lessons assembled from the threats to the UNHCR compassionate mission in Cameroon have been genuinely didactic. It has to be admitted that no matter how well these threats were handled, they nevertheless defaced the UNHCR and Cameroon's image to a trivial extent.

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ARTICLE

THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE IN CAMEROON: Between tradition, bilingualism and openness

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Abstract:

A close look at the different universities found in the former French zone of influence of the French Colonial Empire in black Africa, Cameroonian universities fully and structurally responded to the French university paradigm once inspired by Napoleon Bonaparte. From all indications, there is ample evidence that former students of the first Cameroonian university benefited enormously from its former and triple Negro-African, French and Anglo-Saxon heritage. Created immediately after independence, universities became centers through which global methods were used for the de-africanization of all universities. From then henceforth, universities became an indispensable actors of the Cameroonian diplomacy. Apart from the multilateral cooperations that proved to be so dynamic, the scientific and cultural know how of Cameroonian universities were thanks to the exceptional leadership of talented men. The main objective of this article therefore is to bring to the limelight the various methods used by Cameroonian universities to teach the general history of Cameroon within the post Mai 68 context, to enumerate available resources and information found in those institutions turning them to become veritable centers of acquiring knowledge.

Keywords: Bilingualism, Cameroon, tradition, University.

INTRODUCTION

For most African States in general and those of the French sphere of influence in particular, the year 2010 represents an important moment. Most of them celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of their access to national sovereignty. Beyond such festivities folkloric character, it appears essential to assess a sample of this sovereignty's yeast: the university. From an overall point of view, higher training question constitutes a major problem

within African historiography. If universities found nowadays in Africa directly result from historical contingencies between colonial powers and African states, it is obvious that university, grasped as a medium of production, transmission and diffusion of knowledge, proved to be quite an ancient and well known phenomenon in Africa.

This threefold side of knowledge:



production – transmission – diffusion sends back to its management’s paradigm; a process for which by no way Africa was left at the edge; each people of her having masterminded its own operating mechanisms. The fruition of these learning mechanisms led in several places to the rise of genuine academies; the most outstanding example in Sudano-Sahelian area being the University of Timbuktu within the Songhai Empire which evolution was concomitant to that of its mother country. The appearance of great scholars of the XVth century as well as the erection of the Sankore and Sidi Yaya mosques provided both outlook and structures to that university as seen in the XVIth century. It was, as Cissoko Sekene Mody states it, a gathering constituted by free and mosque schools wherein being preeminent, Sankore ended up in giving its name to the whole.

I. THE TRADITION

The existence of a university institution codified not in African society’s norms but rather in Western’s with corollary: the writing was remarked in the equatorial area in general and in Cameroon in particular. We are talking here about the Bamum Royal Academy. Yet, out of the process leading to these norms and this specific case, there was an endogenous

model whose understanding helps better grasping the black Africa university problem.

1. SURVEY OF THE ENDOGENOUS EXPERIENCE OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN CAMEROON

Each people sets a training system endowed with an intrinsic dynamism so as to insure a proper management of its knowledge. For Western peoples who share a common culture, basis of formal education was set in Antiquity by Pythagorean sophist communities, Plato’s Academy, Aristotle’s High School amongst others; to which superimposed various middle age schools, all leading to the emergence of the first universities in the early XIIIth century [Bastit, 2007 :13-17].

South Saharan continent as for it remained typified by oral character [Ki-Zerbo, 1986 :99-112]. Therefore, the passing of knowledge, be it in lineage or in centralized societies, was done through sketches of daily life, play activities and above all through initiation whereby growth could be perfected and the learner, operating an inner mutation. He would therefore cross from a single individual stage to that of community member [Mveng, 1985 :13-15]. Two South Cameroon lineage-societies give the best illustration of this.

Among the Beti and the Basaa in ef-



fect, the rite appeared as the characteristic item of initiation process. Rigobert Mballa Owono classified the rite within the former into three sets: brotherhood, cleansing and crossing-over [Mballa Owono, 1990 :96-106]. Crossing-over perfected the tribe member's training through the destruction of his old personality for the benefit of a new one they would strengthen; making of the rite a school of social morals. Thus, crossing-over rites by excellence among the Beti, circumcision and Sō rite (which female equivalent was the Mevungu) carried within a oneself overrun. The one initiated learnt how to live in harmony with nature and his fellow-creatures. Located at the edges of the Beti cultural area, the Basaa possessed the Mbog as the managing institution of ancestral powers. Graduating from such a school, the learner reached the level of Mbog Mbog.

In the two initiation processes, didactic music tools were found: the Mvet (Beti) and the Ilung (Basaa) both conveying beyond philharmonics, the sapience of their respective cultures. In these cases, knowledge would make sense only so far as understood in Bourdieu's perception of the habitus; talking of all process aiming at knowing how to say, to be and to do [Bourdieu, 2008]. Here, knowledge blossomed in culture terms, was resti-

tuted within the daily life and weighed in community wealth. Opened for known as know-how, such a cultural process of transmission and preservation of knowledge, inveterate in all African societies, would prove able to adapt to a new knowledge spreading mechanism [Ela, 2006:21].

It was instituted in a West Cameroon centralized State by a monarch of exceptional personality: Sultan Njoya. In fact, with the Bamum Royal Academy, one could speak of an endogenous experience. The Bamum king's feat is the proof of a continuum of endogenous management of constituted knowledge in Africa. To summarize, we would say Ancient Egypt through its houses of life was the first civilization to inaugurate knowledge management both in Africa and in the world through writing. The following endogenous example was the no less famous University of Timbuktu [Cissoko Sekene, 1975:203-206]. Historical mishaps did not allow to actual African University to be set while leaning on these former experiences though. It rather became a transposition of the former colonial countries' models. The black African French speaking countries naturally inherited the French conception which could be labeled as Napoleonian University.

2. THE BAMUM ROYAL ACADEMY

The history of this institution is nar-



rowly linked to that of the Bamum kingdom in general and to the singular destiny of king Njoya, XVIth monarch of Nsharə dynasty in particular. The interest drawn from this question leads us, as a prologue, to dwell on striking facts of this kingdom.

The word *ba* is the plural of *pa* and the term *mum* means “man” as in several bantu tongues. Bamum therefore literally points out “the men”; name which the kingdom founder once gave to his people. It has turned to designate the two-fold reality of the land and its inhabitants. The former is located within the western grasslands of Cameroon, in an area revered Henri Martin places in the 11th longitude east and between 5th and 6th latitude north. The land covers an area of 7300km². It was once conquered by a Tikar leader named Nsharə who originated from a place named Rifum located northwards.

This is what Njoya reveals on his ascendancy and consequently on the origins of the Bamum kingdom. Once upon a time, Bamum people lived at Rifum where their king had three sons: Nsharə, Mfom Mbən, et Mfo Shəm. These princes went about creating a farm which each of them surrounded by a pit and lived within in a fortified camp. Having heard this, their father summoned them. Frightened,

they ran away from him rather than coming as promised they would. As they arrived nearby a river bank, Nsharə urged his brother to let him cross first; which they agreed, allowing him to go with his whole family. They henceforth destroyed the canoe. He established himself at Nziindu Saasa. Some times after, he declared war to Mfo Shəm whom he defeated. He further waged war against Mfom Mbən who shared the same fate. He thus left Matam where his headquarters were set after his first victory and settled in the palace of Mfom Mbən. He became the first king of the dynasty he created. The fundamental step of his kingdom’s creation was the conquest of his capital Fouban. This name dates from the German period since it’s nothing but the deformation of the expression Mfo-Mbən, literally “the grave of the defeated”.

After Nsharə, ten or so kings without fame forerunning an illustrious sovereign ruled. Fierce warrior, Goliath endowed with herculean strength, Mbuəmbuə took the throne after Kouotou, tenth monarch of Nsharə dynasty. Njoya who was his great grandson asserts that these were the first words he uttered the day of his enthronement (XVIIIth century): “I will set the borders of this kingdom with blood and black iron. War is my concern. Limits always are erased whenever set by



mouth". This warlike attitude allowed him to extend the kingdom and subjugate all neighbors. Joseph Ki-Zerbo underlines that it enabled a vigorous originality of a national type [Ki-Zerbo, 1972:292].

Thus, most of Bamum kings made the founding principles of their authority out of war and despotism. The sixteenth king of the dynasty, Njoya, instead clung on more subtle mediums. He opted for the works of mind. His thirst of knowledge and huge intellectual curiosity led him in creating what is convenient to call Bamum Royal Academy; an institution leaning on a scripture and a language which the king himself set; a structured organization with programs.

From his enthronement in 1883, Njoya ventured inside the quest of knowledge. The first outstanding feat of his kingship was therefore the invention of a scripture which, according to Dugast and Jeffreys' works, must have been prior to 1900. Such an invention was believed to have sprung from the king's desire to appear as a *nga rane*; which means a scholar [Martin, 1951:16]. It was revealed to the scientific community by the German missionary Goehring in *Der evangelische Heidenbote* under the title "Der Koenig von Bamum und seine Schrift". This scripture had five cursives. It was at first ideograms

of 510 signs which ended up to be a set of phonograms of 83 signs endowed with a grammar, a lexicon, and an alphabet labeled after its first letters a ka u ku.

Phonetics were so elaborated that Idelette Dugast was forced to admit genuine linguistic talents to the king. According to the latter, possessing a scripture, his people had to have his own tongue. This might be difficult to understand without having in view that Nsharə had adopted the *shü pa-mben*, tongue of the defeated, after he conquered Fouban. So, Njoya decided to create a special tongue: the *shü mun*. Several of its words are yet to be translated. Some came from African tongue, the *shü pu mun* of course, but also the *fufulde* (Fulani) the Duala of Cameroon, the Hausa, Ibo or Yoruba, tongues from Nigeria; and also words from Dahomey and Togo. The new tongue borrowed also from European tongues, especially German, English and French. The following graphs are samples of the scripture and the tongue invented by king Njoya.

The organization of this academy was set as follow: palace was the main intellectual center where the king trained the first intellectual lecturers to whom he conferred the grade of *tapone* meaning "masters". They were further on transfixed in the various schools of the kingdom. In



1918, 20 schools scattered throughout the kingdom were numbered.

Students received history teaching recorded in the king monumental history work Libanor pantü di isang konig mak Rifum reverend Henri Martin translated under the title Bamum History and Customs. It would not be proper to further this analysis without speaking about this great masterpiece. In order to write this history, the king summoned all notable li-able either by their age or their function to master oral tradition. The following informants have been so far identified: Nzimøku, Nzimoshu, Ngomshe, Nzifonanguæ, Nzimombæt, Nziyü'mfon, Nzimombe, Nzingamie. The old age of the latter did not allow him to personally go to the palace. The king sent heralds. He cross-checked the information through a rigorous critical apparatus allowing us to as if it's not possible to see in this king, one of the first historians to see oral tradition as a reliable source.

Learned received also geography teachings based on Bamum kingdom maps established by the king himself, didactics lessons extracted from fairy tales et myths written by king Njoya, teachings of medicine based on treaty of traditional healing. The arts were not left aside. Theological teachings based on the king

religious considerations were also taught which resulted from a syncretism of Islam and Christianity on one hand and ancestral beliefs of Bamum people on the other. The question one could rightfully ask is that of the functionality of both the tongue and the writing. The king first objective aimed at instructing and teaching his people. According to Pastor Henri Martin, king Njoya might have imagined this scripture in order to record outstanding feats of Bamum history. Another objective was linked to administrative contingencies. Following a tradition inaugurated by the European medieval monarch Charlemagne who considered learning as provider of technocratic elite, the Bamum Royal Academy was the very institution that allowed king Njoya to administratively train his civil-servants Tardits, 1980]. Through this institution, he created the emerging conditions of an endogenous administration.

Through his writing, his tongue, his school, the teachers he trained and his scientific productions, king Njoya could set an endogenous system of knowledge in Bamum land. This original work without equivalent was toppled by Cameroon French learning process that granted to the country, following its independence, a national university institution. Created in 1962, it was thought as a reference model



devoted to parting away from traditional methods of knowledge management. It entails symbolic survivorship of African realities: its emblem and motto.

2. THE UNIVERSITY EMBLEM: A HALF-WAY SYMBOL BETWEEN MODERNITY AND TRADITION

In order to speak about the emblem notion it is opportune to set preconditions allowing a better grasp. Etymologically, the word derives from the Greek *emblema* literally meaning “incrustation”. It is a symbolic language going back up to Egyptian antiquity [Erman, Ranke, 1963]. It is in the course of the XVth century that it crossed European academic universe as it imposed itself on the model of allegoric exegesis, appearing as a form of pictured discourses mainly with the *liber emblematum* of André Alcat at Augsburg in 1531. It’s a collection work of Latin epigrams partially extracted from the Greek Anthology where each object, plant, animal is endowed with a precise meaning. In this language, the dove symbolizes peace, the stork love and the lute, covenants. This language was elaborated on the clue that the picture of a type represents a principle. Thus Jesus amongst Christians symbolizes salvation and everlasting life. From there appeared several types of emblems with their messages: love, religion, politics, corporations and so on.

From the XVIIIth century, it was proposed to call emblem, every item endowed with symbolic significance and forming a well delimited whole, detachable. In several respects, the emblem sends back to the symbol. The usual sense attributed to the symbol goes back to analogy; it’s what justifies the fact that one finds it useful to escort this symbolic figure by a motto.

From there, it was practically never found no social practice, cultural conduct nor organization not being impregnated by symbols which field appears almost boundless. Almost all institutions and structured trades equipped themselves with an emblem often escorted by a motto. The young Cameroonian university was no exception to this. Its emblem taken while still being the Federal University of Cameroon remained the one of the University of Yaounde 1.



It was conceived by Reverend Father Engelbert Mveng. It took the appearance of the Abbia, a divinatory game used in the Beti cultural area. In the heart of this pattern, the spider which the Beti call ngam is found, four kola nuts are stuck on horizontal and vertical edges. This symbolic figure is accompanied by a motto: Sapiencia Collativa Cognito [Bella, 2010 :171]. What meaning could such symbolic items get? The answer to this interrogation will be seen through the light of the emblem threefold function: show, unite and order.

Spider and kola nuts are African realities; the former symbolizes wisdom and the latter friendship. Their position in the

four corners marks the universality of this institution. The Latin motto comes from a Duala saying “Dubié e side njanguí” proposed by William Aurélien Eteki Mboumoua, which means “knowledge is a collection, each one brings his share”. Being the symbol of wisdom, the spider shows that the institution is concerned with the production and spreading of knowledge. Kola nuts – friendship symbol at the four corners – testify that the Federal University results from a cooperation aiming at promoting universal knowledge in an African country. The Latin translation of a Duala proverb asserts that the author wanted to respect a university tradition that went back to the middle ages.

The second function that of uniting and the reference to the four corners is the proof of the universal factor of the university. It speaks of a community of masters and pupils from all corners of the globe. This emblem sets the bilingual character of this institution which name is written in the two official tongues: English and French.

The third function, order, is more or less self-explained. Such a symbolic representation goes back to the production of knowledge, to a framework of learning, etc. So, as regards to what was said, one can assert that the university institution in



Cameroon was the corollary of a cultural Western-African syncretism. The university rooting in African traditional values was not solely limited to symbolism. It manifested itself through research structures, works and teaching programs in some departments.

The Centre de Recherche Africaniste (CRA) of the Faculty of Letters and Social Sciences of the Federal University has been the main structure at work towards that goal. It was created by the Fondation Française de l'Enseignement Supérieur au Cameroun which benefited of the help of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS). This prestigious learning society aimed at encouraging and coordinating research on traditional societies in Cameroon in general and in tongues in particular. It was composed of linguists, ethnologists, sociologists and jurists; so to say, of researchers in social sciences interested in pre-colonial Cameroon cultural realities. However, if ever was a realm in which CRA achieve fame as learning society was linguistics. Descriptive, phonological and grammatical studies were carried on Cameroon languages; most of them by students in view of the obtainment of their Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures (DES), their Maîtrise or the Master Degree. Due to practical reasons, I restricted myself to just select a few on them to the prejudice of other no less relevant.

We therefore learn that the tikù appears to be a variant of the ati; being itself the proto-tongue of the Southern-Cameroon Ekang. The ewondo was studied by Jean-Marie Essono. Jean Emile Eko on the other hand carried a study on phonetic description of the fang tongue; while Pierre Lemb did the same with the ngumbà tongue. Michel Simo and Yameni Françoise Yameni respectively worked on linguistic sketches of Bali Kumbat and identified a reference speech of the ngèmbà tongue. This center owes its radiation to several organizers; among others, the following Cameroonians: Henri Marcel Bot Ba Njock, Prosper Abéga, Francis Mbassi Manga, Maurice Tadadjeu but also to some Westerners among which Ursula Wiesemann, Jean-Roland Deltel and last but not least, Patrick Renaud.

In History Department, several studies were laid on pre-colonial Cameroon pertaining:

- Migration and settlement process of actual Cameroon populations;
- Political, economical, social and cultural institutions of pre-colonial Cameroon.

These themes provided important research works. Oral literature became an important factor rooting the Cameroon-



nian university. The Mvet found among the Ejang of the South proved to be the main medium of this literature. It's chiefly a polysemous word describing a musical tool: namely a 1.40m bamboo harp on which by longitudinal cutting of the stalk, was removed four to six fibers as strings and three to six half calabashes fixed as sounding drums. The Mvet recalls also epics, lyrics sung under its rhythm. To crown it all, it's an institution that initiates young learners to life mysteries. Samuel Martin Eno Belinga carried out several works on it [Eno Belinga, 1965]. He proceeded to the collection of several Mvet Epics within the Ejang cultural area. Following his steps, Charles Belinga B'Eno defended a thesis on the relation of iron metallurgy and Mvet oral-character.

Beyond what has been said, one of the main characteristics of this young institution is undeniably its bilingual character.

II. THE BILINGUALISM

Bilingualism is the sum of situations in which two languages are in relation either with a nation or with an individual. It constitutes a peculiarity that distinguishes Cameroonian university institution in Africa as much as in the whole world. My speech aims at pointing out its reality within the Cameroonian university institu-

tion on one hand and how it works in order to promote bilingualism in Cameroon on the other. The point will be analyzing bilingualism at the Cameroon Federal University to see what role it plays in order to vulgarize it within the population.

1. FEW HISTORICAL MARKS FOR BILINGUALISM IN CAMEROON

In order to have a better grasp of what was earlier said; it might be convenient to go back to the bilingualism genesis in Cameroon. Bilingualism is a historical inheritance. It is a direct consequence of the First World War on Cameroon, a former German protectorate after the victory of the Allied Powers over the IInd Reich forces in 1916. France settled in the eastern part whereas Great Britain established in the Western part where each one promoted its own tongue. The reunification of both entities in 1961 favored the emerging of bilingualism while consecrating French and English as official languages. It's therefore the birth of the Federal Republic of Cameroon the 1st October 1961 that led to bilingualism. From then on, the mission of promoting bilingualism became a State royalty. This political will figures in good place in the various Constitutions: 1961, 1972, 1996 and 2008.

The creation of the Federal University of Cameroon is one of the symbols of



the bilingualism promotion in Cameroon. In his General Political Report at the Congress of 1980, president Ahidjo was considering the university as an active center of promotion of bilingualism. In order to allow such a vocation, Cameroonian authority took several measures both political and administrative. The constitutive texts of the university grant a bilingual character to it. Cameroon authorities approached British government which upheld the university by sending English teachers in the university so as to concretize it.

On the academic plan, many measures were taken. The university bilingual orientation was backed by the recruitment of English and French speaking lecturers in all schools. Did the training system become bilingual thus? Lectures taught in the language they chose but students could write exams in the tongue he would feel at ease. The teaching of the second language was reinforced by a bilingual training in compulsory course of four hours a week consisting in teaching in the other language to English and French speaking students. It was a concrete measure which prompted bilingualism in that it allowed the mastery of the two languages by students; if not, to master at least one while possessing good no-

tions of the other.

3. THE BILINGUALISM IN THE UNIVERSITY

Unique in Africa, the introduction of a BA Degree study program in bilingual letters within the course of study in 1964 is relevant. Were allowed to register in this section, French speaking students grading 14/20 in English or less than 08/20 in French at the baccalauréat; for English speaking, grade « B » in GCE – Advanced Level was requested. It was a course reserved to best students of language. In the first year, English speaking students would take more French courses while French speaking ones would take more English's. Later on, the number of course hours became more balanced. In the third year, French speaking students would benefit of six month training course in Great Britain whereas the English speaking students would go to France for the same purpose. The economic crisis hitting Cameroon in the eighties led the Cameroonian authorities to change their ways. From then on, students had to follow their training in the part of their country mastering the tongue – English or French – they were learning.

In the Faculty of Law, French law was taught in French and English law in English. However, Cameroonian law was taught in both languages. Some schools



of the university requested from students to be bilingual before admittance. Such was the case of the University Centre for Health Sciences. The synergy of both languages gave birth to a syncretism: the *camfranglais*. This multi-lingualism avatar is already the subject of studies in our universities.

Bilingualism in Cameroonian university is the fruit of the works of one man: Bernard Nsokika Fonlon. The university institution owes its bilingual character to this illustrious personality. Without ceasing to care for purely intellectual questions, Fonlon was a high State servant [Bella, 2010 :177]. In spite of his relation with the power of then, characterized by authoritarianism and unique thought, he remained an independent intellectual [Bandolo, 1986:253]. His quite singular personality gave an agitated character to his career. His intellectual opinions brought several warnings from the political police of the Cameroon National Union (CNU); the State-party on which Ahidjo's authority leaned. Fonlon was a Cameroonian outstanding figure in general and of Cameroonian XXth century intelligentsia in particular. Although not linguist by training, yet he made of the putting in place and promoting of bilingualism, the center of his preoccupations as a state man and an intellectual. As State man, it

was to him Ahidjo entrusted the elaboration of a linguistic policy and of bilingualism in Cameroon. As man of letters, beyond his teaching and research works, he published several essays on the matter, especially: *Pour un Bilinguisme de Bonne Heure* (1964) and *The Language Problem in Cameroon : a Historical Perspective* (1964).

Bilingualism in Cameroon remains sidetracked by several hindrances though. The 8/10th of the territory are French speaking. Besides, the university itself as fruit of the French-Cameroonian cooperation led most of lecturers, administrators and even students to be French speaking as well. A study conducted by W. Kenneth Thompson and R. Barbara Fogel during the year 1973/74 provides the following statistics: on a global amount of 344 lecturers, 292 were French speaking whereas only 52 were English speaking. During the same year, on a total of 5945 students, 4452 were French speaking and only 439 English speaking. At last, the fact of having built the university premises at Yaoundé, French speaking area became a serious handicap for the population mostly French speaking; the situation turned out to be advantageous for the English speaking minority who did extra efforts.

In spite of these hardships, bilingualism is indeed a reality in Cameroon. Its



promotion by the institution appears not negligible; its advantages being numerous. Bilingualism allowed Cameroon to define itself as a peculiar political entity both in Africa and in the world. Bilingualism also turned to be a determining factor enhancing national unity.

If French and English were held as official languages, it should be recall that other Western languages exist in the Cameroonian educational system. Such is the case of German, relic of German colonial inheritance.

German army's rout at Fort Lamy, actual Mora town, in 1916, sounded the beginning of the French and British presences in Cameroon. During three decades prior to the sharing of the land by the allied powers, Cameroon had been a German protectorate; a status it owes to the Germano-Duala treaty signed between the Woermann Brothers representing German trade firms and little kings of the coastal area of the actual Cameroon. It was the 12 July 1884.

University institution was the perpetuation framework of German colonial legacy in Cameroon. A German Department was created at the University of Cameroon. This is the sole German Department in an African university. All in all, it

welcomes all the Central African German students; number of studies being carried within concerning several and miscellaneous domains such as literacy, linguistics, history, etc. Although Cameroon is bilingual, his academic universe is characterized by multi-lingualism. All this allowed for its university openness to the world.

III. THE OPENESS

Openness is an important a vast aspect that entails a huge variety of activities in which one would select but a few. University institution has henceforth to be analyzed according to Senghor paradigm of the "giving and receiving"; that is conducting a reflection on the place of the Cameroonian University as much as in Africa as in the world. It's the case of studying what the outside brought to the university; but also what in return it had given. The point is to auscultate the interaction among the university institution and the outside. Thus, two aspects dragged our attention: university cooperation and the Cameroonian intellectual's contribution in building the universal civilization.

1. THE UNIVERSITY COOPERATION

From the onset, it should be underscored that the university institution is the fruit of the cooperation. The Came-



roon Federal University is certainly one of the most significant aspects of the Franco-Cameroonian cooperation signed after the independence in 1960. The colleges it entails were created in similar conditions. The Higher Teachers Training College was created thanks to a UNESCO special funding, to a European Development funding and Belgium Kingdom's help. The University Centre for Health and Sciences was created thanks to WHO and the support of the Canadian government.

The Council of Scientific Research and Higher Training of 1974 constitutes a hinge period for the University in Cameroon. It consecrates the effective cameroonization of the University as it inaugurated a cooperating policy with foreign universities, especially African and Western. It was done within the framework of the Cameroonian diplomacy characterized by principles of independence, non-alignment and friendship links between Cameroon and all countries of the world. The main objective of the university cooperation aimed at, as Foumane Akame underlines it, the safeguard of the necessary openness to the external world and the effective participation in building the universal civilization.

The year 1975 constituted a breaking point. Prior to this year, the university re-

mained satisfied in subscribing to regional and international associations, namely the Association of African Universities, the Association des Universités entièrement et partiellement de Langue Française and the International Association of Universities. From 1975, the university started its effective cooperating phase, which was varied and multiform. The University of Yaoundé (as it was then called) cooperated with regional and international organizations on one hand and with the universities from both the North and the South on the other hand. Four main streamlines constituted the directing principles of this new orientation:

- The exchange of lecturers and students
- The logistic support for young students and lecturers in research cycles
- The exchange of pedagogic and didactic documents
- The training of nationals to senior professoral ranks.

Many actions were undertaken. The vice-chancellor and some lecturers represented the university at the international conference of the Universities International Association held in August



1975. In November of the same year, an important delegation of the University of Yaoundé represented its institution at the general assembly of the Association des Universités Entièrement ou Partiellement de Langue Française – AUPELF – held at Lomé Togo. A few moments after, the University of Yaoundé welcomed the African Universities Association (AUA) conference of chancellors and its vice-chancellor was elected as president of this organization.

In 1978, the University of Yaoundé welcomed an AUPELF seminary on management and financing of universities. During the same year, a university important delegation took part at the general assembly of AUPELF at Bordeaux. Three years later, the University of Yaoundé is represented at AUPELF general assembly at Québec. The University of Yaoundé became henceforth a privileged place for organizing AUPELF seminars. Thus, the National College of Polytechnics sheltered a seminary on foodstuff conservation. The Faculty of Letters and Social Sciences welcomed a seminary on linguistics.

Such a dynamism was concretized by the signing of agreements and conventions between the institutes and the following universities:

- The Institut des Sciences Appliquées of Lyon

- The Universities of Bordeaux I & II
- The University of Poitiers
- The University of Toulouse
- The University of Marseille
- The University of Geneva
- The University of Sarrebruck
- The Université de Laval – Quebec –
- The Harvard University
- The Université Libre de Bruxelles

...just to name those. In Africa, the Universities of Dakar, Abidjan, Lomé, Marien Ngouabi of Congo were concerned...

The role of the University of Yaoundé was determining in the process of regional and sub-regional integrations. This aspect of the university openness was perceptible within the framework of the students' mobility. Although national, the university was able to regulate the admission of foreign students. It happened then in the course of the 1977/78 academic year that, on 9058 registered students in the University of Yaoundé, 201 students were numbered; about a proportion of 2,1 coming from the following countries: Togo (41), Chad (30), Benin (25), Gabon (17), Niger (09), Ghana (03), Burundi (03), Ivory Coast (03), Central Africa Republic (05), Morocco (03), Tunisia (03), Nigeria (03), Zaire (11), Upper Volta (03), Mali (02), Senegal (02), Equatorial Guinea (02) Sierra Leone (01), Guinea (01), Sudan (01). Students did not



come only from Africa but also from the four corners of the world. For instance 07 French students were numbered, 03 American students, one Indian and one Haitian.

The *École Supérieure Internationale de Journalisme (ESIJY)* and the *Institut des Relations Internationales de Yaoundé* trained a considerable number of journalists and diplomats mostly originating from black Africa. Beyond the cooperation, the intellectual radiation of the lecturing corps remained an important aspect of the university. For practical reasons, our talk will articulate on Reverend Father Engelbert Mveng. The objective is not to establish a stock-list of their work but to set forwards their scientific radiation as lecturers-researchers in the university of Yaoundé.

2. OPENNESS THROUGH MEN

Reverend Father Mveng was a Pan-Africanist who defended his ideas through science and art. As scientific, Mveng was an archeologist, a theologian advocating for inculturation and most of all, historian by training. In 1968, this young senior lecturer of the Federal University of Cameroon was noticed at the Pan-African congress at Dar-es-Salaam. With T.O. Ranger, he was co-reporter of this conference. He reported for the French part of these works whereas Ranger cared for the Eng-

lish version. It was naturally that the redaction of the French version of the Acts was entrusted to him. He participated actively to the festivities of arts and signs held at Dakar in 1966 and at Lagos in 1977 and at several other scientific meetings on the national and international plans. His work stretched to history and archeology works, in the area of art in general and in the domain of black art in particular.

Mveng intellectual activity provided to him several distinctions in Africa as much as in the whole world. He exercised the presidency of the Arts and Culture Commission of the African Society of Culture. He was expert for UNESCO, member of the technical committee for the preparation of the first world festival of Black Arts and the reporter of that very festival. Reverend Mveng was member of the Egyptologist foundation Queen Elisabeth II, vice-president of Black World Writers. He occupied the functions of general secretary of the Christian African Intellectual Movement. He founded and supervised the Yaoundé Negro Arts Workshop. He also created a museum: the Alioune Diop museum; and actively participated to the study of Black Africa and Ancient World in a contribution to African History edited by the historian Henri Pirenne. In 1976, he was elected associated member of the prestigious Académie des Sciences d'Outre-Mer.



Not only did he take part to intellectual banquets, he also organized colloquia which last in date was Moses the African. Mveng was one of the first historians and one of the outstanding Black Africa intellectuals. His work contributed to the radiation and the discovery of the Cameroonian university institution.

Besides reverend Mveng, one can also quote the economist Joseph Tchuidjang Pouemi, the philosophers Marcien Towa, Ebénézer Njoh Mouelle and Fabien Eboussi Boulaga and the multi-disciplinary Samuel Martin Eno Belinga, etc. They favored the radiation and openness of the Cameroonian university; openness which made out of the University of Yaoundé, an important actor of the Cameroonian diplomacy.

CONCLUSION

Reflection on university institution in Cameroon leads in suggesting a few orientations. The first is that the notion of university in the modern acceptation of the world is not alien to Black Africa and to Cameroon in particular. Although the post-colonial African university couldn't fetch African precolonial academies waters, it remains nevertheless the fruit of a Western-African cultural syncretism; at least in its outwards appearance. This uni-

versity singularized itself by its bilingual status which has allowed its relative easy openness to the world. This openness has been made possible through an active cooperation which took a decisive turning point as from 1975 and to lecturers' scientific contributions.

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ACROSS THE SOUTH



Tea house, Leh. Above, the image of Dalai Lama, the Ladakhis most important leader.



LADAKH

Challenge of Development

Felipe Fittipaldi *

Brazil

Ladakh is a tri-border area (India, China and Pakistan) located on the inside of the Himalayan ridge, one of the most inhospitable places on earth. The only two roads that connect the region to the rest of India remain blocked by snow during 8 months a year. The isolation, the lack of resources and the adverse conditions contributed to the creation of a unique culture molded by the Buddhist philosophy and based on self-sustainability. In the 1950's, when military tension across the border between India, China and Pakistan started to rise rapidly, things began to change. Two roads were built, one connecting the Ladakh to the southern state of Himachal Pradesh, and the other heading east, towards the state of Jammu and Kashmir. In Leh, infrastructure was built in order to attend the large contingent of troops that arrived every day, and the Capital saw the construction of gas stations, workshops and markets. In 1974, civilians were allowed inside the city, although with limited access. The intensified urbanization after the 1970's has brought to the Ladakh not only infrastructure and industrial goods but also the idealized imagery of a western culture shaped around consumption. Leh is going through a process that has been experienced by many other cultures were isolated and eventually started to receive outside influence. Nowadays, Ladakhis are been submitted to the greatest challenge they have ever faced, a challenge much more severe than isolation or harsh weather.

Young Ladakhi playing cricket in downtown Leh. The recent urbanization process has brought western culture to the regions day to day life. Differently from the adults, youngsters, especially in the capital, have embraced the novelties. Sports clothing and other manufactured goods were inexistent in the Ladakh a couple of decades ago.



A child looking curious to the camera during the celebrations of Buda's Birth Celebration, Leh. In the last three decades the region has been going through significant structural and social changes caused by the occupation by the Indian Army and the advent of tourist activities. The new generation will be submitted to the greatest challenge they have ever faced, a challenge much more severe than isolation or harsh weather.

Terrace of Lamayuru monastery, Kargil district. Built in the 11th century, it is one the oldest in the Ladakh and still housing many monks.



Ladakhi women during celebration.



Ladakhi worker in one of the many stone-quarries of the Indo valley. In this barren environment, almost everything is made out of stone.

Leh, capital of the Ladakh. Three decades ago this was a forgotten city located in the heart of the Himalayas. It was once an outpost of the important Silk Route and a pathway for many caravans heading to Central Asia. Nowadays, due to its geopolitical importance, the city undergoes a treacherous urbanization process.



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- **Essays** on relevant issues and context analysis of problems and challenges in the Global South. Non-academic contributions, discussions from the civil society and from policy makers (governmental or not) are welcomed. Essays should be between 2500 to 4000 words. Three keywords and a brief abstract of 100 words, aimed at non-specialists in other south countries, should preface the essay.

- **Dossier** is a thematic section that includes 3 to 5 articles, essays, interviews and photo essays on a relevant issue from the Global South. Please contact the editor to suggest a Dossier.

- **Across the South** is a very special section. We invite contributions of experiences of scholars, journalists, artists and researchers travelling from one south country to another. Narratives on this experience could be written in form of essay, article or even as a poem. Photo-essays area mostly welcomed in this section. Reportage on phenomena that are acquiring in one or more regions of the south that might have a wider resonance or be of wider interest would be also included in this section. Contributions to this section should be between 800-1500 words each or up to 6 photos. Please, contact the editor to propose your contribution.

- **Interview** includes encounters and dialogues with scholars and policy makers well-known in regional circles. These should be within 2000-2500 words. The focus should be on major intellectual influences and significant contributions. Photographs of interviewer and interviewee, of the interview and images of books/journals/visual material published/created by the interviewee would be most welcome. We would recommend a consultation by e-mail with the editor prior to



the actual interview.

- **Review** includes comments on books, films, exhibitions, and conferences. Entries should take into account readership from a wide range of 'south' countries and be within 700 words. Images of (at least one) of front cover, or the events reviewed should be included. Please, do not forget to include the credits.

NOTES ON FORMAT AND STYLE

The magazine follows the English convention of spelling. Non-English words should be in italics and explained or translated in parenthesis. We seek clarity, brevity and simplicity. Short sentences and paragraphs with a generous use of subtitles would be appreciated. Long quotations should be avoided. Quotations of more than forty words should be indented.

When endnotes are used, they should be numbered consecutively and be used wisely, to explain or add information that could not fit within the main text. For bibliographic references, please use Harvard Style. Archival citations should be as brief as possible but the identity and location of the archive must be fully spelled out in the first citation.

Figures should be used for units of measurement and numbers with decimal points. Numbers below ten and multiples of ten up to one hundred should be spelled out and figures used for other numbers ('twenty' but '25'). Percentages should be in words such as '25 per cent' or 'twenty per cent'. Dates should be written as '3 December 2013'.

Contributors should include 30-50 words introducing themselves, and email of contact.

We kindly recommend the inclusion of illustrations, maps, photographs, images of sources and documents wherever relevant, in digital format. Maps, photographs and illustrations should carry full captions and attributions.

We urge contributors to follow copyright rules and provide generous acknowledgements and attributions. We are all aware of the difficulties of copyright protection with regard to material on the web, but hope the contributors will be conscientious in this regard.

