

# AFRICA'S STRUGGLES

## Program

PLENARY 1	RESISTANCES, POLITISATIONS, SUBJECTIVATIONS
PLENARY 2	SPACES AND SCALES OF MOVEMENTS
PLENARY 3	MORAL ECONOMIES AND ECONOMIES OF THE MORAL
PLENARY 4	MOVEMENTS, IDEOLOGY AND VIOLENCE

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Armed rebellions, hunger riots, urban unrest, rural escapism, social movements, advocacy mobilizations, nationalist struggles and peasant movements, preachers, union activists and “African social movements”... Almost 50 years after independence, Africa is more than ever “indocile”<sup>1</sup>. Nearly 30 years after the launch of the “politics from below” research trend, the question of the struggles and forms of resistance on the African continent - as well as the theoretical tools mobilized to study them - are of the utmost relevance, both scientifically and politically.

Theorizing struggles in the Africa-s, amounts to resisting the overused image of an Africa deemed to have stepped out of history, a continent of endless consent (that of the dominated) and of immutable authority (that of leaders), an Africa of consensus that one should leave to the gaze of an a-historical anthropology. Opting for such a focus also means questioning and assessing the specificity of the forms and repertoires of dissent enacted on the continent. In turn, this entails exploring in further depth the diversity of the modes of protest: can, for instance, professionalized forms of protest crystallized around NGOs and violent groups with insurrectionary aims be analyzed together? This involves, finally, accounting for specific cases of protest in light of current transformations pervading African societies, be they related to mutations pertaining to the division between the urbane and the rural, tensions over land, or to religious repertoires of enunciation of the political. This colloquium thus aims at studying both the forms of dissent and the strategies of challengers (e.g. modalities of involvement, *extraversion*, of accumulation of resources), but also the management of protest by governments through the State apparatus (repression, cooptation...).

Such a focus on political and social struggles does not mean, however, that the latter encompass the whole gamut of situations of dissent and protest against the dominants. One of the headways of the “politics from below”<sup>2</sup> approach is doubtlessly to have driven the focus out of the most obvious sites of observation of the political, and to have fostered research on the practices of enunciation of dissent: indeed, “silence does not always imply consent”, as demonstrated by songs, escapes and other threads of indocility.

What is the current state of theoretical work on such forms of dissent in Africa? One of the pioneer writings<sup>3</sup> on protest was explicitly posited within nationalist historiography - to the extent that the second piece of work focusing on this question aimed precisely at opposing this positioning<sup>4</sup>. While the “politics from below” approach has largely contributed to the vibrancy of African studies, what are the current usages of central concepts such as “popular modes of political action” or “moral economy”? One of the central aims of this colloquium is thus, beyond a purely historiographic appraisal, to open a conceptual discussion over theoretical renditions of the forms of dissent in Africa, so as to read them in light of other approaches on protest, by and large developed on Western objects of analysis. Does the opening up of African studies to other theoretical trends imply importing the tools developed by the sociology of social movements - even though the latter has entered a process of routinization, letting its key concepts calcify? This colloquium will pursue the theoretical aim of critically assessing the central paradigms mobilized to account for protest on the African continent, with the hope, among others, that this will contribute to emphasizing the extremely dated and historically situated character of the concept of social movement. How have the analytical tools of the sociology of social movements circulated and been applied to the African continent? With what gains? What is to be made of intersections or, on the contrary, of the differences in the application, or not, of these theoretical frameworks? What is their (more or less) added value, compared to approaches on popular modes of political action - which provide a grid of analysis whose relevance should also be questioned? How should one articulate

<sup>1</sup> MBEMBE, Achille, *Afriques indociles. Christianisme, pouvoir et État en société postcoloniale*, Paris, Karthala, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> BAYART, Jean-François, “Le politique par le bas en Afrique Noire : questions de méthode”, *Politique africaine*, janv 1981, p. 53-82.

<sup>3</sup> ROTBERG, Robert I., MAZRUI, Ali A. (ed.), *Protest and power in Black Africa*. New York: Oxford university press (Center for International Affairs, Harvard university), 1970.

<sup>4</sup> CRUMMEY, Donald (ed.), *Banditry, rebellion and social protest in Africa*. London: J. Currey Portsmouth : Heinemann, 1986.

recent writings in social movement sociology that purport to take into account the transnationalization of mobilizations and the new perspectives opened by a historical sociology of extraversion (J.-F. Bayart)? Should one think at once the circulation and internationalization of modes of protest and that of the theoretical tools purporting to account for them?

On the basis of this theoretical interrogation, the colloquium aims at fostering innovative empirical work on the question of struggles in the Africa-s. Paradoxically, during the decades of dictatorships and then “liberalization”, research on mobilizations, including on processes of delegitimization of authorities, have been set aside. Writings exploring forms of circulation between diverse strata of society have first obscured forms of dissent - culminating with a focus on “civil society” that has “neutralized” research on this theme. As the notion has definitely been cast away as non-operative, work on diverse forms of struggles can anew venture on slippery fields (religious, militia, peasant groups) and sound out the most relevant theoretical tools to address these phenomena.

Friday, January the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010

8 : 3 0 - 8 h 4 5	Reception
9 : 0 0 - 9 : 1 5	<p>Opening Speech : <b>Jean-Claude COLLIARD</b>, president of Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University          Welcoming speech: <b>Frédérique MATONTI</b>, dean of the political science department, Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University</p>
9 : 1 5 - 1 2 : 3 0	<p><b>PLENARY 1: RESISTANCES, POLITISATIONS, SUBJECTIVATIONS</b>          Chairwoman : <b>Isabelle SOMMIER</b> (Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University, CRPS)          Discussant : <b>Klaas VAN WALRAVEN</b> (University of Leiden)</p> <p>Samuel HUBAUX * (Catholic University of Louvain - LASDEL). <i>Aspirations and action modalities of young Niamey civil society activists</i></p> <p>Duncan OMANGA (BIGSAS, Bayreuth University). <i>Hip Hop Music as Social Protest in Urban Africa: The Music of Kenya's Ukoo Flani Movement</i></p> <p>Zekeria OULD AHMED SALEM (University of Nouakchott). « <i>Barefoot activists</i> ». <i>Transformations of the Haratines movement in Mauritania</i></p> <p>Bukola Adeyemi OYENIYI (Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Ibadan) <i>Gendering Protests and Baring the Breasts: New Forms of Civil Advocacy in Contemporary Nigeria</i></p> <p>Ophélie RILLON (Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University - CEMAF). <i>Unruly Youth, Untamed bodies: the Sixties and Seventies Youth Fashions in Urban Mali</i></p> <p>Susan M. THOMSON (University of Ottawa). <i>Everyday Resistance to the Program of National Unity and Reconciliation in Post-Genocide Rwanda</i></p> <p>Denis TULL (German Institute for International and Security Affairs). <i>Political Protest in Bas Congo (DR Congo): The Challenge from the Margins</i></p>
1 2 : 4 5 - 1 4 : 1 5	Lunch
1 4 : 3 0 - 1 7 : 3 0	<p><b>PLENARY 2 : SPACES AND SCALES OF MOVEMENTS</b>          Chairman : <b>Frédéric SAWICKI</b> (Paris I Sorbonne University)          Discussant : <b>Miles LARMER</b> (University of Sheffield)</p> <p>Françoise BLUM (Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University-CHS). <i>African and Malagasy "May" : Circulations and differences in scale (Dakar , May-June 1968 ; Madagascar, May 1972)</i></p> <p>Karine DELAUNAY (Univ. Paris 7/Univ. Nice/IRD URMIS). <i>Asserting right to HIV treatments in the time of an international Initiative (Abidjan, Ivory Coast, 1998-2000)</i></p> <p>Habibou FOFANA (University of Ouagadougou). <i>Judicial independence as social problem: The claim of Burkina magistracy</i></p> <p>Mathieu HILGERS (FNRS - Free University of Brussell). <i>Semi-autoritarism, perceptions and protest practices of the political</i></p> <p>Marie HRABANSKI * (CIRAD Montpellier). <i>Internal Dynamics, State, and external recourses: For a Historical Sociology of Senegalese peasant's movement since the 1960's</i></p> <p>Anneeth HUNDLE (University of Ann Arbor, Michigan). <i>Acceptable Protest: New Eastern Neoliberal Formations, Asian Re-territorialization and Logics of Dissent in Kampala, Uganda</i></p> <p>Marie-Emmanuelle POMMEROLLE (Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University - CRPS). <i>The extroversion of mobilizations : studying the international dimensions of collective action in Africa</i></p> <p>Alexis ROY * (Centre d'Etudes Africaines, EHESS). <i>The strike of cotton farmers in Mali in 2000</i></p> <p>Jérôme TOURNADRE-PLANCQ * (ISP-CNRS). <i>Uses and definitions of the post-apartheid space of social protest in South Africa</i></p>

Saturday, January the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010

9 : 0 0 - 1 2 : 0 0	<p><b>PLENARY 3 : MORAL ECONOMIES AND ECONOMIES OF THE MORAL</b>  Chairwoman : Anne-Catherine WAGNER (Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University - CSE)  Discussant : Vincent Foucher (CEAN-CNRS)</p> <p>Julie AUBRIOT * (LATTS CNRS). <i>New social movements and the right to water in South Africa. The Mazibuko court case.</i></p> <p>Patrick AWONDO (LAS-EHESS, IRD-URMIS). <i>Against sexual order? Reflection on the homosexual mobilization in Africa from a cameroonian perspective.</i></p> <p>Vincent BONNECASE (IEA NANTES). <i>Hunger and social mobilisations in Niger (1973-2008)</i></p> <p>Christophe BROQUA * (IRD). <i>Birth of a cause? The difficult emergence of homosexual mobilisations in French speaking West Africa</i></p> <p>Nigel GIBSON (Emerson College, Boston / University of KwaZulu Natal). <i>Unfinished struggles against apartheid: The shack dwellers movement in South Africa</i></p> <p>Marc PONCELET (University of Liège). <i>Socio-economic but also political protest</i></p> <p>Benjamin RUBBERS (LASC Université de Liège - LAMC University of Brussels). <i>To claim rights in the Congo-Kinshasa. The case of the 'Collectif des ex-agents de la Générale des Carrières et des Mines' (Gécamines).</i></p> <p>Johanna SIMEANT (Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University - CRPS). <i>"Moral economy" and collective action in the Africas: uses and heuristic value of a concept</i></p> <p>Leo ZEILIG * (University of the Witwatersrand). <i>From food riots to political resistance (and back again): charting popular struggles in Africa 1980-2008</i></p>
1 2 : 0 0 - 1 3 : 3 0	Lunch
1 3 : 3 0 - 1 4 h 3 0	<p>Debate :</p> <p>John LONSDALE (Trinity College, Cambridge), Jean-François BAYART (CERI-SciencesPo), Alex de WAAL (to be confirmed)</p>
1 4 : 3 0 - 1 7 : 3 0	<p><b>PLENARY 4 : MOVEMENTS, IDEOLOGY AND VIOLENCE</b>  Chairman: Michel DOBRY (Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University, CRPS)  Discussant : Richard BANÉGAS (Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University, CEMAf)</p> <p>Marielle DEBOS (CERI/University of Berkeley). <i>From peasants in arms to war professionals: the professionalisation of armed struggle in Chad</i></p> <p>Miles LARMER (University of Sheffield). <i>Towards a History of Social Movements in Post-Colonial Africa</i></p> <p>Pedro MONAVILLE (University of Michigan). <i>Comrades and Traitors: June 4, 1969 in Kinshasa</i></p> <p>Tchouaké NOUMBISSIE (University of Douala). <i>Ideology in the Resistance Movement in West Cameroun: Claims and protest</i></p> <p>Kathryn NWAJIAKU-DAHOU (Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford). <i>From Bleeding Heart to Hollow Drum: The making and breaking of Struggle Nigeria's Niger Delta</i></p> <p>Kate SKINNER (Centre of West African Studies, University of Birmingham). <i>'Ablode Safui' ('The Key to Freedom'): a vernacular newspaper and the quest for 'truth' in African rural politics.</i></p> <p>Klaas VAN WALRAVEN (African Studies Centre, Leiden). <i>Sawaba, Niger and the Revolution of a Social Movement (1954-1974)</i></p>
1 8 h 0 0	<p>Final word from the organizing committee: Richard BANEGAS (Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University, CEMAF), Marie-Emmanuelle POMMEROLLE (Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University, CRPS), Johanna SIMÉANT (Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne University, CRPS)</p>

Communications with a \* are *tabled papers*, as the number of papers does not allow everyone to speak and some participants having been not able to attend the conference. These papers will however be discussed and given to the audience.

Attending to the conference is free with a reservation addressed to Catherine Bailleux ([crps@univ-paris1.fr](mailto:crps@univ-paris1.fr))

Access to the conférence : place de la Sorbonne, 75005 Paris, RER Luxembourg or Saint Michel, Métro Cluny Sorbonne or Saint-Michel.