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Actes du 3eme Colloque Scientifique International des
Laboratoires LAReLSo et LaRMA - (FLSL- UYOB)

tenue les 30 et 31 Mars 2026 à Kabala



Thème : Résolution des crises en Afrique et reconstruction
nationale par les sciences et la recherche scientifique à l'ère
de l'Alliance des États du Sahel (AES)



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LAReLSo et LaRMA de l'Université Yambo Ouologuem de Bamako,
sise à Kabala sur le thème : " RESOLUTION DES CRISES EN
AFRIQUE ET RECONSTRUCTION NATIONALE PAR LES
SCIENCES ET LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE A L'ERE DE
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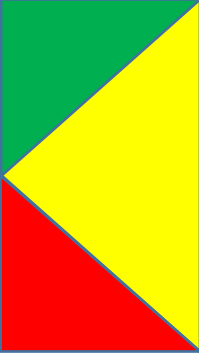
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The journal publishes only quality articles that have not been published or submitted for publication in any other journals. Each article is subjected to a double blind reading. The quality and originality of the articles are the only criteria for publication.



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*Actes du 3eme Colloque
Scientifique International des
Laboratoires LAReLSo et
LaRMA de l'Université des
Lettres et Sciences Humaines de
Bamako, sise à Kabala*

*Sur le thème : Résolution des
crises en Afrique et
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les sciences et la recherche
scientifique à l'ère de
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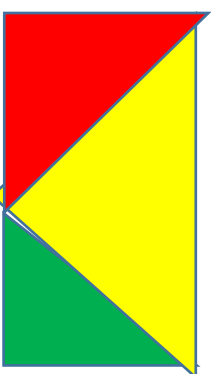
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Argumentaire de l'appel à communication du 3eme Colloque Scientifique International des Laboratoires LAReLSo et LaRMA (UYOB-FLSL)

I-CONTEXTE ET JUSTIFICATION

L'Afrique, depuis son accession à la souveraineté politique dans les années soixante, demeure en proie à des crises multidimensionnelles, mêlant insécurité armée, fractures sociales, fragilité étatique, corruption, *Africaphobie*¹ et chocs économiques, qui compromettent durablement ses trajectoires de développement et entravent l'affirmation d'une véritable indépendance sur tous les plans. C'est dans ce contexte que des leaders patriotes et visionnaires, notamment au sein de l'Alliance des États du Sahel, s'attachent à rompre les chaînes de l'impérialisme, du néocolonialisme, du sous-développement et de la dépendance à l'Occident. Cependant, il convient de noter que les premiers leaders africains révolutionnaires tels que Modibo KEITA, Julius NYERERE, Kwame KRUMMAH, Thomas SANKARA, Mohammad GADAFI et d'autres ont vu leurs luttes avortées en mi-chemin car elles n'étaient pas assez adossées à la science et à la recherche scientifique. De même plusieurs crises assaillent l'Afrique de nos jours, surtout sur le plan sécuritaire, mais la réponse semble être toujours soit militaire, soit faire recours à des personnes non universitaires, voire des non experts dans le domaine de la recherche scientifique. Le Mali, le Burkina Faso et le Niger ne font malheureusement pas exception. Pour pallier cette situation, une place de choix devrait être accordée aux sciences et la recherche scientifique d'où l'impérieuse nécessité de l'implication du monde universitaire.

En effet, les sciences, qu'elles soient africaines ou importées, constituent sans nul doute le véritable creuset de connaissances, de savoir-faire et de technicité permettant de poser des diagnostics fins, des outils de prévention et des évaluations d'impact indispensables pour concevoir des politiques publiques ou stratégies adaptées aux spécificités locales sahéliennes et africaines. Les approches scientifiques permettent également de dépasser les réponses purement militaires en intégrant prévention, résilience sociale, relance économique et réconciliation, et en rendant les interventions plus légitimes et efficaces. Pour corroborer ce qui précède, Aristote dans le *Traité d'Organon* écrit : « La connaissance scientifique se définit comme la connaissance des causes, son approche formelle vise à distinguer le démontrable (théorèmes) et l'indémontrable (axiomes), ce qui relève de l'enchaînement causal et ce qui relève des principes premiers. » (Vrin, 1979, p.89). En termes explicites, la recherche scientifique favorise l'appréhension objective et la découverte réelle des causes d'un problème ou d'une problématique tout en évitant de s'agripper à des causes qui ne découlent pas d'une connaissance scientifique véritablement avérée. Il est également saillant de faire remarquer que la recherche est un effort pour trouver quelque chose ou un effort de l'esprit vers la connaissance (Le Grain, M., 1994, p. 945). De même, D. Bruno (1994, p. 85), soulignera que la recherche est un exercice systématique et méthodique portant sur l'étude d'un problème ou d'une question et mettant en cause des faits qui doivent être vérifiables en vue d'atteindre une fin : la résolution d'un problème ou la réponse à une question ou d'une hypothèse préalable, la recherche exige

¹ Terme utilisé par l'écrivain malien Aboubacar Sidiki COULIBALY (2024, p.95) dans son roman socio-historique, *Le monde Africain doit se réveiller*, Bamako : Alqalam, pour signifier le rejet et le dégoût pour tout ce qui est africain ou renvoie à l'Homme africain ou à l'Afrique

ipso facto un travail d'interprétation. La science, quant à elle, renvoie à l'ensemble des connaissances humaines acquises par la spécialisation (études) ou par l'expérience (pratiques). Son fondement est la raison et l'objectivité.

En sus, l'émergence de l'Alliance des États du Sahel (AES) crée un nouvel espoir pour toute l'Afrique et constitue un espace stratégique sous régional requérant des réponses harmonisées mais devraient être fondées sur des savoirs locaux et scientifiques pour ménager la sécurité, la gouvernance et la reconstruction nationale. C'est pour cette raison que COULIBALY (2024, p.94) écrit : « La seule science qui libère l'Homme véritablement quel que soit le degré de l'aliénation est la science de soi-même. » Nous comprenons ainsi la prééminence des connaissances, des valeurs et savoir-faire endogènes dans la résolution des conflits et la reconstruction nationale à l'ère de la reconfiguration de l'Afrique et de la multipolarisation du monde.

Ce troisième colloque international offrira une tribune idéale pour interroger, analyser et préconiser, dans toute leur étendue, les outils pertinents de décolonisation, les mécanismes de résolution des crises et les dynamiques de reconstruction des États africains par la science et la recherche scientifique, dans un contexte marqué par les enjeux du néocolonialisme et de la menace terroriste. Il convient d'ores et déjà d'affirmer que science et recherche scientifique sont indissociables et qu'elles doivent exercer pleinement leur vocation pour résoudre les grandes problématiques de la cité et favoriser son développement.

Comme Objectif, ce colloque scientifique international vise à créer un cadre de rencontres et d'échanges entre chercheurs nationaux et internationaux sur la problématique de la décolonisation véritable, la résolution des crises par la science et la recherche scientifique au Sahel et en Afrique de façon générale. Il ambitionne également de proposer, à partir des résultats scientifiques issus des travaux menés par les chercheurs et enseignants-chercheurs du Sahel, de l'Afrique et, plus largement, de la communauté scientifique internationale, des pistes de solutions endogènes aux défis sécuritaires et de développement qui fragilisent ces régions sur tous les plans. A cet effet, les axes suivants sont retenus pour les propositions de communication :

II-AXES DE COMMUNICATION

- **Axe 1 : Diagnostic scientifique des crises africaines et reconstruction nationale**

Mettre en lumière la capacité des disciplines scientifiques à analyser finement les causes multidimensionnelles des crises (insécurité armée, fragilité étatique, ruptures sociales, *Africaphobie*, chocs économiques), en mobilisant tant les méthodologies quantitatives que qualitatives pour établir un état des lieux rigoureux.

- **Axe 2 : Littérature, Langue et valorisation des valeurs et savoirs endogènes**

Promouvoir les recherches conduites en terre africaine et la redécouverte des savoir-faire traditionnels comme fondements d'une science authentiquement africaine, apte à proposer des solutions adaptées aux réalités culturelles, sociales et environnementales du Sahel et du continent.

- **Axe 3 : Gouvernance, sécurité et développement fondés sur la recherche**
Souligner l'importance d'intégrer systématiquement les résultats scientifiques dans l'élaboration et l'évaluation des politiques publiques, afin de dépasser les réponses purement militaires et d'instaurer des dispositifs de prévention, de résilience civile et de relance économique légitimes et durablement efficaces.
- **Axe 4 – Libre**
Cet axe est libre et prend en compte tous les autres volets connexes.

III-Calendrier

- Lancement de l'appel : **22 Novembre 2025**
- Date limite de soumissions **des abstracts/résumés : 10 Mars 2026**,
- Les Notifications d'acceptation : **15 mars 2025**
- Date de déroulement du 2^{ème} Colloque Scientifique International : **30 et 31 mars 2026 à l'Université Yambo OUOLOGUEM de Bamako-Kabala-Mali.**

IV-Informations générales sur le colloque

- Les propositions de communication (**New Times Roman, police 12,interligne simple**), assorties d'un résumé de **300 mots** et de **5 mots clés** maximum en **français ou en anglais ou en arabe** sont recevables aux adresses électroniques suivantes : Labolarelso010@gmail.com ou larmaulshbmali@gmail.com jusqu'au **10 Mars 2026**.
Date de notification des résumés acceptés : 15 Mars 2026.Le colloque se déroulera du **30 au 31 mars 2026** à la cité universitaire de Kabala – à l'Université Yambo OUOLOGUEM de Bamako.
- Les auteurs y indiqueront les noms et prénoms du ou des contributeurs, l'institution/laboratoire d'attache, le grade ou la qualité, l'axe d'étude choisi, l'adresse électronique et les mots-clés au-dessous du résumé. Les langues d'écriture des communications ou articles sont le français, l'anglais et l'arabe. **Les auteurs des propositions des résumés retenus seront invités à payer 25.000FCFA comme frais de participation par communicant.** Les meilleurs textes après évaluation seront publiés dans un numéro spécial de la *Revue Kuru kan Fuga* ou la *Revue LaRMA*.

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EXPLORING AFRICANS' SHIFT FROM COLLECTIVISM TO INDIVIDUALISM IN THE CONTEXT OF EURO-AMERICAN INFLUENCE

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Abstract:

This article examines the shift from communalism to individualism observed among the West Africans. Africans, West Africans in particular, were reputed for the high quality of their solidarity and their attachment to common interests. However, nowadays, the mentioned traditional West African values are declining gradually. The purpose of this study is thus to investigate the causes underlying that transition in the context of globalization and euro-American influences in Africa. Methodologically, the qualitative methods were employed in the process of the data collection of this study. Theoretically, Post-colonialism and psychoanalysis are mobilized to ease the interpretation of the study's data. The outcomes of the study show that the traditional West Africa, Manding society in particular, was characterized by the values of solidarity and communalism where every member of the community took part in the communal work. It was also demonstrated that the advent of globalization and the Euro-American influences have played a tremendous role in the mentioned shift in African values.

Key-word: African solidarity, communalism, Euro-American influence, individualism, shift

Résumé:

Cet article examine le changement du communalisme à l'individualisme observé parmi les ouest-Africains. Les Africains, surtout ceux de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, étaient réputés pour leur solidarité et attachement aux biens communs. Cependant, de nos jours, ces valeurs traditionnelles Ouest-Africaines s'effritent progressivement. L'objectif de cette étude est donc d'examiner les causes sous-tendant ce changement dans un contexte de mondialisation et des influences Euro-Américaines en Afrique. Méthodologiquement, la méthode qualitative est mobilisée dans la collecte des données. Théoriquement, le post-colonialisme et la psychanalyse sont utilisés pour faciliter l'interprétation des données de cette étude. Les résultats de l'étude ont montré que l'Afrique de l'Ouest traditionnelle, surtout le mandé, était enchâssée dans les valeurs de solidarité et du communalisme où chaque membre de la communauté prenait part aux travaux communautaires. Aussi, il a été démontré que l'avènement de la mondialisation et l'influence occidentale ont joué un grand rôle dans cette transition des valeurs Africaines.

Mots-clés : communalisme, influences Euro-Américaines, individualisme, changement, solidarité Africaine

Introduction

Traditional West African societies were characterized by principles of solidarity, communalism, and respect to elders. The Manding society, in particular was one of the emblematic examples of these values if we refer to the Charter of Kuruka Fuga. Nowadays, a gradual shift is observed in West African States concerning the mentioned traditional values.

Several factors can explain this change. Some of the main factors are the lasting impact of colonialism and the phenomenon of globalization. These influences have brought about foreign cultural values into the African societies, West Africa in particular. Among these external influences, the Euro-American type of individualism, which is encouraged as a way from rags to riches, plays a major role. This model, in Western perspective, promotes personal success and self-reliance rather than the values based on collectivism known in West Africa.

The objective of this study is therefore to examine the root causes of this mentioned paradoxical transition from common interests to individual ones observed among West Africans, in this contemporary period dominated by the globalization and the Western influence. Postcolonial and psychoanalytic theories are employed to ease and guide the analysis and the interpretation of this phenomenon. These theories offer a useful framework permitting to understand how historical legacy and global related euro American cultural influences have contributed to this shift. This study turns around two main sections. It firstly reviews some West Africans' values of solidarity and their foundation. Finally, it accounts for the evolution of solidarity in modern West Africa following their collusion with euro-American influence.

1. Principles of Solidarity in Traditional West Africa

This section accounts for the cultural foundation of the values of solidarity in West Africa, particularly in Mali. It also scrutinizes the ethical and religious principles underlying communal life in West Africa.

1.1 Cultural Foundation

Traditional African societies like Mali were composed essentially of large extended families, comprising the grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, uncles, aunts, children, nephews, nieces, cousins etc. The main activity of most of these families was farm work as approximately each of them owned farms and were cultivated collectively to meet the needs of the whole. That is to say that traditional Africans used to work collectively in all areas. The following lines highlight the foregoing idea:

Common in collective cultures, extended families exhibit interdependence and share familial responsibilities, including child-rearing roles (Qizi,2023). Typically residing together, extended family members pool resources and collaborate on family duties. Their multigenerational bonds and increased resources contribute to the resilience of the extended family and their ability to meet the needs of the children. (Nwanmuoh et., al., 2024.p.82)

This passage corroborates the above statement relating to the value of commonality in traditional Africa. People were interdependent and the selfishness or individuality was discouraged in these West African societies. The combination of efforts among Africans for the common good, as indicated in the above excerpt, was also corroborated by Odimegwu and Omazu (2021) in like manner: “Communalism has been claimed as a way of life that characterizes African social existence. This way of life emphasizes the interdependence of the members of a community” (p.198). This passage demonstrates that the indicated value was shared by many African nations, especially West Africa.

Another West African value was shared ownership of belongings within the traditional family. It belonged to every member of the family which was communal. That is why, every member of these African families worked together in the family fields, and the harvest was for each member of the family. It means that everyone worked for the common good which implies “my prosperity was the prosperity of my relatives”. However, my failure was the failure of all. This was the general belief. It is in this context that Equiano (1996) asserts as follows: “Agriculture is our chief employment, and everyone, even children and women are engaged in it. (...) Everyone contributes something to common stock, and as we are unacquainted with idleness we have no beggars.”(p. 7) In this passage, the writer testifies that traditional Africans used to work together for the common good, showing the West Africans’ sense of collectivism. That is, they work in collaboration to meet the needs of the whole community.

In the same articulation, the West African communities were built on a simple and fundamental value. That is, the individual existed only through others as scrutinized by Equiano in the above passage. To put further shed on the foregoing idea, the Nigerian researchers Ike Odimegwu and Eric Omazu (2021) explicate the type of communalism that existed in West Africa in like manner: “The communalism of traditional African societies was a system of social, political, economic, and religious organizations. This communalism was founded on morality and was built on the principle of cooperation, fraternity, mutuality and sharing among members (p.213)”. This affirmation corroborates the statements which implies that the traditional West Africans’ principle of solidarity was enrooted in the collectivism (communalism).

It was for the sake of communalism that traditional West Africans strongly preferred the pronoun “we”, symbol of togetherness. However, they rejected the “I” as it is synonymous with individualism and exclusion. That is, it excludes the mass and places emphasis on personal interest. The preference for “we” demonstrates that Manding people, and by extension West Africans in general, were not individualistic. They placed the communal good above personal interest. In regard to that idea, Onah, Oliver, Ezebuilo Hyginus and Ojiakor Theodora (2016) assert:

In the pre-colonial times, the Igbo society was communalistic. In such a society, life, with its joys and sorrows, was shared in common. The problem of the community was the problem of every member of the community, and the problem of any member of the community was the problem of the community. Individualism, if it existed, was at the barest minimum. (p.225)

The passage corroborates the previous statement relating to the sacredness of commonality in traditional Africa. The community was like a big family where everyone had a mutual love and respect.

The typical family in Africa is the extended one, that is to say, a family composed of several members, namely grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts, children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren. The head of the family is therefore the grandfather, the patriarch, along with the other members. If the patriarch passed away, the eldest son automatically became the head of the family. However, he had to consult his other brothers on matters concerning the family, as was the custom in traditional Africa, Mali in particular.

On top of that, for the sake of communalism, the tribe or clan of a traditional Malian village, were considered as “Gwa” which symbolizes a big family. That is to say, all the people belonging to a tribe in the Malian context were considered brothers and sisters no matter how big it might be. Furthermore, the combination of all the tribes and clans were called “Gwaba”. The objective was to create a solid bond among tribes’ members, which was regarded as the guarantee for social stability. With this regard, Tandjigora and Doumbia (2023) in “Traditions et gouvernance locale au Mali” unveil the following:

When conflicts cannot be resolved at the family level through respect for the elder, they are referred to the vestibules of the tribe to which the parties belong if the conflict is between two members of the same tribe. If the dispute involves individuals from different tribes, the matter is brought before the Gwabâ (the great hearth), which is composed of representatives from all the tribes. The highest authority, the leader of the leaders of the Gwa (tribes), is a highly respected and honored figure within the community. His role in conflict management—particularly in land disputes—is undeniable. (p.81, my translation)

This umpteenth passage evidences the clairvoyance of traditional West Africans who knew that the power of a community lies in the capability of its members to work together as one people. A line from a song by John Dickinson in 1768 says, “By uniting, we stand, by dividing, we fall.” The ideology behind this song, although related to the American revolutionary war context had long time been one of the key principles of West African culture. In fact, precolonial Africans had understood that unity was the guarantee for sustainable peace and development long time ago.

Society was like a large family, because everyone participated in the upbringing of children. When a child misbehaved outside his biological father's house, he or she was immediately redressed or punished by a member of the community without asking for the approval of his/her parents. A Malian saying confirms this ancestral reality of the West African society: "den ye bêê taye", which means that a child belongs to everyone and is therefore everyone's responsibility to take of them. Some decades backward, in the Malian society, parents were not too possessive of their children as we can see it today. Children were respectful of every grownup they met in the society because they saw in every man their father and every woman, their mother.

The responsibility of the society in the education of children is also enshrined in the Charter of Kurukan Fuga through Article 9, which states: "The education of children is the responsibility of the whole society. Consequently, paternal authority belongs to all." Within this framework, people did not speak only of "father," "mother," or "brothers and sisters," but of the entire community members. That is, a child belonged to the whole community. Therefore, if he or she lost his/her parents, he/she never could never become an orphan. He or she would immediately be taken care of by uncles, aunts, cousins or other community members with or without any family fond.

Moreover, no parents could complain because their child had been punished for misconduct by a stranger or community member. In fact, in the Malian context, the word "stranger" was not used to designate people within the same community because the community was considered one large family. So for the sake of preserving social cohesion, children were reared and socialized to learn that the community was a big family and that everyone is related.

Furthermore, another fundamental element that underpinned solidarity in traditional Africa was "djatiguiya," especially in the Manding context. In traditional Manding Africa, djatiguiya or solidarity went beyond the simple definition of hospitality or readiness to help. Through this principle, regardless of your race, culture, or even social status, if a foreigner arrived in West Africa, Mali in particular, he/she was immediately hosted by a family without any conditions. The host family did not ask where he/she came from or the reason of his/her presence in their community before welcoming and accommodating him/her. It was only after they have provided the foreigner with accommodation and food that the "djatigui" (the hosts) asked about the purpose of the presence of the "douna," the stranger. Therefore, people traveling from one place to another were sure to find hosts in any Malian village, and by extension West African villages. The mentioned practice was deeply rooted in West Africans' tradition and was respected by the whole community.

In brief, Manding society was organized in accordance with customs and traditional values; therefore, in the family as well as in society, mutual respect was a universal and sacred value. More

particularly, young people owed respect to elders, and on the other hand, elderlies should behave well to deserve the respect. This value is included as one of the articles of the Charter of Kurukan Fuga of 1236, which had been one of the earliest documents ever to proclaim human rights. More precisely, Article 18 of this historic charter states: "Let us respect the right of seniority." This article highlights the importance that the Mandenka attached to elders. They were seen as models by Africans, particularly the youth.

1.2 Tenets underlying Communal Life in traditional Africa

By the same token, as mentioned before, the elderly people were regarded as wise individuals, indispensable in decision-making because of their reputations as advisors and models. That is why, Amadou Hampâté Bâ through a proverb in 1960 revealed the following: "when an old man dies, it is a library that burns (my translation)." This highlights the sacredness of elderly people and their roles in peacemaking, in transmitting knowledge, and in raising the awareness of future African generations. Their mere presence within a family was both deterrent and reassuring as it was a portent of peace and stability in the family. A family that had an elderly, in traditional Africa, the family was *de facto* a peaceful and harmonious family. Its members would be compelled to get along with one another. In the event of disagreement within such a family, the intervention of the family elders would immediately put an end to it. In traditional African context, family divisions caused by misunderstandings of its members were very rare in Manding society because of the presence of the "white beards" elderlies in the society.

Likewise, there was a kind of hierarchy that was inviolable in the Malian Manding family. Everyone knew their place, and priority in any situation was given to the elders. It was forbidden to insult an elderly or even to retaliate in case they insult you. Parents and society in general were uncompromising regarding respect for elders. This idea is supported in the following lines:

These are the first mechanisms mobilized when a conflict breaks. For the populations of this commune, problems, whatever their nature must first be discussed within the family, among brothers. In these discussions, respect for elderly plays a central role. Here, the right of elderly refers to the privilege or authority a person enjoys based on their social and biological age. This status is highly respected during family discussions and in other social interactions as well (Tandjigora and Doumbia.(2023) p.81, my translation).

The excerpt evinces the sacredness of the old age in the traditional Malian society, West Africa in general.

Since elderly people were in a sense sanctified, they were expected to behave in ways that would never tarnish their social reputations. Once they reached old age, our ancestors had to become role

models for the youth, because if you want your advice to be heard or followed, you must be beyond reproach. An African proverb also says that if an elderly person wants to obtain the respect due to their age, they must not set foot where the young people go. In other words, by frequenting places visited by young people, a person of advanced age lowers themselves and exposes themselves to disrespect from the youth. This is what the elders of traditional Africa, especially in the Manding context, had understood; consequently, they knew their place.

2. Development of Solidarity in modern West Africa

The section strives to show how solidarity as we knew of Africa has change over the time. In doing so, it focuses on the impacts of colonialism and the influences of the world super powers like the United States of America through globalization on contemporary West Africans, Malians in particular.

2. 1. Effects of Colonialism and American Influence through Globalization

Traditional education in West Africa, as we have already mentioned in the first chapter, primarily transmitted communal values such as respect for elders, remembrance of ancestors, solidarity in work, and love for one's neighbor, notably through djatiguiya.

However, the advent of colonial school, with its Western values in Africa, particularly in its Western parts, drastically weakened the upbringing of West African children. Children, whose upbringing had once been the responsibility of the entire community like in the Manding society are no longer trained to prize material objects.

Speaking of this unprecedented transformation observed throughout African colonies, Albert Adu Boahen, in the first chapter entitled «L'Afrique Face au Défi Colonial » of the book "HISTOIRE GÉNÉRALE DE L'AFRIQUE: l'Afrique sous domination coloniale," 1987 written by the International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa of UNESCO, states the following:

(...), by the arrival of colonizers, African was governed by its own kings, queens, clan chiefs, and lineage heads, in empires, kingdoms, communities, and political entities of varying size and nature. However, in the thirty years that followed, an unexpected transformation of this situation occurred. By 1914, except Ethiopia and Liberia, the whole of Africa had come under the domination of European powers and was divided into colonies of varying sizes, generally much larger than the preexisting entities and often bearing little or no relation to them. Moreover, during that period, Africa was attacked not only in its sovereignty and independence, but also in its cultural values. (p.21, my translation)

In order to establish their domination over African states like Mali, the colonizers imposed their visions and values through colonial institutions, such as the colonial administration, which controlled and regulated the colonies, and the colonial school, which was meant to educate African children. In doing so, it has been documented that the colonizers deliberately undermined the worldview and cultural values of the colonized in order to domesticate them on the one hand, and to exploit them on the other. This is surely what can explain the crumbling of African traditional values of solidarity and collectivism.

In this regard, Adiele Eberechukwu Afigbo reveals through “HISTOIRE GÉNÉRALE DE L’AFRIQUE: l’Afrique sous domination coloniale,” 1987, the following lines:

For their part, colonial administrators believed that the schools they introduced in Africa would train the African elites who could fill the lower ranks of the colonial bureaucracy in order to create the political, economic, social, and moral conditions. In that, they expected that this would enable the colonial powers to exploit as fully as possible the still underutilized resources of the continent (p.530, my translation).

The introduction of Western institutions and values into colonial Africa was intended to facilitate the exploitation of our lands. However, they negatively impacted our traditional principles of solidarity and collectivism, which had once guaranteed peace and tranquility in our societies.

In colonial schools, oral knowledge which had once been the foundation of African education and the collective spirit, were devalued in favor of Euro-American written knowledge and individualism. African proverbs, which had served as the tools of African orators, had gradually been replaced by the colonizer’s textbooks. In short, the curriculum brought by the Africans was structured in such a way that they devalued African cultures and languages while glorifying colonial cultures and languages.

According to Professor Aboubacar Sidiki Coulibaly (2024), at the white man’s school, he and his classmates were taught that the white man was a kind of God presented as the origin and the driving force behind everything his paternal grandmother had once told him about his people and their history, longtime before Arab and Western arrival. This scholar added that even before he became aware of the greatness of Africa’s past, the school had already deeply disconnected him, and by extension many African children from their identity, instilling in most of them a kind of rejection of African cultural values.² This testimony supports the thesis that the primary aim of colonial schooling was the erosion of our cultural reference points so that we would become mere executors of white men’s

² Pr. Aboubacar S. C., « Le monde africain doit se réveiller », p.10.

orders. When your own history is taught by external actors who control your people, the history they teach you will always be unfavorable to you.

To implement their policies of dividing Africans and consolidating their positions within African states, Albert Adu Boahen, in Chapter 5 of the collective work of the International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa (UNESCO), argues:

With regard to oral versions of the story, one must remember that witnesses are necessarily the subject of two kinds of influence. Firstly, European influence which is related to accounts of battles, told from the colonial point of view, were published almost immediately in the specialized press. On the other hand, colonial policy consisted of enrolling the sons of subdued chiefs in French schools, in the hope of turning them into loyal allies (p.114, my translation).

Thus was born an African elite, educated in the French or English manner, ideologically detached from the village world and attached to the Western world. It acted according to the will of its European masters and facilitated the implementation of the colonial project. This elite, in total contradiction with our ancestral values, plunged into an unrestrained quest for personal success. Knowing that a nation's elites are generally viewed as role models by the general population, they became de facto the model to follow, thereby accelerating the collapse of traditional African solidarity.

It was then that in Africa, and in Mali in particular, success began to be measured by an individual's ability to climb the social ladder alone, in total opposition to the principles of solidarity and collectivism. The child, once the property of the entire community, became an egocentric individual competing with others.

The colonization is not the only factor impeding West Africans' traditional values of solidarity and mutual love. Indeed, globalization with its promotion of foreign cultures, knowledge and lifestyle is a considerable system that is affecting Africans, especially the West Africans.

Indeed, the globalization and the rise of the American influence worldwide are the major challenges to African traditional values. For the sake of globalization, has literally become a country, for every country, be them developed or undeveloped, has the possibility to access anything from other countries, through mechanisms, such as international trade, cooperation, media and even education, etc.

Last mechanism, the mass media, is what matters here in this discussion since they are among the most influential tools in the world. The Western nations have a lot of impact on the Africans and their ways. Africans are especially receptive to American lifestyle through especially mass media and other

mechanisms. Therefore, we commenced to observe a change in African traditional values of solidarity in favor of a rat race for material gains.

To show the power of the American individualism and its association to success, Mark Robert Rank et, al. (2014) assert: "The United States has long been epitomized as a land of equal opportunity, where hard work and skill can result in personal success and fulfillment, regardless of one's station in life (p.1)." The quotation evidences that America is considered as a place of opportunity and success. It is so because Americans have promoted individualism through the concept of "American Dream" which means that anyone can be successful if you work hard on your own. This American ideology is largely spread throughout American nation as well as the entire world. The following assertion sheds light on the extent to which this American ideology can be influential as it is omnipresent in all American arenas:

It can be found throughout our culture and history. It lies at the heart of Ben Franklin's common wisdom chronicled in Poor Richard's Almanack, in the words of Emma Lazarus etched onto the Statue of Liberty, the poetry of Carl Sandburg, or the soaring oratory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It can be heard in the music of Aaron Copland or jazz innovator Charlie Parker. (...) It lies in the hopes of a single mother struggling on a minimum wage job to build a better life for herself and her children. It rests upon the unwavering belief of a teenager living on some forgotten back road that one day he or she will find fortune and fame. (...) In many respects, the American Dream has been deeply rooted in the concept of a journey-the journey to a new country, the journey across generations, and of course, the journey within one's life. (Rank et, al. 2014. pp.1-2)

It means that American nation advocate completion among its citizens. That ideology is promoted in songs, films, etc, and Americans are raised with this ideology that they can be successful if they engage in a rat race pursuit of wealth.

Given the position of America as the world leading super power, its influence over the world is unequivocal. Through media, films and even internet, the American model of individualism is clearly noticeable through West Africans' attitude. Most of the modern African youth are more and more interested in personal gains rather than ancient values supporting solidarity and communalism.

The spirit of rivalry, competition, and individualism, rooted in the American modern society, is progressively affecting and transforming Africans. Thus, competitive logic has imposed itself on our societies. This tension between the logic of solidarity and that of competition now dominates the entire economic life of contemporary society. The current Mali is a clear example of this situation. One can see a growing sense of individualism evolving in the midst of Malian people, more generally West Africans.

Furthermore, globalization, with the opening up to the global market and access to foreign cultures, often pushes our youth to dream of individual success, as this is currently considered a social and international norm. Becoming wealthy, owning luxury cars, and traveling internationally have become priorities in the eyes of our young people. Many are ready to do anything to succeed. In this context, anyone who manages to succeed in life becomes a role model, regardless of the origin of their wealth. That said, people today see only success. When an individual succeeds, they automatically become the target of excessive expectations from their family and close circle. Owing to this situation, the foundation of collectivism that was known in Africa, mainly the extended families, has declined nowadays.

Young graduates or those of working age dream of succeeding on their own, of distinguishing themselves from the rest of the family in order to establish their own small nuclear families alongside the extended families. This is clearly contributing to the fragmentation of most extended families in West Africa.

2.2 The Rise of Individualism

Some aspects of traditional solidarity still exist in our societies today, although they are no longer practiced with the same enthusiasm and reciprocity as in the past. West African societies continue to preserve certain forms of collective solidarity.

For instance, during weddings in the current Malian society, relative, friends and neighbors sometimes offer gifts or money to the newlyweds. If the bride is a member of a women's association known as a tontine, she will receive even more gifts from the association members. The same situation is valid for the naming ceremonies too. During funerals a strong show of solidarity is manifested. Everyone, namely neighbors, relatives and friends show their support to the grieving family, often collecting money to help them.

However, unlike our ancestors whose solidarity was long-lasting, today's solidarity tends to be temporary. Once the ceremony ends, daily life quickly resumes, leaving the newlyweds or the bereaved family to cope alone. The demands and pressures of modern life make people more individualistic. Everyone focuses on their own survival, as the spirit of collectivism has weakened. This has created isolation for some and distrust among others. The person who contributed generously to a ceremony may later find themselves alone when facing illness or financial hardship in our society today. In this sense, contemporary solidarity has become event-based rather than permanent as it once was in the Manding society. People think more individual now than in the past.

This change is due to the transformation of our lifestyles. We no longer see ourselves as a team whose success depends on each person's contribution. The only visible form of collective solidarity today, as noted earlier, is the tontine system, which is primarily economic. Practiced mostly by women's associations, it involves each member contributing a fixed amount of money, which is then given either to the group or to members in rotation to provide mutual support.

In Mali today, especially among women, tontines include financial contributions and gifts that are offered the member who has a ceremony. However, this modern solidarity is often motivated by personal interest as most people don't give their belongings to others for the sake of humanism. Gifts that are offered during these ceremonies are expected to be reimbursed. As Jeanne Semin notes: "Participants placed in the calabash the exact gift or something with the same value as what they had received from the beneficiary when it was their turn. If they had not yet received their share from the tontine, they determined the value of their contribution according to their means and relationship with the host (2007,p.4, my translation)." This clearly shows that modern solidarity is not entirely philanthropic. People give because they expect something in return.

Conclusion

In sum, we can affirm that African countries, particularly, those in the West Africa, have lost of some of their ancient values, especially those related to communal solidarity. The encounter between West Africa and colonial powers, the influence of foreign cultures, and the spread of capitalism are among the main factors that have driven the shift from traditional principles of solidarity to interest-based principles, marked by individualism.

To mitigate this loss in Mali, we should encourage the creation of more philanthropic associations in all municipalities. Their actions would focus on assisting people in need. Their mission would include going to local neighborhoods to identify poverty-stricken families so that they will be supported by the association. Such initiatives could help reduce, in the long term, the number of beggars.

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