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CONTEMPORARY FRANCOPHONE WEST AFRICAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN THE
RISE OF NEO PAN-AFRICANISM: A CASE STUDY OF *Y EN A MARRE* IN SENEGAL

By

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B.A. Université Gaston Berger de Saint-Louis 2009
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A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of the
College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

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Department of Comparative Humanities
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

May 2020

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Dissertation Approved on

January 16, 2020

by the following Dissertation Committee:

Prof. Dismas Masolo

Dr. Tyler Fleming

Dr. Mawuena Kossi Logan

Prof. Souleymane Bachir Diagne

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to
Stacy Bailey-Ndiaye for her selflessness
and unconditional support throughout my doctoral endeavors.

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I would like to express my profound gratitude and wholehearted thanks to Profs Dismas Masolo and Tyler Fleming for having accepted to supervise this work. I greatly appreciate their availability, advice and far-reaching support for the achievement of this dissertation. Beyond providing high-quality scholarly training, they guided me through the intricacies and challenges of graduate school and academia in general. They also provided life-saving tips and best practices that kept me sane throughout my academic endeavors in the United States. Their attention to detail and expertise in Africana studies and humanities made me a better writer and critical thinker. Words are not enough to express my gratefulness for their guidance and unflinching support.

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To Stacy Bailey-Ndiaye, I say *Jërējëf, Jërējëf, Jërējëf!!* Words will never be enough to express my gratitude to her. Writing this dissertation and living in the US would have been a lot more challenging had she not welcomed me as her own son. She will remain a source of inspiration and a model for me and countless young people from Africa and of African descent. To her, I am forever grateful.

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ABSTRACT

CONTEMPORARY FRANCOPHONE WEST AFRICAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN THE RISE OF NEO PAN-AFRICANISM: A CASE STUDY OF *Y'EN A MARRE* IN SENEGAL

Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Ndiaye

January 16, 2020

The emergence of the *Y'en a marre* movement in 2011 has reshaped the face of social activism in Francophone sub-Saharan Africa. In less than a decade of its existence, *Y'en a marre* has become iconic in Senegalese civil society and beyond. Their effective opposition to the Wade regime between 2011 and 2012 reverberated beyond the Senegalese border through their slogan “*touche pas à ma constitution*” (Do not touch my constitution), a rallying cry that young people in Burkina Faso and the Democratic Republic of Congo later appropriated, thus giving the movement a Pan-African platform. The birth of *Y'en a Marre* and its confrontation methods (street protests, verbal attacks via radio, TV, concerts, rap songs to name a few) enabled several important interrogations that this project aims at exploring. What triggers the formation of social movements in contemporary Senegal and Francophone West Africa? How does *Y'en a Marre's* blueprint fit in the general struggle for Pan-Africanism today? How are music and art used to create a transnational solidarity against bad governance and foreign influence in West African affairs? This dissertation explores how contemporary social movements in Francophone West Africa are re-appropriating Pan-African principles to fight for democracy and good governance as well as to curb foreign influence in African affairs.

This dissertation argues that such movements use various innovative means including music, visual art, social media, and street protests to draw popular support and foment resistance

to confront regimes that fail to safeguard basic democratic principles, such as fair and transparent elections. In doing so, social movements in Francophone West Africa help foster a new era in the development of Pan-Africanism called “Neo Pan-Africanism” in which social activist and popular movements become one of the key driving forces of Pan-Africanism as a transatlantic movement and ideology. The dissertation also contends that the *Y'en a marre* movement is spearheading a new type of transnational collaboration partly grounded in popular culture (especially hip-hop), advocacy training and sometimes litigation, to enable social movements in West Africa to fight against common issues that pertain to the safeguard of their national sovereignties.

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INTRODUCTION

On January 31, 2012, a Senegalese university student named Mamadou Diop was run over by a police armored tank while participating in a protest against then-president Abdoulaye Wade for “unconstitutionally” seeking a third term in office. Diop became a martyr whose death marked the consecration of a non-partisan youth movement launched by three hip hop artists called *Y en a marre* (literally We are fed up/Enough is enough). In less than a decade of its existence, *Y en a marre* has become iconic in Senegalese civil society and beyond. Their effects reverberated beyond the Senegalese border through their slogan “*touche pas à ma constitution*” (Do not touch my constitution), a rallying cry that young people in Burkina Faso and the Democratic Republic of Congo later appropriated, thus giving the movement a Pan-African platform. The birth of *Y en a marre* and its confrontation methods (street protests, verbal attacks via radio, TV, concerts, rap songs to name a few) enabled several important interrogations that this project aims at exploring. What triggers the formation of social movements in contemporary Senegal and Francophone West Africa? How does *Y en a marre*'s blueprint fit in the general struggle for Pan-Africanism today? How are music and art used to create transnational solidarity against bad governance and foreign influence in West African affairs?

My dissertation tries to explore the re-appropriation of Pan-African principles by contemporary social movements in Francophone West Africa to fight for democracy and good governance. It argues that *Y en a marre* and similar insurgent movement in Francophone West Africa are spearheading the renaissance of Pan-Africanism which has entered a new phase in its

development that I call “Neo Pan-Africanism”. These activists have managed to deconstruct the elitist and politician discourses that have historically surrounded Pan-Africanism and turned it into a more accessible concept for the masses to embrace. In doing so, the project contends that such movements use various innovative means including music, visual art, social media, and street protests to draw popular support and foment resistance to confront regimes that fail to safeguard basic democratic principles, such as fair and transparent elections. Finally, the dissertation also argues that rise and success of *Y en a marre* have partly facilitated the rebuilding of transatlantic social movement connections to fight against common issues that pertain to the safeguard of national and continental sovereignties such as the use of the CFA currently in Francophone Africa. Thus, in concert with other youth organizations in Africa, *Y en a marre* convened the UPEC (*Université Populaire de L’Engagement Citoyen*) in summer 2018.

This initiative represents the first major grassroots Pan-African summit of contemporary social movements in the Black Atlantic and marked a new beginning for Pan-Africanism as a movement. In September 2016 *Y en a marre* participated in a regional protest against the CFA franc alongside *Urgences panafricanistes* and *Non-aux APE* two other social movements operating in West Africa. Protesters in Dakar, Bamako, Cotonou, and Libreville among other places, sent a strong message to France and governments of African countries using the CFA Franc that monetary sovereignty is a Pan-African prerogative and that the abolition of the CFA currency constitutes an urgency to quell the advance of neocolonialism in Francophone Africa. In the same vein, these movements also plan to sue France and its former president Nicolas Sarkozy for his role in the overthrow and death of President Khaddaffi and the subsequent destabilization of Libya. Understanding the implications of actions like these is important to better situate the struggle of *Y en a marre* in the grand scheme of Pan-Africanism as a movement and an ideology. Therefore,

this project contributes to the study of African social movements and Pan-Africanism in three different ways.

In arguing a new phase of Pan-Africanism, this dissertation defines and elucidates the concept of “Neo Pan-Africanism” in relation to the development of social movement insurgencies in Francophone West Africa. Neo Pan-Africanism in this sense refers to the most recent evolutive period of Pan-Africanism as a movement and an ideology that informs young African social activists in their fight for social change and against neo-colonial processes. In doing so, Neo Pan-Africanism seeks to re-establish the transatlantic connections that existed among Black freedom movements in the 19th and 20th centuries by making Francophone West Africa the commend post of this new phase of Pan-Africanism. In the same vein, this project constitutes a primary work in the examination of the Pan-African impact of *Y en a marre*'s musical and rhetorical productions as a medium for advancing political awareness and civic engagement throughout the African continent.

Music, particularly rap, plays a major role in social movements activism. In this regard, *Y en a marre* has not only incorporated rap in its arsenal of protest but also encourages younger generation of hip-hop artists to critically engage with issues that plague the Senegalese and African societies in their music and not just focus on the entertainment aspect of the art form. The adoption of a concept such as the popular TV show, Rap Journal (created by two *Y en a marre* supporters in 2013) in Benin, Côte D'Ivoire, and Mauritania is a good example of a Pan-African use of rap music by contemporary social activists in West Africa. So far, Africanist scholars have neglected the importance of rap music as a weapon of protest in contemporary social movements studies in Francophone West Africa. Critically acclaimed works of few authors such as Fatou Kandé Senghor, Kathrine Appert, Eric Charry, and Alain-Phillip Durand (2005) have delved into the

socio-political undertones of hip-hop culture in Francophone African settings. However, these authors mostly studied rap music and hip-hop culture in general from an ethnomusicological vantage point which of course has its merits but does not fully render the intricacies of the musical genre in a social movement analytical framework which what this project tries to do.

Secondly, in undertaking this academic endeavor, this project seeks to reposition Francophone West Africa in the discursive analyses of Pan-Africanism by critically examining and questioning the legacy of Pan-African freedom fighters in modern-day activism. The study of Pan-Africanism has historically undermined Francophone Africa, which was generally viewed as the epicenter of Négritude, a concept that many scholars actually separated from Pan-Africanism. Anglophone Africa and the Diaspora disproportionately dominate historical accounts of Pan-Africanism systematically leaving Lusophone, Arabophone and non-Europhone Africa in the margin of Pan-Africanism's history. This research aims at correcting this "injustice" by showing that not only did Francophone Africa impact the rise and development of Pan-Africanism, but it also ensures its revival in 21st century thanks social activists in the region who are currently re-appropriating the concept to fuel "Afro-Optimism".

Finally, this dissertation enriches the study of social insurgencies by adding a different perspective to social movement studies in Francophone West Africa. Contemporary social movements in West Africa (especially in Francophone countries) are understudied and the few ones that caught the attention of the academic world are generally explored through resource mobilization or political process/political opportunity theoretical frameworks. Though these frameworks bring in added values to African social movement studies, they do not always fully capture the complexity of social insurgencies in Africa if they are not contextualized to African socio-cultural realities. The Senegalese economist Ndongo Samba Sylla similarly claims that

despite a surge in social movement studies in Africa in the wake of the “Arab Spring,” West African insurgent groups are still sidelined, thus creating an analytical vacuum that could have helped understand certain Pan-African dynamics (Sylla 2012, p.94). Thus, this work is certainly going to be the one of the first scholarly endeavors to explore contemporary Francophone West African social movements through both a resource mobilization and Pan-Africanism theoretical frameworks. In doing so, this work constitutes a departure from the classic ways of analyzing confrontation movements in West Africa by considering the implications of what I have termed “Preemptive Activism” (when African activists engage a fight to prevent an anticipated destructive political move such as a desire to change a constitution on the eve of major elections) and “Remedial Activism” (when African activists engage a fight to correct a damaging political measure such as disenfranchising a section of the citizenry for political gains) in the mobilization of resources beyond local and national boundaries.

As complementary theoretical frameworks, resource mobilization and Pan-Africanism allow us to analyze the transnational/transatlantic connections that contemporary social movements like *Y en a marre* have fostered in pursuit of ideals for which previous generations of Black leaders have fought for. Pan-Africanism especially will also enable us to better understand the similitudes in the methods of protest that exist among Francophone West African social movements regardless of geographical boundaries, as well as social activists, desire to rid the continent of neocolonialism. Furthermore, given that the accumulation of resources (financial, human, material, etc.) are essential in the existence of West African social movements, the resource mobilization theory is used as a supplement to examine the resilience of Francophone West African social activists despite the persistence of state repression. Resource mobilization theory rises to prominence in the 1970s as movement scholars started rejecting earlier collective behavior

theory that contends that social movements were deviant entities devoid of rationality in comparison the conventional political structures such as political parties. To counter this line of thought, resource mobilization theorists argue that social movements are actually rational organizations composed of actors who have decided to take political action by accumulating resources to optimize their impact on social changes. This theoretical framework is still relevant in the 21st century especially in the digital era where West African social movements rely partly on mobile technology to disseminate messages and organize mass action with a click of a button. Digital technology enables African activists to maximize their financial, human and media resources. Though there exist an extensive literature on Pan-Africanism, African social activism, African music and digital technology, not a lot attention has been devoted to the relationship of these four domains in the examination of contemporary Francophone West African social insurgencies. Nevertheless, this project invites this rich scholarship to better understand the contribution of French-speaking West Africa in 21st century Pan-Africanism.

Contemporary Francophone West African social movements are reimagining Pan-Africanism with a quest for a common identity, democracy, good governance, economic and environmental development. In doing so, social activists forge continent-wide (and transatlantic) networks that allow them to coordinate their political actions against African power structures, some of which remain highly repressive. In this context, the *Y en a marre* movement pioneered a new form of civic engagement that continues to inspire countless youth insurgent movement in Africa and across the Atlantic. Vieux Savané and Baye Makébé Sarr provide a critical analysis of the rise of *Y en a marre* which they believe, has redefined the Senegalese (and West African) political arena since 2011 as well as the essence of social activism in Africa.

In a brilliant detail-oriented examination, the two Senegalese scholars, Savané and Sarr, scrutinize the dramatic political and socio-economic backdrop that led to the inception of *Y en a marre*: President Wade seeking a third term deemed unlawful by certain constitutionalists, recurrent power outages that installed insecurity and drastically curbed the economic progress, to name a few. Following the lead of other writers like Amadou Alpha Sy, Savané and Sarr spell out how the establishment of the *Y en a marre* movement triggered a political consciousness in the masses that subsequently developed into a plea for a better sense of citizenship (Savané and Sarr 2012, 59).

While they emphasize the mass appeal of *Y en a marre* in Senegal, Savané and Sarr overlook the transnational impact the movement has had since its inception in 2011, a shortcoming that economist Ndongo Samba Sylla tries to rectify when he argues in *Democracy, Liberalism and Social Movements in West Africa* that there is a resurgence of social movements in West Africa that has also given rise to new forms of expression and democratic participation. Sylla and his co-authors highlight West Africa's long tradition of resistance to the colonial rule. Together, this scholarship sheds light on how liberation movements born in the wake of the 1945 Pan-African Congress paved the way for contemporary social movements in West Africa. While Sylla looks at social movements from a regional perspective, Devin Bryson analyzes the *Y en a marre* movement from a Senghorian vantage point. He contends that *Y en a marre* is not necessarily a new phenomenon but “part of the lineage of Senegalese cultural producers who have worked within the cultural context established by Leopold Sédar Senghor through an institutionalization and propagation of a unique cultural ideology” (Bryson 2014, p.36). It should be noticed that Senghor's concept of culture is Pan-African by definition as the co-founder of the Negritude movement. He believed that Africans have in common certain inherent characteristics, values and aesthetics.

Maramè Guèye hammers out Bryson's arguments when she scrutinizes language use and the strength of rap music in Senegal's most recent contestation movement. She emphasizes *Y en a marre*'s use of verbal warfare (hip-hop lyrics) to draw public support. Her analysis constitutes a seminal work on the musical production of a social movement in francophone West Africa.

However, both Bryson and Guèye omit the transnational implications of the rise of *Y en a marre*. They restrict the impact of the movement's musical production and Senghorian influence to Senegal. For some time, music has contributed to the political and cultural liberation of African peoples. From colonization to the post-independence period, African artists created rich antagonistic musical repertoires that have not only entertained the masses but also galvanized them to engage with despotic, illegitimate and authoritarian regimes on the continent. Oppositional art especially music remains a "bête noire" of the postcolonial African state (Olanyan 2004). The conflicting or rather violent relationship between Fela Kuti and successive Nigerian regimes certainly epitomizes the threat that many African artists continue to pose vis-à-vis their regimes. Over the decades, African leaders have developed an irrational fear of outspoken artists, conscious that their militant artworks possess the capacity to stir a rather "passive or semi-passive" citizenry into taking action against the political establishment. The belligerent musical productions of artists such as Miriam Makeba, Alpha Blondy or Tiken Jah Fakoly have become the hymn of several generations of fighters and activists across national boundaries. Therefore, the power of oppositional music keeps haunting African regimes many of whom continue to trample on the rule of law.

In many ways, African music constitutes a central site for engaging with national politics and social change (Allen 2004, Ogude and Nyairo 2003). "Music functions as a trenchant political site in Africa primarily because it is the most widely appreciated art form on the continent" (Allen

2004). The irruption of the rap genre in the African music scene has metamorphosed urban cultures by creating new avenues for young people to juggle entertainment and political messages into one medium. Since the 1990s, rap music has been the primary tool of political contention for African youth who are not only determined to uphold their freedom of expression but also remain increasingly vocal about the authoritarianism and incompetence of African governments. Contemporary African rappers set themselves up as the spokespersons of the masses and the downtrodden often marginalized by a small elite. The latter holds the majority of the generated wealth and is often more preoccupied with their self-betterment and economic interests of big corporations (Bonnette 2015).

African rappers are the new flag-bearers of the anti-power structure struggles. Senegal which represents one of the most solid and sophisticated strongholds of African hip-hop has produced generations of politically/civically committed rappers whose music represents in various ways a stimulus package for youth civic engagement. The activism of *Y en a marre* draws from this radical and committed hip-hop to both challenge electoral processes in Senegal and the political status quo (Appert 2018). Drawing from the works on hip-hop scholars, such as Kathrine Appert, Tricia Rose, Eric Charry, and Msia Kibona Clark, this project demonstrates that the *Y en a marre* movement revolutionizes the art of social activism in Francophone partially due to the “weaponization” of African music as well as new information technology.

The advent of social media and digital technology has also profoundly modified the face of social activism especially on the African continent where mobile technology has become pervasive. (McNutt 2018). While armies of tech-savvy activists are converging to platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Paltalk to denounce poor governance and neocolonialism, other young folks are allying online and offline activism to massively mobilize citizens and attack rogue African

regimes on several fronts. The wake of the Arab Spring certainly confirms the importance of digital technology in contemporary African social activism, but it also shows the limits of the digital tools in the sense that the ultimate change often comes from the physical confrontation of the masses against the coercive state apparatus. In this regard, the works of scholars such as Chris Atton (2004), Siva Vaidhyanathan (2018) and Randal Kuhn (2012) have provided a solid ground for the critical exploration of digital technology use in contemporary Francophone West African activism. These works have also allowed us to reconsider the applied principles of the resource mobilization theory in an African context. Though the groundbreaking scholarships of Doug McAdam and Sidney Tarrow (2001, 2009), Zald Mayer and John D. McCarthy (1977) remain relevant to African social movements, they do not always capture the complexities of the cultural settings from which these social insurgences arise. Hence the significance of the extensive use of first-hand sources from African and particularly Senegalese newspapers and news websites.

These African news sources have succeeded in capturing the development of contemporary social movements by providing sometimes objective accounts of the confrontation between social movements/activists and African regimes. These coverages have been essential to the completion of this project given that they complement the shortcomings of scholarly sources. Senegalese newspapers and websites such as *Wal-Fadjri*, *l'Observateur*, *Le Quotidien*, *Dakaractu* and *Seneweb*, provided the most detailed depictions of the June 23, 2011 riots that put *Y en a marre* on the world map. They also offered Senegalese and other African social activists a platform to address authorities and the masses about their political and civic preoccupations. More importantly, they have helped corroborate/fact-check information collected during our fieldwork. Though my research will be partly informed by works of the above-mentioned scholars, it will also try to fill in the analytic and theoretical gap that exists in the study of *Y en a marre*.

Completing this dissertation required a combination of theoretical, archival work as well as oral history methodologies that allowed me to conduct fieldwork in Dakar, Senegal and to collect data from social movement participants, local political actors and other scholars who have studied these movements. Thankfully, my oral history project seminar with Prof K' Meyer coupled with my Rhetoric of Social Movements class with Prof. Schneider have provided me with a solid background in structured and semi-structured interviews including the prerequisites for conducting human subject research. Additionally, taking a class on social movement rhetoric helped me get a solid grasp of historical as well as contemporary advancements in social movement theory.

My past academic research on Pan-Africanism and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States allowed me to conduct archival work at the Library of Congress, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City, Howard University Library, and the Martin Luther King Museum in Memphis. Furthermore, my history of South Africa class gave me more exposure to primary sources and how to collect and explore them in a research project. Since my class had a field visit component, it facilitated Q&A sessions with archivists at the Ekstrom Library and the Filson Historical Society in Louisville who generously share tips and best practices about using collections, manuscripts, and gathering primary data. These exchanges and practical experience came in handy when I visited the Cheikh Anta Diop University archive and the *Archives Nationales* in Dakar to collect newspaper sources about the *Y en a marre* movement. Thanks to my African Philosophy and Race, Ethnicity, and Diaspora classes honed my understanding of the dialectically linked between Pan-Africanism, Négritude and race relations in the Africa and the African diaspora. All of this constituted an important set of tools that facilitated the scrutiny of the relationship between contemporary social movements and Pan-Africanism in Francophone West Africa. However, completing this project came with a set of challenges.

The first challenge we encountered was finding financial resource to conduct fieldwork in Senegal. The Department of Comparative Humanities has no financial resources for graduate student conducting research outside city limits. In the same vein, the resources allocated by Graduate School were not consequent and only allowed me to offset 1/3 on my plane ticket. Therefore, I was obliged to go through the tedious and stressful process of applying for external travel grants many of which did not come through. Fortunately, when all hopes of finding research money were almost dashed, I got a last-minute email form the Roberson Funds for African Studies which granted me extra money to purchase my plane ticket. Nevertheless, I ended up using my personal limited resources to be able to conduct my fieldworks.

The second challenge I faced was having access to primary resources at Archives Nationales and Cheikh Anta Diop University. It took me several trips to these places before I could find the right person to allow me access to the material I needed. Additionally, the fact that some of the resources are not allowed to be copied or photographed, added another layer of complication to the data collection process. I spent hours hand-writing key information I needed for this research project. Gaining the trust of the people who work at the *Y en a marre* project office also proved challenging. Although they welcomed my research project with enthusiasm, they were at times apprehensive about my “intentions” especially when I mention rival movements or entities that have been critical of their activism. It was not easy to interview them for instance and sometimes I had to make several trips to the house before I could get a twenty-minute interview with a *Y en a marre* member. Finally, having to translate most of my sources from French or Wolof to English was a time-consuming and tedious exercise as I want to make sure that I faithful rendered the meanings of music lyrics or primary sources that I got from the movements. Despite all these hurdles, I managed complete the dissertation through a four-part outline.

The first chapter of the dissertation (The Emergence and Evolution of *Y en a marre*: A Socio-Political Context) provides the context in which *Y en a marre* came into existence, it also devotes a brief critical analysis to the dynamics of social movement in Senegal from independence to the contemporary period. Being the former capital of French West Africa, and the center of colonial contestation against working conditions in francophone colonies, Senegal has a long and rich history of social movement organization that made it possible for *Y en a marre* to not only be accepted as a formal entity but also to follow the steps of previous generations of activists and politicians who paved the way for social contestation pre and post-independent Senegal. This chapter will also pay particular attention to the memorable events of June 23, 2011, which placed *Y en a marre* into the orbit of world media. Their leading role in the fight against the constitutional change that would procure President Wade a controversial third term, opened a new era in the rhetoric of social movements as it set *Y en a marre* as a model for many other African activists.

Chapter two entitled “Music and Oral Rhetoric as Arsenal of Politico-Cultural Contention,” focuses on artistic and cultural expressions as a means of protest. The particularity of *Y en a marre* in contrast to other movements is the use of music, poetry, and other artistic forms as a means to express socio-political grievances. The movement has created an interesting rap music repertoire to denounces corruption, poor governance, foreign intervention as well as invite Senegalese people to better exercise their civil rights and duties. Since the movement was co-founded by two hip hop artists (Thiat and Kilifeu), *Y en a marre* ensures that artistic expressions remain central in their methods of protests and their dissemination of information to the masses. In this regard, the chapter also delves into a lyrical analysis of the music produced by artists involved in the movement.

The fulgurant development of rap music in West Africa especially Senegal since the 1990s has fostered a new cultural and communication platform for young artists and activists to mobilize

people and resources. Therefore, artistic expression through music, video, graffiti constitute an integral part of *Y en a marre*'s identity. The use of visual and performing arts in the *Y en a marre* context goes beyond mere entertainment to embrace activism as well as social therapy. Members of the group have used graffiti to transmit slogans and political message as well as to entertain mentally-impaired people in psychiatric institutions in Dakar. Finally, this chapter critically looks into other modes of cultural productions such as language and oral tradition in social activism.

Chapter three entitled “Transnational Collaboration and the Revival of Pan-African Ideals,” explores the continental impact of *Y en a marre*'s activism as it became a model for other social movements in the Francophone West and Central African region. It also scrutinizes how social movements in the region are collectively advancing Pan-Africanism to fight poor governance and curb the impact of neocolonialism through the formation of a Pan-African network called *Afrikki* which constitutes one of the prime symbols of grassroots Pan-Africanism (Pan-Africanism that is not driven by government-centered initiatives but rather by popular transnational endeavors). For a long time, Pan-Africanism was an agonizing political project championed by African governments and intellectual/elite organizations, but since the early 2000s, there seems to be a resurgence of Pan-Africanism spearheaded by popular organizations such as *Y en a marre* who try to involve the masses into solving important issues that are Pan Africanist in nature such as the abolition of the CFA currency, a French colonial legacy currently in use in 14 African countries including Senegal, Cote D'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso. The CFA problematic has created an unprecedented transnational collaboration of social movements on the continent to fight the “symbols” of neocolonialism.

Finally, this chapter investigates the point of contentions among social African social movements gathered in *Afrikki*. While these movements fundamentally agree on the necessity to

coordinate their activism to bring profound changes in their countries and the continent as a whole, they tend to disagree on how to achieve this goal. While a movement like *Jeunes et Forts* in Cameroon encourages African activists to run for public offices in order to bring the changes the masses need, organizations like *Balai Citoyen* champions the “NGOinazation” (the fact of turning social movements into Non-Governmental Organizations like UNICEF) of social movements and engage them into social entrepreneurship to transform their communities.

The final chapter of the dissertation (Resource Mobilization and Its Challenges in the Digital Era) is a diagnosis of the media, financial and human resources *Y en a marre* and similar insurgent movements in Francophone West Africa mobilize to carry out its plan of action. It also focuses on the dynamics of the elite group - social movement relationship and the convergence of interests between movements, media and benefactors. *Y en a marre's* has built over the years interesting partnerships with international organizations and influential people whose reputations raises concerns among certain Pan-African circles. What is the nature of the relationships between *Y en a marre* and international benefactors? Can the expectations of some elite groups/financial funders vis-à-vis social activists compromise the integrity of the social movement? In response to these interrogations, chapter four considers the financial resources of *Y en a marre* which have significantly increased over the years, as well as the complex sometimes questionable relationships between the movement and external. The international trips of the leadership, the music concerts, the fliers, the murals cost a lot of money the origin of which people wonder and speculate. The origin of the movement's financial resources has already caused controversy when Lamine Diack (former Chairman of the International Association of Athletics Federations), one of the benefactors of the movement in its early stages was arrested for corruption. Additionally, the support of entities

like the Soros Foundation and Open Society, generated more “suspicious” and criticism about who might be funding the movement and what are their intentions.

CHAPTER ONE:

THE EMERGENCE AND EVOLUTION OF THE *Y EN A MARRE* MOVEMENT: A SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT

As proponents of the collective behavior theory indicate, the emergence of a social movement and participation in it constitutes the end result of a lasting grievance or discontent that pushes people into taking mass action. *Y en a marre*'s emergence is not a departure from this norm. The movement came into existence during a tense socio-economic period in Senegal exacerbated with a political uncertainty as the then president, Abdoulaye Wade, attempted to change the constitution, eight months before the 2012 presidential elections. Contextualizing the rise and development of *Y en a marre* necessitates an understanding of the general geopolitical situation of Senegal, particularly the 2000-2012 period. This period known as *La première alternance politique* (The First Major Regime Change) is marked by the democratic replacement of the socialist regimes respectively under Senghor (1960-1981) and Diouf (1981-2000) by Abdoulaye Wade's government in 2000. Whereas the later chapters of this dissertation examine how *Y en a marre* has used Pan-Africanism to build a transnational network of activism and mobilize resources through social media and music, this chapter describes how the movement started and developed over the decade. It elucidates the general working environment of the Senegalese activists and my own process of establishing contact with the organization. In doing so, it emphasizes the circumstances under which the movement was born, as well as the events and initiatives that marked *Y en a marre*'s development. The latter being a young movement with a

rapid evolution, it is important to first re-trace the trajectory of the movement in relation to the political history and economy of Senegal.

Historically, Senegal is perceived to be among the most stable democracies in Africa. On a continent which has been conspicuous for despotic leadership and for lack of transparent political processes and individual freedoms, Senegal stands out as one of the few African countries with a record of relatively peaceful advancement towards full-scale democracy (Vengroff and Magala 2001, p.131-2). Despite being a predominantly Muslim nation, Senegal has succeeded in building a secular society in which people of different faiths and ethnic backgrounds coexist in peace. This peaceful coexistence translates into rather non-violent political transitions in the postcolonial era. Often praised for his inclusive leadership, the country's first president, Leopold Sédar Senghor granted a special place to religious leaders in the building of both the republic and its national identity. Senghor led the country from 1960 to 1981 when he resigned to hand his seat over to President Abdou Diouf.

President Diouf's twenty-year reign symbolized in many regards the continuum of socialist and Senghorian policies. By the mid-1990s, however, Diouf's tenure had left many Senegalese disgruntled. After the implementation of the Breton Woods Institutions recommended Structural Adjustment Programs and the second devaluation of the CFA (Communauté Financière d'Afrique) currency in January 1994¹, many wanted a break from the Socialist Party (PS). In 2000, Senegalese voters pinned their hope on Abdoulaye Wade, founder of the *Parti Démocratique Sénégalais* (Senegalese Democratic Party also known as PDS) and figurehead of the political opposition for twenty-six years. With a voting turnout of 63 percent, Senegalese people converged to the voting booths on February 19, 2000, and "took part in what has been among the most fair and free

¹ The first devaluation occurred on October 17, 1948, three years after the creation of the currency

elections ever to take place in Africa” (Vengroff and Magala 2001, p.131-2). When Diouf and the *Parti Socialiste* (the Socialist Party also known as PS) failed to secure 50 percent of the votes, a runoff election was triggered. Opposition parties formed a strategic coalition called “Coalition Alternance 2000,” led by Abdoulaye Wade, and subsequently defeated President Diouf with 58.7 percent of the runoff election ballot. Wade’s victory opened a new era in the country’s history and political economy. It is important to mention here that under Diouf, the Senegalese economy suffered due to internal and external factors.

President Diouf had inherited an economic slump which was engendered partly by the absence of viable economic blueprints from past administrations, as well as a severe drought that hit the country in the 1970s and the Structural Adjustment Programs imposed by IMF and the World Bank. In their co-authored book *Le Sénégal Sous Abdou Diouf: Etat et Société*, the Senegalese sociologist Momar Coumba Diop and historian Mamadou Diouf, describe the country’s bleak economic situation during this period:

Senegal is undeniably in a situation of economic crisis the social consequences of which are implied by adjustment policies, are becoming more and more difficult to bear by a very large majority of the population. The gradual deterioration of the economy, which worsened in the 1970s is illustrated by figures published by the World Bank. In all sectors of economic activity, there is considerable variation and a tendency to regression, if not stagnation compared to the level reached in the 1960s. [...] since the end of the first half of the 1980s, the Debt service is becoming more and more unbearable. With regard to the agricultural productions, one can note that they have been particularly fluctuating, in relation to their sensitivity to rainfall variations. Food crops showed a general upward trend between 1959 and 1967, before starting a downward movement from 1968 to 1980, when a slight recovery took place (Diop and Diouf 1990, p.153).²

²Le Sénégal est incontestablement dans une situation de crise économique dont les conséquences sociales qu’impliquent les politiques d’ajustement, deviennent de plus en plus difficiles à supporter par une très large majorité de la population. La dégradation progressive de l’économie accélérée dans les années 70, est illustrée par les chiffres publiés par la Banque mondiale. Dans tous les secteurs de l’activité économique, on constate des variations considérables et une tendance à la régression sinon à la stagnation par rapport au niveau atteint au cours des années 60. [...] depuis la fin de la première moitié des années 80, le service de la dette devient de plus en plus insupportable. En ce qui concerne les productions agricoles, on peut noter qu’elles ont été particulièrement fluctuantes, en relation avec leur sensibilité aux variations pluviométriques. Les cultures vivrières ont connu une tendance générale à la hausse entre 1959 et 1967, avant d’amorcer un mouvement à la baisse de 1968 à 1980 où se dessine une légère reprise. (My translation)

In highlighting the “catastrophic” economic situation of post-independence Senegal, Diop and Diouf also points out the social repercussions that caused many Senegalese voters to distance themselves from the Socialist Party in 2000. Besides being ready for a political change, the electorate seemed quite charmed by Abdoulaye Wade’s socio-economic program called *Sopi* (change in Wolof).

Upon taking office, Wade implemented an ambitious social and economic program. He embarked on a modernization program centered on infrastructure building (roads, schools, health facilities), improving access to drinking water, and launching ambitious agricultural programs, namely GOANA³ and Plan REVA⁴. Seeking to diversify the country's financial partners, Wade moved Senegal’s economy away from France, historically the country’s main financial and economic partner/benefactor, by striking agreements with other developing economies such as Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and China (Cornado 2012). Under Wade's tenure, the country experienced a modest economic growth. Senegal’s *Direction de la prévision et des études économiques* (The Office of Projection and Economic Studies also know as DPEE) and the World Bank recorded a 6.7 percent GDP growth in 2003 and a 5.9 percent GDP growth in 2004 (DPEE and World Bank online Databank, 2018). Though only bringing about minor growth, *Sopi* has significance in that this was the highest growth rate since the country’s independence in 1960.

This economic progress, however, came with an unexpected boomerang effect. The national electricity company was unable to provide sufficient electric power to millions of

³GOANA means Grand Agricultural Initiative for Food Security. It was a program designed to increase agricultural production in a short amount of time and help the country achieve food self-sufficiency. However, the program did not yield the expected results.

⁴ REVA stands for Plan for the Return to Agriculture. The aim of the Plan REVA was to prevent the rural exodus young people and women, and to provide jobs for emigrants and other people expelled from Europe, and to significantly increase agricultural production, particularly in horticulture, so as to meet the objectives of Accelerated Growth and Poverty Alleviation Strategy.

Senegalese and thousands of small businesses. In 2011, Senegal experienced an average of 900 hours' worth of power outages in just that one year, which brought about disastrous consequences for homes, hospitals, educational institutions and small businesses. Despite these frequent blackouts, electric bills stagnated or increased in some cases. In response, a group of Imams in Guédiawaye (a suburb of Dakar) protested the payment of electricity bills, arguing that the latter did not reflect the homeowners' consumption given the long and continuous power outages throughout the country. In an unprecedented move in the history of structured social protest in Senegal, Guédiawaye Imams organized themselves into a movement called *Le Collectif des Imams de Guédiawaye*. These religious leaders decided to step out of their traditional role as social regulators and religious guides to defy political authorities. Their protest movement later inspired the formation of the *Y en a marre* movement. Imam Youssoupha Sarr, spokesperson for the Imams, spells out their concerns in an interview when he declares:

The perception of the Imamate in Senegal must change. The Imam must have a profession and not be content with donations. Imams must serve the people and must not only be cloistered in mosques. We are conducting citizen actions and playing a sentinel role in preserving social peace. We are here to collect the demands of the people and put pressure on the authorities to solve the problem. We must congratulate ourselves on this fight.⁵ (Imam Youssoupha Sarr interview with Bocar Sakho, *Le Quotidien*, December 16, 2008).

Imam Sarr's declaration is a redefinition of the role of the "Imamat"⁶ which in his perspective goes beyond the boundaries of a mosque to embrace social activism nation-wide. The Imams' protest opened a new chapter in Senegalese and Francophone West African activism. It also reshaped the meaning of civic engagement and religious responsibilities given that the Imam now represents the voice of the people regardless of their religious beliefs. In their new activist role, preaching

⁵La perception de l'Imamat au Sénégal doit changer. L'Imam doit avoir une profession et non plus se contenter de dons. Les Imams doivent se mettre au service des populations et ne doivent pas seulement être cloîtrés dans les mosquées. Nous sommes en train de mener des actions citoyennes et jouons un rôle de sentinelle pour préserver la paix sociale. Nous sommes là pour recueillir les revendications des populations et mettre la pression sur les autorités pour que le problème soit réglé. Il faut se féliciter de ce combat. (My translation)

⁶ The fact of assuming the function of Imam.

became an act of defiance and part of an arsenal of confrontation against the power structure. The Imams' actions galvanized a group of young Senegalese, including two hip-hop artists, a couple of journalists, a banker and IT specialist. Unlike the religious leaders, these young activists crystallized the popular frustration into a bigger movement so as to tell the Wade regime that "enough is enough," hence the birth of the *Y'en a marre* movement in 2011.

I- THE GENESIS AND EVOLUTION OF THE MOVEMENT

Y en a marre formally came into existence on January 16, 2011, in Parcelles Assainies located in the Dakar suburb. Its activities officially kicked off on January 18, 2011, at the *Place du Souvenir Africain* in Dakar. Its founding members included Fadel Barro who became the coordinator and spokesperson of the movement until 2019 when Aliou Sané replaced him. The co-founders also included hip-hop artists Oumar Cyrille Touré (also known by his stage name Thiat), and Landing Mbessane Seck (also known by his stage name Kilifeu), Sophiétou Denise Sow, an IT specialist, El Hadj Abdoulaye Niassé, a student, Marie Ndella Guèye, a banker, and Amath Seck, a businessman. According to Denise Sow, the co-founders came up with the name *Y en a marre* after long and intense discussions about Senegal's socio-economic situation at Fadel Barro's apartment. The movement quickly became popular and attracted the attention of the local press and governmental authorities who at first minimized the importance and the message of the movement but quickly realized that they were dealing with a new phenomenon whose impact goes beyond the Senegalese borders. To better understand the socio-political backdrop in which *Y en a marre* was born, I met and worked with its founding members for a year three months of which I spent at the movement's headquarters in Dakar, Senegal. *Y en a marre* activists graciously shared with me their stories, projects, pictures and documents pertaining to the rise and development of the movement. Investigating the genesis of the movement required several phone calls, interviews as well as hours spent in their project office observing their daily routine.

1- Establishing Contact with the Movement

The clock struck 12 pm when I arrived at the *Y en a marre* movement's project office in Sacré-Coeur, an upper middle-class neighborhood in Dakar. Located on the third floor of a house situated 30 meters from the VDN, one of the busiest roads of Senegal's capital city. The project office sharply contrasts with the movement's "almost abandoned" headquarters located in the Parcelles Assainies Unité 16, a less prosperous locality in the suburb of Dakar where it all began. Now they only meet at the Parcelles office once every two weeks according to Aliou Thiaw, the movement's administrative secretary, to talk about the issues related to activism as well as national politics. My first formal contact with the movement took place on June 29, 2018, at the headquarters where I met with Cyrille Touré, popularly known by his stage name Thiat (from here on he will be referred to as Thiat), one of the most recognized faces of the social movement as well as of Senegalese hip hop.

I first met Thiat at the Hip-Hop Summit that took place in Dakar over two days, June 18-20, 2018, thanks to a mutual friend. He was enthusiastic about my research project more so, he was happy that a Senegalese student had written about *Y en a marre*. As he noted, much of the existing literature about the movement had been written chiefly by non-Senegalese, and for the sake of memory, "we need more Senegalese folks to write about us and our history in general" (Thiat 2018). He gave me the telephone contacts of Aliou Thiaw, *Y en a marre*'s administrative secretary, promised to put me in touch with the other founding members of the movement, and to grant me an interview at a later date at the headquarters in Parcelles Assainies.

After setting up a meeting with Thiat, I waited for his arrival outside of *Y en a marre*'s headquarters. While I patiently waited, a middle-age lady selling breakfast next door asked me in

a gentle voice “are you waiting for someone?” I answered: “Yes, I have a meeting with Thiat.” My answer made her smile and she said: “Thiat, that trouble-maker”. A few minutes later, Thiat showed up wearing a black shirt, black pants and a striped hat that has become now a staple in the clothing of *Y en a marre* members as it reminisces the style of the Guinean revolutionary Amilcar Cabral, one of the figures the movement hails as a model. Before showing me into the headquarters conference room, Thiat exchanged a couple of jokes with the breakfast-selling lady. He explained that he had not slept or eaten for 24 hours due to Senegal’s defeat against Colombia in the FIFA World Cup. He then asked me to take a tour of the headquarters in order to look at the pictures and quotes plastered on the walls while he finishes a phone conversation.

The images and quotes on the headquarters walls tell the history of the movement, the trials, and tribulations of its members and their triumphs. Among these, a picture of the *Y en a marre* members welcoming President Macky Sall to their headquarters after his 2012 presidential victory, a photograph of Fadel Barro shaking hands with then U.S President Obama, a picture of the founders sitting next to former French minister of Foreign Affairs, Laurent Fabius, during his visit to the headquarters. Beyond celebrating the movement’s success, the conference room was also full of pictures bearing witness to the physical and psychological hardships that *Y en a marre* members endured, particularly during the lead up to the 2012 presidential elections. In one of these memorable images, one can see Pape Aliou Gadiaga, a *Y en a marre* member, being dragged by police officers out of the Kaolack City Hall on the eve of a June 23 protest. Another photograph depicts the arrest of Simon Kouka, another prominent Senegalese hip-hop artist and *Y en a marre* activist. One cannot help but notice the big poster in the conference room entitled *Les Dix commandments de l’esprit Y’en a marre* (The Ten Commandments of the Y en a marre Spirit). The poster enumerates the movement’s bylaws and outlines its organizational structure. It also

defines what the “Yennamarristes” call *esprit* (spirit), which, in this context, is a branch or chapter of the movement. The founders chose the term *esprit* to insist that *Y en a marre* is not simply a social movement but a state of mind. They believe that a meaningful social change begins with a radical shift in mentality. The “Ten Commandments” serve a dual role, they outline the philosophy of the movement, but they also note the rules and regulations that *Y en a marre* chapters must abide by. The commandments read as follows:

- 1- The branch of the Y en a marre movement in any area is called “Esprit”. The Esprit is an inclusive, secular and nonviolent organization.
- 2- The Y en a marre Esprit is apolitical and remains equidistant from political parties. The coordinator, the spokesperson, and the members of the bureau must not belong to any political party.
- 3- Members of the Y en a marre Esprit are volunteers and pledge to respond to the call of the main branch as long as the latter aims at safeguarding our democratic gains, the Republic or to promoting the values of the NTS (New Type of Senegalese).
- 4- The Y en a marre Esprit can be established based on the geography, themes, or the socio-professional categories of people.
- 5- The Y en a marre Esprit must have at least 25 members with a minimum of 10 women.
- 6- The Y en a marre Esprit must have a coordinator, a claims manager, an art director, an administrative secretary, a spokesperson and any other commission to be determined in accordance with the needs of the community.
- 7- The Y en a marre Esprit is to diagnose the problems of its community, proposes solutions and set itself as an example of the purest form of the NTS (New type of Senegalese) advocated by the movement.
- 8- The Y en a marre Esprit is to execute its plan of action after having consulted the main organization which ensures the coordination of all actions.
- 9- The Y en a marre Esprit marre must not accept funding from political parties. It cannot under any circumstance monetize its support to any organization.
- 10- The Y en a marre Esprit must get its finding from its socio-educational activities and the sale of T-shirts and other paraphernalia.⁷

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- 1- ⁷ Le démembrement du mouvement Y'en a marre dans les localités est appelés Esprit Y'en a marre. L'esprit est une organisation inclusive, laïque et non-violent.
 - 2- L'esprit Y'en a marre est apolitique et reste équidistant des partis politiques. Le coordinateur, le porte-parole, comme les membres du bureau, ne doivent appartenir à aucun parti politique
 - 3- Les membres de l'esprit Y'en a marre sont volontaires, bénévoles, et s'engagent à répondre à l'appel du Noyau dur tant que celui-ci vise à sauvegarder les acquis démocratiques, à sauvegarder la République ou à promouvoir les valeurs du Nts (Nouveau type de Sénégalais).
 - 4- L'esprit [Y'en marre] (sic) peut constituer en fonction de la géographie, des thèmes, ou en fonction de la catégorie socioprofessionnelle.
 - 5- L'esprit Y'en a marre compte au moins 25 personnes avec un minimum de 10 femmes.
 - 6- L'esprit Y'en a marre est constitué d'un coordinateur, d'un responsable chargé des revendications, d'un directeur artistique, d'un secrétaire administratif, d'un porte-parole et toute autre commission à déterminer en fonction des besoins de la localité

There are three important things in these “Ten Commandments” which are worth emphasizing. The first is the concept of NTS (New Type of Senegalese). Through NTS, members desire to create a new “homo Senegalensis,” or what the Senegalese activist Cheikh Tidiane Diop calls the “ideal type of Senegalese”. This according to Diop should be one who is an active member within civil society through participation in the progress of the nation. Diop argues that this “New Type of Senegalese” must be engaged and advocate for democratic precepts. They must always show equidistance vis-à-vis political parties. They should not use their activism to gain celebrity or easy access to the command of a political party (Diop, 2012). Though this concept of NTS has recently gained traction among young Senegalese, it has been lambasted by the movement’s opponents for being empty at its core and viewed as a paradox, since its creators, claims the Senegalese news critic Ibrahima Diop, “individually do not possess any of the values they try to promote through the concept” (Diop, 2013). Ibrahima Diop judges the concept by the collective character of the movement’s cadres rather than critically analyzing the value of the concept itself or the potential socio-political changes that the concept could bring to Senegal. Diop’s value judgement does not insinuate that leaders of the movement have questionable characters but critics of *Y en a marre* often dig in the past of its members hoping to uncover information that could stain the reputation of the movement and its founders. Whether what these opponents uncover is true or no matter how damaging it could be for the movement, it should be acknowledged that initiatives like NTS have gained the support of the Senegalese masses who see in it the new starting point for social

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- 7- L’esprit Y’en a marre fait le diagnostic des problèmes de sa localité, propose des solutions et s’offre en exemple dans le plus pur style du Nts (Nouveau type de Sénégalais) prôné par le Mouvement.
 - 8- L’esprit Y’en a marre exécute son plan d’actions après s’être référé au Noyau dur qui assure la mutualisation des bonnes actions
 - 9- L’esprit Y’en a marre ne doit accepter aucun financement de partis politiques. Il ne peut en aucun cas monnayer son soutien à une quelconque organisation.
 - 10- L’esprit Y’en a marre tire ses profits de ses activités socio-éducatives et de la vente de ses tee-shirt et autres gadgets. (My translation)

transformation. In 2013, *Y en a marre*'s then coordinator, Fadel Barro articulated this thought in a manifesto:

We said we're fed up so as to set an example and spark the emergence of a New Type of Senegalese, a New Type of African who can bring values for a change. That is to say, build 'yenamarrisme' as a philosophy of action based upon active and constructive citizenship, become a gatekeeper of democracy and a development agent through abnegation and a positive attitude. In short, we need to deconstruct and break with all the obstacles that prevent us from moving forward⁸ (The *Y en a marre* Manifesto 2013).

Through Barro's statement, one can see that NTS is more than just a slogan or a national rallying cry; it has a Pan-African outreach as well, and materializes the "Yenamarrisme" philosophy designed to create a new, creative, and combative citizenship. Through the notion of NTS, these activists reconceptualize the idea of civic awareness by putting the individual at the center of community preoccupations and making them an active agent of local change. As Francophone Studies scholar Michela Ardizzoni affirms, "while still rooted in national pride and local traditions, *Y en a marre*'s call invites citizens to rid themselves of burdening stereotypes which lead to inertia" (Ardizzoni 2017, p.45). Thus, the concept of NTS informs most of the movement's local projects, as we shall see later in this chapter.

The second notable aspect of the "Ten Commandments" is the place of women in the movement. Aside from women's rights organizations, social movements in Francophone West Africa remain overwhelmingly dominated by men. The place of women within these organizations is still marginal. Typically, these movements become increasingly segmented along lines of gender, race, ethnicity, and class, and *Y en a marre* seemingly made sure that women's voices are audible within the movement (Weldon 2006, p.1). From the outset, women have occupied central

⁸ Nous avons dit Y'en a marre pour se donner en exemple et susciter l'émergence d'un Nouveau type de sénégalais, d'un Nouveau type d'Africain porteur des valeurs du changement. Enfin bâtir le Yenamarrisme comme une philosophie d'action fondée sur une citoyenneté active et constructive. Par l'abnégation et la positive attitude, se positionner comme une sentinelle de la démocratie et un acteur de développement. Bref, il nous faut déconstruire et rompre, avec toutes ces tares qui nous empêchent de décoller. (My translation)

roles in the movement as two of its six founding members were women. The quota for female membership (at least 10 women out of 25 members) further symbolizes inclusivity especially in a context where the shadow of patriarchy still haunts the social mobilization in Senegal and Francophone West Africa.

Finally, the third noticeable aspect of the “Ten Commandments” remains the presence of an artistic director in each *Y en a marre Esprit*. This tactic testifies to the importance of art, especially music, in the functioning of the social movement. In fact, it is virtually impossible to dissociate *Y en a marre* from its artistic roots. The movement’s most recognizable faces are the two hip-hop artists (Thiat and Kilifeu of Keur Gui Crew). Since early 2000, these two rappers have been conspicuous for their musical diatribes against the political establishment. They criticized the mayor of Kaolack (a city in central Senegal where Thiat and Kilifeu are originally from), which resulted in their near-fatal beatings. Thiat and Kilifeu ended up being hospitalized for three weeks and then taken to prison, where they claimed they were tortured. Their music, as a result, endured state censorship turning the rappers into enemies of the state (Kaufman 2015). Thiat and Kilifeu brought this dose of radical “*artivism*” into the movement. Art occupies a significant place in *Y en a marre*’s arsenal of political contention and mass/resource mobilization strategies. Besides these discernable aspects of the ten commandments, the presence of quotes and pictures of Pan-African figures and postcolonial thinkers in the headquarters’ conference room cannot go unnoticed.

A big display of a Franz Fanon quotation draws one’s attention when you first walk into the *Y en a marre* conference room. The quote reads: “*Il n’y a pas de destin forclos, il n’y a que des responsabilités dessertées*” (There are no foreclosed destinies but only deserted responsibilities). Not only does this statement constitute the guiding principle of the “*Yenamarrisme*” philosophy, it also represents the motto of the movement and often is the closing

statement within their official documents. Fanon's works and ideas, as well as the ideas of many other postcolonial theorists, still resonate among Senegalese and Francophone West African activists. For *Y en a marre*, such voices are not relics of a bygone era. Instead, they help give the current movement a source of inspiration and a platform to deconstruct neocolonial processes.

Under the auspices of *Y en a marre* and other youth movements like *Urgence panafricanistes*, a continent-wide and diasporic movement founded in Senegal, contemporary social movements throughout Francophone West Africa concern themselves with issues that postcolonial theories have also been trying to address, such as the deconstruction of neocolonialism in all its forms. In *The Empires Writes Back*, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin argue that "we use the term 'post-colonial' [theory], to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression" (Ashcroft & al 2002, p.2). Robert J. Young goes further by adding: "postcolonialism names a politics and philosophy of activism that contests disparity, and so continues in a new way of anti-colonial struggles of the past. It asserts not just the right [...] of peoples to access resources and material well-being, but also the dynamic power of their cultures" (Young 2003, p.4). These statements pertain to the struggle that contemporary African social movements are fighting in their respective countries and at a transnational level as they combat the historical processes that continue to destroy their social and economic fabrics through both poor governance as well as neocolonialism.

In this respect, *Urgence panafricanistes*⁹ echoes these preoccupations in their seven-point political program when they write: "Urgence panafricanistes, is a citizen, geopolitical and

⁹ *Urgence panafricanistes* and *Y en a marre* are partner movements and collaborate and many issues that pertain to curb neocolonialism and foreign influence in African countries such as the fight against the CFA franc.

traditionalist African movement. Its struggle revolves around an anti-globalist dimension by acting in the framework of resistance to French neocolonialism, globalism (generalized Westernization) and imperialism in all its forms”¹⁰ (*Urgence panafricanistes*’ political program, 2017). *Y en a marre* and *Urgence panfricanistes* partnered to protest against issues that pertain to neocolonialism. One such issue is the use of the CFA Franc currency in 14 African countries, as these movements and other regional youth organizations consider the use of the CFA currency as an affront to national and continental sovereignty, in addition to constituting an impediment to economic development (we will elaborate on this in chapter three). Preoccupations like these undoubtedly make Fanon's writings relevant to Senegalese and Francophone West African activists, but also to many other activists on the African continent.

Exploring Fanon’s relevance in contemporary social movements, particularly in the Arab Spring in Tunisia, Nigel Gibson argues that Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* is not only a narrative of wretchedness and suffering, but of self-fashioning movements, which, through action become conscious of themselves as subjects as they become aware of the betrayals of the leaders who speak in their name (Gibson 2015, p.1). This particular aspect of Gibson's argument is visible in the rise of the Rhodes Must Fall movement that started at the University of Cape Town in South Africa on March 9, 2015, when groups of disillusioned black students soiled the statue of Cecil John Rhodes (the figurehead of colonization in South Africa) with human waste and demanded its removal from public sight. Thierry M. Luescher claims that: “the excision of this ‘symptomatic sore’ was but a symbolic step in the Fanonian “decolonization” process of healing the post-apartheid university and creating a new intellectual space” (Luescher 2016, p.2). The movement spouses Fanon’s view

¹⁰Urgences Panafricanistes, se veut un mouvement citoyen, géopolitique et traditionaliste africain. Il s’articule autour d’une dimension anti-mondialiste en agissant dans le cadre de la résistance au néocolonialisme français, au globalisme (occidentalisation généralisée) et à l’impérialisme sous toutes ses formes.

on the use of coercive violence to decolonize populations, a theory Fanon outlines in the first chapter of *Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon writes, “national liberation, national renaissance, the restoration of nationhood to the people, commonwealth: whatever may be the headings used or the new formulas introduced, decolonization is always a violent phenomenon” (Fanon 1961, p.33). Fanon's advocacy of violence to get rid of oppressive system and symbols was formulated during the Algerian War of independence, but it is also a result of a critical reading of the works of Négritude writers, especially Aimé Césaire, who tremendously influenced him.

While Fanon claims that decolonization is the absolute substitution of an oppressive system and by a new one in which “the last shall be first” (in other words, a system run by locals), members of the Rhodes Must Fall movement also believe that the South African education system, which has been set up during the Apartheid era must also drastically change. Using Fanonian principles, the Rhodes Must Fall movement rapidly developed into a call for the decrease of college tuition and a denunciation of South-African leaders unable to keep their promise of building a more egalitarian society. Through Fanonian ideals and principles, the *Y en a marre* movement and #Rhodes Must Fall/Fees Must Fall found a common ground upon which to articulate their activism. They discussed these issues during the first Pan-African summit of social movements (hosted by *Y en a marre* in Dakar in June 2018), during which Fanon was hailed as a source of inspiration for African and diasporic social movements. It is these Fanonian and postcolonial principles that are incised into the decision of visiting the *Y en a marre* headquarters, and make it all the more interesting as the first point of contact with the movement, it is rich in teaching about the history, the trials and tribulations of the movement as well as their philosophies. By installing their headquarters in the suburb of Dakar generally regarded as an epicenter of social protest, the Senegalese activists seem to legitimize popular representativity. Ironically, the movement

possesses a “second headquarters,” which they call the project office, located in the Sacré-Coeur, a nicer neighborhood of Dakar, which certainly does not have the same symbolism as the Parcelles Assainies headquarters.

Y en a marre rents the Sacré-Coeur office space with a grant from the European Union to partly finance a popular program called “Sunu Gox” (Our Community). The organization now runs all its other projects and campaigns mostly from this office. “Sunu Gox” seeks to respond to the environmental challenges facing the suburbs of Dakar, support local initiatives geared towards civic awareness, and to support local groups that are contributing to the improvement of their living environment in concert with local authorities. So far, six local organizations from the suburbs have benefitted from “Sunu Gox”. However, for a movement like *Y en a marre*, it seems paradoxical to not have in the suburb, the office that runs suburban projects. In addition, the monthly rent of the Sacré-Coeur office could have been used to finance more projects. My visit to the “Second Headquarters” yielded a totally different experience.

2- Exploring the Office Project: *Y en a Marre* Moving Away from the Masses?

Everyone was frenetically moving around the office getting ready for the upcoming summit of social movements called UPEC¹¹. Despite the intensity of the preparations, people in the office maintained a jovial atmosphere thanks to the occasional jokes from Moriba Sissokho and Chérif, two hard-working students hired to run errands related to the UPEC summit, or the memories that Fadel Barro or Aliou Sané shared with the other people in the office, like when they got arrested and then expelled from the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is in this kind of environment that I met Denise Safiétou Sow, a founding member of *Y en a marre* in charge of information technology and communication for the movement. It took me thirty minutes to convince her to grant me an interview about the genesis of the movement as she kept telling me that she is shy and does not like to be in the spotlight. Her chattiness and big smile conceal an introvert personality. In a twenty-minute long interview, Denise Saphiatou Sow (also known as Sophia), provided me with a detailed account of the history of *Y en a marre*. She described the genesis of the movement as follows:

Y en a marre was born in a rather particular context because we used to get together at Fadel's in Parcelles Assainies Unit 16 in his old apartment which has become now our headquarters. Thiat, Kilifeu, myself, Amath Seck, Aliou Sané, Fadel and his little brother Mame El Hadji used to hang out there. And it's around cups of tea that the movement *Y en a marre* was born, because we spent days without electricity, many nights in the dark, it was impossible to get any work done and we said that we needed to do something about this situation, because before, it was senior citizens who lived in the suburb who were protesting and we thought it was cowardly on our part to let them protest for us. So we decided to create something. Several names came out of the discussions: « *Y en a assez*,» « *Ça suffit*,» "*Doyna sèk*" and finally, someone suggested "*Y en a marre*". Afterward, we asked ourselves, what kind of movement we would like to create? A movement that will gather all Senegalese people, a movement which is different from what we used to see here. So we said we will call our artist friends, journalists friends and any Senegalese person who identifies with the movement. I remember, the first person we called was Fou Malade around 3 or 4 am, it's Thiat who called him, he told him: 'do you remember when we used to talk about what we could do about the situation the country and when to create something? Well, we just created a movement called *Y en a marre* that will be launched on

¹¹ UPEC means Popular University for Civic Engagement. It was the first Pan-African gathering of contemporary social movement from Africa and the Diaspora.

January 18th'. Fou Malade did not hesitate, he said: 'anything that Keur Gui Crew does, I'm in'. The next day, Thiat and Kilifeu called their other artist friends, Fadel and Aliou Sané who are journalists called their journalist friends, we invited some students and we went to the Place du Souvenir to launch the movement. (Interview with Sophia July 9, 2018).¹²

Not only does Sophia highlight the Imam's influence on the inception of the movement, but she also notes the diverse backgrounds of the activists who created *Y en a marre*. From the outset, the movement resonated with many different socio-professional classes. Its members are artists, doctors, students, street vendors, ex-felons, etc. It is also interesting to point out here the significance of the birthplace of the movement as the suburb of Dakar, including Guédiwaye, Pikine, Parcelles Assainies, Rufisque, are all historical hotbeds of popular resistance and urban cultural expressions. A large number of people dwelling in these places make of the suburbs, attractive targets for political clientelism but at the same time, intimidating places for their potentiality of revolt.

Paradoxically, the suburb of Dakar suffers from a systemic exclusion due to the quasi-absence of sustainable socio-economic policies to improve the lives of its inhabitants. Approximately, three million people live in the suburb. A good portion of its neighborhoods are

¹² *Y en a marre* est né dans un contexte assez particulier, parce que nous avions l'habitude d'aller discuter chez Fadel à l'Unité 16 est son appartement est devenu notre QG actuellement. Thiat, Kilifeu, moi-même, Amath Seck, Aliou Sané, Fadel et son petit frère Mame El Hadji et c'est autour du thé que le mouvement *Y en a marre* est né, parce que nous sommes restés des jours sans électricité, de nombreuses nuits dans le noir, impossible de travailler et on a décidé de faire quelque chose parce qu'avant c'était des vieux du troisième âge qui étaient dans la banlieue qui manifestaient leur ras-le-bol et nous nous sommes dit que c'était lâche de notre part de les laisser revendiquer cela à notre place. Alors nous avons décidé de créer quelque chose. Nous avons commencé à discuter sur le nom du mouvement. Plusieurs noms sont sortis : « *Y en a assez*, » « *Ça suffit*, » « *Doyna sëk* » et quelqu'un a proposé le nom « *Y en a marre*. » Puis on a dit quel genre de mouvement on va créer? Un mouvement qui va rassembler tous les Sénégalais, qui est différent de ce qu'on avait l'habitude de voir ici. Alors on a dit qu'on va appeler les amis artistes, journalistes et tout Sénégalais qui voudrait se retrouver dedans. Je me rappelle, la première personne qu'on a appelé c'est Fou Malade vers 3 heures du matin 4 heures, c'est Thiat qui l'a appelé. Il lui a dit 'tu te rappelles qu'on avait l'habitude de discuter sur quoi faire où créer quelque chose? Ben on a créé un mouvement qu'on va lancer le 18 Janvier qui s'appelle *Y en a marre*' et Fou Malade n'a pas hésiter, il a dit 'tout ce que Keur Gui fait, je suis dedans' et le lendemain, Thiat et Kilifeu ont appelé leurs autres amis artistes, Fadel et Aliou Sané qui sont journalistes ont appelé leurs amis journalistes, on a appelé quelques étudiants et on est allé à la Place du Souvenir lancer cela. (My translation)

overlooked by public authorities, but coveted by political parties. It is also the place where the least docile movements are born (Carayol 2011). Although the suburb records more than two-thirds of registered voters in the capital city, many of its neighborhoods are characterized by safety issues, unpaved roads and unemployment, whereas the overwhelming majority of Senegalese politicians belong to the upper middle class and tend to reside in better neighborhoods. Journalist Rémi Carayol provides an interesting contrast between the suburb where *Y'en a marre* was born and the kind of place where many Senegalese politicians live:

It was a casual conversation in the villa of Moustapha Niasse, former Prime Minister of Abdoulaye Wade who has become now one of his fiercest opponents. The house overlooks the western coast of Dakar, where embassies, residences of diplomats and houses of senior politicians rub shoulders. In his exquisite lounge, the president of the Alliance of Forces for Progress (AFP) delivers his feeling on the "bad governance" of the current regime, then observes a pause. He gets up slowly, disappears for a few seconds and comes back with a black T-shirt in his hands. Niasse smiles, just like in the picture located in a corner of the living room, showing him shaking hands with Bill Clinton. On the T-shirt, nine white letters, four words, a slogan: "Y'en a marre". "This movement will far exceed the "Sopi of 2000," he says. [...] Far from the nice neighborhoods, Parcelles Assainies-Unité 16. Sandy streets, intersections blocked by the Tata, these overloaded coaches that connect the suburbs to Downtown Dakar, carriages pulled by old horses, overcrowded buildings, under-equipped apartments ... We are far from beautiful neighborhoods. [...] It is here that the movement "Y'en a marre" was born. It was a Sunday in January - one of those countless days without electricity (Carayol 2011).¹³

¹³ C'est une discussion à bâtons rompus dans la villa de l'ancien Premier ministre d'Abdoulaye Wade devenu l'un de ses opposants les plus acerbes, Moustapha Niasse. La demeure donne sur la corniche ouest de Dakar, où se côtoient ambassades, résidences de diplomates et maisons de hauts responsables politiques. Dans son salon au goût exquis, le président de l'Alliance des forces du progrès (AFP) livre son sentiment sur la « mal-gouvernance » du régime actuel, puis marque un arrêt. Il se lève lentement, disparaît quelques secondes et revient avec un tee-shirt noir dans les mains. Niasse sourit, comme sur cette photo qui, dans un coin du salon, le montre en train de serrer la main de Bill Clinton. Sur le tee-shirt, neuf lettres blanches, quatre mots, un slogan : « Y'en a marre ». « Ce mouvement va dépasser de loin le "Sopi" de 2000, » affirme-t-il. [...] Loin des beaux quartiers, les Parcelles assainies, unité 16. Rues ensablées, carrefours obstrués par les Tata, ces cars surchargés qui relient la banlieue à Dakar, carrioles tirées par de vieux chevaux, immeubles surpeuplés, appartements sous-équipés... On est loin des beaux quartiers. Dans les années 1970, « c'était une cité-dortoir », explique Mamadou, 73 ans. Aujourd'hui, c'est une ville à part entière, d'où les habitants sortent peu. C'est ici que le mouvement « Y'en a marre » a vu le jour. C'était un dimanche du mois de janvier – un de ces innombrables jours sans électricité. (My translation)

Carayol points a stark contrast between the outskirts of Dakar, where resistance/social revolt often occurs, and other parts of the peninsula dominated by politicians and many other middle-class families. Although the suburbs of Dakar might be predominantly inhabited by low-income families, many of its neighborhoods have absolutely nothing to envy for the wealthiest neighborhood of Dakar. Given the proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, as well as the major infrastructural projects going on there, places like Parcelles Assainies and Guédiawaye are attracting more economic resources and more middle-class families. Additionally, current urban planning projects including pavement, highways, housing are turning parts of the suburbs into more livable spaces.

Y'en a marre came into existence on the eve of the 2012 presidential elections marked by the continuous power outages. This period is also conspicuous for President Wade's unilateral decision to change the constitution and thereby confirming the growing suspicions at the times about his secret moves to propel his son Karim to the executive branch. The inception of *Y'en a marre* is the result of a discussion during which the founders asked themselves a simple question: "what can we do to bring solutions to the situation?" In a December 2012 interview with representatives of the United Nations Regional Information Center for Western Europe (UNRIC), Aliou Sané, journalist and founding member of the *Y'en a marre* explained the genesis of the movement as follows:

We discussed the fact that a group of imams from Guédiawaye had mobilized themselves to speak out against the constant cuts in electricity. So we said to ourselves if the elderly are taking a stand, how come we, the young, don't? And so we decided something had to be done. We considered founding a new political party but quickly dismissed the idea. We felt there was a need for a new movement and area of expression, inclusive and open to all. We felt the expression "*Y'en a marre*" described the general feeling of the population very well and quickly agreed on that name. We then put together a press release, which we submitted to the sometimes hesitant and reluctant media who were not in favor at first. After that, things advanced rapidly – the word spread, the movement gained attention, and

on June 23rd, 2011, demonstrations turned into riots and over a hundred were injured. It was all over the news, and when people saw the way the Government handled things, the movement got even more followers (Interview with UNRIC 2012).

Sané's statement partly sums up the context in which the movement was born. Their irruption into the Senegalese political scene generated widespread speculation on the movement's method. *Y'en a marre* rose to prominence due to the massive protest against the constitutional amendment introduction to parliament on June 23, 2011. June 23 marks one of the most important historical landmarks in the evolution of the social movement, as it put *Y'en a marre* on the radar of the local and international media and made the movement a serious counter-power in the Senegalese political nomenclature.

II- LANDMARKS MOMENTS IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE MOVEMENT

The evolution of *Y en a marre* transformed the ways social moments operate in Senegal and Francophone West Africa. They introduced a new form of constructive activism, which is a departure from the sporadic and circumstantial anti-establishment movements or uprisings that often see the light of day on the continent to fulfill short term political purposes or to denounce a specific economic situation. As a movement, *Y en a marre* concerns itself with socio-economic and community issues before, during, and after elections to hold national and local authorities accountable. For the movement, activism is not only an expression of grievances in the streets or in the media. It also includes advocacy and sustainable community projects in order to empower the citizenry. Since its creation, *Y en a marre* has put forth several important initiatives that correspond to important steps in the movement's evolution, but also undertook major transformative protests and campaigns that reshaped national politics and reverberated across Senegalese borders. The June 23 protest constitutes one of those historical landmarks in the evolution of *Y en a marre's* activism.

1- The “June 23 Protest”

June 23, 2011 went down in Senegal’s political history as a revolutionary date. Thousands of Senegalese citizens, under the leadership of *Y'en a marre*, descended on the streets of the capital city and occupied the National Assembly to oppose what they deemed an “unlawful” change of the Constitution. Months earlier, President Abdoulaye Wade had proposed two constitutional changes that would undoubtedly guarantee him a controversial third term. Furthermore, the bill proposed to create a vice-president position in the governmental structure and many suspected that President Wade wanted the position as a shortcut for his son Karim to ascend to the highest elective position. The bill also required presidential candidates to designate running-mates, and more importantly, it stated that the president would be elected with simply 25 percent of the popular vote, knowing that historically 50 percent was required to win a presidential election. These anti-democratic provisions triggered mass protests that briefly installed a new political order in which political parties were no longer the major actors within national politics but became followers of *Y'en a marre* engaged in a struggle against a government that they believed threatened the founding values of the republic.

Although several signs presaged the June 23 uprising, President Wade and his government ignored numerous calls to abdicate this constitutional project from dignitaries and the national press. Sidy Lamine Niasse, owner of the Wal-Fajri press group and a vocal critic of the regime, alerted the Senegalese public opinion a month earlier when he stated: “Senegalese people are tired don’t push them to the edge.” (Niasse, Sidy Lamine. “Nos Compatriotes sont fatigués” *Walfadjri*, May 2, 2011).¹⁴ Although Niasse’s message was directed at the First Lady who was present at the

¹⁴ Wal-Fajri is the first major private media corporation in the country. Its owner Sidy Lamine Niasse was a religious leader and a tireless advocate of democracy, freedom of press and tireless voice of the masses. He organized popular marches against the governments although he ran diplomatic missions for the Senegalese government under Diouf and Wade, he remains of one their most vocal critics.

ceremony, his statement reflected the accumulated frustrations related to the slow growth, inconsistent access to electricity, as well as police repression of protesters. Ten days before the June uprising, Niassa's newspaper headlined *Emeutes de l'électricité* (The Electricity Riots) an article that reaffirmed the statement he made at the CEOs award ceremony days earlier and shows that the frustration of the masses is unfolding in the streets of Dakar and other regions of the country all demanding an end to the electricity shortage. The article observed:

Khar Yalla spews fire in this disturbing nightfall. Fire and smoke from end to end. Electricity, this rare commodity, warms the nerves. A wave of young people, coming from no one knows where expressed their anger and very quickly melted in nature. 'Y'en a marre' is the only word that could be drawn from these juvenile mouths, bore by silhouettes that disappeared progressively in the darkness of the night (Ndiaye, Amadou. "Emeutes de l'électricité." *Walfadjiri*, May 31, 2011).

The Khar Yalla revolt represents one example in a long list of violent protests that erupted in the few days prior to the vote on the constitutional bill. In the midst of these tensions, President Wade made things worse by tabling the constitutional amendment which left many of his ministers and partisans confused and skeptical about its passage, because they knew changing the constitution few months away from the election would stir a political turmoil. Journalist Latir Mane perfectly captures the reaction of Wade's team when he announced the constitutional change during a weekly government meeting:

The President of the Republic has again surprised his world. Contrary to the information that has been distilled in the press, there was no heated debate on Thursday morning in the Council of Ministers at the announcement by the President of 'his' bill establishing a simultaneous election of a president and a vice-president as the pope took all his people by surprise including, most of his close associates. Sources based in the Palace confide that for this time, no one can say who the person that the president has consulted on this issue is. 'The truth, in this case, exists for the moment only in the President's head, the rest is only speculation. It was at the end of the meeting of the Council of Ministers that the President took the floor to announce the decision to propose the bill.' Our sources say that when the President gave the information, you could hear a fly flying around the room. Great was the surprise of the participants in the Council of Ministers. Even if the history of the post of vice-president was already agitated, for the majority of ministers and liberal officials, this existed only in the head of the President. 'Unless his son Karim Wade, who

was not at the Council of Ministers because he was absent from the country, was made aware.’ But to this day, not many of his associates know the real reasons for this decision. Me Wade is the only one to understand the ins and outs of this decision. (Mané, Latir, Wade et sa nouvelle règle de ‘je’. *L’Obs*, June 19, 2011).¹⁵

As the above article highlights, Wade’s bill was unpopular among his own camp. It was even less popular among the masses who were galvanized by *Y en a marre*’s call to resist the constitutional change. “Many Senegalese saw in the draft reform of 2011, also called ‘presidential ticket,’ a confirmation of the intention long lent to Abdoulaye Wade to hoist his son, Karim Wade, at the top of state power. Voices were coming up everywhere to denounce an attempt at a ‘monarchical succession” (Dieng 2015, 85).¹⁶ On June 23, the bill was to be submitted to the National Assembly largely controlled by Wade’s political party. However, *Y en a marre* protesters descended on Soweto Square (located in front of the National Assembly) to pressure Parliament to reject the bill. Protesters arrived with signs that read: *touche pas à ma Constitution* (Do Not Touch my Constitution), *Halte à la monarchisation de l’Etat* (Stop the Monarchization of the State), *Démocratie en Danger* (Democracy in Danger), *Wade degage* (Wade Clears), etc in order to show their determination to resist the constitutional change. The extent of youth mobilization that day had been unprecedented in Senegalese contemporary political history. As the Senegalese writer Alpha Sy points out, young people “deserted the amphitheatres, boycotted the ritual of the three

¹⁵ Le président de la République a encore surpris son monde. Contrairement aux informations qui ont été distillées dans la presse, il n’y a pas eu de débat houleux jeudi matin en conseil des ministres à l’annonce par le Président de «son» projet de loi instituant une élection simultanée d’un président et d’un vice-président. Pour cause, le pape a pris de court tout son monde. Y compris, la plupart de ses proches collaborateurs. Des sources basées au Palais confient que pour cette fois, personne ne peut dire qui est ce que le président a consulté sur ce dossier. « La vérité dans cette affaire n’existe pour l’instant que dans la tête du président. Le reste n’est que spéculations. C’est à la fin de la réunion du conseil des ministres que le président de la République a pris la parole pour annoncer la décision de proposer le projet de loi. Nos sources de dire que lorsque le Président a donné l’information, on pouvait entendre une mouche voler dans la salle. Grande été la surprise des participant au Conseil des ministres. Même si l’histoire du poste de vice-président était déjà agitée, pour la majorité ministres et responsables libéraux, cela n’existait que dans la tête du Président. « A moins que son fils Karim Wade, qui n’était pas au Conseil des ministres parce qu’absent du pays, n’ait été mis au courant. » Mais à ce jour, ils ne sont pas nombreux ses collaborateurs qui connaissent les véritables raisons de cette décision. Me Wade et le seul à comprendre les tenants et les aboutissants de cette décision.

¹⁶ Beaucoup de Sénégalais voyaient dans le projet de réforme de 2011 appelé aussi « ticket présidentiel » une confirmation de l’intention longtemps prêtée à Abdoulaye Wade de hisser son fils, Karim Wade, au sommet du pouvoir de l’État. Des voix s’élèvent de partout pour dénoncer une tentative de « succession monarchique ». (My translation)

normal (drinking three cups of tea after regular meals), ignored the paths that lead to the stadium and wrestling arenas to appropriate a passion which borders on the irrational, the slogan 'Do not touch my Constitution'" (Sy 2012, p.25). The electric atmosphere on Soweto Square shook Parliament forcing members of the majority to call for pure and simple removal of the bill.

In his book *Le 23 juin au Sénégal (ou la souveraineté reconquise)*, the Senegalese philosopher, Amadou Alpha Sy, argues that the June 23 protest propelled *Y'en a marre* into prominence. Sy provides a detailed first-hand account of what can be called the "June 23 insurrection". He contends that the political establishment typically misconstrues the population's apparent lack of interest in politics as an invitation to seize and abuse their power. In this instance, however, the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) led by Wade did not consider "the unforeseeable nature of Senegalese who tend to react when you least expect them to" (Sy 2012, p.24). The occupation of Soweto Square by *Y'en a marre* protesters chanting: "*Touche pas à ma constitution!*" represented a popular backlash against an eleven-year era partly characterized by manipulations, impunity, nepotism, and social strife (Sy 2012). Wade felt that he no longer faced a viable political opposition, as many of his major projects and initiatives went unchallenged or with little resistance. In any case, the traditional opposition composed of political parties had been unsuccessful in the face of numerous constitutional changes (Dieng 2015, p.86). *Y'en a marre's* merit in this episode is having shook up a political tradition throughout francophone African countries in which opposition parties generally confront the party/parties in power through organized TV, radio debates and wage proxy wars via the press or diplomatic representations in the country. As Dieng confirms in his work, until the eve of the introduction of the constitutional bill to the National Assembly, leaders of civil society and the political opposition were still hesitant to march in the streets and confront the regimes' attack on the constitution (Dieng 2015, p.86). It

took the impatience and physical commitment of the *Y'en a marre* movement to foment massive protests and establish a palpable opposition. Without the pressure of the street, the project would have succeeded, and we would have perhaps, never seen the movement of June 23 or M23 (gathering *Y'en a marre*, opposition political parties, and civil society organizations), *Y'en a marre* would not have the reputation it has today. The success of the June 23 events certainly provided the movement with the momentum and confidence that enabled it to later mobilize against Wade's candidacy for a third term (Dieng 2015, p.86). Thus, the success of June 23 allowed the movement to rally the masses against a third successive election of Wade through the campaign "Daas Fanaanal".

2- 15 April 2011: *Daas Fanaanal* Campaigns

After the controversy about the constitutionality of President Wade running for a third term, the Senegalese Constitutional Court affirmed Wade's eligibility for a third term in January 2012. From this point on, according to Guèye, "Y' en a Marre shifted its rhetoric of refuting Wade's candidacy to a strategy of elimination based on the vote" (Guèye 2013, p.34). In reaction, the activists launched the *Daas Fanaanal* campaign, which was *a voter's registration drive designed to encourage young people to participate in the 2012 presidential election*. The Wolof phrase *Daas Fanaanal*, figuratively means sharpening one's weapon (i.e. knife or machete in this context) in preparation to slaughter an animal. As a proverb, it signals one's readiness for confrontation or a challenge. In this case, *Y en a marre* prepared to defeat Wade at the ballot. Djily Bagdad, member of the movement's coordinating committee, described the campaign in a 2011 radio interview:

Daas fanaal consists of encouraging citizens to get their voters ID and register to vote. Our voter's cards symbolize our weapon against the system in place. It is the voter's card that helped us get rid of Abdou Diouf's regime, it is the voter's cards that helped us impose Benno during the municipal election, it is the voter's cards that will eventually get rid of the current system (Interview with Radio France International 2011).

Djily's assertion underscores the importance that *Y en a marre* placed on the voting process and its aversion to political forcing. Historically, Senegalese youth have been active political agents, and their massive participation in presidential elections is often an indicator of an upcoming regime change. *Y en a marre* understood this phenomenon very well. Two days before the February 24, 2012 runoff election, the movement published a declaration in the national press entitled *Ne Rangeons pas les armes* (Don't Store Your Weapons). Their statement appealed to voters to continue fighting against a third term for Wade in the following terms:

Wounded and outraged by the murderous and bloodthirsty act of force perpetrated by Abdoulaye Wade and his clan, some Senegalese are thinking of boycotting the polls to show their radical opposition to this flagrant violation of the constitution. Such an attitude

would be an argument for the regime in place to justify a possible election hold-up. The struggle must continue and will continue at the polls. "Daas Fanaanal," my card my weapon! You have long honed your weapons, your voter cards. It's time you took them out. Do not put them away (*Y en a marre*, Declaration of February 24th, 2012).¹⁷

The call of *Y en a marre* did not fall on deaf ears. The runoff election saw a massive voter turnout that led to a landslide victory of Macky Sall over President Wade. Beyond the political victory, the *Daas Fanaanal* campaign's success came through the number of new voters; the Ministry of the Interior's own statistics noted that there had been 357,000 new registrants. The Senegalese scholar Marame Guèye points out that "this record rate is the result of an unprecedented commitment of civil society organizations but above all the great mobilization of the *Y en a marre* movement that has created a click for young people through its campaign Daas Fanaanal" (Guèye 2013, p.12). Acquiring voter cards has historically been a tedious or discouraging process in Senegal and many other countries in Africa. By using an artistically innovative approach such as concert tours accompanying voter registration drives, Guèye contends that *Y en a Marre* "reframed this rhetoric and used lyrics to reshape the meanings of the voter card by infusing it with power and reminding people that *Y en a Marre* is a state of mind that requires actions" (Guèye 2013, p.34). Using slogans like my *Ma carte mon arme* (My card my weapon) and *Jaay sa carte, jay sa ngor* (selling your card equals selling your dignity), the movement tapped into Senegalese citizens' dissatisfaction and endowed them with a language of possibility and hope. It is useful to state here that it is a recurrent practice for political parties in Senegal especially the ones in power to pay voters to cast their ballots for them during election days.

¹⁷Meurtris et outrés par le coup de force libéricide et sanguinaire perpétré par Abdoulaye Wade et son clan, certains Sénégalais pensent à boycotter le scrutin afin de montrer leur opposition radicale à cette violation flagrante de la constitution. Une telle attitude serait pour le régime en place un argument pour justifier un éventuel hold-up électoral. La lutte doit se poursuivre et se poursuivra dans les urnes. « Daas Fanaanal », ma carte mon arme! Vous avez longtemps aiguisé vos armes, vos cartes d'électeurs. C'est le moment de les sortir. Ne les rangeons pas. (My translation)

According to Ardizzoni, outreach efforts and *Y en a marre*'s accessibility fostered by tours around the country, walking through neighborhood after neighborhood, and the use of politicized hip-hop, the denigration campaign "proved effective as constituents peacefully voted Wade out of the presidency" (Ardizzoni 2016, p.140). Besides helping to vote out President Wade, *Daas Fanaanal* urged citizens to not just vote but also oversee the ballot counting process and denounce any discrepancy or fraud in the election. The campaign itself also inspired activists throughout Francophone Africa. Distrustful of the electoral processes in their own countries, activists in Burkina Faso and Congo-Brazzaville developed similar campaigns in 2015 and 2016 which they respectively titled *Je vote et je reste* (I vote and then I stay) and *Tout sauf Sassou* (Anyone but Sassou). *Ras-le-bol* in Congo encouraged voters to cast their ballots against Denis Sassou Nguessou, who amended the constitution in March 2015 in order to run for a third consecutive term. Advocating for fair and transparent elections, activists of the *Balai Citoyen* used the same campaign to appeal to voters to exercise their civic duties as well as play the role of observers during the elections. *Y en a marre* inspired both of these movements through a process I term "linear social movement transaction". A visible phenomenon in Francophone Africa, social activists through these countries share successful experiences in a linear way that spread from one country to other French-speaking countries in West and Central Africa. In this instance, *Y en a marre* members helped *Balai Citoyen* form by training its members in protest tactics and advocacy methods. In return, *Balai Citoyen* shared with *Ras-le-bol* in Congo-Brazzaville. Thus, the *Daas Fanaanal* campaign was closely replicated in Burkina Faso and Congo. Historically, we can observe that this process (linear social movement transaction) is not necessarily a new phenomenon. Considering Dakar's strategic geographical location, the city has been a natural hub for the diffusion of knowledge, ideologies, and movements. European explorers and French,

British and Dutch colonizers used it as a port of entry in the precolonial period and later a staging point to conquer West Africa territories. In the last decade of the colonial period, Pan-African trade unions, such as the *Confédération Générale du Travail* (General Confederation of Labor or C.G.T) used Dakar as an epicenter for protests for better labor conditions for African workers in other French colonies.

The modern history of collective bargaining in Francophone West Africa started first in Senegal before spreading to the rest of the region. Lamine Senghor, a First World War veteran along with Magatte Louis Ndiaye and Moïse Ba, veterans working as sailors in Marseille, are the pioneers of West African syndicalism. They became familiar with the principles of labor unionism thanks to their contact with the C.G.T, France's largest trade union coalition in the 1920s. "It is these militants who during the years following the first World War introduced the syndicalist ideology in West Africa" reflected Fall (Fall 2006, p.82).¹⁸ After several training sessions with C.G.T. delegates in France, Magatte Louis Ndiaye founded a sailors' association in 1923 that developed into a sailors' union affiliated with the C.G.T. This according to Professor Iba Der Thiam, constituted the first labor union in West Africa (Thiam 1983, p.2598). From the colonial to the contemporary period in Francophone West Africa, there seems to be a certain continuity in the way protest movements diffuse methods, ideologies and agendas. A coastal city like Dakar tends to set the tone for the formation of social movements followed by other parts of the region. Interestingly, the same pattern has been observed in the popularization of hip-hop music in Francophone West Africa. The first Senegalese hip-hop group Positive Black Soul (PBS), founded in 1989 became an anchor for the musical genre, thus becoming a measuring tape for Burkinabé hip-hop as the talent and engagement of PBS' DJ Awadi inspired the musical career of Smockey,

¹⁸ Ce sont ces militants qui pendant les années qui suivent la première guerre mondiale vont introduire l'idéologie syndicaliste en Afrique occidentale.

a pioneer of hip-hop in Burkina Faso and co-founder of *Balai Citoyen*. *Balai citoyen's* appropriation of initiatives like *Daas Fanaanal*, or *Ras-le-bol* copying *Je vote et je reste* campaign emanates from a long tradition of transnational networking within Francophone West Africa and from Francophone West Africa to Equatorial Africa.

Following the spirit of *Daas Fanaal*, *Y en a marre* recently launched a similar voter registration drive called *Pareel* (Get Ready) in 2018. Although the tone of this campaign appeared neutral (as they did not call for the destitution of President Sall) and less hostile towards the political party in power, officials of the Alliance for the Republic (President Macky Sall's political party) suspect that "Pareel" undermined their chances of winning the presidential election. The 357,000 new voters that the movement reportedly added to the electoral registry in 2011/2012 remained fresh in the memories of the APR cadres.

In 2012, *Y en a marre* and the opposition worked closely since they shared a desire to rid Senegal of Wade's liberal regime. President Macky Sall, the principal benefactor of that proximity, praised the activism of *Y en a marre* on multiple occasions. During a 2012 interview on TFM, a popular and privately-owned TV channel, Sall declared:

Y en a marre is the expression of a movement of young people and of hip-hop, with rap groups that already were already singing "di na ñu demm Palais gene fa saleté bi" (we will march to the Presidential Palace to get rid of the dirt in there) under the socialist regime, without being worried. They are not subversive. These young people work on ethics, which is the requirement of the majority of the population" (Macky Sall 2012, TFM interview).¹⁹

Not only did President Sall's statement show support for *Y en a marre's* activism, it also signaled the movement's fight constituted a popular demand that largely benefitted Sall. Recently Malal Talla, hip-hop artist and *Y'en a marre* member, echoed similar sentiment when he asserted during

¹⁹ "Y en a marre est l'expression d'un mouvement d'amplitude de la jeunesse et du mouvement hip-hop, avec des groupes de rap qui chantaient déjà " di na niu démm Palais guéné fa saleté bi" sous le régime socialiste, sans être inquiétés. Ils ne sont pas subversifs. Ces jeunes travaillent sur l'éthique, qui est l'exigence de la majorité de la population". (My translation)

a televised debate: “we have never been on the side of the government and this was an opportunity for Macky Sall in 2012. We disagreed with Abdoulaye Wade’s candidacy and we told voters ‘ignore Abdoulaye Wade’s bulletin’ and it was an opportunity for Macky” (Talla TV debate Jakaarlo TFM 2018). Six years after benefiting from *Y’en a marre* support, however, President Sall’s admiration for the movement morphed into suspicions, adversity, and intimidation against the Senegalese activists as well as some of its international partners, such as Oxfam, OSIWA and Enda Lead Africa who help finance or run the social movement’s projects.

Fearful that the *Pareel* campaign might represent a disguised slander campaign against the Sall regime, the Minister of Interior Ali Ngouye Ndiaye summoned Oxfam and Lead Afrique Francophone in November 2018 and threatened to withdraw their NGO licenses in Senegal because of their alleged involvement in the *Pareel* campaign and other *Y en a marre* projects. In its November 14, 2018 edition, the news website, *Dakarmatin*, reported Macky attacked *Y en a marre* and threatened Oxfam and argued that “according to our information, the Ministry of the Interior has summoned Oxfam and Lead Africa Francophone, among other supports of Fadel Barro and Co., threatening to withdraw their headquarters agreement” (“Macky attaque Y en a marre et menace Oxfam.” *Dakarmatin*, November 14, 2018). *Dakarmatin* added: “according to our information, since the launch of its program ‘Pareel’, in the direction of the future presidential election, Y en a marre has become a target of the government which is seeking to neutralize the movement” (*Dakarmatin*, November 14, 2018). Hoping to highlight the paradox of the government’s action, Moustapha Girassy, Wade’s former Minister of Information stated in a press release a day later entitled the “*Volte-face tragi-comique de Macky*” (Macky’s Tragi-comic Volt-face):

Today, the country’s president pays back in a negative way Y en a marre, which has turned its back on him, denouncing his authoritarian excesses, his systematic obstruction of an

inclusive democratic game and his political manipulations. I learned with indignation the summoning by the national police, under the orders of the regime of the incumbent Head of State Macky Sall, of the non-governmental organizations Osiwa, Oxfam and Lead Afrique Francophone, on the grounds that they are the backers of the *Y en a marre* movement. This is a blow inflicted on freedom of association and freedom of expression, as well as on the right of associations to seek support from wherever they come, provided they are transparent and of lawful origin and that they are not illicit or mafia financing. This is a tragic-comic volt-face of the outgoing president (Moustapha Guirassy, *Dakaractu* November 15, 2018).²⁰

Guirassy's statement alleges that President Sall's party seems to be experiencing a fleeting episode of paranoia as the election day draws nearer. In concert with other civil society organizations, *Y en a marre* replied to the government's move in a declaration entitled "Déclaration de la société civile sénégalaise sur les actions de réduction de l'espace civique" (Senegalese Civil Society's Declaration on the Actions Aimed at Diminishing the Civic Space). It read:

This Friday, November 16, 2018, the NGO Lead Afrique Francophone received the notification of a decision from the Minister of the Interior dated November 5, 2017, repealing the decree authorizing the creation of the association, thus ending the authorization granted to the organization and ordering the immediate cessation of its activities on the national territory. Previously, leaders of the organization had been convened on Tuesday 13 November for an interrogation that lasted from 15:00 to 20:00 at the Central Police Station, along with three other leaders of the NGOs (ENDA TM, OXFAM, OSIWA) in the framework of an investigation opened on alleged questionable financing for the benefit of *Y en a marre*. Gathered under a spontaneous initiative, organizations of the civil society are denouncing this action of the Minister of the Interior and demanding an immediate withdrawal of the decree. They express their solidarity with *Y en a marre* and Enda Lead Afrique Francophone, which are subject to unfair persecution by the Ministry of the Interior. Beyond this serious and unacceptable act in the functioning of a law-abiding state, it is necessary to note the repeated attempts for some time by public authorities to reduce the public space of expression for citizens and organizations of the civil society through threats and acts of intimidation that cannot flourish in our democracy which grants individual and collective freedoms as well as citizen participation in its fundamental charter (the Constitution) and in most of the legal texts organizing the Senegalese Republic. Recalling the decision of the Senegalese government to revoke the headquarters agreements binding the government to certain NGOs in 2011, we consider that electoral periods are moments of tension and of implementation of containment strategies against social forces which are though working within the framework of the

²⁰ « Aujourd'hui, le président sortant paye bien mal de retour *Y'en a Marre*, qui il est vrai, lui a tourné le dos, en dénonçant ses dérives autoritaires, son obstruction systématique à un jeu démocratique inclusif et ses manipulations politiciennes. J'apprends avec indignation la convocation par la police nationale, aux ordres du régime du chef de l'Etat sortant Macky Sall, des organisations non gouvernementales Osiwa, Oxfam et Lead Afrique Francophone, au motif qu'ils sont les bailleurs de fonds du mouvement *Y en a marre*. C'est encore là une balafre infligée à la liberté associative et à la liberté d'expression, de même qu'au droit des associations de rechercher des soutiens d'où qu'ils proviennent, pour peu qu'ils soient transparents et d'origine licite et qu'ils ne s'agissent pas de financements occultes ou mafieux. C'est là une volte-face tragi-comique du président sortant » (Guirassy 2018). (My translation)

public interest through actions aimed at the economic and social progress of the citizens and the strengthening of our democracy. We are thus reminding the Senegal government to strictly respect the principles enshrined in the Constitution, which is the fundamental law of the country, as well as the various international engagements of which the Republic of Senegal is part. This must result in the cancellation of the order targeting LEAD AFRIQUE FRANCOPHONE and the respect of its rights, as well as the cessation of the current intimidations against other organizations. The collective created in this regard to defend and preserve the rights of citizens, associations, and NGOs in Senegal, will inform the public very soon about its action plan to follow up this position that raises concerns about the Senegal Government²¹ (Declaration of *Y en a marre* and other Civil Society organization in November 16, 2018).

This declaration marked a clean break between President Sall, who had hailed the movement throughout the 2012 presidential election, and *Y en a marre*, who had previously been accused of being too lenient towards Sall's administration. The Minister of Interior's action and the declaration also raised serious questions about the nature of the relationship between a non-profit organization, Enda Lead Afrique Francophone and *Y en a marre* as well as the origin of the movement's financial resources. In 2015, *Y en a marre* was cited in a financial scandal and

²¹ Ce vendredi 16 Novembre 2018, l'ONG Lead Afrique Francophone a reçu la notification d'un arrêt du ministre de l'intérieur daté du 5 Novembre 2017, abrogeant l'arrêté autorisant la création de l'association, mettant ainsi fin à l'autorisation accordée à l'association et ordonnant la cessation immédiate de ses activités sur le territoire national. Auparavant, les responsables de l'association avaient été convoqués le Mardi 13 Novembre pour un interrogatoire qui a duré de 15 :00 à 20 :00 au commissariat central, en même temps que trois autres responsables d'ONG (ENDA TM, OXFAM, OSIWA) dans le cadre d'une enquête ouverte sur des présumés financements irréguliers au profit de l'association *Y en a marre*. Les organisations de la société civile réunies dans le cadre d'une initiative spontanée dénoncent cet acte du ministre de l'intérieur et réclament un retrait immédiat de l'arrêté. Elles témoignent leur solidarité aux associations *Y EN A MARRE* et *ENDA LEAD AFRIQUE FRANCOPHONE* qui font l'objet de persécutions injustes de la part du ministère de l'intérieur. Au-delà de cet acte grave et inacceptable dans le fonctionnement d'un Etat de droit, il faut constater des tentatives répétées depuis un certain temps de l'autorité publique de réduire l'espace public d'expression des citoyens et des organisations de la société civile par des menaces et actes d'intimidation qui ne peuvent prospérer dans notre démocratie qui consacre les libertés individuelles et collectives et la participation citoyenne dans sa charte fondamentale et dans l'essentiel des textes juridiques organisant la république sénégalaise. Se rappelant la décision du gouvernement sénégalais de dénoncer les accords de siège liant le gouvernement du Senegal à certaines ONG en 2011, nous considérons que les périodes électorales sont des moments de tensions et de mise en œuvre de stratégies d'endiguement des forces sociales qui pourtant ne travaillent que dans le cadre de l'intérêt public à travers des actions destinées au progrès économique et social des citoyens et au renforcement de notre démocratie. Partageant des valeurs communes de démocratie, de protection des droits humains et des libertés individuelles et collectives, de participation à l'action publique des citoyens, nos organisations renouvellent leur ferme attachement à ces principes et s'engagent à les défendre aux niveaux national et international. Nous rappelons ainsi le gouvernement du Senegal à un respect strict des principes consacrés par la Constitution, loi fondamentale du pays ainsi que les différents engagements internationaux dont l'Etat du Sénégal est partie. Cela doit se traduire par l'annulation de l'arrêté visant l'association *LEAD AFRIQUE FRANCOPHONE* et respect ses droits et l'arrêt des actes d'intimidation en cours contre d'autres organisations. Le collectif mis en place à ce propos pour défendre et préserver les droits des citoyens, associations et ONG au Sénégal, informera très prochainement d'un plan d'action pour donner suite à cette prise de position qui interpelle le Gouvernement du Sénégal. (My translation)

corruption schemes involving Lamine Diack, the former president of the International Association of Athletics Federations. Although members of the movement denied the allegations, the scandal left a stigma in the psyche of the general public who feared that the movement had been co-opted by external financial forces and Senegalese politicians. (See chapter 4)

In late 2018, the Senegalese government supposedly tracked down 350 million CFA francs that *Y en a marre* received from Enda Lead Afrique. Governmental authorities alleged that the money was released in two deposits, a 150 million contribution in 2017 and a 200 million one in 2018” (*Seneweb*. November 19, 2018). Through multiple TV interviews, press releases and Facebook live broadcasts, *Y en a marre* members denied these allegations and argued that the government only targeted them due to the *Pareel* campaign. In an interview with *Seneweb*, Fadel Barro contended:

At the moment when *Y en a marre* is launching its campaign *Pareel* to encourage young people to withdraw their voter cards and actively participate in the next election, it is at this moment that the government attacks are happening. They (the government) even released figures, 350 million to try to stain our reputation, these are just pretexts, so, we should not be deceived. *Y en a marre*'s funding is not meant to finance *Y en a marre* members, but to fund activities (Barro 2018, Interview with *Seneweb*).²²

Barro unequivocally connected the recent attacks against the movement to the launch of the *Pareel* campaign; this episode raises the question of the financing of social movements throughout Francophone West Africa. By means of partial conclusion, *Y en a marre*'s voter registration drives proved impactful on the presidential election results. While *Daas Fanaanal* openly targeted President Wade's electoral performance, the *Pareel* campaign did not blatantly aim at influencing the election results to the detriment of any particular party. President Macky Sall and his partisans

²² Au moment où *Y en a marre* est entrain de lancer sa campagne *Pareel* qui voulait inciter les jeunes à aller retirer leur carte d'électeur et à participer activement aux prochaines élections, c'est en ce moment-là que tout cela arrive. Donc, il ne faut pas qu'on nous trompe et qu'on essaie de nous dire que oui *Y en a marre* aurait tout ça, c'est des prétextes ils ont sorti des chiffres, 350 millions pour essayer de nous mettre en mal avec les Sénégalais. Les financements de *Y en a marre* ne sont pas destinés à financer les membres de *Y en a marre* mais à financer des activités. (My translation)

seemingly resented *Y en a marre*'s action and thus targeted the group's technical and financial partners. Besides the politics surrounding these voters' registration drives the Senegalese activists made their message more palatable for the masses by creating rap music videos to accomplish these campaigns. Hence, *Y en a marre* accords primary importance to art which justifies the implementation of Citizen Mic.

3- Citizen Mic

In May 2017, *Y en a marre* launched Citizen Mic, an artistic initiative to train thirty young hip-hop artists to lyrics-writing techniques. Citizen mic intends for these up-and-coming rappers to produce richer and more politically-engaged songs. Through the initiative, *Y en a marre* activists train young artists on the issues concerning civic responsibility and good governance, two prominent themes in *Y en a marre's* activism. The project acknowledges a decrease in the level of engagement of hip-hop music in Senegal due partly to the steady rise of commercial hip-hop.

Senegalese hip-hop has always put a strong emphasis primarily on the quality of rap lyrics. However, due to the challenges resulting from its commercialization, the new generation of hip-hop artists tend to distance themselves from this musical subgenre (hardcore rap) for the benefit of more commercial subgenres like crunk or trap music. Subsequently, this departure from conscious rap music has come with a steady decline in the quality of the lyrics as many new school rappers continue to overlook the daily struggles of the masses in the subjects of their artistic productions.

Rapper Simon Kuka, a prominent member of the *Y en a marre* movement regarded as a conscious rapper (one that depicts the everyday struggles of the masses in their music and expose the fallacy of the minority that runs the country), affirmed Citizen Mic aimed at remedying the declining quality of rap music when he argues that nowadays: “people tend to see only light hip-hop lyrics. And we launched this contest to try to raise this level of writing” (Simon, Interview with *Seneweb* 2017). The training sessions were led by professionals including Senegalese rappers, university professors and social actors, a strong team that, Simon says, will make it possible to consider the richness, the complexity and the global dimension that lyrics writing engages (Simon, Interview with *Seneweb* 2017). *Y en a marre* hopes to ensure that Senegalese hip-hop keeps its

title of nobility especially in the context of a national and transnational struggle that seeks to deconstruct neocolonial processes and political excesses. Although attempts to commodify Senegalese rap music have allowed large records sales and paychecks, *Y en a marre* wants to preserve “the historical, social, and economic contexts, out of which rap has emerged, from public consciousness” (Blanchard 1999). Commodification of rap music and lyrical quality are not mutually exclusive. Hip-hop historian Davey D contends that the power of rap music lies in the essence of the lyrics, hence the quality of lyrics should be the primary concern of the rapper; he adds, “keep in mind when brothas (sic) start flexing the verbal skillz, (sic) it always reflects what's going on politically, socially, and economical/y” (Davey D 1998). Thus, as Lucie Latuner underlines in her text, “Y’en a Marre! Hip-Hop Culture and Social Mobilization in Post-Colonial Senegal,” the ways in which conscious rap in Senegal embodies a sense of responsibility to transnational anti-colonial discourse that embraces a global black identity, challenges marginality, and engages in political critique, which, through the creation of movements such as *Y en a Marre*, contributes to a project of African development outside of Western canons (Latuner 2018, p.1). Through Citizen Mic, the movement ensures that the new generation of rappers continuously engages with the issues that affect their society, but they also want to shape a conscious generation that will eventually take over the fight they have started.

4- August 30, 2013, *Dox Ak Sa Gox* (Marching with one's Community)

Besides teaching young artists the art of lyric-writing, members of the movement launched *Dox ak sa gox* on August 28, 2011, an initiative to safeguard the democratic gains of the nation and to make Senegalese citizens more active members of their communities. Civic engagement and leadership constitute two of the most important domains of the intervention of *Y en a marre*. In fact, many African social movements have made civic engagement the subject of national and transnational crusades. A 2016 United Nations report on Youth Civic Engagement shows that over the past two decades, youth civic engagement, especially in Africa south of the Sahara, “has acquired some prominence in research, policy and practice” (UN's World Youth Report on Youth Civic Engagement, 2016). *Y en a marre* is undoubtedly one of the movements spearheading this boom in youth civic engagement noted on the continent through initiatives like “*Dox ak sa gox*”.

From its inception, *Y en a marre* has acknowledged the significance of involving young folks in decision-making processes that directly affect their communities. The activists understood early that endowing young people with a sense of civic responsibility necessarily passes through dynamic participation in the daily politics of their communities, hence the movement quickly transitioned from street protests as the main form of denouncing unwanted regimes to community projects and active citizenship as a form of contribution for change. This shift represents a breakthrough within contemporary activism in Francophone West Africa as movements like *Y en a marre* accord primacy to active/participatory citizenship. Exercising a participatory citizenship facilitates a good and easy transition to adulthood for young people and the upcoming generation. (World Development Report, 2007). By familiarizing young artists with civic responsibilities, the activists simultaneously shape the next generation of leaders. According to the UN, the enthusiasm around civic engagement has been favored by various factors, including concerns about the

deterioration in civic and political engagement among young people worldwide. In the case of *Y en a marre*, the activists also understood that “the focus on youth civic engagement is driven in part by the assumption that young people who are more involved in and connected to society are less likely to engage in risky behavior and violence—and are likely to stay engaged as they grow older” (UN’s World Youth Report on Youth Civic Engagement, 2016). In this regard, *Dox ak sa gox* aims at creating local democracy observatories composed of local citizens who want to have more input in the ways elected officials manage their communities. As the first of its kind in contemporary Senegalese activist history, *Dox ak sa Gox* grounds itself on two key ideas, what the Senegalese activists call “*Contrôle Citoyen de l’Action Publique*” (Citizen Control of the Public Action) and “*La Participation Citoyenne*” (Participatory Citizenship). The first infers that local citizens have the responsibility of overseeing the work of their elected officials and making sure the latter are doing their job within the boundaries of the law and ethics. The second encourages citizens to be active members of their communities by participating in community-driven initiatives. Through these initiatives, citizens expect to keep an eye on the spending of their resources, to determine the priorities of their communities, participate in the elaboration of public policies and the distribution of resources and final access to public goods and services. (*Y en a marre’s Dox ak sa gox Write Up*, 2013). Given their popularity and success before and after the 2012 election, *Y en a marre* capitalized on the public fervor that accompanied the regime change. The program is partly the materialization of the New Type of Senegalese concept we talked about earlier in this chapter. The movement spells out the necessity of a program such as *Dox ak sa gox* as follows:

In its diagnosis of the issues that plague Senegalese society since independence, *Y en a marre* has identified the lack of civic awareness that, beyond the issues of governance, contributes to delay the economic, political and social development of Senegal. Since its early days, *Y en a marre* has not only denounced this lack of civic awareness but also been trying to provide answers through the concept of NTS and the values it promotes. It is with

the aim of imprinting these values in the collective conscience of Senegalese and to gradually entrench them in our daily behaviors that the movement has created a project on citizenship training called Civic Awareness Training (CHAFC). This training will be the place for the planning and implementation of initiatives and concerted actions for citizen participation (*Y en a marre*, Les Chantiers du NTS 2012).²³

Dox ak sa gox represents a true revolution in the functioning of participatory democracy in Senegal because not only does it give citizens the opportunity to talk to their elected official in public fora, but it also teaches them the basic information about local governance to facilitate interactions with public officials. During the official launch of *Dox ak sa gox* in Thies, Fadel Barro reminded the audience that: “When we say ‘enough is enough’ it means that we are fed up of being underdeveloped Africans who are always begging for help. From now on, we do not want to rely on anybody but ourselves. Because development is not a matter of having billions, but to rely on one’s genius and engagement to transform one’s reality into prosperity and that is why we said it is time we organized ourselves” (Barro 2015). His assertion not only testifies to the self-reliance component of the project but also signposts the Pan-Africanist layout of *Dox ak sa gox*.

Y en a marre is the outcome of a social grievance that seven activists were able to crystallize into a social movement thanks to the Imams of Guédiawaye who paved the path to social protest and inspired the founders of the movement. *Y en a marre* quickly rose to prominence due to the protest of June 23, 2011 which drew the attention of the national and international media to the movement. Thanks to initiatives such as *Daas Fanaanal* and *Pareel* Senegalese activists have proven their capacity to sway election results through popular advocacy. Thus, while projects

²³ Dans son diagnostic des maux qui gangrènent la société sénégalaise dans toute sa trajectoire historique depuis les indépendances, *Y en a marre* a identifié le manque de conscience citoyenne qui, au-delà des questions de gouvernance, participent à retarder le développement économique, politique et social du Sénégal. Depuis ses premières heures, *Y en a marre* s’est attelé non seulement à dénoncer ce manque de conscience citoyenne mais aussi et surtout à essayer d’apporter des réponses à travers le concept de NTS et les valeurs qu’il promeut. C’est dans le souci d’ancrer ces valeurs dans la conscience collective des Sénégalais et de l’enraciner progressivement dans nos comportements quotidiens que la création d’un CHAFC a été envisagé. Ce CHAFC sera le lieu de la planification et de la mise en œuvre d’initiatives et d’actions concertées au tour de la Participation citoyenne.

like *Dox ak sa gox* redefine the way people approach participatory democracy, Citizen Mic underscores the importance of art in *Y en a marre's* arsenal of contention. These activists have succeeded in “continentalizing” their struggle for good governance and the fight against neocolonial processes by reviving certain Pan-African ideals.

CHAPTER TWO:

MUSIC AND ORAL RHETORIC AS ARSENAL OF POLITICO-CULTURAL CONTENTION

In the introduction to Carlos Moore's book, *Fela This Bitch of a Life*, Margaret Bushy recalls that "on the day of [Fela Kuti's] funeral, the streets, of Lagos were brought to a standstill, with more than a million-people defying the Nigerian government ban on public gatherings that had been imposed by the military dictator General Sani Abacha" (Bushy 2016). This statement epitomizes the contentious relationship that the Nigerian artist had vis-à-vis the political establishment who always viewed his art as subversive, therefore, a threat to the Nigerian government. More importantly, the feud between Fela Kuti and the Nigerian government mirrors the disdain, as well as the fear that African governments exercise towards politically-engaged artistic productions. In fact, for the longest time, art especially music has functioned as a trenchant political site in Africa primarily because it is the most widely appreciated art form on the continent (Allen 2004, p.1). From Fela Kuti to Franco Luambo via Miriam Makeba and more recently the *Y en a marre* movement, popular music on the continent has remained a major site for challenging the socio-political status quo. "In many ways, and on different registers, artists are engaging their political circumstances through music," writes, (Allen 2004). This chapter argues that African musicians have always used their art to challenge or influence the political status quo or some specific cultural values. Following in the steps of previous generations, contemporary Francophone West African activists are fostering socio-political change through art and music and, more particularly, rap which in recent years has gained popularity and visibility. In this regard,

this chapter primarily takes a retrospective analysis of the politicization of African music as a weapon of protest by artists like Fela Kuti and Makeba. Secondly, it examines how *Y en a marre* and *Balai Citoyen* have succeeded in occupying the political space in Senegal and Burkina Faso through rap music. Finally, it accords attention to the counter-narrative emanating from governmental forces to discredit and stall these movements.

I- MUSIC AS A WEAPON OF MASS MOBILIZATION AND MASS ACTION IN AFRICA

The raucous democratization process in Africa has often been accompanied by mass protests, street violence, but also a politicization of artistic production geared towards engaging the masses in the march for democracy. Since the dawn of independence, African artists have been the spokespersons for the voiceless and the flag-bearers of the cultural and socio-political demands. Their musical productions, for instance, have not only inspired the masses to defy political establishments but they have also instilled fear among the most ruthless and controversial regimes that had taken over many African countries including Nigeria, South Africa, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. As the Kenyan scholar, Dismas Masolo observes, African musical traditions continue to remain an important and integral part of daily knowledge production, particularly in the form of social, cultural, and political commentaries (Masolo 2000, p.367). Music as a political commentary constituted an important pillar in the artistic production of the famous Nigerian singer, Fela Kuti.

Pioneer of the Afrobeat musical genre and fervent human rights activist and pan Africanist, the late Nigerian singer, Fela Kuti constitutes the epitome of the intersection between art and political activism. Upon his return to Nigeria from Los Angeles in the early 1970s, where he acquainted himself with the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, the Nigerian singer profoundly mutated his music from a predominantly Jazz-centered love theme to addressing the daily oppressive policies that affect Nigerian masses. Nigerian writer Michael Olatunji argues that: “the protracted military rule in Nigeria coupled with the large-scale embezzlement and looting of the nation’s treasury, undermining democratic processes as well as the promotion of large-scale violence among other things, by the nation’s military junta provided a new theme for Fela’s vocal music from the mid-970s” (Olatunji 2007, p.1). Fela set the stage for a new phenomenon in

Nigerian popular music known as the Yabis music. Olatunji adds that this genre particularly ridiculed those who governed through coercive force as well as their policies. This could be seen in many other Nigerian musicians' productions who later joined Fela in the 1980s. Fela released his first anti-government song, "Alagbon Close" in 1974, two years before he completely embraced what the Nigerian scholar, Tejumola Olaniyan, called "Political Afro-beat". Through his music, Fela Kuti became a rebel, an iconoclast, and a militant political artist "who would be a major thorn in the flesh of six Nigerian governments, military and civilian, over a span of more than twenty years" (Olaniyan 2004, p.50). Just like many modern artists who tried to combat corrupt governments and unfair policies, Fela fell victim to physical, as well as emotional torture by the government.

Twelve years of relentless, single-handed confrontation with Nigeria's political and civilian establishments were chronicled in the scars he bore all over his body, token of the brutal price he paid for defending the cause of the masses (Moore 2007, p.271). The singer's life was riddled with prison detentions, harassment and corporal punishments. However, he never gave in to the pressure and produced politically engaged music until his death in 1997. Fela Kuti's musical engagement is reminiscent of the South African artist Miriam Makeba's commitment to confront one of the most brutal governmental and racial systems that have ever existed in modern history, apartheid.

Generations of Africans grew up to the rhythm of "Pata-Pata," one of Miriam Makeba's most famous songs and undoubtedly her international signature hit released in 1967. Makeba was not only famous for this hit record covered over the years by many other artists, but she remained famous for her activism against the South African apartheid government. When speaking about the artistic activism of Makeba, J.U Jacobs argues she was "a performer whose career has both

been shaped by and given shape to black South African and American music” (Jacobs 1989, p.5). Makeba herself goes further in her biography by stating that: “I think that I have one thing in common with the emerging black nations of Africa: We both have voices, and we are discovering what we can do with them” (Makeba 1988). Although Makeba insistently maintained that she was neither a diplomat nor a politician and tried as much as she could to avoid overt confrontational style on and off stage, she made the voices of millions of Black South Africans heard in various venues and unveiled the monstrosity of the apartheid system to Americans in different ways (Feldstein 2013, p.14). The singer defended oppressed South Africans and became one of the most vocal critics of the apartheid regime in the United States throughout most of the 1960s. Her fellow activist and husband, Stokely Carmichael, remembers her in the following terms: “[she was] tireless, always on call for the countless liberation struggles everywhere on the continent. More than other human beings, she was an eyewitness to the rebirth of a continent” (Carmichael & Thelwell 2005, p.619). Makeba toured the continent and the rest of the world with her music, as *Jet Magazine* observed in one of its releases, the South African singer used her talent to raise money in the fight to free black folks (*Jet Magazine* March 28, 1968). Makeba’s eventual marriage to Stokely Carmichael in 1968 reinforced her image as an activist and Pan Africanist; however, her image in mainstream America took a serious hit because of her union with the then head of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Historian Tyler Fleming recaptures Makeba’s “fall from grace” following that marriage when he states:

no longer could her non-threatening public image from earlier in the decade hold out. Instead of being depicted as a sweet, exotic African singer longing for home, she was being connected to Carmichael’s Black Power politics, which the media emphasized by pointing out that it expected her ‘husband-to-be’ would be ‘front and center’ at her shows (Fleming 2017, p.9).

Fleming's statement underscores the public and political fear generated every time music meets activism. While some governmental leaders have come to terms with the junction between art and activism along with the eventual challenges it might pose for their leadership, others still struggle to accept the collision between the two and believe that art, especially music, should be confined to entertainment. Fleming's statement also echoes Makeba's assertion in another 2004 biography where she claims that:

Some of my shows were canceled by individuals who had booked me. It caused problems for my career, but I was not bitter. I had suffered that in my own country. South Africa had banned me and my music, so I thought that if some people in the United State decided to try and phase me out, I guess I was just made for that (Makeba 2004, p.119).

Makeba's music which was already regarded as subversive in South Africa suddenly became militant in the United States due to her union to Stokely Carmichael. Thus, Makeba, just like Fela Kuti, infused her art with a strong dose of activism in defense of the oppressed masses. However, it should be pointed out that there exists a difference in the political contexts Kuti, Makeba produced their art. Makeba was a political asylee, therefore, most of her repertoire was essentially a political statement against the regime that forced her into exile, whereas Fela Kuti was an oppressed activist in his own country who decided to forcefully exercise his artistic liberty and freedom of expression regardless of the consequences. Kuti's situation is to some extent similar to many contemporary African activists who use music as a weapon of protest such as *Y en a marre*.

Despite this slight difference, both Kuti and Makeba's music, doubled with a strong dose of civic engagement, became a source of inspiration for the younger generations of African artists. During a lecture he delivered at Western Washington University in 2015, co-founder of the *Y en a marre* movement, Thiat, stated that: "If I remember, Fela Kuti said that one day, music would be the weapon of the future to change the country, and that is what we are doing" (Thiat 2015, Hip

hop and Democracy Lecture at Western Washington University). Reminiscing the engagement of musicians like Makeba and Fela Kuti shows that historically, African music transcends entertainment to embrace political activism. It also shows that contemporary African artists, especially rappers, are not immune to the mistreatment and the abuse musicians like Kuti suffered. African artists in many countries continue to produce insurgent music and pose a threat to their governments. In this respect, music forms a powerful resource to mobilize the masses. It occupies a central position in African activists' arsenal of contention that can transcend geographical, ethnic, ideological and religious borders.

1- Insurgent Music: Following in the Footsteps of the Previous Generations

The new generation of African artists engages with the political scene with a militant musical discourse that is most of the time antithetical to the interests of their respective governments. This activist tradition of African music has gained ground with the advent of popular radio, tv, newspaper, and more recently, social media. Contemporary young African artists benefit from more accessible and flexible platforms, which allow them to share politically charged messages with a national as well as a transnational audience. Hip-hop artists are certainly more vocal and are at the forefront of the battle against poor governance, corruption, and lack of democracy. Their rap music epitomizes the virulence of the anti-establishment narratives that young people have been directing at their governments since the late 1980s. The confrontation between the Tunisian rapper El General and Ben Ali's government is a prime example of the use of contemporary art form as a political weapon. In December 2010, El General released "Head of State," the first overt musical diatribe against the "autocratic" leader. The song became viral on social media and subsequently provoked a police investigation against the rapper followed by a prison sentence. "Head of State" inspired the participants of the Arab Spring who used it as a rallying cry and also paved the way for other Tunisian hip-hop artists to openly criticize their political leaders. Young Africans' propensity for producing oppositional music against their regimes has also trickled into the political arena where political rivals resort to performing arts (music in this case) to criticize parties in power even though they are not professional musicians.

This has been the case in Senegal where Talla Sylla, leader of the political party Alliance for Progress and Justice/Jëf-Jël and former protégé of Abdoulaye Wade, released an album in 2003 to criticize President Wade's administration. His hit single, "*Ndiombor*" (Abdoulaye's Nickname given by President Senghor in reference to his political ruse), became a rallying cry for opponents

to the Wade regimes in the early 2000s. The song provoked vivid anger among Wade's supporters and subsequently inspired a violent physical assault against Sylla who was critically injured and was obliged to seek medical attention in Europe. In 2014, the Senegalese politician released another single entitled "*Naxee Mbay*" (Fallacy in Wolof) in which he denounces youth unemployment under Macky Sall's regime.

Senegalese journalist Assane Saada reminds us that Talla Sylla's resort to music is a heritage from the (PAI) Parti Africain de l'Indépendance (African Independence Party) one of the first political formations created during the post one-party system period in Africa led by Majhmout Diop. According to Saada, PAI members were notorious for reciting poems and using a rhythmic Senegalese traditional music called *Taasu*, to attack the socialist regime (Assane Saada October 7, 2003 *Wal-Fadjri*). Although Senegalese politicians have embraced antagonistic music as a means of political contention, rappers and activists such as Awadi, Thiat and Kilifeu remain the driving force who have conferred the art form its oppositional power in contemporary Senegalese politics.

On December 31, 2018, while the Senegalese nation was patiently waiting for the traditional New Year's Eve President Address to the nation, Thiat and Kilifeu of Keur Crew and co-founders of *Y en a marre*, released on YouTube "Saï saï au Coeur". This politically-charged rap song represents a frontal attack against President Sall and his government. The artists deliberately chose to release the song on a symbolic day when the President traditionally gave an annual report of the state of the nation and the achievements of his government. They chose the same day to provide a report of their own that entirely contradicted the narrative of the Sall regime. This song is part of a large insurgent musical repertoire that aims at denouncing governments; it also represents a burlesque as it parodies President Sall's book *Le Sénégal au Coeur* (2018). West

African hip-hop artists in general and the Senegalese ones, in particular, have succeeded in incorporating derision and irony in their musical productions. This confrontation method reminisces the Fela Kuti's Yabis sub-genre which deliberately ridiculed the government. Derision and Irony in the Francophone West African context is a form of political provocation used to negate the political discourse of the government.

Due to its provocative nature, the song "Saï saï au Coeur" made the headlines of all the major news websites and newspapers in the country. In a matter of one week, "Saï saï au Coeur" recorded one million views on YouTube, making the song one of the fastest viewed rap song in Senegalese rap history. The Wolof term "saï-saï" has different meanings depending on the context. The term can pejoratively designate a person who is mischievous or sneaky and dishonest. While it can be used as a euphemism to describe an illegitimate sexual intercourse, Wolof speakers also use it to refer to a lizard or and evil-doers. Thus, calling someone "saï-saï" especially a public figure is a covert insult that insinuates that they have acted wrongfully. Few weeks before the release of "Saï saï au Coeur" Amy Colé Dieng, a singer and vocal critic of the Sall government, called Macky "saï-saï" in widely share WhatsApp vocal message. Subsequently, Amy Colé got arrested and put in police custody thus triggering an unprecedented public outcry. Fans, fellow artists, politicians, activists defended the Senegalese singer and denounced the violation of her freedom of speech and opinion. By releasing the song "Saï saï au Coeur" few weeks after the Amy Colé incident, the activists Thiat and Kilifeu sought to reignite the controversies surrounding the use of the term "saï-saï". Conscious that music constitutes the most accessible form of transmitting messages to African masses, the release of the rap song was part of a strategic move employed by *Y en a marre* to confront political leaders with the use of strong symbolism in the music video. "Saï saï au Coeur" epitomizes the antithesis to the presidential discourse. It paints a grim picture

of Senegal's socio-economic situation in contrast to what President Sall depicted in his discourse as a more gleaming Senegal on the right track for an emerging economy. The *Y en a marre* artists used taunting and revealing images in their videos to depict the hardships faced by the masses that the president and his government omitted in their address to the nation.

The beginning of the “Saï saï au Coeur” video features a young man sitting at a street corner and putting crackers (what Senegalese people call “biscuit”) on a small table for sale. Next to him, sat Thiat reading a newspaper and wearing a Cabral-style hat that has become a staple among contemporary African activists. While the young man is organizing the merchandise on the table, a young woman stops by and astonishingly asks: “Now you own a table? What happened to your corner-store?” To this, he responds: “You see, Westerners are selling us everything these days. They are selling us dry fish; they are selling us yeet and even netetu”²⁴. The symbolism here is very powerful. The same guy who now owns a small table full of goods plays the role of a shopkeeper in a previous music video that Thiat and Kilifeu released in 2014 called *Diogoufi*, two years after Macky Sall came to power. The message the rappers transmit is that in a span of 2 years, the Senegalese economy has drastically regressed to a point where a regular Senegalese who used to own a corner-store, has now been downgraded to a mere tabletop of merchandise in a street corner.

The response the young man provides in the video when asked what happened to his corner-store represents the symbolism behind the arrival in Senegal of the French chain of supermarkets named Auchan. The latter is a multinational corporation headquartered in Croix, France, and is specialized in retailing. Auchan's presence and its exponential growth in Senegal, alarm many local small business owners and shop-keepers who accuse the French retailer of

²⁴ Yeet is fermented sea-snail and Netetu is fermented African locust bean used as seasoning in many Senegalese dishes. Both “yeet” and “netetu” are staples in Senegalese cuisine.

threatening the local job market and the livelihood of thousands of Senegalese through unfair competition. Senegal's largest retailer trade union, *UNACOIS*, vehemently opposed the French retailer's expansion in Senegal, arguing that "Auchan would be a danger to Senegalese industry, agriculture, livestock and transport" (*Seneweb* 2018). Its presence risks sending many Senegalese to unemployment and jeopardizing the Senegalese economy's autonomy (*Seneweb* 2018). Thiat and Kilifeu made sure that these preoccupations are amplified through their music and video productions. The rappers/activists embody the voice of the masses who are demanding jobs, access to medical care and better economic opportunities. Although President Sall and his regime brought efficient responses to some of these demands by instituting programs such as the *Bourse familiale* (Family Aid) to provide financial resources to the country's most economically-deprived families, and the *Couverture Maladie Universelle* (Universal Health Coverage) to provide health insurance and free medical care to the most vulnerable segments of the population, the popular demand for better safety network has not died down.

While World Bank figures show that the Senegalese economy made steady progress since 2012, (6.8% growth in 2017 and 2018), many segments of the Senegalese society do not see/feel the effects of this economic growth in their everyday lives. Their daily struggles remain unchanged which means that only foreign multinationals and a small elite are ripping the benefit of this growth. The UNDP (United Nations Development Program) and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative's 2019 report shows that the poverty level in Senegal remains extremely high at 46.7 percent as of 2017. Despite steady economic growth since 2012, the welfare of an important segment of the population left a lot to be desired. Ousmane Sonko, among other opposition leaders, contends that only foreign multinationals benefit from the economic growth as 84% of the Senegalese economy is in the hands of foreign companies (Sonko's Speech in Montreal,

2018). *Y en a marre* and other civil society organizations have echoed Sonko's preoccupations on multiple occasions. In a thought-provoking monologue called *10 cours à la nation* (ten lessons to the nation) in reference to the French phrase *discours à la nation* (address to the nation), Thiat elaborates on these social difficulties in the prelude to the song “Saï saï au Coeur” when he says:

At the moment of the final report, Nothing! / Nothing to put in our mouths! / Seven years of our existence have been wasted / With unprecedented state-sponsored crime / The same crooks, the same incompetent people, the same old folks are still in place. / How many apes [sic] switched political parties (to join the presidential party)? / How many media company owners have been corrupted? / How many judges without dignity? / How many instances of police brutality? / How many instances of land ownership misappropriation? / How many incompetent ministers? / How many scandals? / How many people have medical coverage? / And you are giving away social aids / Only to people who belong to your party and forgot about the rest of the country. / Your brother manages the oil resources, and your in-laws manage the contracts / The French [companies] control all public [infrastructure] projects / While Senegalese people are still struggling. / The same cats, the same dogs / They have no self-dignity. / They improve their lives with the sorrow of the people / Give us our voter IDs, you are incompetent / You know that we are going to get rid of you (Thiat Saï saï au Coeur, 2018).²⁵

These lyrics constitute an outburst, a complaint against a regime that struggles to satisfy the needs of its population. They are also a criticism against a political class seemingly more preoccupied with the personal welfare of the elite rather with the well-being of the general population. Moreover, his lyrics represent a diatribe against the “cannibalization” of the Senegalese economy by French multinationals that have accentuated their presence in the country since the arrival of President Sall to power.

“Saï saï au Coeur,” provoked vivid reactions among the Senegalese political class. Opposition parties welcomed the song with enthusiasm while the governing coalition castigated *Y en a marre* and Keur Gui Crew by calling them “rude,” “disrespectful” and “insulting”. President

²⁵ A l’heure du bilan, rien! / Rien à se mettre sous la dent! / Sept an ñu perte suñu temps / ci bii banditisme d’Etat sans précédent / Même truands, même incompetéent, même vieillards dans le vent / Ñaata bubu golo ñoo transumer? / Ñaata patrons de presse acheter? / Ñaata juges sans dignité / Ñaata bavures policières? / Ñaata litiges fonciers? Ñaata ministres yu cuune? / Ñaata scandal? Ñaata ñoo am couverture médicale? / Ngay saraxe ay bourses sociales. / Rien que ton parti fatte la patrie! / Pétrole sa rak, contrats say goro/ Marchés publics tubaab yi. / Sénégalais yi kolo-kolo. / Mêmes chats yi mêmes chiens yi. / Amuñu vergogne. / Siime sen ceere sunu rongoon. / Joxñu sunu cartes yi, da ngaa tële / Xam nga ni da ñu la fiy jële.” (My translation)

Sall's reaction to the song was undoubtedly the most noticeable when he stated during the *Conférence internationale sur l'émergence de l'Afrique* (International Conference on Africa's Emergence) that: "We need to educate/train the youth. [We do not want] young people who insult everyone, young people who insult Presidents. We are not going to progress like that" (Macky Sall's speech during the 2019 International Conference on Africa's Emergence).²⁶ Although President Sall did not explicitly name Keur Gui Crew, it was unequivocally clear that the president's words targeted them as all the major newspapers and online news websites in Senegal argued. Qualifying hip-hop artists' lyrics as rude, disrespectful and insulting is not a new phenomenon in Senegal.

Since the emergence of the musical genre in the country during the 1980s, hip-hop artists have often been the target of critics who believe that the music is "antithetical" to Senegalese values as well as norms of respect and discipline. This argument has been a way for a small elite to defend the status quo which is now the subject of social reforms demanded by the Senegalese masses. Hence such phrases as "antithetical to Senegalese cultures" were now being perceived as calls to passiveness. This was a widespread phenomenon in Africa where "immovable" politicians try to repress informative art forms and demands for political transitions. In the 1980s Africa's conservative politics reached its nervous peak as opposition to authoritarian and unprogressive leadership started to gather momentum in many countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Central African Republic. It's the same wind of opposition that brought Mugabe to power in Southern Rhodesia before turning undemocratic himself in the following decade and being ousted by the masses yearning for democracy and good governance. These are the same winds of change that even Senegalese leaders could no longer shield themselves from.

²⁶ "Il faut former la jeunesse. Pas une jeunesse qui insulte tout le monde, une jeunesse qui insulte les Présidents. Nous n'allons pas nous développer avec ça." (Macky Sall during the *Conférence sur l'émergence de l'Afrique*). (My translation)

2- The Emergence of Senegalese Hip-Hop

Rap music as a part of the hip-hop culture was a product of young people experimenting with music, turntables, and MC-ing at home in the boroughs of New York in the 1970s. “Hip hop developed on its home turf in New York as a relatively unmediated local form of entertainment and expression for urban working-class and marginalized youth – part of what is known as street culture” (Charry 2012, p.4). By the late 1970s all aspects of hip-hop culture, including Djing, graffiti, break-dancing and rap, had started to move out of the private sphere and into public spotlight. The speedy growth of rap in the United States happened to coincide with an important socio-economic mutation in Senegal and the African continent in general. In the 1980s, the World Bank and IMF’s Structural Adjustment Programs put pressure on African economies to live within their means, thus restricting the amount of credit allocated to countries like Senegal. In addition, the latter also experienced a severe drought that devastated peanut farming from 1973 to 1985 and caused a massive rural exodus (Charry 2012, p.10). These economic and environmental transformations exacerbated by more austere immigration regulations in France led to an influx of Senegalese immigrants to New York City. Thanks to an affordable Air Afrique direct flight from Dakar to NYC, many of these newcomers were actually day merchants who would fly to NYC for one day to purchase goods and fly back to Dakar to sell them. This made Senegalese merchants one of the first West Africans to settle in NYC and hold businesses throughout the 1980s. In their flights back to Dakar, these day merchants would take with them rap VHS cassettes that they shared with family, friends as well as clients. Thus, while rap music was slowly paving its way into the Senegalese artistic landscape, it was simultaneously gaining momentum in France which soon became the second-largest market for rap, behind the United States.

The massive presence of Africans in France, particularly Senegalese, made it an obvious conduit for rap to Francophone West Africa. Therefore, the two largest markets for this musical genre were funneling it directly into Senegal, making the country “one of the oldest, most robust, and sophisticated rap scenes in Africa” (Charry 2012, p.9). Although rap music has its roots in the economically deprived neighborhoods of New York City, in Senegal it became at first a domain of the middle-class youth who certainly had easier access to cassettes brought in by Senegalese merchants from New York and Paris. As early as 1984, Senegalese youth had access to recordings of hip-hop pioneers such as Africa Bambaataa, Grand Master Flash, and the Sugarhill Gang. Pioneers of Senegalese rap, Didier Awadi and Faada Freddy confirmed the trajectory of Senegalese hip-hop as well as its reception by middle-class teenagers: “I had a lot of friends of mine who used to travel a lot to New York, and they’d bring rap records back. The first thing I heard was Kurtis Blow and “Rappers Delight” by the Sugarhill Gang...You could find all of this in Senegal. Senegalese are big travelers (Spady, Alim and Meghelli, 2006, p.648). Faada Freddy adds: “we had friends, middle-class friends that used to get stuff from all over like the United States. Because their parents were rich and used to travel, those boys used to tell their parents ‘bring me this, bring me that.’ They brought back rap tapes” (Marlon Regis’ Interview with Faada Freddy 2005). Awadi and Freddy’s statements highlight the significance of the Dakar-New York City corridor in the emergence of Senegalese rap. By late 1989, the country’s first prominent rap group, Positive Black Soul (PBS), came into existence.

Initially, members of a rival group, Didier Awadi and Amadou Barry (aka Doug-E-tee) came together to form PBS at a birthday party on August 11, 1989. As Eric Charry points out, the formation of this group was made possible thanks to the two artists’ common interests in Pan Africanism which transpired in their songs that praised Pan-African figures such as Cheikh Anta

Diop, Thomas Sankara, Kwame Nkrumah, among others. Given the circumstances in which PBS came into existence (common interest in Pan-Africanism), we can safely argue that the rise of Senegalese hip-hop was premised on Pan-African principles. Considering the themes, linguistic parameters, musicality and fashion statements of the genre, the evolution of Senegalese rap music can be subdivided into three main periods: the “Primary Age” (1984-1998), the “Hardcore Age” (1998-2008) and the “Commercial Age” (2008-Present).

The primary age was a period of self-searching, determined by a lack of identity of Senegalese hip-hop. Hip-hop artists’ first inclination was to emulate the American version of rap, and as they did not yet master the art of beat-making and sampling, they mostly rapped over classical American hip-hop beats (most of these rap beats from America were also inspired by blues and jazz classics). This emulation can also be explained by the fact that during this period, Senegalese youth gravitated toward the American entertainment industry starting with Hollywood movies and an attraction for the English language. Senegalese linguist, Fallou Ngom, elaborates on this influence when he writes:

The movies *Rambo* and *Rocky I* and *Rocky II* of Sylvester Stallone were the first major signs of Hollywood dominance in the foreign movie industry in the country. The growing and widespread use of videocassettes, DVDs, and computers quickly expanded the sphere of influence of American youth culture in Senegal and set the stage for the flourishing rap and hip-hop artists found in almost every corner of the country (Ngom 2012, p.109).

Ngom's statement summarizes the spirit of this period which also coincided with the introduction of cable and satellite TV in the country which further exposed young folks to foreign entertainment industries, especially the American one.

Positive Black Soul undoubtedly dominated this era and became the first African hip-hop group to enjoy international fame. Their album *Boul Fale* (“don't pay attention” or “don't care” in Wolof) mirrored a phenomenon and a movement by the same name that challenged societal norms in Senegal in the 1980s and 1990s. In terms of themes and rhetorical engagement, rap lyrics during

this period were unprovocative and purely designed to entertain a middle-class audience. They were predominantly love songs, ego-tripping and story-telling; very few of them addressed socio-political issues. The few “underground”²⁷ groups that were practicing what we can term a “political rap” (a rap music that addresses the daily struggles of the masses) were mostly unknown by the general public, and their songs did not necessarily make it to the mainstream radio stations. “It is with the creation of groups like BMG 44, Pee-Frois, Gnoul te Rapadio or Yatfu whose members came from more popular areas that the average Senegalese became acquainted with rap music. From that moment on, rap music was presented at almost every neighborhood party, particularly during the ‘*Xumbals*’, night parties organized in support of local football clubs” (Keyti 2015). However, from 1998 on, Senegalese hip-hop underwent a “micro revolution” of sort, a revolution that shaped the use of rap music into a weapon of protest and provided people from less affluent neighborhoods with the opportunity to voice their minds on their predicaments. This marked the emergence of the Hardcore Age.

The Hardcore Age set the tone for the flourishing of “political hip-hop” into the mainstream and conferred Senegalese rap music its title of nobility. This period set the premises for what I term the “militantization of Senegalese hip-hop,” or the use of hip hop for insurgent/denunciation purposes. Whereas the previous period was conspicuous for its Americanisms, this period featured the prominence of Wolof lyrics. DJs and MCs of this period championed a return to Senegalese linguistic and conceptual values (particularly Wolof) and popularized the phrase *Rap Wolof mo raw* (Wolof-language rap is on top). Senegalese rap finally built its own identity and “Wolof lyrics

²⁷ In the Senegalese context, “underground” and “hardcore” are often used interchangeably. Underground groups refer to rap groups that have not released an album yet but are famous enough to perform at neighborhood and school concerts. These artists are generally from low-income neighborhoods and tend to be more politically engaged in their lyrics than the mainstream ones. Their music is called hardcore or underground as it tackles the daily struggle of ordinary people and denounces socio-political and economic issues rather than just entertaining.

signal realness, rejecting colonial language in favor of local impact while simultaneously privileging a hip-hop aesthetics of rhythmic interplay, that is a flow that decenters meaning” (Appert 2018, p.178). However, this did not mean that Senegalese rappers abandoned the English or French language in their music. In fact, they succeeded in creating a mixture of Wolof, French and English in their music, a mix Fallou Ngom terms *Wolofranglais* which is still one of the particularities of Senegalese rap. By the late 1990s “African rap, [Senegalese in particular] had emerged as a mature genre, featuring creative use of mother tongues, smart multi-language word plays, messages that were relevant to the experience of African youth, original rhythmic flows, and, within a few years, instrumental tracks that drew on local music” (Charry 2012, p.16). Besides the use of the Wolof language of the era, we also noticed a drastic improvement in the quality of the rap lyrics as Senegalese rap went from being rhythmically-poor to producing lyrics that are full of images, figures of speech and quality rhymes. Rap'Adio (name of a rap group), composed of Keyti, Bibson, and Iba, was undoubtedly the trio that revolutionized the musical genre in Senegal during this period. They popularized the concept of “underground” and “hardcore” hip-hop in and brought militant rap into mainstream. Their first Album *Ku Weet Xam Sa Bop* represented a “rapture” in contrast to the songs produced during the previous era. Appert captures the impact of this group in Senegal hip-hop in an interview with Keyti:

What impressed people was the way we were writing, it was the first time they heard people write like that, with rhymes, images, metaphors, and the subject matter was related to what people were going through, not only in terms of politics but also daily life. I remember when we released our first album, people kept asking me, "How come you can talk about certain things I feel, and you are just putting it into words?" (Appert, p.104).

Keyti's words translate the thematic and technical mutations that accompanied the Hardcore Age. Not only did Rap'Adio confer to Senegalese rap an idiosyncrasy, they also provided it with a purpose that went beyond mere entertainment. However, the group became critical of *Mbalax* music (the mainstream musical genre in Senegal) and went as far as calling it *music bu amul coono*,

(a musical genre that does not require a lot of effort to make and does not address the struggles of the masses). They argued that *Mbalax* was neither politically engaged nor concerned itself with popular struggles. In the same vein, they ridiculed MCs who did not rap about the strife of ordinary Senegalese people. Their songs “Xibaru 1-2 Ground” (News from the Underground/Underrepresented) and “Tewal Real Hip-Hop” symbolize a diatribe against fellow artists they deemed unfit for the rap genre because of their romantic and frivolous songs that failed to address the preoccupation of the masses. “Pakatass” (the term refers to the way prisoners are huddled together in small cells in the central prison of Dakar) paints a grim picture of the carceral environment while the song “Karadindi” glorified the traditional African way of life and criticized the incapability of African governments to decently take care of their citizens. Keyti’s lyrics in “Karadindi” are indicative of the political tone of Senegalese rap music during this period:

I don’t believe in politicians and politics ‘cause they got fake isms and policies, / Since 1-9-6-0 messing up with the economy while you and I continue to suffer, / Day in day out life getting tougher and tougher. / But who dare to contest? Because if you go against the system, / You get imprisoned or hanged, / Because every government in Africa operates like a gang. / No freedom, no food, no justice, no education, plus the youth are unemployed, / Their lives have been destroyed, they don’t believe anymore it’s the void. / But here is hip hop to free your mentality, / Not just something to sing and dance but a means to fight for equality, / A way of life to culture responding to our needs, / It may be too late for us but surely not for our seeds (Keyti, *Karadindi* 1998).

The above-mentioned lines shed light on the political engagement of Senegalese rap music which started positioning itself as a counter-balance to the political power in the late 1990s. Keyti’s criticism of politicians transcended the Senegalese boundaries to denounce a continent-wide systemic collapse due to poor governance. Rap’Adio and their fellow hip-hop artists of this era challenged political systems that they believed were predatory in nature. Their attacks on public authorities reflected the virulence of rap lyrics in this period which ended up occasioning a governmental censorship as the Diouf regime tried to crack down on oppositional music. With Rap’Adio’s coming of age, young Senegalese found in them the spokesperson of the masses. They

marked the second evolutionary period of Senegalese rap and paved the way for what I call the Commercial Age of Senegalese hip-hop.

In many countries, the term “commercial hip-hop” often rhymes with glorification of sex, money, and drugs as well as the objectification of the female body. In this regard, Senegalese hip-hop artists succeeded in partially insulating the art form against the “debauchery” of contemporary commercial hip-hop, although several rappers such as Baye Souley, Xuman, and Carlou D unsuccessfully tried this form of commercial rap but were met with unprecedented criticism from fellow artists, consumers and parent associations as well as their fan base. Thus, by the term “Commercial Age” of Senegalese hip-hop, we refer to the time when artists started advocating for the control of the rap music industry in order to live off their art. Up until the early 2000s, a Senegalese entrepreneur named Talla Diagne dominated the production and distribution of rap music and other musical genres in Senegal including Mbalax. Diagne’s five-square meter store in Sandaga (the biggest market in Dakar) used to be the epicenter of Senegalese music; and many up-and-coming hip-hop artists used to undergo the diktat of this music industry mogul due to their lack of financial means. By the mid-2000s, many rappers started to oppose Talla Diagne’s monopoly and wanted to see changes in the entire rap industry that they saw as a driving economic force and a source of employment for thousands of young Senegalese.

Rappers began to advocate for the creation of rap labels similar to Def Jam; the rapper Fata supported this movement on his popular radio show called Hip Hop Generation and went on to create his own label, TAFLABEL, in 2005. From this point on, the industry witnessed a proliferation of rap music studios particularly in Dakar, which enabled artists to create their own music instrumentals and claimed their independence from Talla Diagne. Fata went so far as to transform his car into a music store from where he could sell his own CDs, thus cutting the middle

men and maximizing his profit. Interestingly, the Commercial Age challenged the primacy of hardcore rap (politically-oriented rap that tackles the daily struggles of ordinary people and denounces unacceptable social issues) as many saw it as less lucrative. If rappers wanted to live off their art, argued Fata, they needed to produce “danceable rap music” that could be played in nightclubs which were dominated at this time by American R&B. This novel direction of Senegalese rap music occasioned a scission in the industry in which proponents of hardcore rap/political rap, mostly from less affluent neighborhoods of Dakar wanted to remain faithful to their principle of defending downtrodden and being the voice of the masses versus advocates of commercial rap predominantly from upscale areas, mostly driven by financial gains. Subsequently, we witnessed an adversity between “Uptown” (suburban neighborhoods) and “Downtown” (inner-city neighborhoods) hip-hop as well as a rivalry between Dakar rap and what can be called regional rap (rap music produced by artists who lived in the other 13 regions of the country).

Hip-hop artists outside of Dakar, like Keur Gui Crew, began advocating the “*de-dakarization*” of Senegalese hip-hop, a term first used by artist and activist Thiat. In other words, they wanted the means of hip-hop production and distribution (studios, radio stations, TV stations, printing companies) to be equally divided among all the regions of the country. Dakar had a concentration of almost 90 percent of the hip-hop industry including recording studios, marketing companies, radio and TV stations. Artists from the other parts of the country had to travel to the capital city in order to record albums or be part of prominent hip-hop radio and TV shows. In other words, they had no visibility unless they evolved in the Dakar hip-hop scene. Thus, they wanted a democratization of the recording industry in addition to easier access to resources and the media. While rappers such as Keyti and Fata transitioned into a more versatile musical production that includes *Mbalax* sonorities and featuring with *Mbalax* musicians, others groups like BMG 44,

Tigrim-Bi, Bat'haillon blin D among other groups from the suburbs of Dakar, remained committed to the boom bap rap/hardcore rap.

The Commercial Age revealed an interesting dynamic in Senegalese hip-hop industry conspicuous for artists' determination to control the industry, the willingness of a few to incorporate new sonorities and distance themselves from what is traditionally known as hardcore and finally, the rivalries between different hubs of rap music production. It is in this context that Keur Gui Crew, an up-and-coming rap group from Kaolack came to prominence by producing a militant rap music to deliberately targeted people in position of political power including the Mayor of Kaolack. They embarked on a musical and rhetorical battle in which they overtly attacked public authorities in their songs as well as in other platforms such as TV shows, and concerts.

II- MUSICAL DIATRIBE AND “MUSICAL OPEN LETTER” AS RHETORIC OF SOCIAL PROTEST

With rap firmly anchored in Senegalese youth culture, the genre began to replicate the expression of civil discontent at the origin of the rap movement in America. Music, like all art forms, has always been used as a tool or a vehicle for making social commentary, whether it be about one’s immediate surroundings or the world at large. However, rap, more so than other forms of music, constitutes a platform for exposing to the public the misery of its surroundings, and valorizing the disenfranchised (Shipley 2012, p.16). Rap in Senegal quickly took up this charge starting in 2000. “During the 2000 presidential elections, hip-hop artists helped sway young voters bringing Abdoulaye Wade to power with a referendum tied to generational change” (Shipley, p.16). In the same vein, *Y en a marre* employed rap music to transition from the musical scene to the political opposition. Along with protests and advocacy, members of the movement have used rap as a primary tool for socio-political contestation. Like in many other parts of the continent, *Y en a marre* has assumed the globalized art form of hip-hop as a medium for constructing a political identity and a language of resistance against the political power establishment.

During the 2012 presidential election, Senegalese hip-hop artists who rallied behind *Y en a marre* used their music and murals painted in high traffic areas to remind their fellow citizens of the sanctity of the constitution, as well as the necessity to respect political promises. Rosalind Fredericks captures this innovative type of political engagement when she states: “through activating their networks in virtual, audio, and urban space, rappers catapulted themselves to the center of the political stage in not only the wave of protest leading up to the elections but through inspiring a deeper public reflection on citizenship and democratic practice” (Fredericks 2014, p.30). The movement is strongly grounded in the verbal art form in which lyrics are part of an arsenal of contention to create popular uproar against the political establishment which generally

regards their songs as seditious and threatening to their political interests. The powerful and antagonizing message that *Y en a marre* conveyed in their rap songs and their verbal attacks through media outlets resulted in multiple police interrogations, custodies and physical attacks against the movement's members. To point out the insurgent character of the movement's discourse and its confrontational methods, *The New York Times* chronicler Adam Nossiter writes as follows:

It is not that Senegal lacks established politicians, political parties or even newspapers opposing Mr. Wade, often with torrents of incendiary if not wide-of-the-mark verbiage, a Senegalese tradition. The rappers, however, have struck a nerve because they cut to the chase. Their language is direct, sometimes crude and quite unambiguous (Adam Nossiter, *The New York Time*, 2011).

Nossiter's comment highlights not only the turmoil *Y en a marre* ushered onto the political atmosphere, but also the defiance that characterizes almost every major campaign of the movement. Rap artists who belong to the movement produced provocative music, which constitutes an integral part of a political tactic that Malal Talla, one of the leading figures of the movement, calls "Urban Guerilla Poetry."

"Urban Guerrilla Poetry" is a recitation of short poems where the audience is often not prepared for the crude content of the verses. According to Malal Talla, the term "Urban Guerilla Poetry" is derived from the name of a combat tactic that was prevalent during socialist revolutionary activities where they used non-conventional fighting tactics by attacking government officials and installations or interests in dense cities under camouflage or by surprise hits. Therefore, urban guerrilla poetry can be understood as "the use of rap lyrics to attack government officials throughout cities and getting away with it" (Guèye 2013, 27). With this tactic, members of *Y en a marre* frequently organize what can be termed as "lyrical attacks" on the government through various artistic and rhetorical conduits including bus tours, social media, music videos, graffiti, radio shows, and flyer etc. Marame Guèye underscores some of the ways

the movement antagonized the Senegalese government when she writes: “when Wade’s government prohibited peaceful demonstrations, rap musicians hopped on buses singing and distributing flyers. These texts served as hideouts from the riot police and constituted ‘unruly’ places beyond Wade’s reach” (Guèye 2013, p.23). This assessment shows the variety in *Y en a marre’s* urban guerrilla tactics, some of which proved occasionally more efficient than street protests or riots. In this respect, the “Urban Guerilla Poetry” represented a social movement diatribe, which serves as a rhetorical response to a political discourse. Social activists enter into a dialogue with citizens to expose the injustices the masses have been enduring.

1- Social Movement Diatribe or the Rhetoric of Provocation

Contrary to political discourse (which generally aims at convincing political subjects to adhere to an ideology or a political program) or philosophical disquisitions, social movement diatribe in the West African context seeks to engage the power structure into a verbal altercation to expose their political flaws. It also attempts, by means of oral performance, to open citizens' eyes to social and political injustices in order to provoke a public outcry against elected officials. The diatribe has a short-term as well as a long-term goal. On the one hand, it tries to unmask the fallacies and insufficiencies of the power structure in order to provoke a mass reaction against corruption, disenfranchisement, embezzlement of public funds as well as denounce water or power outages, to name a few. On the other hand, the diatribe ultimately seeks a regime change through the ballot by trying to sway votes away from and to the detriment of the regime. Contemporary social activists in Francophone West Africa incorporate the diatribe in their arsenal of contention/protest as a tactical response to demagoguery and political falsehood. Furthermore, the oral nature of diatribe ensures a more inclusive activism by making information easily understandable to the general public. The *Bal'ai Citoyen* in Burkina Faso uses this method to diffuse information among its followers:

The dissemination of the movement's ideas passes essentially by oral means, taking into consideration all literacy levels. Messages are relayed by artists during concerts which also serve as rallies, by audiovisual animators but also directly in the neighborhood and localities by the *cibals* (*members of Bal'ai Citoyen*). Social media has also played a crucial role, especially during the two insurrections (*Bal'ai Citoyen* 2018).

Not only does this statement reinforce the efficiency of social movement diatribe, it also signposts the importance of information accessibility in the sense that illiteracy should not handicap equal access to information especially regarding the political affairs of a given country. Social movement diatribe accords significance to orality which is historically the primary way of ingurgitating knowledge and information in many African cultures. This shows a level of social movement

inclusivity which embraces people regardless of their level of academic education. In addition, it symbolizes an interesting contrast to the elitism of traditional political parties.

In the Senegalese and Burkinabé context, social movement diatribe has been civically informative and politically denunciative, thus turning activists in the process into “conscientious objectors.” As a method of social protest, social activists use diatribe in rap songs, oral performances (rap concerts) and TV and radio debates. In doing so, they assume a provocative role that sometimes comes with harmful physical or judicial repercussions. In many instances, activists expect backlash from being overtly critical of their regimes. They know that they can be targets of physical violence or judicial action anytime and plan accordingly.

Y en a marre artists like Thiat and Kilifeu were placed in police custody and interrogated for verbally attacking and antagonizing the regime. These two artists made it clear since the beginning of their hip-hop career that they would not be soft towards elected officials. They have deliberately used offensive lyrics and sometimes invectives in their rap songs to provoke reaction out of the authorities. They reiterate the vexing nature of their lyrics in their song *Lalake*:

Vocal, meaningless and fake people will never challenge us. / We ended your career and snatched your fanbase everywhere. / We overcome the obstacles you put in our path and have way better performances. / Your first hip-hop income was a girlfriend ours was jailtime. / We are way more daring than you are, we cause troubles and trigger controversies (Keur Gui Crew, *Lalake*, 2014).

The last two verses of the stanza not only underscore the artists’ commitment to instigate unrest through their musical discourse but also their readiness to undergo the consequences of their actions. While some people might find this attitude irresponsible and reckless, it should be acknowledged that it is an expression of temerity that goes along with social movement activism; because the moment an individual declares oneself a social activist, they consciously or unconsciously “subscribe” to the risks associated with activism. Therefore, knowing that they are potential government targets, it is in the “second nature” of social activists like Thiat and Kilifeu

to shock their interlocutors and assume the resulting consequences. This is the essence of diatribe as understood by social movement theorist Theodore Windt.

In his article “Diatribe: Last Resort for Protest,” Windt argues that the diatribe is an endeavor to concomitantly chastise, captivate, shock and transmit unfavorable impressions of public officials (Windt 1972). His conception of social movement diatribe corresponds to *Y en a marre* activists' resort to Urban Guerilla Poetry as a means of denunciation of public figures and connection with the masses. From the use of social movement diatribe emerges an unapologetic discourse that defies societal rules of respect (from the perspectives of their targets). In other words, Senegalese activists engaged in this form of protest trample all rules of political correctness, as the terms they use to address politicians in their oral performances and music videos are often deemed by politicians to be disrespectful and inappropriate for young Senegalese. In this respect, social movement diatribe provokes a reaction from politicians who ground their critiques of the rhetorical form on the social and moral values of African/Senegalese societies, namely respect toward elders and persons in position of authority. At the same time, it engenders a counter-attack on behalf of activists based on those same values, thus providing two conflicting perspectives on morality. In more concrete terms, a politician may say that Thiat is being disrespectful by calling fellow politicians who are older than himself “liars” in his songs or TV interviews. Thiat would respond to this comment by saying that “embezzling tax-payers’ money is theft, which is punished by society and religion.” Both of these arguments are premised on societal values and morality as interpreted by both sides. However, by using diatribe in the first place, social movement participants challenge moral norms themselves.

Windt contends that a diatribe serves basically two main functions in contrast to traditional speech forms: to primarily attract attention and gather an audience, and then uses “shock” effect

to rearrange perspectives. Windt also adds that people rarely become concerned about issues until they are shocked. To make the shock effect potent, obscene language becomes part of social activists' lexicons. Their diatribe becomes a way to both satirize basic values and expectations by dramatizing the discrepancy between language and actions, between illusions and realities (Windt 1972). This reminisces *Y en a marre* activists' use of provocative rap lyrics to constantly challenge the traditional form of rhetoric and cultural transaction that expect younger people to address their elders and leaders with respect and reverence. During a rally in July 2011, at the Obélisque Square near downtown Dakar, Thiat used the shocking function of diatribe when he unequivocally declared: "An old man can be useful to a country when he works towards the right direction. But a 90-year old man who says things and then backs out of his words and lies [to the people] must not stay in a country" (Thiat during a 2012 rally). Thiat's declaration shocked many people including supporters of his own movement. The activist's words were in sharp contrast to Amadou Hampaté Ba's famous phrase in *Amkoullel L'enfant Peul* (1991): "the death of an elder is like a burning library". Thiat's declaration was unambiguously directed at President Wade who had just turned 86 in May 2012. However, the statements stood as an oxymoron that acknowledged the importance given to elders in African society particularly Senegalese one but also destroyed the integrity of President Wade who, in Thiat's own perspective, did not fit the description of the "model elder" that Hampaté Ba referenced in his work. Not only did calling President Wade a "liar" represent an offense to social norms, it was also a violation of the Senegalese penal code whose Article 80 considers "offensive," "insulting" words directed at the president to be criminal. For this reason, the *Y en a marre* activists got arrested, interrogated, and placed in police custody.

Although Thiat's words and his subsequent arrest raised outrage on both sides of the socio-political spectrum, support for Thiat came from the movement's membership as well as from

political opposition leaders. The newspaper *Le Populaire* provided a detailed coverage of the whole incidence and described the commotion that occurred at the police station and in court when

Thiat got arrested:

Supporters of *Y'en a marre* movement besieged the police station, Thiat was indeed not alone in his face-to-face with the police. Supporters of the "Y'en a" movement seized the offices of the DIC at the Courthouse for the entire time that Thiat's audition lasted. And on the front line, there were other leaders of the movement: Kilifeu, Fou Malade, Fadel Barro among others. We also noted the presence of politicians who came to show their support. Their determination to spend the night was such that many of them had brought 'merr gaddu' (very flat mattresses), gas bottles and tea equipment, basically everything needed to camp in front of the courthouse and maintained the pressure. And when, at 00:40, Thiat was taken to the Central Commissariat of Dakar, after a diversion of the police, the young people went waited outside of the police station. What started to annoy police officers on the spot who insisted that the young people go away. Until very late, they did not want to leave Thiat alone in the hands of the police (*Le Populaire*, July 25, 2011).

This episode epitomizes some of the consequences that can arise from the use of "harsh" language as a means of protest. Using diatribe has often resulted in the condemnation of activists. Although in the case Thiat was released the next day, Wade's government used the incident to send a strong signal to Thiat's fellow activists reminding them that their paroles have consequences. However, this did not intimidate *Y'en a marre* activists who kept using more shocking terms to qualify Senegalese politicians, especially during televised-debates.

In several televised debates, they continued to use diatribe to confront politicians. The most recent instance occurred in January 2019 when Thiat was invited to a debate with Farba Senghor, a former Wade's protégé and minister in the Wade regime. Thiat refused to shake Senghor's hand. He then argued that Farba Senghor was mediocre and a thief who embezzled public funds. Not only did Thiat's action shock Mr. Senghor, it also disturbed the TV show hosts as well as the general public. The interaction between Thiat, Farba Senghor and the hosting journalists during this debate epitomizes the shocking function and moral reactions to social movement diatribe. In his defense, Thiat argued that Farba Senghor was the outcome of a cult of mediocrity that exists in Senegal when it comes to appointing people to positions of high responsibility. He also added

that since Senegal does not have laws that sanction people like Farba Senghor, it becomes imperative for the people to openly show them how angry they are with them. (Thiat 2019, *Kër Jaraaf* TV Show). *Y en a marre* activists such as Thiat know that this kind of rhetoric always engenders angry reactions from their interlocutor, especially during a nationally broadcast debate like theirs. He is also aware that based on the Senegalese notions of *worma* (respect of the individual) and *yar* (discipline), his attitude towards Farba Senghor would provoke a backlash.

The show host's response to Thiat's argument for why he did not shake his opponent's hand marks the societal/moral response to diatribe when he asserted: "Thiat, don't you think that despite your disagreements (with Farba Senghor), you should be able to shake his hand and then tell him the truth? Because that is more respectful and that is how we do it in our culture here in Senegal" (Bitey 2019 *Kër Jaraaf* TV Show). The journalist's words reaffirm the argument we made earlier in this section; namely that morality and social norms are always used as an attempt to counteract social movement diatribe. Social activists countered this by also making their own use of morality and social norms. In response, Thiat disagreed with the journalist's argument by saying:

There is not anything more disrespectful than embezzling public funds and not be held accountable for it. It is not sensible that Karim was imprisoned while he (Farba Senghor) remained free. We don't know if he benefitted from arbitration, we still do not know what happened with his case, and he never enlightened the Senegalese population about that. So, do not talk to me about respect. The lack of respect that has been existing in Senegal since 2000 comes from these politicians who steal public funds, who are arrogant and, on top of that, switch political parties (to join the presidential coalition). They must respect the Senegalese people, and I do not want to deal with these kinds of people, and I advise all Senegalese people to not deal with these kinds of people (Thiat 2019, *Kër Jaraaf* TV show).

The social activist's rebuttal partially challenges Senegalese notions of respect and morality. In other words, Thiat's underlying assumption is that if refusing to greet someone on TV is not culturally acceptable, embezzling public moneys should also be reprehensible. If calling a politician, a "liar" is culturally wrong, society should also condemn those politicians who do not

respect their promises. In other words, diatribe is antithetical to political correctness and borderlines humiliation in certain contexts.

Due to the humiliating treatment he received from the activist, Farba Senghor ended up quitting the TV show, provoking mixed reactions from internet users including *Y en a marre* supporters. While many people acclaimed Thiat for openly antagonizing Wade's former minister of agriculture, others argued that *the Y en a marre* activist owed Farba Senghor respect regardless of how the latter handled his previous governmental responsibilities. Mandiaye Thiam, a Facebook user, commented on the incident as follows: “Even if Farba Senghor was the worst of humankind, he deserves respect. Greetings in Islam represents a symbolic gesture of great value. By refusing to shake his hand, Thiat goes lower than him.”²⁸ (Sokhna BeentOuh IBraahim’s facebook page, January 26, 2019). Another user added: “the debate could have been done with respect. I did not appreciate Thiat’s attitude. I find it unacceptable regardless of Farba’s virtues or flaws” (Ma Taye Beugue Karim’s Facebook Page, January 26, 2019).²⁹ These comments show that although some people may support the overall struggle of *Y en a marre*, they do not always condone their confrontational methods.

In light of *Y en a marre*’s activists cantankerous interactions with politicians, we can conclude that diatribe in the Francophone West African context constitutes an invitation to a verbal confrontation and as well as to judicial action. In this respect, the more elements of state apparatus engage with activists in this strategic “mind game,” the more the activists gain the sympathy, support and the critiques of the public and the more the state appears intimidating in the eyes of the population. Counter-attacking activists verbally weakens the charisma/integrity of public

²⁸ Même si Farba Senghor est le pire des hommes, il mérite le respect. La salutation est en Islam un geste symbolique d’une énorme valeur. En refusant de lui serrer la main, Thiat s’avilit. (My translation)

²⁹ Le débat pouvait se faire dans le respect. J'apprécie pas du tt! Ak nou Farba meunti mel, je trouve que li rafetoul. (My translation)

authorities, making them look “petty” in the process whereas attacking them in court appears as if the state wants to curtail freedom of expression which makes their authority questionable in the eyes of the international community. In this context, African governments generally find themselves in a dilemma and would certainly be better off if they ignore activists’ verbal attacks. In some cases, authorities sponsor lower-level party members to respond to these attacks and to confront social activists through various platforms including social media. In more extreme cases, we see physical attacks against activists. Thiat was physically attacked by a Macky Sall’s supporter a week before the 2019 presidential election during a live TV show on 2STV. The supporter argued that the activist had been disrespectful to the president. This shows that though diatribe remains an efficient belligerent tactic that turns social movement activists into forces to be reckoned with, it also presents safety risks for them.

Beyond the shock effect it produces among public opinion and political leaders, the diatribe occasionally proves to be highly offensive toward activists’ targets. In Francophone West Africa, the usage of diatribe also involves coinage of phrases to denounce certain political practices and certain types of politicians. For instance, Thiat and Kilifeu popularized the phrase *singes de la république* (monkeys of the Republic) to describe any politician who left the opposition to join forces with the presidential coalition. The term symbolically refers to a monkey jumping from one tree branch to another the same way certain Senegalese career politicians jump from one presidential coalition to another. Farba Senghor is a prime example. He used to be one of Wade’s closest collaborators and a prominent member of the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS). He assumed multiple governmental appointments in the Wade regime, including being the Minister of Agriculture, and Minister of Transportation. Although Farba Senghor and other PDS members had been expelled from the party for an act of rebellion and insubordination to the party's rule, the

Senegalese public opinion expressed their disappointment following his political alliance with President Macky Sall whose regime he previously had been very critical of. This practice called *transhumance politique* in Senegal (switching political party) evokes public disdain towards politicians who indulge in it. During the last decade, the Senegalese civil society has been pushing in vain for the passage of a law to ban this phenomenon. In the meantime, *Y en a marre* activists continue to use the term *singes de la république* to designate and shame these politicians who they believe do not deserve to speak in public anymore since they represent anti-republican values. (Thiat 2019, *Kër Jaraaf* TV Show).

Ultimately, social movement diatribe remains a powerful rhetorical tool for political contention. It enables activists to use the power of spoken words to shock, antagonize and sometimes, shame their opponents. In the case of *Y en a marre*, diatribe transpires through their music and public addresses urging certain people including politicians to call them “rude,” “disrespectful” and “inconsiderate”. Following the incident between Thiat and Farba Senghor, the journalist Bassirou Dieng attacked Thiat in a virulent article titled “*Thiat de Y en a marre... Un impoli qui humilie ses aînés*” (Thiat from *Y en a marre... a Disrespectful Person who Humiliates his Elders*). Dieng writes: “A Muslim must not refuse to shake the hand of his neighbor, as prescribed by the Coran. I could not be silent about the hateful behavior of indiscipline and arrogance of the young rapper and member of Keur Gui, Thiat on the set of 7TV. Who do you think you? How dare you ‘humiliate’ someone who could be your father?”³⁰ Dieng’s article mirrors the reaction of many Senegalese who in reality also support *Y en a marre* activism. Even if the diatribe has proven to be effective so far, it also presents shortcomings given that it can

³⁰ Un musulman ne doit pas refuser de serrer la main de son prochain, conformément aux prescriptions. Je ne pouvais, à vrai dire, rester muet face au comportement troué d’indiscipline et d’arrogance du jeune rappeur Thiat du groupe Keur Gui de Kaolack sur le plateau de la télévision 7TV de notre consœur Maïmouna Ndour Faye. Pour qui te prends-tu pour oser « humilier » publiquement quelqu’un qui peut, pourtant être ton père? (My translation)

alienate the support of segments of the civil society who also value respect for elders, humility, and discipline. Beyond the usage of diatribe, social activists have at their disposal other oratory tools such as the “musical open letter” to fight against the political establishment.

2- “The Letter-Writing” Rap Music as a Rhetorical Act

In their 2011 article entitled ““Mr. President”” Musical Open Letters as Political Commentary in Africa," Daniel Künzler and Uta Teuster-Jahn define the musical open letter as “a new genre of popular music since 2000, in the context of democratization and a certain post-democratization disillusionment. Through those letters, young urban musicians publicly and directly address political leaders protesting against a lack of accountability and demanding a fair dialogue about the representation of voters' interests” (Künzler & Teuster-Jahn 2012, p.1). This musical genre is not actually a new phenomenon in African music particularly Senegalese. As early as 1990, the famous Senegalese singer and proclaimed “King of Mbalax” Youssou Ndour adopted this musical genre in his song called *Bataaxal* (Letter). Prior to the 2000s, however, this musical genre did not have a predilection for addressing political issues. Youssou Ndour's song *Bataaxal*, for instance, deals with love and friendship, but the rise to prominence of urban rap music in the early 2000s coupled with multiple political transitions in many Francophone West African countries including Benin, Mali, Mauritania, and Senegal has made of the open letter a privileged musical form among African hip-hop artists to enter into a dialogue with political leaders. Similar to the diatribe, the musical open letter “speak[s] out in plain language and often defy etiquette rules, in contrast to more traditional, veiled forms of musically expressed criticism” (Künzler & Teuster-Jahn 2012). Targets of this musical genre are often national political leaders, but the genre also has a transnational impact on the continent especially when used to critique foreign interventions into African politics. Didier Awadi's song *J'Accuse* remains a prime example of how open letter tackles foreign political meddling. Sworn Pan-Africanist and self-proclaimed Sankarist (one who believes and shares Thomas Sankara’s ideological convictions) Didier Awadi

criticizes and condemns the interventionist policies of certain Western countries as well as their support of African dictatorships:

I accuse the USA of conspiracy against humanity, of non-compliance with the resolutions of the Security Council. / I accuse America of interference in private matters, when they go to Somalia, where is respect for dignity? / [...] Truman should be tried for crimes against humanity. / How can we accept such atrocity? / Hiroshima Nagasaki the after-effects are still there. / I accuse Georges Bush of being a real butcher. Lying about chemical weapons, where is morality? / [...] I also accuse France of crime against humanity. Too many deaths in Central Africa I could not forget them. [...] I accuse France of irresponsibility before history. Too many coups in Africa are sponsored by them in the dark. / Dahomey, Congo, Rwanda I stop there but France is doing too much damage that's why I accuse Giscard to be an accomplice of Bokassa. / Bokassa paid his debt, Giscard was free why that? [...] / I accuse the all of Africa of chronic irresponsibility, our presidents, our leaders to be selfish and cynical. / They want power, all the power, but once in power they promise things without the power to accomplish them. / They sold Africa, its riches even its beaches ... When you go to a bank, and it looks good, it's because it's foreign owned. / Do you consider yourself independent? / You can dream because it is the former colonizer who still manages. They even manage your currency in the coffers of the Bank of France. They even manage our gold in the coffers of the Bank of France³¹ (Awadi, J'accuse 2004).

Awadi's song stands out as one of the first instances of musical open letters in the Francophone West African rap music. His aforementioned lyrics reminisce the famous letter the French writer Emile Zola sent to French president Félix Faure in defense of General Albert Dreyfus wrongfully

³¹ J'accuse les USA de complot contre l'humanité, de non-respect des résolutions du conseil de sécurité. J'accuse l'Amérique d'ingérence sur les affaires privées, quand ils vont en Somalie, où est le respect de la dignité ? Moi j'étais très content de voir les Somaliens les jeter. On devrait juger Truman pour crime contre l'humanité. Comment peut-on accepter de telles atrocités ? Hiroshima Nagasaki les séquelles sont toujours là. J'accuse Georges Bush d'être un véritable boucher. Mentir sur les armes chimiques où est donc la moralité ? / [...] J'accuse aussi la France de crime contre l'humanité. Trop de morts en Centre-Afrique je ne pourrais pas les oublier. Vous oubliez un peu trop vite tous les tirailleurs Sénégalais, de force en relais, déportés, aujourd'hui expulsés. Ils sont venus, ils se sont battus, ils ont vaincu, votre pays détruit, ils sont revenus et ils ont reconstruit. J'accuse aussi la France d'irresponsabilité devant l'histoire. Trop de coup d'états en Afrique sont commandités par eux dans le noir, au Dahomey, au Congo, au Rwanda je m'arrête là mais la France fait trop de dégâts c'est pourquoi j'accuse Giscard d'être un complice de Bokassa. Bokassa paye sa dette, Giscard libre pourquoi ça? Je dis que la France est ingrate quand elle parle de visa. Quand nos pères sont partis mourir pour elle y'avait pas de visa... J'accuse toute l'Afrique d'irresponsabilité chronique, nos présidents, nos dirigeants d'être égoïstes et cyniques. Ils veulent du pouvoir encore du pouvoir, tout le pouvoir, une fois au pouvoir promettent des choses sans le pouvoir. Ils ont vendu l'Afrique, ses richesses mêmes ses plages... Quand tu vas dans une banque, si elle est bien, c'est parce qu'elle est étrangère. Tu te crois indépendant ? Rêves parce que c'est le colon qui gère. Gère même la monnaie dans les coffres de la Banque de France. Gère même notre or dans les coffres de la Banque de France. (My translation)

convicted for espionage. Not only does the rapper blame Western leaders of crime against humanity by fueling conflicts in many parts of the world, he also directly calls out African leaders on their involvement in the socio-economic issues that plague the continent. Other rappers in the region also made use of this tool to address political issues in their countries or request a better socio-economy treatment from their presidents.

In Mali, the rap group Tata Pound released in 2004 *Cikan-le message* in which they reminded President Amadou Toumani Touré that the country belonged to all Malians, and that the law should apply to everyone including the law-makers themselves. In the same vein, the Beninois rapper Noir et Blanc (Black and White) produced in 2004 *Monsieur le Président* (Mister President) while the Burkinabé rap group *Yeleen* released in 2006 *Dar es Salam* (House of Peace) a musical letter they requested the then President Blaise Compaoré to transmit to his fellow African and Western leaders. In keeping with this innovative musical tradition, *Y en a marre* also adopted the method to convey messages to Senegalese leaders. Simon Kouka, a member of the movement and rapper, incarnates the role of a letter sender/transmitter in his song *Lettre au Président* (Letter to the President). This song translates the daily hardships that many Senegalese suffer/face under President Sall's regime. Simon precludes his artistic product with the chorus “we are tired, we are tired Mister President” which echoes the clamor of millions of Senegalese who had hoped for better days under the Sall regime. Simon melodiously emphasizes the despair of many Senegalese by using a musical instrument that not only inspires sadness and anguish but also nostalgia and sentimentality. Simon makes sure to clarify that his message emanates from *Y en a marre* activist anxious about the destiny of his people:

Prezi, a Yenamarriste is sending you this letter, which comes from the bottom of his heart./A Yenamarriste who will undermine the fervor of the fallacious people and who represents the light that will clarify the essence of these words./The one who will be the

protector of equal rights for haves and have-nots./Due to our love for Senegal, we have accepted to carry Bukki (hyena)./We accepted the criticism and the insults and decided to stay home not go abroad. Prezi, your load is more than heavy however, you are the one who is supposed to solve issues. If you listen, you will hear, do not ignore us we are begging you. Do not mess up like Laye (Abdoulaye Wade) who pretended to know but ended up being vengeful. He was surrounded by ogres who poisoned his mind, he still cannot fathom how he lost the power. Prezi be-careful of the people around you (Simon Kouka, Lettre au Président 2014).

Simon's lyrics, on the one hand, epitomize the hope *Y en a marre* initially placed in the Macky Sall's regime following his presidential victory in 2012. In addition, the rapper's verse "protector of equal rights for haves and have-nots" confirms the role of sentinel the *Y en a marre* activists have been playing since 2011. On the other hand, the use of the metaphor "*Bukki*" (Hyena), reflects activists' distrust vis-à-vis the political establishment embodied by Abdoulaye Wade and his close allies. The metaphor additionally serves as an invitation to President Sall to beware of those same "*Hyenas*" who caused Wade's downfall. In Senegalese folktale tradition, *Bukki* (Hyenas) constitutes the quintessential embodiment of malice and antipathy. The carnivore epitomizes threat, greed, injustice, and betrayal in contrast to *Leuk* (hare) which exemplifies ruse. In Senegalese folktales, *Bukki* and *Leuk* are always depicted as companions with a conflictual relationship trying to outsmart each other. They possess opposite values and different abilities. However, *Leuk* always comes out victorious in their confrontations. The metaphor *Bukki* designates politicians who stand for Senegalese counter-values. Thus, by comparing Wade's entourage to *Bukki* and inviting President Sall to distance himself from them, Simon attributes to these politicians, all *Bukki's* flaws. However, not only does Simon send President Sall and his regime a strong message of hope through his musical letter, but he also warns him against co-opting these potential untrustworthy politicians (*Bukki*) in his cabinet given the fact that switching political parties remains a banal practice. Interestingly, "Letter to the President" does not reflect the usual *Y en a marre's* musical register.

Grounded on denunciation and awareness-raising, *Y en a marre*'s musical production remains overwhelmingly belligerent and argumentative toward the political establishment; but in this instance, "Letter to the President" seems more like *une main tendue* (a helping hand) accompanied with an advisory note to President Sall. The song is a departure from the strident lyrical norm of *Y en a marre* marked by the strong bass drum beat. "Letter to the President" remains melodious and conspicuous for its keyboard-dominant musical instrumental that evokes a sentimentality that one generally hears in a love song. Instead of vigorously criticizing the President as he did in other *Y en a marre* rap songs, Simon reminds the president that they are not his enemies in reality:

Let's make it clear, we are not your enemy / But expect a clear shock if you ever decide to betray your friends. / Excellency, when you came to seek our support, / The Senegalese people saw the share we gave you. / While people were asking you to appoint them as minister, / We told you to prioritize the demands of the masses. / While these people are asking to be added to your legislative lists. / We told you to prioritize the demands of the masses (Simon 2014).

These verses resonate as an "amicable reminder" that *Y en a marre* supported the candidacy of President Sall during the 2012 presidential election, and for this reason, the Senegalese president should not see them as adversaries. Finally, the leitmotiv "we told you to prioritize the demands of the masses," emphasizes the primacy of national interests over individual benefits. President Sall himself seemed to acquiesce to this when he popularized the phrase *La patrie avant le parti* (the homeland before the party) to stress the hegemony of national interests over the priority of his political party although, seven years into his presidency, the phrase seems more like an empty slogan given the blatant nepotism in his government. Additionally, the phrase reinforces the activists' watchdog role vis-à-vis governmental actions. Nevertheless, from the outset, Simon and his fellow activists seemed to be aware that the task of Macky's regime was not going to be easy,

and that it would take a few months to undo the negative deeds of the previous regime. In this respect, Simon asserts:

The situation in which you found the country, we are all aware of it. / The domestic debts Wade left behind, we are aware of them. / Standing straight is not going to be easy since you chose to defuse a bomb, / The people chose you so you knew it was not going to be easy. The homeland before the party, we applaud. / Subsidizing peanut farmers, *I swear* we applaud. Getting rid of 50 offices to reduce public spending, we applaud. However, when is the cost of living going to decrease? (Simon 2014)

Not only do the aforementioned lyrics acknowledge the challenge awaiting President Sall and his regime, but they highlight that the activists were willing to accord the government a grace period to overcome these challenges as well. Coincidentally, *Y en a marre* lost its protesting momentum following the 2012 presidential election. In the post-election period, the Senegalese activists focused more on community service, capacity building and project implementation until 2016 when they actively resumed the contestation to oppose President Sall's constitutional referendum (in 2016, the regime organized a referendum to change the constitution) thus exacerbating the fall out between the regime and the social movement. Nevertheless, it should be noticed that in contrast to other rap songs that *Y en a marre* had produced, "Letter to the President" maintains a respectful tone and lyrics pleading for a constructive social and political change in Senegal. Though still critical and inspiring, this musical open letter pales in comparison to the movement's song released before the 2012 presidential election due to the virulence of the language, the harshness of the musical instruments to name a few distinctive elements.

III- RAP AS A SOCIO-POLITICAL AWARENESS-RAISING AND DENUNCIATION TOOL

Historically, rap music has exposed the predicament of the Ghettoes and low-income communities. The latter have used it not only as an expression of their frustrations vis-à-vis their conditions and the politics but also as a pastime to escape the harsh realities of daily life. In Senegal, the rapper has assumed the role of denunciator and entertainer in addition to representing a vanguard in keeping the general public informed about current socio-political issues. In this regard, the Senegalese rapper simultaneously bears the etiquettes of an entertainer, an activist, and of an educator. In order to fulfill all these roles, s/he has managed to put in place creative ways to engage their public on current national issues. Keyti and Xuman, for instance, popularized the concept of "infotainment" in Senegalese hip-hop when they debuted in 2013 a weekly hip-hop tv show called the *Journal Rappé* (The Rap Journal) whose success reverberates across the Atlantic.

Journal Rappé consists of delivering the weekly news in the form of rap music both in French and Wolof. Keyti and Xuman copied the televised news setting and play the role of journalists delivering the news to an audience. Occasionally, they invite fellow artists to act in the capacity of analysts, commentators, reporters, and correspondents. By using traditional and social media platforms, the creators of this "infotainment," humorously and tactfully captivate the attention of a larger local and continental audience on key socio-political issues. This artistic concept has proven very successful to a point of inspiring other West African rappers to replicate the TV show in their respective countries. In Côte D'Ivoire, female rapper Nash run a spinoff of *Journal Rappé* while in Mauritania a collective of journalists and rappers launched another spinoff called *Chi-Taari Journal Rappé*. In "Senegalese Hip Hop Artists as Agents of Social and Political Change," Sheba Lo spells out the goal and impact of the "infotainment" when she ascertains:

The goal of the show (Journal Rappé) is to create a balance in the content of arts, culture, sports, entertainment, politics, healthcare, and local and national news. Journal Rappé has delivered news about the extension of hours for people to pick up their voter registration cards, new reciprocity visas for western citizens coming to Senegal, new government campaigns to stop smoking, wrestling matches that engross the nation (Lo 2014, p.45).

To point out the pan-African impact of the show and its reliance on humor to attract a large audience, Lo adds:

The show invites a multitude of people from all over Africa and the world as guest correspondents to keep the show entertaining. The emcees appear very serious and nicely dressed, but the approach is humorous. In fact, Keyti says, they are “counting on humor to say a lot. It can take a lot of drama out of the subject... people will laugh now and later, maybe, they will think (Lo 2014).

These statements prove the innovative aspect of the show, and by extension, the Senegalese (and West African) hip-hop artists’ creativity. First of its kind on the African continent, the Journal Rappé has become a successful model that has caught the attention of not only academic and artistic circles but also renowned international organizations such as the United Nations, Oxfam, and OSIWA, among others. In 2015, OSIWA, the West African Branch of Open Society, funded the extension of the “Rapped Journal” in five other African countries (Côte D’Ivoire, Niger, Mauritania, Uganda, and Nigeria) with the view of fostering a conscious youth-led civil society in the image of *Y’en a marre* in Senegal.

On the same wavelength, another up-and-coming hip-hop artist nicknamed Real Saï Saï created the Boutikou Laye (Laye's Corner Store) a social media-based show featuring him in the role of a corner storekeeper who sometimes meddles into the business of his community and tells stories in a rap form. Just like the social significance of a barbershop in American popular culture, the corner store in the Senegalese context carries the same importance as being a gathering place for informal socio-political commentaries and debates it is also an informational center. It is a meeting place for neighborhood residents; making the store-keeper a known figure in the local community. Since most residents interact with him/her on a daily basis including incurring debts

from him, store-keepers often detain key information about people in the neighborhood, thus making the corner-store an ideal gossiping place. Real Saï Saï capitalizes on this social aspect to enter into a dialogue with a younger public more and more connected to social media platforms. These two examples demonstrate the Senegalese rapper's eagerness to share information with their public in ways the majority of consumers can relate to the content of their music. *Y en a marre* artists such as Djily Bagdad, Simon, and Thiat have used the *Journal Rappé* platform to criticize the regime. Other activists in the West African region such as Killer Ace of the Gambia have also participated in the show to denounce Yayah Jammeh's dictatorship. Conscious of the reception of Senegalese youth's rap music, activists utilize hip-hop as a primary medium to convey information to both the public and the regime as their songs testify before and after the 2012 presidential election.

1- Awareness-Raising Rap Music

A diagnostic analysis of *Y en a marre*'s musical record unveils two types of rap songs: awareness-raising songs such as “*Daas Fanaanal*” and “*Dox ak sa gox*” and denunciation songs such as “*Faux Pas Forcer*” and “*Diougoufi*”. The first category of songs is usually released in the framework of new civic and political campaigns such as voter's registration drives or civic engagement campaigns, whereas the second category usually accompanies pre and post-election contentions. In Francophone West Africa, social movements' artistic productions naturally peak during political transition periods. An empirical observation shows that *Y en a marre* produced on average three songs in the last 10 months preceding presidential elections. Similarly, *Le Balai Citoyen* in Burkina Faso intensified their musical production in the months preceding the 2015 presidential elections. Founder of the youth movement, the Burkinabé rapper Smokey released a triple album during this period entitled *Pré-revolution* (2015) which accompanied the voting rights awareness-raising campaign called *Après ta révolte, ton vote* (After your revolt, your vote).

Pre-election periods in this region foster what can be called “activism atrophy”; social movements such as *Balai Citoyen* and *Y en a marre* come out of hibernation to use their lobbyist powers to sway the popular vote in one direction or to incite the masses to take action against political maneuvers they deem illegitimate. In this regard, music remains a privileged tool to engage the masses. Governments in the region have understood the influence of rap music in the new political dynamics of Francophone West Africa to a point of trying to coopt hip-hop artist to their sides. President Wade rallied with Pacotille and Shaka Babs, two famous rappers in his 2007 and 2011 presidential campaigns. Although Wade wanted their two artists to form a counter-movement to *Y en a marre*, they did not gather enough support to steamroll. The engagement of hip-hop artists on both sides of the political spectrum confirms their centrality in Francophone

West African political systems, it also explains governments' phobia towards these new political actors who despite modest means can mobilize the masses against the power structure.

When President Blaise Compaoré intended to amend Article 37 of the Burkinabé constitution which stipulates the presidential term limit to two, Smokey firmly opposed the president's move by urging the masses to protest through his music. The powerful influence of his music made him a target of the governmental and insurrectional forces between 2013-2016. Al Jazeera journalist Robbie Corey-Boulet discusses the impact and the threat the Burkinabé activist music posed to the political as well as military power in the following terms:

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso – Soldiers from Burkina Faso's elite presidential guard moved swiftly through this city last September, training automatic weapons on unarmed civilians, forcing radio and television stations to suspend programming, and burning the motorbikes of journalists. At least one photographer was beaten so badly he lost consciousness. Amid the chaos, a group of soldiers also pursued a less conventional target: the recording studio of Serge Bambara, a rapper and activist better known by his stage name, Smockey. At around noon on Sept. 17, witnesses say, the soldiers pulled up to the studio in a three-vehicle convoy. Told no one was inside, one of the men fired two anti-tank rockets at the building. The studio caught fire, and nearly all of Smockey's production equipment was destroyed or stolen. (Corey-Boulet, "The Soundtrack to Burkina Faso's Revolution," *Aljazeera*, January 28, 2016, Accessed February 16, 2019.)

The destruction of Smockey's recording studio was not only the symbol of the paranoia of President Compaoré's allied forces, it also typified the end result of musical activism that galvanized the forces that overthrew President Compaoré in 2014. The attack also meant an acknowledgment of the powerful intersection between rap/art and activism.

Similar to *Y en a marre*, *Balai Citoyen's* use of music and other forms of oral performance translate the desire to include as many social movement participants as possible. Protesters respond well to music and slogans which generally provide them with a sense of belonging to the insurrection movement and boost their stamina for action. Alice Degorce and Augustin Palé devoted a comprehensive analysis to *Balai Citoyen's* musical production and conclude that the songs that accompanied *Balai Citoyen's* activism are of three different categories. The first

category is protest songs played during rallies. These songs usually serve as an intermission during the speeches of different public speakers. The second category consists of songs performed on stage (during concerts) by a collective of artists who belong to the movement in order to break the monotony of long oral speeches during rallies. In other words, these are songs purely for entertainment purposes. The third category consists of awareness-raising songs which involve artists reminding the public about the importance of voting (Degorce and Palé 2018, p.138). This was the case in a number of rallies organized by the movement on the eve of the 2016 municipal election. The movement's song "Opération Mana Mana" forms another example of the awareness-raising function social movement musical production. This song simultaneously references the significance of community volunteering and communal service campaigns during the Sankara regime which the movement wanted to revive. It also describes the *Balai Citoyen's* objectives.

Determined by and armed with an impartial conscience, / There are more of us, we are stronger, and it's capital. / I assure you that the solution can only be radical. / Because it took only one night to trigger his triumphal march. / Welded in a common front against the diktat of one voice, / It's high time we came to disturb the quietude of the kings. / The *Balai Citoyen* that is in the streets is composed of the same people they called thugs. / Those who walk with signs, torn pants, with crazy heads. / Everyone must go to get their brooms, let everyone participate in the cleaning-up of our palaces, / Less comfort we are operating a civic clean-up, / We are organized in one bloc for a patriotic success. / *Cibal* so beautiful, we come to sweep (the authorities), *Cibal* so beautiful we come to clean up the corrupt, the dinosaurs (older post-independence politicians who are still working in government), the assassins must leave (Smockey & Valian, *Operation Mana Mana*, 2016).³²

In addition to the highlights of the 2014 *Balai Citoyen*-led insurrection that toppled Blaise Compaoré, these verses spell out the role of a *cibal* (a member of the *Balai Citoyen*) which partially

³² Déterminés par et armés d'une conscience impartiale, / Nous sommes plus nombreux, nous sommes plus forts, nous c'est capital. / Je t'assure que la solution ne peut-être que radicale. / Car une seule nuit a déclenché sa marche triomphale. / Soudés dans un front commun contre le diktat d'une seule voix, / Le temps pour nous et venu de perturber le sommeil des rois. / Le Balai Citoyen dans la rue, c'est la même qu'on appelle les voyous. / Ceux qui marchent avec des pancartes, des jeans troués avec des têtes de fous. / Allez tous à vos balais, que chacun met le pied dans le bal et poussière dans nos palais, / Moins de confort qui n'y parait fia fia on frappe, coup de balai civique, / On est gonflé en bloc pour ce succès patriotique. / *Cibal* si bel, on vient balayer, *Cibal* si bel on vient nettoyer, corrompus, corrupteurs, dinosaures, assassins libérez le planché (Smockey, *Opération Mana Mana*, 2016). (My translation)

consists in occupying spaces (physical and virtual spaces), to be a vanguard of the patriotic front against corruption, state-sponsored violence and finally, to become the new voices of the republic. *Y en a marre* used the same register to incite people to vote in the 2012 presidential election through their song “Daas Fanaanal”.

“*Daas Fanaanal*” was undoubtedly the most important rap song produced by the movement to raise people’s awareness about the significance of voting and about the power of their voter IDs in the history of hip-hop in the country. With this song the Senegalese social activists hoped to sway Senegalese votes to the detriment of President Wade. The song empowered the electorate but also reminded voters that the people have the sovereign power to make the changes they would like to see happen in the country. On the other hand, “*Daas Fanaanal*” remained a critique of Senegalese voters’ passivity. Mobilizing people to vote has not always been an easy task for political parties, even less for the Senegalese civil society with rudimentary resources. Conscious that a high participation rate in a presidential election is sometimes synonymous with a regime change in Senegal, *Y en a marre* counted on the talent of its artists to mobilize people to vote. In the introduction to the song, the social activists reiterated the primary goal of their campaign by saying:

Y en a marre is a state of mind, hey Senegalese people, the issue is having one’s voting ID/
And if you don’t have it, it means you are ‘fake’. / Senegal belongs to all of us. The dockers
and the minister have the same rights, don’t let yourself be impressed (Fou Malade, *Daas
Fanaanal*, 2011).

These lines indicate the importance of voting in the movement’s rhetoric, as *Y en a marre* members know the ultimate change will only come through the ballot. The verses also indicate the egalitarian vision of the movement. The voting ID of a cabinet member carries the same value as the one of ordinary citizens who represent the majority, and subsequently as a group, their voting IDs yield

more power. Ultimately, they get to determine who presides over the future of the nation. Djily Bagdad reinforces this idea when he raps:

The people elect and reject their leaders in any democracy. / If we want to play a role in it (democracy), let us arm ourselves with the power of the voting IDs. / Registering to vote is a must even when you do not belong to any political party. / Freedom of expression, and the right to ask for accountability. My voice must be heard, if registering to vote is a duty, having access to my voting ID is a right. / So do not try to silence me (Djily Bagdad, *Dass Fanaanal*, 2011).

Djily's verse reveals a small dose of neutrality vis-à-vis the electoral process. *Y en a marre's* voters registration drives usually claim to be apolitical in the rhetoric but generally detrimental to the political coalition in power. The last two verses of the stanza also uncover a recurrent problem in the Senegalese electoral process, which is the difficulty for people to receive their voting ID after registering in the electoral roster. Governmental authorities are often accused of deliberately retaining voter's IDs especially in areas where they are unpopular in order to curb the participation rate in their favor. This was the case in the 2017 legislative elections in Touba, a religious city and stronghold of Abdoulaye Wade sympathetic to the Senegalese opposition. People faced difficulties getting their voter's IDs, and the voting starting five hours late due to logistical issues. The opposition believed this was deliberately planned to give Touba fewer representatives in the national assembly.

For the 2019 presidential election, the Senegalese government invested over 80 million to dollars make new digital voter's IDs. However, a week before the election day, thousands of voters had not received their IDs while hundreds of thousands saw written on the IDs "Not allowed to vote." This caused a public outcry and incited *Y en a marre* to organize the *Pareel* campaign in 2018 to partly pressure national authorities to deliver the voter's IDs. The social movement regards voting as the starting point of civic engagement and the most authentic expression of the democratic process. Therefore, hindering the voting process equals curtailing people's rights and

tempering with the democratic process. Nevertheless, democracy is an ongoing process that necessitates a citizen observatory, hence the sense of the movement's song “*Dox ak sa gox*” (Walk with your community).

Just like the song “*Daas Fanaanal*,” “*Dox ak sa gox*” was part of an awareness-raising campaign by the same name designed to “raise public awareness and mobilized young citizens in particular to preserve the momentum of civic engagement observed during the 2012 presidential election” (*Y en a marre*'s project description 2012). The Senegalese activists believe that to consolidate the democratic gains, there should be a citizen control of public action and policies. The song emphasizes the significance of what the activists call “the observatory of democracy.” It begins with a soliloquy by Fou Malade who states: “Since we elected you, we have the right to ask for accountability. / This is what we call observatory. / You represent our voices, that is why we have the right to exercise control over you. / This is the message from *Y en a marre*” (Fou Malade, *Dox ak sa gox*, 2012). These lyrics accompany a meaningful video in which Simon plays the role of an elected member of parliament. Wearing a boubou (a traditional Senegalese outfit) and the Senegalese flag across his shoulder like Senegalese MPs on an official visit, Simon sits at a table with a female fellow MP and surrounded by local citizens carrying signs that read: *Observatoire de la democracy* (democracy observatory), *Dox ak sa gox* and *Ligey* (Jobs). One by one, these community representatives (played by different *Y en a marre* artists) exposed to the MPs all the local issues they are confronted with including flooding and unemployment. In the video, the community representatives carry loud-speakers as if to affirm that they are the voices of the people, hence their demands should be heard. Other striking facts of the video are the female activists marching in the streets, the decrepitude of the environment in which they shot the video as well as community representatives walking with the MP across the community showing him flooded

neighborhoods. These are strong images and symbolisms that translate the struggles of a number of people living in the suburbs of Dakar where *Y en a marre* centers its community projects. Through the video, activists send a message to elected officials urging them to be accessible to their constituents and to consult regularly with them, hence the meaning of “democracy of the people, by the people, for the people.” In the first verses of the song, Djily Bagdad articulates the importance of democracy observatory in the following words:

Walk with one’s community, but where is the destination? / The citizens’ republic where democracy displays its utmost essence. / Everything comes from the people and goes back to the people, that is our belief. / We need leaders who respect the constituents and who work to fulfill their aspirations. / We want exemplary leaders who are honest and ashamed to do certain things. / A responsibility without accountability makes it easy to embezzle funds. / We should be model citizens and the community progress should be our interest, / we should be willing to invest energy although we might not see the fruit of our labor. / We need to know our duties and recognize our priorities, / Make sure we have a prosperous future so that everyone has enough to eat like on Eid day. / Give everything you have so that your community progresses (Djily Bagdad, *Dox Ak Sa Gox*, 2012).

These verses address a number of issues including misuse of public funds, and the passiveness of local citizens when it comes to overseeing elected officials’ work. Rapper and former *Y en a marre* member, Karim Guèye, reinforces the latter concern in his part of the song when he states:

It is high time you walked with your community, do not be passive, / Why would you want to be a bystander? / Stand up and look after your community. / Be part of the city council and control the tax collection. / Stand up, do not be passive work for the community. / What belongs to you, should be controlled by you, it is your property. / It is high time you took it (your property) from the politicians and give it to hard-working people (Karim Guèye, *Dox ak sa gox*, 2012).

Karim speaks directly to the citizen as the repetition of the personal pronoun “You” suggests. He invites the local citizens to retake control of their community and proposes an alternative way to manage local communities that do not involve career politicians. These verses constitute the expression of an old grievance that seeks to place local inhabitants at the center of local politics and at the heart of community management. Often do we see in Senegal officials elected in communities in which they have never lived and for years, the Senegalese civil society has been

campaigning to change this. Electing people who dwell in the community provide a stronger sense of responsibility. Additionally, it helps to prioritize the community's interests rather than recruiting voters for the upcoming elections. This explains Fou Malade's fierce opposition to the candidacy of Aliou Sall, President Sall's brother when he wanted to become mayor of Guédiawaye, a locality in which he did not live. "*Dox ak sa gox*" deconstructs the democratic process by inviting Senegalese people to rethink community management and to exercise control over their communities' destiny. It is the quintessential instance of awareness-raising rap that sets apart Francophone West African activism. Awareness-raising rap remains a powerful tool to impact the consciousness of the audience especially knowing that "emcees often influence the thoughts, actions, and worldviews of their audiences. Identifying with an emcee's lyrics, on a group level, has the power to transform youth and to threaten dominant power structures" (Clark 2018, p.73). On the same wavelength, denunciation of public authorities still remains a dominant theme in the musical production repertoire of social movements like *Y en a marre*.

2- Denunciation Rap Music

In many African countries, hip-hop artists constitute, alongside journalists, the fourth power after the executive, the legislative and the judiciary considering their capacity to shape public opinion. The political engagement of these artists represents a counter-balance to the traditional power structure and justifies activist rappers' permanent struggle with the political establishment. “They are among the voices calling for change, challenging the state and speaking on social issues. Their music offers representations of local, social and political conditions, representations that often take the form of protest music” (Clark, 2018, p.71). Their songs are often denunciative and antagonistic in nature, and while the awareness-raising rap songs target the general population, denunciation rap songs set their sight on government and oppressive power structures. Thus, in countries like Burkina Faso, Mali, and Senegal, corruption remains the most recurrent topic in rap songs, as Künzler points out. Groups like Tata Pound (Mali), Yeleen (Burkina Faso) or Keur Gui Crew (Senegal) “have been very vocal on the issue of corruption as well as their governments failing their responsibility to address poverty, healthcare, and education in those countries” (Clark, 2018, p.87). When rappers transfer these preoccupations to the activism battlegrounds, the result remains the same, the critique of governments' failure to address the most elementary socio-economic challenges of the masses. *Y en a marre's* song “Diogoufi” (Nothing has changed) exemplifies the impact of denunciation rap music in francophone West African activism.

This song marks *Y en a marre's* first frontal attack against Macky Sall's regime and the end of its grace period. Having noticed insignificant socio-economic changes two years after his ascent to power, Thiat and Kilifeu decided again to use their musical platform to recall President Sall and his cabinet to order. The social activists seized the opportunity to produce what can be

called the first anti-Macky rap song. In terms of setting and imagery of the music video, the “Diogoufi” is similar to “Saï Saï au Coeur,” another denunciation rap song we mentioned earlier in this section. The usage of black and white footages in the video provides the viewer with the impression that darker clouds have fallen over the country symbolized by the arrival of a new regime that has reinforced the old bad habits. Kilifeu and Thiat seem to resort to dramatization effects to depict the deficiencies of the Sall regime. They utilize theatrical techniques such as soliloquy and light effects, to draw viewers' attention to the grimness of the economic situation. The debut of the music video features darker and black and white images that reminisce the energy shortage, and the increased cost of living that characterized the first two years of the Sall regime. The song preludes with a customer entering into a corner-store to buy a bag of rice (a staple food in the country). Upon handing the money to the storekeeper and asking for the grains, the storekeeper retorted that the price of a bag of rice had increased. Visibly disappointed, the customer shook his head in despair, and left the store. Another customer walked into the store carrying a propane cylinder and requested a new one. To this, the storekeeper replied that there had been a propane shortage in the country for two weeks now. The second customer reacted similarly to the first one. While these customers entered and left the corner store with no satisfaction, Thiat had been sitting next to the store's entrance observing the customer-storekeeper interactions with disbelief. No sooner had the second customer left the store then Thiat started a thought-provoking soliloquy presented as follows:

The same cats, the same dogs, the same back and forth. / The same cases, similar endings. / The same farce, the same schema. / The same electoral promises, the same predatory pricing of the Senegalese coastline (to real estate developers). / The country is in total chaos. / Only two years in power (President Macky Sall) and everybody has had enough. / Someone who cannot manage a local community, how can they run Senegal? / A so-called President, disciple of Gorgui (Abdoulaye Wade). / Are the old raggedy people who followed Senghor still running the country? Maybe it is his wife (Macky's wife) who's running it after all. / It is a group of arrivists who are in power but have quickly failed their duties. / A lazy regime devoid of vision. / We are in a permanent mess and disillusionment. / Where is the civil society that

is housed at the presidential palace? / The electoral livestock [sic] (unprincipled politicians) have already switched political party (to join the regime). / The struggle has not stopped, / We are still living the shortage of water and electricity. / The country is stagnant, nothing is working. / The health system is sick; the education system is problematic. / College graduates cannot find jobs, when will we become serious? (Thiat, *Diougoufi*, 2016).

While the music video is packed with symbolism, the lyrics unveil several aspects of the new regime's insufficiencies. The use of the anaphora “same” informs the listener of the subsistence of the problems that caused the preceding regime's demise. Thiat and Kilifeu critically point out the recurrence of electricity and water shortages coupled with the regime's open-door policy for members of the Wade regime who were willing to join the presidential coalition. Not only does the metaphor “cats and dogs” emphasize the rappers' insistence on unchanged character of the system, but it also translates their disdain for the political game that consists of promising a systemic change during electoral campaign but then perpetrating the same practices once politicians get elected to power. The juxtaposition “Someone who cannot manage a local community, how can they run Senegal?” along with the interrogation about who runs the country, cast serious doubt on President Sall's capacity to govern. Along with it, the use of the irony “the health system is sick” signals a recurrent complaint of the Senegalese who long for a better healthcare system. Furthermore, the rappers introduce a new dimension in their activism: the environment, which justifies the verse on the “predatory pricing of the Senegalese coastline.” In fact, environmental activism gradually occupies a central position in *Y en a marre*'s militancy. The denunciative tone on “Diougoufi” mirrors the accusatorial resonance of “Faux! Pas forcé,” another song *Y en a marre* composed to decry Wade's desire to run for a third term in 2012.

The song title is a double-entendre that suggests a fallacy that the Wade regime intended to impose upon the Senegalese people by wanting to change the constitution. If we analyze the phrase “Faux! Pas Forcé” as two separate clauses, the term “Faux!” means forgery “Pas forcé” means forced step. On the other hand, “Faux Pas” means a misstep, so the phrase “Faux! Pas force”

constitutes a pun meaning a forced or provoked misstep. Not only do these wordplays consolidate the wit, creativity of rappers, they also reinforce the iconoclasm of hip-hop artists who defy all French grammar rules to transmit messages nonetheless audible and understandable to younger audiences. Marame Guèye has devoted an in-depth critical analysis of the song. Not only does this song symbolize a direct message to Abdoulaye Wade, but it also represents an antithetical discourse to the disparaging comments that Wade made vis-à-vis the hip-hop artists who belong to *Y en a marre*. The song features a heavy musical instrument adapted from a 2001 Pee Froiss song, accompanied with a forceful/angry delivery materialized by the chorus: “Abdoulaye! / Do Not Push it! / I swear! / A noble person should honor their words / I Swear!” A vomiting sound follows this forceful chorus which symbolically implies that people have had enough of President Wade. The first stanza of the text elucidates the activists' readiness to confront the regime and the state apparatus by any means necessary to safeguard the constitution:

If the fact of having long ears would allow a donkey to hear and follow orders, its owner would not need to whiplash the donkey / A Monkey cannot cause the damages you have caused, just tell us that you are incompetent. / You have our betting horse, yet you cannot run, / You have our funds, yet you have no pocket / You and your relatives are embezzling our money. / You said we caught you by surprise, now get ready to face our anger (in the streets), you and your policemen. (*Y en a marre* Faux! Pas Forcé, 2012).

The song utilizes strong cultural metaphors to render the disillusionment towards Wade and his regime. Thus, while the donkey is assimilated to stubbornness in the everyday Senegalese lexicon, the monkey symbolizes cunningness and provocativeness; and all of these qualities and flaws describe Abdoulaye Wade as a savvy political strategist. The above-mentioned verses also render a certain element of surprise as Wade's regime never expected such a strong opposition to his constitutional project to come from civil society organizations. Historically, Wade has always been popular among young Senegalese who strongly supported him through his first presidency but eventually grew disillusioned due to his attempts to remain in power. As Marame Guèye argues, this song “constitutes a heated argument with Wade. Because it was the first time in Senegal's

modern history that the youth showed determination, the riot police were overwhelmed and the army was brought out as back up” (Guèye 2012, p.28). Ultimately, it can be argued that in Francophone West Africa, and particularly in Senegal, denunciative rap music form informs the crossroad between hip-hop and political activism. This musical form conveys frustration, determination, and power of the artists that subsequently use their music as a call for mobilization and insurgency hence the “militantization” of Senegalese rap music.

Ultimately, the power of music especially rap has transcended the barriers of entertainment and folklore to infiltrate African politics as an agent of change. Hip-hop artists in Francophone West Africa carry the legacies of musicians such as Makeba, and Fella Kuti, who did not hesitate to use their art as a weapon of protest against hostile governments that tried to demonize them and denied them their most basic rights. The rise of Senegalese hip-hop in the 1990s meant the emergence of a new political force that predominantly appealed to the younger generations. Emanating from the middle class of Dakar with a strong American influence, hip-hop quickly spread its tentacles to the suburbs of Dakar and the other regions of Senegal where groups like Keur Gui Crew conferred to it its “Senegaleseness” and used it as a means to denounce societal issues. In addition to this oral art form, West African social movements include the diatribe in the arsenal of contention to thwart the traditional political discourse. Although the diatribe constitutes an unconventional weapon of protest to a large extent due to its shocking functions, it has proved very efficient for the *Y en a marre* movement since it is a maneuver that attracts their opponents into their playing field but sometimes with unwanted consequences. In the same regard, these activists use the “musical open letter” to convey messages to a political power structure that seems unreceptive to their calls. Thus, given their difficult access to funding, and traditional media outlets social activists in contemporary Francophone West Africa have made of rap music the cornerstone

of their activism. It provides them access to a large and essentially young audience as well as access to an international audience that closely follow the political developments in their countries. In the same vein, social activists have capitalized on the accessibility of social media to mobilize human as well as media and financial resources.

CHAPTER THREE

TRANSNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS AND THE REVIVAL OF PAN-AFRICAN IDEALS: THE RISE OF NEO PAN-AFRICANISM

On Monday, 23 July 2018, the Senegalese capital, Dakar, hosted the first *Université Populaire de L'Engagement Citoyen* (Popular University for Civic Engagement, we will refer to it as UPEC hereafter), a Pan-African summit of social movements under the auspices of *Y en a marre*, Project South, *Filimbi*, *Lucha* among others. In total, fifty-five social movements from thirty countries in Africa and its diasporas took part in the summit. Member of the organization committee, Fadel Barro, states that: “the UPEC was a success. It brought together Africans divided by colonialization, religions and ethnic barriers. Anglophones, Francophones, Arab-speaking and Portuguese-speaking people interacted using the common language of hope.” Black activists across the continent and the Black Atlantic were able to transcend the current political environments that prevented them from examining and furthering the Pan-African issue. (Fadel Barro in the UPEC Proceedings 2019). The premises of this historical gathering took place two years earlier in Gorée Island, Senegal when *Y en a marre* gathered several activists from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte D’Ivoire, Congo Brazzaville, Chad, DRC, the Gambia, Madagascar, and Senegal to discuss the state of African social activism. These activists took key decisions including the formation of a Pan-African platform of the social movements called *Afrikki*, which was officially launched at the end of the UPEC summit. This transnational network “allows social activists to advance the Pan-African cause and discourse and allows social movements to deal with issues that are not only domestic but affect the continent [a people of African descent] as a whole”

(Interview with Fadel Barro 2019). *Afrikki* also seeks to 1) encourage solidarity among all social movements from different African countries, 2) foster civic awareness in Africa and reinforce the image of African social movements through various mechanisms, 3) strengthen social movements advocacy and capacity-building through resource mobilization and strategy-sharing, and 4) put forth funding mechanisms for financial autonomy and support endangered African activists. The UPEC and the formation of *Afrikki* represent a turning point in the history of modern African social activism and an important milestone in “Neo Pan-Africanism,” which I consider the most recent evolutionary phase of Pan-Africanism.

This chapter argues that *Y en a marre* and similar insurgent movements are spearheading the revival of Pan-Africanism, which has entered a new phase referred to in this work as Neo Pan-Africanism. Social activism in Francophone West Africa is collectively advancing Pan-Africanist ideas by pushing for good governance and fighting neo-colonial processes through transnational/transatlantic movement platforms. Using 1945 (the year the Manchester conference was held, and the year Africa became the epicenter of the Pan-African movement) as a point of reference, this chapter briefly explores the evolution of Pan-Africanism as an ideology and a movement from the Diaspora to Africa. It then examines the involvement of *Y en a marre* and contemporary African activists in the rise of Neo Pan-Africanism, which I argue was manifested by the major Pan-African summit of social movements that took place in Dakar in the summer of 2018. Finally, the chapter delves into the fight against the CFA franc currency that African social movements, particularly *Y en a marre*, are engaging in order to cut neo-colonial ties and achieve a monetary sovereignty in West Africa and ultimately a common currency for the continent as a whole. In doing so, this chapter pays close attention to the collaboration of *Y en a marre* with other major transnational social movements that are redefining the relationship between Africa and the

West, as well as between Africans on the continent and people of African descent who reside elsewhere.

At the outset, it can be said that Pan-Africanism is not an easy concept to define because of its large scope, which touches on politics, economy, history and other cultural expressions. The German historian Imanuel Geiss concedes this point when he writes “it is still difficult perhaps even impossible to provide a clear and precise definition of Pan-Africanism” (Geiss 1974, p.3). In *The Pan-African Movement a History of Pan-Africanism in America, Europe and Africa*, Geiss provides six definitional approaches to Pan-Africanism including the following one:

By Pan-Africanism we understand intellectual and political movements among Africans and Afro-Americans who regard or have regarded Africans and people of African descent as homogeneous. This outlook leads to a feeling of racial solidarity and a new self-awareness and causes Afro-Americans to look upon Africa as their ‘homeland’, without necessarily thinking of a physical return to Africa (Geiss 1974, p.25).

This definition attempt highlights the geographical ramifications of Pan-Africanism, which goes beyond the African boundaries and embraces all people of African ancestry. Geiss also emphasizes the structural and ideological fragmentation of the term when he uses “movements” in plural, given that several movements/organizations who fought for the restoration of human dignity to Black people across the Atlantic hoisted the banner of Pan-Africanism. This was the case of the Garvey Movement, and Negritude to name a few.

Geiss’ conception mirrors Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates’ approach in *Encyclopedia Africana*. The encyclopedia defines Pan-Africanism as follows:

[Pan-Africanism is] a wide range of ideologies that are committed to common political or cultural project for Africans and people of African descent. In its most straightforward version Pan-Africanism is the political project calling for the unification of all Africans into a single African State to which those in the African diaspora can return. In its vaguer, more cultural forms, Pan-Africanism has pursued literary and artistic projects that bring together people in Africa and her Diaspora (Appiah and Gates 2005, p.1484).

Similar to Geiss, Appiah and Gates emphasize the fact that Pan-Africanism is first of all a political movement that reunites Africans and people from the Diaspora. The two above-mentioned definitions mirror the African Union's (AU) understanding of the concept which they provide in a special issue commemorating the twentieth summit of the organization. In its publication, *Echo*, the AU defines Pan-Africanism as:

An ideology and a movement that encouraged the solidarity of African worldwide. It is based on the belief that unity is vital to economic, social and political progress and aims to unify and uplift people of African descent. The ideology asserts that the fates of all African peoples and countries are intertwined. At its core, Pan-Africanism is 'a belief that African peoples both on the continent and the diaspora, share not merely a common history, but a common destiny (AU *Echo*, issue 5, January 2013, p.1).

This definition perhaps captures the essence of Pan-Africanism as it pertains to the formation of a united block for progress and prosperity for the black race regardless of their geographical location. More importantly, it acknowledges the dialectical link that exists between the struggles of people of African descent, hence the necessity for Black folks to coordinate their struggle against oppression. Collaboration and sharing of strategies have always been at the center of Pan-Africanism. For the concept to remain viable in the present-day period, organizations like *Y en a marre* partly rely on a network of movements to foster renewed interests in Pan-African ideals throughout the African continent, particularly in its French-speaking regions. It is important to also note that since 2013, the African Union "expressed the view that Pan-Africanism could be considered both 'a governmental and grassroots objective'" after having noticed the engagement of youth movements in the 21st century (Adi 2018, p.1). This is certainly an attempt to disentangle the elitism that has historically surrounded discursive analyses of Pan-Africanism which tend to marginalize popular engagement with the concept. Since 2011, which corresponds to the proliferation of anti-establishment youth movements across Africa, Pan-Africanism has experienced a galvanizing effect thanks to the mass action of popular youth movements.

The evolution of Pan-Africanism was initially the affair of the Black intelligentsia (i.e. people like Blyden who theorized the concept of African personality which is the founding principle of Pan-Africanism). They defined the contours of the ideology and the movement. In the post-independence period, however, Pan-Africanism became a governmental policy with newly-established African states with a goal to unite the continent. Despite failing to build a federal state, African leaders agreed to establish supranational entities, such as the Organization of African Unity and ECOWAS. These organizations largely proved unable to curb Pan-Africanism's loss of momentum in the post-independence period mostly due to their inability to solve conflicts between member states. The multiplication of insurgent movements on the continent, are now pushing African youth to revive the concept through various initiatives. From intellectuals to social activists via government officials, the trajectory of Pan-Africanism is marked with highs and lows yet, the concept survived the most challenging situations throughout the centuries.

According to many scholars and practitioners of Pan-Africanism like George Padmore and Imanuel Geiss, Pan-Africanism traces its origins back to the 18th century. Its emergence coincides with the proliferation of events (such as the returned of enslaved Africans to their continent) and sub-movements that have modified the course of Black Atlantic history. Based on the paradigmatic shifts that took place between 1776 and 2011, I identify five major periods in the evolution of Pan-Africanism: Proto-Pan-Africanism (1787-1900), Theoretical Pan-Africanism (1900-1945), Pragmatic Pan-Africanism (1945-1963), Functional Pan-Africanism (1963-2011) and finally Neo Pan-Africanism (2011-present) which constitutes the focal point of this chapter.

Proto Pan-Africanism can be regarded as the first period in the evolution of the Pan-African concept and movement. The term is coined by the German historian Imanuel Geiss who used it to refer to the events that laid the ideological foundation of Pan-Africanism as a movement such as

the colonization of Sierra Leone and Liberia by people of African descent from the Americas. It is characterized by the paradigmatic shift that occurred in the wake of the American Revolution as well as the emergence of abolitionist movements in Europe and the United States. I term the second evolutive period of Pan-Africanism “Theoretical” given that no major practical action was concretized to quell the advance of colonization which was the major paradigm shift that occurred in the wake of the Berlin Conference in 1885. Theoretical Pan-Africanism represented a phase of self-searching, denunciation, construction and re-construction of the bases of Pan-Africanism as a structured movement. The 1900 Pan-African Conference in London and various Pan-African Congresses marked key developments of the period.

“Pragmatic Pan-Africanism” corresponds to the post-Manchester Conference up until 1963 given that all the theorized principles and objectives discussed during the Pan-African congresses, became praxis after 1945. The significance of this period partly lies in the independence fervor and the Cold War dynamic which had fostered global changes. Formerly-colonized people especially Africans and people of African descent appropriated the Atlantic Charter during this period and used it as a catalyst to reclaim humane treatment for the Black Atlantic. Functional Pan-Africanism refers to the fourth phase of the periodization of Pan-Africanism. The total liberation and unification of Africa formed key paradigm shifts of this period resulting in the formation and also the demise of the Organization of African Unity which was not able to solve the territorial, ethnic and political conflicts that spread across the continent after the colonizers’ departure. Theoretical, Pragmatic and Functional Pan-Africanism pertain to the evolution of the concept and movement in the 20th century. It should be mentioned that prior to 1945, Africans’ involvement in Pan-Africanism was somewhat marginal in comparison to the diaspora. However, the Fifth Pan-African

Congress in Manchester symbolized the consecration of African participation in the Pan-African movement as Africa became the epicenter of Pan-Africanism after 1945.

The Fifth Pan-African Congress (1945) primarily focused on African affairs. A re-definition of the geopolitical map after the Atlantic Charter's ratification also affected the African continent still under European domination. Subsequently, Africans had become more aware of their transformative power after helping liberate Europe, from the convulsive clutch of fascism. Colonialists grappled with the dilemma/paradox of keeping their African colonies subjugated or grant them freedom, a principle they defended against the Axis Powers during the Second World War. However, refusal to grant African colonies independence constituted a self-negation, and above all a great financial risk for the European imperialist powers whose management of the colonies had become costly given the immense reconstruction program awaiting them in Europe in the wake of the Second World War. While George Padmore shared with the Congress delegates the hardship that people of African descent were facing in the Caribbean, especially the British Guiana, Du Bois depicted the grimness of the racial issue in the United States and African-Americans' achievements in the freedom struggles. Related to the predicament of Black people all over the world, African delegates acknowledged that Africa "had been interfered with, and that alien rule has not improved education, health or nutrition of African peoples, but on the contrary tolerates mass illiteracy, ill-health, malnutrition, prostitution, and many other social evils" (Padmore 1971, p.143). Unfortunately, the same quandaries participants denounced in Manchester are still prevalent in Africa.

To conclude the Fifth Pan-African Congress, delegates issued the "Declaration to the Colonial Powers," which challenged European nations to apply the provisions of the Atlantic Charter in regard to Africa and urged young African leaders, such as Kwame Nkrumah and Jomo

Kenyatta, to return home and help lead the long march towards independence. Nationalism thus became the most shared sentiment among African leaders and Africa formed the epicenter of Pan-Africanism. However, it should be noticed that the fervor that had once fueled Pan-Africanism following the Manchester Congress considerably dwindled in the decades following the achievement of independence (1970s, 1980s and 1990s). Internal conflicts, civil wars, military coups, and ideological differences about concepts like federalism and regionalism weakened Pan-Africanism.

Such divergences ultimately led to the formation of the Monrovia and Casablanca groups. These two blocs had different visions about the prospective development of the African continent and Pan-Africanism. While the Casablanca group, which included Ghana, Egypt and Algeria, favored the formation of an African federation similar to the United States of America, the Monrovia group which included Nigeria and the majority of francophone Africa, championed the creation of regional organizations instead. The two blocs eventually merged to form the Organization of the African Unity, but their already deep-seated differences continued to play out. Consequently, the OAU faced challenges in fulfilling its mission, which ultimately led to its demise in the early 2000s. The creation of the African Union in 2002 sparked African governments' renewed interest in Pan-Africanism.

“Today, the African Union represents the strongest political symbol of Pan-Africanism, as it is an organization with a membership that not only includes fifty-three [sic] members out of the fifty-four African states but also the entire African diaspora” which represents the sixth region of the African continent (Adi 2018, p.1). The reality is today's Pan-Africanism seems to be an “agonizing” concept in the African diaspora. In other words, people of African descent no longer play the prime role they undertook during the formative years of Pan-Africanism and seem to be

more concerned with internal affairs in their respective countries of citizenship. In the same vein, African governments still struggle to concretize the Pan-African/continental projects, such as connecting African cities, inter-state travels, or creating a single currency for the continent. These shortcomings bring doubts about the contemporary African leaders' capacities or willingness to achieve the ultimate goal of unity. How can Pan-Africanism become a political, socio-economic and cultural reality if some African states with all their means fail to put forth the basic elements of African unity such as democracy, good governance, freedom of movement? Contemporary African social activists rekindle the flames of Pan-Africanism among the masses and unlock the concept from its elitist confinement to grant it a grassroots foundation hence the rise of Neo Pan-Africanism.

I- SOCIAL ACTIVISM IN FRANCOPHONE AFRICA AND THE RISE OF “NEO-PAN AFRICANISM”

In their book *Africa Uprisings* (2018), Adam Branch and Zacharia Mamphilly spell out the dawn of a new era in African politics and socio-economic progress by pointing out a shift from what is traditionally known as “Afro-pessimism” to “Afro-optimism.” The term “Afro-Pessimism” represents a widespread sense of despair and lack of opportunity among the overwhelming majority of Africans. However, since the early 2000s, the continent’s economic growth, increasing political stability, and the rise of a blossoming middle class have begun shifting the narrative of “hopelessness” to “Afro-optimism,” which signals increased ambitions to build a brighter future. “GDP growth rates reached unprecedented heights. Foreign capital pours into oil and gas investment in East Africa. Vast private housing colonies rise from the sea in Lagos Nigeria,” write Branch and Mamphilly (Branch & Mamphilly 2018, p.1). As foreign investments flow into the continent and buttress African economies, there exists a growing understanding by some that Africa’s future is bright.

This progress, however, is not representative of only half of the whole African population living in extreme squalor. According to Branch and Mamphilly, both “Afro-pessimism” and “Afro-optimism” overlook the majority of citizens by depicting them as helpless or simply disregard them in favor of “the new African elite” (Branch & Mamphilly 2018, p.1). This systematic negligence (of the masses in favor of the new elite) brought about unwanted consequences as scores of citizens seek to resolve the inequality gap by continuing to move from the rural to urban areas in search of better economic opportunities. In the same vein, more and more urbanites continue to occupy the streets demanding more social changes in favor of the masses. In fighting these systemic challenges, populations have acquired a different kind of political awareness, which is typically centered on structured mass mobilizations and mass actions.

In other words, the actions of social movements often transcend rural, urban and national boundaries to inspire more activism at the continental level. In this context, transnational collaborations become the new norm of social activism on the African continent and subsequently provides Neo Pan-Africanism a podium to address contemporary national and continental issues. Several questions come to mind when one hears the term Neo Pan-Africanism: what does Neo Pan-Africanism mean? What sets this phase apart in contrast to the periods covered in the previous sections? Who are the main actors of this contemporary manifestation of Pan-Africanism? Finally, what are the potential challenges these actors can encounter?

1- Defining Neo Pan-Africanism

Neo Pan-Africanism can be defined as the 21st century manifestation of Pan-African ideals through popular/grassroots mass actions with the ultimate goal of fostering African and Black transatlantic unity while fighting neo-colonial processes and establishing continental democratic transitions and good governance. As a distinct period in the evaluation of the Pan-African movement and ideology, actors of Neo Pan-Africanism are mostly composed of young social activists seeking to engage the masses with an afro-utopian concept of self-reinvention and self-determination, what the Senegalese scholar Felwine Sarr would term “Afrotopia.” Sarr defines “Afrotopia” as “an active utopia, an attempt to reflect and project oneself into the future and give sense to a civilizational, humane and societal adventure that put the African at the center of their project” (Sarr 2016, interview with Librairie Mollat). Sarr’s concept is consistent with the argument that the African continent functions under the directives and injunctions of Northern countries and Western-controlled institutions like the World Bank or IMF which tend to design and impose policies such as the Structural Adjustment Programs in Africa. From its political structures to its social policies, many African countries have little to no say in the shaping of their future. Therefore, Sarr contends that Africa must collectively rethink its future without external influence or Western concepts of development and civilization. In other words, there is a need for Africans to deconceptualize and reconceptualize notions such as development, and not constrain themselves in the Afro-pessimism and Afro-optimism dichotomy given that there are endless possibilities between the two.

It is this work of reconceptualization and active utopia that young African activists engage with through grassroots Pan-African endeavors. In the Neo Pan-African context, the notion of Afro-utopia transcends the abstract imagination of the “ideal African society” devoid of its current

political plagues to embrace peaceful regime changes, good governance, the improvement of women's conditions, youth welfare as well as environmental protection. In doing so, activists resort to what can be called "Preemptive Activism" to prevent autocratic excesses usually manifested in unilateral constitutional changes (like in the DRC and more recently in Guinea). They also use "Remedial/Curative Activism" to correct damages occasioned by illegitimate and unlawful governmental actions and policies like the oil and gas contracts in Senegal or the constitutional change in Burkina Faso. Ultimately, as African activists stated in the July 2018 *Azimiyo La Dakar*³³, "the emergence of social movements in Africa and the African diasporas is part of the realization that a radical change in the political, economic and social paradigms of the Africans themselves is needed, based on their own history and their cultures" (*Azimiyo La Dakar* 2018). In other words, "it is a question of reinventing, on a pan-African scale, a common utopia and of committing ourselves, resolutely and in solidarity, to complete the struggle for the liberation of Africa, begun by previous generations" (*Azimiyo La Dakar* 2018). These quotes reaffirm on the one hand the centrality of African cultural paradigms in contemporary social activism and the continuity of the struggle past generations of African and Black activists undertook to find solutions to similar issues. The concept of Neo Pan-Africanism takes root in Francophone Africa with the establishment of popular movements such as *Y en a marre*, *Le Balai Citoyen*, *Lucha*, *Urgences panafricanistes*, and *Iyana* among other movements who built transnational partnerships that defy state repression and geographic boundaries.

Popular mass actions predominantly characterize this period, especially in Francophone African countries where important socio-political and economic changes are engendering

³³ The *Azimiyo La Dakar* is the final declaration African and Diasporic activists issued during the first Pan-African summit of social movements that took place in Dakar, Senegal in July 2018. The document was drafted by the *Y en a marre* activist Fadel Barro and the novelist and economist Felwine Sarr.

predictable clashes between the political establishment and masses and between young activists and neocolonial forces. Francophone West African has certainly garnered a lot of attention since 2011 when massive protest movements destabilized the Senegalese regime and toppled the Compaoré regime in Burkina Faso. Similar turmoil destabilized North Africa a few months earlier when a young street vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire to protest the seizure of his merchandise by municipal authorities, sparking the Tunisian Revolution and what is later known as the Arab Spring. The year 2011 became a catalyst for the emergence of popular mass actions across the African continent particularly in the Francophone regions thus bringing the sinister memories of 1968.

It will be useful to note here that Africa, like any other region of the globe, goes through protest cycles “when multiple social movements or social groups engage in sustained protest clustered in time and span across a wide geographical boundary (e.g., national scale)” (Almeida 2014). Social movement scholar Sydney Tarrow strengthens this argument when he concedes that “protest becomes a protest cycle when it is diffused to several sectors of the population, is highly organized, and is widely used as the instrument to put forward demands” (Tarrow 1989, pp.14-15). The 1960s constitute a prime example of periodic insurgencies that swept across the continent particularly its French-speaking regions with 1968 being a significant landmark in the history of social protest in Francophone West and Central Africa. Becker & Seddon reinforce this idea when they argue:

African students in Europe and on the African sub-continent were in contact with each other and were therefore aware of what was happening elsewhere; news of the ‘events’ in Paris certainly reached the French-speaking public in West and Central Africa very fast. It seems striking, therefore, that even those discussions of the 1968 ‘events’ that have emphasized their international or ‘global’ nature have failed by and large to discuss the extent to which popular protest and conflict in Africa that year and indeed throughout the 1960s, had both their own internal dynamics and yet were also linked closely with wider international events and developments (Becker & Seddon 2018).

Becker and Seddon's statement demonstrates the cyclical nature of protest movements in Francophone Africa often connected to more global political dynamics. Yet, due to the region's strong dependency on France and similarities in the political issues, Francophone Africa tends to react against political issues in unison. This peculiarity distinguishes the movements in the region from the rest of socio-political insurgencies on the continent.

The origin of cyclical protests is not always easy to circumscribe since it is often a combination of factors that engenders these uprisings. Adam Branch and Zacharia Mamphilly provided an overview of the new waves of protest that struck the continent starting in 2011 by contending that the insurgencies can be "cast as the ultimate challenges to capitalism, a rejection of liberal democracy an uprising by the 'multitude', the work of social-media-savvy youth, or an outburst by frustrated middle classes" (Branch & Mamphilly, 2018). They further contend that the new wave of mass protests arose in reaction to a distinct confluence of economic and political factors exacerbated by social circumstances such as the systemic marginalization of the lower classes and the concentration of the wealth among a small elite.

Focusing his analysis on West African protest movements, Senegalese economist Ndongo Samba Sylla similarly argues that West Africa undoubtedly experiences ebbs and flow like everywhere else in the world. He further adds, "we should not make the wrong diagnosis. The problem in this region is not the lack or deficit of 'democracy', but rather, the unbridled liberalism that prevails in the economic and political spheres" (Sylla 2014, p.146). In light of Sylla's analysis, one can reckon that in comparison to their Anglophone counterparts, the weak economic performance of Francophone West African countries in the past two decades have aggravated the region's tensions which subsequently rippled through the education systems, the supply of essential goods and the healthcare system among other sectors. In this perspective, prominent

African economists, such as Felwine Sarr and Kako Nabukpo, accuse the CFA franc currency for contributing to the lack of sustained economic growth in Francophone West Africa. In fact, the region is bound to an astringent and France remotely-controlled financial system that stifles inflation but does not foster economic growth. Journalist Alain Faujas captures this discrepancy in a 2012 news article in *The Africa Report*. He writes:

French-speaking Africa is lagging behind English-speaking Africa even without the weight of South Africa. [...] French-speaking countries account for only 19 percent of Sub-Saharan Africa's average GDP whilst English-speaking countries boast of 47 percent (excluding South Africa). Countries belonging to the mainly French-speaking Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa (UEMOA) have been growing at an average rate of 3.4 percent per annum in the last ten years, whilst those in the mainly English-speaking East Africa Community (EAC) have registered a 5.4 percent growth rate." (Faujas 2012).

Not only does the above-mentioned statement depict a global image of the two regions' economic performances, but it specifically draws a stark performance chasm between Francophone West Africa and its English-speaking counterparts. Therefore, it is understandable that French-speaking West Africa seems more prone to social uprisings and a more fertile ground for social movement organizations stretching beyond national boundaries.

Due to the region's high level of unemployment, social inequalities, and the lack of optimism about the future, young people in these regions want their voices to be heard. Their civic engagement manifests itself in local politics, policy-making, as well as social and cyber activism. Besides the national political dynamics, they understand that decisions made miles away by international/foreign entities, such as the IMF, World Bank or the French National Bank, can drastically affect their daily lives. The aftermath of the Structural Adjustment Programs (1980s), and the second devaluation of the CFA currency left a bitter taste in the mouths of two generations of young Francophone West Africans. The latter are not only demanding better governance and a more active participation in the policy making, but also better consideration for their future. In this regard, citizens are increasingly vocal about the rational exploitation and pricing of their natural

resources. There is a latent mistrust among Francophone West Africans vis-à-vis their leaders hence the need to constantly play the role of gatekeepers through their activism.

One could legitimately argue that the 2011 Arab Spring constituted the paradigm shift that triggered Neo Pan-Africanism. The Arab Spring consisted of a wave of revolts that swept across north Africa and the Middle-East with Tunisia being the epicenter. Unlike the revolts in Northern Francophone Africa, protesters in sub-Saharan West Africa, especially in Senegal and Burkina Faso, managed to maintain organized social movement structures that continue to oversee the democratic process and participate in the consolidation of democratic gains. In Tunisia, for example, the uprising did not necessarily foster a sense of organized activism that oversaw the post-revolution period. In other words, there exists a sort of vanguardism in the Francophone West Africa whereby the most politically-savvy or the most civically-engaged elements of the civil society form movements and attract more participants. This vanguardism existed during the 2011 revolution in Tunisia.

We cannot ignore the leadership role played by the labor movement (UGTT) *Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens* (Tunisian General Labor Union) in the Tunisian revolution and the army of tech savvy people who fueled the mass mobilization in the streets of Tunisia through social media. However, they did not sustain their role as “Guardians/Gatekeepers of the Revolution” upon removing President Ben Ali from power. As a result, there is a counterrevolution trend that has been unfolding slowly but surely reinstating the status-quo. North African scholar of Development Studies, Gilbert Achcar, declared in a 2015 interview: “Tunisia is no exception to the regional counterrevolution trend, I am afraid. [...] Tunisia is experiencing a massive comeback of the old regime’s men. [...] The new dominant party in Tunisia is not exclusive but to a very large extent, a refurbished version of the old regime’s ruling party” (Interview with Gilbert Achcar

2018, *Jacobinmag*). Although the 2011 Tunisian revolution resulted in regime change, it did not create lasting popular organizations that could challenge the status quo. Unlike Tunisian revolutionaries, Francophone West African protesters connected their struggles and garnered a Pan-African network of protesters that currently makes these social movements a driving force of Neo Pan-Africanism.

In addition to environmental activism which now occupies a central position in 21st century Pan-Africanism, there exist two important elements that distinguish Neo Pan-Africanism from the other periods of the Pan-African movement described above. On the one hand, while the four previous periods of Pan-Africanism concerned themselves with precolonial and colonial processes, Neo-Pan Africanism accords prominence to local politics continentally as well as the fight against neo-colonial processes. For instance, while the issue of slavery and the repatriation of enslaved Africans back to the continent of their origin constituted a focal point of Black activists in the Proto-Pan-Africanism period, the ill-treatment of native Africans by colonial authorities occupied a prime spot in Pan-African meetings from 1900-1945. On the other hand, whereas the previous periods of Pan-Africanism saw a transatlantic flow of ideas and strategies from the Diaspora to the continent, Neo Pan-Africanism is rather grounded on the African continent (as result of the 1945 Manchester Conference) with a gradual movement of ideas from the local to the regional and from the regional to the continental. In the current stage of Neo Pan-Africanism, the movement of ideas has not fully reached the transatlantic capacity/dimension that existed throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. However, recent events like the African Union symbolically making the Diaspora the sixth region of the African continent and the participation of Diaspora-focused movements, such as Black Lives Matter and Project South in the US in Pan-African

summits like the 2018 UPEC, testify to the growing inclusion of the Diaspora in the Neo Pan-African era.

In this regard, Black Atlantic social activism in the era of Neo Pan-Africanism encompasses four distinct levels of alliance: the local, regional, continental and transatlantic levels of solidarity. The local or national level consists of social activists creating a counter-balance to the traditional political power in the view to addressing internal affairs that pertain to democracy and good governance through participation in policy-making and policy application. At the regional level, social movements participants acknowledge the similarity of their struggles and collaborate to address issues that their respective countries are facing. On the continental level, the struggle from one region of the continent is transposed to another by way of sharing protest strategies and assist fellow activists to overcome resource and state-induced challenges. The transatlantic or diasporic level of Neo Pan-Africanism concerns itself with the collaboration between social movements primarily involving or driven black communities on either side of the Atlantic. The fact that West African social movements such as *Y en a marre* and *Balai Citoyen* initiated Central African social movements like *Lucha* and *Filimbi* into their methods of protest and campaigns speaks volumes about the ways Neo Pan-Africanism is unfolding at the continental level. In the same vein, Project South's involvement in the organization of the first Pan-African summit of social movements in Dakar is a strong statement to Diasporic Neo Pan-Africanism. More importantly, the group's contributions were not simply just symbolic, as Project South provided nearly 80 percent to the UPEC budget and their participation in *Afrikki*, constitutes a token of how Neo Pan-Africanism operates at the transatlantic level.

These four distinct levels do not suggest a geographic delimitation or a divide in the contemporary (or historical) manifestation of Pan-Africanism as Nantambu (1998) argues. Rather

they describe the mechanism through which present-day African activists disseminate the ideology of Pan-Africanism from the local to the global by following a linear progression dictated by events happening in particular African countries or regions. Such subdivisions also partially mirror Ali Mazrui's compartmentalization of the Pan-African struggle in *Africa's International Relations* (1977). Mazrui identifies five dimensions of Pan-Africanism: Sub-Saharan, Trans-Saharan, Trans-Atlantic, West Hemispheric and Global Pan-Africanism. Mazrui justifies his approach by assessing that:

Sub-Saharan Pan Africanism limits itself to the unity of Black people or Black countries South of the Sahara.... Trans-Saharan Pan Africanism extends solidarity to those who share the African continent across the Sahara Desert, the Arabs and Berbers of the North. Trans-Saharan Pan-Africanism insists on regarding the great desert as a symbolic bridge rather than a divide, a route for caravans rather than a death-trap. Trans-Atlantic Pan Africanism is the third level of solidarity, encompassing the peoples of the Black Diaspora in the Americas as well as the African continent....West Hemispheric Pan-Africanism encompasses West Indians, Black Americans, Black Brazilians and other Black people of the Western hemisphere....Global Pan-Africanism brings together all these centers of Black presence in the world and adds the new Black enclaves in Britain, France and other European countries which have come partly from the Caribbean and partly from the African continent itself (Mazrui 1977, p.68-9).

Mazrui's compartmentalization is certainly one of the most inclusive approaches to Pan-Africanism. Not only does it embrace all the geographic locations where Pan-Africanism has manifested itself, (except Asia) but it also gives North Africa its rightful place in the Pan-Africanism discourse by regarding the Sahara Desert not as a divide but rather as a bridge between North Africa and Africa South of the Sahara. Nevertheless, Afrocentric scholars such as Kwame Nantambu finds Mazrui's subdivision problematic as "it perpetuates the European divide-and-conquer maneuver; it not only deletes the vital revolutionary variable in the struggle but, more important, it also disintegrates the Pan-African movement (Nantambu 1998, p.4).

The Afrocentric concern is valid if one conceives of the Pan-Africanism as a disjointed movement that sporadically manifests itself in distinct regions of the global, but if we regard it as

a universal phenomenon among Africans and people of African descent who have suffered similar plights and decided to connect their struggle, Mazrui's approach appears very sensible. Neo Pan-Africanism's four dimensions of alliance mentioned above also looks at Pan-Africanism as a common struggle among Black people but regards Francophone West Africa as the command post of 21st century Pan-African movement and ideology. This approach also seeks to reposition Francophone Africa in the discursive analyses of Pan-Africanism given that its contribution to the concept has systematically been dwindled over time.

2- Rehabilitating Francophone Africa in Pan-African Discourses

Historically, Africanist scholars have accorded a perfunctory examination of Francophone Africa's involvement in the development of Pan-Africanism. Although concepts such as Négritude benefitted from thorough scholarly analyses over the decades, Anglophone Africa still get the lion's share when it comes to accounts of Pan-Africanism. My argument about this oversight is not new since several authors have pointed out the omission of French-speaking Africa from popular narratives concerning the history of Pan-Africanism. Historian Georges Shepperson argues that the account of Francophone Africans' participation in Pan-Africanism "has yet to be told....If French-speaking African participation in the Pan-African movement seems to have been neglected from 1921 until the 1945 Manchester Congress, the emergence of *négritude* in the 1930's indicated that they were making a distinct contribution to cultural Pan-Africanism" (Shepperson 1962, p.354-355). In the same vein as Shepperson, Rupert Emerson suggests that English speakers "tended to monopolize both the term 'Pan-Africanism and the movements and congresses associated with it'" (Emerson 1962, p.12). In light of Shepperson and Emerson's observations, one can legitimately argue that Francophone Africans have been marginalized in Pan-African narratives. This is partly due to the fact that many Francophone African leaders were so taken by France's assimilationist policy that they lost sight of the urgency of autonomy and self-determination of African nations. It has also been stated many of these Francophone political leaders disparaged Pan-African ideas because their proponents "were likely" to be radicals advocating for total independence from the metropole (Emerson 1962). Furthermore, Paris has historically been suspicious of Pan-Africanism and its calls for African unity. French authorities went as far as calling off the Tunis Pan-African Congress in 1921 for fear of independentist agitations in French colonies.

However, these divisions have not always been the case. Due to Blaise Diagne's proximity to the French Premier Minister Georges Clemenceau, W.E.B. Du Bois along with a delegation of 56 people were permitted to hold the Pan-African Congress in Paris (1919). Prominent Senegalese politician and member of the French Parliament, Diagne, discreetly got the green light from Clemenceau to hold the congress while Du Bois was on a NAACP mission to investigate the treatment of Black soldiers in Europe. Francophone Africans and Caribbeans were at the forefront of the Second and Third Pan-African Congresses. The latter, organized in November 1923 in London and Lisbon, opened amidst divergence of opinions between Du Bois and the French-Speaking members under the leadership of Isaac Béton, Secretary of the Pan-African Association.

This discord strongly affected the organization of the Congress, obliging Béton to call it off and Du Bois to reconvene it in extremis. According to political scientist Ramla Bandele, there existed an ideological rift between the Francophones and the Anglophones that caused a significant dysfunction within the Pan-African Association: "The issue of the division was Diagne's position that blacks should identify and develop within the colonial system. The competing view was that Blacks should gradually move toward self-governance and gradual separation from Western powers" (Abegunrin 2016, p.29). These differences morphed into a gradual and systemic isolation of Francophone African and Caribbean elements of the Pan-African Congress movement and subsequently into their ostracization in the historical narratives of Pan-Africanism. However, Francophone Africa is on the verge of redeeming itself since social movements in the region are engaging the most impactful transnational initiatives in the current phase of Pan-Africanism. These include the first Pan-African summit of social movements that took place in Dakar, in 2018 under the leadership of the *Y en a marre movement* and the formation of *Afrikki* the Pan-African network of social movements.

II- THE DAKAR PAN-AFRICAN SUMMIT AND THE FORMATION OF *AFRIKKI*

The organization of the UPEC and the formation of *Afrikki* in 2018 represent a significant milestone in the emergence of “Neo Pan-Africanism.” They are the first major Pan-African grassroots initiatives that have taken place in the 21st century.³⁴ Since the 1960s Pan-Africanism had been the predilection for African governments, regional organizations like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU). Although the latter is striving to provide young Africans and the Diaspora a seat at the discussion table, these political entities have (whether unconsciously or not) undermined the presence and the role of the Diaspora as well as grassroots endeavors in the advancement of Pan-Africanism.

The UPEC symbolizes a key Francophone initiative and a transformative experience for activists in the Black Atlantic as a whole. It serves as the first major transnational platform for youth insurgent movements in contemporary Africa that not only dealt with civic awareness and political change but also with the welfare of social activists. Moreover, the UPEC formed a space where social movements agreed on a collective agenda and a road map to build the “New Africa”. In this respect, Fadel Barro asserts that the UPEC “was [partially] born from the realization that Africa’s public space was missing a forum where [activists] could talk about their problems and project themselves in ‘active utopias’” (Fadel Barro in the UPEC Proceedings 2019). In addition to the problematic of solidarity between social movements, the diagnosis of their individual experiences and shared interests, the UPEC gathered contemporary social activists to revisit recent events that have challenged the rule of law and principles of democracy in Africa. They also seize the opportunity to analyze past and current socio-political and cultural challenges in relation to the

³⁴Here we are not including government-centered initiatives materialized through regional or continental organizations such as Ecowas and the African Union.

“New Africa” young people want to see emerge. More important, the summit stood out as an incubator of modern thoughts where movement leaders and participants, policy-makers and scholars interacted to foster change with the clear consciousness of a shared destiny. Finally, the UPEC subscribed to the continuity of Pan-African resistance against alienating internal and external forces which Barro insists on in the final report of the summit. He asserts:

‘The old colonial power has choked the budding utopia that was Pan-Africanism, which was the goal of the great figures of the African independence like Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Lumumba or Nnandi Azikiwe’ In the end, they were condemned to be protesters of unjust political, economic, and cultural order without ever having had the opportunity to structure and carry out their project of the necessary transformation for an Africa traumatized by colonization. Today. Our generation is faced with the same problems, and we have to invent our own answers to those problems. (Barro, UPEC Proceedings 2019).

Barro’s statement reiterates the fact that the new generation of African activists continue to follow in the path of their Pan-African predecessors who led the independence movements. Furthermore, he underscores the fact that Africa still trails the same political, economic and social issues that partly emanated from the colonial experience, in addition to decades of exploitation and poor governance. In front of these “recycled challenges,” contemporary African activists are adopting new fighting methods with the intent to propose political alternatives that completely sever colonial and neocolonial ties. Hence the need to project themselves into “utopian” frameworks so as to challenge the status quo.

As Mamphilly stated on the opening-day of the UPEC summit, contemporary African social African movements “are successful when they engage in ‘utopian thinking’ in other words, the role of [African activists] is to make the impossible inevitable. They do this by presenting an alternate vision of what is possible beyond the existing political structures and making it appear natural” (Mamphilly 2019, Presentation at the UPEC). Mamphilly captures the “*gageure*” contemporary African activists have to face in a global political climate where the usage of

coercive violence continues to engender countless tragedies in the ranks of social movement activists. Violence against activists seems to be more preoccupying on the African continent where the tragic death of movement leaders generally remains unsolved, and their incarcerations usually unjustified in relation to constitutional laws.

1- Repressing Pan-African Activism and The Reminiscing Past Pan-African Gatherings

African activists risk their lives to enact change in their respective countries. Their daily activities and movements present major risks for them and their loved ones. Jails and prisons become second homes for many of them. Folly Satchivi, leader of the *En Aucun Cas* Movement (Togo) was arrested and imprisoned by the Togolese regime following his participation in the UPEC. In countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo where freedom of speech and expression are quasi-inexistent, activists face even greater danger. Street protests are often violently repressed, attacks on activists and intimidation are widespread. State repression caused many prominent Congolese activists like Fred Bauma, founding member of *Lucha*, to flee the country while his fellow activist Luke Nkulula lost his life in a suspicious fire on June 9, 2019. *Y en a marre* and *Balai Citoyen* members have endured arbitrary detention from Kabila's repressive government in 2015 when they got arrested in Kinshasa during their participation in a civic engagement workshop.

While Kémi Séba, founder of *Urgences panafricanistes*, was arrested and subsequently expelled from Senegal in September 2017, the group's spokesperson in Senegal, Ndeye Nogyaye Babel Sow, received death threats and intimidation. Séba and Sow's activism against the CFA currency gave them a bad reputation among *Franceafrique* circles who favor the status quo when it comes to monetary dependency of Francophone Africa. In February 2019, Sow's apartment was burglarized. Her work cellphones and laptop, which contained *Urgences panafricanistes's* confidential files, were stolen. Before leaving the apartment, the individual(s) also wrote threatening messages on her wall. The threatening message they left behind ("b***ch watch out!" [sic]) suggested that it was an act of intimidation which left their target unperturbed.

In the subsequent interviews she delivered to the media, Sow accused the Senegalese government and *Franceafrique* of trying to silence her. She also stated that the attack was not against her as an individual, but an attack against the African youth and Pan-Africanism. The coercion and recurrent arbitrary detentions of African activists prompted political scientist Saïd Abass Ahmed to remind his audience on the second day of the summit that in places like Congo, Togo, and other African countries, “too many activists are still in detention for simply speaking out to say they want something better and they deserve better.” More importantly, Abass called for African activists to reorganize themselves and not be “suicidal” or “martyrs” in the face of extremely repressive governments as he adds: “a true militant is a living militant” (Ahmed 2019, UPEC Presentation). Due to the risks associated with their civic engagement, African activists who created *Afrikki* decided to put in place funds to come to the rescue of fellow activists operating within highly repressive systems in Africa and eventually the Diaspora.

Activists throughout the Black Atlantic continue to suffer harassment, intimidation and attempts to end their lives. The murder of Brazilian activist Marielle Franco in 2018 and the suspicious death of several people tied to the Ferguson, Missouri, protests in the United States (including Danye Jones and Deandre Joshua) show that Black Atlantic activists are prime targets of organized violence and/or hate groups. The 2018 Dakar summit allowed Fadel Barro and his fellow African activists to open *Afrikki* to more African and Diasporic social movements thus making *Afrikki* and the summit, a reincarnation of the First Pan-African Conference in 1900, and the subsequent Pan-African Association that resulted from it.

The organization of the UPEC on Monday July 23-27, 2018, reminisced in many ways the first London Pan-African Conference, organized by Henry Sylvester Williams, which coincidentally kicked off on Monday, July 23, 1900. The London conference saw the participation

of leading figures such as W.E.B. DuBois, Bishop Samuel Walters, among others. Its primary purpose was to enlighten British public opinions on the human rights violations, atrocities and exploitation happening in the colonial empire, especially in southern Africa. The conference also denounced the racial climate in the United States where Blacks endured discrimination, violent oppression, and even lynching (a common practice that extended well into the 20th century). Colonization and European imperialism dominated the geopolitical context of the 20th century to which Africans and the African Diaspora responded by forming a Pan-African Association advocating for humane treatment of the Black races and the respect of their dignity and human rights. Thus, a longing for liberation and nationalism became the most shared sentiments among Africans and people of African descent in the Caribbean, Europe and the Americas who participated in the conference.

Although 118 years separate the Dakar Summit and the First Pan-African Conference, striking similarities existed between them in terms of themes and structural outcomes. Black activists convened in Dakar not only to address similar issues discussed at the London Conference but also to reinforce their activism capacity building. They also designed mechanisms to strengthen the presence of social movements on the continent, to reinforce their financial capacities and set up a fund for endangered activists. The UPEC had seven main goals:

- 1- To provide courses on social movements' history and the sociology of civic engagement in order to enable activists to better organize and build sustainable movements.
- 2- To critically analyze and challenge African youth civic engagement.
- 3- To empower African youth and encourage them to take ownership of democratic institutions (bridging the gap between institutions and citizens).
- 4- To mobilize young citizens to take charge of their future and the destiny of the continent so as to build a lasting peace.
- 5- To explore the added values of new information technologies in civic engagement.
- 6- To widen the Pan-African networking platform by creating bridges between African and Diasporic social movements.
- 7- To promote young Africans who have developed innovative solutions to social issues and help them share their experiences (Les Enjeux de UPEC 2019).

It is important to highlight the significance of goals number 5 and 6. The face of social protest and youth insurgencies have globally changed in the digital era. Activists have weaponized digital technology to build efficient mass mobilization strategies that usually bypass government censorship. In fact, African social movements have taken advantage of the continent's mobile technology boom to forge a digital network that not only uses social media to relay information and expose socio-political issues, but they also use applications like WhatsApp, Paltalk, Imo, Viber and Facebook Messenger to share information and avoid government surveillance. New technology can sometimes help cut the distance between social activists and the masses who can get mobilized in a relatively short amount of time. New technologies also reduce the risk of getting apprehended by state apparatuses, who have strategically used cyber surveillance over the years as a means to monitor activists' communication, movements and actions (see chapter 4). As far as goal 6 is concerned, young African activists are increasingly conscious that their struggle would be more impactful if linked with similar struggles in the African Diaspora. Therefore, creating links between African and Diasporic social movements becomes a necessity.

Social movements' transatlantic connections can also facilitate the mobilization of financial resources as the diaspora has historically been an important funder of Pan-African initiatives on the continent. The organization of the UPEC itself was possible thanks to the significant financial contribution of Project South, an Atlanta-based organization whose work is rooted in the heritage of southern freedom movements. As noted earlier, Project South financed 80 percent of the UPEC's budget. This is another instance of the transatlantic dimension of Neo Pan-African solidarity at work. The UPEC constituted a historical moment of teaching and learning for Black activists, artists and community leaders from all over Africa and the diaspora. Just like

the London Conference, the organization of the UPEC also coincided with a grim political context in the Black Atlantic world.

The summit came at a time when countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo were still ruled by repressive autocratic regimes that deprived their citizenry of the most elementary aspects of democracy like freedom of expression. It also came at a time when people of African descent across the Atlantic still suffered from racial persecution whether in the form of police brutality, micro aggressions or systemic racism. Similarly, political power in countries like Cameroon, Uganda, Equatorial Guinea, Togo, and the Republic of Congo is controlled by a handful of leaders who have been in power for several decades and seem reluctant to bring democratic changes. When formal colonial rule ended, Africans had hoped that the continent would see better days but unfortunately many countries have lapsed into different forms of political and economic oppression. Activists who met in Dakar wanted to use the UPEC as a crucial moment to educate the general public on the evolution of historic and contemporary social protest in Africa and show people that not much has changed politically since the achievement of independence.

The first day of the summit kicked off with a panel, entitled “Social Movement: Origins and Challenges” animated by Professors Zacharia Mamphilly and Saïd Abbas, to revisit issues that fostered social mobilization in the past. Abbas and Mamphilly addressed the obstacles African freedom movements encountered causing many of them to fail prematurely in the 19th and 20th centuries. They also recounted the trajectory of protest movements in the colonial and post-colonial periods while listing the challenges that contemporary social movements have been facing and how African social activists can learn from past freedom struggles on the continent. Participants in the summit were almost unanimous that they are confronted with two types of challenges that Mamphilly conceptualized into external and internal challenges.

Externally, social movements evolve within a bigger national and international context that often dictates the course of action as well as the means used to challenge the status quo. In Africa, the biggest obstacle to social movements remains African governments themselves and lack of resources. African states are often very repressive, and we see similar trends emerging throughout the world. In this regard, Africa activists “have to confront very harsh realities in terms of how they are viewed by their own governments. Governments that even call themselves democratic often view social movements as threats to their existence rather than fundamental components to a healthy democracy” (Mamphilly 2018, interview at UPEC). Additionally, Mamphilly argued that from Senegal to the Congo, via North African countries, the common state response to social movements is not embracing them as a form of democratic action but rather repression and that is challenging for social movement collectively but also for individual social activists many of whom have been tortured, detained, or killed.

One cannot disagree with Mamphilly’s suggestion that repression constitutes a stumbling block for activism since the quasi totality of African regimes exhibit nervousness and paranoia in front of social movements’ demands. However, one may add that in the African context, state repression unintentionally bolsters activism and sometimes can be a publicity stunt for many social movements. The Congolese activist and member of *Lucha* Eunice Etaka acquiesces when she stated that “from colonization to the post-independence period, Congolese have been fighting for freedom. The successive regimes that led the country failed to install true democracy. Currently we (Congolese) are facing social inequalities and repression and it is in this context that *Lucha* came into existence.” (Eunice 2018, interview at UPEC). Etaka reckons that although colonization is over, in the Democratic Republic of Congo people feel like they are still living in the colonial era with their own leaders assuming the role of colonizer. “Congolese are supposed to live in a

democracy grounded on the basic principle of the government of the people, by the people and for the people” and Congolese citizens have decided to exercise this power regardless of state repression. (Eunice 2018). Eunice painted a grim picture of the state of democracy in the Congo, but she also exhibited the determination that animates countless young Congolese who decided to defy state repression to impose democratic changes in their country.

Human Rights Watch reported that between 2015 and 2018, Congolese security forces killed 300 people participating in political protests. Activists are frequently arrested, beaten and sent to jail without due process but they still continue to invade the streets demanding democracy and social changes. Despite the extreme coercion, Congolese activists from *Lucha* and *Filimbi* maintained the pressure against the Kabila regime that intended to change the constitution. In this respect, their biggest accomplishment came when President Joseph Kabila declared in August 2018 that he was not running for re-election. In the Congolese example, state repression fueled social activism. In other words, the more governments use illegitimate coercive force to subjugate the citizenry, the more people commit themselves to installing/restoring freedom and democracy through mass action. Thus, what Mamphilly considers as an “external factor” that hinders African social activism represents to a large extent a driving force that emboldens individual people to participate in social movement.

Internally, Mamphilly contends that there are a number of challenges for social movements the most important of which remains the decline of broad ideological resistance to global capitalism namely the decline of African variance of radical Marxism. According to the political scientist, radical ideologies are withering away in the Global South in favor of more narrow identity politics. For this reason, “there are very few Third-Worldist movements anymore, and very few Pan-Africanist movements” (Mamphilly 2018, interview at UPEC). The nationalistic

fervor that characterized many African countries following the Second World War and the independence movements gave way to political and ethnic infighting in many parts of the African continent. This contributed to the subsequent decline of Pan-Africanism as an ideology in the late 20th century. Were Africans less interested in Pan-Africanism after achieving independence? Did the failed attempts to create an African federal state discourage the Pan-African hardliners or was Pan-Africanism simply a demoded ideology that faded in the shadows of hyper-capitalism and identity politics?

The reality is that more movements and organizations are acknowledging the relevance of Pan-Africanism in the 21st century as a response to national, continental and diasporic political issues. Whether they are fighting detrimental identity politics, racial prejudice or economic and social inequality/injustice, all the movements that gathered at the 2018 UPEC summit in Dakar reaffirmed their engagement and attachment to Pan-Africanism. The latter has been experiencing an unprecedented revival and UPEC symbolized an act of renaissance of Pan-Africanism among the masses, which should be differentiated from what one may call “institutionalized Pan-Africanism” or Pan-Africanism as advocated by African states and the African Union. The types of challenges internal to African social movements especially the Francophone ones are related to their engagement in radical socio-economic transformations and their role once they help bring political change. This internal dilemma was palpable during the UPEC and if not addressed properly, it can eventually constitute a threat to the existence of both social movements and the Pan-African platforms that supports them such as *Afrikki*.

2- Progressists vs. Gatekeepers

The UPEC revealed two trends in Francophone Africa's social movement activism both of which fundamentally agree on the necessity of Pan-Africanism but differ on the way activists ought to contribute to social change in their respective country. On one side are what I call the "Progressists," African activists who believe that social movements should move beyond protest and denunciation to actively participate in the entire political process. The Progressists believe that if African activists want to see profound socio-political changes in their respective countries, they must run for elective positions at the local and national levels. Once they get elected to decision-making bodies (or so they hope), then they can help operate the necessary mutations from within. For the Progressists, social change does not occur when switching people within a system, but it is rather an organic process whereby an entire system deemed faulty must be substituted with a new one. Therefore, in order to foster profound socio-economic mutations, the "Progressists" want social activists to be part of the elective decision-making bodies whether it is the national assemblies, the city council, or run for mayoral positions. This was mainly the position of Cameroonian activist/rapper Abe Gaston, popularly known by his hip-hop pseudonym General Valsero.

Valsero represented *Jeunes et Forts* and Our Destiny, two prominent social movements from Cameroon. Valsero and like-minded activists publicly rejected the notion that people engaged in social movements should be "apolitical," a term he argued, many contemporary African activists continue to misuse since participation in social movement in itself is a political act. By "apolitical," Valsero means that it is paradoxical that many African activists are willing to combat the political establishment to bring the social changes, but at the same time remain reluctant to assume elective positions. Valsero contends that: "social activists must move away from the complaint stage and

ask themselves what part they can play to bring solutions to socio-political issues” (Gaston 2018, Personal Communication at the UPEC).

Valséro and the Progressists’ position sharply contrasted with the stance of the *Balai Citoyen* delegates. They believed that the role of the African activists should be the one of a sentinel, a watchdog vis-à-vis the political power structure rather than running for political positions. This group are “gatekeepers” in that they believe the rightful place of an activist is not in the national assembly, the city council, or presidential palace but on the streets with the masses. To reiterate the importance of the gatekeeping mission of the African activists, Souleymane Ouedraogo, spokesperson of the Balai Citoyen at the UPEC claimed that:

After the 2014 insurrection in Burkina Faso, Balai Citoyen benefitted from a legitimacy that could easily allow the movement to appropriate the transition period. We could have gotten positions in the government, we could have become members of parliament in the Transition National Assembly, we could have monitored all the transition process but hélas, we chose to keep playing our gatekeeping and civic monitoring role instead” (Ouedraogo 2018, Personal Communication at the UPEC).

In relation to Valséro’s position, Ouedraogo’s statement marked a clear cognitive dissonance and tactical scission within the Francophone activist networks in Africa. The notoriety of African activists following popular insurrections is often construed by many as a rite of passage for assuming higher public/elective responsibilities. However, the transition from activism to politics remains a delicate move on the continent due to the bad connotations, many Africans associate the term “politician” with demagoguery, corruption and fallacy.

Consequently, the public is often suspicious of activists who try to run for political office. Many argue that once social activists step into the political arena, they become unprincipled, corruptible, and prone to being co-opted by the very establishment they set out to oppose. Prominent activists like the Kenyan Boniface Mwangi have been confronted with such a predicament when they decided to run for public office. In 2012, Mwangi declared that he would

never run for office and that he was comfortable being a political agitator, holding elected officials and the Kenyan government accountable (Abdi Latif Dahir February 22, 2017). Five years later, he decided to seek a seat in the Kenyan parliament. Although many voters were enthusiastic about his transition from activist to member of parliament, others like Rogers Anuro expressed their misgivings by contending that “Mwangi should remain an activist and not join the ‘gang’ or the ‘club’ of parliamentarian” (Dahir 2017). Anuro’s concerns echo the fear of many social movement participants as well as members of the general public who are already very critical of activists like Boniface Mwangi and *Y en a marre*.

Why do many African activists live “lavish” lives, travel internationally so often while not having steady jobs besides their civic engagement? Has social activism in itself become a job/career in Africa that pays so well that many prominent activists enjoy high-standard living similar to that of the politicians they criticize and fight? Though being an activist is not tantamount to miserabilism, the level of comfort activists like Mwangi revel in tends to raise suspicion and seems antithetical to the ideals they preach. Many argue one cannot chastise politicians for corruption, embezzlement and mismanagement of public funds while living in opulence. Activists who occupy public offices must be routinely scrutinized to determine the origin of their wealth. This constitutes a legitimately popular concern that must be addressed if Africans want to break the cycle of oppression. African activists, particularly those who enter the political arena, should not have a problem disclosing the origin of their wealth because, just like elected officials, members of civil society must be accountable to the masses as well. In 2019, Mwangi published on twitter a picture of him and his children stuck in traffic. He was lambasted for driving an expensive car. He was accused of using his activism as a means to leading a comfortable life.

Similar to the criticisms directed at Mwangi, many Senegalese contend that *Y en a marre* activists (the leadership) are also “living comfortably” and want to drag the masses often consisting of economically-deprived people in the streets. The denigration of Mwangi and the *Y a en marre* leadership by ordinary citizens is not an atypical example for African activists, especially when they join the political arena. They generally incur distrust rather than support once they express the desire to run for political positions.

In this regard, Said Abass reminded social activists at the UPEC that there are two types of “diseases” to which African activists are exposed. The first one is becoming “professional activists”: using one’s social activism as a source of income and secondly, being tempted to enter the political arena. He added that though every citizen has the right and the duty to get involved in public affairs, “entering into politics is a congenial disease that preys on social movements. However, social movements’ credibility lies in their ability to collectively refuse this political calling [...] It seems that many of those [African activists] who have tried sorely regretted it” (Ahmed 2019, Paper during the UPEC summit). Whether Mwangi, Thiat, Fadel Barro are professional activists or not, it is certain that their potential venture into politics would be a harder challenge given the stigma that would accompany their conversion. Besides, the realities of persuading a large segment of voters often involves corrupting them with money or other types of goods, which remains a recurrent practice among many politicians. Will social activists indulge in such degrading practices should they try to win over the electorate? Boniface Mwangi himself is familiar with the experience as he recalled people could not stop asking for money while he was trying to get endorsements to run for parliament in the busy streets of Nairobi in 2017.

The negative experiences activists encounter while running for political positions legitimizes the Gatekeepers’ concerns. They suggested during the UPEC summit other ways to

move their activism forward without becoming career politicians. In this sense, the spokesperson of the *Balai Citoyen* mentioned that there had been ongoing discussions within their movement to change the status of the *Balai Citoyen* to a non-governmental organization (NGO).

However, it can be argued that the Progressists' position also has merit. As Ben Monterroso asserts: "if political activists maintain the principles that fueled their fight on behalf of the community, they can successfully become politicians" (Monterroso 2016). He adds that activists are aware of their community's need and demands. If they become elected officials, their background should facilitate and inspire their policy-making and implementation of community issues. (Ben Monterroso, *New York Times*, February 8, 2016). Gaston and Mwangi who respectively represented the Central and East African delegations at the UPEC summit adhere to Monterroso thought. Finally, there is a third trend spearheaded by the *Y en a marre* movement that represents the median between the Progressists and Gatekeepers. This group we can refer to as the "Moderates" adopted a middle-of-the-road position in the progression of contemporary activism. They think that African activists can run for public office while effectively safeguarding their integrity as sentinels and serving their communities as any regular non-governmental organization would. Fadel Barro articulated this viewpoint when he states:

The positions of both camps (Progressists and Gatekeepers) is an interesting ongoing discussion and it is well-elaborated in the summit's proceedings. I think it is an interesting issue that movements will discuss among themselves[...] Personally, I believe that our movements should be like the ANC (African National Congress) when it was first established; meaning, we mobilize to defend a cause, but at the same time, we can conquer the political power while still remaining *Enda Tiers Monde* which was a big NGO that used to help communities to stay aware of issues. So, I believe that both (running for political positions and playing the role of a gatekeeper) can go together. I have faith in social movement leaders that they will choose the best course of action based on their socio-cultural realities (Interview with Fadel Barro 2019).

Barro's statement epitomizes the third way in the future of African activism and like the two previous positions, it confirms that youth movement activism is not a static process, it is in a state

of permanent transformation to adjust to socio-political and cultural dynamics of the time. However, it should be noted that the issue of occupying public office constituted a point of contention within the *Y en a marre* movement itself when Barro decided to run for a parliamentary seat in 2017. The movement's leadership argued that Barro was free to seek a parliamentary seat like any eligible citizen, however he cannot remain a member of the movement should he choose to become a Member of Parliament. Faced with the dilemma, Fadel Barro renounced his political ambition to remain the coordinator of the *Y en a marre* movement. This certainly explains why he personally favors a happy medium between the Progressists and the Gatekeepers.

Ultimately, the binary between the Progressists and the Gatekeepers remained a highlight of the 2018 Pan-African summit of social movements. These two trends announced a new direction for social activism on the continent which is bound to adopt to the changing political realities and the resilience of career politicians who want to monopolize power as long as possible. Therefore, what I refer to as “social movement morphism” becomes a necessity; in other words, African activists must be prepared to mutate their movements' structures to fit the contextual demands of the socio-political reality in their respective countries. In the meantime, activists can continue to work on collective strategies that accommodate the needs and concerns of the masses in their march to establish true democracies and good governance. The establishment of *Afrikki* and the declarations (*Azimiyo La Dakar* and the Declaration of Dakar) that concluded their Pan-African summit in Dakar are reasons to believe that African activists and their fellows across the Atlantic possess the capacity and the will to instate joint fighting strategies as their Pan-Africanists predecessors did in London and Manchester.

Participants closed the UPEC with the *Azimiyo La Dakar* and the Declaration of Dakar. These two historical documents recalled memories of the Declaration to the Nations of the World,

drafted under the leadership of W.E.B. Du Bois, and the petition to Queen Victoria at the end of the 1900 London Conference. In a similar vein, the *Azimiyo* and the Declaration of Dakar echo the London conference in the sense that they evoke the Pan-African dimensions of the past and contemporary Black freedom struggles.

They also called for a transnational cooperation of social movements from Africa and the African Diaspora for a political and socioeconomic emancipation as well as the revival of the Pan-African consciousness so as to reclaim African history and culture. More importantly, the activists added an environmental provision to their declarations, which confers Neo Pan-Africanism a new dimension that was not of concern in the previous Pan-African eras. In the Declaration of Dakar, activists agreed that “Social movements in Africa and its diasporas are committed to integrating in their struggles, the fight against climate change, its causes and consequences” (Declaration of Dakar 2018). They added that the African continent is so far “relatively spared” by environmental degradation and that it was critical to stem the deterioration of Africa’s ecosystems and resources, via comprehensive “public policies and civic education that is conscious of the ecological challenges in the era of the Anthropocene” (Declaration of Dakar 2019). Unfortunately, these two final documents have not yet caught academia’s attention nor made its way in mainstream political and media spheres. Nonetheless, they are seminal literatures in the development of Neo Pan-Africanism.

Drafted by the Senegalese scholar Felwine Sarr and social activists Fadel Barro (*Y en a marre*) and Jean Mobert (*Lucha*), the *Azimiyo La Dakar* constitutes the grassroots manifesto of Neo Pan-Africanism and deserves to be shared with a wider audience due to its historical importance. It reads as follows:

DECIDE THE FUTURE

- 1- The millennial history of Africa - cradle of humanity and civilization - is a story of genius, conquest, resilience, dignity and greatness. From Timbuktu to the edges

of the Zambezi; From the pyramids of Sudan and Egypt to the borders of the Nile and the Congo, the African peoples built prosperous empires and put in place elaborate political, economic and spiritual systems, ahead of their time. They have established cultures of extraordinary richness; invented some of the most ingenious arts, techniques and processes in the history of mankind.

- 2- Slavery, slave trade and colonization have undertaken, with extreme brutality, to dispossess Africa and its peoples of their life-force, their natural wealth, their identities and their cultures. Whether they came from the West or the East, the artisans of this supposedly “civilizing” work used brutal means to try to destroy and alienate Africa and Africans. They shared Africa as one shares spoils of war, and traced boundaries through it. They imposed their languages on us and falsified our history.
- 3- But the history of Africa and its diasporas is also a story of resistance and resilience. Resistance against slavery and slave trade. Resistance against colonization, apartheid and oppression. Resistance against cultural alienation and assimilation. Resistance against the grabbing of our lands and looting of our wealth. We celebrate Menelik II, winner of the Battle of Adoua, Queen Nzinga, Kimpa- Vita, Shaka-Zulu, Toussaint Louverture, Kimbangu, Cabral, Nkrumah, Chris Hani, Lumumba, Santarino Ihure, Mwalimu Nyerere, Dedan Kimathi, Sankara, Winnie and Nelson Mandela, and many others who throughout history, have embodied these resistances. We celebrate the heroic struggles of slaves and their descendants in the Americas, the Caribbean and elsewhere to liberate themselves and emancipate themselves.
- 4- Slavery and apartheid were abolished, and the African nations conquered independence. But the pan-African struggle for unity, freedom and prosperity continues. From north to south, east to west of the continent, and among the descendants of slaves, millions of Africans continue to suffer the ravages of violence and abject material indigence. Without a hitch, a handful of corrupt leaders and elites took over. Slavers and settlers: they sell our wealth and flout our dignity. Over the past decades, we have been rehashed with concepts and promises democracy, multiparty systems, human rights, sustainable development, structural adjustments, growth, debt relief, emergence ... What mirages! The feeling of helplessness, dependence and guilt has been cultivated in us.
- 5- The emergence of social movements in Africa and the African diasporas is part of the realization that a radical change in the political, economic and social paradigms of the Africans themselves is needed, based on their own history and their cultures. It is a question of reinventing, on a pan-African scale, a common utopia and of committing ourselves, resolutely and in solidarity, to complete the struggle for the liberation of Africa, begun by previous generations. Aimé Césaire said that we Africans are the “eldest sons and daughters of humanity. It is therefore a question of restoring our dignity, our pride and our fertile place within humanity.
- 6- Also, activists from Africa and its diasporas who gathered in Dakar, Senegal on July 29, 2018, decided to set up a pan-African platform called Afrikki. Its goal is to federate the thoughts and the action of the social movements of Africa and its diasporas around a common pan-African agenda:
 - The awakening of pan-African consciousness, the repossession of our history and our cultures: reclaiming our collective history and memory through the consciousness of the masses, education, culture and the arts;
 - Political emancipation: bringing together the voices of our peoples for political emancipation, the fight against oppression, the right to self-determination and the realization of the dream of the United States of Africa;

- Economic and social emancipation: Combine the fight against the hoarding, exploitation, diversion and use of Africa’s natural resources and economic wealth to the detriment of Africans and future generations. Frantz Fanon said: “Each generation must, in relative opacity, find its mission, fill it or betray it. Our mission is here. We have found it and we are committed to doing everything we can to fulfill it. “There are no fates forfeited, there are only limited responsibilities”

July 27, 2018, Dakar.

The *Azimiyo La Dakar* constitutes one of the most comprehensive declarations of Pan-Africanists not affiliated with any governmental or supranational entity in the 21st century. It evokes the glorious past of the African continent and people of African descent as well as the traumatic events that redefined the course of history in the Black Atlantic. More importantly, it projects Africa and its Diasporas into a promising future where the younger generations would gain full consciousness of their glorious heritage and political emancipation. The *Azimiyo* echoes some aspects of the Declaration of Dakar, which are wider in scope and take into account pressing contemporary political issues unfolding on the continent. The following lines mark some other salient points dealt with in the declaration:

Gathered at the symbolic Place du Souvenir Africain in Dakar, Senegal, right by the first Popular University of Citizen Engagement (UPEC) from 23 to 28 July 2018, African social movements and committed artists and intellectuals from Africa and its diasporas made a firm commitment to pool their energies, their ways and their strengths to bring together the aspirations of their people for freedom and dignity. Some situations require concrete and urgent actions.

A. Political processes and elections:

Sovereignty belongs to the people. The time for patriarchy is over. Africans must freely choose their leaders and regularly renew their institutions. We must put an end to the untimely changes of constitutions on the continent.

B. Violent conflicts and terrorism:

African social movements express their solidarity with the peoples of Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Mali and Burundi, victims of too many years of abject violence with dramatic humanitarian consequences [...] In Cameroon, Nigeria, Chad, Niger, Mali and Burkina-Faso, where young people are both victims and instruments of religious fundamentalism and its corollary, terrorism, African social movements denounce [...] the chaos created and maintained in Libya by France, the United States and their allies. We call on the concerned states to address these causes, rather than opting for solutions based solely on the use of arms.

C. Memory, education and culture

African Social Movements and African Diasporas Decide to Establish a Pan African Remembrance Day for the Slave Trade, Slavery, Colonization and Apartheid that ruined the African continent and suddenly ripped off millions of African lands. The date and modalities of commemoration of this day will be announced later.

D. Inter-African mobility, immigration and modern slavery

African social movements and African diasporas argue that borders and languages inherited from colonization should no longer divide Africans. They pledge themselves to campaign bluntly for the abolition of all obstacles to the free movement of Africans on their own continent, including visas.

E. Place and condition of African women

The social movements of Africa and its diasporas recognize the primordial place of African women in the development of Africa throughout history. At the same time, women are still subject to discrimination and atrocities of all kinds, including sexual and gender-based violence. African social movements condemn all these forms of discrimination and cruelty. Practices and traditions such as excision cannot be tolerated.

The Declaration of Dakar shows how social movements are trying to infuse a new impetus into Pan-Africanism. On the one hand it addresses issues that have long plagued the African continent such as illegitimate constitutional changes and leaders who refuse to relinquish political power. On the other hand, it concerns itself with contemporary challenges such as terrorism and environmental protection that have become part of the global discursive agenda fora. One of the most important aspects of the declaration resides in the place granted to African women, many of whom continue to undergo gender discriminations despite significant advancement in their condition in the last decades. However, the institutionalization of a “Pan-African Remembrance Day” should be highlighted as a revolutionary step in the advancement of Pan-Africanism.

This was the idea of the self-proclaimed Pan-Africanist and prominent Franco-Caribbean cultural actor Claudy Siar, who for fifteen years has advocated for the establishment of a day remembering the victims of the transatlantic slave trade and colonization. In the memorable speech he delivered at the UPEC, Claudy Siar lamented that: “today on the continent, there is still not one official day [dedicated] to the memory of millions of deported Africans.” He added that he has been lobbying at the African Union and other countries to argue that it was a question of dignity “to honor the millions of Africans tortured because of slavery, that we need to commemorate the

ancestors on a specific day, but also in memory of the victims of colonization and all colonization throughout the ages and throughout the world” (Siar 2019, Speech at the UPEC). Siar sought to revive and institutionalize the collective memory of the Black Atlantic while acknowledging the suffering of other people in the Global South whose humanity had been stripped away by decades of Western colonization. By pushing for a Pan-African Memorial Day, Siar and his fellow activists also wanted to magnify the role of the African Diaspora in the fight for black liberation.

It is important here to recall the central role of the African Diaspora in the organization of major Pan-African gathering including the London Conference in 1900 and the UPEC in 2018. Pan-Africanism has historically been a diasporic concept, born, developed, and sustained by people of African descent. W.E.B Du Bois and Henry Sylvester Williams are prime examples of this diasporic commitment to Pan-Africanism. People of African descent especially those in the United States, engraved their footprints in the *Place du Souvenir Africain* which hosted the 2018 UPEC. On the other hand, both gatherings concluded with the formation of Pan-African structures (the first Pan African Association and *Afrikki*) designed to coordinate the freedom struggles. Thus, *Afrikki* can certainly create a renewed period of Pan-African unity and activism granting the diaspora the place it deserves.

Nevertheless, given the dissensions that occurred in previous Pan-African structures, it is legitimate to wonder if *Afrikki* will surpass the financial and managerial challenges that partially caused the demise of the first and second Pan-African Associations. Will Black Atlantic activists be able to transcend the geographical, linguistic cleavages that have often characterized Pan-African organizations like *Afrikki*? Finally, will they be capable of designing inclusive and transparent processes that will ensure permanent success to this new Pan-African organization? As African social movements, especially in the Francophone countries, grow into the driving force

of the 21st century Pan-African movement, the fate of Neo Pan-Africanism partially depends on success of *Afrikki*. Thus, to avoid being another short-lived Pan-African experience, *Afrikki* should learn from the mistakes of the Pan-African Associations.

In the wake of the 1900 London Conference, participants set out to maintain the momentum of the Pan-African Association and to ensure a large diffusion of the Pan-African ideology. It was also planned to organize a Pan-African conference every couple of years. Though a second Pan-African Conference was to take place in the United States in 1902 and a third in Haiti in 1904, historian Immanuel Geiss notes that “nothing is known about any preparations for such meetings” (Geiss 1974, p.215). The same failure characterized *The Pan-African*, a monthly newspaper created by the Pan-African Association which sadly only published one issue in October 1901 before disappearing from the media sphere. In actuality, these failures revealed the movement’s tenuous financial footing doubled with a chronic lack of staff and resources, which weakened the association. To avoid a similar fate, *Afrikki* must seek to establish mechanisms that will help mobilize financial and human resources and realistically planned frequent Pan-African gatherings like the UPEC to maintain the momentum. At the end of the 2018 summit in Dakar, delegates agreed to meet and to discuss the state of black activism every other year which is coincidentally the same meeting periodicity that delegates agreed on in London. Internal dissension also jeopardized the existence of the first Pan-African Association just a few months after its establishment.

The *Pan-African* highlighted in its first issue that “in a somewhat desperate tone that certain unidentified members had taken advantage of Sylvester Williams’ absence from London to carry out a kind of palace revolution not in order to seize power but to dissolve the association on the grounds of shortage of funds, and to report the fact to the press” (*The Pan-African*, 1901).

Rumor has it that members of the Pan-African Association's executive committee based in London were involved in this silent coup given their subsequent firing. Upon returning to London, Sylvester Williams and Alexander Walters, who was Chairman of the Pan-African Association at the time, unsuccessfully tried to revive the organization with a stronger African presence. However, these cosmetic changes did not halt the demise of the Pan-African Association, which ceased its activities by the end of 1901. Thus, for the sake of permanent organizational success and internal harmony, *Afrikki* should make crisis management a priority in the functioning of the organization and set forth bylaws to handle internal discontent/disputes while allowing free speech and diversity of opinions within the structure. Just like other transnational organizations, Pan-African ones have a history of internal disputes grounded on personal interests but are mostly conspicuous for regional/linguistic/cultural differences.

Entities like *Afrikki* have also been notorious for frictions between their African and the diasporic elements and sometimes disagreements between their Anglophone and Francophone members. Both types of issues are undoubtedly remnants of the divide created by the trauma of slavery and colonization to a large extent. This is noticeable in the formation of the second Pan-African Association of 1921 under the leadership of W.E.B. Du Bois and Isaac Béton, a young schoolmaster from Martinique who was then based in Paris. In addition to experiencing a chronic shortage of funds, this organization was plagued by the tensions between its Francophone and Anglophone members, seemingly embodied by Du Bois and Béton. "It is almost embarrassing to see to what extent these men were preoccupied with petty intrigues, quarrels about a few dollars' worth of membership fees and various trivial misunderstandings all of which took a great deal of their energy and time" (Geiss 1974, p.227). According to Du Bois, African Americans felt mistreated by the organization's Francophone members to a point that the former lost the desire to

help raise funds for the Pan-African projects. The dissonance between the Francophone elements and the African American members of the second Pan-African Association illustrated a lack of cohesion and coordination, which resulted in the debacle of the 1921 Pan-African Congress in Lisbon.

On the other hand, the African elements denounced the paternalistic and “big brother” attitude of some of the diasporic elements many of whom often thought that they were indispensable for the success of the movement and the diffusion of the Pan-African ideology. What can *Afrikki* learn from these episodes? First of all, its members must strive to build a strong and harmonious relationship between Africans and people of African descent within the organization. This unity must be based on mutual respect and devoid of paternalism, sexism and all other negative “isms” that can undermine the platform’s functionality. Secondly, the decision-making process within the organization should be inclusive regardless of language, geography, age, nationality, or gender. In other words, leaders of the *Afrikki* platform should make sure that every voice is heard, and that they efficiently and regularly report back to the masses. In contrast to the first half of the 20th century, today’s communication technologies are more and more affordable and readily available to many social activists, although the ones operating in rural areas might have a harder time accessing them. Lack of communication should not be an excuse to predict or justify an eventual failure of *Afrikki*. This means that the platform needs to put in place strong and inclusive communication strategies from the outset. Ultimately, the organization of the UPEC and the establishment of *Afrikki* symbolize strong signals that Pan-Africanism is no longer a dormant concept. It continues to inspire the fight of young Africans as well as the struggle of Black people across the Atlantic. The African youth are eager to reinvent themselves and forge a future in which they will no longer be the hostages of neo-colonialism and its allies on the continent. Therefore,

Neo Pan-Africanists are attacking the strongest symbols of neo-colonialism such as the imposition of the CFA currency. This will be a long and tedious process that could eventually guarantee Francophone Africa in particular a true economic sovereignty.

III- ABOLISHING THE CFA CURRENCY, A PAN-AFRICAN IMPERATIVE

It was 7am on August 25, 2017 when agents of the formidable Senegalese Criminal Investigation Division (DIC) entered in Kémi Séba's Dakar apartment to take him into custody. A week before, Séba, the controversial leader of the *Urgences panafricanistes*, organized the biggest coordinated protest across Francophone Africa and the Diaspora to denounce the use of the CFA currency on the continent. From Dakar to Libreville, hundreds of activists invaded the streets of African capital cities demanding the abolition of the CFA. Moreover, they called for the institutionalization of a new Pan-African currency, which better reflected Africa's economic realities and respected African sovereignty. During this protest, Séba symbolically burned a CFA bank note, an act that not only offended Senegalese authorities but violated Article 411 of the Senegalese penal code (which stipulates that the public and voluntary destruction of a bank note is liable to a one to five-year sentence). His action incurred the wrath of the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO), the financial regulator of the CFA zone. BCEAO authorities promptly lodged a complaint against the Pan-African activist and the court battle had not reached its epilogue as of January 2020.

In his defense, Séba argued that his action was purely symbolic. He further contended that each nation has the right to possess its own currency and the right to decide of its own political fate. On to of this, Séba asserted that no political future can be had without a total control of one's own economy. For him, "there are exterior forces namely the Bank of France that has the prerogative to agree or disagree with our economic decisions. This shows that [Francophone Africans] have an outdated currency, a currency that is submissive and is reminiscent of enslaving process" (Kémi Séba Speech during the march against the CFA, August 19, 2017). Though Kémi Séba was exonerated by a court in Dakar, he was later expelled by the Senegalese authorities.

Beyond the symbolism, activists and intellectuals across the continent regarded Séba's action as heroic. It forced the public opinion and governmental authorities in Africa and France to engage a "dialogue" about the status and reforms of the CFA franc.

The activist's method is controversial, confrontational but above all efficient as it shook one of the main pillars of the Francophone African financial system (the BCEAO) and reframed the debate over the legitimacy of the CFA franc and the neo-colonial ties that African states have vis-à-vis France. In reaction to Kémi Séba's arrest, Senegalese economist, Felwine Sarr, contends in an op-ed that "no matter how foul it may seem, Kémi raises a real issue which is the economic, political and military domination ties that make decolonization an unfinished process despite the fact that most African nations achieved independence since the 1960s". (Felwine Sarr, *Le Monde*, August 28, 2017). Not only does Sarr support Séba's symbolism, he also blames the lack of a true dialogue between economists, monetary experts, central banks and the citizens about the CFA, as well as the lack of a firm political will to find viable alternatives to the currency. Thus, according to the Senegalese economist, we must acknowledge that the activism of Kémi Séba and like-minded groups called Afrocentrists or Pan-Africanists has contributed to bringing the CFA question at the heart of the public space and make it a priority for African governments (Felwine Sarr, *Le Monde*, August 28, 2017). Séba represents the voices of millions of Africans who have been advocating for the total substitution of the CFA with a new currency that is not subjugated to the French financial system or pegged to the Euro. More importantly he epitomizes the appropriation of a Pan-African ideal that leaders before him had championed and failed.

For a long time, Francophone African elites, backed by the former metropolis, had tried to make the CFA issue a taboo or an exoteric topic that only "initiated" people were allowed to express their opinion on it. Although the topic had seemed untouched over the years and that many

people who opposed the use of the CFA in Africa such as Sylvanus Olympio underwent forms of economic and political persecutions, today, a new wave of young African activists have realized that their economies and their daily lives can significantly improve if they use an independent currency. Since 2011, the fight against the CFA has picked up a new momentum thanks to the unflinching engagement of movements like *Urgences Panafricanistes* and *Y en a marre*. These organizations consider the abolition of the CFA currency as a Pan-African priority. They have succeeded in moving the epicenter of the fight from the handful of intellectuals that opposed the currency to the popular masses who are finally acknowledging the stakes involved in having a monetary independence.

In this respect *Y en a marre* member Simon Kouka asserted during the march coordinated by Séba that “we cannot call ourselves independent while depending on a currency such as the CFA franc. Sovereignty implies having one’s own currency” (Simon Kouka, *Le Monde*, September 18, 2017). In fighting for monetary sovereignty, Francophone West African social movements form a coalition that journalists term the “Anti-CFA Movement”. While these movements diverge on methods and agenda in their ordinary/daily activism, they regard the CFA franc as a pressing issue that necessitates to assemble their forces and combat what they view as an “unnecessary evil”.

There exists within this anti-CFA coalition, Pan-African hardliners like members of the *Urgences panafricanistes* who possess an Afrocentric vision of relationship between France and African countries and subsequently advocate for an immediate severance of all ties between the former metropolis and its former colonies. On the other side, we have the moderate Pan-African intellectuals like Malian author Aminata Dramane Traoré and Togolese economist Kako Nubukpo who convened in February 2019, the *Etats généraux du franc CFA* and champion the “Francxit”

in an orderly manner. Despite profound methodological differences between the hardliners and the moderates, both groups agree on the fundamentals of installing a financial system that fosters economic growth.

The CFA presents lots of shortcomings for African economies. Delegates at the *Etats généraux du franc CFA* held in Bamako unequivocally enumerated these shortcomings in the following terms:

- This currency has not allowed the structural transformation of the economies that use it and the intra-community trade in the CFA zones remains at 15% compared to 60% in the euro zone.
- The CFA is pegged to the Euro which is too strong African economies that use the CFA. Therefore, in the global trade context, the currency acts as a tax on exportations and a subsidy on importations.
- The CFA feeds the double monetary and financial repression, because of the preeminence of the objective of defense of the fixed exchange rate with the euro, to the detriment of the financing of the domestic economy in free zone.
- Foreign exchange reserves deposited in the French Treasury, that are theoretically supposed to ensure the stability of the financial system, prevent states from reinvesting in their own economies, many of which are failing. Thus, the countries that use the CFA franc are now at the bottom of the human development indicators list (HDI) even if some countries have annual growth rates above 5%.
- CFA banknotes and coins are made exclusively in France, thus accentuating the subjugation to the former colonial power. This greatly reduces the de facto independence of the states that use the currency. (Statement of the *Etats Généraux du Franc CFA's* Coordinating Committee, February 16, 2019).

The above-mentioned statement is revealing in the sense that it exposes some of the mechanisms France has put in place since 1945 to hold African economies hostage. It can also be added that the convertibility of the CFA with the Euro favors European companies especially French ones that desire to invest in Africa. Finally, it facilitates rich Africans to deposit their savings “more or less acquired legitimately” in European banks without profiting local African economies. All of these make of the currency an issue to urgently remedy. Pan-African intellectuals and activists are not opposed to the idea of removing France from the entire Francophone African monetary system as a first step towards a permanent alternative the CFA.

In this regard, Guy Marius Sagna, a founding member of the *France Dégage* (France Get Out) movement, asserts during a CFA protest in Dakar that “the long term objective is for

Francophone African countries to completely leave the CFA zone but in the meantime, we believe that France must leave the BCAO's board of directors and it should not take more than a year for this to happen. We also think that bringing back our foreign reserves located in the French Treasury must not last an eternity" (Guy Marius Sagna, *RFI*, September 17, 2017). Not only is this sentiment of the anti-CFA coalition grounded on idealism and sovereignty, but African economists are quasi unanimous that the CFA stalls economic progress in the Francophone African regions.

Almost three quarters of a century after its inception, the CFA currency continues to symbolize the Trojan Horse of the *Françafrique*. As Togolese economist Koku Nabukpo reiterates in "Politique monétaire et servitude volontaire," the CFA currency remains the colonial ties between France and its former colonies in Africa. He adds that "the franc of the African Financial Community (CFA) is a striking example of the existing (post)colonial link between France and its former West and Central African colonies"³⁵ (Nabukpo 2007, p.70). Reaffirming the corrosiveness of the CFA for African economies, Nubukpo stated in a 2019 interview with the French news channel France24, that: "the CFA franc is a currency that is economically inefficient, politically illegitimate and socially inequitable. We can also add that the currency is historically a disgrace" (Nubukpo 2019, during a TV5 interview). The economist's opposition to the CFA has been unequivocal despite having worked for the International Organization of La Francophonie (OIF) another organization that many consider as a symbol of neocolonial ties between France and its former colonies. More importantly African intellectuals like Nabukpo and Sarr are aware that the fight for a monetary sovereignty will not be successful without the involvement of social movements.

³⁵Le franc de la communauté financière africaine (CFA) est un exemple frappant du lien (post)colonial qui se perpétue entre la France et ses anciennes colonies d'Afrique de l'ouest et du centre. (My translation).

Ndongo Samba Sylla reaffirms the centrality of African social movements in the CFA struggle when he asserts: “the proposal to leave the logic of monetary domination can only succeed if we have [...] a massive mobilization of African population in general and Pan-African social movements in particular. This will make it possible to cope with French-speaking African heads of states’ lack of ‘political will’” (Sylla 2019). Not only does Sylla acknowledge the centrality of Pan-African social movements in the CFA fight, he also warns them against the potential institutionalization of a single currency in West Africa that is scheduled to take effect in 2020. According to Sylla, Pan-African social movements should distance themselves from the single currency project in West Africa. This project, Sylla argues, “is unlikely to see the light of day and is used by some African heads of states simply to put the social movements fight against the CFA franc to sleep” (Sylla 2018).

In fact, ECOWAS heads of states announced on July 6, 2019 the adoption of the name “ECO” for the single currency that is going to be used in the entire West African region. While the announcement sparked enthusiasm among many West Africans, social movements like *Urgences panafricanistes* called the initiative a masquerade and a sheer nominal change of the CFA franc given that this planned single currency will still be pegged to the Euro just like the CFA. Therefore, they vehemently expressed their opposition to the move which in many regards could be another neo-colonial ruse designed to subjugate more African countries.

To decry the adoption of the single currency, Kémi Séba organized a press conference on July 18, 2019 in which he called for a massive protest against what he calls the “*élargissement de la zone CFA*” (enlargement of the CFA Zone) symbolized by the upcoming adoption of the ECO currency. The inception of the latter will not produce a total rupture of the financial and monetary mechanism to which the CFA currency has been subjugated. Thus, it can be said that *Urgences*

pafricanistes, *Y en a marre* and similar movements in Francophone West Africa have not said their last words regarding the CFA and ECO currencies. They have found in these currencies, another unifying factor to further Pan-Africanism. Since many African intellectuals and head of states failed in the past to free their fellow citizens from economic and financial dependency, Pan-African social activists want to intensify the struggle through mass action across the continent and the diaspora hoping that France and its neocolonial allies on the continent will give in to the popular pressure.

In conclusion, it can be said the fight against poor governance and dependency has sparked a renewed interest in Pan-Africanism among African activists. Since its official inception in the African diaspora at the beginning of the 20th century, Pan-Africanism has concerned itself with the welfare of Black people regardless of geographical boundaries. However, the emergence of Neo Pan-Africanism in the 21st century, coincides with African youths' will to reinvent themselves and the continent with a strong dose of optimism and utopia. Thanks to the engagement of social movements, Pan-Africanism is also becoming more and more the domain of the masses who partake in crucial fights like the abolition of the CFA franc. Thus, the organization of the UPEC in Dakar allowed social movements to form *Afrikki*, a new Pan-African front that aims at synchronizing efforts to reconstruct better African states and a continent devoid of dictatorship, economic turmoil and neocolonial processes. In doing so, social movements necessitate lot of financial, human and media resources that are not always easily accessible in a continent still characterized by repressive regimes.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND ITS CHALLENGES IN THE DIGITAL ERA

For a long time, the rhetoric of social movement studies had been the predilection for sociologists and historians. Up until the 1960s, existing literature on mass action suggested that social protest activity and participation in social movements resulted from collective grievance. In other words, for a social movement to exist, scholars such as Henry Giddings argued, there must be a collective and almost spontaneous expression of discontent. Giddings and like-minded social movement scholars termed this argument the collective behavior theory. This view is premised on the belief that social movements are deemed by formal political structures to be deviant and therefore devoid of rationality. However, one of the shortcomings of this theory is that it risks lumping together or seeing as identical all group actions, thus including in the description also spontaneous, short term action-oriented organizations like riots and similar types of pretests. In the 1970s, Doug McAdam, Charles Tilly, Mayer Zald and John McCarthy, among other scholars, challenged the collective behavior theory with the “Resource Mobilization” one.

Proponents of the resource mobilization theory argued that social movements are actually composed of rational actors who aim at impacting the sociopolitical process, and in doing so form Social Movement Organisations (SMOs) to acquire resources and mobilize the masses to accomplish the movement’s goals. The resource mobilization theory puts emphasis on both the popular support as well as the pressure that social movements experience from the power structure: “It examines the variety of resources that must be mobilized, the linkages of social movements to other groups, the dependence of movements upon external support for success, and the tactics used

by authorities to control or incorporate movements” (McCarthy and Zald, 1977, p.1223). Accumulating resources in the Francophone West African context involves seeking financial, media and popular backing. Though many prominent social movements like *Y en a marre* and *Balai Citoyen* have succeeded in finding the necessary resources for their activism, they often face many apprehensions concerning the legitimacy and the origin of some of their resources. Therefore, we should ask, what kind of resources movements need to foster social change in Francophone West Africa? Who provides these resources to social activists? Finally, are social movements jeopardizing their popular legitimacy when they accept resources from entities whose policies and domains of intervention are deemed dubious or antithetical to the socio-cultural or political values of a given nation? As we discuss in more details later, the criticism expressed here addresses the possible contradiction on the part of social activists between their acceptance of resources from foreign entities while they also claim to fight for or defend African sovereignty.

In addition to analyzing the mechanisms and the origin of social movement resources in Francophone West Africa, this chapter argues that “mobilizing resources,” both as a theory and as a practice, presents a number of challenges for activists, some of which can delegitimize their struggles for social change as well as expose them to governmental surveillance and repression. It also pays attention to the existence of concerted and transnational efforts to gather resources that will benefit vulnerable activists operating in highly repressive environments like the Democratic Republic of Congo. Thus, departing from the premise that the presence of any social movement is contingent upon resource availability, this chapter explores the strategies that movements like *Y en a marre* utilize to gather resources for political action. It also takes particular interest in the external allies and the potential influence they exercise on social movement policies. Evidently, due to lack of internal resources, many African social movements heavily rely on external support,

generally from governments of the Global North, either directly or through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) sponsored by agencies allied to them. Subsequently, this external help does not come without strings attached as many movements often find themselves in delicate positions trying to satisfy local and external demands built on the assistance they receive. In this chapter, we will consider, respectively, media, financial and human resources as the backbone of mass action on a continent that continues to embrace the penetration of information technologies, the influx of foreign capitals and NGOs, as well as a demographic boom – all of which facilitate the expression of popular discontent.

I- MOBILIZING MEDIA RESOURCES AND ITS CHALLENGES

It goes without saying that the media constitutes a formidable power in the structure of modern states. For governments, corporations, oppositions and other private entities, the media represent a powerful resource to disseminate information and sometimes propaganda. In their fight against various power structures, Francophone West African social movements have long understood that to successfully bring about social change, they must secure media resources (TV and radio air time, visibility on social media platforms etc.) in environments where freedom of expression and of speech are nominal in many regards. Without media resources, these social movements would not survive and would undoubtedly be at the mercy of African government propaganda and smear campaigns. The German political scientist Joachim Raschke rightfully points out the significance of media coverage when he asserts that “a movement that does not make it to the media is non-existent” (Raschke, 1985, p.343). Movements that struggle to tame their media resources generally have visibility issues and find it difficult to popularize their demands.

1- Traditional Media vs Social Media

Francophone West African social movements usually have two options when it comes to media resources. They can rely on traditional mainstream media to propagate their demands to a larger public and draw the attention of government officials. In this regard, the relationship between the media and social movements can be that of a conflict pushing a critical narrative or partnership providing positive coverage to protest movements. American sociologist and mass media scholar Henry Lusk Molotch perfectly illustrates the potential nature of the connection between media and protest movements when he asserts that “media and movements are dialectically bound, always in motion and alert one another’s motion be it embrace, flight, or thundering blow. The most appropriate metaphor to describe their relationship is dance - sometimes a dance of death” (Molotch 1979, p.92). However, not all social movements obsess about positive relationship with traditional mainstream media, “some groups are very successful in dealing with the media; others attain media resonance only to a small extent, or in rare moments, while still others fail completely” (Rucht 2004, p.29). However, as the sociologist Dieter Rucht posits, failing to capture the attention of the media does not necessarily mean that their cause is completely lost. “They may try to develop their own means of communication to spread their word, to reframe their goals and demands, to change their forms of actions and/or to reorient their media strategies so that they become more attractive to the media, or parts of it” (Rucht 2004, p.29). In other words, the absence of mainstream media coverage obliges movements to resort to alternative media. While some African movements embrace “nanomedia,” a term coined by John Downing and Mojca Pajnik to refer to small scale communication actions designed for various targeted audiences, others in Francophone Africa have adopted social media as a way to spread information in this digital technology era.

Historically, the coexistence between African social movements and the mainstream media had been conflictual at times. Several studies show that the two entities maintain a love-hate relationship that eventually incites many social activists to come up with alternative communication tools. In a 2018 study of the nature of the relationship between mainstream media and social movements, South African scholars Tenja Bosch, Herman Wasserman, and Wallace Chuma concur that African social movements have some type of connection with the mainstream media and that they see the media as central to their struggles. However, the academics reckon that:

the predominant perception is that the media were not entirely reliable partners. Community-based movements especially had an ambiguous relationship with the media. It appears that mainstream media was considered, on one hand, a critical partner for covering the movements' legitimate struggles in the immediate term and, in the other hand, part of the hated in long term. There was also a perception that the media selfishly concentrated on what pleased and, in the process told only part of the story. (Bosch, Chuma and Wasserman 2018, p.2261).

While the authors pinpoint the dependency that many social movements feel vis-à-vis traditional media, they also underline the incentives that drive many protest movements away from these communication entities that occasionally eschew their coverage. Organizations such as *Y en a marre*, have fully embraced new information and communications technologies (ICTs). Alongside traditional protest methods (rallies, press conference, marches) *Y en a marre* has developed a cyber-activism to compensate for their possible lack of access to traditional media and build a direct relationship with movement participants. In doing so, they have managed to escape state control of information and private media some of which are actually pro-government. Thanks to the preeminence of social media and the proliferation of mobile internet on the African continent, *Y en a marre* and other activists in the region possess new conduits to disseminate information; but more importantly, they find in social media new ways to build quantitative and qualitative mobilizations.

For more than a decade now, social media have been transforming politics in Africa. Tech-savvy young folks, typically from urban centers, have turned social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp into alternative communicative tools as well as weapons of protest to express grievances and mobilize the masses to take political actions. Simultaneously, candidates for public offices, political parties, activists and social movement participants use social media to engage with various audiences in order to fuel political conversations and inspire social change. United Nations political advisor and former journalist André-Michel Essoungou translates the pervasiveness of social media in African social activism when he writes: “social activists have been using social media to campaign on critical political issues. Across the continent, they have exposed human rights violations which would have remained hidden otherwise. On Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp, they have kept the important conversations at the forefront. In North Africa, the Arab Spring was spurred, in no small part, by their use of these platforms” (André-Michel Essoungou, *Observer Research Foundation*, June 10, 2019). Essoungou’s statement captures social movements’ craze for cyber-activism, and at the same time shows the conclusive results it can yield when used during protests as was the case in Tunisia and Egypt during the Arab uprising in 2011.

While many Francophone West African social movements employ social media as a substitution for mainstream media, *Y en a marre* adopts social media as supplement to their already strong media arsenal. In other words, Senegalese activists have never regarded social media as a means to an end. Though they acknowledge the mobilizing power of Facebook and Twitter, they never exclusively rely on them to conduct mass actions. Two reasons could explain the equidistance that *Y en a marre* has tried to maintain between traditional and social media. On the one hand, the movement was co-founded by two professional journalists, Fadel Barro and Aliou

Sané who previously worked for well-established Senegalese press outlets in Senegal. Not only do they understand effective communication methods, but they also possess strong connections among the Senegalese media environment that certainly create a kind of sympathy for the *Y en a marre* cause. Media coverage does not necessarily represent an issue for the movement, especially when they organize press conferences, solicitate interviews or need event coverage. Today in Senegal, *Y en a marre* undoubtedly benefit from more local and international air time than any other social movement in the country due to the size and socio-political impact of the movement. “Reputable” media corporations such as BBC, TV5, and *The New York Times* continue to take interest in their activism.

On the other hand, the proliferation of media outlets in Senegal and the country’s relative freedom of expression makes it easy for *Y en a marre* to access media coverage. Before the late 1990s, there was a quasi-absence of private media outlets. Senegal had one major national TV and a radio station (RTS and Radio Senegal) both of which remained under government control. Towards the end of the 1990s, the government liberalized the telecommunication and audiovisual sectors which favored the naissance of several major private media companies including *Walfadjri*, *Sud*, *Excaf Télécom* to name a few. With the advent of the première alternance (see chapter one), more newspapers, TV channels and news websites came into existence. This proliferation of media outlets engenders a fierce competition among media outlets, many of which remain unprofitable. Consequently, this scramble for information and sensationalism partly makes most *Y en a marre* related-events newsworthy for the Senegalese media.

Since its inception in 2011, *Y en a marre* has managed to impose itself as an opinion leader when it comes to the daily political affairs of the country. Leaders of the organization are solicited by the media to comment on current political issues or participate in televised debates.

However, this proximity with the media sphere can sometimes be a double-edged sword because certain outlets owned/co-owned by government officials or pro-regime journalists often negatively portray the movement or fail to accurately present the position of *Y en a marre* activists. Moreover, the fact that the government provides financial resources to all the major Senegalese media outlets could potential be detrimental to the movement's coverage.

When Abdoulaye Wade became president in 2000, he decided to buttress the development of the press by providing private media outlets with an annual financial aid called *Aide à la presse*. The Wade regime “intended” to support the press and provide small media groups with a financial stability. While many journalists enthusiastically welcomed the initiative, others saw in the president's move, a political maneuver to coopt the Senegalese press in fostering Wade's image as a champion of freedom of expression and secure a positive coverage for his regime. Though Wade's actions might have been genuine at first, he occasionally used his financial aid as a Damocles Sword against “rogue” press groups that negatively depicted his regime. When Macky Sall became president in 2012, he did not suppress the aid to the press but instead built the *Maison de la Presse*, (The Press House) a long-time request from actors of Senegalese press who wanted a well-equipped public space where journalists, technicians and other communication specialists can congregate and work. President Sall also supported the passage of a new press code in the national assembly, two old demands that Senegalese media actors held so dear. These “acts of seduction” towards the press can be construed in Machiavellian terms as a carrot and stick approach vis-à-vis the media. The government dangles the carrot in the form of financial aid for a compliant pro-regime press. Media outlets who belong to this category are generally well-served in government aid and advertising contracts. Their journalists also serve as communication strategists or spokespersons for government entities. On the other hand, the recalcitrant press

endures the ravages of the “stick” by being unable to access grants and undergo harassment from the government which has sent law-enforcement to shutdown private media outlets (on multiple occasions). In March 2016, law-enforcement descended at Wal Fadjri with an order to interrupt the signal of the TV and radio stations after its owner Sidy Lamine Niasse called President Sall a liar. This means that the Senegalese press is not entirely free. Since organizations like *Y en a marre* partially relies on it to project their messages and popularize their political actions, powerful government officials could compel certain media outlets to deny *Y en a marre* coverage or even lead slander campaigns against the movement. For these reasons, *Y en a marre* launched its online TV station called YEM TV in 2018 thanks to the availability of internet and the will to democratize the media in Senegal. In this respect, Fadel Barro founding member of *Y en a marre* argues that “the internet constitutes a tremendous opportunity for social movements because classical media will not always relay their discourse. Today with the availability of internet, we have the possibility to create our own media outlets” (Interview with Fadel Barro, June 2019). Not only does Barro articulate the significance of internet in contemporary African activism, he also expresses the desire to emancipate social movements from the grip of classical media.

YEM TV epitomizes the result of a movement’s will to remain independent from traditional media. Furthermore, it translates the activists’ desire to relay reliable information about the mismanagement and state corruption and give a platform of expression to thousands of marginalized voices. *Y en a marre* co-founder, Aliou Sané comforts this idea when he argues that YEM TV “is a participatory media grounded on citizen-journalism. It allows citizens to share videos about their daily struggle. For instance, yesterday we covered the water shortage in Bargny where residents had not had water for 17 days” (Aliou Sané, *Radio France International*, May 26, 2018). To Sané’s declaration, Fadel Barro adds that creating their own internet TV channel “is a

possibility to do raw journalism which means giving information and assuming the veracity of it. We remain impartial and we will not allow censorship on the TV. The only thing that we will ban on the TV is putting restrictions on what we can or cannot cover” (Fadel Barro, *Radio France International*, May 26, 2018). Sané and Barro reignite the notions of citizen and resistance journalism which British media scholar, Chris Atton defines as “a type of citizen journalism that can be used to create a platform for marginalized voices to expose and dissent structures of oppression, disseminate experimental knowledge of poverty, and mobilize activism as a way to invert the hierarchy of access and subvert the political power structure of dominant narratives” (Atton 2004, p.85). Resistance journalism then becomes a resource of communication that empowers ordinary denizens and movement participants to construct unique narratives or viewpoints.

Through their online TV, *Y en a marre* activists embody the role of citizen journalists who “question established media roles of journalists and raise publicity for everyday citizens as alternative experts and creators of reality” (Vincent and Straub 2017, p.3). The use of internet and social media allows activists to totally control their narrative and free them from the dependence on classic media. Given the exponential increase of internet users on the African continent, social media represent more and more a weigh station for movements to measure their approval rate among the masses. Despite being more and more indispensable for social activism, information and communication technologies present shortcomings for most African social activists.

In her book *Antisocial Media*, Siva Vaidhyathan remarks that social media more often than we think produces the opposite effect for which it was intended. Her theory is all the more applicable to Francophone West African protest movements that social media use can be counter-productive, exclusionary and predatory for them under certain circumstances. In other words, as

some movements are comfortable with digital media, the more they are tempted to shift the mobilization efforts on internet platforms. While mobilizing masses through internet proved to be successful in more industrialized countries, it may not translate well in African settings for multiple reasons, especially since many African cultures place significant value on interpersonal relationships and community links. Fadel Barro understands this phenomenon when he asserts that “internet is extremely important for social movements, but it cannot replace the action on the ground” (Interview with Fadel Barro, June 2019). Whereas ground action (or offline activism) and physical interactions with the public can reinforce symbiosis, social media can create an unwanted distance between activists and movement participants. The virtual interactions can also lead to participant disengagement in the long run.

Not everyone can read social media posts in local languages (Wolof, Fulani, Dioloa, etc.), French or English. Additionally, not every potential movement participant has the means to access a reliable internet connection. As of October 2019, only 39.6 percent of the African population had internet access in comparison 62.7 percent in the rest of the world. As far as Senegal is concerned, 58.2 percent of the population have access to internet versus 18.2 percent in Burkina Faso, 12.4 percent in Togo, 18 percent in Guinea and 32 percent in Benin. In Anglophone West Africa, 61.4 percent of the Nigerian population have access to internet, 80.9 percent in Liberia and 39 percent in Ghana, 19.8 percent in Gambia and 13 percent in Sierra Leone (Internet World Stats 2019). On average, Anglophone West Africa has more internet access that online connectivity remains globally limited in Francophone West Africa. Under these circumstances, internet-based mobilization campaigns might prove inefficient for social movements in the region and from one country to another, activists might face more obstacles reaching out to people via digital technologies.

Consequently, cyber activism in Francophone West African settings may not guarantee the strengthening of the social capital that movements manage to build through physical interactions and traditional means of communication (TV, radio, flyers, tours, concerts, door to door etc.). Furthermore, internet-based activism can be exclusionary in the sense that it tends to leave out people from rural areas who have unsteady internet access and the urban proletariat who also find access to new technology challenging. Additionally, precarious access to electric power in many African countries makes cyber activism unreliable. By using this medium, social movements might only reach citizens of the middle class and the diaspora who do not constitute a critical mass to foster successful political actions in French-speaking West Africa.

A good example on this can be seen in the number of people who engage with *Y en a marre*'s Facebook event posts. On August 2, 2019 the movement created a Facebook event asking people to join them in protest against the arbitrary detention of Guy Marius Sagna, a fellow activist who was arrested for posting a "false terrorist alert". Only 26 people shared the post, 57 said they would attend, while 176 people said they were interested in participating. Similarly, *Balai Citoyen*'s past Facebook events and online calls for mobilization also show low numbers of engagement. Their April 2019 online attempt to gather protesters against the national telecommunication company reveals that only 150 people clicked the "Going" button while 21 Facebook users hit the "Interested" icon. These numbers are considerably low given that approximately, 108,000 people follow *Y en a marre* on Facebook on a daily basis and close to 55,000 people follow *Balai Citoyen*'s Facebook page. Among the users who engaged with these Facebook posts are certainly direct movement members which means that the campaigns reached even less people than it intended to if one subtracts movement members from the equation. Although Sagna was eventually released on bail, the call for protest to liberate him was not

successful. Thus, we can question if this lack of online engagement is related to low internet access rates. Would more people have attended had *Y en a marre* and *Balai Citoyen* used traditional means of disseminating information? Would people have been more receptive, had they been approached in-person by movement members? The answers to these questions might not be a definitive yes; however, it should be acknowledged that *Y en a marre's* Facebook page shows that since its creation, very few people engage with their efforts to mobilize for marches and other forms of protests against the government.

Movement participants in Francophone West Africa show more sympathy and compassion towards activists they can connect with on the ground, not virtually. They relate to movements that come toward them and inquire about their daily struggles rather than cyber protesters. Despite being tech savvy and having relatively easy access to mobile internet, Burkinabé and Senegalese youth are not always receptive to social media calls for mobilization. On the other hand, *Y en a marre* has seen well-attended rallies when they used a combination of more conventional methods of communications like text-messaging, flyers, concerts, bus tours, and other forms of mass communications.

In the African context, the power of social media in mass actions may be overstated. Analyzing contemporary African uprisings from western prisms, recent scholarship on social media in insurgencies generally confers overweening power to the latter despite its mitigated usefulness in many popular revolts. Schwartz et al. unequivocally sustain “Facebook Revolution” theory³⁶ when examining the 2011 Egyptian revolt that toppled President Mubarak despite presenting arguments for and against the significance of social media in the uprising. In the same vein, Randall Kuhn also accords a capital importance to social media in the “Arab Spring” in his

³⁶ Refer to multiple uprisings coordinated using social media namely Facebook.

article “On the Role of Human Development”. Although these authors did a great job in nuancing their arguments at times, it should be pointed out that many analysts and political commentators (in Western mainstream media) pushed a western-centric notion that political changes in the Global South are always directly or indirectly influenced by technological tools or socio-economic policies from the North in the wake of the Arab Revolts. While *The New York Times* for instance published on February 2012 an article entitled “How an Egyptian Revolution Began on Facebook,” CNN released “Why Not Call it a Facebook Revolution?” doubled with Huffington Post’s February 2011 article “Egypt’s Facebook Revolution”. All these titles are oblivious of the fact that “real revolutions” take place offline, and they are indicative of a desire to credit Western-made and operated technology for the North African revolts.

However, African many activists and scholars have been pushing back against this type of narrative. They remind the public that social media is a strong vector for mobilization and denunciation, but we should never forget that ultimate change will come from the actions on the ground, the physical confrontation, the pressure the masses exert on the state apparatus. To paraphrase *The New York Times* Thomas Friedman, we should remember that what removed Hosni Mubarak Ben Ali and Blaise Compaoré from power was not Facebook, Twitter, or any other social media platforms. It was the determination of millions of people in the streets, ready to sacrifice their lives for what they believed (Thomas Friedman, *The New York Times*, February 3, 2016). Therefore, when analyzing social insurgencies, it is helpful to dissociate the mobilization tools (social media and traditional media) from the actual physical confrontation while acknowledging that they are not mutually exclusive. The way Francophone West African social movements engage with social media unequivocally debunks the “Facebook Revolution” theory. Mobilization, revolts and political change in Africa (or any other place) can exist independently from the

influence of social media and digital technology. The latter had minimal to no effect in the political changes that took place in Senegal and Burkina Faso between 2011 and 2015. Fadel Barro reinforces this idea when he says:

Social media cannot replace the ground action. I suspect something since the beginning [of recent popular uprisings in Africa] and I have been saying that there exists a western trend which is arguing that if there is enlightenment in the world it is thanks to us because we have created internet which allows African youths to be awakened. It is as if all of these [revolts] would not happen if there were not internet, that is not true! Internet maybe allows to inform people, but it does not prevent people from being sent to prison, it did not prevent Luke Nkulula from being set on fire in his own house in the Congo, it does not prevent the repressing from continuing. On the contrary, today social media kill the real social movement actors sometimes because they confer the popular verdict to people who do not understand absolutely nothing. Although social media enables information sharing, you also see many clowns use it to insult or to cultivate 'Likes' and call themselves activists but where are the true ones? They are the ones in the streets scarifying their lives. Social media only gives an account of what people are accomplishing on the ground, but it cannot replace them (Interview with Fadel Barro, June 2019).

Barro counteracts the "Facebook Revolution" theory and minimizes the power of social media in contemporary insurgencies in the African continent. His sentiment does not echo African leaders' who have developed over the last decade a legitimate phobia about social media due to its capacities to mobilize, disseminate information and help expose corruption. Cyber activism also compromises government communication strategies, hence African governments' unbridled efforts to clamp down on or police social media.

2- Cyber-Surveillance

Many African activists have understood early on that a successful mobilization of resources does not depend on social media especially knowing that they have no control over the availability of the internet. Governments can unilaterally cut power lines, disconnect internet devices and phone, radio and tv signals to the detriment of protesters. More importantly, they have accentuated surveillance activities against opponents of the regime. “Facebook has grown into the most pervasive surveillance system in the world” This is how Vaidhyanathan describes the “Big Brother dimension” that the picture, video, and message sharing platform has taken to the great pleasure of opinion-restraining regimes. Whereas social media and ICTs in general enable protest movements to have a shared control in the political discourse, it makes government surveillance easier and poses a serious threat to cyber activists and social movements. In this perspective, Vaidhyanathan asserts:

what makes Facebook good also makes it bad, what makes Facebook wealthy also let us be crueler. At the root of all this is system of surveillance unlike any we have ever seen. ... we can't perform as responsible, informed, engaged citizens of a republic if significant segments of the polis are harassed, silenced, and threatened every time they attempt to engage in matters of public debate (Vaidhyanathan, 2018, p.54).

The author points out a major concern that African human rights advocates are also worried about due to intense government monitoring of social media activities in Africa. Cyber surveillance may constitute a major setback for African activists, hence the need for them to strategically filter the kind of information they choose to share on social media and avoid sharing their whereabouts online for fear of governmental scrutiny and retaliation. In 2019, several Senegalese activists were located and arrested due to sharing their whereabouts on Facebook and/or posting messages the Sall regime deemed subversive. On February 25, 2019, former *Y en a marre* activist and founding member of the movement *Nittu Dëg*, Abdou Karim Guèye, was arbitrarily arrested at

Independence Square in Dakar while he was live on Facebook.³⁷ Guèye was calling for people to join him in protest against the provisional results of the presidential election declaring Macky Sall's coalition winner. Guèye was again arrested under similar circumstances on June 19, 2019 when he had shared his location on Facebook Live and was calling for a mass mobilization against what he called the dilapidation of Senegal's natural resources (the generous oil and gas contracts given to foreign corporations).

Guèye is known for sharing provocative Facebook Lives appearances in which he chastises the Sall regime. His overzealousness leads him sometimes to publicly share his location, thus facilitating his own arrests by law enforcement. Guy Marius Sagna, one of the most prominent Senegalese social activists of the moment was also the victim of government surveillance when law enforcement placed him in custody due to a Facebook post criticizing the fact that government officials tend to go to France when seeking medical care. This post came after the announcement of Oumane Tanor Dieng's death in a Paris medical facility. Dieng had been Premier Minister under President Diouf and Chairman of the High Territorial Collectivity Council under Macky Sall³⁸. In reference to his death, Sagna published on Facebook: "Dying in a hospital of the former colonial power though they had 59 years to endow this country with medical facilities worthy of the name. What a pity!!! What a waste!" (Manon Laplace, *Jeune Afrique*, July 19, 2019). Sagna was interrogated following this post though law enforcement later reported that his arrest emanated from a different Facebook post on the same day in which *Frapp-France Dégage*, a movement co-

³⁸ Abdou Karim Gueye is believed to have been poisoned after falling ill and necessitating two emergency surgeries following his arrest and incarceration by law enforcement. Guèye is currently in Germany seeking medical care after his fellow activists organized a successful online fundraising campaign to pay his medical bills. Although his transfer to Europe for medical purposes raised several criticisms from people who think that it is antithetical to his struggle against neocolonial processes, remaining in Senegal would have been risky for him. On the one hand, medical facilities in the country did not have the technology to take care of him in case of further complications. On the other hand, governments on the continent are known for tempering with medical facilities to eliminate cumbersome opponents. Him being transferred to Germany was strategically a safer option.

founded by Sagna published the following message: “*La France prépare un attentat terroriste au Sénégal*” (France is preparing a terrorist attack in Senegal). However, Sagna’s lawyer, Aly Kane, disputed the police report by arguing that investigators questioned his client only about the first Facebook post. These examples confirm that law enforcement and regimes are carefully watching every move activists make online and will not hesitate to use that against them. It is not a secret that African governments have been trying to sophisticate their cyber surveillance techniques and technologies.

In 2015, *Quartz Africa* reported that “African countries are entering the world’s newest arms race, for cyber weapons and surveillance, at a rapid clip. According to recent *Wall Street Journal* report, an estimated 29 countries around the world now have formal or military units dedicated to cyber warfare, and 63 countries have used cyber surveillance on their own citizen or abroad. Of those, four were in Sub-Saharan Africa” (Lily Kuo, *Quartz Africa*, October 16, 2015). This report reveals that cyber spying is becoming more pervasive on the African continent.

During the same year, (2015) BBC and Privacy International obtained leaked classified documents detailing the existence of a Ugandan internal surveillance program called *Fungua Macho* (“Open Eyes” in Swahili). The operation uses a software called Finsher Technology developed by the Gamma Group International, a firm based in the UK. The surveillance system “can covertly be deployed in buildings, vehicles, computers, mobile phones, cameras and any other equipment deemed worthy for information extraction or surveillance”. More importantly, the document revealed that the same program “is being used by countries like Nigeria, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Senegal, and most recently Kenya” (Nick Hopkins and Jake Morris, *BBC News*, October 15, 2015). From the BBC and Privacy International report, it is clear that political opposition and activists in Senegal and other African countries are primary targets of government

cyber espionage. *Y en a marre* member Djily Bagdad seems to understand the seriousness of cyber espionage when talks about the mobilization against the Wade regime between 2011 and 2012. He stated: “we used to do the meetings in some very anonymous places that nobody would know. We stopped using our regular phone numbers, we started buying sim cards, using them for two days and then disposing of them because you might have your phone tapped. It was pretty hectic” (Djily Bagdad 2015). While they were being hunted down by the Wade regime for instigation massive protests against the change of the Senegalese constitution and Wade’s candidacy for a third term, *Y en a marre* members worried about their movements and communications. Out of fear of being monitored by government intelligence services, they strategically restrained their online presence.

In summary, we can say that media constitutes a viral resource for movement mobilization. In the Francophone West African context, social activists are conscious that access to traditional media can be an uphill battle given the bifurcation of the press and government control of information. Thus, the advent of social media and mobile technology has provided them with opportunities to control the narrative around their political actions, revolutionizing the ways protest movements mobilize masses to support activism. However, as cyber skeptics, argue, online activism cannot necessarily replace the offline mobilization efforts. Virtual or online mobilization efforts can de-socialize/disengage movement participants who seem to better engage with ground action and in-person interactions with social activists. Nevertheless, the biggest issues with cyber activism remain government espionage, which is becoming more and more pervasive on the African continent. In addition to media challenges, Francophone African social movements struggle with financial resources.

II- MOBILIZING FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND ITS CHALLENGES

In November 2015, major Senegalese and international news media outlets broke the news of an unprecedented corruption scheme involving the International Associations of Athletics Federations (IAAF). French authorities placed under scrutiny high-ranked senior IAAF officials as a result of allegations that Russian athletes were shielded by these officials after their drug tests came out positive. For the Senegalese media, the scandal was close to home as Lamine Diack, president of the IAAF for 16 years and his son Massata Diack were at the center of the scandal. The French police and Interpol investigated Diack for corruption, money laundering, and covering up several cases of positive doping tests. More importantly, investigation documents revealed that not only did Diack pocket one million dollars in bribes, he also financed Senegalese political leaders and youth movements including *Y en a marre*. The news website *Dakaractu* revealed that “between 2009 and 2012, Lamine Diack financed Senegalese politicians except Macky Sall, Moustapha Niassé and Ousmane Tanor Dieng, but he also supported social movements such as *Y en a marre*” (*Dakaractu*, December 19, 2015). After long hours in custody, Diack himself confessed that he received money from the Russians to help the Senegalese opposition get rid of the Wade regime in the following terms:

I told you at that time we needed to win the ‘battle of Dakar’, meaning overthrow the regime in place in my country, Senegal ...For that we needed to fund transportation for young people in order to campaign, raise awareness about civic engagement [...] I thus, needed funds to rent vehicles, meetings venues, to print out flyers and posters in all the villages and neighborhoods of the city [Dakar]. Mr. Balakhnichev [President of the Russian Athletics Federation] was member of the Poutine’s team and at that time there were the issue of Russian athletes’ suspensions few months before the world championship in Russia. We [Diack and Balakhnichev] found an agreement Russia provided the funds. It’s Balakhnichev who organized everything, Papa Massata Diack [Lamine Diack’s son] took care of the deal with Balakhnichev (Yann Bouchez and Stéphane Mandard, *Le Monde*, December 17, 2015).³⁹

³⁹ « Je vous ai dit qu’il fallait à cette période gagner la « bataille de Dakar » c’est-à-dire renverser le pouvoir en place dans mon pays, le Sénégal, il fallait pour cela financer notamment le déplacement des jeunes afin de battre campagne, sensibiliser les gens à la citoyenneté (...) J’avais donc besoin de financements pour louer des véhicules, des salles de

Diack's confession to investigators unveiled his antagonistic sentiments toward the Wade regime and explained his motivation to help get rid of it using illicit foreign funds. These illicit funds also partly constituted vital resources for the *Y en a marre* movement which did not deny receiving support from the former IAAF president to lead their activities. When confronted by the press and public outrage, the Senegalese activists claimed that Diack only offered them a couple of plane tickets to travel to Paris to take part in a forum organized by a chapter of the movement in 2013 after the presidential election. Thiat and Fadel Baro firmly maintained that it was the only time Lamine Diack supported their action. Though Diack and the activists' accounts remained conflicting and needed further elucidation, the sheer fact of citing *Y en a marre*'s name in the scandal was enough to soil the movement's reputation. In addition, it raised the thorny issue relative to the mechanisms and origins of social movements' financial resources in Francophone West Africa. Mobilizing funds remains one of the toughest challenges of African protest movements as the majority of them trail monetary deficits and rely entirely on powerful organizations or what movement scholars call elite groups to sustain them financially.

meetings, pour fabriquer des tracts dans tous les village et tous les quartiers de la ville. M. Balakhnichev faisait partie de l'équipe Poutine et à ce moment il y'avait ces problèmes de suspension des athlètes russes à quelques mois des championnats du monde en Russie. Nous nous sommes entendus, la Ruissie a financé. C'est Balakhnichev qui a organisé tout ça. Papa Massata Diack s'est occupé du financement avec Balakhnichev» (Yann Bouchez and Stephane Mandard, *Le Monde*, December 17, 2015) (My translation)

1- Interest Convergence and/or Dependency

Three main reasons could explain this fund shortage. Primarily, African states generally dissuade international organizations (NGO's, corporations, diplomatic representations) operating in their territories from financing social movements activities or any local organization they deem disruptive for the regime. International entities helping fuel social movements' political actions are often viewed negatively by state officials who generally assimilate their support to movements as efforts to destabilize the regime. However, the latter tend to find partnership between protest movements and international entities on community projects less problematic and less threatening to those in power. Depending on the nature of the international entities (NGO, diplomatic representation, corporations), African governments have historically, either threatened to revoke their licenses, slapped them with taxes, or severed diplomatic ties if the financial support to social activism involved officials of a foreign country. To avoid retaliatory measures, international entities often hesitate to collaborate with African social movements except under rare circumstances where the partnership is deemed non-threatening; for instance, if it concerns community projects. This partnership between *Y en a marre*, GRET and the European Union to develop environmental and community projects and improve access to basic services is not necessarily alarming to Senegalese authorities who certainly see benefit in it since it aligns with their mission to serve local communities. In contrast, the social movement's corporation with OSIWA and Enda Lead-Afrique in the framework of the *Pareel* campaign in 2018 caused uneasiness within the government who had suspended Enda Lead-Afrique's activities and threatened to revoke the organizations' licenses to operate in Senegal (see chapter 1).

Although the aforementioned "retaliation measures" seem extreme, they represent predictable outcomes when governments sense that external forces are meddling in internal affairs

or supporting insurgences. In 1980, Senegal severed its diplomatic ties with Libya when authorities suspected that Khadaffi supported Ahmet Khalifa Niasse, whom they accused of plotting to overthrow Senghor's government to install an Islamic state (Pierre Biarnes, *Le Monde*, July 1, 1980). Regarding fiscal retaliation, the Senegalese government have audited private media outlets in the past, such as Wal-Fadjri, following compromising information the latter possessed about the regime. In November 2012, *Dakaractu* reported that reliable sources told them that the tax authorities were contemplating legal pursuits against Sidy Lamine Niasse the CEO and owner of Wal-Fadjri who was in possession of very sensitive information and about to publish a book that could also shake up the state hence the necessity to activate tax litigation in order to obtain his silence (*Dakaractu*, November 21, 2012). This type of repression is prevalent in Africa but also outside of the continent when many governments often use taxes as leverage to deter or render harmless recalcitrant elements in their societies.

The second reason for social movements' financial difficulties is that the culture of donating money for a political or social justice causes is not very developed in Francophone West Africa especially in Senegal although the proliferation of money transfer technological changing this tendency. In other regions of the Black Atlantic world countries, celebrities will not hesitate to financially support social justice causes. For instance, in October 2015, Beyoncé and Jay Z organized a charity dinner during which they raised 1.5 million dollars for social justice organizations including Black Lives Matter (BLM). Colin Kaepernick also raised 20,000 dollars for the same organization. Beside celebrities, protest movements such as BLM tap into the corporate donor circles and philanthropists who adhere to their cause to optimize the mobilization of funds. The *Washington Times* reported that "for all its talk of being a street uprising, Black Lives Matter is increasingly awash in cash, raking in pledges of more than \$100 million from

liberal foundations and others eager to contribute to what has become the grant-making cause du jour” (Valerie Richardson, *The Washington Times*, August 16, 2016). Impactful initiatives like these are lacking in French-speaking West Africa where corporations and philanthropists are not willing to financially participate in protest movement causes. Individual donations are equally rare and the few ones they occasionally receive come from the diaspora, where expatriates come to appreciate the efficacy of the donation system when it comes to fight for political or social justice causes.

Finally, collecting membership fees is a hustle for protest movements. Movement constituents can donate time and energy but usually struggle to financially contribute to the movement’s activities. This is undoubtedly due to structural issues given that the majority of people involved in movement organizing are young and do not have jobs or steady incomes. Therefore, it stands to reason that many remain more preoccupied by saving for personal and family emergencies rather than refill a protest movement’s coffer. On top of that, very few movements create sustainable revenue-generating activities. Despite all these obstacles, *Y en a marre* manages to mobilize substantial financial resources internally but also externally with the support of international NGOs.

At the beginning of the movement’s activities, the co-founders of *Y en a marre* understood that financial self-sufficiency was a priority to sustain their activities. A combination of revenue-generating activities and partnerships proved to be the quickest way to assemble the necessary resources for political contention. Barro explains this strategy when he assesses that:

in the past we needed to sell *Y en a marre* tee-shirts to find money and organize our activities. When Wade lost the election, we started contracting with funders such as Open Society [OSIWA] and Oxfam, Ford Foundation. Today, we are working with the European Union on projects that will help us spread our vision of the ‘New Type of Senegalese’. We have created projects with these financial partners which will allow us to recruit a staff and

employ members of the movement who understand very well the vision of *Y en a marre* and have them work on projects (Interview with Fadel Baro, June 2019).

Barro's comments highlight the fundraising mechanisms and the diversity of financial partners that support the work of *Y en a marre*. However, one cannot help but notice that none of the partners originated from Senegal or Africa, they all come from the Global North. This brings about the question of whether or not a Francophone African protest movement could run the risk of being co-opted or "puppetized" by a powerful external entity should the latter desire to combat a specific regime or leader? By allowing external donors to fund local movements, aren't African governments fragilizing their authority? These two interrogations might seem exaggerated to a certain extent; nevertheless, they are not insensible knowing that external support could potentially alienate the visions of a social movement if its activists do not stay firm on their convictions. In doing so, external support turns activists into rather destructive forces that do not try to bring equilibrium in the political process but to undemocratically overrun the established power structure. The questions also make sense knowing that social movements can potentially develop into fully-fledged armed rebellion and that some Northern countries have a poor record of providing resources to rebellion armies and other types of subversive groups in the Global South, especially in Africa. African protest movements are often criticized for being manipulated by foreign donors. Though these criticisms emanate most of the time from partisan viewpoints, cooperation between protest movements and foreign funders can morph into co-optation. This represents a potential setback for movements and activists in French-speaking Africa.

In *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency* (1999), Doug McAdam argues that in their journey to confront the established political order, social movements establish linkages with elite groups who support the insurgents' endeavors because, if they are to survive movement organizations, they must figure out resource input as a hedge against the uncertainty of

the environment they confront (McAdam 1999, p.27). Elite groups in this context function as a double-entendre designating, on the one hand, a small number of powerful entities/people who possess means to neutralize or destroy the insurgent movement and, on the other hand, a small entity that finds in protest movements “an opportunity to advance their interest and thus extend cautious support to insurgents” (McAdam 1999, p.57). In this respect, organizations or people who provide financial backing to insurgent movements belong to the elite group.

McAdam maintains that the relationship between social movements and elite groups is that of a mutual exchange. The formulation of the linkage between the two entities accords significant bargaining power to elite groups whose interests sometimes completely diverge from those of protest movements. Therefore, contends McAdam, the elite group/social movement partnership represents “a trade-off between benefits obtained and costs incurred.” “Costs” in his view makes reference to the efforts movement activists must deploy to bridge the discrepancy between movements’ objectives and funders’ interests. “Should either be overemphasized, the movement organization runs the distinct risk of co-optation on the one hand and dissolution on the other” (McAdam 1999, p.27). In light of McAdam’s assessment, one could infer that movement benefactors do not always offer help fortuitously whether the insurgents are aware of it or not. Most of the time there are prerequisites to benefitting from elite groups’ support or a latent desire to further a particular agenda specially in African where for many years international NGO, lobbyists and Western philanthropists have used it as testing grounds to impose socio-political and cultural changes or “new norms and values”. Donors can oblige activists to adjust their agenda and visions in order to address their concerns. Though financial and material backing from elite groups remain crucial for the advancement of protest movements, co-optation is potentially destructive for social activism. It (co-optation) reflects a strategic and Machiavellian recuperation of a socio-

political ideal by an elite group for ideological or agenda setting purposes that inevitably lead to the weakening and demise of the movement. Therefore, McAdam reminds us that:

Co-optation can occur either in advance of elite support, as the organization seeks to modify its operation in such a way as to make itself 'acceptable' to elite sponsors, or after receipt of support, as a condition of continued backing. Perhaps the most damaging outcome of co-optation is the channeling of potentially disruptive into institutionalized channels. (McAdam 1999, p.28).

This statement underlines that resource mobilization inevitably exposes social movement to co-optation sometimes through a long process of imposing preconditions and asking for more concessions. The more movements play by the funders' rules, the more they distance themselves from the primary vision and goals of the insurgencies. Nevertheless, one should not omit the times when movements and elite groups' interests occasionally collide resulting from a win-win partnership for both entities. In this perspective, opponents of the co-optation theory, such as Markus Holdo, contend that co-optation is a rare occurrence and that elite group/social movement interactions usually result in reciprocal strategic linkages that are contingent on each party's acknowledgment of the other's gains.

Since its inception in 2011, *Y en a marre* has been on the receiving end of cooption claims and allegations that the movement serves the tentacles of organizations many people deem "neocolonialist" and "subversive" such as the Soros Foundation, Oxfam and OSIWA. Before being expelled from Senegal, social activist and self-proclaimed Pan-Africanist Kémi Séba denounced the relationship between *Y en a marre* and Oxfam whom he accused of being a neocolonial organization. Similar criticisms were formulated when pictures of George Soros surrounded by the Senegalese activists and wearing a *Y en a marre* tee-shirt surfaced in newspaper headlines in 2015, the year the movement got its first grant from OSIWA (an organization founded by Soros). Soros might be seen as a philanthropist and advocate of liberal ideal in the West but

elsewhere he represents a menace for regimes. “Many saw in these occurrences (Soros congregating with *Y en a marre* activists) evidence that Soros was involved in Abdoulaye Wade’s removal from office. Except that the scenario is not corroborated if we follow the chronology of facts; Soros’ Dakar visit took place in 2013 well after the presidential election and before the OSIWA grant” (Michael Pauron, *Jeune Afrique*, July 12, 2017). *Y en a marre* members reaffirmed on several occasions that neither Soros nor any other foreign organization dictates their struggle for social change. Furthermore, Fadel Barro reckons in an interview that *Y en a marre*’s financial resources have always generated speculation: “We [*Y en a marre*] have been criticized for one thing or another but we always assume our choices and actions. Oxfam supported Mandela in the past. People tell us things like: ‘George Soros supported you, and he is Zionist.’ They are conspiracy theorists. They can say whatever they want but we know what we are doing” (interview with Fadel Barro, June 2019). Barro’s statement partly exhibits a certain degree of confidence that the movement cannot be recuperated or influenced by fund providers. For its members, *Y en a marre* has not deviated from its founding principles and its goal of serving the masses and keeping the political class in check. In this respect Barro adds:

We are not influenced by anybody. We went looking for funds where we thought we could find them to continue our activities without furthering anybody else’s agenda, which is the most important thing for us. Now people are not used to seeing young emancipated Africans who are capable of carrying out their own projects. It is an old mentality to think that the relationship between young Africans activists and Westerners is that of a tutelage. Many think that young Africans cannot independently lead successful projects. When we started the movement, there was not one donor/benefactor. But if we did not have financial resources after the departure of President Wade, that would have been the end of the movement. It was either to accept being co-opted by the new regime or find financial partners to further our own agenda. However, if funders deem that their agenda coincide with our goals, that’s better. There are lots of judgments, and misinterpretations nevertheless, we are trying to move forward (interview with Fadel Barro, June 2019).

The declaration partly comforts Holdo and anti co-optation theorists’ earlier argument that elite groups and social movements work on the basis of mutual convergences rather than a desire for co-optation. It also highlights the skepticism and suspicions the general public has vis-à-vis the

connections between movements and foreign benefactors. However, Barro's declaration sharply contrasts Abdou Karim Guèye's claims in a 2015 interview with Marodi TV in which he denounced *Y en a marre*'s acceptance of funds from western NGOs and accused them of furthering the agenda of these organizations.

Early member of *Y en a marre*, Guèye, left the movement after the 2012 presidential election and founded a "rival" movement called *Nittu Dëg*. The term "*Nittu Dëg*" means "a person who tells the truth," who is not afraid of the truth and by extension, a person who remains true to their principles and beliefs. The name of Guèye's movement seemed like a jab at *Y en a marre* when it first came out, given that the activist believes his former comrades "are corrupt and being diverted from their initial vision and from Senegalese/African values by western organizations" who, according to him, did not have the best interest of Senegalese people and Senegal in mind (Abdou Karim Guèye, Interview with Marodi TV, July 25, 2015). Guèye's disenchantment with the protest movement and his sudden departure epitomized the disillusionment of hundred other young Senegalese who stopped participating in *Y en a marre* activism after the 2012 presidential election as they claim that the movement did not remain true to its founding principles. His reasons for leaving the group are quite revealing and presented as follows:

In the past the enemy used to kill revolutionaries, now they finance them, because OSIWA and Oxfam are western-own organizations that finance the movement and as the Wolof proverb says: He who lends you their eyes will also point the direction you must look at'. When we were experiencing water and power outages under Abdoulaye Wade, *Y en a marre* protested. Today we are experiencing the exact same things, where are the *Y en a marre* activists? Because they have been corrupted. I realized that Westerners wanted to remove Abdoulaye Wade from the power and *Y en a marre* was/is a war tool that westerners are using to fight Africans. When Oxfam started financing *Y en a marre*, I was part of the movement, but there was something that I did not understand early on; that the funds basically served to remove African presidents that do not serve their [western they provided] interests. I left the movement when I understood that (Abdou Karim Guèye, Interview with Marodi TV, July 25, 2015).

No matter how outlandish Guèye's claim might seem, it translates into a legitimate fear of many Africans vis-à-vis the relationship between social movements and some western NGOs due undoubtedly to the controversial roles the latter historically played in Africa (especially in disaster situations). Should Francophone West African social movements accept foreign money and resources from elite groups for their activism? The answer is affirmative as long as there is no precondition attached for accepting legitimate funds or if there are convergences between the movements and the benefactors which take into account the greater good of the nation without concealing any hidden agenda. At present, foreign donations are the most vital resources maintaining movements activism alive but African activists themselves are almost unanimous in the sentiment that they must put forth creative fundraising strategies.

2- Fundraising Strategies

Resources from elite groups, particularly foreign ones, at best create conditions of dependency for Francophone West African social movements and may result in total subordination at worst. To avoid such situations, African protest movements need to aspire to full autonomy by diversifying their sources of revenue. Solutions could come from compartmentalizing social movement organizations into two distinct entities: one in charge of social activism and the other one registered as a fully-fledged NGO. This may allow them to conduct social entrepreneurship activities with tax exemption and apply for local and international grant money. Having the status of an NGO could drastically reduce their dependency on foreign NGOs operating in their respective countries and will allow them to deal directly with potential funders. Activists from *Balai Citoyen* have engaged reflection towards this direction for a while (see chapter 3).

West African social movements should also look into online crowdfunding, which is not yet a prevalent culture in Francophone Africa, but it holds potentiality for increasing their financial capacity. Although youth movements are very active online, they have not fully tamed the internet tool to mobilize financial resources. Thus, social movements should develop online fundraising strategies to tap into the monetary power of Africans living in more industrialized countries. The latter are generally anxious to see profound socio-political changes in their home countries. They seem willing to always support social movement causes but sometimes do not find conduits to financially contribute to social activism hence the necessity set up online crowdfunding. Nowadays, there are several internet platforms that facilitate crowdfunding. Additionally, social movements could set up commercial websites with links that allow individuals donations. Unfortunately, many Francophone West African movements do not have functional websites and the few ones that do like *Y en a marre* do not have links for people to donate money.

The only time these movements resort to crowdfunding is when a fellow activist is incarcerated or going through some legal/personal troubles that require funds. Fundraising should be a permanent endeavor. They must also capitalize on the boom of mobile money in Africa which has revolutionized economic transactions on the continent in the past decade to increase their financial capacity. Mobile money has made it easy for millions of Africans in urban centers and rural areas, to make transactions without needing a bank account. This technology has been used in Senegal and other African countries for disaster-relief efforts. It could also be useful for social movements in local fundraising activities. The money they collect from individual donations do not come with any preconditions or strings attached in comparison to donations they receive from NGOs and other external organizations

Copywriting the names, slogans, or artistic productions of social movements may constitute another source of revenue. Commodifying such brands will add a monetary value to their activism and allow people to buy paraphernalia through online stores. This fundraising tactic is very prominent in other parts of the Black Diaspora like the United States where organizations such as Black Lives Matter capitalize on their logos and slogans. Not only does this bring money to the organization, it also serves as publicity for the organization. *Y en a marre* successfully started a similar endeavor with the sale of ‘*Y en a marre*’ and *Wax-Waxeet*⁴⁰ tee-shirts but did not follow through.

Finally, as African protest movements manage to build strong alliances, resources mobilization must also be a Pan-African endeavor. In other words, through organizations like

⁴⁰ After promising that he would only run for two terms, before his election in 2000, President Wade contradicted himself by expressing his desire to run for a third term in 2011. He used the term *Ma waxoon waxeet* (I said it but now I am taking my words back) during a rally organized by his supporters to say that he is not going to keep his promise and would instead be a candidate in the 2012 presidential election. *Y en a marre* then used his words *Wax Waxeet* to run a propaganda campaign against his candidacy.

Afrikki, African activists must put in place fund-generating activities to first finance the organization of the UPEC we discussed earlier in chapter three and secondly to maintain the daily activities of the organization. They should tap into the resources of people of African descent given that funds are usually more accessible in Northern countries. Overall, mobilizing financial resources for protest movements necessitates shrewd and aggressive marketing techniques so as to not entirely depend on elite groups or be at their mercy. In this regards, social movements must include marketing/fundraising units in their structures.

III- MOBILIZING HUMAN RESOURCES AND ITS CHALLENGES

The effective mobilizing and management of human resources is the ultimate goal of any protest movement. In fact, the media and financial resources evoked early generally concur to facilitate the recruitment of a critical mass in order to make impactful political actions. It is important to note that by human resources, we refer to people who devote resources, time, labor and guidance to a given social movement. The availability of human resources determines many aspects of a social movement, including its popularity, weight in the political process, and ultimate longevity. There is a logical relationality between popularity, weight, and longevity in the existence of a social movement given that the more popular a movement, the greater its impact on the political arena and subsequently the greater its chances to remain an actor on the political scene. However, many social movements struggle to stay alive in contemporary Africa because they have difficulties recruiting/regrouping the masses around their demands, particularly prior to major political confrontations. They also generally fail to maintain the critical mass after major political contention periods such as presidential elections. This was partly the case of *Y en a envie*, a movement created by elements of the Wade regime to counter the popularity of *Y en a marre* in 2012. Unfortunately, their calls for action did not resonate with the majority of Senegalese including militants of the Senegalese Democratic Party (President Wade's political party). Famous activists who belonged to the movement, such as the hip-hop artist Chaka Babs, were not able to organize successful counter-protests to effectively challenge the preeminence of the *Y en a marre* narrative in the pre-presidential election period.

Consequently, in less than a year of existence, Senegalese people witnessed the demise of *Y en a envie* which entirely ceased its activities following the downfall of the Wade regime in 2012. Interestingly, *Y en a envie* possessed more financial resources than its counterparts given

that it was directly funded by members of the Wade regime. Yet, its mobilization efforts quickly fizzled out whereas *Y en a marre* gathered more momentum with less resources. Though the availability of financial resources remains crucial for the survival of a protest movement, in the *Y en a envie* instance, we can argue that the absence of viable/loyal human resources impeded the development of social movement. In addition, the commitment of the movement's participants experiences ups and downs contingent upon risks factors that we shall elaborate on later in this section. Nevertheless, one could ask how much time should movements like *Y en a marre* spend on recruitment? How can they transform by-standers into engaged activist ready to engage in political action and commit to the survival of the protest movement? These interrogations deal with the complex issue of social movement recruitment.

1- Social Movement Recruitment

Recruiting adherents constitutes one of the most fundamental elements of resource mobilization. Movements need active membership and personnel to function properly. This incites JD McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald to postulate that “in accounting for movement’s success and failures there is an explicit recognition of the crucial importance of involvement on the part of individuals from [the inside and] outside the collectivity which a social movement represents.” In doing so, social movements have several strategic tasks including mobilizing supporters, neutralizing and/or transforming mass and elite publics into sympathizers (McCarthy & Zald 1977, p.6). Early resource mobilization theorists, Zald and McCarthy, criticize collective behavior theorists by removing the notion of grievance and generalized beliefs from the center of social insurgencies and instead place availability of resources particularly human resources at the heart of social movement organizations. In this regard, they developed the notions of social movement “constituents,” “adherents,” “bystander public” and “beneficiaries;” all of which characterize different levels of individual involvement in a given social insurgency.⁴¹

Social movement adherents represent the individuals that believe in the objectives of the protest movement while constituents refer to the people who not only belong to the movement but also provide resources for the latter. The goal of the movement leadership, as Zald and McCarthy posit, is to turn adherents into constituents and keep them engaged in the process. (Zald and McCarthy 1977, p.11). If we apply this theory to *Y en a marre*, we can say that people who deem that the movement is fighting a noble cause for the greater good of the Senegalese/African people are adherents of the movement whereas the individuals or activists who do actual labor for *Y en a*

⁴¹ They also theory the concepts of social movement organization or SMO and social movement industry also refer to as SMI. All of which will come in handy in the analysis of movement participation in French-speaking Africa.

marre make the movement's constituents or membership. Thus, from a human resource standpoint, the goal of the *Y en a marre* leadership should be to convert those believers into active members of the movement who will then contribute time, money and labor for the movement.

At another level, the goal of resource mobilization is, as its proponents contend, also to convert non-adherents into adherents. In more concrete terms, Zald and McCarthy's concept of human resource mobilization represents a two-step process, which consists of converting non-adherents into adherents and then adherents into constituents. Applied to *Y en a marre*, we can say that movements should strive to convince people who are either neutral or resistant to the goals and vision of the movement to ultimately see the positive in their struggles and consequently join the fight. However, in the Senegalese and Francophone West African settings generally, this two-step process falls short as movement participation is less formalized, less demarcated and that individuals can jump directly from non-adherents to constituents. Consistent with this argument are McAdam's concept of recruitment and the intricacies of movement participation. The social movement theorist believes that scholars often oversimplify social movement recruitment processes and assimilate them to the process by which an individual affiliates him/herself with formal organizations like a club for instance. According to him, the adherent/nonadherent (or member/nonmember) dichotomy may elude the greater number of people who are, by definition, "active" in a movement and for this reason, it does not have significant value. "The boundaries of a movement are never as clearly defined as those of formal organizations. Movements are much more ephemeral. Demarcating the boundaries of a movement in order to distinguish participants from nonparticipants is extremely difficult" (McAdam 1986, p.67). McAdam and like-minded thinkers would rather uphold the idea of gauging participation in a specific social movement activity in order to determine the degree of involvement in social insurgencies. In this respect, the

massification of *Y en a marre* and the formation of its membership aligns more with McAdam's idea of recruitment and partially invalidates Zald and McCarthy's human resource concept in addition to not obeying any specific recruiting strategy at first.

Thiat, Fadel Barro, Sophia, and the other founding members of *Y en a marre* never set out with a clear recruitment objective or tactic in mind. They simply transmitted strong messages to the public and their conviction that profound changes needed to take place before they saw the first constituents voluntarily joined the movement. Through traditional and new media outlets, they were able to convert non-adherents directly into constituents who donated time, money and labor to the protest movement. Barro says in this context: "*Y en a marre* did not have recruiting strategies, because people must understand that when we started the movement, we were not aiming at membership. We just had strong positions that we firmly defended and through exemplarity, people [voluntarily] joined us, and when they came, we organized them" (Interview with Fadel Barro, September 2019). This statement demonstrates that the mobilization of human resources does not necessarily require strategizing and that spontaneity can be determinant in the formation of movement constituency. More importantly, the assertion also informs us that the acquisition of human resources can be anterior to organized actions as highlighted in the press release that officially kicked off *Y en a marre's* activities in 2011. In this document, the movement's founding members wrote:

Y en a marre is looking forward to gathering young people of this country as soon as possible, first, through local meetings. We will find young people where they are and federate them to this movement. If the Senegalese youth accepts to engage and assume the struggle, we will then share with them a plan of action that will be maturely conceived and intelligently executed in the respect of the law⁴² (*Y en a marre's* first press release, January 18, 2011).

⁴²Y en a marre compte rassembler dans les plus brefs délais les forces jeunes de notre pays. D'abord par des rencontres de proximité, trouver les jeunes là où ils sont pour les fédérer à ce mouvement. Si les jeunes Sénégalais acceptent de s'assumer et de s'engager dans ce combat, un plan d'action leur sera alors communiqué. Plan d'action qui sera murement conçu et intelligemment exécuté dans le respect de la loi pour que «*la lumière soit*».

Not only did the founders set preconditions to engage in political mass action, they also clearly identified their target population on the outset that later constituted the core of its constituencies. The level of engagement they received upon calling for action surpassed their expectations and Barro recalls that people started calling him on his cellphone continuously asking about joining the movement after they toured radio and TV outlets.

Besides being able to form a movement constituency through unconventional channels, *Y en a marre* benefitted from its association with famous individuals and people who have strong connections with the media spheres. In many regards, affiliation with other structures can predict the level of success in recruitment for social movements. In fact, in a collaborative work entitled “Social Network and Social Movements” (1988) Fernandez and McAdam argue that one of the most significant structural elements of social movements is their overlapping linkages with other organizations. The “ties among these organizations are an important channel through which they mobilize resources, including one of their most valuable resources, personnel” (Fernandez and McAdam 1988, p.358). In this regard, *Y en a marre* has benefitted from its conflation/association with rap group *Keur Gui Crew* composed of Thiat and Kilifeu, two of the founding members of the social movement. *Keur Gui Crew* was already a well-known and well-respected group in Senegal who called for social changes in their music since the 1990s, and since Thiat and Kilifeu had been the faces of *Y en a marre* in its formative year, the movement was able to “unintentionally” tap into *Keur Gui’s* fan base to form its constituency. The overlap between *Keur-Gui Crew* and *Y en a marre* was advantageous for recruiting human resources and leadership as the presence of Thiat and Kilifeu made it easy to coopt other rappers like Simon, Djily Bagdad

and Fou Malade and the first responders to the movement's call were also young fans of the rappers who joined the movements.

2- Risk Factors and Movement Participation

Being a social movement constituent does not always equate participating in all of the movement's political contentions. *Y en a marre* and similar organizations on the continent have seen massive involvement in political actions at times, and steady decline in participation in other circumstances. This is due in part to the urgency/cruciality of the political demands as well as the risks associated with undertaking a specific collective action. In other words, for *Y en a marre* constituents, preventing Wade from changing the constitution through parliament to secure a third controversial term in 2011 might seem more urgent for a potential movement participant than campaigning against President Macky Sall's constitutional referendum in 2016. This could, therefore, justify the massive participation in the protests against President Wade in 2011-2012 and the loss of fervor in the campaign against President Macky Sall's proposed referendum. In the same vein, these constituents are more likely to take part in a government-authorized rally than in an unauthorized one due to the potential physical and judicial repercussions. Consistent with the argument, mobilization of human resources and recruitment are better circumscribed in relation to a specific movement activity. McAdam sustains this idea when he writes:

How can we ever hope to study movement recruitment if movements resist boundary demarcation, how can we know whether a person has been successfully recruited into one of them? The only way, I think, is to shift the focus of analysis from these unwieldy abstractions known as movements to specific demonstrations, actions, campaigns, or other bounded forms of activism. We can study the process by which an individual comes to participate in a particular activism. (McAdam 1986, p.67).

The aforementioned assessment reiterates that recruitment and participation are complex dynamics that cannot be reduced to simple binaries. In the Francophone African context, they respond to other parameters such as ethnicity and religious affiliations that are not necessarily under the control of activists or movement organizers. Individual involvement in activism also responds to risk factors.

Early social movement theorists used to minimize or completely overlook the notion of risk in movement activism. Collective behavior thinkers emphasized interest convergence as being the major factor explaining people's participation in collective action. Resources mobilization scholars on the other hand, herald the notion of risk being primarily a fundamental element of motivation or dissuasion in taking part in political actions. McAdam goes as far as arguing that low risk/cost activism or high risk/cost activism predicates response to a call for movement activism. To paraphrase McAdam, movement participants recruitment obeys a complicated dynamic that explains why the same factors that push someone to take part in a riot are distinct from the motives that incite another individual to sign a petition against the reelection of a candidate. In these instances, riot participation is a high-risk cost activism while signing a petition can be regarded as risk free cost activism. The frequency of state repression of movement activism in Francophone West Africa falls into the category of high-risk cost activism for the majority of movement participants.

The possibility of repression always constitutes a deterrence to participation in mass action. For many West Africans, participation in specific mass action is, after all, a psychological exercise whereby movement adherents, constituents, sympathizers, gauge the individual risk-benefit analysis of their potential engagement. While President Wade capitulated under the *Y en a marre* pressure who massively and forcefully opposed his constitutional change in 2011, the movement failed to rally its constituents against the constitutional referendum in 2016 and the amendment of electoral code in 2018 introduced in the national assembly. In the first case, President Wade authorized the popular protest which allowed *Y en a marre* members and the opposition parties to occupy the surroundings of the Senegalese parliament without any repression at first. The increase

of violence in the protesters' rhetoric partly dissuaded the MPs to pass Wade's connotational amendment.

In the second instance, not only did Senegalese authorities ban all marches and rallies against the electoral bill, they strategically shut down downtown Dakar, including the outskirts of the national assembly and the presidential palace to make sure unauthorized personnel would not access the area. The massive police presence in the city days prior to the amendment of the electoral code and the threat of judicial actions against potential protesters signaled a strong determination to violently quell any attempt of demonstration. In these drastic conditions, *Y en a marre* protesters were more hesitant and reluctant to take action, but the movement's leaders call for mobilization lamentably failed, thus hurting the efficacy of the movement in the process. While the first political contention presented less risk for movement participants, the second one seemed dicier for them.

Aggrieved by the inaction of the constituents and Senegalese people in general who stayed home, Kilifeu chastised the masses on a widely shared video by calling them "defectors" and "not being manly enough". His frustration and the subsequent profanity he directed at the public were the outcome of vain recruitment and mobilization efforts that did not take into account the individual risk-cost activism. "Recruitment to activism is less likely to succeed when protesters perceive or expect negative outcomes of their activism" (Shriver 2000, p.322). When protesters know that their participation might cause harmful physical and judicial damages, they tend to be more reluctant to take action. However, we should notice in instances when movement activism turns into a popular revolt, people seemed to be guided by different psychological rules and calculation whereby, individual sacrifice takes primacy over threat of physical harm or judicial action. This attitude was perceived during the 2011 protest led by *Y en a marre*. In June 2011,

protesters contemplated the idea of marching to the presidential palace to “remove” Wade from office. Similarly, during the 2014 revolt in Burkina Faso, protesters led by the *Balai Citoyen* defied the martial law imposed by the Compaoré government and marched to the palace to topple him even after he (Compaoré) withdrew and dropped the constitutional bill that would allow him to run for another term. The same psychological fervor helped unseat Presidents Ben Ali, Hosni Mubarak and Muammar Khaddafi during the “Arab Spring”. Therefore, the notion of high-risk cost activism could be irrelevant in the context of popular African popular revolts/revolution, the higher the risk the stronger the popular participation and support. Therefore, weak participation can fragilize the reputation of movements and make them appear weak in the eyes of the established power structure. It can also delegitimize their demands.

In summary, we can say that resource mobilization is indispensable in the social movement activism. The longevity of a movement and its contention capacity are essentially contingent upon the availability of resources. In this respect, media resources enable activists to partly control the political narrative despite online media resources accentuating government cyber surveillance. The relatively easy access to internet in some Francophone West African urban centers causes many social movements to gravitate towards online mobilization campaigns, thus making them lose sight of the importance of the closeness with the masses (rural and urban) that offline activism is more likely to procure. As far as financial resources are concerned, social movements’ affiliation with controversial public figures or international organizations raises lots of questions regarding the integrity of the movements as well as the intentions of their financial partners. However, social movement actors are conscious that one of their biggest challenges remain financial self-sufficiency. Today there are mechanisms that can allow them to at least cut down their dependency on external funding and better shield themselves from “predatory partnerships” that require them

to accommodate funders' agenda. The recruitment and mobilization of human resources still form a point of contention among social movement theorists who have not fully grasped what essentially motivate people to participate in a social movement. In the meantime, protest movements in Francophone West Africa continue to defy the most orthodox collective action theories. While there is a small dose of spontaneity that seemingly characterizes engagement and participation in movements' political contentions, the risk factors are still determinant in individual involvement in a specific movement activism. Finally, it should be noticed that resource mobilization in 21st century African social movements tends to become a Pan-African endeavor due to activist networks like *Afrikki* that have been formed to collectively combat despotism and neo-colonialism on a continental scale

CONCLUSION

Reacting to bad governance and economic disparity, recent social movements throughout the African continent have recreated a new sense of continent-wide collaboration, mostly informally (because they function outside the traditional political party structures), to bring about the institution of democratic processes and government accountability. While the collaboration across the nations has renewed the Pan-Africanist quest for political and economic autonomy of African nations from the Global North, these social movements' appeal for greater grassroots involvement in governance has evoked and enhanced the value and practice of democracy and the rule of law in the different African nations, often amid resistance, sometimes fierce and violent, from the leaders and governments they oppose. This study has analyzed the role of *Y en a marre* in this present social, political evolution in Africa and their activism fostered ideological and strategic connections across the Atlantic.

Y en a marre emerged from the dire economic situation in Senegal in 2011. The economic crisis had affected the national electric power supply which consequently affected small businesses, universities, and hospitals among other important institutions in addition to everyday person's living conditions. Although the Senegalese economy recorded a slight improvement between 2000 when president Wade was elected and in 2011 when *Y en a marre* came into existence, the global economic recession that occurred in 2008 did not leave the country of *Teranga* (Hospitality) unscathed.

Abdoulaye Wade inherited a disadvantageous economic and financial situation from the previous socialist regime that governed the country for 50 years under Senghor and Abdou Diouf whose governance were affected by complications such as a decade long severe drought that decreased agricultural productions, the devaluation of the CFA currency and the imposed Structural Adjustment Programs. Wade's ambitious political economy when he took office, did not preclude the rise of a youth protest movement which initially concerned itself with a fighting against power outages but quickly morphed into a watchdog organization against the Senegalese power structure and model of youth activism across Francophone African regions. However, one should acknowledge the significant role of the *Collectif des Imams de Guédiawaye* in the inception of *Y en a marre*.

The *Imams* turned into social activists, reminded the Senegalese people that as religious guides and social regulators, it was also their duty to denounce what many citizens perceived as organized government scam since the national electric company continued to deliver unusually exorbitant bills despite the recurrence of power outages. The *Imams'* call for Senegalese consumers to not pay their electric bills due to poor service, inspired Sophia Denise Sow, Fadel Barro, Thiat, Kilifeu to co-found *Y en a marre*. From their headquarters in the suburb of Dakar, the young activists sent a strong mobilization message that reverberated beyond Senegal borders and galvanized other African youths to take action against their political leaders.

Y en a marre activists quickly realized that the struggle they are leading has strong Pan-African implications. They embrace the legacies of Pan-African figures and anticolonial activists such as Frantz Fanon, Amilcar Cabral and Kwame Nkrumah among other figures. The presence of images of and quotes from these leaders in *Y en a marre's* headquarters testify to the admiration that the Senegalese activists have towards Pan-African leaders who engaged the fight for the

liberation of the African continent. In this respect, *Y en a marre* embraces classic protest methods such as street demonstrations that help the movement affirm itself as the new political or anti-establishment power to be reckoned with. The historical June 23 Protest that the movement led threw the Senegalese political power off guard and forced the parliament to withdraw a highly controversial constitutional bill “intended to eternalize” a man (and his family) in power. In this regard, the engagement of the Senegalese social movement helped stem the monarchizing of the Senegalese political power and sent a strong message to not only the future leaders of the country but also to the rest of Francophone West Africa that the masses will oppose any attempt to undemocratically stay or access power. The movement’s success in the June 23 Protest increased its popularity and propelled the NTS (New Type of Senegalese) concept as a way to reshape the Senegalese psyche for civic engagement, environmental responsibility and consciousness.

Y en a marre also put forth the NTS philosophy to engage Senegalese people into a new type of civic leadership that involves holding local leaders accountable and actively participating in community politics. Thus, the NTS concept forms the backbone all of *Y en a marre* projects including *Dox Ak Sa Gox*, *Daas Fanaanal*, and *Citizen Mic* among others. While *Dox Ak Sa Gox* intends to reinforce youth engagement capacity in community politics, *Daas Fanaanal* proves the movement's capability to swing the electoral balance. As far as *Citizen Mic* is concerned, it underscores *Y en a marre*’s commitment to the arts especially rap music which continues to occupy a prime spot in their arsenal of political contention. The fact that hip-hop artists co-founded the movement partly justifies the activists’ attachment to rap music as a form of political denunciation and a means to force the established power structure to uphold the democratic principles of freedom of expression.

Music has historically been a powerful means of opposition on the African continent and African artists have traditionally been on the frontline of popular opposition to autocratic regimes. The engagement of icons such as Miriam Makeba and Fela Kuti paved the way for contemporary artists like Thiat, Kilifeu, Simon and Smokey who do not hesitate to use their music for political denunciation. These people successfully devote their artistic talents to the service of social activism, hence the notion of “artivism” which has not only become a buzz-word among activist circles in Africa but the ethos that sustains the political determination of a new generation of fighters seeking to foster profound changes in African societies. “Artivism” thus signals the dialectical link between art and activism. In Francophone West Africa, one cannot subtract art from contemporary youth activism given the vanguard role artists and their productions play in society. Their music in particular has become one of the most formidable rhetorical tools in their arsenal of political contention. Social movements in Francophone Africa use music to counter the political narrative of their regimes but sometimes to provoke negative/despotic reactions from public authorities and expose them to public criticism and outrage.

Through the use of imagery and figures of speech, African “artists” not only unleash their creativity, but they also attack power structures they deem autocratic, incompetent, corrupt and not serving the best interest of the masses. Through their song “Saï-Saï au Coeur” Thiat and Kilifeu for instance parodied the annual public address of the Senegalese president, while exposing the corrupt nature of the political class that repeats the cycle of oppression and corruption once they get a hold of the power. Thus, the hip-hop artists and activists' music becomes part of a diatribe or a counter-rhetoric that antagonizes public figures without much regard to the traditional notions of morals and values of their respective societies. Though musical diatribe constitutes a powerful rhetorical means to engage both the public and political authorities, it sometimes results in judicial

and physical consequences for artists and activists that utilize it. The musical open letter also remains a significant means for activists to enter into dialogue with the political establishment and the public. The fact that it is designed as a personal message from a disenchanting ordinary citizen to their elected official symbolizes a rhetorical act that attempts to make the authority personally connect with the citizen and understand their deepest feelings. Therefore, in contrast to the musical diatribe, “letter-writing rap” music seems less confrontational and emphasizes the personal connection as well as the moral lessons that Francophone African hip-hop artists occasionally transmit to the public authorities through their music.

Rap music in Francophone West Africa goes beyond entertainment to embrace denunciation and raises socio-political awareness. The music has become a compelling social commentary that challenges the socio-political and cultural status quo. As more and more people of different age ranges and social backgrounds embrace the musical form, African activists have found in rap the platform to both awake popular consciousness and to remind public authorities their duties vis-à-vis their citizens. Through songs like “Daas Fanaanal” and “Dox ak Sa Gox,” *Y en a marre* was able to get Senegalese people to register to vote against a regime they deemed predatory and to have a say in the ways their local communities are run. Through songs like “Faux Pas Forcer” and “Diogoufi,” the Senegalese activists and artists forewarn the public about the danger of undemocratic and unpopular political maneuvers that can jeopardize the peaceful public environment as well as the persistence of the cycles of misery and oppression that politicians seem unable to break. Thus, art in general and rap music in particular fuel Francophone West African activists’ political confrontation while keeping the masses engaged and entertained. The music transcends national boundaries to inspire activism in other horizons thus translating the “Pan-Africanity” of Francophone West African activism.

Pan-Africanism as a movement and an ideology continues to inform grassroots activism on the African continent which has become the epicenter of the Pan-African concept since 1945. Before 1945, Africa, particularly Francophone Africa, occupied a marginal position in the Pan-African movement and has been systematically overlooked in discursive analyses of the evolution of Pan-Africanism. Pan-Africanism scholars generally seem to confine Francophone Africans participation to Pan-Africanism to Négritude while according a larger importance to Anglophone Africa and the Diaspora. Similar treatment characterizes Lusophone, Arabophone and non-Europhone Africa which are also marginalized in Pan-Africanism narratives. Francophone West Africa is today at the foreground of the revival of the Pan-African concept thanks to the dynamism of its social movements and their engagement to strategically connect social activism in Africa and the rest of the Black Atlantic. 21st Century Pan-Africanism is experiencing a new popular impetus, distinct from the elite-driven 20th Century Pan-Africanism thus propelling the concept into a new era we can term “Neo Pan-Africanism”.

As a concept that is almost two and a half centuries old, Pan-Africanism has gone through different evolutionary phases that we can grasp through five periods including Neo Pan-Africanism. “Proto Pan-Africanism” is a term suggested by Imanuel Geiss which designated the period prior to the formation of the Pan-African movement but laid the groundwork that fostered the existence of the concept. Theoretical Pan-Africanism precluded with the 1900 London Conference and indicates the phase of self-searching, construction and reconstruction of the basis of Pan-Africanism as an organized movement. Pragmatic Pan-Africanism turned the theorized principles and decisions taken during several Pan-African gatherings into concrete political actions. Functional Pan-Africanism revealed the dysfunctions within the Pan-African movement as well as a chasm in the ideals of the movements and the priorities of the newly-founded African

states. Therefore, Pan-Africanism experienced a loss of momentum for several decades due to various reasons including internal conflicts, border disputes and the inability of the Organization for African Unity to quell post-independence infightings that stem political and economic advancement on the African continent.

Although the formation of the African Union marked a turning point in 21st Century Pan-Africanism, it is the rise of grassroots social movements particularly in Francophone West Africa in the second decade of the millennium that has allowed Pan-Africanism as a movement to rekindle the dynamism of its formative years. From the rise of the Arab Spring in Tunisia to the inception of *Y en a marre* in Senegal, social movements overturn the political status quo while forming a transnational collaboration grounded on the Pan-African principles of unity and anti-oppression. Whether it is internal or foreign oppression, political or economic exploitation, young Francophone West African activists have taken the lead in shielding the masses from the devastation of despotism and neocolonialism. The formation of *Afrikki* during the 2018 UPEC consolidated activists' determination to defend the interests of the masses in Africa and people of African descent across the Atlantic. The 2018 UPEC is a landmark in the conception and evolution of Neo Pan-Africanism as it marks the first major Pan-African grassroots endeavor that seeks to structure social movements on a transcontinental basis and tackle issues pertaining to the welfare of the African masses and people of African descent across the Atlantic. Therefore, the UPEC and *Afrikki* reminisce the 1900 Pan-African Conference in London to some extent, given the structural outcomes and the questions raised during the gatherings. Thanks to the leadership of *Y en a marre*, activists in the Black Atlantic were able to set in motion a coordinated plan of action that could potentially revolutionize the face of social activism and profoundly help transform modern African societies by championing Afro-Optimism and fully-fledged democracies grounded on African

cultural values and norms. To achieve these goals, activists gathered around *Afrikki* must learn from the mistakes of the defunct Pan-African Associations so as to avoid the conflicts that slowed the progress of Pan-Africanism in the 20th century. Currently, there exist differences of opinion on which organizational form African social movements should adopt going forward. While some activists such as Valsero, and Boniface Mwangi favor the political engagement by running for elective positions and fostering social changes from within, movements like *Balai Citoyen* explores the possibilities of turning their organization into an NGO which will allow them more freedom to undertake revenue-generating activities and transformative community projects. *Y en a marre* on the other hand, continues to defend the role of social movements as sentinels of democracy although the co-founder Fadel Barro considered the idea of running for parliamentary election at some point. Regardless of the structural form they adopt, African activists must also accord priority to their resource mobilization capacities.

Accumulation of human, financial and media resources represents a major aspect of protest movements and advocates of the resource mobilization theory agree that the availability of resources can determine the level of success of a given social movement. As far as media resources are concerned, Francophone West African activists have managed to counter the rhetoric of traditional media and the power establishment thanks to the internet which makes it possible for many social movements to directly address the masses and coordinate popular mobilization efforts. However, the proliferation of mobile technology and the increasing resort to cyber-activism is not without drawbacks for African activists. On the one hand, online activism in Africa does not always have the same efficiency as offline activism especially in places where in-person interactions are fundamental for community relationship building. *Y en a marre* and *Balai Citoyen's* Facebook calls for protest show that very few people engage with their online

mobilization efforts in contrast to their offline mobilization endeavors which tend to attract more participants. On the other hand, online activism can be exclusionary in the sense that people living in rural areas or the urban proletariat who struggle to have decent and continuous internet access. Additionally, the internet access rate in some Francophone West African countries remains extremely low. The scarcity of electric power in some areas and the fact that governments in the region can limit or sever internet access anytime, make online activism a flimsy mobilization tool for African activists. Finally, online activism increases the risks of cyber-surveillance to which African governments have resorted to crack down on the political opposition and social activists. Many instances in Senegal show that public authorities and law enforcement are closely monitoring the online “maneuvers” and communication of social activists which allow them, remain a step ahead of opponents to the regime. The challenges protest movements face in mobilizing media resources, trickle into their efforts to accumulate financial resources.

Mobilizing funds reveals the intricacies of the relationship between social movements and elite groups. The Diack scandal in which *Y en a marre* was cited, raised the suspicion that social movements in Africa can potentially constitute the extension of powerful foreign funders who try to combat African regimes they deem problematic. While the protest movement-funders relationship can be that of a mutual benefit, powerful funders might be tempted to ask for concessions from social activists in order to accommodate their agenda. Therefore, once social movements are entirely dependent on external benefactors, it becomes easier to coopt them. To minimize the potentiality of co-optation, protest movements must create less constraining fund-raising mechanisms including better monetizing their artistic creations, resorting to online crowdfunding, creating online stores and potentially partitioning their movements into two

separate entity enabling one of them to be a fully-functional NGO. To set all of this motion, social movements necessitate dedicated human resources.

The recruitment and participation of movements constituents continue to be a point of discord among social movement scholars who struggle to circumspect the who's who and who does what in a protest movement. Whereas scholars like Zald and Meyer favor a sequential approach to movement participation from bystander to adherent and from adherent to constituent, McAdam distances himself from this trinary contending that social movements do not operate like formal organizations or club and that it is hard to delimit where the adherents' duties stop and where the constituents' obligations start. McAdam rather pushes for the notion of low and high-risk factors as contingent on social movement participation. However, the way Francophone West African social movements attract participants partially invalidates the aforementioned authors' conceptions of recruitment and participation in protest movements as they obey to more complex engagement patterns that sometimes factor in ethnic, professional, political and religious affiliations that do not necessarily characterize social movements in the Global North. Therefore, the need to create new and unique theoretical frameworks for Africa social insurgences becomes an urgency.

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APPENDIX:

ACRONYMS

ANC : African National Congress

APR : Alliance Pour la République

AU : The African Union

BCEAO : Banque Centrale des États de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (Central Bank of West African States)

CFA : Communauté Financière D’Afrique

CGT : Confédération Générale du Travail (General Confederation of Labor)

DIC : Division des Investigations Criminelles

DPEE : Direction de la Prévision et des Études Économiques (The Office of Economic Projections and Studies)

ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States

GOANA : Grande Offensive Agricole Pour la Nourriture et L’Abondance

IAAF: Internationals Association of Athletics Associations

ICT: Information and Communications Technology

IMF: International Monetary Fund

NAACP: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

NGO : Non-governmental Organization

NTS : Nouveau Type de Sénégalais

OAU: Organization of African Unity

OSIWA: Open Society in West Africa

PBS : Positive Black Soul

PDS : Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (Senegalese Democratic Party)

PS : Parti Socialiste (The Socialist Party)

REVA : Retour vers l'Agriculture (Return to Agriculture)

SMO : Social Movement Organization

SNCC : Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee

TFM : Télévision Futurs Médias

UGTT : Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens (General Union of Tunisian Workers)

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UNRIC: United Nations Regional Information Center

UPEC : Université Populaire de l'Engagement Citoyen

CURRICULUM VITAE

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Comparative Humanities Department
Bingham Humanities 212
2211 South Brook Street
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501 West Kenwood Dr,
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Comparative Humanities, University of Louisville, KY (Projected) January 2020

Dissertation: “The Contribution of Francophone West African Social Movements to the Idea of Pan-Africanism: The Case Study of *Y en a marre* in Senegal”

Committee Members: Dismas Masolo (Co-director), Tyler Fleming (Co-director), Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Mawuena Kossi Logan

Visiting Scholar, University of Louisville

Affiliated with Pan-African Studies Department of University of Louisville, KY 2013-2015

Academic Project: “African-American Freedom Movements and the Rise of Pan-Africanism and Independence Movements in Africa”

Supervisors: Prof. Omar Sougou & Prof. Ricky Jones.

- Mapping of civil rights protest sites in downtown Louisville.

Supervisors: Dr. Nefertiti Burton & Celeste Lenier.

Master of Arts

Language, Literatures, and Civilizations of the Anglophone World, Gaston Berger University, Saint-Louis, Senegal 2011

Thesis: “Identity, Universalism and Cosmopolitanism in Barack Obama’s works: *Dreams from my Father*, the *Audacity of Hope* and Public Speeches”

Bachelor of Arts

English Language, Literatures, and Civilizations

Gaston Berger University, Saint-Louis, Senegal – July 2009

Certificate in Creative Enterprise Core Business Skills

Joint certificate between the British Council and Bordeaux Management School – Dakar, Senegal - April 2010

Certificate in Literature Across Cultures and Globalization

Joint certificate between the University of Hamline, Minnesota and Gaston Berger University, Senegal. 2010

TEACHING EXPERIENCE 2013-PRESENT

- Intermediate French (FREN 122)** *Spring 2020*
University of Louisville, Classical and Modern Languages Department
- Cultures of America (HUM 152)** *Fall 2018, Spring 2019*
University of Louisville, Comparative Humanities Department
- Creativity and the Arts (HUM 151)** *Spring 2018, Summer 2018*
University of Louisville, Comparative Humanities Department
- Cultures of America (HUM 152)** *Spring 2017, Fall 2017,*
University of Louisville, Comparative Humanities Department
- Cultures of America (HUM 152)** *Summer 2017*
University of Louisville, Comparative Humanities Department
- Cultures of America (HUM 152)** *Spring 2016 Fall 2016*
University of Louisville, Comparative Humanities Department
- Cultures of America (HUM 152)** *Summer 2016*
University of Louisville, Comparative Humanities Department
- Cultures of America (HUM 152)** *Fall 2015*
University of Louisville, Comparative Humanities Department
- Basic French (FREN 121, 122, 123)** *Fall 2014*
University of Louisville, French Department
- Francophone African Cultures, Lit and History (FREN 317)** *Spring 2013*
University of Louisville, French Department
- Comprehension and Composition (Eng 202)** *Spring 2012*
Gaston Berger University, English Department
- English Language Instructor** *July-September 2010*
Abdou Aziz High School English Club Dakar, Senegal
Taught English grammar, conjugation, writing and conversation to high school stud

INVITED LECTURES

- Guest Speaker** *November 2013*
University of Louisville's Mouhamed Ali Institute for Peace and Social Justice.
Was invited to talk about Diaspora Re-crossing or the Historical Relationship Between Continental Africans and Diasporic African.

Guest Speaker*December 2013*

University of Louisville's International Diversity and Outreach Program.

Was invited to talk about Pan Africanism and Freedom Movements in Africa and the United States.

Guest Speaker*Nov 2011- Jan 2012*

University of Wisconsin's French and Italian Department

Was invited by 6 different faculty members to talk to their students about Francophone West African culture and Francophone African literature.

Guest Speaker*December 2011*

University of Louisville French Department

Was invited by 2 different faculty members to talk to their students about Francophone West African literature and film production.

PUBLICATIONS***Book Chapter***

- "African American Evangelic Missions and Activism in the Congo: The Activism of Reverend Sheppard," *Reflections on Leadership and Institutions in Africa*. Ed. Toyin Falola and Kenneth Kalu. Rowman & Littlefield. (Forthcoming, Chapter accepted.)
- "Hip-Hop and Anti-Establishment Politics in Senegal: The Activism of the *Y en a marre* Movement," *Levering Expectations: Young People and Popular Arts Culture in Africa*. Ed Paul Ugor. University of Rochester Press. (Forthcoming, Chapter accepted).

Articles in Progress

- "Francophone Social Movements and the Use of Music and Oral Rhetoric as Arsenal of Socio-Political Contention in West Africa"
- "The Emergence and Evolution of the *Y en a marre* Movement: A Socio-Political Context"

Essays

- "Entre alarmisme et prouesse médicale: l'autre défi des Etats africains face au COVID-19" op ed, www.seneneews.com, www.yerimpost.com, www.malisenegal.com, April 2020.
- "Election Frauds and New Leadership: The Challenges of Senegalese Democracy." Africa is a Country, July 2019.
- "Attendez Cheikh Yérim, 'Sexe' nous parle d'éthique" op ed, www.malisenegal.com, January 2019.
- "From London to Dakar, UPEC Reminisces the First Pan-African Conference" *2018 UPEC Conference Proceedings*.

Encyclopedia Entries

- “Negritude: Emergence of a Movement and an Ideology” Update on Africa and the World: *The Continent in Global History*. Ed. Saheed Aderinto. Santa Barbara, CA.
 - “Wives and Co-Wives in Modern Sub-Saharan Africa.” *The Daily Life of Women in World History*. Eds. Colleen Boyett, Michael Tarver, and Carolyn Neel. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, December 2017. (Forthcoming)
 - “Social Activists in Modern Sub-Saharan Africa.” *The Daily Life of Women in World History*. Eds. Colleen Boyett, Michael Tarver, and Carolyn Neel. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, December 2016.
-

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- “Contemporary Social Activism in Francophone West Africa and the Rise of Neo Pan-Africanism.” Annual African Studies Association Conference, Boston, November 2019.
- “Contemporary Social Activism in Francophone West Africa and the Rise of Neo Pan-Africanism.” Institute of Humane Studies, George Mason University, November 2019.
- “African American Evangelic Missions and Social Reforms in the Congo Free State.” Afrisem Annual Conference, Northwestern University, April 2019.
- “African American Evangelic Missions and Activism in the Congo: The Activism of Reverend Sheppard” Boston University, March 2019.
- “From social movement to Pan Africanism: The emergence of a new type of activism in West Africa” University of Louisville, February 2019.
- “The Contribution of Contemporary Francophone West African Social Movements in the Idea of Pan-Africanism: The Case Study of ‘Y’en a marre’ in Senegal” 61st Annual Conference of the African Studies Association, Atlanta December 2018.
- “Solidarity and Global Liberation” Research-Meets-Activism Symposium by Ann Braden Institute for Social Justice and the Urban League November 2018.
- “Le Pan africanisme en tant que mouvement et idéologie,” First Edition of the Université Populaire de l’Engagement Citoyen. Dakar, Senegal July 2018.
- “A Different Pedagogical Approach to the Study of Pan-Africanism,” Annual International Symposium of The Dakar Institute for African Studies. Dakar, July 2018.
- “The Contribution of Contemporary Francophone West African Social Movements in the Idea of Pan-Africanism: The Case Study of ‘Y’en a marre’ in Senegal.” Afrisem Annual Conference, Northwestern University, Chicago, May 2018

- “African American Evangelic Missions and Activism in the Congo: The Activism of Reverend Sheppard” Annual Africa Conference, University of Texas, Austin. March 2018.
- “Towards a Periodization of Pan-Africanism,” The Africa Seminar, Northwestern University, Chicago, April 2017.
- “Towards a Periodization of Pan-Africanism,” Association of Global South Studies Indiana University Southeast. December 2017.

SCHOLARSHIPS, PRIZES AND AWARDS

- Graduate Dean’s Citation Award Winner, University of Louisville, April 2020
- Institute for Humane Studies’ Hayek Fund for the Scholars Award, October 2019
- Institute for Humane Studies at George Mason University Travel Grant, September 2019
- University of Louisville’s Doctoral Dissertation Completion Fellowship, June 2019
- Undergraduate Research/Mentorship Initiative Grant, University of Louisville, May 2019
- Anne Braden Institute for Social Justice and Research Award, May 2018
- The Roberson Fund for African Studies Research Grant, May 2018
- Barbara Harlow Prize for Best Graduate Student Paper at the 18th Annual Africa Conference, The University of Texas at Austin, March 2018
- The Comparative Humanities Research Scholarship, January 2018
- The Comparative Humanities Travel Scholarship, February 2018
- The Graduate Network in Arts and Sciences Travel Scholarship, March 2018
- The Graduate Student Council’s Research Scholarship, March 2014
- Delphi Center for Teaching and Learning Faculty Favorite Award, 2014

PUBLIC SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Service to the University

Participant/Volunteer for the “We Are Louisville” Hackathon University of Louisville, 2018

- An all-day social justice and advocacy event that brings together community leaders, community members, students of all levels, and faculty to help welcome and support immigrants and refugees in Louisville. Helped map all immigrant-owned businesses in the city.

Pan-African Studies Graduate Student Association Research Coordinator, University of Louisville, 2013-2014

- Was in charge of organize scholarly exchanges on issues pertaining to Africa and people of African descent. Assigned books and articles to read and discussed by the organization.

Diop Society Research Coordinator, University of Louisville 2013-2015

- Was in charge of organize scholarly exchanges on issues pertaining to Africa and people of African descent. Assigned books and articles to read and discussed by the organization.

Member of the African Students Union, University of Louisville, 2013-2015

- Helped plan meetings, knowledge bowls and organized the annual Africa Night

Assistant Treasurer for SIFE (Student in Free Enterprise) Gaston Berger University, Senegal, 2008-2010

- One of three students chosen from the English Department to be members of SIFE-Senegal; Responsible for the SIFE group money; Participated in the supervision of the Senegal Valley's Women Empowerment project and the Shoemaker's Commercial project; Participated in the SIFE Senegal national contest.

President of the English Club Gaston Berger University, Senegal, 2008 – 2009

- Managed 30 executive members and more than 100 members; Supervised committees' activities and events; Coordinated travel and participation of all UGB students in the Annual English Clubs Festival; Oversaw the knowledge bowl and all sports competitions; Represented the English Department in the College of Arts and Humanities student club; Worked on the World Water Day Commission.

Head of the English Club Pedagogic and Scientific Committee Gaston Berger University, Senegal, 2006 –2008

- Organized guest lectures and debates; Trained students participating in the Arts and Humanities knowledge bowl; Tutored first year students in the English department; Created and updated the first ever English Club website.

Service to the Profession

Panel Chair, African Studies Association Annual Conference, Boston, November 2019.

- Chaired the "Diaspora in Africa" Panel and led the discussions following the presentations

Graduate Students Representative at the Senegambian Studies Association, USA, 2018

- Spokesperson of graduate students working on/in the Senegambian region, help organize the bi-annual conference of the Senegambian Studies Association in Dakar-Senegal and Banjul-Gambia.

Conference Proceedings Coordinator

- Developed a canvas for the 2018 UPEC conference proceedings, interviewed and transcribed interviews with social activists, wrote reports about the Pan-African summit of social movements

in Dakar.

Conference Volunteer, Université Populaire de l'Engagement Citoyen 2018

- Assisted in day-to-day operations of the conference.

Service to the Community

Group Coordinator Bridge Kids International, 2008-present

- Coordinate and supervise the different projects that Bridge Kids groups are working on in six countries.

Organizer of the Annual African Heritage Festival in Louisville, 2013-present

- Help with scientific presentations, vendor both and sport competitions of the biggest Africa and people of African descent-centered festival in Louisville.

Initiator of the English Teaching Program (ETP) Saint-Louis - Senegal, 2009

- Built collaborative relationship between Gaston Berger University and 10 elementary schools in Saint-Louis to teach English to pupils and initiate them to environmental consciousness.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Administrative Assistant and Web Master 2013 – 2015

International Diversity and Engagement Programs University of Louisville, KY

- Coordinated A&S study abroad programs and community outreach programs in metropolitan Louisville, managed the offices' website, helped with administrative tasks, Group Coordinator for Bridge Kids International

Assistant Project Manager Innovations for Poverty Action Dakar, Senegal 2012

- Coordinated a 5 million-dollar sanitation project funded by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Designed quantitative and qualitative research material for household surveys, helped with data collection and data analysis.

Reporter at the Senegalese National TV and Radio Station Dakar, Senegal 2010

- Reporter for a weekly English broadcast called *E-mag*, aired on public television.

Sales Representative 2007-2010

Publishing Company Editions Khadimal Moustapha Dakar, Senegal

- Responsible for selling and delivering scholastic materials to over 50 elementary schools in downtown and the suburbs of Dakar.

Professional Interpreting AND Translation Experience

- Translator for Human Right Watch, New York. I translated data they collected from

Senegal in their palliative care project as well as translated subtitles for a short documentary about chronic diseases in Senegal. January 2014.

- Interpreter for Human Rights Watch during their Palliative care research in Senegal, July 2013 and December 2012.
- Interpreter and translator for Bridge Kids International, May 2008 - present
- Interpreter for the International Workshop for Urban Project Management in Thiès, Senegal, organized by a French NGO called Les Ateliers from October 19th to November 3rd, 2012.
- Translator for a Marketing and Communication company called D&D Consulting. I translate articles for a quarterly local magazine called Premium issued by Expertiz. August-October 2012.
- Interpreter for Bridge Kids International, during their monthly meetings and Annual Conferences. From May 2009 – present.
- Interpreter for Muhamed Ali Institute for Peace and Justice during their pedagogic trip, lectures and meetings at Université Gaston Berger, Saint Louis, Senegal. July 2012
- Guide and interpreter for Goucher college Maryland for their cultural exchange program called PEACE (Promoting Education and Cultural Exchange); February 2010
- Guide, interpreter/translator for Sookmyong University (Korea) students and officials in Senegal. February 2011
- Guide, interpreter/translator for University of Louisville students in Senegal. May-June 2011
- Interpreter and translator for Saint-Louis City Hall on the International Conference on climate change and local governance. December 2010.
- Translator for the Google Senegal- Workshop to translate Google into Wolof – Saint-Louis, Senegal June 2010

Helped translate 3000 words and phrases from English and French into Wolof for the Google interface. Proofread the messages once they were translated.

LINGUISTIC ABILITIES

Français: Proficient (native level)

Wolof: Proficient (mother tongue)

English: Proficient (native level)

Arabic: fairly good spoken; very good written and reading skills

REFERENCES

Dr. Tyler Fleming

Associate Professor of Pan African Studies and History, University of Louisville

Strickler Hall - Room 445 - P: (502) 852-5985 - Email: tyler.fleming@louisville.edu

Dr. Dismas Masolo

Professor and Distinguished Scholar of African Philosophy, University of Louisville

Bingham Humanities – Room 306 – P: (502) 852-0456 – Email: dismas.masolo@louisville.edu

Dr. Mawuena Kossi Logan

Associate Professor of Pan African Studies, University of Louisville

Strickler Hall - Room 445 - P: (502) 852-5954 – Email: mawuena.logan@louisville.edu

Dr. John Greene

*Professor of French and Francophone Studies, Department of Modern and Classical Languages
University of Louisville*

Bingham Humanities – Room 331 – P: (502) 852-8885 – Email: john.greene@louisville.edu