Centralism Of State Power in Africa: Power Against the People

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Abstract

This text aims to examine the process of institutionalization of the State in Africa in its unitary and centralized form. It is based on the observation that the highly centralized State has failed and is facing multiform crises, economic, political, socio-cultural and security. Not only has it contributed to the disarticulation of African societies, but it has also failed to provide lasting benchmarks for the entities it is supposed to govern. Several expressions exist to characterize the state in Africa : «Failed States» or failing states, «Soft States» or soft states or rhizomes. The latter term is also developed as "collapsed states". The main question of this reflection is whether the State in its unitary and centralized form is not against the people, if the crises that pass through it are not expressed more in its articulation with the internal dynamics of the territories considered as peripheral. The aim is to examine the incongruities attached to the unitary and centralised form of the state in Africa, using analyses from the grey literature on the state-genesis in Africa.

Keywords

Africa, identity challenges, reference crises, state centralism, State.

Résumé

Le présent texte ambitionne interroger le processus d'institutionnalisation de l'État en Afrique sous sa forme unitaire et centralisée. Il part du constat selon lequel l'État fortement centralisé a échoué et fait face à de crises multiformes, tant économiques, politiques, socioculturelles que sécuritaires. Il a non seulement contribué à la désarticulation des sociétés africaines, mais encore il n'a pas pu imprimer de repères durables aux entités qu'il est sensé régenter. Plusieurs

expressions existent en effet pour caractériser l'État en Afrique : « Failed States » ou États défaillants, « Soft States » ou États mous ou encore rhizomes. Cette dernière expression est également développée sous le vocable de « collapsed States » ou États faillis. La question principale de cette réflexion est de savoir si l'État sous sa forme unitaire et centralisé n'est pas contre le peuple, si les crises qui le traversent ne s'expriment pas davantage dans son articulation avec les dynamiques internes des territoires considérés comme périphériques. Il s'agit d'examiner les incongruités attachées à la forme unitaire et centralisée de l'État en Afrique, en recourant aux analyses issues de la littérature grise sur la stato-genèse en marche en Afrique.

Mots clés

Afrique, centralisme étatique, contestations identitaires, crises de référence, État.

Introduction

Increasingly, state centralism in Africa is being challenged. Witness the various demonstrations in the streets of Africa and the speeches of activists, both against France, French-Africa relationship and against all forms of foreign interference. Some of these speeches call for the rejection of France and its model of civilization bequeathed to the continent. There is also a certain connivance between a certain political elite manipulated in hand to serve the cause of the destabilisation of Africa, an elite also against the people. Apparently, divorce seems profound, incriminating among other perspectives the rejection of centralism and the adoption of an egalitarian democracy based on federation.

Our study draws on the sociology of democratic transitions in Africa ; It is understood that through the miasmas of the various crises experienced by the continent, the various political processes (national conferences, wars of rebellion, dictatorships, etc.) are read, subsumed to what is known as the "political and/or democratic transition". This term characterizes, in Africa, the transition from single party systems to pluralism. Indeed, on the African continent, to understand the democratic transition is to attempt from within an analysis of the project of invention of politics through the institutions and games of multiple actors and with various logics, The European Union is also involved in the process of institutionalisation. For Francis Akindés (1999, pp. 610-613),

the sociology of democratic transitions is this questioning of both the tendentious regularities and differences that emerge from national experiences as well as the ways of thinking and acting of actors. Especially since the field of democratization as a process is an arena of confrontations of interests, norms and values[1].

Africa as a whole is experiencing, at various levels, multifaceted shocks, mainly due to colonial legacies, one of which is state centralism. In fact, these are exogenous values that are often poorly grafted to the properly African values based

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[1] All quotations from authors in French have been transcribed by us.

on community egalitarianism. Values that collide, leading the continent into an endless socio-political crisis. We question here particularly the territorial spaces formerly under French colonization. The main subject of this work is the state centralism bequeathed by France to its colonies. Its explanatory model starts from the analysis of the failures of tropical Jacobin centralism, with an emphasis on certain incongruities attached to it. The ideal would have been to take a comparative approach with other spaces, particularly English and other spaces. This may not be discussed in this work, although its editorial context is based on various historical trajectories.

Julien Meimon (2004, p. 4) shows that the historicity of relations between African countries and France is understood as hegemonic transactions. These are passed between States, between French and African leaders, between officials on both sides but never between the territories and realities close to the communities. Moreover, when the idea of development is evoked in this cooperation, it is to be read as a reformulation of the colonial problem of enhancement and civilizing mission. This is a hegemonic dynamic which is understood as a system of domination with ethical, civilizing, evangelizing or assimilationist pretensions and which is supposed to inspire obedience and adherence on the part of the addressees. This analysis is also similar to that made by Jean-Pierre Dozon (2003) when he conceptualizes his relationships as relationships between «brothers and subjects» in which the node of this relationship is built on a regime of force based on fear. In this sense, French governance in Africa responds to an imperial vision. In other words, the bilateral agreements between France and its colonies are merely a legal formalization of this hegemonic relationship.

The colonial pact is a system of total economic dependence. It required the colonies to produce raw materials solely for the benefit of France. And it enjoins them to import only the products of the Metropolis. This pact is strengthened by cooperation, with military and defence agreements. It defines, at the same time, the "condition for the transfer of sovereignty" to the colonies, and presents itself as a means of tight control "of the political and economic influence that other industrialized nations might exercise in Africa (Meinon, J., 2004, pp. 23-26). Colonization is not just economic and commercial exploitation. It has also led Europe to look at the peoples it has colonized, to represent them and even to show them off.

She [Europe] spoke on their behalf, pronounced on their status and in doing so often betrayed the religious, juridical, political universalism she proclaimed, proposed or claimed to identify and disseminate(…) it is guided by the concern to renew the study of relations between Europe and the world, beyond the Marxist discourse, that a new critical approach, the postcolonial approach, would have made its necessary virtue and would today focus on showing that "Representations have many implications, not only in the field of images, but also in the field of economic and political decisions (Mangeon, A., 2006, pp.63-67).
Similarly, international relations are built on interests.

For American capital and that of the other industrialized western countries

to invest in a country -underdeveloped, be similar- there must exist in that country, on the one hand a repressive political regime that prevents any movement of workers' demands and on the other hand a comprador national bourgeoisie who adores and makes the population of this country adopt the western mode of consumption. (Tolen, A., 1999, p. 2).

1. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE FUTURE OF AFRIC

In the present historiography of Africa, under the influence of the European schema which wants the nation to assert itself with the progress of liberalism, tribal and ethnic links are evoked as an essential framework of collective identities; even when the ethnic group is seen as "colonial construction" (Kipre, 2006; Jakavonytė-Staškuvienė, 2021). However, establishing the links between identity and territorial logic in Africa is reductive, because until then, policies in Africa have consisted in the separation of populations. Politics has remained a matter of elites who are careful not to mix in the peripheral masses, because the integration of populations as actors of collective identities requires that they appropriate the State and carry the essential evolutions of it. This construction of the relations of the African elite and popular masses dates back to the 19th century. For Marc Abélès (2012), the 19th century is that of the «national worlds», that is to say of the more or less broad cultural spaces where political communities mingle, reflecting several levels of organization and relations. Borders are increasingly becoming a marginal form of territorialisation of collective identities. National identities are intimately intertwined, more open.

1.1. Put in context of French colonization and Africa : a multiparty system in shambles

The year 1990 saw the establishment of democracy in Africa in various formats. Political parties were created, as well as citizen associations. The private press existed, contributing to the animation of public debates. On analysis, the democratization process does not seem to be entirely viable in Africa. Better, it stumbles. The elections, although regular, are often contested by the opposition whose most important leaders often refuse to take part. The public press is at the service of the ruling party and journalists, working in this institution, face self-censorship. As for the private press, it lacks the means of its policy and those who exercise it are either threatened or compelled to stand trial for defamation. Civil society associations play their role of citizen control of public action, but their voice rarely counts and they are forbidden to demonstrate on public roads their disapprovals… The continent is sinking into identity-ridden crises, inscribing in the duration the contestation of the State (Kasalak & Dagyar, 2020).

No doubt, the colonial transplant took it badly. The values that the Republic is supposed to promote do not seem to permeate the African cultural ethos enough. We are faced with two conflicting moral imperatives : on the one hand, the legacy of the centrality of the Jacobin state, and on the other hand, the resistance of

community spaces that are jealous of their autonomy, of their particularisms, especially of what identifies them : their territories. An investigation into the historical trajectory of African countries shows that the republic and the value it conveys remain a problematic issue, as well as the issue of national membership. Everywhere there is a chronic political instability of States, but also the difficult integration of certain territorial areas in the constitution of States. Cultural, religious, regional and ethnic affiliations are more associated with individuals than with national affiliation. The regions, the Community territories seem more to be vehicles of resentment that the States fail to manage and to consider (at least to satisfy them).

1.2. The different analytical perspectives of the State in Africa

Responses to the state crisis in Africa and its difficult ownership by the grassroots have been formulated. These include decentralisation processes that have become widespread since the 1990s. Their aim was to build a system of governance rooted in local contexts, responding to local problems and capable of being reappropriated by local actors (Crouzel, 2007; Susilawati, Khaira, & Pratama, 2021). For this, decentralization should go hand in hand with the democratization of local governance. It has led to a redefinition of all powers present in local political arenas through three paradigmatic perspectives. The first perspective is neo-institutionalist. It postulates the effects of institutions on action practices and in turn the effects of practices on institutions. The second is based on the paradigm of action. It wants the involvement of non-state actors in the analysis of public management to go beyond a conception of governance that is essentially focused on public institutions. Their reform allows a widening of the poles of power and a rebalancing of the local arenas. The last paradigm is that of local governance which is truly multi-stakeholder. Governance is conceived here as a process of linking the interests of public action within the framework of co-management. This requires a weak institutionalization of the state, with participation at the heart of local democratic governance. Hence the diversity of public actors (decentralized structures of the central state, demonopolisation of the exclusivity of local public management.

The emergence of elected local authorities as actors at the heart of local power, with democratic legitimacy. Alongside these actors there are also other new public or parapublic actors (implementing agencies), resulting in the creation of a local political field with pluralist competition, in addition to the existence of more traditional actors (customary leaders, trade unions, professional organisations and farmers).

All these processes show the inability of States to take responsibility for themselves and to put themselves at the service of the entities they represent. As a first approach, we proceed by a reading of the incongruities of colonial inheritances. These are both notions and "values" whose incorporation into African socio-political realities is problematic and seems to pose more of a problem than anything else.

2. THE INCONGRUITIES OF AFRICAN COLONIAL HERITAGES

The contact in Africa the West is followed by the colonization produced incongruities whose the operationalization strengthens the crises in Africa. The first

of these congruities condenses into the notion of nation, which is disconnected from the perception of local communities.

2.1. Dichotomy around the idea of nation

The nation sees itself as a territorial space organized by a state, within which various interactions take place. It is claimed by those who claim it as part of themselves, in a kind of organic relationship. This is why the nation is the daily plebiscite (Dumont, L. 1987. It can be designed with reference to the soil and as a historical unit, with reference to culture and blood.

Nevertheless, this definitional reality is only classificatory, because it cannot say what the nation is in reality ; it is moreover called into question by Renan (1882) who considers that the nation is a construction and therefore, there cannot be such a clear dichotomy between the law of the soil and the relationship to culture and blood. There is permanent interpenetration, according to the trajectory and the construction or legal deconstruction of each country. Hence the importance of taking the nation as a perpetually imagined community, if not ideologized according to the need of the moment. The nation is therefore a socio-political construction, in the sense that politics plays an important role in the formulation, construction and strengthening of a unified, collective and integrative identity, through a work of promotion of values - Here Republicans -which are his own. It is a semantic arbitrary, variable according to the representations that each country has of its inhabitants :

the limits of a subjective definition of nation are of a different nature. Since the nation is conceived from the consciousness which claims it and no longer as a set of objective characteristics proper to a human community, the risk is to confuse the discourse of the nation with the concrete reality of the population concerned which may well be very far from defining itself as a nation (Wieviorka, M., 1993, p. 27).

In Africa, the State as a whole that unites individuals in a common and sustainable destiny seems to be a decoy, compared to the strong expression of the feeling of attachment to the community and ethnic space. The explanations and justifications provided often call into question a lack of governance, a lack of consensus indispensable, ferments of the democratization of public life. Among these, we must mention the shared values, and above all the common will to live together, always present in citizens' consciences. It also presupposes understanding how individuals and communities have been socialized and governed in the formation of a whole that is the Nation that is still in the making, from the colonial period to the present day.

2.2. Permanent questioning of the realities of communities

Community reference is commonly used in the social sciences, particularly in geography; In North America or in the local tradition of the Chicago school to designate collective identity, membership in a social group or attachment to specific cultures that are variables that form the basis of social bond. In Africa, the community has local relevance – the village, the neighbourhood – regional or international (diasporas for example). This is more a question of sociability than of

social strictly speaking. Sociability is the set of roles played by the person, while the social bond is "the function of the individual in society" (Mafessoli, M., 2000, p. 138).

The community cannot be qualified a priori professional, political, religious, linguistic, ethnic or sexual mutual, because it can cover one or more dimensions. A particular community may be formed by public action (Mansutti, E., 2007). By evoking the trajectories of Vietnamese migration in France, he notes that involuntarily or not, we saw emerge on the territory of the Republic two types of territories : communitarian territories of separation and territory of integration. For him, communities that are considered "communitarian" are those that emanate from a particular identity based on the cultural identification criteria of their members and whose formation the Republic has contributed to by their confinement in separate spaces.

In France, the concept of community is not unanimous. Michel Mafessoli seems to be the one who attaches the greatest importance to it. He sees in the emergence of community neo-tribes the sign of a decline in modern individualism. The mistrust in France of the word community is justified, because for many this word refers to communitarianism, understood as the strengthening of identity withdrawal. Wieviorka (2001) also considers that this traditional conception of communities, favouring the stability of observed social groups and their reproduction in a more or less defensive logic, runs the risk of easily freezing them in their difference by essentializing their collective identity: a real or imagined identity that is assigned to the outside world as much as it is claimed by its members.

Cultural relativism has made it possible to open society to particularisms and minority cultures, in the sense that the communities associated with the idea of communitarianism are always minority communities (or minorities), underrepresented or even silenced. A community is united by a strong tradition, history or collective culture. It is formed on the origin lignagère or filiation, clearly identifiable with a limited social unit, a structure of reproduction to perpetuate its existence, strong signs of internal recognition or external identification, of common culture, ritualized rites or practices recognized by all (Goueset, V. & Hoffman, O., 2006). But a community is above all a global social process, resulting from an aggregate of disparate elements. This process of aggregation and appropriation of the community by the dominated groups can set the members in a certain illusion to the point that they can imagine an offspring.

At all times, the formation of a community is the expression of a form of resistance to the factors of change in order to preserve oneself and to exist in one's being. From this point of view, the community becomes an institution that, to perpetuate itself, positions the actors in hierarchical relationships (dominated/dominant), reference to a collective identity, opposable to the other.

The post-modern surge has made the re-decomposition of communities one of the keys to understanding contemporary societies throughout Anglo-Saxon geography. In Latin America, and since the 1970s or so, the notions of communidad (communidade in Brazil) and participacion communitaria have become a

cornerstone of the process of democratization and re-inlegitimization of politics (Goueset, V. & Hoffman, O., 2006, p. 1).

3. THE SETTING ASIDE OF COMMUNITY TERRITORIES

The way to consider the abyssal distance in the vision of France on its African possessions is summed up in the way in which societies with diffuse hierarchies, willingly named acephalic societies, have been treated in their thick forests. Forgetting that space is not only a physical reality but above all a space of ethnic relationship.

3.1. Confusion between communitarianism and African Community territories

Territories have never been frozen, enclosed spaces. They were crossed by the shifting dynamics of populations, especially during fights, natural disasters or bad spells. Seizing the territory as a space for mobility and multipolar relations between peoples is a perspective that puts at the centre of the debate the question of exclusive and individual possession of the property. This conception poses a problem of dualism and of confrontation between the norms of the modern state in relation to the management of the land and the communal principles of the land as an undivided good. Moreover, the appropriation of terms allows to reactivate permanently the internal hierarchies and the authorities.

In Africa, the territory is :

The result of a process of socialization and appropriation, the territory is a space of recognition and identification. It is a concept that is applicable at different scales, and can be conceived for socio-ethnic groups as well as for a national community or political power (Stary, B., 1995, p. 1).

The territory thus gives meaning to community life. There is a kind of relationship between community and territory. The Community territory is the answer to the sorrows of men and times. There is a certain sacredness attached to this sense of unity that binds a people, a community to its land, to its region, sometimes to the point of making sacrifices or libation to preserve it from all defilement. When we evoke the field as an agricultural space, a local terroir, we evoke at the same time the idea of a certaine appropriation of this space by the communities that work it, develop it and vivify it. Space reflects the expression of domination over the territory ; in this sense space evokes as much the specification of a territory and the organization of its management methods. As a result, there are spaces depending on their use. As a result, there are spaces depending on their use. Space inevitably structures the collective imagination, according to its size, shape and dimensions. How can we then understand that we can say that the territory belongs to a disembodied state and not to the communities ?

3.2. Ethnicise to rule better

Structuralism influenced the anthropological analysis of the post-war period, giving importance to the name of the studied group or ethnonym considered as the stable referent. Linked to this constructivist issue of ethnicity is the question of the

reappropriation of the colonial library or the way in which the reference groups eventually adopted the colonial character of the ethnic categories and took advantage of it to classify, in turn, their relations of otherness. Instead of focusing on the ethnic typologies or reporting on the internal and historical logic of the groups considered separately, the typologies must be analysed, focusing on the ethnic boundaries and how they are maintained. The reading of the first anthropologists approaching different countries has been altered. They did not understand that the notion of ethnic group finds its relevance only in the dynamic and procedural aspects. Indeed, when actors use ethnic identities to categorize themselves, they do so for purposes of interaction. To do this, they use diacritical traits that are obvious signs sought and affirmed by individuals to mark their identity (clothing, cut, lifestyle, types of scarifications, rites of passage, dietary and other prohibitions).

Anthropology only makes a critical examination of the concept of ethnicity during the second half of the 20th century, when, by associating the historical perspective with its approach, it accesses the formation processes of identity groups and reveals exogenous influences on ethnogenesis. Africanists, in particular, establish that ethnic groups are not traditional but colonial creations. These analyses are well based, not to repeat them, on the idea that these categories are constructions of the outside, as an ascription, that is to say as an assigned identity. In a dynamic and interactive approach, identities are transformed over time, as contexts and power relationships change.

Designating pilgrims in the Middle Ages, the term "ethnicity" reappeared in France in the 19th century in a context where debates were held on the nation, on objective criteria for the recognition of languages and on the realistic approach of groups :

"In its neutral and minimalist sense, ethnicity has designated groups of human beings having in common a language, a religion, a culture, a history, a geographical origin" (Amselle, J.-L., 1999, p. 37).

The early administrators of the French empire in Africa were aware of the long-term effects of these oppositions, given the way they systematically ethnicized the groups with which they came into contact. For example, the debate on multiculturalism is a political-ideological debate that makes ethnicity a central issue, at the risk of reigning identities and groups under the pretext of no longer wanting their existence (De Rudder, V., 1995). Ethnicisation is therefore only a process. The imputation or claim of an ethnic affiliation is only one referent among other referents of role and social status. The concepts of ethnicity or ethnicisation act as a kind of key to interpret situations and organize interactions.

The legitimate question to ask is this : «ethnicisation is it not the return of an ethnocentric vision of the conquering observer who, in order to distinguish himself from the other, assigns to him a status of inferior, of ethnic» either yesterday or today ? (Touraine, A., 1997, p. 238). The French context of social marginalization means that the emergence of ethnicity in French society appears to be the result of social disorganization, a lack or a lack of cohesion in the statutes

and roles within a social system, so that the collective goals and objectives of its members are not fully achieved.

The critical approach to ethnic politics highlights the discomfort and distrust of the French scientific community in the face of the concept of ethnicity that would refer to tribal wars, intertribal struggles or the ghettoization phenomena of postmodern society. In France, in scientific circles, the nation is considered as the universal community, while concepts such as multiculturalism and antiracism refer to militant enterprises or a company of derealization of the national fact, Turning into apostles of differentialist theses.

As a result, public institutions play a role in producing and maintaining ethnic differentiation :

Ethnicity does not develop in a cultural and identity vacuum. It does not represent [a] phantom part, but presupposes the presence of a certain ethnic materiality, the real part of the ideal that manifests itself upstream by the internalization of particularist norms and values values through socialization and family education, and forward by the omission of a collective project (building a community of destiny). As a social fact, ethnicity is inseparable from this process of ethnicisation of individuals and groups, and from the permanence of a community utopia. (Geissern V., 2010).

4. THE FAILURE OF THE STATE PROCESS AND THE PROBLEM OF OVER-POWER IN BLACK AFRICA

The African continent has already faced many upheavals to be seasoned and take control of its development. Schooling allowed the overthrow of the old order and resulted in the production of small subordinate staff executing for colonial need. Their main task was to ensure that taxes were levied, troops were raised and new land was developed. The formation of these elites followed a precise order ; for the prestige attached to the clerical function of the administration must not be undermined by the emergence of a young educated generation (Blanchet, G., 1983). This effort to build an elite of the sons of chiefs and notables, as Governor Éboué put it, resulted in inconclusive experiments.

4.1. Elites trained to serve the metropolis, not the people

These elites were not well equipped to ensure the development of independent Africa, in that the territories bequeathed by the colonial administration were underdeveloped. Blanchet (1983, p.10) notes :

At the same time as it causes the progressive decline of traditional authorities, the colonial power gives rise to a new social layer linked to the establishment of administrative structures, to the development of urbanization, To that of education and to the emergence of a commodity economy, it must constitute a kind of layer-support but quickly goes beyond this support role.

Similarly, the process of development responsibility to indigenous minorities among highly illiterate and "traditional" populations has not been made possible.

Indeed, at the same time as it introduced schooling, at the same time colonization attacked traditional African structures. It has caused them to lose their sovereignty and authority. It also forced them to abandon all means (military, judicial, legislative, new social organizations) allowing them to exercise this authority and sovereignty.

The years 1925-1930 marked the first demonstrations of opposition of some of these elites to the colonial order in progress. This opposition is the expression of popular sentiment. They are displayed as opposition to traditional leaders in their roles as agents of colonial and modern power, as well as to the colonizer himself. These demonstrations were carried by a number of leaders; but this sudden rise of a charismatic leader in the African indigenous elite made it possible to cancel the distances existing between elites and popular masses. The charismatic leader being solicited from everywhere, there will be breaks between the set objectives and the means to achieve them. The situation of over-power (Lacouture, J., 1970) in which the leader evolves will cause the dilution of real power for the benefit of his immediate entourage. Gradually, there will be a single party identification with the nation.

At the time of independence, it was the political leaders who held the main government posts, on the one hand ; the Africanisation of the main administrative machinery was carried out under their control, on the other hand. The vacuum created by the departure of local cadres to the need to stem the centrifugal currents imposed simultaneously the strengthening of the [single] party at this level by the constitution of cells and an effort to integrate the different village associations (Herbst, J., 2014). Since independence, the African political space has been beheaded by its best elites.

Now the party has become an oligarchic structure closely dependent on the state and its leader. This will also have the consequences of cutting the politics of the masses, relatively indifferent. In this regard, Alpha Oumar Konaré (1999) asserts that we know what it cost our peoples that the front of the intellectuals had become distended in contact with power. He continued :

[Pour les masses populaires], l'adhésion [au parti] est un rite formel et obligatoire et dont la participation reste insuffisante. Par la cooptation qui prédomine en son sein, au lieu d'être un instrument de mobilité sociale et un véhicule des aspirations au changement, il tend à devenir le champ clos où se déroule le cursus honorum d'une minorité conformiste acquise au pouvoir établi (Konaré, A. O., 1999, p. 28).

Failing to serve as a popular anchor, the political party was dissolved in the people, reproducing within itself its fractures and quarrels. We are also witnessing the politicization of public administration without any advanced specialization, with a clientelist recruitment method. Konaré (1999, p.28) concludes :

Objet de convoitises, conférant un statut élevé, l'accès à la fonction publique tend à échapper aux seuls critères de qualification professionnelle d'autant plus que se fait une tendance à sa fermeture moins imputable à celle de la couche dirigeante qu'au tarissement du recrutement par raréfaction des postes disponibles.

This perspective underlines the need to analyze the relations in Africa

between long time, short time and strategy of actors.

4.2. Need for the construction of African structural unity

The reading of African historicity can only be dynamic and in time. This has not always been the case for most researchers in Africa or on Africa. They often content themselves with the relations of forces present to build theories whose time reaches that difficult to deconstruct. These writings on the Internet have sometimes helped to turn power and possession into a device of punishment and retribution.

The colonial past has profoundly altered local patterns of thought and political structuring. By reflecting on the work of Bilolo Mubabinge (2004), Kâ Mana (1987), we indicate that he tries to grasp the entire history of Africa in its structural unity. This attempt has no meaning unless the consciousness of this unity imagines and establishes a new power of being, a concern for oneself based on liberating political and economic purposes. Kâ Mana questions two forms of what he calls logico-practical structures that organize the current relations between Africa and the West : one concerns the structures of dependence which is the present economic-political order and which is only discussed in the mechanisms of financial interests distorted by bilateral and multilateral aid ; The other touches on the structures of mimicry that dominate the representative field of the African negro. These two forms of logico-practical structures make the West the paradigm of the very idea of civilization.

Through this reading, Kâ Mana launches a new order of meaning in the humanities, in politics, in economic and religious life through the destruction of dependency systems. He considers that the issue of substance in the work of Axelle Kabou (1991) is whether attitudes, African attitudes, models of thought and strategies of action go in the direction of a desire for development or are clear signs of rejection of any sense of cultural and social progress. Axelle Kabou (1991, p. 22) asks :

How can we explain the cultural state of the continent despite its innumerable riches and its exhilarating discourses on human advancement ? What are the most important requirements for a profound change in the mentality of our peoples, if they really decide to enter the imperatives of our time and the challenges of our time ?

The author's response to these questions is positive. According to him, Africa refuses development and hides this refusal to itself through multiple mechanisms that undermine its chances of economic, social and cultural success. So, to understand why this continent has continued to decline despite its considerable wealth, we must first ask ourselves how it works at the most elementary microeconomic level : in the heads of Africans. Thus he comes to the conclusion that the Africans would refuse the method, the organization to prefer the waste of resources, the sabotage of the common good, the disgust for coherence, transparency, rigour. They have a penchant for tinkering, apart from the hope of foreign intervention, which is also considered a historical duty.

Daniel Etounga-Manguelle (1991, p. 16) takes culture as the explanatory

basis for the underdevelopment of the African continent. For him, the sole cause, the source of all the deviations is African culture, characterized by its self-sufficiency, its passivity, its lack of enthusiasm for meeting other cultures, before the latter impose themselves on her and crush her, her inability, once the evil has been done, to evolve in contact with them without falling into abject mimicry (Etounga-Manguelle, D., 1991, p. 16).

Daniel Etounga-Manguelle (1991, p. 71) also talks about an African culture frozen in the image of cold palm oil. It is frozen by definition and can only come back fluid if it is warmed up." He says Africans cling to nationless nationalism. Mubabingue, Kabou, Etounga-Manguelle, from Kâ Mana's point of view, have reductive analyses on Africa, The representational field in which they are placed takes little account of the fact that the social field is above all a battlefield and that there are local arenas everywhere where this antagonism manifests itself. If the link between democracy and development is as present as F. Mitterrand (Baule), those who for years have supported non-democratic, dictatorial and bloody political regimes, have acted knowingly against the development of Africa. We have seen the exclusion of populations in the fundamental decisions concerning the future of their country. Autocratic regimes have been put in power with the support of the theory of development without democracy.

4.3. The Need to Reclaim Self from the African Being

Kâ Mana finds that in order to understand the scope of the critical considerations formulated by the above-mentioned authors, they should be understood as questions intended to liberate the ontological horizon of cultural creativity and the energetic of freedom. Without this ontology, without this energy, these questions are vain and naively idealistic. For him, the African humanities are not only an effort to objectivate oneself but also an effort to invent and produce oneself.

The triptych of self-objectivation, invention and self-production, Kâ Mana (1987) presents them in the following way : self-objectivation is the obligation for Africa to see itself as the history of the last five centuries has thought of it (as a thing, as a void). This is why African researchers set themselves as objectives to analyze the structures of this thing, the dimensions of this nothingness. The invention of oneself is the abstract recovery of oneself as a subject. A historical subject which articulates its own history in all its values, which thinks of it both as axiological fruitfulness and as destiny, in the sense of struggle against the forces of life and the forces of death. A subject that re-imagines itself in the negativity of its historicity as in the glorious permanence of its reasons for living and hoping.

Finally, production is defined as the transition from the ideal to the concrete, from desire to reality, from pious wishes to the priority tasks of living. Here, conflicts, debates, my dead ends and contradictions are looked at in what they are: These are the ways in which the very face of the future is decided, the crucial place in which a people reaches the greatest idea of itself and decides to accomplish itself through concrete actions that transform its suffered destiny into an agreed destiny.

This is a Utopian nothing. This is why the African humanities have both a scientific and ideological character.There is always «the ambiguity of recourse to the West in a desire to refuse the West», through disconnection.

In reality, this West holds much of Africa's imagination as well as its historicity. This is certainly what leads Africans to think that they are not free and that the conditions of their liberation are subject to the necessary break with the West, especially with France. This rupture is as much political, economic, security as geostrategic. It is expressed more actively elsewhere as the rejection of centralism or simply the power of strong men. It is therefore a policy at the service of the people and by the people.

Conclusion

For René Otayek (2004), the decoding of relations between France and Africa, based on the exclusively ethnic perspective, explains nothing. He criticizes the perception of the Western scientific world on African societies. This means that the authors analyze Africa with borrowed glasses from outside, those of France. However, these glasses, fruit of French political ideology, were structured by more than two (2) centuries of Jacobinism. With this ideology, little attention has been paid to the ability to blend cultures (melting pot) to ensure the integration of migrants from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Ultimately, deconstructing to better build the future of African societies is a step in a long series of steps. If these terms [ethnicity, people, nation] have acquired a massive use, to the detriment of other words such as nation, it is probably because it was a question of classifying certain societies separately and giving them a specific quality. Similarly, if the term tribe in French has about the same use as that of ethnicity, it defines in Anglo-Saxon anthropologists a type of social organization proper : that of segmental societies. Fragmentary societies are defined as societies defined by the presence of social elements of the same nature, such as lineage, resulting from the successive divisions of the same initial cell, distinct from state societies with centralized or pyramidal power. In short, it is time to put an end to concepts against the African people in order to allow them to invent their own landmarks and their intrinsic becoming. An important threshold has been crossed : the emission of others on the political and strategic destiny of Africa has become unpopular. The people want to take power and control its exercise. This movement is called to last and for an Africa in the making.

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