

The Young of the "Grins de Thé" and Public Speech Delivery in Burkina Faso

Ollo Pépin Hien¹

¹CNRST/INSS, Political Science, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

ollopepin@yahoo.fr

In an urban context marked by the permanent social exclusion of a category of young people, these young succeed in recomposing in their way a partial community tie through the "grins de thé" (tea groups). These "grins de thé" form, in this case, a subgroup and an internal subculture to the global society. These are places in which the young, often without any permanent job, and unmarried, meet every day "to spend time" while drinking tea. The young men who gather in the streets to drink tea "participate in a general movement of creating a street culture that gives birth to new social practices" (Julian Kiefer, 2006).

These tea clubs, also called "QG" (Headquarter), that are plentiful in the streets of Ouagadougou city are informal public spaces where members' conversations topics are in general not only many but also varied: sports, politics, music, leisure, public denunciation of the social inequalities. As informal public spaces, we discover in the "grins" a diversity of expression types of social criticism against the "system" and that brings the young to suspend their immediate adherence to the dominant political orthodoxy. As political public spaces, these young's informal assemblies express the communication conditions through which a discursive formation of the informal political opinion is expressed within the autonomous public spaces. These informal public spaces functioning politically outside the guarantees offered by the institutions of the State of rights, take their roots in local cultural traditions, socialization models, and a political culture specific to a juvenile part of the population.

Then, it could be worth analyzing the multiform processes of the social representation production on the social world in these new emergent configurations. We will try to understand how these informal public spaces that function as popular assemblies contribute to the emergence of new political imaginaries among the young. What are the social conditions and the public speech modes held in these popular arenas?