

## Initiatives of the voiceless in social change

« Arabic revolutions » are on the front page at the present time when western politicians as researchers are surprised, they forget that youth insurrections blow up in Algeria in 1988 and that there were riots against shortage in Tunisia and in Egypt in 2008.

I should like to say that in 1991 in Mali youth impulse a popular insurrection which, although bloody repressions, succeed in doing to fall from power 23 years military dictatorship and establish a parliamentary decentralized democracy with a new Constitution which reminds the victims of these events and allows the right to civil disobedience.

The memory of their bravery and the actual struggles for a better life of those who call themselves les “sans voix”, “the voiceless” make me want to propose this panel.

We will be wondering about emergent actors who, in different ways, express social preoccupations and opposition to policies of privatization increasing economical differentiations, unemployment as the crisis of the state. We will highlight the initiatives originating in those who don't come to power, young people or women, those who call themselves the voiceless.

We will break up with usually analyses of political and economic changes in terms of development or crises according to western viewpoints and we will refer to the way Africans deal with these questions. Like them we will question the freedom of choice of reforms regarded as advanced by western power-brokers, but which pay scant regard to the voiceless.

Individual reactions lead to the creation of volunteer organizations which differ from trades unions or foreign NGOs. They create spaces to express themselves as local radio stations, farmers' federations and social forums. Anti-globalist initiatives coexist with religious movements; both question the sovereignty of countries which obey western orders.

To understand voiceless groups we have to study politics, economy, power and popular culture especially religious movements. Group dynamics have to be analyzed in different countries where social demands are freely expressed and where the press and radio stations echo the demands, as well as when repression is the rule. In this panel we will examine social criticism declined in different style in West Africa, in Senegal, Mali and Ivory Coast.

In Ivory Coast young officials, hit by the growth of privatization, adhere to a Japanese religious movement to claim a stronger State (Frédérique Louveau). In Senegal, young people exert a radical social satire through rap and confer it the status of "weapon of mass denunciation" "(Mamadou Dimé) when others listen to discourse pronounced by a religious guide and leader of the Truth for Development Party (Mouhamed Ly) and a group of imams initiate a protest in Dakar poor suburbs against the free fall of their purchasing power (Abdourahmane Seck). This movement embodies the will of to position themselves in the public space as determinant players. In Mali, there are more than hundred Islamic associations and numerous young people and women become freely members of it. These growth is part of associative movements most of them unreligious. We count 18720 legal associations in 2008. They reveal a participative democracy but result also of disappointing classical political

parties and trade unions which are financed, linked to international requirement of liberal economy and consequently diverge from citizen preoccupations. Democracy doesn't protect against structural violence generated by financial capitalism or against structural adjustment plans, neither in Mali nor in the world.

We observe that doing such research has methodological implications. In some case there are people who call themselves voiceless and constitute movements but in other case it is the observant who use this expression. So we have to specify who use this expression and in which contexts whose may be quite different and are determinant. What is common between civil servant, graduate out of work, laid-off worker or peasants? Most of them are young people and women who claim dignity. They are confronted with structural adjustments politics. Nevertheless we will question their purpose as the Malian popular movement "Sans voix" do. This movement one of the Mundial Social Forum and of the international network *No Vox* warns against leaders who stand up as the *voice of voiceless* in the public space especially in the Mundial Social Forum which last one has take place at Dakar in 2011. Despite this danger such Forum provides an international audience to local actions which converge towards those of other countries, giving internationality to the actions of the voiceless as some film makers or singers and the internet do. Without forget that most of the voiceless don't have access to the net or the Forum and that uprisings are born among them.

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