

« Standing Parliaments » in DRC Between ancient and modern types of communication and citizenship

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Our paper will be based on the following question : Is the communication pattern of the « parlements debout » in Kinshasa a rupture with the ancient modes of communication (technocratic, institutionalized, legitimate etc.) and embracing a new logos, creating a new citizenship, characterized by the appropriation by the people of the democratic principles? Do the democratic principles daily practiced in the “Parlements debout” contribute to the construction of a new citizenship?

The “Parlement debout” is both a phenomenon of information and rumor transmission. Taking place in urban public spaces, it is an anti-institutional form of communication, where the control and the management of the circulation of information is done by people assembled in the street.

The Congolese citizens assemble in the streets to produce and consume information. This practice is breaking the anonymity of news transmissions, which is transformed by a face to face communication act, in Habermas’ sense. This practice reveals the gap and the links between new communication needs and the former and formal system of information transmission supported by institutionalised and legitimate structures such as newspapers, televisions, radio stations, political leaders etc.

