

BAYREUTH

The Making of Meaning in Africa: Word, Image and Sound



BIG SAS Works!

EDITORS

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Acknowledging Reviewers of this Journal

The editors understand the hard work, time consuming and largely unpaid task of doing review for an academic journal. For the reviewers who worked with us in this volume titled 'The Making of Meaning in Africa: Word, Image and Sound', we sincerely appreciate the inordinate amount of energy, resources and time they invested in ensuring that the integrity and quality of this journal was maintained. Accordingly, we gratefully acknowledge the following reviewers;

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Making Meaning out of Meaning: Word, Image, Sound and Beyond

Foreword by Dr. Eric A. Anchimbe

This third volume of *BIGSASWorks*, like the previous two, lives up to the standards set at inception and certainly fulfills our expectations through the divergent yet illuminatory and cross-disciplinary perspectives on the meaning-making images, sounds, signs, and words studied in the seven papers collected here. I am, therefore, delighted to write this brief forward, which provides one of many lenses through which we could view the variety of images, discourses, signs, and sounds – as crucibles of meaning formation in Africa – described by the authors.

As the editors clearly state, ‘meaning is not to be found, but rather to be made, to be constructed from a certain subject positionality’. The contributors corroborate this stance using methodologies and frameworks within disciplines like media studies, literature, linguistics, and translation studies. In their quest for meaning – how it is made, co-constructed, re-constructed, de-constructed, and transmitted – they consult images, i.e. cartoon images of the terrorist attacks on embassies in Kenya (Duncan Omanga), picture images of refugees in Kenya (Pamela Chepngetich-Omanga), and animal metaphorical images in Hausa and Swahili Bible translations (Henrike Firsching). Since ‘sounds’ also carry meaning, the authors continue their quest for meaning in music by studying Freetown’s Jamaican Reggae (Michael Stasik) and radio broadcasts focusing on religious radio discourses in Tanzania (Francis Ngatigwa). As far as ‘words’ or ‘signs’ are concerned, two authors draw into the debate the types of meaning transmitted through HIV-AIDS prevention discourses (Didérot Djiala Mellie) and the narrative transfigurations of violence in African novels (Gilbert Ndi Shang).

From music through radio and newspapers to the novel and online blogs, and tackling topical issues such as religion, HIV-AIDS, refugees, violence, and terror, this volume typically replicates the extent of interdisciplinary research and co-existence within BIGSAS. With the variety of perspectives adopted, scholars of many disciplines will find this volume very useful both as a report of first-hand patterns of meaning-making in Africa and also as a reference companion for research on Africa. The online blogger’s impact on the making of meaning, especially in the domain of religion, projects the new (virtual) order of meaning-making and meaning-transmission in contemporary Africa. To quote Francis Ngatigwa (this volume, p. 67):

As opposed to the much more controlled mainstream media, the free for all social media reveals the nuances

and tensions which, though suppressed in other platforms, provide a more reliable barometer of the social complexion of Tanzania [and by extension, Africa] today.

Having been involved myself in studying meaning in Africa, I am pleased to say, this volume of excellently selected and very representative articles makes a lot of meaning and should be read also as a process of meaning-making. The many pictures included herein carry various shades of meaning and will be interpreted from different social, economic, religious, linguistic, political, and cultural viewpoints today and in the future.

The editors and members of the BIGSAS Workgroup 'Meaning making in Africa' deserve to be commended for the diligent work, and especially, this succinct volume.

Dr. Eric Anchimbe is assistant Professor of English Linguistics at the University of Bayreuth. He is also a senior fellow at the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African studies (BIGSAS). He has published extensively in the area of Sociolinguistics, world Englishes, pragmatics, applied linguistics, political discourse and computer mediated communication in Africa.

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EDITORIAL

Some Reflections on the Making of Meaning in Africa; On the Word, Image and Sound

Duncan Omanga and Gilbert Ndi Shang

The present collection addresses the intricate ways in which events, processes and phenomena are apprehended and reproduced in Africa. Inasmuch as the contributions fall under the gamut of media, literary, linguistic and translation studies, they are all underlined by an investigative quest for the understanding of meaning making processes in Africa. Generally, meaning making is a natural characteristic of every society. As a means of survival, human beings have an inherent tendency to make sense of the world from the most benign to the most enigmatic of social phenomena. However, it is important to pose the following fundamental questions: Can anything ever be known in positivist terms? Can we ever attain the kernel, that irreducible element in matter/meaning that is void of any peripheral attrition?

Any claim/pretention to truth/knowledge is undercut and superseded by e-merging events and processes, spatially and temporally. In an endeavour to situate meaning, primacy needs to be accorded to contingency and multiplicity over ordinary stability and organicity of meaning. Something is never *just* there, as a sedimented reality, to be apprehended. Right down to the least sememes, traces of meaning formation are devoid and divested of their atomic relation to reality. The possibility of capturing truth, reality and meaning in their pristine or primordial form, to echo the Platonic world of Forms, is humanly impossible. Therefore, meaning is not to be found, but rather to be made, to be constructed from certain subject positionality. In this regard, Word, Image and Sound as basic constituents and pillars of meaning making have to be re-examined thoroughly and not to be taken for granted.

Foremost, words are not givens, but constructs with particular trajectories that determine what they come to mean in various spatial and temporal contexts. The link between the signifier and the signified is catachrestic and arbitrary. At the entrance to the cave of word origin/meaning, stands the metaphor. Consequently, a word is not just itself, but it is always already a metaphor, constituting an inventory of analogical references that conceal and expose, in various degrees, the traces of other meanings inherent in its trajectories. Every word/metaphor has a descent (*Herkunft*), a heritage (*Erbschaft*) even when its Origin (*Ursprung*) cannot be located with certainty. In *Gay Science*, Nietzsche defines metaphor with reference to its Greek etymology, *meta-pherein* meaning to carry or to transport across a distance (in Alison 2001:76). This underlines

the possibility of transference, deferrals, displacements that underpin the itinerary of metaphors. The word therefore becomes not only a frigid substance but a lively scene where elisions, erasures, detours, exposures, alignments; refutals are staged, benignly but, sometimes, also strategically.

With regard to images, they attempt to visually *capture* reality both in space and time. But it is to be noted that, even in their desire to presence reality with the camera, the image cannot escape the *seeming* effect, as it is inevitably caught up in processes of assembling (construction), resembling (simulation) and disassembling (dissimulation). When a photo is shot to freeze the present moment into a testimonial and even testamentary archive, it operates through a perspective, a pre-determined angle of *capture*. According to Susan Sontag, even in its depiction of the horror that war distills, every photo is authored and the same image can be inscribed in multiple and contradictory narratives by belligerent parties (2003:10). In a similar perspective, when events are reported as *breaking news* and broadcast instantly on television screens throughout the world, it is already framed by a particular prism. The supposedly *im-mediate* attains the viewer in an already *mediated* form. The camera, an almost indispensable instrument of putative knowledge in contemporary world with which reality is *shot*, can therefore be both a medium of ostentation as well as obfuscation of social reality. In a certain way, the image produced by the camera oscillates between chimera and putative reality.

Lastly, sound, as the materialization of meaning in acoustic form is an worthwhile study focus. Though sound means many things to different people, it posits as a successive order of phonemes. In any case, even silence has to be regarded as important in the production of sound. Silence is not just the absence of sound. In recent criticism of music, both sound and silence are dialectically related. To put it correctly, silence has to be *listened to*, as a certain kind of voice in its own right. In *On Late Style*, Edward Said talks underscores the 'allusive silence' of subaltern people as a form of protest against situation of deprivation (2007:16). In its inscription at interval or interlude between sounds, silence can in itself pose as a threshold of meaning. Sound, understood in this complex form, can therefore be a unit of meaning making that deserve critical attention.

In the above, we have examined Word, Image and Sound as singular and transient entities. In effect, what Word, Image and Sound are engaged in, either singularly or interactively, depending on the contexts, is to tell a narrative. They tell stories, basically. Events, when they occur, do not naturally/automatically take the form of narratable sequence and order. They are always emplotted to form more or less coherent stories or narratives. According to Hayden White, even in chronicles, the least causally connected and perhaps least ideologically inclined form of documenting events, objectivity is still hard currency since a selection has to be made as to what is eventful

in the first place (1987:16). And this choice is based on certain enabled and enabling discourses that seek to present a particular version and vision of events as natural whereas it is based on a particular power constellation, with a *telos* or a kind of *realpolitik* of the parties concerned.

Following from the above constructions of word, image and sound, it can be deduced that there is never anything like a presence, only a re-presence. This brings to light the process of meaning making as a field of re-presentation papered on specific discursive formations. Such representations can therefore be employed in processes of meaning making like translation, negotiation, interrogation and counter-discourse with regard to cultural, social and political events and processes in Africa.

It should be clearly stated that though our major point of focus is this volume is Africa, the African continent is not an isolated entity. Modern Africa exists in a globalized world and its challenges are, to some extent, local renditions of global issues. Therefore, there are possible zones of confluences and intersections between Africa and other parts of the worlds with regard to the translation, negotiations and interrogations of meaning. It is with this openness in mind that the articles in this two part collection are organized.

Michael Stasik addresses the popularity of the Jamaican reggae music brand in the social and political landscape of Freetown, the capital city of Sierra Leone. Stasik privileges an audience-focused research on music production and consumption. Consumption is examined as an act of re-production a la Certeau through which supposed meaning is re-constructed, appropriated and re-tailored to ends that are not primarily determined by its producer or that are not self-evident in the texts themselves. In spite of its anti-establishment revolutionary messages Jamaican reggae ends up being enlisted both in the legitimating discourses of a government that represents itself as revolutionary and by rebel groups that engage in gory inhuman atrocities while still presenting themselves as purveyors of change.

Henrike Firsching's paper uses metaphors drawn from The Bible to make commentary on arguably the two most influential languages in Africa; Hausa and Kiswahili. Specifically settling on how animal metaphors are translated from Greek and Hebrew texts into Kiswahili and Hausa, she reveals the all too common challenge in translation; culture and context. In her work, she convincingly explains how translators has to navigate treacherous terrain in translating the names of animals that are, by all historical accounts, not native to Africa. Using animals such as the bear and the wolf, she explains how translation of key Bible texts has to strike that critical balance between fidelity to the original text and conveying meaning to the target audience.

Francis Ngatigwa's paper focuses on the *Mfumo Kristo* discourse in Tanzania. This discourse, which loosely translated from its Kiswahili form, means 'the Christian hegemony.' As a concept, *Mfumo Kristo* has lately become one of the most convenient excuses at explaining and accounting for the present day Tanzanian state. As a religious discourse, the concept has been routinely exploited by sections of the populace to explain the perceived marginalization of Muslims in the United Republic of Tanzania. Using the closure of a controversial Muslim Radio station as a starting point, Ngatigwa traces the *Mfumo Kristo* discourse by mining content from discussion blogs. The rich data reveals that even as the post colonial state in Africa flexes its muscle and gags the mainstream media, the new media platforms, represented by the vast array of social media, are possibly where Africa's latest conflicts are waged, won and lost.

Diderot Djiala examines the strategies in the fight against the scourge of HIV/AIDS in the town of Dschang in Cameroon through the analysis of non-mobile images in public places. Based on empirical, semiotic and constructivist approaches, he examines the interaction between image and text in the conception and construction of flyers and billboards destined to the youthful population of Dschang. This takes place in an innovative linguistic landscape dominated by the phenomenon of "Camfranglais", a language that combines features of French, English and other languages in Cameroon. A key aspect of Djiala's paper is his re-assessment of the centrality of the image of the 'young girl' both as the highest risk group and a possible pivot in the fight against the scourge. Even though the feminization of the scourge is to be criticized, Djiala underlines the fact that these images/texts foreground the decisive role of the youth in the fight against HIV/AIDS and in the development of the nation.

The dynamics shift slightly in Pamela Chepngetich-Omanga's paper which examines the strategies of self-representation in the refugee camps in Kenya through the practices of photography. Through her notion of '*Photographicide*' she focuses on the politics that surround the practice of image-making in the context of displacement. Photographers are not only interested in portraying the circumstance of the refugees, but in inscribing these images along corporate and individual narratives of self-representation that interrogates the claim of objectivity of photography. The images of and by refugees are therefore caught between NGO politics/propaganda, the refugee's positive self-portrayal of their normal life and the 'humanist' appeals of international media.

Gilbert Ndi Shang discusses the works of two African authors from Francophone and Anglophone Africa. He examines the representations of violence through the metaphor of the dismembered body as the narrative interrogation and indictment of modern regimes of violence. The analysed texts reiterate the general

crises of narration in the face of human abjection where the boundary between human/inhuman is rendered infirm by (in) human practices of violence. However, Shang concludes that Ayi Kwei Armah and Sony Labou Tansi innovatively inscribe their works within Pan-Africanist/humanist narratives respectively, based on a quest for possible rebirth foregrounded on the historic resilience of the African/human being in the face of historic processes of violence.

Using editorial cartoons as the sites from which to plot the circulation of meaning during moments of crises in Kenya, Duncan Omanga reveals how these popular pieces of journalistic craft are much more than repositories of laughter, and are potent sites for the construction and deconstruction of legitimacy. Using the US embassy attacks in East Africa as an example, Omanga uses editorial cartoons to illustrate the fluidity of the form and content of what constitutes terrorism. Indeed, the editorial cartoons confirm the very possibility that terrorism is more of a construct than a brute material fact. In other words, even as they reflect the dominant discourses floating about, editorial cartoons condense complex terror events into distilled moments which allow us to gain insights into how quick victims can turn villains.

In this volume on '*The making of meaning in Africa : Word, Image and Sound*', we do not claim to summarise the diverse loci of meaning making in contemporary Africa, but we intend to contribute to and develop the study of Africa and African cultures in its broad diversity; print, popular and media culture. In so doing, we agree with Karin Barber that specific audiences, texts and performances in 'Africa have distinctive, conventional modes and styles of making meaning' (1997:357) and the papers in this volume offer a glimpse into some of these processes of meaning making in the continent.

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PART ONE

SOUNDS AND SIGNS AS MEANING

Freetown's Jamaican Reggae: Further Notes on Audiences in Africa and on the Social Meanings of Music

Michael Stasik

Much of the music listened to by African audiences today is not produced locally but elsewhere and by music artists living worlds apart from the local realities of their African audiences. Yet, much of the current Africanist research dealing with popular music in conjunction with African societies tends to confine itself to the study of locally-produced music and, in so doing, limits its principle focus to (local) musicians and their lyrics and songs. This empirical and epistemological bias brings in its wake the risk to exclude from its representational scope those who make music socially meaningful in the first place: the society, here understood as music audiences writ large. Drawing on the exemplary case of the social meanings audiences in Sierra Leone's capital Freetown make of Jamaican reggae music, in this article I propose a realignment of the research focus, shifting from (local) music producers to the 'consumers' and users of music. Though the results of such a shifted analysis are prone to be rather fractured and contradictory, I argue that they – thereby – come much closer to the fractured and contradictory meanings African audiences make of music be it of a foreign or of a local origin.

Keywords: social meanings of music – popular music audiences – Jamaican roots reggae – Freetown, Sierra Leone

Introduction

It is a truism that music is influenced and shaped by its social, cultural, political, and economic contexts. This commonplace easily leads to the assertion of music as a social mirror. Given certain reservation, this assertion surely is tenable. The respective patterns of sound, instruments, lyrics, etc. all speak of the socio-cultural, material and historical context in which they are produced and played. Music – in its material, sonic and poetic dimensions – can indeed be read for a history of *music's* material, sonic and poetic developments. However, it is quite a common claim that music also 'reflects' the wider social, cultural, political, and economic institutions within which it is produced and consumed. In doing so, music is assumed as a form of a multi-layered 'text' that can be interpreted as a *social* chronicle. Music, in its various musical idioms and, especially, in its verbal expressions, is then taken as a reflection of

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prevalent social discourses and realities and, further, as a representation of broader social traits, trajectories and structures. The underlying epistemological paradigm can be summarized in the assertion that as music is 'done' by society, music 'speaks' of society.

Much of the recent, sociologically inclined research on music in African Studies has adopted this paradigm.¹ In many instances, the Africanist's reading of (an African) society through music is characterised by yet another assumption, which draws a significant distinction between music that is locally produced and music produced elsewhere. Barber, in her influential essay on *Popular Arts in Africa* (1987), highlights this distinction by stating that art 'produced by the people themselves [...] has a better claim to express some aspects of their own attitudes or experience' (108). While this claim is most valid in analytical terms (as it somewhat eases the endeavour to read society through its *own* music), it carries the empirical flaw to restrict the 'readings' to this very *locally* produced music and thereby to disregard *non-locally* (or 'globally') produced music (as well as other popular art forms; see e.g. Fugelsang 1994; Larkin 1997), which often has a much wider African listenership and which bears a great deal of significance for the lives of its local African audiences (see Weiss 2009).

In most research dealing with local forms of popular music in Africa, the music artist forms the focal point of (a researcher's) attention. The focus on the artist is usually grounded in modes of inductive reasoning: local musicians experience and live in the same social, cultural, political, and economic realities as their (local) audiences. Their songs and music, which (in most cases) are directed at local audiences, can be thus seen as products of these realities and are therefore read as more or less direct, though artistically 'altered', *expressions* of these realities and the local attitudes, experiences and concerns they bring forth. I will discuss the conceptual implications of this inductive stance in more detail below. However, a main empirical matter ought to be mentioned right away: much of the music listened to by African audiences today is not produced locally but elsewhere and by music artists living worlds apart from the local realities of their African audiences and their locally-grounded attitudes, experiences and concerns. For the reading of society (and its local attitudes, experiences and concerns) through 'its' foreign music, the focal point of (research) attention has to shift from artists to audiences. And audiences are, virtually by definition, a much more scattered and diffused field of study than music artists (see e.g. Allor 1988; Bird 1992; Erni 1989). Consequently, the reading of the local social meanings of a foreign music, and in fact of any art form, whether of local or foreign origin, demands a methodology that allows taking into account that constitutive diffuseness.

¹ I reckon it pedantic to specify the advocates of that paradigm. Since it constitutes the most dominant stream in the field, its representatives are well known.

A seminal venture into this diffuseness of African audiences' modes of interpretation and appropriation was made in a collection of articles edited by Barber (1997a). The connecting feature of all the contributions being the insight that once the (researcher's) gaze turns from the realms of (artist's) production to the realms of (audiences') consumption of a popular art form, we do not encounter any passive attempts to merely 'decode' messages, but most active and creative acts of 'self-positioning' (Barber 1997b: 356), of 'self-production' (*ibid.*: 359), and, eking the list with Weiss' notion, of 'self-fashioning' (Weiss 2009: 18). In this article, I build upon this still scant body of work, furthering its 'diffused' reading praxis by looking at a foreign music's diffused local social meanings. I evolve this reading from the exemplary case of a popular music genre which is predominantly produced outside Africa, which is widely popular among African audiences, and which remains conspicuously absent from music-related, sociologically oriented works in African Studies: roots reggae from the Caribbean island of Jamaica; thus the pop music fusion of ska and rock steady which evolved in Jamaica in the late 1960s (Davis 1982).² Furthermore, I restrict my exemplary reading to Jamaican reggae's local listenership in Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital, which was the site of my research on popular music audiences (Stasik 2012a).

Though my take on the 'diffused' reading praxis might have well been exemplified by looking at a different foreign music genre popular with Africa audiences, reggae proves an especially intriguing example because of two interrelated factors. On the one hand, reggae's social meanings appear to be exceptionally fixed and confined to the music, thus to be carried within or inside the 'music-itself'. In other words: thinking of reggae, the emblematic figure of a marijuana smoking, dreadlocks wearing, redemption songs singing Rasta man in a red-yellow-green-coloured attire comes to mind. It is, on the other hand, against these stereotypical and allegedly straightforward social meanings of reggae that the ambiguities, ambivalences and contradictions in its respective scopes of locally produced social meanings become particularly salient.

I have structured this article into four sections. In the first section, I provide a more in-depth discussion of the analytical and empirical make-up of many recent, sociologically inclined, music-related studies in the field of African Studies. By re-engaging, in particular, with Barber's earlier and still much persuasive work (1987), I set out a frame for a revised approach for the study of meaning making in the fields of popular music studies in Africa. In section two, I briefly delineate the broader context of Jamaican reggae's global

² Among the few studies dealing with foreign reggae in Africa include Cannizzo (1979) and Savishinsky (1994a, 1994b). Some of the most recent writings concerned with local adaptations of reggae in Africa include Akindes (2002), McNee (2002), Bourderionnet (2008), and Schumann (2009). Interestingly, all four authors focus on local adaptations of reggae in Francophone African countries.

dissemination and its popularisation in Africa and beyond. In section three, I turn to the ambiguities, contestations and contradictions constitutive of the production of reggae's social meanings in Freetown. I have organised this third section along a chronological order: from reggae's introduction into Freetown's and Sierra Leone's music scenes in the early 1970s to its broadened dissemination during the country's economic decline in the 1980s through to its most diffused and contradictory appropriations during the years of the civil war in the 1990s. In the last section, I put on a more analytical lens again and conclude with several propositions for the study of music's (diffused) social meanings and of the ambivalences and contradictions inherent in their production.

Breaking Music's Social Mirror

The above delineated tendency of many recent, music-related Africanist' studies – to approach music as a *societal* mirror – is marked by a mode of analysis, which can be described as reaching (and reading) from the *inside-out*: one looks at 'what is in the music' (the *inside*) to deduce from it 'what is (alleged) to be in society' (the *outside*). Besides the risk of producing tautological circles and thriving on a rather simplistic mode of analytical mimesis (since one is prone to find in the music only what one has already found, or been searching for, in society – and the other way round), there are four main issues at stake.

(1) The first issue concerns the enigmatic quest for music's *meaning*. The 'inside-out' mode of reading music in (its) relation to society – thus of reading society through (its) music – is premised on yet another well-established (though highly contestable) paradigm in the study of music, which implies that the meanings of music are to be found *in* the 'music-itself'. This idea might be well suitable for the rather narrow hermeneutics of musicological analysis, in which the *musical* parameters of music are analysed (e.g. harmony, melody, riff, beat). For the sociologically oriented analysis of music realms, however, the concept of music's intrinsic meanings proves delusive (Keil 1998; Small 1998). Its application becomes particularly visible in Africanist' studies dealing with so-called 'political music'. In these 'socio-political music studies', which in fact form the bulk of Africanists' music-related studies, notions are coined such as music as 'the means of expression of the marginalized masses' or the somewhat self-contradictory idea of music as 'the voice of the voiceless' (see e.g. Allen 2002; Englert 2008; Njogu & Maupeu 2007). With regard to musical expressions, this sort of political function-lens is obviously inspired by many musicians' potential 'to sing what cannot be spoken' (Agawu 2001:4), their granted *Narrenfreiheit* to criticise the establishment.

On the one hand, these politically biased approaches towards music have their due rationale, first and foremost by pointing out the socio-political relevance of music expressions. On the other hand, they

beget an approach and perspective, in which music becomes confined to its (politically relevant) lyrics, at the expense of its vital characteristics of non-verbal sounds, performance, and play (see Drewal 1991). Likewise, the focus put on ideological and political contents (of lyrics) often obstructs a more heuristic view on the broad range of ideological stances inherent in music expressions and, even more so, on the potentially endless spectrum of social interpretations. These might, and often do, range from explicit class-conscious critiques, to a more or less tacit support of the status quo, and through to the probably most common characteristic of serving entertainment purposes and 'thus' of being above political frays, which in fact bears ideological implications, too. Frequently, though, the whole range of these stances is displayed within the work of a single artist; as, by the same token, it is contained in the spectrum of audiences' understanding of any given song. In a similar manner, meaning-generating agency is ascribed predominantly to musicians and their intentions, leaving out in rather bleak desolation the dimensions of audiences' perceptions, ideas and actions. In consequence, the understanding and interpretation of music's social meanings tend to be confined to a contextualised reading of lyrics, supplemented by a sketch of the artists' biographies and attitudes.

Beside the somewhat rampant fetishisation of the (lyrical) word, in these approaches the idea is pursued that by interpreting musical expressions, thus by reading *music's* meanings, one could further interpret, or rather interpretatively deduce, from them the 'expressions of the publics', that is: a sort of hand-picked piece of society's discursive cake, along with its various icings of current local experiences, of pressing or suppressed socio-political concerns, etc. In other words, the meaning-generating and meaning-constituting agency is allocated on the side of the music and its performers. However, while musical meanings might well be found therein, any extra-musical and especially *social* meanings of music – and this is, in the end, what sociologically oriented researchers of music are dealing with – are not; or, following Barber's reading of Volosinov, not solely, for meaning 'belongs neither to the speaker nor to the hearer: rather, it inhabits a zone between them' (Barber 1997b: 356-7). What the analyst's proclamation that a musical piece *speaks for* 'the publics' then speaks of, is in fact a rather dubious claim of the analyst him/herself to interpret the respective song for 'the public', and thus to bridge the whole in-between zone of meaning-making all by him/herself (see also Wolfe & Haefner 1996).

(2) These matters lead on straight to the quest for the scope of music's (social) representationality.³ As delineated above, in the 'inside-out' approach, it is commonly argued that a musician speaks for his/her society. S/he does that by, firstly, being – a representative – part of the respective society and its prevalent, political,

³ For a (much) more thorough discussion of this much complex issue, see e.g. Walten (1994); and, for yet deeper immersions: Langer (1942) and Ingarden (1962).

hegemonic, marginalized, etc. discourses, and, secondly, by bundling the respective discourses through the disseminating – and representational – power of the microphone and the mass-produced and consumed channels through which his/her music is spread across society (in fact making it a sort of monologic relation, as the artist echoes back on society its own discourses). Following this line of reasoning, in the ‘inside-out’ reading mode it is assumed that, since the musician does represent society, the analyst does unveil social meanings (or their representations respectively) by looking at the musician and reading his/her lyrics.

The argument, as well as its debunk, is redundant. Whoever the musician might speak or sing for, thus ‘gives representation to’, in the end it is – again – the analyst who reads the representation as a representation of ‘the publics’. The meaning- or, in this case, the representation-generating agency is allocated first on the side of the music (and its musician), from which (and whom) the analyst then alleges to deduce other, social meanings and representations. The bounding of the socio-musical field is, once more, left with the analyst who decides which meanings are socially meaningful and which representations speak of (or represent) which social realms, discourses, experiences, etc. Here, Spivak’s (1988) critical metaphor of the (academic) ventriloquist who speaks for the ‘subaltern puppet’ takes on a particular inflection, leading to the somewhat rhetorical question, whether the subaltern can sing?

(3) The most practical issue affects the very empirical heart of many if not most sociologically-inclined studies on (popular) music in Africa; that is: the (socio-geographic) *place* of origin of the music in question in relation to the (socio-geographic) place of the studied society. Driven by the said premises of the ‘inside-out’ reading mode, by its underlying paradigms, and by the consequent urge to read society through *its own* music, a too obvious reality is, too often, left unmentioned: at least for the last two or so decades, the music of many societies in Africa is, to a (often very) large percentage, not the music produced *in* the respective society but imported from the outside. Any attempt to either allocate the music’s meanings in the ‘music-itself’ and to deduce from it social meanings or to take a musician’s stance as a representational case for prevalent social discourses and meanings collapses along with its presumptions. What can we – sociologically, anthropologically and/or historically – learn about, for example, the Freetonian society from, for example, Celine Dion’s music, which had an undeniable resonance in that very Freetonian society, by looking at Mrs Dion’s lyrics and *her* representational social and discursive affiliations? In Barber’s wording: ‘what do we make of the case of performances avidly received and interpreted by people to whom they cannot conceivably have been addressed’? (1997b: 356).

(4) The last issue concerns the intricate notion of ‘popular’ in popular music studies – the academic genre to which much of the recent

sociologically inclined Africanist music studies is assigned. Returning to Barber's earlier treatise (1987), she defines 'popular' art as a relational concept with fluid and shifting boundaries whose meanings oscillate between, traverse across, and coalesce with what other Africanist 'populists' defined as 'traditional arts' and 'elite arts' (9-12). According to Barber, for 'popular' art to become popular it has 'to appeal to people, it has to plug in at some level to popular consciousness [...]. It is the capacity to pick up popular aspirations, fears and anxieties, give them concrete expressions and communicate them' (108). This communication process 'is fragile, and full of risks, divisions and fragmentations' (110). And since this fragmented communication is taking place mainly on the side of the audiences, Barber concludes that we 'should build up a more detailed picture of the "publics" to which different popular genres are *directed*' (*ibid*; *my emphasis*).

The key term, and in fact the analytically problematic one, is 'directed'. Though pointing towards the importance of the audiences, Barber nevertheless sticks to the apprehension of the 'popular' in popular art by looking at the artefacts, and not at the publics that make these artefacts popular. This becomes plain in her formulation that the 'popular genres are *directed*' to the publics, which implies, firstly, that they already are popular before they reach 'their' public, and secondly, that – at least theoretically – the audience is in fact not a required force in the processes that constitute *popular art*.

Especially with regard to popular music arts in Africa, in many cases the respective (music) art-itself is, as noted above, not directed *at* Africa nor is it directing anything particular *to* Africa (Celine Dion's songs serve a much pervasive instance). The bulk of these arts is produced elsewhere. What is directing – and directed – are the audiences who chose from the ever-growing array of globally transmitted and available media and arts. I would thus propose to modify Barber's attempt to define the 'popular' in popular art (and music) 'by the *relationship* between performers and audiences' (1987: 47; *my emphasis*). This relationship, I would argue, is mainly established by the audiences whose relational complement might rather, or better, be described as an imagined performer; something, or somebody, whose significance – the 'capacity to pick up popular aspirations, fears and anxieties' – is constituted mainly on the side of the audiences, and not by the performer.

Seizing on Barber's popular treatise for a last time, I fully endorse her statement that for the study of popular arts in Africa (as elsewhere) the 'methods of aesthetic criticism must be conjoined, and not at a superficial level, with those of social science' (1987: 5). What I partly disagree with, though, is her conclusion that we thus need to ask 'by whom and by what means, in what circumstances, under what constraints, in whose interests, and in accordance with what conventions, these arts are *produced*' (*ibid*. *my emphasis*). Rather, I argue that we need to ask primarily, though not exclusively, by

whom, by what means, in what circumstances (...) these arts are *consumed*; or, following de Certeau's more apt terminology, which helps avoiding the passivity connoted by the term 'consumption': what *usages* audiences make of these arts (de Certeau 1988: xii).

These four, briefly scrutinized issues in Africanist socio-musical studies all point towards an analytical volte-face that is to be eked by a methodological volte-face. Analytically, the idea of music's intrinsic meanings has to be abandoned (at least for any study outside musicological and philosophical domains, in which already enough 'meaning-battles' are being fought; see e.g. Kivy 1990; Robinson 1997) so to clear a space for the sociologically and anthropologically more relevant questions of what it means when this music is performed, played, and (especially) listened to at this time, in this place, and with those people taking part in it – thus for the set of interrelated parameters that in their combined force constitute the *social* meanings of music (Small 1998). Methodologically, a similar space is to be cleared for a social group other than socio-musical analysts to account for the interpretation of music as well as for the processes by which music's meanings are generated and contested (see also Barber 1997b: 356; see also Wolfe & Haefner 1996). Rather than only listening to the musicians and their music, the sociologically inclined researcher of music thus also ought to *listen to people listening to their music*. Though the results of such an analysis are prone to be rather fractured, confusing and contradictory, I would assert that they – thereby – come much closer to the fractured, confusing and contradictory meanings (not only African) audiences make of music and to the role(s) music plays in society.

Jamaican Reggae

Jamaican sounds and 'vibes' of roots reggae hit most of the Anglophone world in the early 1970s. Spurred on rhetorics and aesthetics of the oppressed, and on an inherent bid of defiance to the oppressors, reggae music found its foremost followers among those who were (or felt) oppressed. In the postcolonial orders 'after empire', these were predominantly the young un- or underemployed stranded in the empire's urban peripheries. Whether marginalised Maori youths in urban New Zealand (Mitchell 1998), young Havasupai Indians living in deplorable conditions in North America's reservation enclaves (Dub 2002: 9-18), or West Indians struggling for survival in the French-Dutch state-anachronism of Saint Martin (Guadeloupe 2009) – all adopted reggae as a musical-cum-ideological corrective to their experiences of suffering, exploitation and alienation.

Yet, concurrently, the very same Jamaican sounds, songs and artists found their way into the metropolises' mainstream music markets as well. Here – be it in the US, in Britain, or across the western parts of

mainland Europe – reggae captured audiences of quite different historical backgrounds and socio-political positions. In its appeal to these wealthier, principally white, and often sub-urban audiences, Jamaican reggae augured the same sorts of seemingly contradictory and paradoxical appropriations of *Black Culture* by *White Youth* (Jones 1988) that accompanied the rise of hip-hop music from the mid-1980s onwards (see e.g. Tanz 2007; White 2011). It is furthermore most telling of the ‘inside-out’ mode of analysis that, beside some rather uncritical accounts of the history of reggae’s dissemination in Europe and the US and its ‘cooption’ by white artists (e.g. Barrow and Dalton 2001: 383-440; Bilby 1977; de Koningh and Griffiths 2003; Griffiths 1995), authors grappling with the emergent, seemingly ‘bizarre conjunction’ of ‘giggling white girls’ dancing to Jamaican reggae (Hebdige 1991: 151) tend to construe it as a ‘failure’ on the side of (white) audiences ‘to comprehend what is actually being sung’ (Alleyne 2000: 15).

These global waves of reggae generated as many variations of reggae’s local social meanings as there were local social spaces to be filled by them. To start with a rather general observation: the socio-cultural processes underlying the popularization of reggae music in its place of origin, Jamaica, and around the globe followed two structurally opposed lines. In Jamaica, it was the music that progressively evolved out of a particular form of religiously and politically motivated panoply of lifestyles and attitudes (the Rastafari culture). In most if not all other parts of the (reggae) world the direction was reversed. There it was a multitude of various lifestyles and attitudes that progressively evolved out of, and was attached to, the music. This is a first hint towards the impracticability of speaking of a however fixed social meaning in reggae music itself. Sociologically, the ‘music-itself’ is not much more than a mere form, being carried around through diverse and diffusing channels of mediation and mediatization, ‘waiting’ to be seized, used and – thereby – filled with contents, connotations and meanings. The notion of music as a ‘hollow space’, as dubbed by Agawu (2001: 7), suits well an apposite apprehension of music’s form as a sort of sonic vacuum to be filled with social significance.

In its cultural genealogy, the syncretic religious orientation of Jamaican-bred Rastafari formed the roots of the music. Rastafari, in turn, was based upon African slave descendants’ reading of the bible. In this reading, Haile Selassie’s accession to the throne of Ethiopia in 1930 represents the fulfilment of biblical prophecies relating to the downfall of ‘Babylon’ and the unburdening of the black man and humanity (Lewis 1993). While the apparent affinity between Rastafari *Weltanschauung* and African histories points towards a possible explanation of reggae’s vast appeal in Africa, it somewhat misses to explain the character of the virtually universal musical idiom reggae took on soon after it entered global music scenes.

In the late 1960s, Jamaican Rastafaris, spearheaded by Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, and Bunny Wailer, began to use their music, as well as the already existent Caribbean music producing and marketing structures, to voice their beliefs – a commercialised evangelising endeavour, so to speak. Several factors fostered the processes through which their music was globally disseminated and popularised. On a broad scale, three only loosely related developments coincided and triggered a combined force in favour of spreading the Rastafarian sounds.

(1) A versatile Afro-euphoria emerged in the 1960s' aftermath of many African states' independence (and after the end of Apartheid in the USA), which stipulated, within as well as outside black communities around the globe, a space for popular black figures. In this respect stood Bob Marley in line with other popularised black figures such as Kwame Nkrumah, Martin Luther King, Muhammad Ali, and James Brown.

(2) Within much the same period, a vast and fast progression in technologies of media production and dissemination took place. From the late 1950s onwards, many TV-stations initiated and many radio-stations widened their mass-broadcasting enterprises, which in turn spurred on the further spread of what Adorno and his Frankfurt colleagues coined 'mass' or, in their vernacular even more pejoratively, 'popular music culture' (Adorno 1941). With regard to reggae's connection to the world's incipient mass media channels, it is telling that much of reggae's initial popularity in most parts of West Africa (as well as in much the rest of the world) was triggered by the movie *The Harder They Come*, which was screened across the region's movie theaters in late 1973, featuring the Jamaican reggae artist Jimmy Cliff and a soundtrack consisting entirely of reggae songs.

(3) The lyrics of reggae's pioneers were marked by a highly poetic, metaphoric and – thus – *open* form. Evolving from and revolving around the Rastafari's Manichean worldview, two symbolic idioms form Jamaican reggae's antagonistic and dichotomist lyrical as well as ethical spectrum: on the one hand, utopian Zion and, on the other hand, the ever-evil Babylon. These symbolic and vague denominations of good and evil, in turn, provided (and still do provide) an ideal hollow space that each and every listener, according to his/her place and time, could fill with personalised and localised ideas and imaginings of utopias and evils. As open as the lyrical meanings in the music are, as 'vulnerable' are they to interpretations, adaptations and appropriations – the only confines being drawn by the limitations of every listener's imaginative versatility.

Freetown's Jamaican Reggae

The 1970s in West Africa were a time of severe turbulences. In the conjuncture of increasingly stinging politics of exclusion – with military and autocratic regimes ruling in Nigeria (under Gowon, Mohammed, Obasanjo respectively), Ghana (Acheampong, Akuffo, Rawlings), Cameroon (Ahidjo), and Liberia (Tolbert), among others – and newly arising, predominantly urban (sub) cultures, reggae soon took shape as a musical stronghold in the lives of many of urban West Africa's alienated youths (Savishinsky 1994a).

1970s

Since a military-backed coup in 1968, Sierra Leone's president Siaka Stevens fostered a strategic use of political-economic patronage relations and repressive, often violent, practices to destroy or neutralise opposite groups and civic society (Alie 1990: 239-44, 2006: 70-113; Koroma 1996; Zack-Williams 1985). Promoting a 'conspiracy of state vandalism' (Squire 1996: 74), Stevens progressively put the majority of Sierra Leoneans into the position of a politico-economically wrenched minority. In this setting, reggae's Manichean imagery of victim and oppressor and of resistance and the call for justice fell on much fertile grounds. By the mid-1970s, reggae became widely popular among unemployed youths in Freetown and beyond, as well as among groups of radicalised college students (Kandeh 2005: 88-89). In so-called *potes* – popular gathering places in the ghettos of Freetown's impoverished East Side – the two groups came together to hang out, to smoke marijuana, and to listen to reggae while discussing the 'conscientising' lyrics of the songs (Abdullah 2005: 182; Rashid 2004: 46).

At the same time, however, reggae was also incorporated into Freetown's mainstream music scene. Many of the city's popular dance bands began to include reggae songs and styles in their repertoires.⁴ In their rendition, reggae was played in the city's upmarket music venues, mostly located in Freetown's affluent West End parts. Here, those who listened and danced to Jamaican-bred reggae tunes belonged to the country's upper classes, including the political ruling class. Thus, in the *potes* and among marginalised youths, reggae became a (sonic) symbol of opposition. On the city's big music stages, in turn, it went in line with the entertainment practices of 'those who were opposed'. While the very songs, sounds and lyrics resembled and in fact duplicated each other across Freetown's socially, politically, economically, and geographically divided groups – thus connecting its divided listenerships on a sonic, musical and lyrical level –, the contexts of the music's perception and consumption diverged from and contradicted each other – thus disconnecting its listenerships again. By exhibiting these simultaneously interconnected and deviating trajectories of music's

⁴ To instance: the hit song 'Arata Poison' by Sabanoh 75, one of Freetown's most renowned dance bands of the 1970s, was a one to one copy of The Wailor's 1973 hit 'Stir it up'.

social meanings, Freetown's 1970s reggae reveals the foundational contradictions social polyphony 'inflicts' on its musical counterpart. In some of the recent work on popular music, it is argued that the respective socio-cultural and *socio-geographical environment* in which people consume music plays a determining role in *what* social meanings these people make of music (e.g. Bennett 2000). In the case of reggae in Freetown during the 1970s, this 'socio-geographical lens' is most applicable. From the very outset, Freetonian listenerships ascribed reggae a diffused and in fact much confused amalgamation of social meanings, with the prime meaning-generation factors being the respective *place* and the wider social *space* and *context* in which its consumption(s) and usages took place. The marginalized youths, who formed reggae's main listenership in Freetown's impoverished east, were a group that, for large parts, was – economically and geographically – distanced and excluded from the upmarket music venues in Freetown's west. 'Their' reggae bore social (and political) meanings of defiance and opposition. For those at the centre of economic and political power, who formed reggae's main audiences in the upmarket West End venues, reggae bore social meanings of rather *apolitical* entertainment. The prevalent social meanings of Freetown's reggae were thus predominantly derived from the social setting of its consumption (read: *usage*), and from the social status of its consumers (read: *users*), rather than from anything 'inside' the music.

1980s

In the 1980s, Sierra Leone descended into insolvency. Growing foreign debt, rampant inflation, and grand-scale corruption wrenched the economy to successive low-points, resulting in chronic shortages of food, fuel and electricity (Alie 2006: 120-121). On the political stage, president Stevens confounded a 'decline of politics' with 'politics of decline' (Zack-Williams 1985). Public institutions became deprived of capital, the country's infrastructures degenerated, uttering a much cynical attitude many Sierra Leoneans expressed towards the state (Koroma 1996). With regard to Freetown's popular music scene in general and to its reggae scene(s) (and its diffused social meanings) in particular, these broader socio-political and economic developments bore three main effects.

(1) Most of the 1970s' live bands could not generate enough revenue to continue to be viable. Slowly but surely, they disappeared from the scene. In many of the upmarket venues, where these bands used to play, they were replaced by what older Freetonians today refer to as 'music machines' – audio amplifiers including speakers and a record and cassette player. As records and cassettes were a commodity restricted to Freetown's affluent sections of society (Bender 1985: 133), their sales are good indicators of the music consumption practices of these upper classes. One of Freetown's most successful record sellers during the 1980s (Pat Paul) recalled for me his main sales back in these years. Among a broad diversity of international

pop music genres that he was selling, reggae was a top-seller – thus indicating the continued appeal reggae had among Freetown's affluent groups of audiences.

(2) On the other end of Freetown's social (and geographical) spectrum, the *pote* culture got somewhat 'extended' by the rapidly increasing throng emergent at the ever-growing margins of economic and political power. Fuelled by the economic deterioration the country experienced throughout the 1980s, the number of what Abdullah calls Freetown's 'lumpens' and 'subalterns' (2002: 25), mainly male un- and underemployed youths, rose continuously – in turn stoking up the *pote*-assemblies in Freetown's East Side ghettos. Reggae continued to play a central role in the *potes*. A former *pote*-participant described to me the character of the *potes* and their attendant youths as follows:

The *pote* was the place to be – when there was no other place to go. Like some people go to the bars and clubs, we went to the *pote*. The *pote* was our bar and club. It was about the being together, about listening to reggae and smoking. It is about the two: smoking and reggae. They fit good. You get the inspiration from both. The music inspires you and the smoking inspires you.

As Abdullah argues, these inspiring 'ideological sessions [held in the *potes*] were the assembly lines wherein rebels were made' (2005: 174). In his account of the *potes*, in which he describes them as breeding grounds of the 1990s' conflict ('a dress rehearsal of some of the monstrosities that would be visited on innocent civilians/communities'; *ibid.*), he also provides a description of the then-prevailing social meanings ascribed to the *potes*'participants, and hence to reggae's *pote* audiences: 'thugs, as they were collectively referred to' (*ibid.*).

The social meanings associated with reggae in the *potes* were thus virtually diametrically opposed to the social meanings emergent from its 'consumption' among Freetown's upper classes, among which the music was played on new 'music machines' and listened to on a limited number of expensive music-sets in upper-class bars and private homes. The social categories and connotations ascribed to its listeners bounced back on the music and created a diffused agglomeration of reggae's social meanings.

(3) Yet, the overall scope (or 'topography') of reggae's social meanings in Freetown of the 1980s was even more confused than that. As the owner of a much renowned bar in Freetown's centre (*Sonny Marke's*) explained to me, outside the *potes* and the upmarket venues, it was not people's choice to gather in bars and parlors so to listen to reggae. Often, it was the other way round: people gathered in bars and parlours in which the music that was played happened to be reggae. The reason, in turn, was fairly arbitrary. Because many bars could neither afford a 'proper' music

system nor purchase cassettes or records, they relied on music that was played on the radio. And among the five or so radio stations that could be received in Freetown at that time (all on long-wave, including Sierra Leone's home broadcaster *SLBS*), the only station that played a reliable amount of music and had a fairly good reception happened to be Gabon's *Radio Numéro Un*, which mainly played: reggae. Being broadcasted in French, *Radio Un*'s music was in fact the only reason for most of its Anglophone Freetonian listeners to tune in to. In these somewhat 'regular' settings, reggae consumption was born out of a simple necessity driven by financial restrictions and broadcasting 'realities' rather than out of any politically, musically, or otherwise motivated choice and decision. Here, (reggae) music's 'hollow space' helped to fill the (most literal) sonic vacuum brought about by economic adversity.

1990s

With regard to processes on the political scene and the thereby strongly affected social and economic developments, the 1990s were a most erratic era. Framed by eleven years of civil war (1991-2002), the country's citizens suffered through three coup d'états (1992, 1996, 1997), two military rules (1992-96, 1997-98), a succession of incipient democratisation processes (1991-92, 1994-96, 1998), two national elections held in much frail circumstances (1996, 2002), as well as a multi-variant of internal and external military forces fighting, allying, and intervening in each other's affairs and in the population's lives and well-being.⁵

In the course of these much volatile years, reggae music and its diffused social meanings went through a great many alterations and evermore diffusions. These became particularly pronounced with regard to its roles (and social meanings) within the various political, military and civil factions involved in, and affected by, Sierra Leone's civil war.

The first major change (and in fact rupture) in reggae's socio-political significations followed the first military coup in 1992, which ousted Stevens' party after twenty-five years of autocratic rule.⁶ A split-off of young soldiers from the battlefield marched into Freetown, deposed the ruling party at a surprising ease, and established a military junta, the National Patriotic Ruling Council (NPRC). The country in general, and the youths in particular, welcomed the coup plotters and gave them their support in the belief that the new military regime would introduce positive changes after years of failed leadership and a

⁵ For a detailed discussion of the conflict's evolvments and its various social, political, and economic affects, see, for the conflict's first years, Richards 1996 & 2005, and Ellis 1995; for the later years of the conflict: Alie 2006: 132-209, as well as the collection of essays in Abdullah 2004. For the concurrent developments Freetown's and Sierra Leone's music scene went through in the 1990s, see Stasik 2012a: 80-94.

⁶ Stevens himself stepped back in 1985, handing over power to a strategically chosen successor, Joseph Momoh.

ruined economy (Richards 1996: 9). With the economic assistance of the international community, the NPRC administration started out well and, for the first two or so years, met the hopes and expectations many Sierra Leoneans had raised after the change of leadership (Alie 2006: 141-143).

With parts of the new state authorities, and the state leader, being well under 30 years of age (the new head of state, Captain Valentine Strasser, was only 25 years old), the junta's resonance onto the country's music scenes was extraordinary. The youths of Sierra Leone could easily relate with the new regime, and vice versa. They shared similar social backgrounds, went through similar experiences, and appreciated the same kinds of movies and music – particularly Jamaican reggae and US American hip-hop. The symbolic dimension popular music took on during the NPRC era became evident on the day of the coup, as Sierra Leone's national radio played 'non-stop rap and reggae music' (Opala 1994: 197). Soon after, Captain Strasser's personal musical favorite, Sonny Okusun's reggae song 'African Soldier', became a major hit in Freetown – underscoring the new found identification of Freetown's population with its youthful political leadership. Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, Tupac Shakur, and other popular music heroes became the emblems of the new regime. In spontaneous outbursts of admiration, youths began to paint the portraits of popular music figures next to the portraits of the leaders of the NPRC revolution across the walls of Freetown and the country (Opala 1994). Strasser and his junta were bestowed the honour to be depicted next to Bob Marley and Jimmy Cliff. A form of greeting derived from Rastafari culture – by saying 'one love' (in turn inspired by Bob Marley's song 'One Love'), pressing one's fist against the other's, and pulling it back to one's chest – became a solidarity symbol of the new administration. Though the smoking of marijuana was not legalised, its prosecution was virtually suspended. *Pote* hangouts, formerly confined to Freetown's East Side ghettos, arose on the grounds of military and police barracks.

Propelled by these developments, reggae turned into the musical emblem of the political mainstream. Unprecedented in Sierra Leone's history, and maybe even in modern world history, youth culture and youth music – that is Jamaican reggae as well as US hip-hop – became identified with the political establishment. However, reggae's socio-political significance remained anything but confined to the NPRC administration's 'revolutionary aura' (Opala 1994: 197) and its followers. The rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), whose cadre, as argued by Abdullah (2002, 2005) and Rashid (2004), was recruited among the 1980s' *pote*-assemblies, fancied reggae as well (Nuxoll 2012).

As I was told by many people who during the war sought refuge in Freetown, many a times rebels 'announced' the invasion of upcountry towns and villages through the deafening play of reggae (as well as hip-hop) music. As one former RUF combatant explained

to me, in the RUF's bush camps, car batteries were a most precious good as they were needed to run radios and cassette players on which music – again reggae and hip-hop – were played by the predominantly young militants. Bob Marley – the most prominent musical figure on the side of the youthful civilians – ranked also on top of the rebels' sonic and visual imagery. Bob Marley t-shirts were used by the RUF as uniforms. As Presthold (2009) writes, 'these shirts became so closely associated with the rebels that by the late 1990s people seen wearing Marley T[shirt]s were presumed to be RUF' (2009: 208). On the night to May 11, 2000, the day of Marley's death, which is celebrated as a sort of informal public holiday in Freetown, the RUF based in the upcountry town of Kono celebrated a 'Bob Marley Night' as well (Presthold 2009: 215). A most gruesome (and, at the same time, most telling) example for the diffuseness of reggae's social meanings is given by former child soldier Ishmael Beah (2005: 21). He describes that among the various mutilation-practices adopted by RUF rebels in their acts against the civilian population, the chopping off of all of a victim's fingers while saving the thumbs was dubbed by the perpetrators 'one love' – making the very same symbolic reference to Bob Marley's hit song as in the reggae-derived NPRC greeting.

Reggae music's ambivalent usages, conflicting appropriations, and contradicting social meanings became further diffused during the second military rule of the 1990s, which, unlike the preceding NPRC, was scorned by Freetown's population. In May 1997, an army break-away group staged a coup, ousted the recently elected government, and formed a junta—the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The AFRC linked up with the RUF and invited the rebels to join them to administer the country. The following ten months of the AFRC/RUF rule were characterized by lawlessness and widespread looting (Gberie 2004). As AFRC's soldiers devastated the city, their music – predominantly reggae and hip-hop – formed the sonic backdrop for their ravages. One informant described to me that during the nights, AFRC rebels would drag out people of their homes, make bonfires, and stage impromptu sorts of *potes*, as they smoked marijuana and played reggae. The rebels wanted civilians around them so that ECOMOG troops, whose jets were scouting potential AFRC camps at nights, would not be able to single them out.

As the AFRC enforced an overnight curfew in Freetown, the city's night life came to a virtual standstill. However, some resilient and (in a manner) subversive party organisers circumvented the curfew by secretly organising so-called 'curfew parties'. For these much clandestine purposes, a clique of chosen participants came together at a pre-concerted location and just before the start of the curfew, then celebrating behind closed doors throughout the night, and returning to the streets and back home in the morning hours after the end of the curfew. According to one regular attendee, the curfew parties' common playlist was composed of latest dance tracks played during the night's peak hours, while, during the early morning hours,

the then winded participants preferred relaxing to some reggae tunes.

Two months after the coup, the ousted government launched a clandestine radio station near Freetown, *Radio Democracy 98.1*, which implement a sort of 'guerilla journalism' (Gordon 2004: 188). People made a lot of effort to listen to the station by secretly winding up wires on trees and hiding radio cables under the ground, risking punishment or even execution in case AFRC forces would discover them. Besides clandestine news broadcasts and anti-AFRC propaganda, a large portion of *Radio Democracy's* airtime was made up of the play of 'freedom songs' – to large parts consisting of Jamaican roots reggae classics.

This kind of Janus face reggae music took on during the AFRC/RUF reign pointedly exemplifies the diffused, ambiguous, and much contested scope of social meanings of Freetown's Jamaican reggae. During these months, the proximity of reggae's contradicting appropriations and diffused social (and political) meanings 'spoke' most clearly of music's babel. On the one hand, AFRC/RUF forces used reggae as 'soundtrack' to their massacres and rampant physical and psychological violations of people's integrity. On the other hand, the very same sounds and songs played by *Radio Democracy* as well as during the curfew parties served this subjugated population as a sonic source of hope for peace, as a means of volition to carry on and preserve integrity, and, not least, as a much ordinary musical backdrop for afterhours relaxations at the end of a sweated night of dancing. The 'music-itself' fluctuated across borders of radically different and opposed, though temporally and spatially connected and juxtaposed social realities. The respective social (and political) meanings ascribed to reggae were anything but inscribed *into* the music. Neither could they be read from the music's (lyrical) inside to its (social) outside: both rebels and civilians listened to the same songs. It was the 'outside' that made the (radical) difference.

On the Meaning of Music's (Social) 'Meanings'

Since reggae entered Freetown's soundscapes in the early 1970s, its diverse meanings – whether related to arenas of sonic, social, political, or 'entertaining' significance – have been subjected to society's constant negotiations. New signifying appropriations of the music and its usages were followed and challenged by yet newer (re)signifying appropriations. The ambiguous and contradictory roles and meanings ascribed to Jamaican reggae in Freetown calls to mind Quayson's (2003: xviii) notion of intersectional and conjunctural phenomena. Quayson defines these phenomena by two basic attributes: firstly, they are constituted by ambiguity and contradiction; secondly, they are constitutively embedded in what he calls 'a variety of structural relations' (*ibid.*). While he evolves this notion from the analysis of literary works, music can be thought of as fitting equally

well into it. In fact, due to its inherently 'fluctuating' and diffusive character, music might be even a better-suited exemplification of conjunctural phenomena than works of the written word. Freetown's reggae was (and is) an intersectional and 'conjunctural' phenomenon throughout. The music's significance for extra-musical domains – its *social* meanings – depend on, and are contested by, the respective audiences that appropriate (read: listen and dance to) it and by the respective spatial, social, political, economic, and historical contexts and realms these audiences constitute and are constituted in (Barber 1997b: 347). And as diverse, ambiguous and contradictory the scopes and characters of its audiences are, as diverse, ambiguous and contradictory are the scopes and characters of the musical phenomenon of reggae.

In the socio-economic and political set-up of Stevens' autocratic and repressive state of the 1970s and '80s, marginalised groups appropriated reggae as a sonic symbol of defiance against the state. At the same time, those Freetonians who formed the very heart of political and economic power used it for mere entertainment purposes – a dimension not less present with regard to the reggae songs played in the *potes*. By means of reggae's heightened diffusion through the broadcasts of Gabon's *Radio Numéro Un*, yet another dimension was added to its disseminations across Freetown's soundscapes: that of a mere musical backdrop to people's 'regular' encounters in 'regular' bars. In the erratic period of the 1990s, the contradictions grew evermore blatant. Dependent on where, by whom, and under what circumstances reggae was played, consumed, and 'put to use', the meanings associated with the (very) same sounds and songs ranged from hope and courage to horror and despair. The figure of Bob Marley, both in its sonic and visual imagery (esp. t-shirts), proved a paramount vehicle for the exposure of reggae's intersectional, conjunctural and contradictory (social) meanings.

As Adorno (1975: 186) states, what music's idiom represents most vigorously is in fact the very *absence* of firm meaning. Music is the flagship of the 'principles of antinomy' that constitute humanity and its human crudities. It is, furthermore, not *despite* but *because of* music's seemingly universalistic nature and appeal that the meanings ascribed to it beget a contradictory and much contested scope (Stasik 2012b). Music's social meanings, we might thus follow, are neither fixed *in* the music nor can they be 'read' or interpretatively deduced *from* it. Meaning is, on the contrary, eminently fragile, context-dependent and -derived, and therefore most open for various contested usages and appropriations.

This fluctuant, elusive and ever-negotiable 'nature' of meaning was, maybe most lucidly, formulated by Wittgenstein in his reflections on the meaning of 'meaning', in which he puts forward the clear cut sentence: 'The use of a word in the language is its meaning' (1974: 60). From there, he draws up the metaphor of cause and effect to

explicate how meaning relates and is attached to its words (in use): 'If [...] by the word 'meaning' we mean a characteristic sensation connected with the use of a word, then the relation between explanation of a word and its meaning is that of cause and effect' (*ibid.*). Meaning is the *effect* of a word's explanation, while the explanation in turn is inextricably bound to its usage, which is its 'ostensive definition' as Wittgenstein adds (*ibid.*). In order to understand, apprehend and *explain* a phenomenon's meaning we thus cannot settle for the investigation of its mere appearance but have to dig into its specific, 'ostensive' *usages* – which are the cause of the phenomenon's respective meaning(s). The mere listening to a society's (own) songs and music might thus reveal nothing but the interpretations of the one who listens and writes about 'it'. The listening to the 'music-itself' (and the transcribing of its lyrics and artists' explanations) will not suffice. In order to clear an analytical space for society's constitutive ambiguities and contradictions, which in this sense can be said to be 'mirrored' in the broken glasses of music's ambiguous and contradicting social meanings, meaning has to be freed from its narrowing 'intrinsic' pre-assumptions. Drawing on Wittgenstein's philosophy of meaning, Geertz derives the following methodological maxim for the study of 'meaning' in the ethnographic field:

[M]eaning is not intrinsic in the objects, acts, processes, and so on, which bear it, but [...] imposed upon them; and the explanation of its properties must therefore be sought in that which does the imposing – men living in society. The study of thought is, to borrow a phrase from Joseph Levenson, the study of men thinking' (1973: 405).

Borrowing, and adjusting, in turn that phrase from Geertz, we might thus conclude that the study of music (and its meanings) is the study of men (and women) making, using, listening, and dancing to music.

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Animal Metaphors in Hausa and Swahili Bible Translations

Henrike Firsching

This paper attempts a comparison of animal metaphor translations in four Hausa and six Swahili bibles. The aim is to discover different methods of metaphor translation. An important focus of the paper is on the translation of animals which occur in the bible but not in the environment of Hausa or Swahili speakers. This pertains to the bear, the wolf, the hind and the partridge, which are part of some examples of metaphor investigated here. These examples are contrasted with metaphors containing the expressions 'lion' and 'sheep' which are native animals to Hausa and Swahili speaking areas. The comparison of ten biblical metaphors and their translations shows the translators' preference for rendering the metaphor basically unchanged into the target language by using the same animal as in the original metaphor. In some cases though, the animal is replaced by an animal which is common in Hausa or Swahili speaking areas.

Keywords: Hausa, Swahili, animal metaphors, bible translation, source domain

Introduction

Animals are commonly used in metaphors to describe a person, i.e. 'there is a semantic transfer of the attributes that are associated with the animal to refer to the behaviour of humans' (Charteris-Black 2004:182). This requires of the reader 'a high level of familiarity as regards typical animal attributes and behaviour in relation to humans' (ibid.:185). Bible translators might take this familiarity as given concerning animals which are domestic in the environment of the target group. But how do they deal with animals which occur in biblical metaphors but not in Hausa or Swahili speaking areas? Do they simply translate the animal regardless of the culture-specific symbolic meaning attached to it, or do they choose a different expression which triggers similar associations in Hausa or Swahili as the animal used in the original metaphor?

Both approaches are found in translation examples taken from various Swahili and Hausa bible versions. This paper attempts a comparison of metaphor translations in the respective bibles. Since

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the Old Testament was mainly written in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek, these two languages serve as basis for the comparison. However, only for some Hausa and Swahili bibles, information about the source texts of the translation could be obtained. It has to be assumed that not all translations were produced on the basis of the biblical languages. Most probably, English bibles such as the King James Bible were also consulted. Nevertheless, a comparison of the Hausa and Swahili passages with Hebrew and Greek texts makes sense in order to show potential diversions from the biblical text. An English bible is also quoted if it seems to have influenced the translation.

The major objective of this study⁷ is to identify different methods of metaphor translation and contrast various Hausa and Swahili bible versions particularly with regard to their ways of handling animal metaphors. Another main research interest of this paper is the translation of metaphors containing animals which are part of the biblical cultures but not of Hausa or Swahili speaking areas versus metaphors with animals that Hausa and Swahili speakers are familiar with. The bible is an especially apt source text for this study because of its inviolability as a sacred text. Since the bible is considered the word of God, translators are likely to focus on conveying its original meaning rather than creating an aesthetic piece of literary work.

Hausa and Swahili bible translations

This section briefly introduces the Hausa and Swahili bibles taken into account for the research. The bible sample consists of four Hausa versions as opposed to six in Swahili. This proportion reflects the number of bibles in circulation: more bibles have been translated into Swahili than into Hausa. Probably, there are more Christians among Swahili speakers than among the mainly Muslim Hausa: thus the need of bible translations is stronger in Swahili than in Hausa. The set of bibles chosen for this study is supposed to mirror this situation.

Another purpose of the sample is to present older translations compared to recent ones as well as versions produced by various translators using different translation methods. Some bibles were produced by Western missionaries, others by native speakers or a team of both. For the majority of the bible versions, some information about the translators and the translation process is available. However, in most cases, this does not apply to native speakers even though they were important in many translation projects. Their names are hardly indicated, and according to Mojola (1999: 125) 'in cases where they are mentioned, they are identified merely as informants, helpers or assistants, even though we know that some of the local participants played significant and indispensable roles in the actual

⁷ This study is part of my dissertation project entitled 'The translation of biblical metaphors in Hausa and Swahili'.

translation process.’ Unfortunately, it is first and foremost the European missionary translator whose work is valued (ibid.: 57). A limiting factor in the choice of bibles was their availability. For this reason, it was not possible to investigate the first published edition of all bibles and a reprint or revision was used in some cases. The following table gives an overview of the bible versions:⁸

Year published	Title	Translators	Source texts ⁹
1919	<i>Maagano ya kale</i> . The Old Testament in Swahili (Mombasa). (reprint from 1914)	H.K. Binns (1914 edition translated by H.K. Binns and W. E. Taylor)	?
1925	<i>Agano jipya. La bwana na mwokozi wetu Yesu Kristo kimefasirika katika maneno ya kiyunani</i> . The New Testament in Swahili (Zanzibar). Revised edition.	Edward Steere, revised by Frank Weston and Godfrey Dale	Hebrew, Greek
1937	<i>Biblia ndio maandiko matakafu yote ya agano la kale nayo ya agano jipya katika msemu wa Kiswahili</i> .	Karl Roehl assisted by Martin Nganisya and Andrea Ndekeja	?
1952	<i>Biblia. Maandiko matakafu ya Mungu yaitwayo BIBLIA yaani agano la kale na agano jipya</i> . The holy bible in Kiswahili.	translated under supervision of Butcher and Hellier	Greek
1995	<i>Biblia. Habari njema kwa watu wote. yenye vitabu vya deuterokanoni. Tafsiri ya ushirikiano wa makanisa</i> .	Peter Renju (Roman Catholic), Cosmas Haule (Roman Catholic), Jared Mwanjalla (Anglican), Mahava (Lutheran), Oendo (Seventh Day Adventists), Waruta (Baptist), Mhina (Anglican), Kalugila (Lutheran)	?
2009	<i>Biblica Swahili bible</i>	?	Hebrew, Greek
1932	<i>Litafi mai-tsarki. Tsofon alkawali da sabon alkawali</i> . The holy bible in Hausa.	Walter R.S. Miller, J.L. Maxwell, Fairlie and H.G. Farrant, A.P. Stirrett, A.M. Benson, R.A. Dickson, assisted by nationals	?
1965	<i>Linjila. Sabon alkawarin ubangijimmu Yesu almasihu macecimmu</i> . The New Testament in Hausa.	G.P. Bargery, I.M. and C. Sanderson, six nationals	?
1972	<i>Linjila. Sabon alkawarin ubangijimmu Yesu almasihu macecimmu</i> . The New Testament in Hausa.	slight revision of 1965 edition, prepared by Daniel N. Wambutda and Peter W. Turner	?
2007	<i>Litafi mai-tsarki</i> . The holy bible in Hausa.	Old Testament: most likely translated by D.N. Wambutda, Chidawa B. Kabaruk, Paul Yusufu, Maikudi Kure New Testament: revised version of 1972 NT	Hebrew

⁸ The information about the bibles and their translators is drawn from Chesworth 2008, Mojola 1994, 1999, 2000, Stock 1899a, 1899b, 1899c, 1916 and Wambutda 1981. For complete references of the bibles, see reference section.

⁹ Not for all bible versions in the sample reliable information about the language skills of the translators and the source texts used in the translation process could be obtained at this stage of research.

Metaphor translation types

The definition of metaphor taken as basis for this study is the one developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980: 5): 'The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.' For example, in the metaphor 'she is a dove', a woman is understood in terms of a dove, i.e. the characteristics of a dove are projected on her. The source domain is the conceptual domain which provides the metaphorical expression used to understand another domain, the dove in the given example. The conceptual domain which is described in terms of the source domain is the target domain, in this case the woman who is described as a dove (cf. Kövecses 2002: 4; Barcelona 2000: 3).

This paper focuses on metaphors with animals as source domains. The Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament) biblical text passages are compared with their Hausa and Swahili translations found in the various bibles introduced above. Every metaphor translation is then assigned a certain metaphor translation type. The system of metaphor translation types used here was inspired by categories of metaphor translation as presented in Floor 2007, Hofmann 1980, Kjær 1988, Kuth 1995, Thelen 1996, Newmark 1981 and Schäffner 1999.

Basically, three types of metaphor translations are distinguished: translations which preserve the original metaphor (type 1), translations which turn the metaphor into a comparison or simile (type 2) and translations which are non-metaphorical (type 3). These main translation types refer to the translation of the whole metaphor phrase, e.g. the phrase 'he is a lion'. Each type splits into three subtypes which refer to the translation of the metaphorical source domain, e.g. 'lion' in the example provided in the following table.

Metaphor translation types	Example: 'He is a lion.'
1. The metaphor is preserved ...	
a) ... with the same source domain as in the original	He is a lion .
b) ... with a different source domain from the same semantic field	He is a wild animal .
c) ... with a different source domain from a different semantic field	He is an earthquake .
2. The metaphor is translated as comparison/simile ...	
a) ... with the same source domain as in the original	He is like a lion .
b) ... with a different source domain from the same semantic field	He is like a wild animal .
c) ... with a different source domain from a different semantic field	He is like an earthquake .
3. The metaphor is translated as non-metaphorical paraphrase ...	
a) ... with the expression used as source domain in the original	He is a man with the character of a lion .
b) ... with an expression from the same semantic field as the original source domain	He is a man with the character of a wild animal .
c) ... with an expression from a different semantic field than the original source domain	He is dangerous .

The purpose of the translation types is to facilitate the comparison of different translations and to give an overview of the various translations of a metaphor example. Nevertheless, not every metaphor translation can be definitely assigned to a certain translation type: the types serve as orientation and are not to be treated as clear-cut categories.

Examples of animal metaphors and their translations

Six different animals are the source domains of the metaphors analysed in this paper: the lion, the sheep, the bear, the wolf, the hind and the partridge. The lion and the sheep occur in the bible as well as in contemporary Hausa and Swahili speaking areas. Hence the translators are likely to assume a familiarity of their target group with the symbolic meaning of the animals and might therefore use the same expressions in their translations. The bear, the wolf, the hind and the partridge, on the contrary, were part of the fauna in the biblical land, but do not exist in the environment of either Hausa or Swahili speakers. The target group of the bible translations might thus not know the characteristics associated with these animals in metaphorical use.

The examples are presented in tables which also show the Hebrew or Greek biblical text with my own English translation. I intended this translation to be either literal or as close as possible to the original so that the metaphor can be captured even by readers who do not know Hebrew or Greek. The references to the Hausa and Swahili bible versions are abbreviated by mentioning only 'H' for 'Hausa' or 'S' for 'Swahili' and the year of publication. The metaphorical source domain is highlighted in grey or in bold print.

In none of the examples, all ten bibles of the sample can be quoted because some bibles contain only the New or only the Old Testament. In case of a metaphor from the Old Testament, seven translations are mentioned (two in Hausa and five in Swahili), whereas examples from the New Testament are quoted from nine bibles (four in Hausa and five in Swahili).

The lion (Prov 28:15 I, Lam 3:10-11 II, Zep 3:3 I)

Until 100 B.C. the lion was native to Israel/Palestine and Greece. Lions also exist in Eastern as well as in Western Africa (cf. Cansdale/Schütz-Schuffert 2009: 1562). The Israelites experienced the lion as a terrible enemy and a fatal threat against their flock. Obviously the number of people having really encountered a lion face to face was few, which gave rise to a broad mythology centring on the lion. Ferocity was commonly associated with the lion: 'Malicious in action, premeditated in harm, ruthlessly efficient in killing, the lion metaphorically embodies evil' (Ryken 1998: 30). Additionally, the lion was a symbol of royalty and power: 'Because when the lion is on the hunt something is going to die; it symbolizes the absolute power of kings and even of God' (ibid.).

Also in the African context the lion in many cases represents danger. It is sometimes said to be the king of the animals. Despite its power, the lion may also be depicted as stupid in African literature (cf. Möhlig 1998: 142). The bible applies several terms for 'lion'. The most prominent one is the Hebrew *'aryēh*. This term is part of the first metaphor found in Prov. 28:15 which describe a king who terrifies his people as 'growling lion':

Prov 28:15 I ¹⁰	
<p style="text-align: right;">אַרְיֵה־נֹהֵם [...] מְשֹׁל־רָשָׁע עַל עַם־דָּל: <i>a growling lion [...] is an outrageous ruler over a poor people</i></p>	
1 a	<p>S 1937: 'Simba angurumaye [...] ni mtu asiyemcha Mungu akitawala watu wanyonge.' <i>A roaring lion [...] is a man who does not fear God and who rules weak people</i></p>
2b	<p>H 1932: 'Kamar zaki mai-ruri, [...] Hakanan ne mugun mai-mulki a bisa talakawa masu-mayata.' <i>Like a roaring lion, [...] so is an evil ruler over those who are poor and destitute</i></p> <p>H 2007: 'Talakawa ba su da wani taimako sa'ad da suke karkashin mulkin mugun. Abin tsoro ne shi kamar zaki mai ruri, [...]' <i>The poor do not have any help when they are under a ruler of evil. He is a thing to fear like a roaring lion, [...]</i></p> <p>S 1919: 'Kama alivyo simba angurumae, [...]; Ndivyo alivyo mwenyi kutawala aliye dhalimu aliye juu ya watu masikini.' <i>Like a roaring lion, [...]; so is someone who rules and who is unjust and who is over poor people</i></p> <p>S 1952: 'Kama simba angurumaye, [...]; Ndivyo alivyo mtu mbaya awatawalaye maskini.' <i>Like a roaring lion, [...]; so is an evil man who rules poor people</i></p> <p>S 1995: 'Mtawala mwovu anayewatawala maskini, ni kama simba angurumaye [...].' <i>An evil ruler who rules poor people, is like a roaring lion [...]</i></p> <p>S 2009: 'Kama simba angurumaye [...], ndivyo alivyo mtu mwovu atawalaye wanyonge.' <i>Like a roaring lion [...], so is an evil man who rules the weak</i></p>

Only the S 1937 bible maintains the original metaphor in the translation and calls the terrible ruler *simba angurumaye* ('roaring lion'). It is thus a type 1a translation. The other bibles turn the metaphor into a comparison and use *zaki* in Hausa or *simba* in Swahili ('lion') which classifies them as type 2a. Their translations sound very similar to the English King James Bible, in which this verse reads: 'As a roaring lion and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people'. This might mean that some of the translators could have consulted this bible as a help in the translation process. In the next example, the lion is used to describe an enemy:

¹⁰ The Roman numerals indicate that more than one metaphor from this verse is analyzed in the course of this study, e.g. Prov 28:15 I denotes the first metaphor investigated in Prov 28:15.

Lam 3:10-11 II	
אַרְיֵה בְּמִסְתָּרִים: <i>he is [...] a lion in hiding</i>	
2a	<p>H 1932: '[...] yana yi mani kwanto, kamar zaki chikin ruƙuƙinsa.'</p> <p><i>[...] he is lying in wait for me, like a lion in his hidden spot.</i></p> <p>H 2007: 'Ya zamar mini [...], Kamar zaki a boye cikin ruƙuƙi '</p> <p><i>He was to me [...], like a lion hiding in a hidden spot.</i></p> <p>S 1919: 'Yeye, hali aliyo kwangu mimi, [...], mfano wa simba mwahali mwa siri-siri.'</p> <p><i>He, they way he was to me, [...], like a lion in a hidden place</i></p> <p>S 1937: 'Yeye akaniwia [...] au kama simba aliye mafichoni.'</p> <p><i>He was to me [...] or like a lion in a hiding</i></p> <p>S 1952: 'Alivyo kwangu ni [...], Kama simba aliye mafichoni.'</p> <p><i>He was to me [...], like a lion in a hiding</i></p> <p>S 1995: 'Yeye [...]; ni kama simba aliyejificha.'</p> <p><i>[...], like a lion which is hidden</i></p> <p>S 2009: '[...], kama simba mafichoni, ameniburuta kutoka katika njia'</p> <p><i>[...], like a lion in hiding he has dragged me from the way</i></p>

In this case, all the Hausa and Swahili bibles opt for a type 2a translation, i.e. a comparison using the Hausa term *zaki* or the Swahili equivalent *simba* ('lion'). Again, the King James Version is strikingly similar: 'He was unto me as a bear lying in wait, and as a lion in secret places'. The following metaphor describes rulers as cruel and ruthless by using the image of a lion:

Zeph 3:3 I	
שָׂרִיָּהּ בְּקִרְבָּהּ אֲרִיֹת שֹׂאֲגִים [...] <i>her rulers in her midst are roaring lions [...]</i>	
1 a	H 1932: 'Sarakunanta a chikin tsakiyatta zakuna ne masu-ruri' <i>Her kings in her midst are lions that roar</i> H 2007: 'Shugabanninsa zakoki ne masu ruri' <i>Its leaders are lions that roar</i> S 1919: 'Hao wakuu wakwe walio ndani yakwe huwa ni simba wangurumao' <i>Its rulers who are in its midst are lions that roar</i> S 1937: 'Wakuu wake waliomo mwake ni simba wangurumao' <i>Its rulers who are in its midst are lions that roar</i> S 1952: 'Wakuu wake walio ndani yake ni simba wangurumao' <i>Its rulers who are in its midst are lions that roar</i> S 1995: 'Viongozi wake ni simba wangurumao' <i>Its leaders are lions that roar</i> S 2009: 'Maafisa wake ni simba wangurumao' <i>Its officers are lions that roar</i>

Contrary to the previous examples, this metaphor is translated quite directly by all the Hausa and Swahili bibles. They apply *zakuna/zakoki* in Hausa or *simba* in Swahili ('lions') and belong to type 1a. Consulting the King James Bible, it is striking that it also translates metaphors without forming a simile in this case: 'Her princes within her are roaring lions'. To summarise the findings about the translations of the various lion metaphors, one could conclude that because of the familiarity of Hausa and Swahili speakers with this animal, the translators of the Hausa and Swahili bibles decided to maintain the lion in all examples analysed here. In some cases they turned a metaphor into a comparison. Whether the reason for this decision was to render the metaphor more comprehensible or simply the translator's adherence to the King James Bible remains unclear.

The flock or the sheep (1Chr 21:17, 1Pt 5:2)

With almost 400 references, the most frequently occurring animal in the bible is the Hebrew expression *šōn* meaning flock or sheep. This is due to the prevalence of sheep as one of the main economic pillars of ancient Israel. The kind of flock the bible refers to is a group of sheep sometimes mixed with goats (cf. Ryken 1998: 292-3, 782-5; Firmage 1992: 1126). Hence, *šōn* can be translated as 'flock' or 'sheep'. The particular characteristics of sheep give rise to an enhanced symbolism. On their own, sheep are helpless and unable to find their way. They totally depend on the shepherd to find water and pasture. The people of Israel or the church in the New Testament are likened to a flock with God as their guiding shepherd (cf. Ryken 1998: 293).

The main Hebrew term denoting ‘flock’ or ‘sheep’ is *šōn* which as a collective noun includes sheep and goats (cf. Cansdale/Schütz-Schuffert 2009: 1557). This expression is the source domain of the first example. It is David who says these words to God in order to prevent him from punishing the whole people of Israel for his own disobedience towards God. David calls the Israelites ‘flock’ or ‘sheep’ in this example.

1Chr 21:17	
וְאֵלֶּה הַצֹּאֵן מִה עָשׂוּ <i>and this flock, what have they done</i>	
1 a	H 1932: ‘amma waɗannan tumaki , mi suka yi?’ <i>but these sheep, what have they done</i> S 1937: ‘Lakini hawa kondoo wamefanya nini?’ <i>But these sheep, what have they done?</i> S 1919, 1952: ‘lakini kondoo hawa, wamefanya nini?’ <i>but these sheep, what have they done</i> S 1995: ‘Lakini kondoo hawa wamefanya nini?’ <i>But these sheep, what have they done</i> S 2009: ‘Hawa ni kondoo tu. Kwani wao wamekosa nini?’ <i>These are just sheep, why them, what have they done</i>
3c	H 2007: ‘amma waɗannan talakawa fa, me suka yi?’ <i>but these poor people, what have they done</i>

Most of the bibles maintain the metaphor in their translation and therefore belong to type 1a. The Swahili expression used is *kondoo* and the Hausa bibles apply *tumaki*, both meaning ‘sheep’. The H 2007 bible translators opted for a non-metaphoric paraphrase which reads *amma waɗannan talakawa fa, me suka yi* (‘but these poor people, what have they done?’). The sheep are replaced by *talakawa*. A *talaka* is ‘A person who holds no official position of any sort; the “man in the street”; a poor person; one who is destitute’ (Bargery 1993: 983). This translation is hence categorised as type 3c. The concept of sheep is also prominent in the New Testament. The next metaphor appears in a letter from the apostle Peter to church elders, whom he encourages to lead the believers in the way shepherds tend their flock:

1Pt 5:2	
<p>ποιμάνατε τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποίμνιον τοῦ θεοῦ <i>pasture the flock of God which is among you</i></p>	
1 a	<p>H 1932: 'Ku yi kiwon garken Allah wanda ke wurinku' <i>Tend the flock of God which is among you</i></p> <p>H 1965, 1972: 'ku yi kiwon garken Allah da ke tare da ku' <i>tend the flock of God which is with you</i></p> <p>H 2007: 'ku yi kiwon garken Allah da yake tare da ku' <i>tend the flock of God which is with you</i></p> <p>S 1925: 'lichungeni kundi la Kristo lililo kwenu' <i>tend the flock of Christ which is with you</i></p> <p>S 1937, 1952: 'lichungeni kundi la Mungu lililo kwenu' <i>tend the flock of God which is with you</i></p> <p>S 2009: 'Lichungeni kundi la Mungu mlilokabidhiwa' <i>Tend the flock of God wich is kept</i></p> <p>S 1995: 'mlichunge lile kundi la Mungu mlilokabidhiwa' <i>tend the flock of God which is kept</i></p>

The Greek expression *poimnion*, which is the source domain of this metaphor, is a diminutive and refers to a small flock of animals. As in the previous example, all Hausa and Swahili bible translators opt for a translation of type 1a using the Hausa expression *garke* or the Swahili lexeme *kundi* ('flock'). This time, the original metaphor comprises the verb *poimainō* ('to herd, graze, pasture') which is rendered by *kiwo* in Hausa and *kuchunga* in Swahili, both referring to tending, grazing, etc

Pertaining to biblical metaphors with the source domains 'sheep' or 'flock', the Hausa and Swahili bibles considered here usually translate them almost unchanged. With one exception, both examples given are rendered as type 1a translations, i.e. as metaphors retaining the original source domain.

The bear (Prov 28:15 II, Lam 3:10-11 I)

Bears existed in Israel/Palestine until the beginning of the 20th century. The Israelites had to fear attacks of bears on sheep especially during winter times. The bear was a bigger threat to them than the lion, because bears are stronger and their reactions less predictable (cf. Cansdale/Schütz-Schuffert 2009: 1562). The bible mentions the bear about a dozen times and depicts it as a dangerous animal associated with violence and power. Especially terrifying are its strong paws and claws (cf. Ryken 1998: 30).

Since bears are not found on the African continent any more (the atlas bear had lived in North Africa from Morocco to Libya before the 1870s) the translators cannot imply that Hausa and Swahili speakers

are well informed about a bear's characteristics and its symbolic meaning (cf. 'Bear'). According to Ryken (1998: 30), because of its heavy-handedness the bear is likened to a 'wicked man ruling over a helpless people', as in this example from the book of Proverbs:

Prov 28:15 II	
<p>וְדָבַר שׁוֹקֵק מִשָּׁל עַל עַם-דָּל: [...] <i>[...] and an attacking bear is an outrageous ruler over a poor people</i></p>	
1b	<p>S 1937: '[...] na chui atamaniye kula ni mtu asiyemcha Mungu akitawala watu wanyonge.' <i>[...] and a leopard longing for feed is a man who does not fear God and who rules weak people</i></p>
2a	<p>H 1932: '[...] kamar bear kuma mai-farauta Hakanan ne mugun mai-mulki a bisa talakawa masu-mayata.' <i>[...] and like a hunting bear: so is an evil ruler over those who are poor and destitute</i></p> <p>H 2007: 'Talakawa ba su da wani taimako sa'ad da suke karkashin mulkin mugun. Abin tsoro ne shi kamar [...], ko beyar mai sanda' <i>The poor do not have any help when they are under a ruler of evil. he is a thing to fear like [...], and a crouching bear</i></p> <p>S 1919: 'Kama [...] na duba mwenyi kutanga-tanga; Ndivyo alivyo mwenyi kutawala aliye dhalimu aliye juu ya watu masikini.' <i>Like [...], and a strolling bear; so is someone who rules and who is unjust and who is over poor people</i></p> <p>S 1952: 'Kama [...], na dubu mwenye njaa; Ndivyo alivyo mtu mbaya awatawalaye maskini.' <i>Like [...], and a hungry bear; so is an evil man who rules poor people</i></p> <p>S 1995: 'Mtawala mwovu anayewatawala maskini, ni kama [...] au dubu anayeshambulia.' <i>An evil ruler who rules poor people, is like [...] or an attacking bear</i></p> <p>S 2009: 'Kama [...] au dubu ashambuliaye, ndivyo alivyo mtu mwovu atawalaye wanyonge.' <i>Like [...] or an attacking bear, so is an evil man who rules the weak</i></p>

The most interesting among the translations is S 1937 because it replaces 'bear' with *chui* ('leopard'). This animal is known as predator in East Africa. In African literature, the leopard is depicted as impulsive, hot-tempered and cruel. In some cultures, it represents a king and local authorities use its fur as their attire (cf. Möhlig 1998: 134). These characteristics perfectly correspond to the image of the unjust ruler in the metaphor in Prov 28:15.

The other bibles do not exchange the bear with another animal. Their translations are comparisons of type 2a. In Hausa, the terms *bear* and *beyar* are used, obviously taken from English. The question as to what Hausa speakers associate these terms with can only be assumed at this point of the research: the 'bear' does not appear in

Bargery's Hausa dictionary, which suggests that the majority of Hausa speakers is neither acquainted with this term nor has ever come across the corresponding animal. The fact that the translators apply a non-existent loan such as *bear* shows that they either did not find an appropriate Hausa equivalent or did not want to deviate from the biblical text by choosing a different animal.

In S 1919, 1952, 1995 and 2009, 'bear' is translated by *duba* or *dubu*. These expressions are Arabic loans, as are a huge number of other Swahili words. Even though *dubu* has found its way into Johnson's dictionary, many Swahili speakers, especially those living in rural areas without having ever left their country might not have a clear picture of a bear in mind. In the next example, the metaphor is rendered as comparison in all Hausa and Swahili bibles. The writer who feels being punished by God describes God as a bear:

Lam 3:10-11 I	
דָּב אֲרֵב הוּא לִי	
<i>he is a bear ambushing me, [...]</i>	
2a	<p>H 1932: 'kamar bear yana yi mani kwanto, [...].' <i>like a bear he is lying in wait for me, [...].</i></p> <p>H 2007: 'Ya zamar mini kamar beyar wanda yake fako, [...].' <i>He was to me like a bear lying in wait, [...].</i></p> <p>S 1919: 'Yeye, hali aliyo kwangu mimi, ni mfano wa duba aoteae, [...].' <i>He, they way he was to me, is like a bear lying in wait, [...].</i></p> <p>S 1952: 'Alivyo kwangu ni kama dubu aoteaye, [...].' <i>He was to me like a bear lying in wait, [...].</i></p> <p>S 1995: 'Yeye ni kama dubu anayenivizia; [...].' <i>He is like a bear ambushing me, [...].</i></p> <p>S 2009: 'Kama dubu aviziaye, [...].' <i>Like an ambushing bear, [...].</i></p>
2b	<p>S 1937: 'Yeye akaniwia kama nyegere aoteaye [...].' <i>He was to me like a mongoose lying in wait [...].</i></p>

Most of the translations belong to type 2a because they use 'bear' in a simile. The renderings of 'bear' in these translations are the same as in the previous example: *bear* or *beyar* in the Hausa bibles and *duba* or *dubu* in the Swahili bibles. Again, the S 1937 translation differs from the others in comparing the enemy with a *nyegere* ('mongoose, skunk'). The mongoose is native to Africa South of the Sahara and hence familiar to the target group of the Swahili bible. Nevertheless, information about a symbolism surrounding it could not be obtained so far. Mongooses are predators but they are not known to attack human beings (cf. 'Mongoose'). Another open question is why Roehl used *nyegere* ('mongoose') in this verse and *chui* ('leopard') in the previous example.

What these examples show is that the S 1937 bible seems to have a tendency of substituting animals which are foreign to Swahili speakers by other animals more familiar to them. However, it is not clear whether Roehl's objective in this case was to transfer the metaphor into Swahili culture or to avoid the use of an Arabic loan.¹¹ The other bibles maintained the bear even though it is not native to the environments of their target groups.

The wolf (Gen 49:27, Mt 7:15)

Wolves are native to Europe, Asia and North America, but not to Africa South of the Sahara (cf. 'Gray Wolf'). Until the time of the New Testament wolves were numerous enough in the biblical land to be a threat to livestock (cf. Cansdale/Schütz-Schuffert 2009: 1562). Symbolically, the wolf is portrayed as 'bold, opportunistic and ruthless' (Ryken 1998: 30), an 'animal of particular ferocity' (ibid: 958). It is used to describe false prophets, self-serving religious authorities and people who persecute the church (cf. Hennig 1990: 885; Ryken 1998: 958).

Despite the negative image of this animal, Jacob calls his son Benjamin a wolf in Gen. 49:27. According to Bräumer (2005: 243) who considers that especially non-semitic ancient peoples honoured the wolf, a positive association of this metaphor is well possible: the wolf being smaller than the lion symbolises Benjamin's courage and strength. Ryken (1998: 30) on the contrary sees Benjamin's 'opportunistic misadventures within the pack of twelve tribes' as reason for comparing this tribe to a wolf.

¹¹ In his bible translation, Roehl wanted to 'purify' Swahili from Arabic loanwords which he associated with Islam. He aimed at 'minimizing its Arabic lexical borrowing while at the same time maximizing the use of its Bantu lexical roots as reflected by usage in the interior of mainland Tanganyika' (Mojola 2000: 516). Topan (1992: 340) criticizes this strategy by accusing Roehl of excluding 'good Swahili words' and applying an 'impoverished form of the language'.

Gen 49:27	
בְּנֵימִין זָאֵב יִטְרֹף	
<i>Benjamin is a wolf that rends</i>	
1b	<p>H 1932: 'Banyamin kerkechi ne mai-zafin kawa' <i>Benjamin is a wild hunting dog with great desire</i></p> <p>H 2007: 'Biliyaminu kyarkeci ne mai kisa' <i>Benjamin is a wild hunting dog that kills</i></p> <p>S 1919: 'Benjamin ni mbwa-mwitu mwenyi kurarua-rarua' <i>Benjamin is a wild dog that rends</i></p> <p>S 1937: 'Benyamini ni mbwa wa mwitu mwenye uchu wa damu' <i>Benjamin is a dog of the wilderness with desire for blood</i></p> <p>S 1952: 'Benyamini ni mbwa-mwitu mwenye kurarua-rarua' <i>Benjamin is a wild dog that rends</i></p> <p>S 1995: 'Benyamini ni mbwamwitu mkali' <i>Benjamin is a fierce wild dog</i></p> <p>S 2009: 'Benyamini ni mbwa mwitu mlafi mwenye njaa kuu' <i>Benjamin is a voracious wild dog which is very hungry</i></p>

In all Hausa and Swahili bibles the wolf in this metaphor is rendered as 'wild dog' or 'wild hunting dog'. The Hausa term used is *kerkechi* or *kyarkeci*. In Swahili, *mbwa (wa) mwitu* is the source domain of the metaphor. This is explained as 'jackal, wild dog' in Johnson's Swahili-English dictionary (1939a: 270). The term 'wild dog' commonly refers to members of the dog family of carnivores, the Canidae, e.g. wolves, jackals, coyotes, foxes, etc. Since jackals are known in East as well as West Africa, the Hausa and Swahili terms applied in this metaphor most probably denote the jackal. In many African tales, the dog and other related animals are associated with negative characteristics such as greed, craving for food, uselessness and betrayal (cf. Möhlig 1998: 109-10). The translations belong to type 1b because they are metaphors but contain a different specific expression from the semantic field of animals, or in this case, predators. The next example is from the New Testament and labels false prophets as wolves. The metaphor expresses that the 'name wolf identifies an inner nature that, even if covered in sheep's clothing, shows itself in behaviour' (Ryken 1998: 30).

Mt 7:15	
<p>Προσέχετε ἀπὸ τῶν ψευδοπροφητῶν, οἵτινες ἔρχονται πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν ἐνδύμασιν προβάτων, ἔσωθεν δέ εἰσιν λύκοι ἄρπαγες.</p> <p><i>Beware of false prophets, who come to you in clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are robbing wolves</i></p>	
1b	<p>H 1932: 'Ku yi hankali da masu-karyan annabchi, masu-zuwa wurinku da fatar tumaki, amma daga chiki kerketai ne masu-hauka.'</p> <p><i>Beware of those who give wrong prophecies, they come to you with the skin of sheep, but from inside they are wild hunting dogs who are mad</i></p> <p>H 1965: 'Ku kula da annabawan karya, waɗanda su kan zo muku da siffar tumaki, amma a zuci kuraye ne masu kwace.'</p> <p><i>Pay attention to the prophets of the lie, who come to you with the likeness of sheep, but in the heart they are hyenas who are plundering</i></p> <p>H 1972: 'Ku kula da annabawan karya, waɗanda su kan zo muku da siffar tumaki, amma a zuci kyarketai ne masu kawa.'</p> <p><i>Pay attention to the prophets of the lie, who come to you with the likeness of sheep, but in the heart they are wild hunting dogs who are greedy</i></p> <p>H 2007: 'Ku kula da annabawan karya, waɗanda sukan zo muku da siffar tumaki, amma a zuci kyarketai ne masu kawa.'</p> <p><i>Pay attention to the prophets of the lie, who come to you with the likeness of sheep, but in the heart they are wild hunting dogs who are greedy</i></p> <p>S 1925: 'Jihadharini na manabii wa uwongo, watu wanaowajia wamevaa mavazi ya kondoo, walakini kwa ndani ni mbwa wa mwitu wakali.'</p> <p><i>Be on guard against the prophets of the lie, people who come to you wearing clothing of sheep, but from the inside they are fierce wild dogs</i></p> <p>S 1937: 'Jilindenii kwa ajili ya wafumbuaji wa uwongo! Wanawajia wamevaa kama kondoo, lakini miyoyoni ni mbwa wa mwitu wenye ukali.'</p> <p><i>Protect yourselves for the sake of the prophets of the lie! They come to you dressed like sheep, but in the hearts they are fierce wild dogs</i></p> <p>S 1952: 'Jihadharini na manabii wa uongo, watu wanaowajia wamevaa mavazi ya kondoo, walakini kwa ndani ni mbwa-mwitu wakali.'</p> <p><i>Be on guard against the prophets of the lie, people who come to you wearing clothing of sheep, but from the inside they are fierce wild dogs</i></p> <p>S 1995: 'Jihadharini na manabii wa uongo. Wao huja kwenu wakionekana kama kondoo kwa nje, lakini kwa ndani ni mbwa mwitu wakali.'</p> <p><i>Be on guard against the prophets of the lie. Those come to you looking like sheep from the outside, but from the inside they are fierce wild dogs</i></p> <p>S 2009: 'Jihadharini na manabii wa uongo, wanaowajia wakiwa wamevaa mavazi ya kondoo, lakini ndani wao ni mbwa mwitu wakali.'</p> <p><i>Be on guard against the prophets of the lie, they come to you wearing clothing of sheep, but in their inside they are fierce wild dogs</i></p>

Again, all translations are categorised as type 1b, as in the previous example. The Hausa and Swahili expressions correspond to those found in the other wolf metaphor, apart from one exception which is H 1965: its translators make use of *kuraye* ('hyenas') as metaphorical source domain instead of wolves. This refers to the 'spotted hyena' as indicated by Bargery (1993: 648). Hyenas are, in contrast to wolves, common in the Hausa speaking areas. In African literature, the hyena represents stupidity, greed, cannibalism and witchcraft. It often plays the role of an antihero (cf. Möhlig 1998: 110). Why the translators choose to substitute the wolf by the hyena instead of the wild dog or jackal remains unclear. Considering the two metaphors with the Hebrew or Greek source domain 'wolf', it is striking that in contrast to the 'bear' metaphors, none of the Hausa and Swahili bibles mentions the wolf in their translations. They all replace it by other animals, in most cases this is the wild dog or jackal. The hyena is preferred only once.

One reason for this might be that Hausa as well as Swahili does not have a word for 'wolf'. In his English-Hausa dictionary, Skinner (1965: 213) explains 'wolf' by *wani naman daji na Kasashen sanyi (dangin kare ne)* ('a certain wild animal of cold countries (it is like a dog). In Swahili, Johnson (1939b: 628) gives *mbwa mwitu* ('wild dog') as translation for 'wolf'; the same expression is used in the Swahili translations of the 'wolf' metaphors. However, the bible translators might as well have used the English term as some of them did in their translations of the 'bear' metaphor.

The hind (Gen 49:21)

In biblical times, there were three species of deer in Israel/Palestine: red deer, fallow deer and roe deer. Distinguished qualities of the deer are springiness and a confident step. The Hebrew term *'ayyāl* (in the example given below, the feminine form *'ayyālāh* is used) is derived from a root with the meaning 'to be strong, ahead, mighty' and was presumably used for red and fallow deer in most biblical references (cf. Hennig 1990: 876; Bräumer 2005: 238). The deer does not exist in Eastern or Western Africa (cf. 'Deer'). The following example is taken from the blessing of Jacob. He compares his son Naphtali with a hind. This refers to the quickness and freedom of the tribe of Naphtali whose people were fast and good warriors (cf. Bräumer 2005: 238).

Gen 49:21	
נַפְתָּלִי אֵילָה שְׁלַחָה <i>Naphtali is a hind let loose</i>	
1b	H 1932: 'Naphtali ḍan barewa ne sakakke' <i>Naphtali is a young dorcas gazelle straying around</i> H 2007: 'Naftali sakakkiyar barewa ce ' <i>Naftali is a straying dorcas gazelle</i> S 1919: 'Nafitali ni kuungu aliyefunguliwa' <i>Naftali is an antelope that was unfastened</i> S 1937: 'Nafutali ni kulungu aliyefunguliwa kukimbia' <i>Naftali is an antelope that was unfastened to run</i> S 1952: 'Naftali ni ayala aliyefunguliwa' <i>Naftali is an unfastened hart</i> S 2009: 'Naftali ni kulungu jike aliyeachiwa huru' <i>Naftali is a female antelope let free</i>
2b	S 1995: 'Naftali ni kama paa aliye huru' <i>Naftali is like a free gazelle</i>

None of the translations mentions the hind used in the original metaphor. The Hausa bibles render it as (*ḍan*) *barewa* (young dorcas gazelle). In the Swahili bibles, different expressions are encountered: *ayala* ('hart'), *kulungu* ('antelope') and *paa* ('gazelle'). These animals are different from the 'hind' used in the Hebrew metaphor and the translations therefore belong to type 1b¹², except for S 1995, which is a comparison and hence type 2b. It cannot be judged from the translations for which reason the translators chose 'gazelle' or 'antelope' instead of 'hind'. Either they thought it more apt to the Hausa or Swahili environment and therefore easier comprehensible, or they translated this way simply because it is not clear which species the Hebrew term *'ayyāl* exactly denotes.

The partridge (Jer 17:11)

The Hebrew term *qōrē* most likely refers to the grey partridge, which is spread over Europe, Asia and North America, but not Africa (cf. 'Grey partridge'). Until the year 1948 the existence of rock partridges in Israel/Palestine is documented. In biblical times the partridge was hunted (cf. Hennig 1990: 882; Firmage 1992: 1144). It was said to collect and hatch eggs laid by other birds. This assumption 'probably stems from the occasional practice of some pairs which lay a second clutch before the first has hatched and combined them after hatching. The older chicks which became independent sooner were not believed to be the pair's own' (Ryken 1998: 94). According to Cansdale/Schütz-Schuffert (2009: 1564) the metaphor in Jer 17:11 does not allude to this practice of the partridge, but to the fact that

¹² The Swahili expression *ayala* ("hart") as the male counterpart of "hind" is considered a different animal as well and therefore the Swahili 1952 translation is categorised as type 1b and not type 1a.

partridges built their nests on the ground and the eggs are therefore without protection. The prophet Jeremiah compares this with the illusive security of fools.

Jer 17:11	
<p>קָרָא דָגַר וְלֹא יָלַד עֹשֶׂה עֵשֶׂר וְלֹא בְמִשְׁפָּט</p> <p>a partridge breeding and not bearing/laying is someone who gains wealth not in justice</p>	
2b	<p>H 1932: 'Kamar makarwa wadda ta kan kwanta a bisa kwan da ba ta saka ba, hakanan kuma mutum na wanda ya tattara dukiya, amma ba ta wurin gaskiya ba'</p> <p>like a francolin which lies down on eggs it has not laid, so is also a man who has collected wealth, but not in the right way</p> <p>H 2007: 'Kamar makwarwar da ta kwanta kan kwan da ba ita ta nasa ba, Haka yake ga wanda ya sami dukiyar haram</p> <p>like a francolin which lies down on eggs it has not laid, so is someone who has gotten immoral wealth</p> <p>S 1919: 'Vilevile kama huyo kereng'ende akusanyae vijana ambavyo hakuviangua mwenyewe, ndivyo alivyo huyo ajipatiye mali, illa si kwa ndia iliyo halali'</p> <p>just like that francolin that gathers young ones that it did not hatch itself, so is the one who gets himself wealth, but not in a way that is lawful</p> <p>S 1937: 'Kama kwale anayelalia mayai, asiyoyataga, ndivyo, alivyo apataye mali kwa kupotoa watu'</p> <p>like a francolin that lies on eggs, which it does not lay, so is someone who gets wealth by corrupting people</p> <p>S 1952: 'Kama kware akusanyaye makinda asiyoyazaa, ndivyo alivyo mtu ajipatiye mali, wala si kwa haki'</p> <p>like a francolin gathering young ones it has not born, so is a man who got himself wealth, but not in a righteous way</p> <p>S 1995: 'Mtu apataye mali isiyo halali ni kama kware akusanyaye makinda ambayo hakuyaangua'</p> <p>A man who gains wealth which is not lawful is like a francolin collecting young ones it has not hatched</p> <p>S 2009: 'Kama kwale aanguaye mayai asiyoyataga, ndivyo alivyo mtu apataye mali kwa njia zisizo za haki'</p> <p>like a francolin hatching eggs it has not laid, so is a man who gains wealth in an unrighteous way.</p>

All bibles investigated translate this metaphor as comparison introduced by *kamar* or *kama* ('like'). The similes belong to type 2b because they replace the original source domain (grey partridge) by a related animal which is native to Africa, the francolin. Grey partridges and francolins are both birds of the phasianidae family. Hence their outer appearance and even their prominent role as prey animal of hunters is very similar.

The Hausa expression used for francolin is *makarwa*. This is described in Bargery's dictionary (1993: 756, 761) as the double-spurred francolin (*Francolinus bicalcaratus*) or the Clapperton's francolin (*Francolinus clappertonis*) which are two different species of francolins, both restricted to Africa. Most of the Swahili bibles apply *kwale* or *kware*, only in S 1919 the term *kereng'ende* is used for francolin. In the translations of these words given by Johnson (1939a: 235), apart from the francolin, the partridge is indicated as

possible rendering even though partridges never existed in Africa. This is most likely due to the fact that Johnson being a European knew the partridge from his home country. He identified the various francolins he encountered in East Africa as closely related to the partridge and hence wanted to point to this in his dictionary. Therefore the animal terms used in the Swahili examples are translated as 'francolin' here and the translations are categorised as type 2b.

Results of the comparison

Preferred metaphor translation types

The translation examples presented above reveal a predominance of certain metaphor translation types: Among the animal metaphors presented in this paper, type 2a is the most frequently used form of rendering a metaphor. Of a total number of 81 translations, 25 belong to this type. Hence, the preferred method the translators apply to cope with animal metaphors is the conversion of the metaphor into a comparison.

Two other translation types occur almost as often as type 2a: type 1a, i.e. the keeping of the original metaphor and its source domain, and type 1b, i.e. a metaphorical translation which makes use of a source domain animal which is different from the original metaphor. Type 1a and 1b are both used 23 times among the examples listed here. Translation type 2b is applied in nine metaphor translations. This translation method renders the metaphor as simile and replaces the original source domain by a different animal. In summary, the bible translators prefer to either create a simile using the original metaphorical source domain (type 2a); keep the original metaphor in their translation (type 1a); or replace the metaphorical source domain by a different animal (type 1b).

It is surprising that translations of subtype 'c' (1c, 2c or 3c) do not occur more often since they would offer the potential of avoiding animals which are not common in Hausa or Swahili speaking areas.¹³

Native versus 'exotic' animals

A main research question posed in the introduction addresses the issue of culture-specific expressions in metaphors, i.e. in this case animals which were part of the biblical environment but are not native in Hausa or Swahili speaking areas. As demonstrated above, the translators usually retain animals which are familiar to the target group and use them in the translation. In the examples investigated

¹³ This is different in other metaphor fields, as shown in my dissertation which includes a corpus of 354 metaphors from the fields 'human body', 'animals', 'botany', 'inorganic nature', 'material culture', 'social culture'.

here, this pertains to the 'lion' and the 'sheep' metaphors. With one exception, they are all translated by translations of subtype 'a', i.e. the original source domain reoccurs in the translation.¹⁴

The 'exotic' examples are the 'bear', 'wolf', 'hind' and 'partridge' metaphors. The metaphors containing these animals are treated in different ways by the translators: the 'bear' is retained in the translations except for the S 1937 bible which refers to *chui* ('leopard') (Prov 28:15 II) or *nyegerere* ('mongoose') (Lam 3:10-11 I) instead. All translators, however, substitute the source domain 'wolf'. They apply *kerkeci/kyarkeci* in Hausa or *mbwa (wa) mwitu* in Swahili (all meaning 'wild (hunting) dog') or similar expressions most probably denoting a jackal. In the H 1965 translation the expression *kuraye* ('hyenas') is used once (Mt 7:15). Thus, in case of the 'wolf' the translators try to replace this source domain by an animal which is part of the environment of Hausa and Swahili speakers. The same method is applied to render the 'hind' and the 'partridge' examples. The bible translators use various expressions to replace the hind: *barewa* ('dorcass gazelle') in Hausa and *kuungu/kulungu* ('antelope') or *paa* ('gazelle') in Swahili. The partridge is substituted by *makwarwa* in Hausa and *kwale/kware* or *kereng'ende* in Swahili. These expressions all denote the 'francolin', a bird very similar to the partridge.

Such adoptions were not carried out in most bibles while translating the 'bear' metaphors (except for the S 1937 bible). The reasons for this remain unclear: did the translators consider the 'bear' and its metaphorical characteristics as familiar to their target group? Did they see this animal as irreplaceable without distorting the respective biblical context too much? Were they not able to find an animal with similar characteristics native to Eastern or Western Africa? These examples confirm that source domains which are unknown to the target speakers pose a challenge in metaphor translation. There are mainly two solutions applied by bible translators:

The most popular strategy in dealing with this problem is to substitute the original source domain by an expression from the same semantic field that the target community is familiar with. Ideally, this new source domain has a similar metaphorical meaning. In the system of metaphor translation types, this method is mirrored by subtype 'b' (1b, 2b, 3b). Most of the 'wolf' metaphors presented above are translated in this way.

The second option is to translate the metaphor without changing its source domain; by doing so the translator creates a subtype 'a' translation (1a, 2a, 3a). This was undertaken in most of the translations of the 'bear' metaphors (except for the translations found in the S 1937 bible).

¹⁴ The exception is found 1Chr 21:17 which is rendered by a type 3c translation in H 2007.

Another possible method would be to produce a translation of subtype 'c' (1c, 2c, 3c), i.e. a metaphor, comparison or non-metaphorical paraphrase with a totally different source domain. Concerning the metaphor field of animals, this translation would contain an expression which does not denote an animal. This strategy was only pursued in one of the examples investigated here, a metaphor with the source domain 'sheep' (1Chr 21:17). The H 2007 bible reads *amma wadannan talakawa fa, me suka yi?* ('but these poor people, what have they done?'). Even though Hausa as well as Swahili speakers experience sheep in their environment, the translators of this bible change the source domain. One would expect to find more translations like this, especially in case of animals which do not belong to the environment of the target group. However, it seems that most of the translators do not want to change the biblical text to such an extent.

Summary

This analysis of metaphor translations shows that the translators of the bibles included here prefer three ways of translating an animal metaphor:

- translation type 2a, i.e. a translation as comparison using the same animal as in the original metaphor
- Translation type 1a, i.e. a metaphorical translation with the same animal as in the original metaphor
- Translation type 1b, i.e. a metaphorical translation in which the original animal is replaced by a different source domain from the semantic field of animals.

In case of an animal which is not native to Hausa or Swahili speaking areas, the translators apply mainly two different solutions:

- they either replace the animal by a local animal which evokes similar associations (translation type 1b), or
- they keep the metaphor and its original source domain in the translation (translation type 1a).

Thus, in order to gain results which are more precise and representative for the bible sample, more animal metaphors need to be taken into account.

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Religious Radio as Factory: Probing the *Mfumo Kristo* Discourse in Tanzania's Radio Imaan and the Popular Blog 'Jamii Forums'

Francis Ngatigwa

The emergence of religious radio broadcasts in Tanzania in the 1990s has not only changed the media landscape with religious content but also influenced the production, distribution and consumption of other new media domains. Also, religious radio broadcasts have become factories of news and initiators of agendas and discourses in the new and social media with influence on the consumers' imagination, thinking and construction of meanings. This article examines the confluence of Radio Imaan, a religious radio owned by Muslim organization based in Morogoro-Tanzania and bloggers of Jamii Forums in constituting the discourse of mfumo Kristo (or Christian hegemony).

Keywords: Religious media, mfumo Kristo, new media, weblogs, bloggers, discourses.

Introduction

This paper probes the discourses before and shortly after the closure of Radio Imaan (RI)¹⁵, a radio station owned by a Muslim organization based in Morogoro-Tanzania and how its contents and status, constituted discourse centred on Christian hegemony or *Mfumo Kristo* among bloggers¹⁶ of Jamii Forums (JF).¹⁷ To achieve

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¹⁵ Radio Imaan aims at broadcasting the word of Allah to reach the masses. RI, through its satellite transmission, covers almost the whole of Tanzania mainland, Zanzibar and reaches beyond the borders of neighboring countries. As of July 2011, there were 364 programmes in RI under four major categories namely Prayers and Islamic knowledge, News and information, Social programmes and Human promotion and welfare. In these categories, Prayers and Islamic knowledge accounts for 60%, News and information for 20%, Human promotion and welfare for 15% and Social programmes for 5%. RI which operates for 24 hours puts priority to programmes on prayers and Islamic knowledge.

¹⁶ In this article bloggers connote participants in online discussions through comments and replies on issues presented in a thread¹⁶ of the Jamii Forums.

¹⁷ The Jamii Forums (JF) has been in existence since 2006. Operating on the motto 'Where we dare to talk openly' the JF is one of the most popular weblog for Kiswahili speakers in Tanzania and beyond for discussion on issues which

these aims, the paper appropriates the concept of 'Factory' as used by Scholz (2013) in which he discusses the shifting of sites of labour markets to the Internet through the lens of their political, technological and historical making. However, in this article the concept of 'Factory' is also used to conceptualize how RI produces news tips for discussion in JF. Additionally, following O'Keeffe's (2006) concept on discourses, discourses in this article have been identified within an interactional rather than a representational or critical framework. In this sense, the study examines the interactions and conversations among bloggers in two of the threads of JF and points out the major discourses which have framed the construction of bloggers' different versions on issues or events which have been presented in JF. This kind of conceptualization lines also with Furlough's analysis of the processes of text production, consumption and distribution (Fairclough, 1992: 7). Under this model when participants produce (communicate) and consume (interpret) a text or talk (in this article a text sourced from RI and presented in the two threads of JF) they draw on members' resources stored in their long-term memory (Fairclough 1989:163). The resources which are cognitive help them to know and construct meaning on what they interpret. The cognitive resources may be conditioned by revolving discourses on certain issues in a given society.

The paper specifically focuses on thread discussions on the six months suspension from broadcasting activities of Radio Imaan and *Kwa Neema* FM (a Christian Radio station that was suspended the same time RI was suspended). The selected thread has been translated from Kiswahili into English and later transcribed. Where necessary, the thread in its Kiswahili version has been retained as can be seen in the footnote. The purpose was to track how this thread constructed or deconstructed discourses on Christian hegemony in Tanzania.

The Mfumo Kristo (Christian Hegemony) Discourse in Tanzania

It is claimed that Tanzanians have been divided by religio-centrism (*udini*). While the genesis of *Udini* is not a straight forward issue to locate and trace in Tanzania, several scholars have pointed to religious revivalism both in Christianity and in Islam as the reason behind the phenomenon (Ludwig 1996, Gifford 1996, Lodhi and Westerlund 1999). Currently, in Tanzania *udini* has become an interpretative and expressive tool in socio-political and economic spheres (Morley 1992, Lederach 1997). For instance, in the An-Nuur

are covered and ignored by the mainstream media. It is the biggest online Tanzania community with 116,847 registered members as of 28 February 2013. The number of members keeps growing daily. Due to the fact that registration allows pseudo-identities, there is a possibility for a multiple memberships. Worth noting, the JF non-members can only access without contributing to the content of the discussions. JF consists of different forums (rooms) which focus on specific issues such as politics, news, business and economics. As of 28 February 2013, JF had 328,799 topics and 5,816,787 posts. JF is online created space for interaction

newspaper owned by Muslims (An-Nuur 2011)¹⁸ the lead story titled “*Waislamu kwenda Mahakamani*”(Muslims to go to Court) analysed the employment opportunities in different public sector whereby the story reports on 2325 employment opportunities given to Christians compared to 142 given to Muslims. Reports such as these and are only an indicator of a growing tendency in Tanzania to view social, political and economic issues through the prisms of religion, which routinely manifests in political competition and related discourses. Worth to note, the media is increasingly becoming the battle ground in which some of these battles are fought (Ndaluka 2012:22). In the online discussions, bloggers are divided on issues on the suspension of RI. Although it is not easy to determine their religious backgrounds, at least one thing is clear from the analysis; their arguments are conditioned by revolving *udini* elements in Tanzania.

More importantly, the *udini* discourse (depending on one’s religious proclivities) is articulated largely as an attempt to dismantle or reform what is known as a Christian hegemony (*Mfumo Kristo*) in Tanzania. The concept of *Mfumo Kristo*, which loosely translates to the Christian hegemony, is a widely held notion among sections of Tanzanian society that attempts to explain the perceived marginalization of Muslims. Indeed, significant sections of the Muslim society feel that the government of Tanzania is operating under *Mfumo Kristo*. According to these discourses and revisionist attempts at historical facts, it is claimed that Julius Nyerere, the first President of Tanzania (1961-1984) is the founder of the Christian hegemony. According to the propagators of *Mfumo Kristo*, the concept does not refer to a specific religious background or affiliation of a president who is on power but the system under which the government of Tanzania operates.¹⁹ Muslims claim that *Mfumo Kristo* humiliates and undermines Muslims rights and it is used as an interpretative tool in their grievances against the government²⁰ (Ndaluka 2012:218).

Another issue which Muslims in Tanzania claim as implementation of *Mfumo Kristo* is the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the government of Tanzania and Tanzania Episcopal Conference (Catholic) and Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT). The MoU gave birth to Christian Social Services Commission (CSSC). Through this memorandum the Government of Tanzania committed to support initiatives made by two church organisations: Catholic

¹⁸ See AN-NUUR: Waislamu kwenda Mahakamani: Wapinga ajira kwa Wakristo 2325, Waislamu 142 tu; Wataka kujua utaratibu uliotumika katika hatua zote, Mifano yatolewa, barua za Waislamu kufichwa, kuchanwa. No.966, Ijumaa Julai 8-14,2011,p.1

¹⁹ Please see Kongamano (Diamond Jubilee) -Hatari ya Mfumo Kristo. Part 1-3. Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHgCgmp-0iY>. Accessed on 17 May, 2013.

²⁰ See: Mujahiduun (2011) Hatima ya Tanzania na Mfumo Kristo. Available at: <http://mujahiduuna.blogspot.de/2012/06/hatima-ya-tanzania-na-mfumo-kristo.html>. Accessed on 17 May, 2013.

Church-Missereor and the Lutheran church KfW by providing subsidy to church owned healthy centres and hospitals when applied for that purpose. At the time when the memorandum was signed, there were discourses of particular sections of Tanzania being historically marginalised and disadvantaged in comparison to other regions.²¹ The above examples reflect how *Mfumo Kristo* is conceived and embodied in the discussions among bloggers in the two threads.

The aforementioned discussions paint the picture of the current religious discourse in Tanzania through the media which situates Tanzania within an intense debate pitting Muslims and Christians on opposite sides. At the centre of these discussions are issues ranging from social justice, power and social economic welfare of either group. Of germane to this paper, a conspicuous discourse moment emerged on 27 February 2013, when RI and *Kwa Neema FM* (a Christian broadcasting station) were suspended from operations for six months for having aired programmes which were thought might breach peace. According to Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA), during the national population and housing census in 2012, RI aired programmes meant to persuade Muslims not to take part in the national census until the element of religion is itemized in the census. The action of RI was contrary to the laws governing the content of programmes in Tanzania. On the other hand, *Kwa Neema FM* aired programmes aimed at encouraging Christians not to eat meat slaughtered by Muslims which only worsened the nascent hostility between Christians and Muslims in Buseresere village in Geita, western Tanzania.²² These events proved crucial in organizing and constructing discourse in the blogs. In announcing the closure, the TCRA may have had in mind two programmes popular with RI's audiences.

One of the programmes of RI which generates news for extended discussion in the JF is *Kidokezo* (News tips) programme. This programme is aired every day except Sunday from 08:05 am to 08:50 am. News tips are sourced by the programme producer from newspapers and other media in Tanzania and elsewhere in the world and introduced in studio for audiences to give their opinion through phone calls. Similar to *Kidokezo* programme in the pattern of production is *Mwangaza wa Jamii* (The Torch of Society) programme which is aired every Sunday from 08:05 am to 09:00 am. In the programme, the producer chooses themes from general issues such as education, politics and current affairs and leads a discussion with invited guests. Audiences are invited to contribute in the discussion through direct phone calls to the studio.

²¹ See: The history of Christian Social Services Commission. Available at http://www.cssc.or.tz/about_us/history.php. Accessed on 17 May, 2013

²² See: Rouge FM radios suspension proper. Available at: <http://www.dailynews.co.tz/index.php/local-news/15167-rouge-fm-radios-suspension-proper1>. Also: TCRA to asses broadcasting ethics compliance in Mwanza. Available at: <http://www.ippmedia.com/frontend/?l=52551>. Both accessed on 21 May 2013

The two programmes have contributed to the issues posted and discussed by bloggers of JF. In the discussions about the broadcasting activities of RI, there are those who consider that in the two programmes the radio airs provocative issues. 'RI is the cause of all these which we are experiencing with *udini* (religio-centrism)²³. RI is being used by agitators as an important tool to cause hatred among religious groups. In my opinion, RI does not deserve to be in the media industry of Tanzania'²⁴ According to these bloggers the two programmes are threatening the unity and peace of the country by causing hatred and religious tensions among Tanzanians.²⁵ On the other hand, there are bloggers who consider the suspension aimed at silencing Muslims to favour *Mfumo Kristo* (Christian hegemony) which benefits Christians especially Catholics.²⁶ For instance, a blogger goes as far as to view the suspension as a means to suppress Muslims.

It is not true [that RI is threatening peace and unity] the agenda is to prevent Muslims from owning media which can make them disseminate news and information in this era whereby information is power. In the information era, whoever has access to information has access to power. In order to silence Muslims, the government denies them access and the possibility of owning media. Media creates awareness, so to suspend RI is to prevent Muslims from knowing their rights. After all, it is the only radio of Muslims with a country-wide coverage compared to radios in each district owned by those who are on the other side.²⁷

²³ According to Wijzen definition of *udini* can be seen in following practices and expressions: witnessing religious tensions and thinking that there may be religious conflicts in the future; attending rallies that slander religions and thinking that these rallies exacerbate religious tensions; reading religious magazines and thinking that these magazines contribute to religious conflicts; watching videos that slander other religions and thinking that it would be good to ban these videos; thinking that people of any religion in Tanzania are oppressed; and thinking that the Sharia can solve Muslims' problems.

²⁴ Translation from Post 432 "...Radio imani ndio iliyotufikisha kwa mdhila yanayotukumba hivi sasa ya UDNI, hii imetumika kama chombo muhimu cha wachochezi wa nchi hii... Kwa muono wangu, haistahili kuwepo katika ulimwengu wa media Tanzania.

²⁵ Posts 522, 536,548,579,654,655,65

²⁶ Posts number: 490, 429,379,262,242

²⁷ Translation of post 429, "sio hivyo.issue hapa ni kwamba,waislam hawatakiwi kuwa na media zao zitakazofanya nao wawe na uwezo wa kupashana habari,katika zama hizi information is POWER,whoever have access to information has access to power.Sasa ili kuwakata makali hao jamaa ni kudenya their access to possibility of them owning media.Jua media ina creat awareness.Sasa hawataki waislamu wawe aware na mambo mengi yanayoendelea dhidi yao.Mwenyewe si unaona iman ni redio pekee wako nayo wakati wenzao wanazo karibu kila wilaya."

According to those who oppose the suspension, RI is working according to the principles of Islam and it has nothing which can be termed as provocative or agitating. For them, RI stands for truth, is very professional and uses reliable sources (Post 732). 'The suspension is a suppression of Muslims and Islam which calls for Jihad to liberate Muslims and Islam', a blogger insists.²⁸

The bloggers observe a delicate socio-religious atmosphere caused by the mushrooming of religious radios. Due to this situation, the bloggers call for a review of the regulations on the registration and performance of religious radios in Tanzania and the need for qualified journalists.²⁹ The discussions indicate that religious radios apart from raising the tide of religious awareness as observed above from Muslims' perspectives; are the cause of religio-centrism and tensions. According of the bloggers of this view, religious radios through their broadcasting services incite hatred and are likely to cause religious violence. For them religious radios are playing the role of activists to the extent of taking *dini* (religion) to *udini*. Some bloggers perceive activists' role in the broadcasting activities of RI which affect public discourses on the radio itself and Islam (Post 432). For example the expression of *Mfumo Kristo* is used by Muslims to convey religious interests. In the view of some bloggers this Christian hegemony defines the socio-religious sphere in Tanzania. According to them, the government and the TCRA are acquiescing to the hegemonic power of *Mfumo Kristo*, a reason cited for the suspension of RI.³⁰

The socio-religious situation of Tanzania is an indicator of power struggle between Islam and Christianity to establish religious hegemony (Wijsen&Mfumbusa 2004). For instance a blogger observes that 'Islam and Christianity are two different religions. It is worthy that everyone follows his or her religion without forcing others to believe in what he or she believes. I am a Christian and my credo to Jesus Christ, my honour to the Virgin Mary... whether you believe it or you do not believe that is not my business...' (Post 453).³¹

²⁸ Post 517, 437,347,261

²⁹ Posts 492,564, 623,664, 727).

³⁰ Posts number 724, 71,206, 487,244,443,413,415,344,377,292

³¹ Translation from Post 453: "Tuna imani mbili tofauti ndugu yangu sioni haja ya kuanza kulumbana na wewe unatumia kitabu kimoja na mimi natumia kingine so sioni haja ya kuniita mpuuzi, wala sikulazimishi uamini nachoamini ila mimi kinywa changu kitaendelea kuimba na kusadikia kwa Mungu baba Mwenyezi muumba mbingu na dunia na vitu vyoote vinavoonekana na visivoonekana, Na kwa Yesu Kristu Mwanaye aliyetungwa na Roho Mtakatifu akazaliwa na Bikira Maria akateswa kwa mamlaka ya Ponsio Pilato akafa akazikwa akashuka kuzimu akafufuka siku ya tatu akapaa mbinguni amekaa kuume kwa baba atakuja tena kuwahumu wazaima na wafu, nasadiki kwa Roho Mtakatifu bwana mleta uzima ataokaye kwa baba na mwana anayeabudiwa na kutukuzwa na baba na mwana aliyenena kwa vinywa vya manabii, Nasadiki kwa kanisa moja

As it has been noted the struggle for power between the two proselytizing religions reflects the existing socio-religious atmosphere in Tanzania of religious tension and potential religious conflict. Ndaluka (2012) documents how there have been struggles between Muslims and Christians for dominance and control of social, cultural and state resources in the country. Some of these conflicts have led to physical violence, as happened during the 1993 Good Friday pork crisis (Mbogoni 2004), the 1998 and 2000 Mwembechai crises (Njozi 2000) and the Zanzibar riots (Mukandala, et al. 2006). There are scholars who have documented on the struggles for dominance between Muslims and Christians in Tanzania. (Westerlund 1980, Chande 1998, Ludwig 1999, Wijsen and Mfumbusa 2004)

Freedom of the press and Mfumo Kristo

For some bloggers, the suspension of RI puts on trial press freedom and freedom of religion which are guaranteed in the constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania (URT). On the other hand, there are bloggers who think that religious radios abuse the freedom given to them in the name of preaching religion. For them, 'preaching religion is different from defaming other religion(s); the latter cannot be justified as freedom of religion to be practiced. There is a clash of religious doctrines between Christianity and Islam. The doctrinal differences once aired against another religion amount to an abuse of the freedom of press as well as religion' (Post 328).³²

On the suspension of RI vis-à-vis freedom of the press and religion, bloggers are divided into four groups in the discussions on the suspension of RI. The first group views the suspension as unjust, against press freedom and freedom of religion of the Constitution of. For this group, the suspension of RI is unjust and against freedom of speech...³³ Also the suspension apart from being against press freedom and freedom of religion, one blogger opines that the closure

takatifu katoliki la mitume naungama ubatizo mmoja kwa maondoleo ya dhambi nangojea na ufufuko wa wafu na uzima wa milele ujao AMINA....HIII NDIO IMANI AMBAYO NAONA FAHARI KUBWA KUIKIRI NA KUITANGAZA NA NIPO TAYARI KUIFIA!wewe ikubali usiikubali ni juu yako!!"

³² Translation from Post 328: "Kuna kuhubiri dini, na kuna kukashfu dini. Hivi ni vitu viwili tofauti kabisa. Ninachoongelea hapa ni kukashfu dini nyingi kwa mwavuli wa kuhubiri dini yako. Huwezi, kwa mfano, kufundisha ukristo kwa kutumia mafundisho/basis za kiislam. Kila dini ina mafundisho yake ambayo kimsingi yako ndani ya dini yenyewe. Labda niseme hivi, huwezi kufundisha Physics kwa kutumia syllabus ya Chemistry, hata kama masomo yote mawili yako chini ya mchepuo wa science. Na wala huwezi kutetea mkorogo wa aina hiyo ni ku-practice uhuru wa mawazo! The same ideas are in Posts: 310,290,171.

³³ Translation from Post 103 "huu ni uonevu sana haswa kwa radio iman! freedom of speech ipo wapi..!"

recalls the era of first president Nyerere when press freedom was limited. RI has caused no chaos in Tanzania and it does not provoke violence. It is better for us (Muslims) to appeal in the court of law.³⁴

The second group questions the reasons given by the TCRA on the suspension of RI. According to the TCRA, during the national population and housing census in 2012, RI aired programmes meant to persuade Muslims not to take part in the national census which was contrary to the laws governing the content of programmes. Bloggers of this group consider that this reason is far from reality and not genuine because RI has aired provocative and agitative programmes for a long time. 'This is yet an evidence of government which is not serious. I have monitored RI since 2011. In most of its programmes, RI aired contents which made the community of Muslims to hate Christians. This is especially the case of talk shows. A good example is when they are talking about the dominance of the so-called *Mfumo Kristo* in the government...in my opinion Radio Imaan had to be banned even before the ban of *Mwanahalisi* newspaper.'³⁵ Another blogger views the reason and timing as 'somewhat ridiculous because the national census was conducted four months ago and the punishment is given now compared to *Kwa Neema FM* whose incident happened just a month ago, am I missing something here?'³⁶

The third group tries to give answers to questions raised by the second group. This group considers the punishment was targeted to RI but the TCRA and the government strategically decided to balance the matter by curiously extending the suspension to *Kwa Neema FM*, a Christian station. Also, there are views that, the suspension was directed at *Kwa Neema FM* but in manage the

³⁴ Translation from Post 171 "si kweli kabisa..... hakuna connection yoyote , ni fitna tu! walikuwa wakitafuta sababu wakakosa.... i hope kutakuwa na rufaa ikibidi hata mahakamani waende ushawahi kusikia kitu yaitwa " freedom of speech & expression " wasiturudishe enzi za nyerere! Iman radio haijawahi kusababisha vurugu wala uwagaji wa damu ... mijadala inayojadiliwa mule ni maoni yao binafsi a ni juu yako kukubali kuhesabiwa ama kukataakwa upande wapi hiyo radio kwa neema imestahili sababu vurugu zilizotekea mwanza wao ndio walikuwa kama kichochezi"

³⁵ Translation of Post 725 "Huu ni uthibitisho mwingine wa serikali isiyo makini, mimi nimekuwa mfuatiliaji mzuri wa redio Iman Tangu mwaka 2011 na imekuwa ikiendesha vipindi vingi hasa talk show za kufanya watu wa jamii ya kiislam kuichukua jamii ya kikristo, mfano mzuri ni pale wanapokuwa wanazungumzia serikali kuwa inaongozwa na kinachoitwa mfumo Kristo.Ila kutokana na serikali kuogopa kufanya maamuzi imeamua kuifungia na Neema Fm ili kubalance mambo ila kwa maoni yangu Redio Imani ilipaswa kufungiwa hata kabla ya kufungiwa kwa Gazeti la Mwanahalisi." The same argument is given in Posts:743, 740,735, 729,68

³⁶ Translation of Post 9 "The timing is ridiculous! Sensa ilifanywa lini hadi adhabu itolewe leo? Na ina maana ni suala la sensa tu ndio radio imani imekiuka? Kwani nini ichukue miezi minne tangu kosa lifanyike hadi kuichukulia hatua radio imani lakini less than a month kuichukulia hatua Radio Neema? Am I missing something here????

expected religious tensions, RI was suspended. All in all, the decision is viewed as aiming at social engineering to avoid any sense of injustice. 'It is balancing the equation...the government wanted to balance the situation by suspending the two religious radios together, this is not the best way to curb religio-centrism... I doubt about the suspension given to *Kwa Neema FM*, I am convinced the suspension was for RI but they included *Kwa Neema FM* but in order to balance the situation. RI had to be suspended earlier because it has been promoting hatred for long time.'³⁷ On the other hand, '*Kwa Neema FM* was the target; RI is included in the suspension to balance the situation because the reason given for the suspension of RI leaves a lot to be desired.'³⁸ There is a group which views the punishment as lenient compared to what RI has caused in the country as far as peace and unity are concerned. 'The punishment given to RI is not enough'³⁹ because '...RI is a catalyst for religious conflicts.'⁴⁰ This group maintains that RI deserves even a long-life ban due to its agitating and provocative contents which threaten peace and unity by causing hatred between Christians and Muslims in Tanzania.⁴¹

Conclusion

Bloggers admit that the government and the TCRA are overly cautious to act on what is happening in religious media. Bloggers also think that the government is weak and slow in taking actions. They go further to believe that the government in suspending the two radios has balanced the event. Some bloggers think that RI deserved to be suspended earlier due to its broadcasting activities but the government remained silent. For bloggers, the reason for the suspension of RI leaves a lot to be desired. In the discussions, some bloggers think that the content of RI on the National Population Census is not serious than the provocative content of some of the programmes aired in RI. According to the bloggers, all these show the weakness of the government to take action on matters which may

³⁷ Translations of Post 642: "balancing the equation!!!!, Post 630 "serikali bana ikiifungia redio ya dini hii lazima iifungie na ya dini ile eti lengo ni kubalance hatutauondoa udini kiivyo mi nadhani sheria ifuate mkondo na wachusika wachukuliwe hatua kali" Post 661 "Mkuu ina maana hujasoma alama za nyakati? hapo lengo kuu ilikuwa hiyo redio ya Morogoro (Imani) hao wengine wameingizwa ili kubalance mambo. Mi nilitegemea redio imani ipigwe kamba kwa kipindi kirefu manake wao wamekuwa wachochezi kwa kipindi kirefu sana sasa. Lakini ndo hivyo tena gov't inawaogopa sijui kwanini. Lakini yana mwisho haya"

³⁸ Translations of Post 563 "Mkuu redio neema naona ndo iliyo lengwa, redio imani imefungiwa kubalansi yatokanayo, wanayodai kuwa ni makosa ya imani yalifanywa kipindi cha sensa! Kwanini haikufungiwa kipindi hicho?"

³⁹ Translation of Post 16 "radio iman hiyo adhabu haitoshi"

⁴⁰ Translation of Post 20 "adhabu ndogo sana hiyo hasa kwa radio imani mchochezi mkubwa wa masuala ya dini!!!!"

⁴¹ Posts 519, 481, 481, 484, 486.

harm the peace of the country. This article concludes that, RI through its broadcasting activities factorizes agendas which are taken by JF for extended discussions. Under this situation, consumers of social media have an advantage to get more from what has been aired by RI. Also there is a convergence between mainstream media and new media for news tips. The phenomenon gives more access of news sources for the media and later worthy news to consumers of media in Tanzania.

More importantly, the discourses revealed in the JF forums convene a public that continuously reveals the growing faultline of religion in Tanzania. As opposed to the much more controlled mainstream media, the free for all social media reveals the nuances and tensions which, though suppressed in other platforms, provide a more reliable barometer of the social complexion of Tanzania today.

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PART TWO

IMAGE AS MEANING

L'enjeu du Signe Langagier dans la Construction Sociale contre le VIH/SIDA

Didérot Djiala Mellie

In the face of widespread contamination and social impact of the HIV/AIDS phenomenon, the use of various sign systems, destined to a multicultural audience seems to be exploited as a way of creating awareness on HIV/AIDS. This paper analyses the non-mobile images, combining verbal and non-verbal signs, pasted in different locations in the town of Dschang - Cameroon - for the purpose of sensitising the youth against the scourge. Through semiotics and constructivist frameworks based on empirical research, we intend to critically investigate the meaning of signs combination as a strategy to capture the interest of this specific target group's awareness against HIV/AIDS and consequently to meet the challenge of stopping its spread and its socio-economic impact on the town of Dschang and its neighbourhood.

Mots clés: VIH/SIDA, sensibilisation, représentations, signes, sens, contexte

Introduction

Cette communication se situe dans le cadre des études que nous menons sur la communication préventive en matière de lutte contre le VIH/SIDA au Cameroun. Dans ce module, nous interrogeons les enjeux des signes au sein des images fixes réservées à l'éducation des jeunes contre cette pandémie dans la ville de Dschang (Cameroun). En effet, le VIH/SIDA constitue un problème de santé publique de grande envergure qui défraye la chronique depuis sa découverte en 1982 jusqu'à nos jours. Au Cameroun, il est souvent associé à des représentations diverses. Allant dans le même sens que Drescher (2010), deux formes de discours semblent se rivaliser d'adresse sur le terrain de la prévention : d'une part, le discours scientifique (en position basse) que s'efforce de transmettre le personnel du ministère de la santé et ses associés sur le VIH/SIDA contre, d'autre part, le discours populaire (position haute) qui reflète les pesanteurs socioculturels d'une couche sociale importante de la population au sujet du VIH/SIDA. Cette situation semble fragiliser le

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déploiement des efforts qui ne sont pas déjà qualitativement et quantitativement convenables à sa prévention sur l'étendue du territoire. Nous situant dans une logique à la croisée du constructivisme (Le Moigne 1995; Bulot 2011) aidé de la sémiotique (Joly 2000) et des observations du terrain, les messages de sensibilisation contre le VIH/SIDA apparaissent en contexte le résultat de l'interaction entre l'expérience des concepteurs et la réalité sociale du VIH/SIDA mis en signe. De ce fait, l'attention sera portée sur « la vie du signe au sein de la vie sociale » (Saussure 1989:33) prise en charge dans les supports fixes de sensibilisation contre le VIH/SIDA adressés aux jeunes pour y étudier les stratégies déployées pour construire la réalité du VIH/SIDA en rapport avec cette tranche de la population. Pour le développement de notre réflexion, nous allons nous considérer comme lecteur interprète modèle⁴² dans l'intérêt de ressortir la dimension signifiante du rapport existant entre l'expression et le contexte de leurs usages. Notre plan prévoit les stations suivantes : le cadre théorique et méthodologique, la présentation du contexte et du corpus et enfin l'analyse de cas.

Méthode de collecte et d'analyse des données

Le champ disciplinaire des sciences sociales dispose des outils techniques propices pour la collecte et l'analyse des données. L'appropriation de ces outils ont permis pendant la phase de terrain, d'observer, de collecter des images fixes sur le VIH/SIDA et de récolter des informations liées à leurs différents emplacements dans la ville de Dschang⁴³(le lieu de cette étude, nous allons y revenir). A cet effet, nous avons personnellement suivi tout le long de l'axe lourd traversant cette ville dans le but de repérer et de photographier des images fixes. Nous avons aussi sillonné des rues et ruelles, longé des édifices publics (établissements scolaires - collèges, lycées et universités, hôpitaux et foyers culturels et associatifs) à la recherche des outils d'analyse déployés dans ces espaces. Chacune des images filmées étaient étiquetées et stockées en vue d'une visualisation et exploitation minutieuse à temps opportun. Il n'était pas aisé de repérer tout seul un grand nombre de ces outils d'analyse. Des collègues et connaissances nous ont quelques fois prêté main forte en nous indiquant à chaque fois que l'occasion le permettait des endroits où nous pouvions en trouver.

⁴² Nous avons opté nous fier à notre expérience du terrain comme acteur de lutte contre le VIH/SIDA dans une association de développement (PIPAD) œuvrant dans la prévention du VIH/SIDA à Dschang et ses environs. Dans une réflexion à venir, nous analyserons des discours épilinguistiques des cibles sur ce phénomène.

⁴³ Dschang, capitale du département administratif de la Menoua, est une ville universitaire située dans la région de l'Ouest-Cameroun. C'est un milieu où de nombreuses associations sont actives dans l'éducation des populations contre le VIH/SIDA.

Après l'étape de terrain commençait alors le travail de bureau. Il consistait à visualiser autant de fois que possible dans le but de systématiser leur contenu. L'accent était porté sur les éléments constitutifs du contexte construit dans la composition de la surface de chaque image pour déceler le public cible. Par la suite, la catégorisation se transportait vers les différentes façons de construire chaque public visé. C'est ainsi que notre choix s'est porté sur l'étude des messages adressés à une cible spécifique : les jeunes.⁴⁴ Pour ce qui est de l'analyse des données collectées, la préoccupation centrale de cette réflexion étant d'étudier 'en priorité des processus de production de sens, pour ensuite proposer des interprétations plausibles' à la suite de Joly (2000 : 131), les approches sémiotique et constructiviste sont ainsi propices pour rendre compte des représentations des acteurs de lutte contre le VIH/SIDA matérialisées en différents systèmes de signes dans les supports fixes pour l'éducation des jeunes. Le regard critique du contenu de ce corpus au moyen du cadre méthodologique et conceptuel énoncé plus haut nous permet de mettre en évidence les stratégies mises en jeu dans ces messages et l'interprétation qu'on peut en dégager dans l'effort d'atteindre le public.

Mise en contexte de l'étude

Dschang est l'une des villes importantes du département de la Menoua. Située dans la région de l'Ouest, elle est le siège de cette subdivision administrative et en même temps le chef-lieu de l'arrondissement qui porte son nom. Cette ville bénéficie d'une position géographique stratégique qui favorise le regroupement des populations venues des horizons divers. La tolérance de son climat, la fertilité de ses sols, son relief pittoresque, ses chefferies et cérémonies traditionnelles, ses sites touristiques et la cohabitation paisible entre populations, l'existence des services publics de qualité sont autant d'arguments qui militent en faveur de ce brassage de population hétérogène. La lutte contre le VIH/SIDA dans cette partie du Cameroun fait partie des priorités des associations de développements qui travaillent en synergie avec les démembrements du comité national de lutte contre le VIH/SIDA installés dans cette division administrative. Selon les statistiques de l'enquête sentinelle réalisée auprès des femmes enceintes de cette région, le taux de prévalence au VIH/SIDA est de 4,9% en 2009.⁴⁵ Face à cette situation, la prévention reste pour l'instant la voie à privilégier par les instances de lutte contre le VIH/SIDA (Drescher 2010, Djiala 2009).

⁴⁴ Dans le cadre de cette réflexion, nous entendons par jeune toute personne membre de la couche sociale dont l'âge varie entre 15 et 24 ans et qui fréquente encore ou a pu faire le lycée ou l'université.

⁴⁵ OMD, 2010, Rapport régional de progrès des objectifs du millénaire pour le développement, Région de l'Ouest.
http://www.statistics-cameroon.org/downloads/OMD/OMD_OU_2010.pdf

L'étude des communications en matière de santé liée à ce phénomène de santé publique a fait l'objet de nombreuses réflexions scientifiques (Tourneux 2011, Drescher 2008 et 2010, Djiala 2009, Arvind et Everett 2003, Escudero-Chauvel, 2000). Les auteurs examinent ce mal à travers des corpus et des approches diversifiés. Nous pensons notamment à Henri Tourneux qui relève, dans ses travaux effectués dans la partie septentrionale du Cameroun, que la lutte contre le VIH/SIDA souffre d'un déficit d'information en langues nationales d'où l'impossibilité de toucher les couches non scolarisées en langue française ou anglaise comme c'est le cas dans les images fixes de sensibilisation contre le VIH. Cet auteur étend sa critique sur les pratiques langagières dans les messages contre le VIH/SIDA qui souffriraient d'une certaine inconsistance et seraient, selon lui, à l'origine de l'échec des sensibilisations sur le VIH/SIDA. Martina Drescher, dans une approche conversationnelle des enregistrements vidéos des séances de formation des futurs paires éducateurs dans la prévention du SIDA au Burkina-Faso, relève quant à elle les interférences qui sévissent entre le discours contextualisé incarné par les apprenants et le discours biomédical pris en charge par les enseignants en exploitant les méthodes que les participants à ces séances de formation mettent en place pour organiser de manière intelligible leurs activités. Nous allons nous situer dans une perspective similaire, toutefois, en nous focalisant sur un corpus d'images fixes pour étudier le sens en jeu dans ce contexte spécifique.

Présentation du corpus d'étude

Le corpus de cette réflexion est constitué d'images fixes déployées dans le cadre géographique de Dschang par des associatifs pour éduquer la population jeune en matière de VIH/SIDA. Les concepteurs⁴⁶ de ces messages de sensibilisation sur les images fixes ne sont pas en mal d'inspiration. Ils exploitent différents types de supports qui se rivalisent d'adresse aussi bien au niveau de leurs natures qu'au niveau de leurs formes. Ce sont des banderoles, des affiches, des dépliants sous des dimensions diversifiées qu'on retrouve placardés sur des babillards ou sur les façades de quelques bâtiments publics ou privés, sur des surmontoirs dans les bureaux d'associations œuvrant dans ce combat et même dans des lieux les plus insolites tels que les toilettes ou sur les pylônes électriques plantés le long des rues et ruelles ou au bord de l'axe lourd dans cette région. Certains carrefours sont des lieux privilégiés où foisonnent ces supports. On les retrouve également sous forme de graffitis griffonnés sur des barrières. Nous ne saurons passer outre ceux qui sont flanqués sur des T-shirts, casquettes, foulards ou

⁴⁶ La conception des messages de sensibilisation contre le VIH est prise en charge par l'organe gouvernemental de lutte contre le VIH/SIDA (le Comité national de lutte contre le VIH/SIDA –CNLS-) et les associations camerounaises et internationales.

d'autres objets usuels arborant pour l'occasion une fonction publicitaire (stylo, porte clef, médaillons). La nature du matériau de ces supports se présente aussi sur des genres diversifiés même si le papier en constitue le principal. Malgré sa profusion, ce support en papier se caractérise par une précarité liée aux aléas climatiques et manipulations diverses. Dans cette catégorie figurent en bonne place des affiches, des flyers, des dépliants et des posters aux dimensions hétérogènes. Les contenus de ces supports sont tout aussi diversifiés sur le plan de la forme que sur les savoirs qu'ils transmettent. Sur le plan de la forme, l'on remarque l'agencement plus ou moins harmonieux des formes verbales et des formes non verbales dans la composition de leurs surfaces. Pour continuer notre réflexion, il est important de faire un point sur l'organisation du paysage linguistique de la région.

Paysage linguistique au Cameroun

Le paysage linguistique du Cameroun est complexe. Cette complexité est due à la diversité des langues qui cohabitent dans cet espace. Pour faire une communication devant toucher le grand public au Cameroun, les annonceurs des messages de sensibilisation contre le VIH/SIDA sont confrontés à un embarras qui est celui de trouver le langage adéquat pour atteindre la cible. En effet, 286 langues sont d'après (Gordon 2005) utilisées au quotidien dans ce pays de l'Afrique centrale. La grande catégorisation que l'on peut en faire est la distinction entre langues au statut officiel (le français et l'anglais), les langues dites nationales/maternelles (279 langues correspondant sensiblement au nombre d'ethnies qui y cohabitent) et les langues composites à fonction véhiculaire (le pidgin english, le ffulde, le camfranglais). Le français et l'anglais sont reconnus par la constitution du Cameroun comme langues officielles. Même si ces langues sont inégalement utilisées sur l'ensemble du territoire, elles ont le privilège d'être des langues de médias, d'éducation, d'administration, de travail, de grands rassemblements, des situations formelles et voire informelles. On comprend pourquoi les images fixes d'éducation des populations contre le VIH/SIDA sont majoritairement faites en ces deux langues. Toutefois, le contact avec d'autres langues sont à l'origine de l'essor d'autres types de parlers dont la base demeure l'une de ces deux langues officielles dans ces supports. Nous allons dans le cadre de cette réflexion nous focaliser sur un corpus dont la base est le français.

La construction de la cible

Dans toute communication, le langage joue un rôle primordial dans la médiation entre les représentations du sujet parlant et la réalité elle-même. Dans cette lancée, Bulot (2011) fait remarquer que 'ce que l'on dit, ce que l'on fait dire, ce que l'on dit faire est pondéré de social et inversement contribue à le construire'. Communiquer c'est assumer à la fois deux rôles en contexte : 'le contact social, l'interaction sociale et la coordination sociale des comportements' et de l'abstraction de la pensée qui favorise la décontextualisation de celle-ci.⁴⁷ (Vygotsky repris par Tapé Gozé, 1994 :33). A cet égard, toute déclaration sur le VIH/SIDA, avant d'être une matérialisation concrète d'une connaissance du sujet parlant, est une construction de cette réalité mise en signes. A la lecture des images fixes conçues pour l'éducation, on se rend à l'évidence que les concepteurs procèdent à un ciblage d'une couche sociale spécifique dans chaque support. Les messages visant les jeunes présentent de ce fait des caractéristiques généralement communes qui semblent particuliers à cette catégorie. Cela s'observe aussi bien au niveau des formes langagières que sur le plan des contenus portant sur le mode de vie associé à la cible.

Selon les considérations théoriques constructivistes, le destinataire d'un message peut produire, reproduire ou révolutionner à travers lui une réalité donnée d'après sa perception et son positionnement par rapport à la chose décrite. Seule une approche méthodique de la connaissance ainsi produite à travers le questionnement portant sur le statut de *cette dernière, la manière dont elle est créée et sa valeur*, permet selon Le Moigne (1995 : 4) de déboucher sur son essence réelle. Le contexte construit sur la surface des supports présente des éléments mimant la cible sur plusieurs points dans le but de susciter l'attention de celle-ci. L'articulation entre ces différents éléments significatifs décrit des scènes de vie ou permet de les reconstituer dans la réalité. Dans ce processus, chaque signe utilisé joue un rôle propre dans la réalisation du contexte construit qui s'efforce de représenter le hors-contexte du support déterminant ainsi à l'avance l'orientation du message véhiculé et sa cible principale ou directe. Ce phénomène relève de la corrélation entre le texte et son audience qui est à l'origine un pacte de lecture et de réception que le concepteur engage avec la cible. C'est le cas des appellatifs neutres ou généralisants dans les extraits : '**Elèves de Zenmeh**, barrons la voie au MST et au SIDA', '**Jeunesse**, le SIDA est une menace pour ton avenir et ton devenir' et 'Yoyettes, faisons le point...' ou encore des désignations nominales explicites matérialisées par des noms propres : 'Oh, **Anita**, qu'est-

⁴⁷ Ce point de vue est également partagé par A. R. Luria paraphrasé par Gozé : 'le langage opère au moins sur deux plans : sur un plan général, il remplit le rôle de l'information culturelle en assurant la participation de l'être humain à la culture sociale. Sur un plan spécifique, le langage joue un rôle cognitif, car il permet d'abstraire, de conceptualiser, de représenter le réel.' p33

ce-que tu es devenue ?... ' et ' **Jimmy et Annabelle** forment un couple parfait. Les deux ont le VIH...ne le savent pas. Chaque partenaire connaît-il le passé de l'autre ? ' Ces signes linguistiques à fonction d'apostrophe renforcé par des images de jeunes personnes sont des astuces à mettre à l'actif des stratégies non seulement dans le but de cibler la catégorie mais aussi de l'amener à prendre conscience du danger que constitue cette pandémie et de l'inciter à adopter des comportements conséquents. Le sens de l'image iconique prêterait à la mésinterprétation et la mauvaise réception si celle-ci ne possédait pas des facteurs facilitant sa lecture. Les concepteurs des messages d'éducation contre le VIH/SIDA maximisent les chances de réceptions du projet véhiculé en contournant « la terreur du signe incertain » Barthes (1964), repris par Lugrin et Pahud (2001), qui proviendrait de la difficulté à délimiter le sens des images de la ' chaîne flottante ' de sens qui s'y dégagent en les accompagnant des messages linguistiques. La mise en relation du message iconique et du message linguistique permet de reconstituer le contexte construit et de faire remonter en surface le sens spécifique en rapport avec les représentations des concepteurs. Sur cette base, les images fixes de sensibilisation contre le VIH/SIDA ciblant la jeunesse mettent au devant l'image de la jeune fille.

- Les représentations de la jeune fille

Le lexème ' représentation ' est en lui-même un concept ambigu du fait de la polysémie⁴⁸ qu'il génère. Sous un angle spécifiquement social, la représentation est considérée selon Jodelet cité par Virasolvit (2005) comme ' une forme de connaissance socialement élaborée et partagée, ayant une visée pratique et concourant à la construction d'une réalité commune à un ensemble social.' (2005 :63). La perception des constructions sociales de la réalité décrite est favorisée à la fois par des codes linguistiques et les codes graphiques usités dans les supports de communication à l'effet d'éduquer les populations. De ce fait, nous nous contentons de scruter le sens lié à l'image⁴⁹ que livre les visuels fixes de la jeune fille face au VIH/SIDA. La place que cette dernière occupe dans ces messages est importante. Le poste d'analyse centré sur elle est conforté non seulement par les statistiques nationales en matière de prévalence du VIH/SIDA relevant que 3,2 % de jeunes filles âgées entre 15 et 24 ans vivaient avec le VIH/SIDA en 2008, mais aussi,

⁴⁸ Le terme représentation peut renvoyer à plusieurs réalités. Il se réfère dans ce contexte aux savoirs sociaux mis en mots ou en images et à l'expression par des éléments graphiques perceptibles dans le corpus.

⁴⁹ Le lexème image dans ce contexte renferme à la fois les représentations visuelles et les perceptions (idées) développées au sujet de la jeune fille.

leur forte représentation dans ces supports de sensibilisation.⁵⁰ Sur un ensemble de trente cinq visuels constituant notre support d'analyse, vingt six font explicitement allusion à cette dernière. Vingt cinq présentent des images d'elle (communication non verbale) contre une seule la désignant par le lexème 'filles' sans l'intervention d'une représentation iconique quelconque. Elle y est présentée sous plusieurs facettes incarnant tantôt la vertu, tantôt le déshonneur.

- L'image méliorative de la jeune fille

Elle est celle qui s'érige en modèle à suivre autant par ses consœurs que par la société entière pour faire face au VIH/SIDA. Dans notre corpus, cette perception de la fille exemplaire nous apparaît sous diverses situations sociales. Elle est présentée comme une personne sensible au bien-être sans le VIH/SIDA. Prêchant par le bon exemple, elle s'entoure des armes pour se protéger du VIH/SIDA, assiste ses pairs face à la menace liée au VIH/SIDA et apporte son soutien aux personnes infectées. Onze des vingt cinq supports portant sur la jeune fille transmettent une image valorisante de cette dernière. On la retrouve invitant au dépistage, à l'abstinence et luttant contre la stigmatisation et la discrimination des personnes infectées.

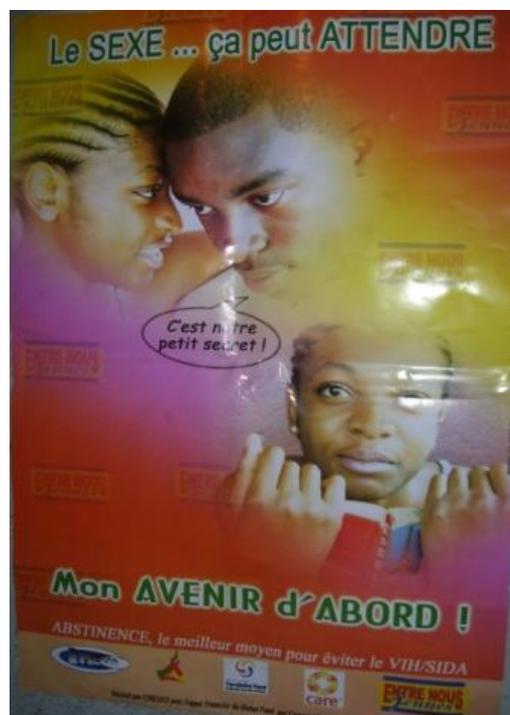


Figure 1: Représentation du comportement exemplaire face au VIH/SIDA

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Dans l'affiche ci-dessus, placardée au babillard principal du Lycée classique de Dschang en décembre 2010, on peut lire le message linguistique : ' Le SEXE... ça peut ATTENDRE. C'est notre petit secret. Mon AVENIR d'ABORD ! Abstinence, le meilleur moyen pour éviter le VIH/SIDA '. Le décodage de ce support se réalise progressivement grâce au découpage couplant harmonieusement lecture analogique et lecture digitale de son contenu. De ce point de vue, les éléments de son contenu sont reconnaissables et interprétables grâce aux stratégies mises en jeu puisées dans l'expérience quotidienne. Celles-ci se situent aussi bien au niveau linguistique qu'au niveau iconique. Le niveau iconique, contrairement au niveau linguistique, a cette particularité de reproduire des traits physiques du référent représenté. Il peut s'agir, conformément à Joly (2000 : 33), d'un certain nombre de qualités de l'objet comme sa forme, sa proportion, ses couleurs ou sa texture. A cet effet, sur la partie supérieure de l'affiche un gros plan excentré et coïncé sur le bord gauche de l'affiche deux jeunes gens dont les parties visibles sont leurs têtes rapprochées. Le sens que produit cette posture dévoile l'intimité qui existerait entre eux. Le bras gauche de la jeune demoiselle entoure les épaules du jeune homme, le front collé sur le côté droit de la tête de ce dernier, les yeux fixant ceux de son vis-à-vis. Son regard extériorise une certaine gaieté et une assurance qui contraste avec l'attitude du jeune homme qui dégage plutôt de la crispation voire de la déception. Le rôle qu'elle incarne dans ce décor est celui d'une fille entreprenante qui sait et défend ce qui l'intéresse. Le propos ' C'est notre petit secret » contenu dans le phylactère pointant vers la bouche de son compagnon traduit l'effet de ses actions sur son compagnon et témoigne du pouvoir qu'elle détient dans cette situation.

Le décor à lui seul permet de définir la distribution des rôles dans ce contexte. La jeune fille semble réagir à une demande qui lui aurait été adressée par le garçon. L'attitude de ce compagnon laisse croire qu'il n'a pas de choix devant le poids des stratégies déployées par son vis-à-vis pour retourner son offre. Sa pensée transcrite en écriture minuscule noire dans une petite bulle contrairement aux paroles de la demoiselle qui, non seulement sont quantitativement plus développées, mais aussi transmises par des signes typographiques plus accentués démontre le déséquilibre de force qui existe entre les deux en faveur de la jeune demoiselle. Cette accentuation typographique est rendue par : le gros caractère des lettres, l'alternance entre des mots et expressions en lettres majuscules et ceux en lettres minuscules, et enfin, la variation des couleurs. Celles-ci partent des signes de couleur sombre (vert sombre) aux signes de couleur plus claire (vert clair). Chacune des lettres est en surbrillance de couleur blanche sur fond en bandes obliques rouges cassés de jaune par endroit qui alternent avec du violet. Cette présentation typographique méliorative des propos de la jeune demoiselle renforce le contraste permettant de mettre en exergue la position haute (de force) dont elle jouit dans cette situation face à la position basse (de faiblesse) du jeune homme. Cet engagement à défendre ses intérêts lui permet d'écarter ce qui pourrait constituer une entrave à son bien-être. Ses efforts en sont bien récompensés comme semble nous le renseigner un autre gros

plan d'elle, excentré du côté droit de la même affiche, les yeux levés vers le ciel semblant scruter l'avenir, tenant entre ses bras un gros livre ouvert.

Juste en bas de ce portrait on peut lire ' Mon avenir d'abord '. De son apparition le dos tourné à la première image, avec un livre en main et sans la compagnie du garçon, on peut en déduire qu'elle est parvenue à contourner le principal obstacle à son ambition de réussir. Le livre en main a ici une fonction symbolique ouvrir à la réussite sociale, opposé à l'activité sexuelle qui représente dans le contexte un danger dont il faut éviter pour assurer la réalisation de l'ambition personnelle valorisée par la société. Sur un tout autre plan, la jeune fille apparait comme la garante du soutien psychologique véhiculant des notes d'espoir pour des personnes affligées par le VIH/SIDA.



Figure 2: Symbolisation de l'espoir face au VIH/SIDA

L'une des illustrations de cette image positive de cette dernière est véhiculée par cet aphorisme présent dans le support ci-dessus : ' Le soleil viendra, qu'importe le temps qu'il faudra... Sida en parler ça aide ' qu'on peut lire en dessous d'un portrait gros plan présentant deux jeunes filles souriantes. Leur sourire symbolise par sa matérialisation une expression et un appel à l'espérance. Généralement, une infection à VIH/SIDA est socialement associée dans le contexte de Dschang et de ses environs à une fatalité de telle sorte que toute personne dont le statut est connu comme tel est très souvent sujet de stigmatisation et de discrimination. Nous en déduisons à partir de notre expérience du terrain que les constructions des concepteurs comme stratégies de sensibilisation

s'inspirent des paramètres contextuels à l'instar des perceptions locales sur cette pandémie dans le but de les déconstruire et d'en proposer quelque chose de mieux. Seulement, il arrive dans certains cas que les positionnements de certaines autorités en matière d'éducation des populations fassent relativement plus de mal que de bien qu'elles auraient souhaité véhiculer par leurs propos. 'Le Cameroun a besoin de ses filles et de ses fils sans SIDA' en est une illustration de ce type de message. La question qui pourrait, en toute légitimité, se poser est celle de savoir le sort qui serait réservé à ceux des 'filles' et des 'fils' de ce pays déjà infectés par ce virus. Une telle construction pourrait davantage contribuer à renforcer le mépris vis-à-vis des personnes qui vivent avec le VIH/SIDA et leur enfermement sur eux-mêmes avec des conséquences plus ou moins facheuses pour leurs proches que pour eux-mêmes.

De ce qui précède, le sens produits par les supports étudiés fait de la jeune fille une personne consciencieuse et entreprenante dans la lutte contre le VIH/SIDA et son impact social. Cependant, cette image contraste avec d'autres types de construction qui s'efforcent d'établir la responsabilité de cette dernière dans la propagation de cette pandémie.

-Les représentations de la jeune fille responsable de la diffusion du VIH/SIDA

Dans le corpus servant cette réflexion, la femme en général et la jeune fille en particulier est souvent présentée sous une image dévalorisante. Seules les images de femmes illustrent, par exemple, une personne séropositive (4 affiches et 1 dépliant). Leur nudité est mise à contribution pour passer des messages (2 déliants), elles sont plus représentées dans les messages iconiques quand les concepteurs veulent parler de la prostitution comme voie de passage de VIH/SIDA (1 dépliant) et les images de jeunes filles enceintes (2 affiches). Sur le dépliant ci-dessous, déployé et collé au mur de la salle de conférence du PIPAD, adressé aux jeunes filles reconnaissable par la formule d'adresse qu'on peut lire en accroche de la troisième colonne de la gauche vers la droite 'yoyettes, faisons le point' on peut voir en dessous, en très gros plan rectangulaire, une image centrée sur des yeux aguicheurs délimités en dessous par la base du nez et au dessus par les sourcils.



Figure 3: Dépliant de sensibilisation sur les risques des relations sexuelles payantes et intergénérationnelles

Dans le prolongement des deux extrémités des yeux, on peut découvrir des pavillons d'oreilles légèrement dressés vers le haut. La peau lisse, les sourcils épilés et renforcés au mascara noir et la touffe de cheveux qu'on peut aisément distinguer renseignent davantage sur le sexe et la jeunesse de l'actant. Le message linguistique qui accompagne le regard de la jeune demoiselle rend plus concret le contexte. L'articulation entre les éléments de ce contexte donne un portrait des individus qui risquent l'infection au VIH. Si l'on s'en tient au texte en dessous de l'image décrite plus haut : ' L'argent du sponsor peut-il guérir du SIDA ? Être top est il plus important qu'être digne ? Coucher avec ton prof te rend-t-il plus intelligente ? ... N'oublie pas, les sponsors menacent ta santé et ton avenir. Oublie-les absolument', on constate que la jeunesse féminine est associée dans ce contexte à des pratiques qui l'exposent au VIH/SIDA. Soigner sa silhouette d'une certaine façon, avoir un certain type de regard chez la jeune fille apparaît un adjuvant au service de sa quête d'une satisfaction spécifique : se faire de l'argent grâce aux retombées de ces artifices aux fonctions d'attraction pour des rapports sexuels tarifés ou encore pour l'obtention des notes en livrant son corps aux enseignants.

Le corps de la jeune fille devient dans ce contexte une ' monnaie d'échange ' pour l'assouvissement de ses besoins. En même temps, ces armes qui sont acquises à la cause de son plaisir constituent de véritables opposants à sa santé et à son ascension sociale. Cette figure antithétique mettant en scène un rôle initialement contrôlé par le sujet, qui, à cause des péripéties liées aux risques de cette tâche, pourrait le perdre pour subir de manière irréversible des

répercussions des actes du pallier du départ s'il ne s'avisait pas à changer. On peut en déduire que le contexte construit dans cette colonne de ce dépliant déconstruit les jeunes filles, les présentant comme exposées au VIH/SIDA à cause de leurs agissements, le but visé étant de pousser ces dernières à plus de retenue pour éviter cette calamité sociale. Nous aurions pu penser à une perception individuelle si un seul élément de notre corpus en faisait allusion, cependant, plus d'une quinzaine de nos objets d'analyse appartenant à des annonceurs et concepteurs différents semble lui attribuer cette responsabilité. Cette vision devient donc une reproduction des thèmes sociétaux ou de la mentalité collective vis-à-vis de cette dernière. Or, à bien regarder, sa vulnérabilité en particulier et celle de la femme en général, renforcée à travers cet acharnement qui consiste à lui attribuer en creux la responsabilité de la propagation du VIH/SIDA paraît dédouaner les hommes dans le rôle qu'ils joueraient dans la propagation des infections à VIH/SIDA. Il serait légitime de mettre l'accent sur cette catégorie dans la politique de prévention du VIH/SIDA dans cette localité.

Construction du public et hybridité langagière

La transmission des connaissances sur le VIH/SIDA visant l'éducation du public jeune au Cameroun n'échappe pas à une construction remodalisante du langage. La courroie de transmission de l'information (langage) semble à cet effet jouer dans ses usages un rôle décisif dans l'aboutissement du projet véhiculé. De ce fait, le filon du lien de dépendance plus ou moins stable entre cible, contexte et langage semble se matérialiser dans les supports de sensibilisation dans le but d'inciter la réception de la cible. La langue française, telle qu'elle se présente dans certains visuels fixes de cette étude, s'écarte du standard recherché et exigé par les défenseurs de la norme exogène, les puristes de cette langue à l'instar de Tourneux (2011) et de Mendo Zé (1990). Le choix des mots et des structures morphosyntaxiques use des procédés qui font montre d'une très grande créativité connue sous l'appellation de parler jeune ou camfranglais. Pratique linguistique que Mendo Zé (1990) considère de 'mauvais modèles de français' qui sont diffusés à travers 'des tours de la langue familière ou argotique, soit pour des raisons de facilité, soit par ignorance des règles et structures immanentes de la langue française' (1990 :7-8). Carole de Féral (2007) émet à ce sujet un bémol quand elle soutient qu'il s'agit pour les jeunes dans ces formes de parler de revendiquer ou 'de construire grâce à la connaissance d'une variété commune, de nouvelles identités' qui leurs sont propres. Les concepteurs des messages adressés aux jeunes semblent se prêter aux pratiques linguistiques de cette cible.

Dans l'affiche suivante placardée à hauteur de poitrine sur le mur, à un mètre de la porte principale de la bibliothèque centrale de l'Université de Dschang en 2011, le contexte qui y est construit

attribue à chaque élément présent un rôle spécifique qui concourt à la catégorisation de la cible.

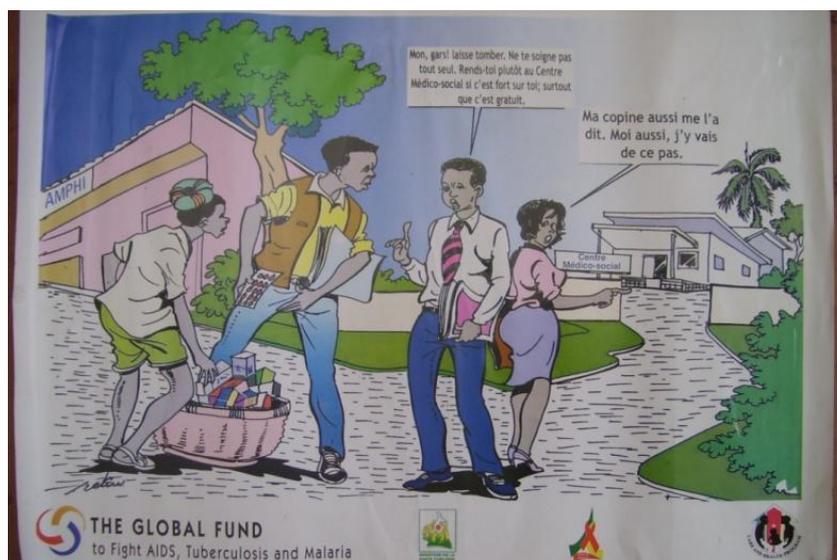


Figure 4 : Affiche de sensibilisation contre l'automédication

Le message iconique frappe en premier. Il donne à voir quatre personnages au premier plan de l'affiche. De la gauche vers la droite, un jeune homme en culotte vert olive, légèrement courbé, la main dans un panier rempli de petites boîtes cartonnées placé sur le pavé devant lui, le regard rivé sur un des participants placé après celui qui est en face de lui. Le coussin posé sur la tête atteste que ce panier y était placé avant cet instant spécifique. Son vis-à-vis directement debout devant lui, les jambes légèrement écartées, la main droite tenant une plaquette remplie de gélules, la main gauche frottant son entre-jambes, le bras gauche soutenant sous l'aisselle un cartable. Le visage plissé tourné vers la droite où se trouve un autre jeune homme tenant lui aussi un cartable à la main gauche, l'index de la main droite levé semblant le mettre en garde contre quelque chose. Au-dessus de la tête de ce dernier pointe d'ailleurs une bulle qui retranscrit ses paroles : ' Mon, gars ! Laisse tomber. Ne te soigne pas tout seul ! Rends-toi au Centre Médico-social si c'est fort sur toi, surtout que c'est gratuit.' Juste à côté de ce dernier, une jeune demoiselle ayant un sac suspendu à l'épaule gauche, dos contre les trois jeunes hommes, s'engage sur une allée en pavé en direction d'un bâtiment de couleur blanche serré sur le bord droit en arrière-plan de l'affiche. La tête tournée vers la direction des autres actants, l'index de la main droite pointe le bâtiment vers lequel elle se dirige. Le message linguistique qui lui est attribué est 'Ma copine aussi me l'a dit. Moi aussi, j'y vais de ce pas.' Sur un panneau fixé devant le bâtiment vers lequel s'oriente est inscrit le message linguistique de couleur violette sur fond blanc ' Centre médico-social '. Du côté opposé à ce centre médico-social, se trouve en second plan, en vue de profil, un grand bâtiment de couleur rose dont on peut lire sur sa façade principale l'inscription 'AMPHI'. Des espaces verts se trouvant de part et d'autre du couloir séparent le centre médico-social de l'amphi. De ce décor, la relation entre le

texte et les images permet de constater que la relation entre fonctions d'ancrage et de relais restitue le contexte interne qui renseigne à son tour sur les pratiques socialement vérifiables en contexte. Il met en scène une situation où un étudiant intercepte un vendeur ambulant de produits pharmaceutiques pour s'en procurer. Les autres actants, camarades étudiants, l'en empêchent en le conseillant le lieu propice où il peut bénéficier des soins adéquats.

Le lieu où se trouve cette affiche est un espace accessible à tous ceux qui fréquentent la bibliothèque (étudiants, corps enseignant et le personnel d'appui de l'université). Contrairement à ce qu'on aurait pu attendre, la langue utilisée est celle du quotidien des étudiants en dehors des amphes. La langue utilisée rompt avec les exigences des règles de l'art qui privilégie la norme du français de France enseignée dans les amphes. C'est un langage plutôt familier qui est plus utilisé en situation de communication entre copains, loin des situations de communication formelle. Cette réappropriation du français avec des constructions calquées sur la syntaxe des langues nationales est un phénomène résultant du contact entre plusieurs langues. ' Si c'est fort sur toi ' en une illustration forte. A la place de ce calque, les puristes auraient préféré la formule ' si tu n'en peux plus'. Contrairement à ce que Mendo Zé (1990: 75) taxe de mauvais modèle de français, l'accent semble être mis sur la communication et non sur la norme métropolitaine du français. Si on arrive à trouver ce genre de langage sur les affiches à l'intérieur de l'université, c'est que l'annonceur/concepteur mise sur les pratiques linguistiques informelles des jeunes dans cette localité pour accroître les chances d'attention et d'adhésion au projet véhiculé. Par ailleurs, cette affiche a cette particularité de remettre sur la sellette la question de l'automédication et ses conséquences néfastes en pleine essor au Cameroun et dans la majorité des pays d'Afrique. Dans le dépliant étudié plus haut, fixé sur l'une des façades intérieures de la salle d'attente du PIPAD,⁵¹ on peut lire le texte suivant :

'Yoyettes', faisons le point : L'argent du Sponsor peut-il guérir du VIH/SIDA ? Être ' top ' est il plus important qu'être digne ? Coucher avec le prof te rend-t-il intelligente ?...Tu as certainement entendu parler de : Sponsor, Kapo, financeur, etc. Tu connais peut-être une amie, une sœur qui a un partenaire beaucoup plus âgé qu'elle et qui lui donne de l'argent et des cadeaux. Tu as probablement un camarade qui sort avec le prof en échange des notes... Mais, sais-tu que : 46 % de Sponsors sont des célibataires avec plusieurs copines. 42% d'autres Sponsors sont mariés et ne recherche que ' la chère fraîche '. Sponsors + ' Yoyettes = croisement dangereux... Très souvent, le Sponsor est marié et/ou a plusieurs ' petites ' dans la ville. La fille de son côté a son ' bon gars '...le Sponsor impose souvent le des rapports non protégés à sa jeune partenaire. 45% d'apprenties et 35% d'étudiantes engagées dans des relations avec

⁵¹ Projet intégré pour la promotion de l'auto-développement, association de développement œuvrant dans la lutte contre le VIH/SIDA dont le siège est basé à Dschang-Cameroun.

des Sponsors ont déjà pratiqué un avortement clandestin... La fille offre son corps. Le Sponsor achète le plaisir... Dès que le Sponsor a eu son compte, il se désintéresse de la fille et la relation meurt... Ce message frappe par un style qui joue abondamment sur des créations néologiques. Ces créations tournent autour de la forme et/ou du sens des mots. Les termes ' Yoyettes ', ' prof ', ' Sponsors ', ' Kapo ', ' financeur ', ' petites ', ' la chère fraîche ', ' bon gars ' en sont une illustration typique de ce genre de créativité. Ce sont tantôt des emprunts aux langues environnantes, tantôt des mots existant dans la langue de communication, mais, qui ont perdu leur sens originel en contexte. La fracture typographique signalée par la mise en exergue des mots et expressions dans les guillemets ou en italique témoigne à la fois du contexte inhabituel de leur usage et, pourrait on ajouter, de la distance que prend le concepteur pour signaler que ces mots et expressions ne sont pas de lui. Le mot ' yoyettes ' puise, par exemple, ses origines dans le parler jeune appelé camfranglais. Il est utilisé dans ce parler pour désigner les jeunes filles coquettes et ravissantes. Par contre, les termes mis en exergue ' petite ', ' bon gars ', ' la chère fraîche ' existent dans la langue française. Seulement, la clarification de leurs sens en fonction du dictionnaire de la langue française dérouterait la compréhension du message communiqué à travers leurs usages. En effet, le mot ' petites ' dans ce contexte ne qualifie point un substantif du genre féminin qui serait exigüe ou restreinte et n'a non plus rien à voir avec de ' jeunes personnes de sexe féminin pas encore adulte ' comme communément utilisé dans une situation de rapprochement communicatif familial. Dans ce contexte, il partage avec l'expression ' la chère fraîche ' le même référent 'maitresse ou concubine' d'un jeune âge.

Par ailleurs, les termes tronqués ' Kapo ' et ' prof ' observés ça et là dans la construction du message sans l'utilisation de signes typographiques s'apparenteraient à une légitimation de leurs usages. L'apocope ' prof ', généralement utilisé à l'oral et dans des situations de rapprochement communicatif, est issu de la chute des syllabes finales 'es seur' du mot professeur. Par contre ' Kapo ' est un terme qui fait appel à plusieurs référents. Il est parfois associé aux personnes chargées autrefois d'encadrer des personnes privées de liberté gardées dans des camps de concentration nazis. Il fait aussi référence au titre de caporal dans l'armée française et de bien d'autres nationalités. Celui présent dans ce dépliant n'a rien de commun avec ces usages traditionnels. En réalité, il y a eu une réappropriation du mot ' caporal ' avec non seulement la suppression des syllabes 'o-ral', mais aussi, une modification de la graphie par la substitution de la lettre ' c ' par ' K ' en gardant la même prononciation. Le ' Kapo ' a pour référent dans ce contexte toute personne qui, sur le plan social, a une situation financière admirable et s'en sert pour appâter des partenaires sexuels qui sont généralement de jeunes filles. On comprend donc que les signes utilisés, aussi bien linguistiques qu'iconiques, jouissent d'un enjeu qui, au-delà d'être une stratégie pour atteindre la cible, sont des

perceptions soumises aux conditions sociales trahissant par le fait même, si on s'en tient à Boudreau et Dubois (2005), 'des positionnements qu'adoptent les locuteurs par rapport à eux-mêmes et par rapport aux autres' (2005 : 213) en matière de lutte contre le VIH/SIDA.

Conclusion

En dernière analyse, notre réflexion portait sur l'exploration de l'enjeu du signe langagier dans la construction sociale contre le VIH/SIDA. Il s'agissait d'analyser les messages de sensibilisation contre le VIH/SIDA adressés aux jeunes par voies d'images fixes dans la ville de Dschang au Cameroun. Partant du postulat que toute communication, conformément à Tsofack et Tandia (2003), 'est un acte de langage, un produit fabriqué en vue d'une consommation' (2003 : 158), il aura été question de détecter et d'interpréter les stratégies mises en jeu dans les supports de sensibilisation pour stimuler l'attention et la réception des messages contre le VIH/SIDA à destination des jeunes. Pour y parvenir, nous avons moulé notre réflexion dans un cadre théorique et méthodologique qui liait approche empirique, sémiotique et constructiviste. Ce cadre a permis d'identifier des éléments du système de signes linguistiques et des éléments non-verbaux mis en jeu dans le processus de production de sens concourant à la restitution du contexte créé dans la composition des supports fixes en rapport avec le contexte de leurs usages. Il en ressort que les signes du langage mobilisés dans ces supports ont par parfois subi un glissement sémantique qui joue hautement sur les codes sociaux à partir desquels il faut s'en inspirer pour passer du 'signe au sens' selon Boutaud (1998 : 10) ou du moins dévoiler leurs sens en contexte. Le paradigme constructiviste a permis de dénicher les perceptions qu'ont les concepteurs des messages contre le VIH/SIDA de cette pandémie et de la cible jeune à travers les signes mis en jeu.

Il ressort de l'exploration des connaissances transmises aux jeunes de cette localité que les signes utilisés révèlent des symptômes d'une jeunesse en proie à cette pandémie du siècle. Ces signes revêtent une valeur symbolique oscillant entre dénigrement des comportements jugés exposant aux risques d'infection à l'encouragement des conduites estimées exemplaires pour contrer le VIH/SIDA. Leur vulnérabilité viendrait selon les promoteurs d'éducation de ces jeunes de l'immaturation, de l'ignorance, de la recherche du prestige et de la misère ambiante qui plonge certains dans la prostitution. Cette image projetée sur ces derniers participe de la reconstitution des traquenards auxquels ils sont confrontés afin de leur donner une signification spécifique qui était jusqu'alors négligée ou ignorée de ceux-ci. L'entrée en jeu des représentations des jeunes, des espaces jeunes et des pratiques linguistiques jugées identitaires à ce groupe social contribue davantage au renforcement de la fonction incitative. Toutefois, il est regrettable que les

messages de sensibilisation contre le VIH/SIDA destinés à la population en général et aux jeunes en particulier passent sous silence d'autres facteurs qui sont elles aussi des voies de propagation du VIH/SIDA pour se confiner sur sa transmission sexuelle. La féminisation de la propagation de cette pandémie semble également un handicap énorme aux résultats escomptés. Dans la foulée de Forceville (1996), ' It is argued that an examination of text-internal context does not suffice, however; in addition, text-external factors such as cultural conventions, expectations, and genre-attributions need to be considered as well. '(1996 : 2), nous limiter à l'analyse du contexte interne construit dans ces supports de sensibilisation contre le VIH/SIDA et à notre rôle d'analyste interprète demeure restrictif. C'est pourquoi il est envisagé de rendre compte dans un article à paraître bientôt les constructions de cette cible vis-à-vis du phénomène VIH/SIDA et des ' reproches ' qui leur sont faits.

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Media and Self Representation: the Visual Economy of Picturing Refugees in Kenya's Dadaab Camp

Pamela Chepngetich-Omanga

Photographic representation is pivotal to our understanding of its subjects. However, photographs are neat slices of time that cannot portray everything concerning the particular group represented. It is indeed true that those involved in the photographic representations of others can only offer selective representations of subjects in ways most relevant to their organisational structures and specific to their mission objectives and demands. Focusing on the mass-media and humanitarian organisational photographic representations of refugees in Kenya, this paper utilises W.J.T. Mitchell's (2005) approach to photographic analysis in exploring photographs in terms of their representational angles, seeking to interrogate their content, and highlight the excluded frame by dialoguing pictures from different categories of photographic representation. In so doing, the paper illuminates the underlying influences on photographic representation of refugees, arguing that both media and self representation are equally subject to ideological and structural biases and impulses, and that these representational categories in isolation produce only partial reality concerning their subjects of representation.

Key words: Self Representation, Photography, Kenya, Refugees,

Introduction

There are no crises of displacement without visual representation. Ranging from simple disasters such as earthquakes and floods to complex disasters⁵² such as wars, conflict, and famine, all of which lead to displacement, these have been made visible to distant audiences through visual representation. The mass media has been quite instrumental in covering such crises, information which has then yielded an outpouring of humanitarian support from audiences depending on the need (Moeller 1999: 99)

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⁵² Susan D. Moeller (1999:100) has defined Simple emergencies as tragic natural occurrences, such as earthquakes which require straightforward humanitarian interventions, e.g. provision of food and shelter. Complex emergencies are those complicated by underlying causes, and require both military and humanitarian interventions, for example famine which is a result of extended periods of conflict.

As much as the mass media represents unfolding crisis, humanitarian organisations also play a key in representing displacement. Being the key organisations that receive and settle refugees in the camps, these organisations also visually represent refugees not only in times of crisis of arrival into the camps, but also as a continuous practice even when refugees have fully settled. In most cases, these representation engagements are not undertaken by the NGOs alone, but also in collaboration with professional photographers and the refugees themselves.

Diverse representational themes therefore emerge when different actors represent displacement. To begin with, media representations of famine are mostly produced in times of unfolding crises when those affected are undergoing desperate situations either fleeing or just arriving in the camps. For this reason, media representation portrays its subjects as desperate and hopeless (Malkki 1995:12; Moeller, 1999: 98). NGO representations on the other hand differ from media representation in the sense that they are mostly produced in times of calm when refugees have settled in the refugee camps. In this sense, they offer alternative information as compared to that which is prevalent in the mass media.

In isolation, these photographs can only represent that which it stands for (Okediji 2003: vii). Media representations are true to the news values⁵³ that determine their selection. Some of the news values that guide the representation of displacement in the media include *timeliness* (referring to current occurrences), *human crisis* (meaning tragic occurrences in which people are affected) and *impact* (in which the number of people affected should be high); (Oosthuizen 2004: 453). This means that images of refugees in flight or just arriving into the camps are published at that moment in time as compared to those of already settled earlier arrivals or other more positive images of refugees. Moreover, these people have normally walked for many days in arid terrain without food and water, and their physical appearances at the time of arrival largely portray the impacts of famine on the human body.

NGO representations on the other hand can yield both positive and negative images, depending on the context in which they are produced (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2009: 234; Utas 2005: 406; Kihato 2007: 104). If they are meant for fund raising purposes, photographs that depict the need for funding are selected. On the other hand, reports on accomplished projects are largely accompanied by pictures of that particular project, coupled with direct quotes from its beneficiaries (Rajaram 2002: 248). NGO representations are therefore restricted within the organization's areas of focus.

These images are therefore limited in terms of how much they reveal. Once a photograph portrays a crisis in the media, it cannot at the

⁵³ I use news values to refer to the guidelines which editors use to select from the many events those that will be published as news.

same time portray an accomplished project of the NGOs. These are indeed separate moments and contexts specific to the situation they represent. They are thus neat slices of time as Susan Sontag (1977: 17) states. They represent only one aspect of the refugees' lives while cutting away all the other aspects. This limit of photography can be described as a form of *photographicide*.

For this reason, how to decipher these varied representational themes is an important endeavour for an article like this one. The case has often been to criticise media representation for only featuring negative images concerning those undergoing crises, as a practice that has only led to the creation or reinforcement of stereotypes (Malkki 1995: 10, Bleiker & Kay 2007: 140). This has culminated into embracing alternative representation for its greater possibility to produce "positive" images which can then overhaul stereotypes produced by dominant representations (Bleiker & Kay 2007: 141). A point to have in mind though is that not only positive images emerge out of alternative representations since negative images can arise as well, due to the complex relationship that exists between positive and negative representation (Kihato 2007:104; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2009:324).

Engaging representation in terms of positivity or negativity of what they represent is however something we should rise above. Campbell (2010) notes that whether positive or negative images, photographers' subjective choices on topics, aesthetics, among other choices are the key determinants of what they photograph. Secondly, context largely defines how images look like, so that they are specific to the context in which they were produced. And lastly, these photographs cannot be substituted for one another since they belong to different categories of representation but are important to the comprehensive visual representation of refugees (Grossberg 2008:102; Campbell, 2008:114; Shapiro, 1988:5).

In an endeavour to avoid photographicide which only results in a limited representation and thus understanding of subjects of representation, it is important to view these images as "fragments of a whole to which they represent" (Shapiro 1988:5). In this regard, photographs from different categories of photographic representation reveal only specific aspects of refugees' stories that conform to their producers' economy, and these can be combined in order to achieve a comprehensive representation. In this manner, viewers and scholars alike should be aware of other photographic representations apart from the one source they are exposed to, be it media, NGO, or refugees' self-representations. Such representations in singularity are incomplete, but an all-round exposure offers a comprehensive understanding of subjects of representation.

W.J.T. Mitchell's (2005) approach to photographic analysis largely guides such an endeavour. Mitchell proposes the interrogation of photographs by examining their representational angles in order to

understand what its frame of representation excludes or includes, and hence what this prevents us from seeing, and prevents it from showing (p. 50). The different approaches taken by different sources of photographic representation can therefore be analysed by dialoguing pictures from these different sources so as to obtain a comprehensive representation. Such an analysis does not rule out the established photographic analysis in terms of the surface and underlying meanings, but builds into a deeper analysis of photographs. This analysis therefore appreciates the existence of photographs from diverse sources and the varied contexts in which they have been produced, and acknowledges all as building blocks towards a comprehensive representation of refugees.

This way, the varied representational categories are taken to be part and parcel of what defines Dadaab refugee camp⁵⁴. Media representation for example offers a certain kind of knowledge which is quite different from, but adds to a comprehensive representation when refugees define themselves. In this way, the outcomes of representation are defined in terms of the contexts in which they were produced, leaving representation as an open ended process in which the achievement of an authentic representation of refugees is not the aim. Rather, the process is left open so that any new sources of photographs other than those which are already available are adopted to contribute to this broader aim towards a comprehensive representation of its subjects. (Debrix 2003: xxxvi).

The photographic representations are analyzed, not in terms of the “positivity” or “negativity” of what they represent, but as fragments that build to a cumulative whole. Therefore, none of the representations should be viewed as more authentic or a substitution of the other, but as partial representations made up of different sections which offer portions of knowledge concerning refugees’ lives. These are then complemented by the other categories in forming a comprehensive representation of the refugee camp (Shapiro 1988:5). As Grossberg notes, these representations are “neither equivalent nor reducible to each other” (2008:102), but contribute to a broader representation of the particular group concerned.

Below is an example of analysis towards the all-round appreciation of refugees’ photographic representations in Dadaab refugee camp. These photographs have been grouped into categories which were identified from sampled photographs of refugees by photojournalists (henceforth media representation), by refugees under the auspices of NGOs (henceforth termed public self representation), and photographs produced by refugees for their private use (henceforth known as private self representation). Themes that emerged from these categories form the sub-headings of these analyses.

⁵⁴ Okediji 2003: xi makes a similar argument in his discussion of the representation of African Americans through art.

The Fence

As a photography cue, 'the fence' is an important trope within the visual economy of picturing displacement. It is used to represent situations of displacement in which refugees are approaching their host countries. In most cases, this functions to record a *timely* event which is still unfolding and which easily qualifies as news for the media. In television news coverage, reporters run this moment in a short clip with accompanying voice to describe the circumstances. Such 'moving images' portray its subjects moving towards the fence as if energized by the nearness of the fence, and therefore their destination, as compared to the longer distance of their origin. An example is the CNN news report concerning the crisis in Syria in which its citizens were fleeing to nearby Turkey⁵⁵. Newspapers on the other hand offer still images of people positioned behind the fence as seen in the photograph below. This is then contextualised by the accompanying caption and news story. The Fence in this news context thus works to justify the truth claims by journalists of the way things are (Zelizer 2004:118). It acts as evidence of displacement in being a proof that these events occurred, and that journalists were there to record.

As much as the use of 'the fence' signifies timeliness of this news report, the occurrence is however not totally new. Rather, it is continuity to a developing story of a looming crisis in the concerned country or region. In this sense, the fence functions as a climax to this developing story whose outcome, the displacement, seems to have been lingering in the minds of many. In this sense, the fence signifies displacement and therefore confirms the magnitude of the crisis at hand, offering a justification for the media attention that was invested in that developing story in the first place. Understood this way, the fence therefore belongs to this genre of representing developing crises -crises which can be tracked back- as compared to natural disasters that strike instantly and in which no or few developing stories exist. On the other hand however, this sort of barrier (fence) is specific to this particular context and should be seen to differ from other kinds of barriers, for example those that exist prison cells.

⁵⁵ For details see, <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/04/06/world/europe/turkey-syrian-refugees>



Fig. 1 media representation, courtesy of Tom Maruko

The photograph above is a perfect example of the manner in which the media uses the fence to accompany unfolding news reports on displacement in which people have to seek refuge in neighbouring countries. It shows a child, seemingly a boy, positioned behind a chain-link fence. He is distantly looking away from the camera, as if to occurrences further away on the other side of the fence. Behind him are blurred images of other refugees which corporately succeed in making the boy the central subject of attention. While signalling the fact that there are many more trapped in this space of liminality, the fusion of a grim looking boy pressing himself against the fence is a powerful metaphor that is probably designed to call the attention of key stakeholders.

As mentioned earlier, the fence is an important marker in the visual representation of displacement, signifying new arrivals of refugees into camps. Their long days of walking on arid terrain are now over and they are thus waiting to be admitted into the Dadaab refugee camp. The sad fact however is that during the 2011 crisis when this photograph was taken, the number of daily new arrivals was so huge such that people had to queue for long hours, sometimes days, before being registered and therefore finally getting into the camp (Muir 2011). This queuing led to further deterioration of their situation, sometimes leading to death. Make shift camps also dotted up to hundred metres away from this border, when refugees made temporary shelter in which to wait for their turn to be registered. Two things followed from this. In order to sustain them, aid workers offered emergency assistance to these people in the make-shift camps. But even so, those with the highest risk were rushed to emergency health centres in the camps for treatment. This high risk was judged through physical appearance of greater weakness and deterioration and was quite handy for those who received it. On the other hand however, it may have worked to reproduce victimcy⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Mats Utas (2005) explores victimcy to refer to when victims of a situation play the game of the vulnerable as the situation demands. Christina Clark (2007) also uses this term in an almost similar manner.

bearing in mind that all these people had undergone difficult circumstances.

Apart from this, their new identity as refugees is not yet a reality since they have not been granted refugee status on this other side of the fence, but are willing to denounce their citizenship of the other side of the fence, which is their country of origin. In this regard, the fence is significant in producing refugees who, after crossing over, remain refugees and are therefore defined as stateless due to their lack of nationality. Pictured in this manner, their identity is therefore firmly located in the ambiguous state of liminality. Furthermore, they are not defined as internally displaced persons in their countries of origin despite the make-shift camps they occupy on the other side of the fence. There is therefore a sort of interplay between intimacy and distance with regard to their identity. This new identity is so near, and yet still, so far. It is accessible and yet unapproachable. These oppositions form part of the erotics of this particular genre of photography. Using this trope, the media easily defines the borders of 'here' and 'there', situating subjects of such representations as the 'other' or as aliens.

Such presentation of 'the fence' also triggers anxiety with regard to the ambiguity of the refugee law. Concerning refugees, the law states that they have a right to be hosted by the country into which they flee (Mannik 2012:264). With regard to the host country however, its acceptance to host refugees is voluntary, meaning that they can choose to either host them or not (ibid). This ambiguity therefore translates into a humanitarian plea. On the one hand, an appeal is made by subjects of such representation not only to us as viewers of this image (whether nationals of host country or not), but more so to the government of the host country to open its gates. But then again a tense moment is connoted for all the parties involved due to the possible responses to this plea. The host country can choose to allow the refugees in, but it also has a right to decline, and therefore reject this plea. Political reactions then spring in from here. The boy's look seems to acquiesce with the public's 'why-don't-you-let-them-in' outcry, when the receiving government is left with no option but to open its gates. If the government on the other hand does the 'unimaginable' and refuses to allow these people in, it is immediately viewed with contempt especially in the face of international media and humanitarian organisations, while its nationals may identify with it. In this regard, the refugee camp becomes a political project granted by the host country in an attempt to gain international approval.

In general, 'the Fence', together with the accompanying media story, offers justification of the subjects' decision to flee, and of their plea to be allowed to cross over to the other, probably safer side of the fence. The boy's uncertainty revealed through his thoughtful stare therefore speaks for the many more in his company, of the difficult past and of the tense and unsure, though hopefully better future.

Better in the sense that it justifies their decision to make such a journey, but unsure due to the fact that they do not know what awaits them on the particular decision to cross over, and also how will turn out on the other side of the fence.

Yet as a picture that is specific to this particular context, the photograph cannot tell, and therefore conceals other realities about refugees. It has blurred, and therefore concealed the gender, age, and appearances of the many people who are in the same situation as this boy. Furthermore, with the reality of unaccompanied minors in situations of displacement, the photograph does not inform whether this boy was unaccompanied or not. Lastly, it does not reveal the adventures a boy this age experiences in an outdoor environment with many people around, but only captures the moment when he is thoughtfully staring.

Gender, Media and Self representation

The following photographs portray refugees who have essentially 'crossed over the fence', and now safely sequestered into the Dadaab refugee camp.



Fig. 2 media representation; courtesy of photographer Tom Maruko



Fig. 3 Public self representation; photo by refugees courtesy of AFSC



Fig. 4 Private self representation; photo by refugees courtesy of AFSC

Fig. 2 captured the crisis of newly arrived refugees into the Dadaab camp following escalating famine that struck Somalia and other parts of Ethiopia and Northern Kenya in the year 2011. The photo captures the horrors of freshly arrived refugees in the camp receiving medical attention and the much needed rest from days of walking on arid terrain. We chance upon a mother and her two children as the focus of the photo. Agony is scribbled all over her face, marking perhaps the only visual evidence of the suffering she has endured in the war torn Somalia. Her equally traumatised children are a potent sight inviting instant sympathy. A visibly malnourished pair, huddled next to their mother all facing away from the camera, forms a perfect reduction for the mass media on the ramifications of violence. To the left of them is another woman, perhaps another repetition of the mother and child pattern. The gendered nature of how the media visualises the aftermath of conflict is evident in this template of a vulnerable mother and her children, which relates to Dorothea Lange's most famous *migrant mother photograph*, and also to *Madonna and child* paintings in western art (Price & Wells 2006:44). The absence of any male presence in the form of a father or otherwise, accentuates the notion of a gendered victimhood that foregrounds feminine vulnerability and childhood innocence.

However, it is worth noting that the structures that inform the collection and dissemination of news, especially news concerning refugees in times of crises, are most likely to produce photographs along such a template. Moreover, the sight of a woman and child stands out as a perfect metaphor of conflict and violence, for the simple reason that motherhood and children evoke near universal emotions almost familiar to all. Additionally, the visualisation of the weak and innocent, in this case a woman and her children, is usually used in the media to focus more on the results of conflict rather than on the politics underlying the conflict (Campbell 2007).

However, as a photograph that is specific to its context of production, it can only inform about the crisis that loomed during its time of

production, therefore revealing only certain aspects of the refugee camp experiences. Furthermore, when put into context, the concept of gender gains a cultural interpretation when it comes to understanding photographs of refugees, especially of Somali refugees in Dadaab refugee camp. Fig. 3 therefore confirms the cultural specificity of photography and gender in Dadaab camp, where it is much easier to see photos of men than those of women. This photograph was produced by refugees in a project which focused on training them on photography skills. They were then tasked with an assignment to photographically relay what the concept 'peace' meant to them. This photograph shows four men lying, and the fifth squatting on top of a heap of sand. They are all waving their two fingers to symbolise peace. This is with regard to the topic of assignment in which they were supposed to photographically relay what 'peace' meant to them.

The men's appearances reveal the mixed nature of Dadaab refugee camp which hosts communities from different countries in the horn. The deliberate mix was intended to anchor the concept of unity and peace among previously warring communities or nationalities⁵⁷. They are all well groomed, transgressing the stereotypical media representations of refugees in desperate situations. This photograph, taken during the calm moments of Dadaab refugee camp, reveals the stability that existed at the time of the training as compared to media representations taken in times of human crises. In picturing men as the central focus of this photograph, the cultural orientation of the context in which this photo was taken springs up, beckoning a gender consideration. Most cultures from the horn countries, moreso within the Somali, prohibit the public display, and therefore photographing of women.⁵⁸ This, on the one hand, transgresses prevalent media representations which utilise images of women and children. On the other hand, it points to a need for further thought to issues of gender in scholarly arguments on representation. In this sense, while the mass media utilises images of women and children, women are absent in images produced by refugees, not necessarily due to a contest against stereotypical representations, but rather due to cultural issues.

While fig.3 provides the rarity of maleness as subject of representing refugees, fig.4 conflates the spontaneity of childhood bliss and the suggested thrill that comes with play. The photo contains four children. A girl, visibly excited at the foregoing, holding a baby, and next to her another girl stands facing the photographer. Behind them, on a tree is a boy doing what boys of his age would normally do with strong trees outside the family home. The photo stands out as a picture of everydayness and normality. There is little evidence of posing, or prior arrangement before the photo is taken. Although it is taken outdoors, the photograph actually invites us into a private

⁵⁷ Source: interviews with refugees

⁵⁸ This information was obtained from an interview data with Film Aid International Kenya officials.

sphere; it is the sphere of more intimate relations, that of between siblings. Indeed, without knowing the context, one would scarcely associate the photo with a refugee camp. It is full of action and movement and exudes more energy and spontaneity.

Still, as a capture of a frozen moment, a slice in time and space that immortalises such moments, this photograph, like the ones previously discussed, is limited as to how much it reveals. Further, as one that contributes to our discussions on gender, the photograph reveals the enlightening aspect of culture-specific considerations in representation. In absencing women, the photograph has made children its subject. Again, this does not necessarily contest stereotypical media representations taken during times of crises in which children in desperate conditions are pictured. Rather, in portraying daily life, the culture-specific gender considerations of not photographing women in refugees' self photography emerge. In short, while the mass media utilises images of women and children in representations of crises of displacement, self-representation has situated the culture specific picturing of men and children as subjects in photographs produced by refugees. Yet as photographs that are limited in terms of how much they reveal, they can be rightly argued to have committed photographicicide.

A Word on Ideology

The broad concept of ideology in general is the bedrock of most representations, be it media or self representation. In mass media representation, ideology informs coverage of most events, including current affairs, politics, just to mention a few. In such news reports, the selection of photographs is informed by ideological news values. These are the connotative guidelines that inform the selection and publication of stories in the mass media (Zelizer 2004: 130; Hall 1981). But the extent to which news reporting is ideologically laden varies depending on what is at stake. Ideological influences on events in which political stakes are high would differ from tragic occurrences in which connotation plays a minimal role. In her findings, Zelizer notes that war reporting inclines journalists to report in a manner that suits the 'surrounding mandates' on how the war should be reported (2004:131). Contrasting this with tragic events such as road accidents, floods, fire breakouts, or displacements such as the one this paper focuses on, the ideological guidelines for coverage of these events are very complex. In this regard, *consonance*, a news value that has elements of ideology guides this process. Consonance refers to reporting events in a manner that corresponds to audiences' world views and expectations (Davison *et al* 1982:101). For example, reporting refugees' experiences in a pattern similar to what refugees look, or rather should look like. This visual template is central in maintaining the visual tradition of representing refugees and therefore not distorting the pattern of thought of the audiences. Such preconceived notions in audiences'

minds therefore call for reporting in ways that fit into these established visual traditions.

Furthermore, Campbell (2007: 359) notes that underlying forces that trigger displacement such as long term conflicts are mostly ignored with media reports focusing on visible crises such as widespread starvation and famine, which are the immediate triggers of displacement. In essence, focus is given to the humanitarian perspective of displacement where deaths and other human crises have been experienced, while ignoring underlying causes. In this case therefore, coverage of displacement is a complex issue composed of various underlying layers of triggers, but what we see in the news are the last stage events characterized by images of human suffering and displacement. In such moments therefore, journalists have little choices but to relay unfolding crises with timeliness being the guiding principle. Resulting stories therefore are not so much ideologically laden as they are informational.

On the contrary, self representations under the auspices of NGOs fail to evade visible ideological influences. The photographs below reveal the NGO's mission focus, which is peace. Despite humanitarian organisations engaging in projects to empower refugees, these have to be related to the broader organisation's mandate.



Fig. 5 Self representation; photo by refugees courtesy of AFSC



Fig. 6 Self representation; photo by refugees courtesy of AFSC

Taken by a fellow refugee, Fig. 5 shows a refugee child with a paper placard. The ideology of peace stands out quite clearly. The primary focus of the photograph is a child holding a white paper written 'I love peace.' An assortment of household knick knack clutters the background. The rest of the other sections are dark, except for the area around this child, making him the focus of the photograph. This photo was not only part of the NGO's project, but was also the subject of a colourful exhibition during the world's Refugee Day in Nairobi, 2010. Clearly, it was meant to send a different message of refugees away from the usual staple of hunger, strife and grief. In this photo, the privacy of shelter is denotatively suggested, while the connotations of comfort and warmth of a house, however simple, is implied. The child, who is the subject of focus in this photograph, is the main object through which the assignment of a 'peace campaign' has been fulfilled.

While in media representation of refugees the mother and child image is used to anchor the message of victimhood and vulnerability, a child who barely understands the complexities of peace and violence becomes a tool whose innocence and vulnerability is used for a seemingly positive effort in this case. Represented previously as the epitome of the worst of human crisis (fig.1&2), a child is once again propped as the carrier of the banner of peace. This is an indication of how NGOs utilise the same patterns that media use to construct news (of victimhood and despondency), and in a move that challenges stereotypical depictions, transgresses victimhood by using a child to send a different, even opposing message. Such inversions are also seen in fig.6.

In this photo (fig. 6), like the previous one, the influence of the photographer on the conduct and arrangement of the subjects of representation is profound. If mass media photographs reveal a more natural and less overt awareness of being photographed by the subjects, 'thematically' produced photos show the opposite. The 'interference' of the outcome of photography by the photographer in themed photography is not merely on the perceived preparedness, arrangement and choice of setting, but also on the ideological message explicitly espoused. This photo shows five boys raising the universal symbol of peace (and also victory). The image conjures thoughts of childhood fun, boundless play and the camaraderie that accompanies such friendship. Still, the raised fingers, especially from the two boys on extreme sides, one raising it only reluctantly, and the other, who seems the oldest in the group, facing down, as if saying 'I really do not believe (or understand) what this is all about', reveal more the ideology and intentions of the sponsoring NGO than real life in a refugee camp. And contrary to media photos that thrive on news values of conflict and victimhood, the photo provides a view of the camp life one would never see on media photography; fun loving boys, relatively neat, with shoes on and evidently not starving.

Indeed, the enthusiasm of the boy at the centre whose peace symbol is raised highest reveals energy and a boy's glee that one would rarely imagine exists in a tented community. Worth noting, while the media exploits childhood innocence to construct victimhood (and news for that matter), self photography through NGOs equally exploit childhood innocence to purvey their own ideology and objectives.⁵⁹ Still, as slices of time and space, both forms of representations enrich our own understanding of the kind of life that is found in Dadaab refugee camp.

Conclusion

This article has detailed the manner in which media and self representation in isolation are limited in terms of how much they reveal. They are constricted by the boundaries that structure the particular fields in which they operate, and hence produce only certain kinds of photographs that fit into their particular categories as discussed above. By interrogating photographs from different sources, aspects concealed in one photograph have been revealed by photos from different sources. In this manner, the photographs complement each other, thereby contributing towards a broader understanding of subjects of representation. This is aided by Mitchell's (2005) approach to photographic analysis. In order to obtain a broader understanding of refugees therefore, photographs from all available sources concerning refugees should be viewed collectively.

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⁵⁹ I am not making a normative argument that this ideology is either bad or good, I am only revealing an attribute associated with childhood that the media and humanitarian organisations find effective in communicating their message.

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(Re-) Signifying Abject Bodies: Narrative Transfigurations of Violence in the Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah and Sony Lab'ou Tansi

Gilbert Ndi Shang

*In both academic discourses and socio-historical reality, the scourge of violence constitutes a major challenge to conceptualizations of the boundaries of humanity and human progression or retrogression. This challenge is echoed in most African novels which portray the 'crisis of writing' and artistic representation in the face of human abjection. However, thanks to their complex structures and aesthetic innovation, African literary representations transfigure the reality of violence in order to capture the resilience of the 'human' specie. This paper examines representations of human violence in Sony Lab'ou Tansi's **L'Etat Honteux** (1981) and Ayi Kwei Armah's **Osiris Rising** (1995). With close regard to narrative structures and techniques, it argues that though both authors make recourse to the "body" as a central metaphor in narrating the orgy and intimacy of violence, their works belong to distinct literary traditions. However, they are both inscribed within an artistic articulation of resistance and regeneration of the society in the face of various historical processes of dismemberment through violence.*

Key words: violence, body, abjection, enunciation, regeneration.

Introduction

In her ground breaking work, *The Power of Horror*, Julia Kristeva (1982) considers literature as a principal medium for the 'ultimate coding of our crises, of our most intimate and most serious apocalypses' (p.207). What constitutes this 'apocalyptic' space of (in) human experience defines the borders of the bearable, the expressible and the narratable in human crises. Violence, a recurrent theme in postcolonial novels, constitutes one of the major crises of narrativity in modern literature and it represents a human condition of extremity. Notwithstanding its banal familiarity through mediated imaging, ocular testimony and direct tactile experience by its human victims, somatic violence constitutes a complex phenomenon and demands peculiar aesthetical, ethical and even ideological considerations in its representation.

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The present paper makes recourse to the definition of Gerald Priestland who considers the use of violence as a zero sum game that attempts to maximise the pain of the victimised 'other': 'the essence of violence is that physical power is deliberately employed, with the ultimate sanction of physical pain, and little choice but surrender or physical resistance' (Arblaster 1975:5). This form of violence turns the 'other' into an object, denying 'it' the shared space of the 'human' in relation to the perpetrator. In his philosophical consideration of the moral crises triggered by untold human suffering, with the Holocaust as a paradigmatic case, Adorno famously asserted that 'to write a poem⁶⁰ after Auschwitz is barbaric, and that corrodes also the knowledge which expresses why it has become impossible to write poetry today' (Adorno 1967). The Holocaust and the horror of the concentration camp surpassed, in his view, the bounds of expressivity of mankind's destruction of his own kind. Whether Adorno's interrogation of the narrativity of the Holocaust is informed by a sense of the universalization of the local or by a truly 'objective' memory of global and historic sites of (in) human barbarism is a major question here. Whether or not the grim experiences of the concentration camp were singular and unprecedented in the history of human suffering is even a more disputable and disputed issue. However, Adorno forcefully spelt out the crises of literary expressivity in the face of unnamable abjection. As Wexler asserts, any attempt to represent violence confronts an aesthetic dilemma, 'because to represent violence is to give it a meaning. A dead body does not explain itself.' (Wexler 2012:2). As such, even the most creative attempts at representation might tend to enforce the contrary of what it condemns.

In his seminal work on time and narrative, Paul Ricoeur equally raises the question of the death of storytelling in the face of human experiences that confront the mere process of narrating, (1985:28). But unlike Adorno, Ricoeur is more optimistic in the adaptation of the novelistic genre in the narration of (in) human experiences. In this regard, and this is the thread this essay pursues, the narrative does not only denarrate itself in order to underline the inexpressivity and untellability of violence but also succeeds, in the case of the selected texts, in deconstructing the teleology of the perpetrator with regard to the victim.

In a general sense, the representation of violence involves a series of considerations: If writing entails an expression of experience, real or imaginative, through what prisms can it 'capture' the nadir of human violence without doing prejudice to its victims or being reductive with regard to its inhuman barbarity? How does the sentence of enunciation function to accommodate violence in its very present moment beyond temporal and spatial *différance*? How does the

⁶⁰ 'Poem' represents, in this context, as in the classical works of Plato and Aristotle, creative writing in a more general sense.

portrayal of violence defy and subvert the very motifs for which they are carried out, that is, the unconditional termination of the life of the 'other'? These are the questions which postcolonial African writers face in the re-writing of experiences of violence. In so doing, authors transcend the narrated violence and re-imagine avenues for the resurgence of the human spirit even in the most abject situation. This paper examines complex representations of human violence and the ability of the text to transfigure the sombre depths of symbolic and somatic violence and re-imagine alternative visions of human existence. Such narrative representations subvert and transcend the tendency of violence to foreclose human possibilities. With close regard to the narrative configurations of Sony Lab'ou Tansi's *L'Etat Honteux* (1982) and Ayi Kwei Armah's *Osiris Rising* (1995), the paper argues that, though inscribed within divergent literary traditions and authorial motifs, both authors symbolically make recourse to the violated "body" not only as a central metaphor of the orgy and intimacy of human violence but also as the locus of resistance and regeneration.

Trivializing the 'human': Lab'ou Tansi's 'barbaric' writing

Marcel Ntsoni *alias* Sony Lab'ou Tansi (1943-1995) is a Congolese author that is well known for his anti-conventional and surrealist creative works. He has published several texts that range from novels, theatre and poetry. Some of his most popular novels include *La Vie et Demie* (1979), *L'Etat Honteux* (1981), *L'Anté-peuple* (1983), *Les Sept Solitudes de Lorsa Lopez* (1985), *Les Yeux du Volcan* (1988) and *Les Commencements des Douleurs* (1995). For the purpose of this article, we would focus on his second text *L'Etat Honteux* (*The Shameful State*⁶¹). This text is a dictatorship narrative that relates the story of Martillimi Lopez, a peasant who comes to power under the mantle of change aimed at overturning the brutal and absurd political practices of his predecessors. Despite his discourse of liberty and redemption of his people, Lopez's rule gradually degenerates into violence and summary executions. He serially orders the killing of detractors of his personalist dictatorship. Lab'ou Tansi's text attains a level of imaginative sophistication in its disruption of any sense of expressive coherence and normative narrative expectations through an aesthetic of defamiliarization. Though the text is based on a political crisis, it symbolically resonates as an existential quest for meaning, evading a causal plot and blurring the dichotomy between the subject and object of enunciation. In order to apprehend the linguistic fabric of Tansi's work, it would be important to examine his ontological and symbolic conception of language and its attempts to

⁶¹ The translation of the title as well as all other translations of the text are ours. There exists as yet no English version of this text, to the best of our knowledge. The question of translatability is critical in Lab'ou Tansi's texts in general due to his creative puns and complex syntactic structures.

express human abjection.

With reference to his (ab)use of language, Lab'ou Tansi defines his 'relationship' with the French colonial language as that of 'rape', epitomizing the primordial violence that characterises the colonial encounter: *'Mes rapports avec la langue française sont des rapports de force. J'écris en français parce que c'est dans cette langue-là que le peuple dont je témoigne, a été violé, que moi-même j'ai été violé.'* ('My relationship with the French language is that of force. I write in French because it is the language in which the people of whom I am witness were raped, in which I myself was raped' (Devésa 1994:78). Rape constitutes the central metaphor in the representation of coercive hegemony as Lab'ou Tansi attempts to retrace the colonial genealogy of post-colonial regimes of violence. Neo-colonial France is referred to as *'le Coq Gaulois'* (The Gaulish cock), redolent of the French emblem and symbol of national pride, the Cockerel. There is also an implicit pun on the image of Charles de Gaulle, arguably the founder of the French neo-colonial system in francophone Africa. Lab'ou Tansi castigates the normalization of the neo-colonial hegemony after the nominal independence of former colonies. So defined, the materiality of Tansi's expression eschews normative rules as it posits as the subversive and pervasive "other" of the language of conformity and orthodoxy.

Tansi's anti-hegemonic linguistic gesture addresses humanity through the prism of an exterior sensibility, what Roland Barthes refers to as the atopic prism of an out-of-place (Barthes 1973:51) and what Kristeva, in the analysis of the works of Celine, calls an 'elsewhere' (Kristeva 1982:203) of enunciation that refuses to be stabilized. In his previous novel, *La Vie et démie (Life and a half)*, Tansi expresses the premise of his 'barbaric' style in vehement terms. In a rhetorical question that seems to characterize his artistic creativity, he asks:

A une époque où l'homme est plus que jamais décidé à tuer la vie, comment voulez-vous que je parle sinon du dehors ? [...]J'écris pour qu'il fasse peur en moi. J'invente un poste de peur en ce vaste monde qui fout le camp... (La Vie, 9)(At a time when man is more than ever determined to kill life, how would you expect me to write except from an outside position? I write to inspire fear in myself. I invent an outpost of fear in this vast world that gives a damn ...) (Life 9)

In an attempt to capture the horror of human suffering, the author is faced with the question of language and the positionality of evocation. To write from this ex-centric space; he organizes the social symbolism of his language around the organic and the corporal, questioning the foundations of human civilization in the midst of global violence and human abjection. The philosophy of enunciation in the text is therefore characterized by a modality of

exceptionality along Brechtian lines of estrangement. In his poem "Nothing Natural" Bertolt Brecht castigates the decline of humanity and human values into a state of 'dehumanized humanity' and 'ordered disorder' in the 'modern world order' (Brecht 1937). Both authors are concerned with the banality of acts of human barbarity and the normalcy with which they have come to be regarded in contemporary cultures.

In a critically anti-conventional stylistics, Lab'ou Tansi's representation of socio-political reality consists in 'casting reality in a different mode from the way it has come to be seen by convention, authority, or custom' (White in Leitch 2010:1545). In a spectacular execution of captured rebels, the narrator in *L'Etat Honteux* exclaims: '*Il est tombé. Le sang. Nous avons tous vu du sang. Mais pas ce sang-ci. Toutes les balles ont frappé le cœur. Quel exercice. Le dos s'est ouvert.*' (He fell. Blood. We have seen blood. But not this kind. All the bullets hit against his heart. What an exercise. The back opened out) (*Etat* 65). Tansi's narrator/witness finds it difficult to construct a cohesive sequence of events or a readable story in the face of the startling scene of violence. On witnessing a similar spectacle of violence later in the text, the narrator recalls his experience in a slaughterhouse in California that makes him to stop eating meat all his life (*Etat* 117). At this point, the slaughter of the cow and the killing of the human being are conflated in his memory. The boundaries of difference between the two collapses and the terms 'flesh' and 'meat' become disturbingly interchangeable in *L'Etat Honteux*. Lab'ou Tansi's perversive use of language to underline human degeneration is sustained in his later texts like *Les Yeux du Volcan* (*The Eyes of the Volcano*) and *Le Commencement des Douleurs* (*The Beginning of Pain*), works that are equally built around the abject and grotesque, depicting societies that are constantly threatened by an imminent apocalypse.

The practical assimilation of the human body with other 'things' undelies Lab'ou Tansi's narrative at the most basic level. His text re-figures the evanescent voices of victims of lethal political power, those beings whose parenthetical existence constitutes a constant interrogation of modernity. Under the regime of the dictator Martillimi Lopez, members of the Bha tribe form a rebellion to capture power. Lopez responds with a new tactic of execution that denies his victims' appurtenance to the human race. The victims are regarded as "trash" and are thus subjected to inhuman treatment: '*Vous comprenez donc pourquoi quand j'ai un Bha je «bahnde », des ordures comme Sayonsa [...]Ourni Tolazo, toute la « bhananeraie » quoi?*' (*Etat* 116). (You now understand why when I lay hands on a Bha, I "bahnd" him. Trash like Sayonsa [...] and all that "band of 'bhananas'"). A distinct method of killing is reserved to the members of a particular tribe that portrays their 'difference' from and inferiority to the ruling tribe. Killing is therefore not a benign act; it is done with a certain technique that reveals the perpetrator's conception and location of his victim on semi-human paradigm of existence. Sony Lab'ou Tansi

disturbs our sense of existential order and the borders of the (un)acceptable in the exercise of sovereign power. In his imaginative world, 'human flesh' and 'meat' (EH, 127) are conflated and 'creation' is likened to 'criminality' so long as there is no divine project for the remission or redemption of the human soul (EH 118).

It is in this aesthetic of ontological interrogation of human progress that the ambiguity of the text's title can be analysed. *L'Etat Honteux* can be read as a response to the philosophical stance that the 'modern' 'organised' society is an antithesis of the primordial state of nature. Lab'ou Tansi puns with the concept of 'state' in such a manner that it could be understood as "state of nature" and as "State of law and order", the political organisation with the monopoly of violence over a specified territory. Writing from a rudimentary sensibility, Lab'ou Tansi implicitly questions the putative civility of 'modern' organized political power as necessarily antithetical to the state of nature. According to Hobbesian philosophy, the state of nature is characterized by violence, permanent strife and mutual terror. In the same light, Hegel refers to it as 'a state of injustice and violence, of untamed natural impulses, of inhuman deeds and feelings.'(qtd. in White 1983:111). With most of the global and local manifestations of violence in the world carried out by organized political power (Nganang 2007:202), Lab'ou Tansi's text interrogates the ethos not only of the post-colonial State but also its Westphalian genealogy, the European States with their long history of brutal conquest of other peoples and territories in the name of the civilizing mission. Taken as a paradigm of organizational life, the Western States (and their (neo) colonial epigones) posit as a negation of the state of nature. However, in a critique of idealistic and celebratory imaginations of human progress in the face of continuous violence, Fabien Eboussi Boulaga asserts:

L'état de la nature n'est ni antérieur ni extérieur à notre expérience humaine. Il ne faut pas le reléguer dans la nuit des temps mythiques ni le réduire à un concept méthodique, qui donne l'arrière-plan contraste nécessaire à la compréhension de la condition humaine telle qu'elle est vécue. Il est une possibilité qui peut échoir à l'homme toujours et partout. (The state of nature is neither anterior nor exterior to our contemporary human existence. It is not therefore to be relegated to the dark night of mythical time or to be considered as a methodical concept that provides a contrastive backdrop necessary for the understanding of the human condition as we see it. It is a constant possibility that can befall mankind at any moment and in any place.) (1993; 106).

The horror of Lab'ou Tansi's fictional world is the re-figuration of the barbaric instincts and the primal state of nature that continue to threaten human social space in the 'modern' world. "*L'Etat Honteux*" therefore underlines the inherent tensions in human civilization with

the continuation of barbarism under the cover of institutions that underline a modern order of civility. Since the modern State remains the guarantor of life within national territories, the basis of State authority and its use of force remains contentious in many cases where the State becomes the major perpetrator of violence, not for the common good (if there is any such thing), but for the interests of those in power. In this regard, one might say that the Hobbesian argument for the necessity of a strong central authority to prevent the threat of 'the war of all against all' is fraught. Arblaster thus poses the question: why should we assume that the State, as the holder of the monopoly of 'legitimate' violence, would use it in the interest of all of the broader society? (1975:15) In most cases in modern society, the State itself might paradoxically revert the society to the primary state of nature in the sense that it becomes the tool which a particular group of people uses to assert their hegemony over other groups, both internally or externally.

In order to express the liability of the modern polity to revert to violence, Lab'ou Tansi's metaphorical system hinges on continual atavism symbolized through the recurrent images of the naked body, organic matter and fecal elements. *L'Etat Honteux* is an embodied text, which 'desires' to be touched, felt, heard and not only read. The language that knits through the textual body is not therefore an ordinary language, it is *an-other* language meant to articulate the unspeakable. In this text, the concept of *langue*⁶² would not necessarily mean any set of intelligible communicative codes, but the restless agitation of the anatomical 'tongue', the blabbing tongue of the subaltern/subject hopelessly striving to articulate its desolate condition. It is language in its 'shameful state' (a point that reflects the novel's title), before it is disciplined by social forces, ideology, political correctness, the exigencies of office and other forms of estrangement from the concrete body. If the intradiegetic narrative voice most often loses its logical coherence in Lab'ou Tansi's texts, it is because his narrators construct meaning not only in the realm of stable life, but in the twilight space between life and death. Some few minutes before their execution, the inmates of the central prison address a letter to the president:

'Monsieur le president c'est un mort qui vous parle, les morts ne savent pas quelle langue ils parlent et ils n'ont pas d'autres formules de politesse que leur odeur de mort' (Mr President, it is a dead man speaking to you, the dead do not know in what language they speak and they do not have any other form of courtesy apart from their deadly odour.) (*Etat* 86).

Thus Lab'ou Tansi's text interpellates the reader from an unusually mnemonic sensibility that of establishing an olfactive, tactile, aural and visual contact with the mimetic experience of the writing process

⁶² *Langue* as a polysemous term means both *tongue* and *language* in French.

itself. In the 'warning page' of the novel, such duality of speech and the organicity of the text as a living body are underlined: '*J'écris comme je crie, un peu pour forcer le monde à venir au monde...*' (EH, *Avertissement*) ('I write as I shout, in a bid to force the world to come to the world') (EH, *warning page*). Lab'ou Tansi's text sheds light as well as problematizes the urgency/agency of writing violence within the aesthetical space characteristic of Roland Barthes' notion of 'writing aloud'⁶³. A reading of Tansi is therefore an act of involvement, participation, or complicity in the construction of his mimetic world and the realization of one's role in the history of (in)humanity as opposed to the impunity that goes with solitary reading (Ricoeur 1983:11). It is an encounter with pleasure (as the text is full of humorous baroque) but it is also a risky exercise for his writings can be experienced as an exteriorization of a conscience of terror. Through a system of chaotic punctuation and con-fusion of subjects of enunciation, the text stages an atmosphere of uncertainty of human life in the text. The dictatorial president becomes a loose gun and a schizophrenic character who perceives danger in anybody around him: '*Il parle à mon cousin Martillimi Lavoua qui ne comprendra jamais qu'il n'est pas encore président mais cette fois je te ferai avaler mon P. A si tu bronches.*' (39) ('He speaks to my cousin Martillimi Lavoua who would never understand that he is not yet president but this time I will make you swallow my P.A if you trip'). In this passage, the walls between the 'you', 'I' and 'he' are perforated and rendered permeable and intrusive. A benign conversation with his cousin unpredictably turns into a scene of violence. Across the tissue of the writing surface, the world that the text paints re-figures the fragility of the implied author's own being when the State and other institutions which are supposed to protect the citizens becomes instruments of death. It is this existential contingency in the face of violence that the implied author shares with the implied reader which makes *L'Etat Honteux* such a phenomenal representation of violence even by the standards of Lab'ou Tansi's numerous avant-garde texts. Within a radical conception of the aesthetics of abjection, Lab'ou Tansi converts the human body into a text, a writing surface and the locus of violent political authority.

Lopez, the dictator of Tansi's banana republic, tells the dissident subjects that: '*C'est écrit dans vos yeux, c'est écrit sur vos fronts, c'est écrit sur votre sang: ici on n'aime pas les dirigeants.*' (*Etat 72*) ('It is written in your eyes. It is written on your foreheads, I see it in your blood,. Here you don't like leaders') (*Etat 72*) Hence, factored in the conscience of the autocrat as the inherent rejection of his rule; the subject's body becomes the theatre of various technologies of death. However, Tansi transfigures the subject's body into a concrete form of regenerative resistance. Thus, the subject's body is not a docile body. It is a body in a constant quest for liberation against

⁶³ Julia Kristeva also discusses the notion of writing aloud as an inherent part of the writing of abjection where the normal codes of proper enunciation are literally blown apart.

control. In this text, the violated body of the subject re-constitutes itself through Lab'ou Tansi's use of magical realism. As a matter of fact, victims of the Providential Guide's murderous regime in Tansi's earlier novel *La Vie et demie*, symbolically resurface in *L'Etat Honteux*, to resist the president's authority.

An example is the character Chaïdana, the daughter of the opposition leader Martial, whose desecrated body re-incarnates his daughter and engages in a supernatural resistance to the dictator's authority. From a trans-textual reading, the spirit of resistance survives through the character of Larsa Laura⁶⁴ who routinely emerges from the underworld to defecate on the presidential bed as a form of subversion of the ruler's power (*Etat* 58, 87, 88). Laura sometimes operates through her numerous doubles. When Martillimi Lopez meets a young child in his parlour, he accuses the latter as being a double of Laura (*Etat* 87-8). The boy confesses that though his friends call him 'Laura', it is a mere nick-name, having nothing to do with Larsa Laura, the enemy of the State. Lopez's paranoia makes him difficult to convince. He orders his aide to hang the little boy. Ironically, he discovers the next day that there is more shit on his presidential bed than ever before (*Etat* 88). Through Tansi's baroque and surreal proliferation of characters, the female character Larsa Laura subverts the tantalization of power by the patriarch. However ubiquitous is the practice of repressive power in the textual world of Lab'ou Tansi, it is not completely uncontested. There is always room for its opposition and reversal through the re-constitution of the fragmented body of the subject. In the following passage, we analyze the memorialisation and re-memberment of the fragmented body in Armah's *Osiris Rising* not only from a transtextual but from a transhistorical perspective.

Armah and the Re-membering of Dismembered Bodies

Ayi Kwei Armah (born 1939) is an African author of Ghanaian origin. He is primarily a novelist and an essayist. His first and perhaps, most popular text is *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), a scathing indictment of postcolonial regimes following African independence. Some of his later novels include *Fragments* (1971), *Why Are We So Blest* (1972), *Two Thousand Seasons* (1973), *The Healers* (1979), *Osiris Rising* (1995) and recently, *KMT: In the House of Life* (2002). One of the key qualities of Ayi Kwei Armah's fiction is its exposition of deep pan-African and philosophical meditation on morality. His novels are centred on a quest for the meaningful apprehension of the historical tragedy from which the African

⁶⁴ Larsa Laura is the major female figure of resistance in the text. The description of her character and her previous marriage to Lopez is reminiscent of Chaïdana's sexual context with The Providential Guide in *La Vie et demie*, a tactical marriage that she uses to gain access to the most intimate space of the presidential bed from where she launches her resistance.

continent is still waking. This constitutes the major motif in *Osiris Rising*. In this text, the central character is Ast, the Afro-American woman who returns to fight for social revolution in Africa after her doctorate degree in the United States of America. Her journey motif, a symbolic reversal of the Atlantic experience of slavery, is based on the metaphorical re-memberment of the African self in the face of historical fragmentation symbolized by the processes of slave trade, colonialism and their contemporary cognates. In the opening pages of the text, Ast contemplates 'Who sold us? What did such a betrayal mean? Was it dead history? Or did it still have the energy to shape the future?' (*Osiris* 1). Ast's decision to immigrate to the African State of Hapa is motivated by a desire to relate with her roots and reconstitute her being, a being suffering the weight of centuries' long spatial and spiritual displacement. Though her conviction is tainted by the uncertainty of what awaits her in the African country under the dictatorship of President Utombo, her mission acquires a symbolic legitimization when she reads the book *Journey to the Source* by a fellow African American author. This book tells the story of an African slave woman who relentlessly attempts to escape from bondage even when her slave masters are bent on killing her dream of freedom:

An African woman, transported to America to slave for European settlers on Amerindian land emptied by genocide, attempted flight several times. How she intended to reach Africa she did not say. In spite of torture after recapture, she kept trying. For that and her refusal to abandon remembered ways, other captives called her African. (*Osiris* 2)

In her last attempt to escape, her captors remove her eyes to make her blind but this does not deter her. Though Ast disputes the way the original story has been influenced by the editors of *Occident*, the central character provides her with immense spiritual motivation. Reflecting on the violently blinded eyes of this courageous woman, she asks: 'why should vision be denied coming generations descended from this woman who tried seven times despite despair to retrieve a stolen future?' Through this story, Ast finds an exemplary demonstration of African resilience against oppression and physical and spiritual dismemberment. She re-figures herself in the image of this woman and her determination is to carry forth her dream and accomplish the mission she bequeathed to future generations.

In *Osiris Rising*, Armah's Pan-African ideals are enshrined in the creed of the Ankh, a secret society based on the principles of fraternity, equality and justice, led by Asar, the *alter ego* of the mythical Osiris. The philosophy of the Ankh is based on the re-inscription of the traces of redemptive paths distorted by dominant texts that emplot the narratives of slaves and the colonial subjects solely on a paradigm of defeat and resignation. His text therefore reconstructs this history from a different perspective:

Over these disastrous millennia there have been Africans concerned to work out solutions to our problems and to act on them. The traces these makers left are faint, because in the continuing triumph of Africa's destroyers the beautiful ones were murdered, the land poisoned. (*Osiris* 10)

On the ashes of the violence incurred by the victims of the horrendous trade, is added epistemological violence as the voices of the victims are submerged under distorted meta-narrative representations. Ast and Asar set out to re-imagine the past from the perspective of those who struggled against the violence of slavery and colonialism and to re-inscribe their life stories into an inter-generational matrix of resistance. While Armah's masterpiece, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) is dominated by symbolically profound depictions of corruption and disillusionment, *Osiris Rising* posits as a novel of re-birth, regeneration in the face of social decay and violence. The alienated duo in the earlier novel, Man/Teacher is symbolically trans-formed in the latter text into pro-active characters, Ast/Asar, modeled along the mythological characters of Isis/Osiris respectively. In many aspects, *Osiris Rising* is a Bloomian misprision⁶⁵ of the *The Beautiful Ones* with regard to character construction, the imagination of time and most importantly, the symbolic inscription of death-redemption in the narrative temporality of the text. By infusing his fiction with a mythological time frame, Armah's text is transformed into the romantic genre which Northrop Frye defines as "the tendency to suggest implicit mythical patterns in a world more closely associated with human experience" (Frye 1957:140). The body of the positive characters in *Osiris Rising* are portrayed in the light of their spiritual propriety while those of depraved characters like Seth are represented as sterile in spite of their outward beauty. When Seth, for example, attempts to rape Ast, the latter fights back, squeezing his decayed testicles which produce a yellowish and disgusting pus (*Osiris* 63). This is proof of the security chief's inward decay in spite of his apparent virility. This image contrasts with the sex scene⁶⁶ between Ast and Asar which is described in its sublimity and the spiritual aspect is given primacy over the secular bodily pleasure. The union of bodies is merely representative of an even stronger union of souls and ideals between Ast and Asar.

⁶⁵ In Harold Bloom's seminal text *The Anxiety of Influence*, the author analyses several ways by which poets deal or relate with their strong precursors to negotiate their distinctive voice (Bloom 1997: xiii). Through misprision or 'swerving', the young poet takes over the images and ideas of the previous poet but deflects them unto a different poetic vision.

⁶⁶ It is during this moment that Ast gets pregnant, the pregnancy that offers a different interpretative orientation to the text when Asar is assassinated at the end of the text.

In his disillusionment with historical truth, Armah displaces the text and inscribes the mythical conscience of the society unto the imagery of the stream, an ambivalent space of oblivion and redress, death and redemption⁶⁷. The sea, a constant image of the dehumanizing nature of slavery and slave trade is radically re-invented as a space of re-birth and re-memberment. In *Osiris Rising*, this rebirth is not represented by the Transatlantic ocean, but on the Egyptian Nile, the river of life. The ambivalence of the violated body is portrayed in the spectacular murder of Asar by Seth Soja Spencer, the Deputy Director of Security, the epitome of State induced violence and the henchman of neo-colonial puppet president Christian Utombo⁶⁸. However the dexterous and ambivalent narration of the assassination of Asar (mythological Osiris) foretells the re-generation of his dismembered body:

... Ast saw Asar totter upright in flash, arms still *in the communicant attitude* of his last question. Then he exploded *silently* into fourteen *starry* fragments, and the pieces plunged into *peaceful water*. Asar's craft bobbed upon the water. It skipped forward till it banged into the large security patrol yacht. Then it turned, *slowly, steadily, regaining lost distance* [...] The Deputy Security officer gave no orders concerning the empty little boat adrift....(*Osiris* 305) (*my emphasis*)

The above passage, the ultimate paragraph of Armah's text, underlines the tension between the real and the mythical. The killing of Asar is perceived differently and differentially through the mundane eyes of Seth, the evil personae of Armah's text on the one hand, and the mythical vision of Ast (mythological Isis) on the other. To the former, Asar's death marks the end of the resistance movement. However, Seth is unaware that Ast is bearing a baby in her womb by Asar, the germ of the mythological Horus that would be born to fight the evil rule of Seth and Utombo. The double focalization and the oxymoronic diction of the passage convey an optimistic vision of transcendental redemption of the society. This symbolizes a disturbance of logical causality characteristic of Jesus Christ's crucifixion⁶⁹ and His utterances on the cross that reflect the triumph of the spiritual over the physical, the eternal over the temporary.

⁶⁷ In the Osiris myth, Osiris' body is thrown into the River Nile after his murder by Seth. However, the Nile gains a redemptive imagery since the body is later on recovered by Isis, Osiris' wife. The Nile, the mythical river of life becomes connotative of regeneration, redressing the macabre memories of the Atlantic.

⁶⁸ This could be an anagram of 'Mobotu' Sese Seko, former president of Zaire, the present Democratic Republic of the Congo.

⁶⁹ In effect, the use of the images of the fall/resurrection here is ambiguous. Armah's text could be seen as an interrogation of the colonialist claim of the supremacy of the Christian religion by showing that there exist other myths of resurrection that predate the Christian one.

Where Seth sees defeat, Ast prefigures Asar's Phoenix-like re-generation on the ashes of his temporary demise.

Temporality is therefore moved onto a utopian transcendental sphere. The boat which, in *The Beautiful Ones*, carries the fugitive Koomson to Ivory Coast after the coup, becomes in this generally more optimistic text, a spiritual vessel that transports Osiris' soul to the world beyond. In Armah's fictional world, there is the interplay between reality and myth with the author's vision for the ultimate prevalence and restoration of the soul of the just rendered evident in the mythical dimension. With the characteristic perspectival depth of his descriptions, Armah's enunciation is made to host both the spectacular nature of the violent act and the spectral return of the dismembered body. The body's mythical return is materialized through the birth of Asar's posthumous child Horus, according to the Egyptian mythology (Pinch 2002:143).

The imagination of re-memberment in Armah's text is also undertaken through the symbolic body of the Ankh. The Ankh is a secret union founded against the backdrop of moral deterioration in a society ravaged by slave raids and social insecurity. In consonance with the unity of the human body, the Ankh is a 'body' of discrete laws and principles that foster justice and equality amongst its members. When Cinque, the fake Rastafarian priest, settles back in Hapa from the USA, he creates a salvation church purportedly based on traditional 'African values'. However he uses female members of this sect for his sexual gratification and material aggrandizement. In order to sustain the commitment of his members, Cinque distorts his family genealogy, recovering a broken sceptre of the Ankh symbol and falsely re-signifying it as an artifact of his royal African ancestry (*Osiris* 269). To his disconcertation, Ama Tete, the oral historian and source of memory in the text, proves that the broken Ankh was handed to his (Cinque's) ancestor Apo as a symbol of expulsion from the Ankh secret society when he contravened the creed of the sacred union by indulging in the slave trade (*Osiris* 268). By the recovery of the broken Ankh, the symbolic unity of Armah's novel and his philosophy of renaissance are thereby articulated in the same way as the reconstitution of the severed body of the murdered Asar.

Ayi Kwei Armah and Sony Lab'ou Tansi: Ships that Crossed at Night?

In spite of their different stylistic approaches, Ayi Kwei Armah and Sony Lab'ou Tansi take distinctive paths that lead more or less to similar figurative destinations. Armah's text can be inscribed within the ambits of the black experience with its manifestations through the dehumanizing Trans-atlantic trade and the contemporary forms of political violence in the postcolony. In *Osiris Rising*, characters are not only products of a singular historical era. Instead they are connected to the various epochs that mark the trajectory of the

African continent and the black experience. Ayi Kwei Armah approaches the question of violence from a trans-historical perspective, focusing on its impact on the African personality especially at the spiritual level. Thus, the question of violence and the dismemberment of Africa are central in Ayi Kwei Armah's re-writing of African history and elaboration of his pan-Africanist vision.

Lab'ou Tansi, on the other hand, universalizes violence by interrogating the general state of 'modern' human civilization. *L'Etat Honteux* is a critical interrogation of human history and the transmission of barbaric culture at all levels of the global human society. In *L'Etat Honteux*, after enumerating the death of various opposition leaders who have been exterminated by the president with the connivance of his international allies, the prisoners interrogate the contradiction, not only of Lopez's regime but of humanity in general:

La grande question est maintenant la suivante: si nous ne pouvons rien contre la chute de l'humain, pendant combien de temps tiendrons-nous encore humains? [...] Ne faisons pas de la liberté un piège à cons, ne faisons pas du respect de la viande humaine une farce, ce faisant, nous applaudirons Hitler et Pizarro. (The big question of the day is the following: If we are helpless in the face of the fall of man, for how long shall we remain truly human? Let us not turn liberty into a trap for idiots, let us not turn the respect for human meat into a farce, in that case, we would be applauding Hitler and Pizarro⁷⁰)(*EH*, 126-7)

Lab'ou Tansi uses the fictional dictatorship of Martillimi Lopez to enable him question the discourse of human progress in the face of violence. In the above passage, the use of the 'we' is not a parochial one, limited to the regime of Martilimi Lopez but it is an open question to human society in general. *L'Etat Honteux* thereby confronts us with images of various historical figures who are supposed to belong to a disavowed past but who continue to cast their shadows over contemporary times.

While Lab'ou Tansi's text can be categorized as counter-sublime grotesque with its banalisation of scatological imagery, Ayi Kwei Armah's *Osiris Rising* belongs to the order of philosophical meditation on the power of myth and history. In a meticulous blend of history, myth and fiction, Armah's text is based on the quest for a usable past. He symbolically excavates buried traces of social

⁷⁰ Francisco Pizarro was a 16th century Spanish 'conquistador' (conqueror) of the continent of Latin America. Pizarro is purported to have committed genocide amongst the aborigenes in order to assert Spanish colonial hegemony.

liberation and re-inscribes them within an epistemic quest for meaning in a rather dispiriting African present. Where Tansi relates the representation of violence unto the quest for meaning of life in the face of existential fragility, Armah's primal concern is the re-construction of the African personality and the re-imagination of African continental and Diasporic histories.

Conclusion

The stylistic disparity between both authors need not however blur their intersection. Both authors depict, but more importantly, transcend the dismal representation of violence and suggest the possibility of re-birth of a new human society. They defy the practice of violence through the imagination of human regeneration. While such a defiant representation pushes Tansi's texts to the limits of grotesque absurdism reminiscent of Beckett's theatre of a post-lapsarian world in dire need of redemption, Armah's Afro-renaissance idealism transforms the novelistic genre into a mytho-poetic re-imagination of history. Lab'ou Tansi's images of abjection and debasement need to be re-considered through their subtle equivocality and ambiguity. Though the ubiquity of scatological imagery *prima facie* lends itself to dystopic interpretations, its meliorative dimension need not be overlooked. In his critique of Rabelais' carnivalesque grotesque, Mikhail Bakhtin argues that: 'The images of faeces and urine are ambivalent, as are all the images of organic matter, the material bodily lower stratum; they debase, they destroy, regenerate, and renew simultaneously' (Bakhtin 1983:151).

From this perspective, it can be asserted that Tansi's trivialization of the human body, a provocative narration of the debasement of the human species through the practice of violence, is fundamentally in sync with Armah's pan-Africanist re-memberment of 'mythical bodies' of Africa's heroes. Both novels employ innovative stylistics in the representation of violence in such a way that the possible resurgence of the African and human species and the possibilities of newness are not blotted out in the despair that is inherently characteristic of violence. However, the possibility of newness is not to be realized through a naive narrative of literary optimism. Rather, it is achieved through a confrontation of the civilized world with its discursive 'opposite', interrogating normative conceptions of the 'human' as a badge of difference.

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Trial and Terror: Editorial Cartoons and the Framing of the Embassy Attacks in Kenya

Duncan Omanga

*This paper probes the dominant frames that characterised the editorial cartoons' coverage of the August 7th terror attacks in -- Nairobi. Using ideas from media framing and semio-history, this paper reveals how editorial cartoons are more than mere repositories of laughter or ridicule and are potent artefacts mirroring their social and political context. In particular, this paper reveals that following the embassy attacks in Nairobi, editorial cartoons played a near adjudicatory role which lent or undercut the legitimacy of key stakeholders, in this case the terrorist or the state itself. Focusing primarily on editorial cartoons drawn from Kenya's two leading newspapers namely **The Nation** and **The Standard**, this paper reveals the frames that characterized the media coverage of the attacks and how the identified frames ambiguously interrogated the concept of legitimacy.*

Keywords: Legitimacy, Framing, Editorial Cartoons, Ideology, Terrorism, Kenya

Introduction

It was like a scene straight from a war movie...a deafening explosion, flying debris, billowing smoke, blood and terror stricken faces-all in a space of seconds. (The Standard 9th August 1998)

Days before the embassy attacks, newspapers in Kenya were preoccupied with the mundane local and international news. An embarrassing bankers' strike was the dominant item in the local headlines and on the regional front, a rebellion that eventually led to Congo's president Laurent Kabila's ouster and eventual death was simmering and threatened to plunge the neighbouring Rwanda, Uganda and Angola into war. Meanwhile, recent successful tests of nuclear capability by India and Pakistan appeared to be the dominant agenda in the international news front. This was to change very soon. On the morning of 8 August 1998 following the attacks on the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, the front pages of both *The Standard* and *The Nation* were replete with carnage and destruction. *The Nation* screamed 'Bomb Terror,' with a full sized picture of the then Kenyan Trade Minister Joseph Kamotho

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occupying about a third of the front page. Drenched in blood and supported by aides on either side, he is pictured being carted off towards what seems to be a waiting ambulance. Apparently, he had been in a meeting with the then American ambassador, Prudence Bushnell. A photo placed inset a large photo of a woman soaked in blood provided a 'fitting' preview of what lay inside. As anchorage, there were bold sentences promising readers that more 'bloody' pictures and stories were inside the paper. Sub headlines under the main headline equally roared that people in their hundreds had died, and that then Kenyan President Moi had ordered emergency cabinet talks. Another offered that thousands were in hospitals. The normal newspaper format was temporarily suspended to capture this unprecedented moment of national disaster. Apart from the front cover, virtually three quarters of the paper covered the event with a bias on pictures than stories. The leisure section that normally contains a comic strip and puzzles did not have the latter, having made way for more gory images. The paper was literally 'blood soaked.'

Scholars argue that terrorists need publicity; usually free publicity that such a group could normally not afford or buy (Nacos; 2007; Picard 1993). Any publicity surrounding a terrorist act alerts the world that a problem exists that cannot be ignored and must be addressed. Over time, terrorists hope to gain a favourable understanding of their cause, if not their act. In addition, terrorists' organisations may seek legitimacy to what is often portrayed as ideological or personality feuds or political differences between them and another mostly powerful group or state. The media is therefore consciously or otherwise capable of granting these coveted attributes through how they frame the terrorist attacks, for instance how they define the attack (is it simply an attack or a terrorist attack?), how they deploy the causal frames (who is responsible?), how they moralise the event (is it good or evil?) and how they suggest remedies (is it militaristic alternative or one for the courts to decide?). Entman termed this particular media function as 'framing.'⁷¹ This study reveals how editorial cartoons in Kenya framed terrorism shortly after the 7th August terror attacks in Nairobi, and the extent to which the subsequent framing interrogated the aspect of legitimacy.⁷²

Nyamjoh (2009) has argued that the editorial cartoon as a form of expression emerged from a context and background of political control, draconian press laws, selective communication and downright misinformation by the state (p. 97). Such a view perceives the primordial forms of the editorial cartoon in Africa as a form of

⁷¹ To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described' (Entman 1993:52).

⁷² Legitimacy is understood as a favourable media coverage to either state actors or terrorists that results from extended media publicity of a terror act which also includes recognition to individuals or state agencies.

dissent in a stifling political complexion. Today, the rapidly changing political dispensations in parts of Africa that obtain a free press and open democratic spaces have indeed transformed editorial cartoons. Today, most people view cartoons as a comic intervention in socio-political issues. While such observations are indeed valid the versatility and usefulness of the editorial cartoon as an item of a scholarly probe has been undercut by widespread assumptions that the editorial cartoon is most effective in its humorous ridicule on those who wield political power.

A number of studies on Kenya's cartoons have been done that have demonstrated the constructive power within this potent genre with different scholars probing the varied meaning making roles played by the editorial cartoons. For instance, Musila (2007) focused largely on editorial cartoons as repositories of satirical laughter directed at ambiguities and absurdities within a rapidly changing society while Obonyo (2011) considered the efficacy of cartoons in communicating health messages. While mapping the spatial representation of Islam, Omanga (2012a) has shown how editorial cartoons define religious space in Kenya and also how editorial cartoons in Kenya transgress rooted gender roles and expectations (Omanga 2012b). Both Lent (2009) and Gathara (2009) provide a detailed chronicle of the historical trajectories of both the lives and works of the main cartoonists in Kenya.

Worth to note is that the editorial cartoon in Africa has long morphed beyond the limited focus of lampooning the local political class to a complex text secreting with ideologies, values, fears, culture and the aspirations of a people concerning a particular issue. In this paper I equate the editorial cartoon the status of the editorial, or an op-ed commentary. Unlike a news report, the news commentary is a discursive product reflecting on an event appearing earlier as a news report. It is discursive in the sense that it is a refined product of reflection, interaction, and social discourse at both local and international levels. As artefacts of political culture and communication, editorial cartoons provide a frame through which analysts can plot back to gain the texture of public opinion. The editorial cartoon in Kenya and much of Africa has presently moved beyond a preoccupation with mere laughter and humour, assumed as the main weapon in the cartoonist's armoury, and has matured to become a site through which 'culture' in its varied forms is reproduced, maintained and reaffirmed (Omanga 2012c). In several ways, the editorial cartoon draws on public knowledge to reproduce aspects of the world and also inadvertently constructs meaning and knowledge on current events in much the same way mainstream media does (Walker 2003; Greenberg 2002). In this paper, I use ideas appropriated from academic debates on media framing and semiohistory in order to account for the dominant discourses following the embassy attacks in Nairobi. In order to do so, I have

taken all the editorial cartoons from the two leading dailies⁷³ in Kenya that specifically captured the event and the subsequently mined frames were used as loci aimed at plotting the trajectory of meaning making in Kenya after the embassy terror attack.

Gamson and Lasch (1983) have convincingly argued that a frame appearing in a particular text represents a 'frame package.' This frame package is assumed to be a cluster of coherent and complementary devices that serve as an identity kit for a frame. As a package it is composed of three parts; the manifest framing devices, the manifest or latent reasoning devices and an implicit cultural phenomenon that displays the package as a whole, which corporately secrete the frame. The framing devices are composed of all manifest elements in the editorial cartoon and the reasoning devices are simply how these elements are read, or how they lend themselves meaningfully by how they infer problem description, evaluation and diagnosis. Accordingly, the framing and latent devices were used as systematic indices of a purely interpretative study⁷⁴ that acted as that boundary markers of interpretation. On the other hand, to deal with the temporal nature of the study, the making of meaning from the editorial cartoons was greatly helped by ideas borrowed from semiohistory, a recent development from semiological thought largely concerned with the historical circulation of signs, the floating of meaning and their link with particular concepts of social reality. Semiohistory pays attention to social constructions of realities and at the traces which they have left in texts (Müller; 1994). The compatibility of both approaches is anchored by the assumption that reality is not a brute, material fact but a matter of social construction.

Framing Terrorism as Islamic in Editorial Cartoons

Shortly after the embassy attacks and the media spectacle that followed, there was a natural bent towards apportioning responsibility. However, for most terror attacks, responsibility is always claimed to enable the targeted audience⁷⁵ make the political link between the attacks and the grievance motivating the attack.

⁷³ Kenya's mediascape is a duopoly of two newspapers *The Daily Nation* and *The Standard*. The two still control over 90% of the newspaper readership in the country. The editorial cartoons appearing on this paper are courtesy of the generosity of Godfrey Mwampembwa (Gado) and John Kamawira (Kham), the editorial cartoonists at *The Nation* and *The Standard* respectively.

⁷⁴ The researcher bore the burden of identifying, extracting and accounting for the revealed frames

⁷⁵ By targeted audience I do not mean those who have been merely directly affected, rather it is those to whom the message of terror is intended for. In the chapter on media and terrorism, this study observed that terrorism can be understood as a form of communication with a sender on one end dispatching a (often political) message to a receiver (or an intended audience). For an act to be considered terrorism it must have an audience.

Members of the *Egyptian Islamic Jihad* claimed responsibility, a group closely associated with Ayman al Zawahiri, the Egyptian physician who later teamed up with Osama bin Laden to become al-Qaeda's deputy. Worth noting, the attacks were scheduled for 7th of August, deliberately chosen to coincide with the eighth anniversary of the arrival of American troops in Saudi Arabia. This was one of the key reasons offered by Bin Laden in launching a jihad, *holy war*, against what he called the infidels. In fact, earlier in the year Bin Laden had publicly declared a 'Holy War against Jews and Crusaders.'⁷⁶ This religious discourse immediately dominated the framing that would characterise the apportioning of responsibility in the frames appearing immediately after the attacks.

Editorial cartoons were more scathing, eschewing the political correctness widespread in editorials and other prosaic texts, and emerged as vehicles through which the dominant cultural tropes were transmuted. On the 11th of August three days after the embassy bombings, the cartoon below (figure 1) appeared on the editorial page of *The Standard*. The cartoon attempts to show the forces and people behind the August attacks in Nairobi, as the cartoonist gives prominence to the 'enemy.' From the outset, the bold inscription '*in the name of god...indeed!*' gives us hints of a religious motivation to the attacks. Dressed in deathly black flowing gown inscribed with the word terrorism on it, the hooded (most probably skeletal) figure armed with a fearsome scythe, stands erect gazing at a smouldering building. The hooded figure clearly recalls the historical Grim Reaper, a veritable Western representation of evil and death.⁷⁷ The transformation and appropriation of this sign from the global to the local can be traced to the 80s when it became the quintessential symbol for the AIDS pandemic. Frequently used in health campaigns in the 80s when the disease carried a heavy stigma, the image's connotation of death was so compelling and riveting and only helped to make the AIDS stigma worse. Over time when attention shifted towards fighting stigma the grim reaper was momentarily shelved. Soon it re-emerged in the late 90s as the embodiment of terrorism and terrorists.

⁷⁶ See 'report of the joint inquiry into the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 - by the house permanent select committee on intelligence and the senate select committee on intelligence, http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/creports/pdf/fullreport_errata.pdf

⁷⁷ The Grim reaper is found in many societies since the beginning of History. It has also been linked to the angel of death found in both Christian and Jewish scriptures. The term Grim reaper in the English language became popular from the 15th century onwards as the embodiment and symbol of death.

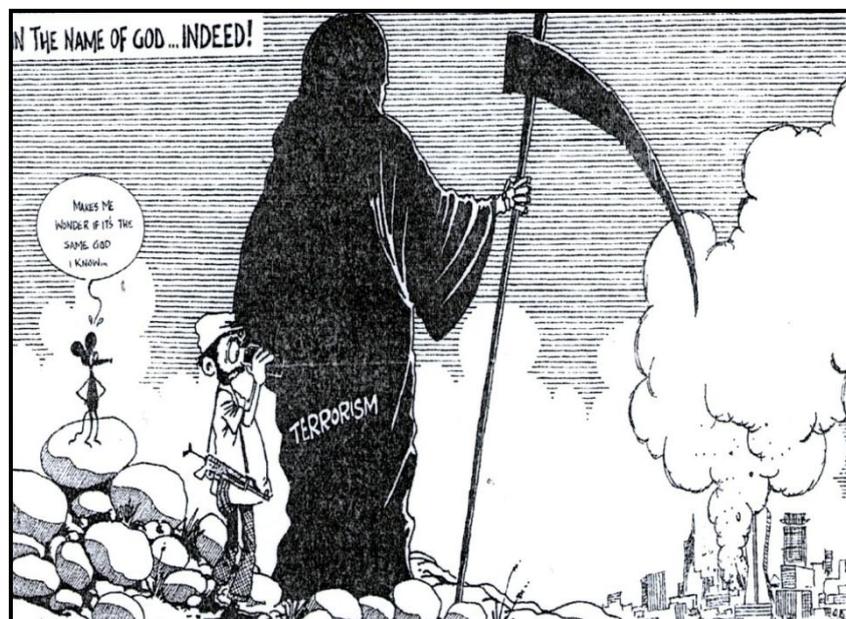


Figure 1: The Standard, 11 August 1998. Reprinted with permission

As seen above the dominant framing devices are the two lexical phrases the 'terrorist' hiding behind the hooded silhouette and the burning structures on the margins of the text. These devices descriptively suggest that an attack (the burning structure) by people espousing particular religious motivations has been executed. By using the image of the angel of death, the transposed sign, whose historical trajectory in Kenya connotes disease and death in epidemic proportions, succeeds in defining the attacks as evil and inspired by malevolent forces. The lexical elements '*in the name of god indeed*' and '*makes me wonder if it is the same god I know*' by the 'mouse' seem to question the nature and rectitude of the faith espoused. While a denotative reading may imply an isolated attribution of responsibility to some nondescript religious fanatics, the connotations secreted, taking account of the prevailing discourses in Kenya, were clearly meant to apportion blame on Islam.

Indeed, this cartoon marks the beginning, although in subtlety, of the TERROR IS ISLAMIC frame by suggesting religious imperatives behind the attacks. While Muslims and Christians have coexisted peacefully save for occasional differences, some mutual suspicion has grown following the embassy attacks. Moreover, after the disintegration and failure of the Somalia state, hundreds of thousands of Somalis, most of whom are Muslim fled to Kenya. This massive influx of Somalis only added fervour to the previously silent suspicion between the two religious groups. This editorial cartoon reveals the nascent yet stark construction of binarism delineating 'us' and 'them', in which the resulting otherness tears at the other's

religious credentials. This framing formed a key discourse moment especially following the terrorists' claim to be acting in the name of God. As expected, a cautious debate on the relationship between Islam and terror dominated the discursive environments. These debates also inspired fervent defences from Muslims and their leaders that Islam had nothing to do with the embassy attacks. Looking at the editorial cartoon, the deliberate positioning of the grim reaper as part of the symbols deployed to frame the attacks anchors a moralisation of the attack as evil.

While the focus grants the attack mere publicity, legitimacy of the attack is denied. In suggesting that the perpetrators of the attacks were acting at the behest of a blood thirsty and perverted ideology and conveniently hiding behind religion as justification for violence, the editorial cartoon succeeded in framing the attacks as the product of irrationality and blind fanaticism, thus denying the alleged attackers legitimacy. Meanwhile, this kind of framing was not innocent of a nascent ideological struggle that was to characterise the framing of terrorism in Kenya. Indeed, an ideological mode of othering, which was already present in religious discourses in the country before the attack, delegitimizes the political and social motivations behind the attack. Here the ideology of othering is given ballast by linking the embassy terror attacks indirectly to Islam and directly to evil. These signs of the 'other' as religiously different, evil and violent were the first signs in the late 90s that surfaced to construct the new terrorist. It is important to note that this editorial cartoon was a reflection of nascent but carefully concealed Islamophobia at the time but whose traces still remain in present day Kenya.

The next day on 12th August 1998, perhaps disturbed by the inability to explicitly identify the kind of religious ideology he was talking about, the editorial cartoonist at *The Standard* was more cutting and blunt (figure 2). The gloves were drawn. The piece provided evidence that the cartoonist has profound latitude to communicate in a way that few, if any journalistic writing can achieve. While it may be thought to be extremely provocative, it merely represented the dominant discourses at the time of the attacks and rising religious suspicions in a country perceived to be predominantly Christian.



Figure 2: The Standard, 12 August 1998. Reprinted with permission

The cartoon contains three conspicuous framing devices; it shows a camel laden with explosives under scorching sun while nonchalantly standing next to a man of Arabic extraction, who appears deeply engrossed in petitioning 'god' for help in killing and maiming (the innocent). The epithet of terror etched in the words 'terrorist camp' and a bemused 'mouse' completes the picture. In Kenya, the camel is used mostly by the residents of the Northern Province, of whom the vast majority are Muslims. The same animal is also common as a sign that connotes orientalism. Compared with the previous cartoon, the entire syntagm betrays a paradigm association of evil (signified by the Grim Reaper in the previous cartoon) and a particular religion (signified by the supplicating man). However, the framing isolates a more specific faith among those known to audience members. The man, kneeling on a mat is suggestive of Islamic form of prayer and the epithet 'terrorist' anchors the intended link between terror and Islam. Consequently, these devices secrete predictable reasoning devices that suggest that for the present problem of terrorism, the cause is a perverted form of Islam, whose morality is also questioned as it targets 'innocent women and children.' And unlike the previous editorial cartoon, the frame TERROR IS ISLAMIC is more explicit here. Needless to say, the cartoon elicited sharp reactions from Muslims in Kenya. Sheikh Ali Shee, the then head of Islamic preachers in Kenya had this to say about the cartoon 'The media have already tried and found Islam as the cause of the car bomb blast ... without taking into consideration the implications of such insinuations.'⁷⁸ In an opinion piece appearing in the *Daily Nation* penned by Sheikh Khalif, an official of the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM), he argued that;

⁷⁸ For detail see <http://www.ipsnews.net/1998/08/religion-bulletin-kenya-media-equates-islam-with-violence-muslims-say/>

even before the identities of the terrorist and their motives have been determined by local and international investigators now working on the case, there have been concerted efforts by some sections of the mass media to make it look as if Islam was to blame for the unfortunate event. (Sheikh Ahmad Khalif, *The Nation*, 19 August 1998)

Further, the Sheikh bemoaned the developments shortly after the blast in which several Muslims were harassed, picked up by police from their homes and their places of work for no apparent reason other than being Muslims. Local Muslims were also reportedly enraged following then President Daniel arap Moi's televised remark that the perpetrators of the bomb would not have done the deed if they were Christians. The editorial cartoon, it appears, merely captured in symbolic form the dominant discourses at the time and the unuttered thoughts among sections of Kenyans. Parallel to the uproar from Muslims, there were a series of articles written by both Muslims and non-Muslims that the attacks were isolated events and should be understood as crime, not dogma. However, while the connection between strands of Islam and terrorism may appear sensationalist and offensive, the cartoon seemed to be reflective of the attackers' explicit deployment of religious discourse before, during and after the attacks.

In the editorial cartoon, the continued othering and ideological framing gain impetus as Muslims (and Islam) are symbolically linked with senseless violence as the killers of women and children. Coming at a time when Muslim groups were agitating for space in the political and social sphere of the country, the continued linkage of Islam to violence might have sought to undermine these claims. Worth noting, the framing of the attack as targeting the innocent and defenceless delegitimizes the act. Since time immemorial, the very idea of killing women and children is the acme of inhumanity and a clear pointer to the villain in a conflictual situation. Evidently, this framing reduces the victims of the attack into a template of gendered victimhood and childhood innocence that not only delegitimizes that act, but one that at the time implicitly disempowered and undermined aspirations of Muslim people and groups in Kenya. On the other end, such framing of inhumanity and savage violence equally legitimises a broad range of legal, security, social and military decisions in the governments' effort at fighting terror. Not surprising, most of the counter terror strategies have come under criticism for inordinately targeting members of the Islamic community. Still, the media and especially the editorial cartoons⁷⁹ began mellowing their content with regard to

⁷⁹ In an interview with John Khamirwa in Nairobi in early 2012, he observed that increased protests and the possibility of targeted violence on cartoonists prompted him and other cartoonists in Kenya to be extremely cautious in depicting Muslims in unflattering forms after 9/11. While no direct harm or threat was visited on him based on the two editorial cartoons, current global discourses and increased Muslim rage at cartoonists over perceived sacrilege

this frame and resorted to more abstract metaphors and little lexicon elements for the frame TERROR IS ISLAMIC.

Editorial Cartoons and Framing Terrorism as Evil

Following the furore raised in using religious metaphors the natural consequence was the use of a more non-controversial frame but one with a silent, subtle and less overt binarism. The TERRORISM IS EVIL frame emerged as a much more politically and ideologically sensitive frame and one that scarcely stoked religious passions in the country. While the frame may be thought to have emerged as a result of near agreement by most stakeholders (sponsors, media owners, gatekeepers, religious groups, state and non-state actors) that terrorism is evil, it is equally possible that the frame is a watered down version of the TERRORISM IS ISLAMIC frame. This is probable considering the social, political and cultural discursive environment in Kenya shortly after the blasts. Apart from its political correctness, the TERRORISM IS EVIL frame was stable and has not changed in spite of the vicissitudes of terror and the ongoing war against terror today. Appropriating the now culturally mainstreamed symbol of the Grim Reaper, *The Standard* published the following cartoon in its editorial page showing two adversaries running after each other in what is described as a vicious cycle (figure 3). The cartoon contains four key framing devices; the Grim Reaper is juxtaposed with Uncle Sam, a symbol of the United States implying US global power and its 'big brother' role in international politics. While the lexical framing device 'the vicious cycle continues' ridicules the unconventionality of the war against terrorism, the second lexical devices, 'where is this devil' constructs a good versus evil binarism. Here, the oppositional pairing suggests a black and white scenario in which terrorism is an inherently evil phenomenon and the US the protagonist (leading the forces of good, perhaps) in a frame that suggests a continuous, never ending clash between the US on one hand, and the 'devilish' elements behind terrorism.

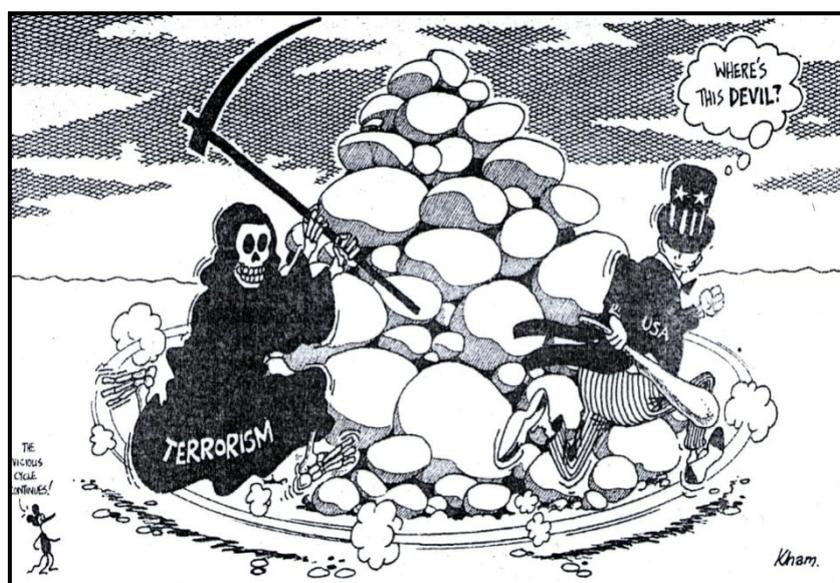


Figure 3: The Standard, 30 August 1998. Reprinted with permission

Corporately, all these devices prompt and direct attention to the core frame of 'TERRORISM IS EVIL. To reach this frame, the manifest and latent reasoning devices in the frame package moralises terror as cunningly evil (attacking surreptitiously from the backside) and implicitly locates the US as possessing the possible antidote to this evil. While the frame appropriates ideological tropes that vilify and demonise the embassy attackers as evil and cunning, through a paradigmatic link, these tropes still act as potential substitutes to a perceived but muted Islamic threat. This vilification certainly denies them (attackers) legitimacy and reproduces a discourse that permits collaborative but asymmetrical efforts in fighting terrorism, in which the US is primed as vanguard in the fight against terror. The framing of terrorism as evil is a powerful ideological strategy especially for state agents who may not wish to negotiate or face up to terrorists' demands. Since evil cannot be converted, a fight to finish remains the only option of dealing with it. The final solution for evil since time immemorial remains its total destruction. As Keen (1986) observes,

the effectiveness of labelling our enemies evil serves to smoothen the path for their destruction, for we believe that as devil, demon, or myrmidon of evil, the enemy is possessed by an alien power. He fights not of his own will, but because he has been taken over by an alien spirit and is compelled by an illusion. Any warrior who kills such an enemy strikes a blow for truth and goodness and need have no remorse' (1986:41).

In this sense therefore, Keen anchors the argument that the framing of terrorism as evil eliminates any possibility of legitimacy. At this point, it becomes difficult to argue that the media offers any

substantial kind of legitimacy to the terrorists beyond mere publicity. The framing of terror as evil was possibly more pronounced within the public than direct discourse from political leaders. However, evidence shows that framing terrorism as cowardice, as shown below, was a deliberate framing strategy perfected by political leaders.

Framing Terrorism as Cowardice

Even long before 9/11 state agents, media and the political class have frequently labelled terrorist acts as cowardly. As one would expect, the logic behind this discourse is to undermine the terrorists' strategy which thrives on vulnerability and surprise. By casting aspersions on the means of attaining their stated aims, the hegemonic ideology has always used cowardice to delegitimise terrorism. Moments after the embassy bombings President Clinton angrily vowed to bring justice to those who committed what he termed as 'cowardly attacks.'⁸⁰ The US state department similarly picked the same tone describing the attacks as cowardly, arguing that the casualties included thousands of innocent women and children. Similar labelling of the terror attacks as cowardly was mentioned in Madeline Albright's solemn remarks at the site of the bombing in Nairobi.⁸¹ Likewise, in the local papers both *The standard* and *The Nation* described the attacks as 'senseless' and 'cowardly' since those directly affected were innocent people who need never have suffered the way they did. But that was not all, the connotation of the attacks as cowardly in Kenya was understood in the light of the prevailing international politics. As a perceived soft and easy target, Kenya had taken the bullet on behalf of America. While the term cowardly as used by the Western political class sought to undermine the methodology of terror in general, in Kenya the same term was used as a reference to terror groups hitting at poor countries in Africa whose defence systems are still weak, to get the attention of the West. Thus, Kenya and by extension Tanzania were framed to have simply been caught in the crossfire of a war that was not their own. As seen in the editorial cartoon below, an ideological mechanism of naturalisation picked on the familiar notion of vulnerability in the developing world in a frame that highlights the cowardly nature of the embassy attacks.

⁸⁰ Daily Nation, 8 August, 1998.

⁸¹ See <http://secretary.state.gov/www/statements/1998/980818.html>.



Figure 4: The Standard, 9 August 1998. Reprinted with permission

Published on 9th August, the editorial cartoon contains four main framing devices. The most dominant is the now common symbol of the United States government, Uncle Sam, cast in a vain attempt at swatting a troublesome bug. The bug, carrying the epithet of terrorism on its wings, somehow outmanoeuvres these attempts, and turns, training its sting at a diminutive, bare foot man labelled 'third world' who is thought to be a softer and manageable target. The 'mouse' on the right gives away the core frame TERRORISM AS COWARDLY by suggesting that 'cowards go for the easy targets.' A double faced binarism emerges pitting the US against terrorists at one level and terrorists paired in opposition to weaker and vulnerable countries. Worth noting, several ideological modes are in operation that fortifies this frame. To begin with, the ideological mode of othering the terrorist mutates to a verminization in which the terrorist is reduced to a non-human form. This verminization delegitimizes the terrorists through dehumanization and is a frame that opens the door for a provincial way of dealing with those with whom we have political quarrels; a complete mop up, as one does to pest and pesky bugs (Keen 1986).

Secondly, the ideological construct that naturalises victimhood and vulnerability of the 'third world' countries (the word *third world* itself being a construct that excuses and legitimises domination and helplessness) is used to buttress the frame of terror as a cowardly act pivoted on targeting the weak. This kind of framing was a dominant discursive item in Kenya following these and other terrorist attacks. In an editorial titled 'hunt down these cowardly killers' on the 8th of August, a day after the attacks, *The Nation* argued that Africa had become the new battleground of international terrorism as a result of lax security arrangements in this part of the world. It further speculated that the terrorists must have reconnoitred around the world and found that the US missions in Africa represented the soft under belly that could be struck. The linkage between vulnerability and cowardice careered further. In a more scathing serving that

appropriated and fortified the sense of victimhood to frame cowardice, a *Nation* columnist opined that

a poor country whose people have an average income of a dollar day, which is daily losing 500 citizens to AIDS, a tattered economy, bogged down by a million orphans, is not a worthy adversary for any self-respecting warrior. But the soldiers of al-Qaeda are not warriors. They are cowards. (*The Nation*, November 29th 2002).

Although penned after the Kikambala terror attacks four years later, these sentiments tap on a similar ideological vein of victimhood as does the editorial cartoon. While the framing of terrorism as an act of cowardice mostly subsumes the terrorists' strategy of surprise and indiscriminate deployment of violence, in Kenya, and perhaps a host of other developing countries the construction of terrorism as cowardly took on a broader meaning. Not only was the terrorist act cowardly due to its strategy of indiscriminate use of violence, but it was cowardly because it was executed in an economically poor country, and one that was framed a weak actor in international politics and affairs. In this sense the frame of TERRORISM AS COWARDLY is pegged on the assumption that terrorism is an unfair challenge (on the weak), using strategies that chiefly exploit the element of surprise and weakness to attain political and social leverage. Accordingly, it is possibly the most brutal frame in denying the terrorists legitimacy or recognition. In contrast, framing terrorism as a crime, as does the next editorial cartoon brings a rather new perspective that somehow blurs the boundaries of the whole notion of legitimacy.

Framing Terrorism as Crime

Apart from framing terror as evil and cowardly, framing the terrorist act as illegal is another common way (and a mostly statecentric narrative), of delegitimizing the 'others' position and legitimising one's own. However, unlike framing terror evil, the illegality of terrorism assumes human agency in framing terror whilst framing terrorism evil taps into the divine and sacred. This implies that framing terrorism as an unlawful strategy of war is far much more benign than framing it evil because the former is a constructed fact subject to discursive whims while the latter assumes a divinely cast, unchangeable set of a moral law, at whose end is a divine moral law giver. In the case below, the framing of terrorism as a criminal act is not too dissimilar to that found in institutionalised forms of conceiving terrorism. Similar to the definition of terrorism provided by the United Nations, the US Federal Bureau of Investigations and that by the Kenya government,⁸² the idea of terrorism as an unlawful act is emphasised

⁸² In defining terror, The United Nations gives premium to the particular act being criminal, while the FBI gives weight to the unlawful aspect of the use of force (Hoffman, 2006). Defining the act as unlawful or criminal is more in line with the

in the cartoon below. Drawn from *The Daily Nation*, it represents a more neutral position to framing terror. This construction leads to an equally less passionate way of commentary on terrorism as it emphasises on the criminality perspective of the act, and not the political or ideological perspectives, which inevitably become controversial.

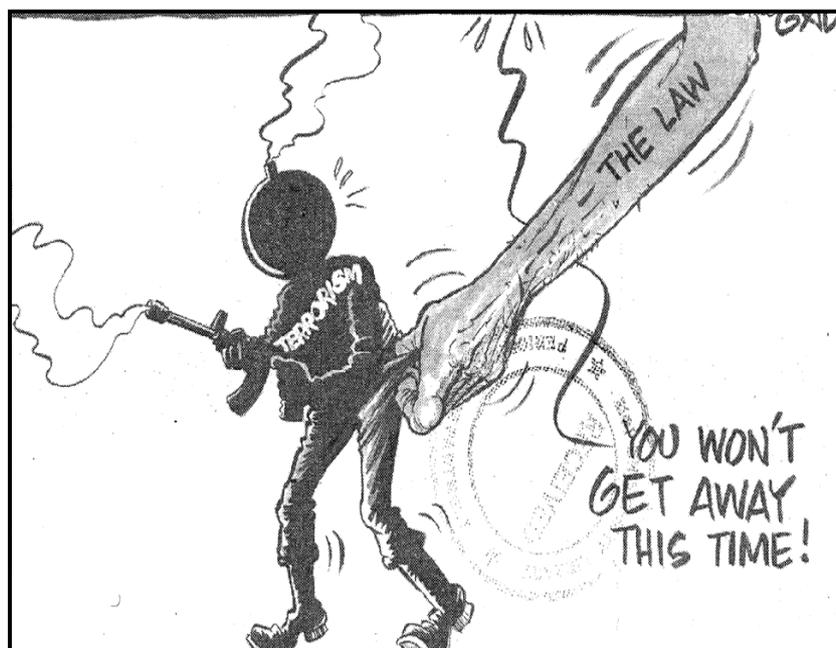


Figure 5: *The Daily Nation*, 9 August 1998, reprinted with permission

Among its manifest framing devices, the cartoon contains a blacked out man holding a smoking gun and an equally smoking head, presented metaphorically as a bomb, all indicative of an attack that has just been executed. A gigantic hand, inscribed with the words 'the law' grabs the man by the waist as if to hoist him. This extended hand suggests an imminent arrest. In Kenya, grabbing somebody from the back of the waist, so as to prompt in the culprit an almost midair toe-walk not only signifies arrest by a law enforcement officer, but also culpability on the part of the accused. Although the law is clear that one is innocent until proven guilty, such handling carries strong connotations of guilt, as it usually implies one was actually caught in the act. While the text lacks reasoning devices explicitly suggestive of causal and moral attributes, the legal institutions are framed as a treatment option for terrorism. Additionally, since criminality is common place and an everyday experience, especially in Nairobi, the reduction of the embassy attacks to crime sanitises what was initially conceived as a heinous act.

While the more dominant frame emerging within this package partly yields the **TERRORISM IS CRIME** interpretative frame which might be seen as delegitimizing terrorism, the alleged terrorist, unlike in the previous cartoons, is not considered evil. In fact, a closer scrutiny of the cartoon above reveals the silhouette of a soldier, thus possibly

'official position' in any country, because it rarely includes the actions of states, which are often times considered lawful.

elevating the terrorist to a combatant and his mission gaining some ounce of dignity. As combatants, soldiers represent state interests and are allowed to kill and are immune from prosecution for their acts. Therefore, representing terrorists as soldiers dignifies their actions and certainly undercuts that of legitimate state agencies. In the cartoon above, we are invited to assess two seemingly contradictory frames, that of terror as crime, or that of terror as a form of combat. Still, taking the cultural issue into consideration, the **TERRORISM IS CRIME** seems to be more conspicuous. This particular frame can also be thought to be sympathetic to the official position of terror, mostly from state organs. Such framing is relatively non-controversial (in the Kenyan context) as it deftly positions state and non-state actors; in which the state (and its form of terror is implicitly legitimate) and that of non-state actors is not legitimate, unlike the more controversial ideological (religious) framing. However, such framing that reduces terrorism to crime becomes an ideological mode that actually sanitises terrors and conceals the gravity and the heinous character of terrorism. Crime is considered a transgression of law that occurs within a community and perpetrated mostly by members of the same community, which in the case above leads to a construction of a relatively benign form of terrorism. At the same time this thinking primes judicial institutions as the most effective ways of dealing with terrorism. As recent history has shown, the courts in Kenya and abroad have not been very effective in combating the spread of terror. Occasionally, the convergence of court appearances and the attendant media coverage of terrorist trials have transformed courts to the latest platforms and spaces for terrorists to seek sympathy and further recognition.

Editorial Cartoons and the Framing of American Insensitivity

It would be fairly accurate to argue, as has been suggested earlier, that virtually all the framing of the embassy attacks in the editorial cartoons provided publicity to the attacks. This was the pattern in the other sections of the newspaper such as the editorials, commentaries and news reports. As earlier mentioned, this coverage was massive and extensive and perhaps unprecedented in Kenya's print media with regard to the coverage of terrorism. The pervasive and sensationalist focus on the bloodied and the dying may have boosted newspaper sales, but it might also have given the terrorist undue attention and publicity. While the publicity bonanza that was generously extended to the terrorist for days on end did not materialise into immediate legitimacy, some recognition began to stream in a few days after the attacks. For instance, having chosen the 7th of August as the day of the attack, a day meant to coincide with the arrival of American troops in Saudi Arabia, the political message began to sink in. Kenyan newspapers began probing this contextual background which marked the beginning of a gradual, though halting steps towards legitimacy. This recognition came about

when the political meanings of the attacks were explained, and the alleged mastermind, Bin Laden, given extensive coverage.

In an article appearing on the 12th of August, about five days after the attacks titled '*Is this man sponsor of world terrorism?*', the iconic image of Osama raising his right arm, with his fore finger pointing skywards, makes perhaps the first appearance in a Kenyan daily. In it the article details a brief biographic sketch of what drives Bin Laden to sponsor terror across the world. Described as a tall and thin fully bearded man, and by those who have met him as a soft spoken and extremely courteous man, one begins to see the human side of one who previously embodied the acme of evil. He is cast as a captive of an ideology widespread in the Arabian cultural space that sees the world in simplistic terms as a struggle between righteous Islam and hedonistic (doomed) west. His heroic exploits in Afghanistan are called upon to fortify his claims to recognition, and his current 'war with America' is given extensive 'logical' context.

The complicated Middle-East politics was not the only source of counter frames after the August 7th terror attacks in Nairobi. Soon after the attacks there were complaints that the American marines securing the site moments after the blast harassed and roughed up Kenyans who were attempting to rescue the injured and the dying. Matters were not helped when the US government explained that these actions were attempts to ward off would-be looters. The grieving nation was miffed at this. Worse, on the 8th of August the US government issued travel warnings to Kenya which immediately had severe effects on the key tourism industry in the country. Meanwhile, it emerged that a 'walk in' source had already warned the US government through the Israeli consulate in Nairobi but he was swiftly dismissed as a fraud.⁸³ This was in addition to several warnings that were issued to the US government that the location of the embassy at the centre of the city was an easy target for terrorists. Also, details surfaced that a few minutes before the attacks the security guards at the gate of the US embassy had frantically tried to call their superiors in the building to inform them of the suspicious men, but were kept waiting on the cumbersome and bureaucratic phone traffic. In addition, when the US government decided to send injured embassy staff to Germany for specialised treatment, there were murmurs that only US citizens were considered, while locals working for the embassy were left to their own devices.

This understandable yet potentially conflictual event drew criticism from the media even before the dust from the blast had settled. Corporately, when these events came to light, the media veered from a focus of the attack and took to more counter hegemonic frames that, although not directly extolling the attacks, began casting America as an insensitive and arrogant super power whose

⁸³ Standard, 16 August, 1998.

swaggering mien was seen as a convenient excuse for inviting the unfortunate attacks.

'This was not our war. Why then were the Americans so insensitive?' screamed a news feature hours after attacks anchoring a photo of a US marine shooting off bystanders, and his left arm supporting an automatic rifle. 'Kenyan used to think their police are unfeeling buffoons but that was before they met the American Marine, and had a firsthand peep at the American sense of priorities, their view of friendship...'.⁸⁴ This and similar other articles and news reports ushered in a different tone that signalled the start of a series of counter perspectives to the framing of the whole event in the Kenyan media. Although this framing never fully developed into an outright legitimating of the attacks, by framing the attacks as the result of the US government negligence, arrogance and oversight, a construction of the US as a complicit actor in inviting the attacks began to emerge. It therefore came as no surprise when a media clamour for compensation to local victims of the attacks began in earnest.

On its part, realising the simmering diplomatic row brought by the foregoing, and which were made worse by President Clinton's initial slighting of the Kenyan victims of the terror attacks, the US government quickly rescinded the punishing travel advisories given earlier. In addition President Clinton promptly issued a televised apology and then dispatched Secretary of State Madeline Albright on a charm offensive to Nairobi to mend the haemorrhaging diplomatic relations between the two countries. In the following cartoon published in the *The Nation* on the 12th of August 1998, the key framing devices include an awaiting plane labelled *American Rescue Force 1*, mean faced marines in a phalanx standing guard as a medical team hauls away American victims. On the left a pile of debris is still smouldering, as a hand sticks out, the former a sign of the carnage while the latter a synecdoche of the hundreds of blast victims allegedly considered less significant. At the bottom left is the typical Kenyan victim, badly maimed (and obviously an admirer of things American seen by his *Chicago Bulls*⁸⁵ singlet and *Nike* sneakers). At the time *Chicago Bulls*, one of the most successful American Basketball teams, carried connotations of chivalry and prowess for Kenyan youth in and out of the court. *Nike*, considered more of a fashion label than a sportswear manufacturer in Kenya, symbolised the cultural consonance between the US and Kenya that was supposedly being undermined by the latest developments. At the time, the two brands were a metonymy of the high noon of

⁸⁴ Daily Nation, 16 August, 1998.

⁸⁵ As one of the most successful basketball teams in the US, Chicago Bulls had acquired a keen following among Kenyan youth following televised games in the local Public television. Apart from merely indicating a kind of cultural exchange, the epithet also symbolizes an increasing cultural acquiescence wrought by American popular culture on Kenya's social-cultural space.

cultural imperialism wrought by the onslaught of Americanism on the local social space.



Figure 6: Daily Nation, 12 August 1998. Reprinted with permission

The bandana-clad young man is stunned, not so much about the constructed hierarchy of victims, but more of the rejection of an America he had hitherto looked up as the cultural and social ideal. Although he looks more of a Yankee than a local lad, a couple of muscle-bound marines menacingly aim their guns at him and inform him that he cannot board the plane since he is a security risk (to Americans). While it is not clear why he would want to board the plane, the emergent frame betrays only a fringe relationship to the issue of terrorism. The reasoning devices suggest that while an attack (problem) has occurred, there seems to be a constructed hierarchy of victims. Meanwhile, an ideological mode that naturalises (African) victimhood plays out in a core frame that suggests AMERICAN INSENSITIVITY. While this frame seems to be a carryover of the negative sentiments replete in the editorials of both papers that Americans were insensitive to Kenyans following the blasts, it also worked in tandem with the ideological construct of victimhood. There seemed to be a sudden need from Kenyans that America should shoulder the financial outlays of the terror attack. In an editorial on the 12th August in *The Standard* titled 'The Ugly side of Americans' the paper decried 'the heavy handed, insensitive presence of US marines ringing the embassy' who had taken to putting motorists through roadblocks, car searches and unleashing sniffer dogs on locals. In addition, the paper urged the US government to make a substantial donation to the newly established National Disaster Fund,⁸⁶ after all, the editorial asserted, this was

⁸⁶ This fund, headed by the Former Attorney General Charles Njonjo, was tasked with raising funds for the local victims of the blast. It was meant to cover medical bills and funeral expenses, and also act as a form of compensatory mechanism since local insurers did not cover terrorist attacks.

their war. 'Instead of platitudes,' argued the paper, 'we would then have hard evidence of the true depth and sincerity of America's sympathy and support.'⁸⁷

While it is difficult to conclude that this framing gave terrorists some legitimacy, this discourse shifted the focus of vilification from the terrorists to the Americans, a framing that had the possibility of gifting sympathetic leverage to the terrorists. This position was lent credence when more critical evaluations of US policy on terrorism in the past were highlighted in commentaries appearing in the two papers. For instance, after the US state department slapped travel advisories against Kenya shortly after the blast, a columnist writing in one of the papers railed at what he thought was a double faced policy on terrorism. 'The United States policy on international security is replete with duplicity and betrays absurd allergy to logic' argued the author, 'the US reaction to the bombing of its mission in Nairobi, its reaction to the aggression in Kuwait, its involvement in Panama and Grenada, illustrate double faced Americanism.'⁸⁸ He went on to argue that the travel advisories were uncalled for since it was the presence of the US mission in the country that had made Kenya unsafe. It was perhaps with these developments in mind and the deteriorating diplomatic relations between Kenya and the US that President Clinton offered a televised apology on the foregoing. And as earlier mentioned Secretary of State Madeline Albright was quickly dispatched on a much needed charm offensive to Kenya and Tanzania.

On August 18th 1998 Madeline Albright arrived in Kenya. In the following cartoon published in *The Nation* a day after her arrival, she is cast landing to a carpeted reception, but not the expected red carpet. The word 'compensation' is conspicuously bold on the carpet Madeline walks on (Madeline and the carpet form the two dominant framing devices). As reasoning devices, the editorial cartoon merely reflected the expectations that awaited her from the Kenyans. Her visit ushered in heightened expectations in Nairobi. It was taken for granted that apart from showing sympathy to the bereaved and apologising on behalf of the US for its perceived misconduct, Secretary Albright would make the much anticipated announcement that compensation from the US would be forthcoming.

⁸⁷ See, *The Standard* 12 August, 1998.

⁸⁸ See *The Standard*, 20 August, 1998.



Figure 7: Daily Nation, 18 August 1998. Reprinted with permission

However, in her speech that morning at the site of the bomb blast, the envoy first refuted allegations of callousness from the marines arguing that in the circumstances, amidst the horror, the fears and the different tasks that had to be done, misunderstandings were bound to occur. Further defending the actions of the marines, she argued that they were afraid the weakened buildings would collapse and trap new victims, and that the marines had to take caution against the possibility of a second attack. And much to the chagrin of part of her audience, her only hint of money was for the purposes of rebuilding structures and not cash payments.⁸⁹ *The Standard* editorial on the 19th lamented the failure of the US to make commitments on compensation and direct help to victims of the blast. This discourse continued to furnish an ideological construction of (Kenyan) victimhood and dependency in the wider frame of AMERICAN INSENSITIVITY. But not all were impressed with this rush towards victimhood. Writing an op-ed piece in the *Daily Nation* on August 20th, an author asked Kenyans not to expect 'handouts' from the 'self-interested and egocentric Americans.' Rather, Kenyans should learn to be self-reliant and pull through the tragedy by their own bootstraps. 'Americans are interested in what affects them individually' he argued

This would be seen as selfishness and indeed it could be, but that is simply the American way...Secondly, Americans neither know nor care about the rest of the world. It might be difficult for Kenyans to understand that very few Americans who have heard about Kenya cares about it...this might explain the gung-ho attitude that is seen, especially among US marines, that other people loath so much (Mutahi Kagwe, *The Nation*, 20 August 1998)

⁸⁹ See Albright's speech at <http://www.fas.org/irp/news/1998/08/index.html>

These sweeping statements and sentiments represented a part of the then prevailing mood shortly after the departure of Secretary Madeline Albright. To this day compensation for victims of the embassy attacks has never been fully settled.⁹⁰ As a media frame, the continued construction of Kenya as a victim of a war that was not its making, in tandem with the framing of America as an ungrateful, insensitive and swaggering super power had several implications. For instance, the oppositional pairing of the terrorist evil on one side and the forces of good on the other side in earlier frames, took a paradigmatic change that metamorphosed into an oppositional pairing of an insensitive America against a weak and innocently victimised Kenya in later frames. For a moment the real enemy, the terrorists themselves, were forgotten. A year later, after the release of a report in the US termed Accountability Review Board⁹¹ that probed the circumstances surrounding the embassy bombings, this particular frame of an insensitive America found renewed expression in the local press. Denouncing the report's contents as inconclusive and slighting, the *Daily Nation's* editorial on March 21st was scathing in its attack on the report

...the US report merely mentions in passing that 'an estimated 200 Kenyan civilians were killed and 4,000 were injured. It does not acknowledge the conduct of US officials and soldiers which amounted to nothing less than the obstruction of the rescue effort. It makes no mention to the damage to our economy which resulted from the deliberate acts of the US government (in warning Americans not to travel to Kenya in the aftermath of the bomb), neither does it address responsibility of America for the loss we have suffered in not giving us sufficient warning that it knew it was targeted by international terrorists (*Daily Nation*, 21 March, 1999).

As seen above, the notion of US insensitivity did not peter out with the passage of time. This frame of an insensitive America would later mutate into America as aggressor a few weeks after the 9/11 attacks in the US and the subsequent war on terror in the Middle East. In retrospect, although outright legitimacy to the terror attacks was not given by the media, the vilification of the US and its conduct provided a congenial ground from which the sapling of recognition, sympathy and even legitimacy found a toehold.

⁹⁰ On 11 May 2011, the outgoing American ambassador Michael Renneberger admitted that his country could never adequately compensate victims of the 1998 bombing. However he revealed that a total of \$40 million had been used in providing medical care, reconstruction of buildings and scholarships for students directly or indirectly affected by the blast. Pressed further, he argued that the US government had tried to be responsive to the victims, but that in such situations, one can never do enough.

⁹¹ For details see http://www.state.gov/www/regions/africa/accountability_report.html

Conclusion

As the first major terror attack in Kenya it was interesting to see how the media framed the event. Various, there were moments where the media was completely complicit to the terrorist agenda by unwittingly becoming a conduit of the fear, anxiety and even propaganda of the terrorist through their coverage. While the scale and impact of the embassy attacks rightly called for extensive media coverage, it was rather obvious that part of the Kenyan media went overboard in the display of carnage. The editorial cartoons revealed very rich information on how terrorism was framed and how emerging issues from the attacks were interpreted. Generally, a paradigmatic view revealed that terrorism was framed variously as evil, criminal, Islamic and cowardly. It was interesting to note that these frames did not emerge out of context but equally subsumed the circulating discourses around the time of the embassy attacks drawn from official (state) sources, media commentaries, the public and the media gallery. As expected, some of these frames were vehemently contested in a hegemonic struggle at shaping meaning. For instance, the framing of terrorism as an Islamic ideology was later successfully resisted and made way for the more agreeable and less controversial hegemonic ideology of terror being evil.

However, 'fully formed' counter frames following the embassy attacks barely emerged in full throttle. Nevertheless, the conduct of the American marines at the site of the bombing was extrapolated and subsequently framed as representative of a superpower whose foreign policy and relation was selfish, arrogant and insensitive. While it was left to the audiences to make guesses on whether such an attitude may have invited such attacks, the proximity of the attacks and the large numbers of Kenyan casualties may have inhibited the development of critical counter hegemonic frames. Accordingly, most of the frames in the editorial cartoons after the embassy attacks largely deprived the terrorists of any kind of social or political legitimacy. Still, it is important to note that some of the emergent counter frames displayed the latent potential to legitimise and rationalise terror. It is also possible that the inability to capture Osama bin Laden shortly after the attacks, coupled with outstanding issues such as compensation to blast victims and an ambivalent American foreign policy towards Kenya, produced a lack of closure that found full expression in local editorial cartoons four years later after the September 11th 2001 terror attacks in the US.

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