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# **Revue Internationale de Langue, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation**

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et les défis contemporains de paix durable dans l'espace  
CEDEAO »**

***"Integration, Free Movement of People and Goods and the Challenges of  
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## ***Revue Internationale de Langue, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation***

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**Contacts :** (+228) 90284891/91643242/92411793

Email : [larellicca2017@gmail.com](mailto:larellicca2017@gmail.com)

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### Editorial

La *Revue Internationale de Langue, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation* (RILLiCC) est une revue à comité de lecture en phase d'indexation recommandée par le Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur (CAMES). Elle est la revue du Laboratoire de Recherche en Langues, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation Anglophones (LaReLLiCCA) dont elle publie les résultats des recherches en lien avec la recherche et la pédagogie sur des orientations innovantes et stimulantes à la vie et vision améliorées de l'académie et de la société. La revue accepte les textes qui cadrent avec des enjeux épistémologiques et des problématiques actuels pour être au rendez-vous de la contribution à la résolution des problèmes contemporains.

RILLiCC met en éveil son lectorat par rapport aux défis académiques et sociaux qui se posent en Afrique et dans le monde en matière de science littéraire et des crises éthiques. Il est établi que les difficultés du vivre-ensemble sont fondées sur le radicalisme et l'extrémisme violents. En effet, ces crises et manifestations ne sont que des effets des causes cachées dans l'imaginaire qu'il faut (re)modeler au grand bonheur collectif. Comme il convient de le noter ici, un grand défi se pose aux chercheurs qui se doivent aujourd'hui d'être conscients que la science littéraire n'est pas rétribuée à sa juste valeur quand elle se voit habillée sous leurs yeux du mythe d'Albatros ou d'un cymbale sonore. L'idée qui se cache malheureusement derrière cette mythologie est que la littérature ne semble pas contribuer efficacement à la résolution des problèmes de société comme les sciences exactes. Dire que la recherche a une valeur est une chose, le prouver en est une autre. La *Revue Internationale de Langue, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation* à travers les activités du LaReLLiCCA entend faire bénéficier à son lectorat et à sa société cible, les retombées d'une recherche appliquée.

Le comité spécialisé « Lettres et Sciences Humaines » du Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur (CAMES) recommande l'utilisation harmonisée des styles de rédaction et la présente revue s'inscrit dans cette logique directrice en adoptant le style APA.

L'orientation éditoriale de cette revue inscrit les résultats pragmatiques et novateurs des recherches sur fond social de médiation, d'inclusion et de réciprocité qui permettent de maîtriser les racines du mal et réaliser les objectifs du développement durable déclencheurs de paix partagée.

Lomé, le 20 octobre 2020.

Le directeur de publication,

Professeur Ataféï PEWISSI,

Directeur du Laboratoire de Recherche en Langues, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation Anglophones (LaReLLiCCA), Faculté des Lettres, Langues et Arts, Université de Lomé.  
Tél : (+228) 90284891, e-mail : sapewissi@yahoo.com

### ***Ligne éditoriale***

**Volume :** La taille du manuscrit est comprise entre 4500 et 6000 mots.  
Format: papier A4, Police: Times New Roman, Taille: 11,5, Interligne 1,15.

### ***Ordre logique du texte***

Un article doit être un tout cohérent. Les différents éléments de la structure doivent faire un tout cohérent avec le titre. Ainsi, tout texte soumis pour publication doit comporter:

- un titre en caractère d'imprimerie ; il doit être expressif et d'actualité, et ne doit pas excéder 24 mots ;
- un résumé en anglais-français, anglais-allemand, ou anglais-espagnol selon la langue utilisée pour rédiger l'article. Se limiter exclusivement à objectif/problématique, cadre théorique et méthodologique, et résultats. Aucun de ces résumés ne devra dépasser 150 mots ;
- des mots clés en français, en anglais, en allemand et en espagnol : entre 5 et 7 mots clés ;
- une introduction (un aperçu historique sur le sujet ou revue de la littérature en bref, une problématique, un cadre théorique et méthodologique, et une structure du travail) en 600 mots au maximum ;
- un développement dont les différents axes sont titrés. Il n'est autorisé que trois niveaux de titres. Pour le titrage, il est vivement recommandé d'utiliser les chiffres arabes ; les titres alphabétiques et alphanumériques ne sont pas acceptés ;
- une conclusion (rappel de la problématique, résumé très bref du travail réalisé, résultats obtenus, implémentation) en 400 mots au maximum ;
- liste des références : par ordre alphabétique des noms de familles des auteurs cités.

### **Références**

Il n'est fait mention dans la liste de références que des sources effectivement utilisées (citées, paraphrasées, résumées) dans le texte de l'auteur. Pour leur présentation, la norme American Psychological Association (APA) ou références intégrées est exigée de tous les auteurs qui veulent faire publier leur texte dans la revue. Il est fait exigence aux auteurs de n'utiliser que la seule norme dans leur texte. Pour en savoir

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### **Présentation des notes référencées**

Le comité de rédaction exige APA (Auteur, année : page). L'utilisation des notes de bas de pages n'intervient qu'à des fins d'explication complémentaire. La présentation des références en style métissé est formellement interdite.

### **La gestion des citations :**

**Longues citations :** Les citations de plus de quarante (40) mots sont considérées comme longues ; elles doivent être mises en retrait dans le texte en interligne simple.

**Les citations courtes :** les citations d'un (1) à quarante (40) mots sont considérées comme courtes ; elles sont mises entre guillemets et intégrées au texte de l'auteur.

### **Résumé :**

- ✓ Pour Pewissi (2017), le Womanisme transcende les cloisons du genre.
- ✓ Ourso (2013:12) trouve les voyelles qui débordent le cadre circonscrit comme des voyelles récalcitrantes.

### **Résumé ou paraphrase :**

- ✓ Ourso (2013: 12) trouve les voyelles qui débordent le cadre circonscrit comme des voyelles récalcitrantes.

### **Exemple de référence**

#### **Pour un livre**

Collin, H. P. (1988). *Dictionary of Government and Politics*. UK: Peter Collin Publishing.

#### **Pour un article tiré d'un ouvrage collectif**

Gill, W. (1998/1990). "Writing and Language: Making the Silence Speak." In Sheila Ruth, *Issues in Feminism: An Introduction to Women's Studies*. London: Mayfield Publishing Company, Fourth Edition. Pp. 151-176.

#### **Utilisation de Ibid., op. cit, sic entre autres**

**Ibidem (Ibid.)** intervient à partir de la deuxième note d'une référence

source citée. Ibid. est suivi du numéro de page si elle est différente de référence mère dont elle est consécutive. Exemple : *ibid.*, ou *ibidem*, p. x.  
**Op. cit.** signifie ‘la source pré-citée’. Il est utilisé quand, au lieu de deux références consécutives, une ou plusieurs sources sont intercalées. En ce moment, la deuxième des références consécutives exige l’usage de *op. cit.* suivi de la page si cette dernière diffère de la précédente.

### **Typographie**

-La *Revue Internationale de Langue, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation* interdit tout soulignement et toute mise en gras des caractères ou des portions de textes.

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### **Tableaux, schémas et illustrations**

Pour les textes contenant les tableaux, il est demandé aux auteurs de les numérotter en chiffres romains selon l’ordre de leur apparition dans le texte. Chaque tableau devra comporter un titre précis et une source propre. Par contre, les schémas et illustrations devront être numérotés en chiffres arabes et dans l’ordre d’apparition dans le texte.

La largeur des tableaux intégrés au travail doit être 10 cm maximum, format A4, orientation portrait.

### **Instruction et acceptation d’article**

A partir du volume 2 de la présente édition, les dates de réception et d’acceptation des textes sont marquées, au niveau de chaque article. Deux (02) à trois (03) instructions sont obligatoires pour plus d’assurance de qualité.



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## **LITTERATURE**

# **The Attempt of Irredentism in Mali: Root Causes, Features and Perspectives**

**Talagbé EDAH**

Etudes africaines et postcoloniales  
Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar, Sénégal  
talagbeedah@gmail.com

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## **Abstract:**

The discomfort of the Tuareg people since the colonial era has been a time bomb. The dereliction reinforced by structural and political factors baffled the national and social cohesion and the chaos was to come if it were not for the French military intervention. This study sheds light on how the North-South dialectic undermined sustainable peace and security, political vacuum and escalation of violence in Mali. It also emphasises geopolitical stakes since the Republic of Mali has become one of the strongholds of terrorists in West Africa. Through the investigation of literature on conflicts in Mali, postcolonial approach in the analysis of conflicts, the study has come to the conclusion that more political transparency is needed from Mali and its partners to make a headway.

**Key words:** Cohesion, dereliction, dialectic, irredentism, precipice, strongholds, vacuum.

## **Résumé :**

Le mécontentement manifesté par les Touaregs depuis la période coloniale est une bombe à retardement. Exacerbé par les facteurs structurels et politiques, la cohésion nationale et sociale a été affectée, ainsi, le pire allait se produire n'eût été l'intervention militaire Française. Cette étude met en lumière comment la dialectique Nord-Sud a compromis la paix durable et la sécurité, l'impact du vide politique sur l'escalade de la violence au Mali. Elle met aussi l'accent sur les enjeux géopolitiques puisque la République du Mali est devenue l'un des bastions des terroristes en Afrique de l'Ouest. A travers la documentation de la littérature sur les conflits au Mali, l'approche postcoloniale sur l'analyse des conflits, l'étude est parvenue à la conclusion que pour trouver une issue favorable à l'instabilité politique du Mali, cela exige de lui et de ses partenaires plus de transparence politique.

**Mots clés :** Abandon, bastion, cohésion, dialectique, irrédentisme, précipice, le vide.

### **Introduction**

The way each President who once ruled Mali came to power, the policy he set up and the way he left power help grasp the major causes of the attempt of irredentism in this West African country. If some came by free and fair elections, others resorted to the military overthrow. Even though unconstitutional events are contrary to democratic principles, sometimes they contribute to relieve the sufferings of the populations. In 1990, during popular uprisings against the regime of Moussa Traore, Amadou Toumani Toure successfully led a military overthrow as he thought it was the only solution to stem the confusion. Surprisingly, instead of staying in power he entrusted it to a civilian after elections that opened the door to the pluralist democracy. Years later, Amadou Toumani Toure ran for the presidential elections and won. This sounded as a reward of the populations. Soon, the Malian democracy was regarded as one of the showcases in West Africa. However, towards the end of the second mandate of the very Amadou Toumani Toure, the country was under severe threats of jihadism. The causes of these hard times Mali went through and which are not over yet are remote, immediate, domestic and external. Historically, populations of the Northern Mali bear a grudge against states authorities for the lack of vital facilities in the area even in the main towns like Gao, Timbuktu, Kidal, Menaka. To show their anger, there have been rebellions followed by fruitless peace agreements but what occurred in 2012 showed the extent the frustrations.

The 2012 Tuareg uprising prompted by the fall of Khadafi's regime during the Arab Spring revealed the impacts of the North-South dialectic and the incapacity to find out adequate ways out. The joint sub-regional and European forces with France, the spearhead prevented the insurgents from occupying the whole territory after having taken a good deal of towns. The analysis of such a threat related to jihadism, terrorism, radicalization, violent extremism implies a broad range of dynamic trends as set out by the grievances.

The occupation of the Northern Mali by insurgents availed *Serval Operation* shepherded by France on January 11<sup>th</sup> 2013 followed by the deployment of the AFISMA on April 25<sup>th</sup> which later became the United Nation Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). As the sustainable peace and security is taking time to be built because of the deadlock, it has been decided to cooperate with another partner namely Wagner of Russia to better manage the rebuilding of the state that seems compulsory.

Three armed groups operate under different labels in Northern Mali. The self-defense militia operates under the leadership of the Ganda Koi and Ganda Izo ethnic group. Their main aim is to help state authorities free the Northern Mali from the hands of rebels namely: AQMI, MUJAO, Ansar Dine and MNLA and so forth. Contrary to the self-defense groups, there are rebel ones embodied by MNLA (Mouvement National de Liberation de l'Azawad/ National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad). The third entity is the Islamic organizations with Al-Qaeda au Maghreb Islamique (AQMI) / Al-Qaeda in Islamic Magreb (AQIM), the Group Salafiste pour la predication et le combat (GSPC) / Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (SGPC), Movement pour l'unicité et le jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest (MUJAO) / (Movement for Unicity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA), Ansar Dine of the notorious but controversial figure Iyad Ag Ghali, Front de libération du Macina (FLM) to name but a few.

The attempt of irredentism in Mali raises debates on postcolonial categories, the administration of the father of independences, that is, those who took power freshly after the departure of the former colonizers, the South-South cooperation, and relationships between neighboring countries. In *Memoires*, Abdou Diouf, the former president of Senegal reveals how decades ago, there was some misunderstanding between Mali and Senegal but later on, the leaders of the two countries understood that without reconciliation and dialogue, the sub-region can never ever make political progress which is strongly linked to economic revival. As such, each made efforts for the living together to be possible. He asserts:

Presque au même moment s'ouvraient à Bamako les négociations pour la normalisation des rapports entre le Sénégal et le Mali. La délégation sénégalaise était conduite par Alioune Badara Mbemgue qui était à l'époque ministre des Travaux Publics et des Transports. Avant cela, à la fin du mois de janvier, le ministre malien du Développement, le Dr Seydou Badian Kouyaté était venu à Dakar. Il était porteur d'un message du président Modibo Keita au président Senghor. En février le gouvernement décidait d'abolir le visa d'entrée aux nationaux maliens et la réouverture des lignes aériennes entre les deux pays. C'est finalement le 8 juin 1963 que les accords de Bamako furent signés et, le 22 juin, les présidents Senghor et Modibo Keita se rencontrèrent sur le pont de la Falemé à Kidira. Les discours prononcés par les deux hommes, furent de véritables hymnes à la fraternité retrouvée (Diouf, 2014: 72).

Here is an outstanding diplomatic attitude for the sake of peace and stability which is needed without minding who is wrong or right. What matters is the mutual acceptation despite cultural, religious diversities. The friendship found back seems paramount for the promotion of genuine peace and stability. The late presidents, Léopold Sedar Senghor and Modibo Keita set an example that should guide each and every one instead of self-defense. In this light, postcolonial approach on conflicts will help understand how the failure of the independence in many African countries still impedes the sustainable stability. On top of that, I intend to resort to the resolution and the transformation approaches to design peace keeping and political agreements mechanisms. A survey resulted from the combination of these approaches on the root causes, the structural and political factors will contribute tremendously to the analysis.

The study sheds light first and foremost on how the discrepancy between the North and the South arouses uprisings, then the impacts of political vacuum on the escalation of violence and at long last it is going to lay the emphasis on the threat brought about by the rise of terrorists' strongholds in the Sub-Saharan Africa.

### **1. The North-South Dialectic and the Tuareg Rebellion**

The North-South dialectic entails discrepancy on development policies many governments implement in Mali. Authorities usually regret it after

being aware of how it undermines their services but unfortunately when it is too late to do whatsoever for remedy. In other words, imbalanced distribution of wealth in Mali led to frustrations that should have avoided earlier. Anger generated by the fact of being forsaken may take many proportions standing, therefore, for a message the populations send to leaders. At this juncture, the freedom fighters believe all sorts of means are appropriate to denounce the injustice they undergo that is why they opt for self-defense.

When the South of Mali is favored upon the North under no plausible grounds, even though the underprivileged are mature and willing to negotiate, promoting thus peace and stability, a time will come when they may feel deeply desperate at the point of losing control. This attitude does not tally with peace and security principles. All in all, it may appear that authorities have done all they could but unfortunately, the Northern populations are not satisfied hence they voice complaints. A person, a regime can fall short meeting the expectations of a part of his populations when others enjoy, but when two or three different regimes repeat the same mistake, it is obvious that there are hidden factors which need to be deciphered and clarified. With this mindset, the failure of various governments in Mali accounts for the genesis of the Tuareg rebellion, the liberation of l'Azawad which has a long history. Pye advocates in his work entitled *Identity and Political Culture*, what should be the pivotal attitude of leaders towards vulnerable populations. He puts it: "In speaking of vital importance of leadership in raising the level of performance, we are alluding to the critical place of authority in national development, if leaders are to inspire a population and to direct a society to higher level of performances, their words and actions must carry an aura of legitimacy" (Pye, 1971: 134). The dire poverty and the difficult leaving conditions arouse anger, despair and triggers devastating instability that is why it is often recommended to endeavor and get development policies which are admitted by representatives, the populations in every area and region of the country. The task meant to satisfy each and every one must be so hard despite the fact that it helps avoid reactions contrary to a stable atmosphere.



Addressing marginalization calls for the involvement, the management first and foremost of worthy institutions whose responsibility is to carry out development projects with the aim to improve the welfare of the citizens. In case they make a mistake otherwise are unable to achieve properly the set goals, if the populations are not courageous, they can become violent when claiming their rights, what they deserve rightfully. Without much attention, one may believe that the cleavage between the north and the south in Mali is limited to economic contexts. It is obvious that the way wealth makes people live a decent life, the same way it can lead to unbearable occurrences when the deprivation is unfair. Neglected and marginalized, the Northern people were desperate and took weapons to defend themselves which apparently is the easiest but dangerous way. Concerned about security issues and the hardships of the populations, many scholars investigate the ins and outs of the situation. In his book D. Sow sheds light on the root-causes of irredentism in Mali as follows:

L'irrégentisme targui est une constante de l'histoire du Mali. S'inscrivant dans le prolongement d'une certaine résistance à la colonisation française, quatre soulèvements ont marqué la vie du pays entre son accession à l'indépendance en 1960 et 2006. Lancée en protestation à la marginalisation économique et politique des 'populations de l'Azawad', la rébellion du 17 janvier 2012 apparaît ainsi comme l'avatar le plus récent de revendications cycliques dans le septentrion malien (D. Sow, 2016: 34).

Before the 17 January 2012 uprisings, many others definitely took place in the North Mali to protest against the injustice the Northern populations undergo. More often than not, reaction of authorities did not show any compromising otherwise peace promoting efforts and this, under the administration of colonial masters and even when the native took power after the independences. The strategy of terrorists being centered on their capacity to take advantage of chaos, they quickly came back after the fall of Khadafi's regime to conquer the North of Mali and if possible the whole country. But for the military intervention of the French and the sub region army which showed prompt concerns, the insurgents were about to lay hands upon the capital city of Bamako after conquering a great deal of Northern towns with their flags hoisted. During the Arab Spring,

Amadou Toumani Tourré, the Head of State of Mali showed his friendship towards Khadafi sending soldiers to back him up but surprisingly enough, when the latter was captured and killed, instead of coming directly back home and occupying their former positions, many Malian soldiers stayed in North Mali. Well organized, as one would believe that they received support from somewhere, they proved that the unfair policies are really a time bomb.

Ever since the outbreak of the rebellions and in front of the hostilities, the responses of different governments lack efficiency because of their scopes. By repressing the rebels, co-opting rebels leaders, giving to some rebel leaders like Iyad Ag Ghaly, a disproportionate respect and influence during the negotiating peace processes, by offering economic incentives to some combatants to disarm them, by implementing the “divide and rule policy”, Malian authorities have failed to come to grips adequately with the Tuareg rebellion. The awful living conditions of the Northern populations which sometimes ends up to illnesses and deaths make them violent simply because they are at their wit’s end. In the same wavelength, Coulet maintains:

Underdevelopment is shocking; The squalor, the disease, unnecessary deaths and the hopelessness of it all, the prevalent emotion of underdevelopment is a sense of personal and societal importance in face of disease and death of confusion and ignorance as one grope to understand changes of servility toward men whose decision govern the course of event, of hopelessness before hunger and natural catastrophe, chronic poverty is a cruel kind of hell (Coulet, 1973: 23).

Beyond the parallelism, Coulet appeals to the leaders to pay attention to how vulnerability can bring about disability even the loss of human lives. As such, the animal nature that lies in any human being when out of control unfortunately overtakes the human ways of thinking and acting. The motivation of the Tuareg uprisings, the empowerment they claim resorting to weapons shows some wickedness but their attitude should be deciphered taking into account the root causes. In short, the other features that depict the common life in the northern Mali is underdevelopment that directly impacts the well-being, for without means and vital

resources people face hardships to take make ends meet. To crown it all, even little diseases which indeed should be cured can lead to death because of lack of primary healthcare infrastructures.

Natural disasters too did not favor life for the populations. Severe droughts brought about unhappiness, thus, thousands of them had to leave the area and go to seek refuge in neighboring countries, namely, Niger, Libya, Mauritania, Algeria. This exodus as one can expect it, led to frustrations, encouraging new connections with other groups mainly in Niger where the Tuareg rebel movement had also been active. In Libya, those climate driven refugees were warmly welcomed, integrated in the Libyan Islamic Legion where they were militarily trained, equipped and took part in wars that the Libyan regime led in other African countries particularly in Chad to conquer “La Bande d’Aozou” These waves combined with the ones motivated by incentives attraction during the Arab Spring made the threat more serious. In his book, Prou depicts the main purposes of rebels coming from different countries to uphold Libya under Khadafi during the tough moment of the Arab Spring: “Des mercenaires arrivent toujours du Niger, du Tchad, du Soudan et du Mali, attirés par les fortes rémunérations proposées par Khadafi. Ils sont pris en main à Sabha, importante base militaire du Fezzan et sont ensuite dirigés vers les lieux de combats après avoir été formés et équipés en armes légères” (Prou, 2012: 11).

The consequences of the droughts helped the Tuareg people reshape outside their country their political and separatist agenda. This dangerous network which escaped Authorities of Mali was later one of the major factors that contributed to jeopardizing the political arena, the integrity of the country. The political elites failed to see the danger come because they were so concerned about the political power in the capital city of Bamako. In this regards, the left wing may have genuine ideas but in case the government does not welcome them they can neither be useful nor profitable for the advancement of the country. The Malian opposition leaders, the civil society organizations must have done their utmost reminding people of the danger the country was running but this initiative cannot bear fruits unless they have a hearing. To be plain, the crisis in

Mali reveals how personal interests overtake the common one. This does not refer only to the failure or the incapacity of the key figures who led the country but the whole elite without putting any evidence forward, it can be argued that among the surrounding of different leaders that succeeded at the head of Mali, there were some few politicians originated from the north. If so, the achievements of the latter, that is to say, the few political figures' achievements for the development of the area is not much.

The responsibility is shared, for it is not only a single person who must be blamed when addressing the attempt of irredentism in Mali. At the globalization era and even before, ruling refers to decentralization in the way that a given entire territory is delimited taking into account some factors. To this end, before the attempt of irredentism, indeed, in 2012, since the crisis has not taken such a worrying extent yet, the political subdivisions otherwise the electoral subdivisions were definitely carried out and consequently, during local elections meant to elect representatives like members of parliament, and Mayors everything went on fairly well. Sometimes, it is obviously possible to blame whosoever namely the chief but those who work at the grassroots are the ones who tarnish the achievement, for they are Head of States in miniature. Another aspect that instigated violence in Mali is basically the scope of mistakes, otherwise the fact of not fulfilling paramount tasks in a due time.

## **2. Political Vacuum and the Escalation of Violence**

The vacuum in North Mali appears in many forms: in space, deficit in authorities' undertakings and the way institutions are handled. When the emptiness is filled by something which does not fit, or does not deserve the place, it sets back development goals. To some extent, the term vacuum triggers radicalization which can be defined in different ways. Khosrokhavar defines the term radicalization as any violent action that stands against the established order: "Par radicalisation, on désigne le processus par lequel un individu ou un groupe adopte une forme violente d'action, directement liée à une idéologie extrémiste a contenu politique, social ou religieux qui conteste l'ordre établi" (Khosrokhavar, 2014: 191). In North Mali, terrorists exploit power vacuum to impose their

agenda, intensifying violence cycles, a series of suicide bombing and attacks on strategic targets. The coup led by Haya Sanogo on 22 March 2022 seemingly accounted for the incapacity of President Amadou Toumani Toure's government to supply the armed forces with sophisticated weapons to protect the populations. The motive was noble because the national army appeared weak in front of the terrorists, therefore many loyalists were being killed but unfortunately the coup led to the gradual fragmentation of Mali's democratic institutions and political division among the elite as pointed out by Levinger (2013: 96) as follows: "A connector is a potential source of cohesion within or between groups [...] associated with sources of social and institutional resilience and local capacities for peace."

The more there are military overthrows, the more social fragmentations and divisions there are. The absence of state power to enforce primary societal principles and law triggers criminal activities like drug trafficking, weapon smuggling, hostages taking. The case of Soumaila Cisse, the opposition leader in Mali, runner of the 2018 presidential elections is palatable. During the campaign in the North, he then was held hostage by an armed group for around six months. The political vacuum also provides the space for extremist groups to settle down, get trained including taking control of entire villages and cities. Moreover, the failure to embark on genuine reconciliation and transitional justice processes leads some communities to join otherwise get closer to armed groups for the sake of protection or the search of lost justice. Likewise, there have been divisions between the state and the populations, between North and the South, between state and non-state institutions even between the different ethnic groups that look at each other as sworn enemies. The aftermath of the rebellions and negotiations that led to peace agreements fostered tensions and misunderstandings among Northern communities because some groups took advantages of the prevailing instability and then started putting forward their own interests.

The leadership moves between the armed groups and the rivalry make not only the cohabitation impossible but instigates violence as well. The decentralization promised by governments was badly implemented and led to a demilitarization fostering eventually security vacuum. Worse

still, the Tuareg rebels took advantage of the emptiness caused by the clumsy demilitarization to impose their agenda and ways in the area. In this light, A. Sow urges African leaders not only to endeavor and pay attention to the complaints of the populations but to also take them into account so as to avoid therefore useless uprisings. He puts it:

Les aspirations des peuples en termes d'attentes de la part de leurs gouvernants sont presque partout les mêmes. Cependant il n'en saurait résulter un mode de gouvernement universel. Si la plupart des politiques de décentralisation et de développement local se sont soldées par des échecs en Afrique c'est parce qu'elles ont été importées, imposées, colportées et copiées sans grand effort de contextualisation culturelle et encore moins de souci réel d'harmonisation avec les us et coutumes, et conceptions locales de la gouvernance ou bien des reformes ou expériences vécues en la matière (A. Sow, 2017: 330).

A. Sow relates important issues many people think but are afraid to express lest they should offend the West. After reflecting thoroughly, there is the need to address them no matter the price to pay because they keep hindering. It is time African countries designed development projects taking into account the needs and aspirations of the populations. The cut and paste generations have shown their limits, thus, they have failed meeting the expectations. Why not shift and coin our own projects? There is the matter of inferiority complex because in many sectors, everything developed countries invent, African can do the same even overtake them in many regards. A good deal of examples about black people succeeding everywhere is ample palatable evidence.

Still on vacuum related to the institutions, three major restructuration measures namely political democratization, economic liberation and administrative decentralization were expected to be implemented after the fall of Moussa Traoré but because these new reforms were not well carried out, it overshadowed the serene stability of Mali becoming a real threat for the sub-region.

### 3. Geopolitical Stakes: The Latest Strongholds of Terrorists in the Sahel

Chafiq (2011: 9) is of the opinion that “L’instrumentalisation du Jihad produirait ainsi la *fetn * au sein de la communaut  musulmane, qui une fois livr e aux d mons de l’extr misme, irait   sa perte”. In this line of thought, it stands to posit that there is much confusion and uncertainty in North Mali with the presence of several armed groups. Terrorists, freedom fighters take advantage of the uncertainty in Mali to settle down and keep imposing their ways therefore showing their nuisance capacity. Human rights are muffled regarding the treatment of human body to make their voice heard. On top of that, the holy Coran’s scriptures on behalf of which they operate proceeding with deadly incursions is distorted just to achieve their aim. The self-defense groups are armed to defend their people who unfortunately they are associated with different forms of misconducts and crackdowns.

The complexity to live with such people requires mechanisms, wisdom and some degree of maturity. The movements, the displacement and the psychosis triggered impact directly the local economy since the populations are not free to carry out their daily activities as they want. Agro pastoral activities having taken a serious blow, food insufficiency and insecurity make life hard for those who decided not run away. In such, the spread of this phenomenon be it inside the Malian territory or beyond its borders is a potential threat that must be fought deciphering, above all, the language of these criminals. Clever as they are, strong measures are needed because according to history, wherever they occupy, to eradicate totally their strongholds it is never easy that is why efforts intended to prevent them from spreading otherwise taking ground are requested in a joint and collaborative manner.

When the insurgents were making their invasive way towards Bamako, to abide by the international law under the agreement of the UN, France deployed its army to Mali under the name of *operation serval* for the sake of peacekeeping mission. To be honest, the French president is praiseworthy for this humanitarian gesture. But for their promptitude, Mali was on the verge to be invaded totally. This was far cry and echoed happily as victory. After the first victory, the populations are expecting

the second being the true stabilization followed by the reconciliation in vain. As this is taking time, authorities proceed to an assessment of the stalemates and the livid situation hence they came to be aware of the double dealing behavior of not only the French army on the ground but also the French authorities. Hating this and being afraid to see Mali as a space of occupation, the junta Assimi Goïta, the president of transition decided to take his responsibility that is what basically accounts for the decision to expel French military in the detriment of Wagner which is a private Russia organization. At this juncture, the back shift is debatable, for Wagner which had served before in Central African Republic and which is not a state institution is not free from criticisms. Around the 17 August 2022, the divorce was consumed since the French army departed for good from Mali. When some people regard the clash as ungratefulness, others do not. They would rather side with the junta believing that it is a matter of sovereignty and responsibility. In this respect, Dieng believes that the cold war, with at the core, the assassination of Modibo Keita, among major salient factors has prevented Mali from taking off democratically and economically. He then puts it:

The French and the West in general thought that it was high time to stop Kéita (Modibo Kéita) and his anti-West policies and attitudes. They master minded the November 19, 1968 coup against him, which opened up the door into power for the military led General Moussa Traoré who would run out to be one of African's leading postcolonial dictators. As a consequence of Keita's removal, for 24 long years (from 1968 to 1991) Mali was a France/West sponsored dictatorship, which made economic development and democratization impossible in that West African country (Dieng, 2019: 312-313).

At times, like President Modibo Kéita, African leaders who were anti-West were targeted and physically eliminated by the West for the person of their choice to take over. The desire of the former colonizer to see a particular figure at all cost at the head of a country like the case of Moussa Traoré whose administration was shouted simply because it is the worst Mali has ever known evidences the extent of accountability of powerful countries with regard to stability in Africa. When Malians were



aware of the shadow of France behind the harsh embargo put on them, being a landlocked country, they soon became frustrated and annoyed. Besides, a great deal of Africans scholars raised their voices to denounce the attitude of France. This is undoubtedly one of the motives that prompted the decision to put an end to the partnership with European countries with France, the key actor. The following are the outcomes we have come up with at the end of the analysis.

The most efficient key for peace is forgiveness that is what the upcoming Nigerian popular saying stands for: “Sorry heals wound”. A sincere forgiveness entails dialogue, mutual acceptance since it enables people to live together despite cultural and political diversities. Despite measures put forward to take up the security challenges, jihadism, religious fundamentalism, terrorism, are still threatening the northern populations in Mali. When the historical leader of AQMI, the Algerian Abdel Malek Droukdel was killed in June 2020 in Tessalit, a town of Mali by the special French force, people were so delighted but after years, it must be concluded that the nuisance capacity is still the same. It is widely taken for granted that food insecurity worsens the living conditions in areas going through conflicts, wars, ethnicity etc, for it makes populations vulnerable hence it is regarded as another cause of instability. In this frame of mind, urgent humanitarian gestures are needed to alleviate the suffering of the populations. On behalf of his country Mali, the former Acting Prime Minister, Lieutenant Colonel Abdoulaye Maiga lashes out at France and the UN at the latest UN General Assembly in these terms: “Move on from the colonial past and hear the anger, the frustrations, the rejection that is coming up from the African cities and countryside, understand that the movement is inexorable.”

Anti-France movements rise everywhere in the continent even in the diaspora. Debash (2006: 75) warns about the impacts of the constant implication of France in Africans’ affairs this way: “La foule des villes africaines attribue ses malheurs à une France trop présente pour être innocente.....” The movement led by Kémi Séba, raising the awareness of Africans about the risks of the CFA currency, the movement led by Guy Marus Sagna of Senegal under the name: “FRAPP, FRANCE DEGAGE”, denouncing the political agenda of the latter in Africa,

demonstrations taking place everyday God sends against France are signs of resentment for the former colonizer. Elsewhere, Mattei (2014: 41) maintains : “La France agit en Afrique pour son compte. ” Many former colonisers are still concerned about both the political and economic development of their ancient colonies. In doing so, some of them are continuously being appreciated with regard to the minimum honesty in the North-South relationships which is not the case of France. Examples are manifold to illustrate that. Against the will of African nations, France and NATO intervened militarily in the Libyan crisis making the country difficult to rule whereas the other outcomes are the fact that the Libya has become a stronghold of jihadists. The next example is on the military intervention in Ivory Coast with the arrest of the President Laurent Gbagbo by French Army. They would not be criticised if they did not take side supporting openly the challenger of Laurent Gbagbo as though, they, the former coloniser, France is the one who decides on the person who should rule Ivory Coast. In a nutshell, despite the combat against the Françafrique network, it is unfortunately still at work.

The Acting Prime Minister of Mali does not agree with the position of the UN, France and even some ECOWAS member's states leaders with regard to the indictment of the 49 Ivoirian soldiers in Mali and their mission. To be honest, if those soldiers went to Mali with the top intention to uphold Mali, they should not have hidden their identities and agenda at the airport. Some said they were bricklayers, according to others they were carpenters and so on. Before such a situation, even though diplomacy cannot be performed in a public place, the UN and France must avoid hot speeches because the facts are obvious and incredible. Makgoba advocates the promotion of the African renaissance and unity in his book entitled *African Renaissance* to overcome such postcolonial attitudes that keeps imposing what should be done on African countries. He affirms:

African renaissance is a unique opportunity for Africans to define ourselves and our agenda according to our own realities and taking into account the realities of the world around us. It is about Africans being agents of our own history and masters of our destiny (Makgoba, 1999: xii).

Africa of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is no more the one of the colonial era when all sort of decisions from France were accepted without reactions. The courage President Ahmed Sekou Toure had decades ago saying No, in other words his disagreement to the masters, many African leaders of the 21<sup>st</sup> have the same courage. Besides, Makgoba advocates that the best solutions to the African backwardness as it is lagging behind should be built on self-confidence in taking decisions which will impact Africans' future rather than being sharpened sometimes negatively by decisions taken, schemes designed by others.

The relationships between countries sharing the same border with Mali deserve much attention when addressing instability. Formerly, according to Media and the documentation of literature on conflicts in Mali, Algeria and Libya under Khadafi, potential mediators of Malian crisis used to provide Malian insurgents weapons which is incredible and does not favor regional peace and security. Many key leaders and mediators basically play lip service when the neighboring country is going through a predicament. To what extent can this lead to peace?

The three centres acknowledged by ECOWAS as the Training Centres of Excellence (TCEs) in West Africa are the KAIPTC (The Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center) in Ghana, L'Ecole de Maintien de la Paix Alioune Blondin Beye (EMPABB) in Mali and the National Defense College (NDC) in Nigeria. There is the need not only to motivate such an initiative but also strive and set up many more centres while encouraging young people, even adults to be trained there and help disseminate preventive peace and security mechanisms. There is no doubt that youth unemployment is another time bomb. In this light, Authorities have to make much effort on that.

## **Conclusion**

Shortly after the Baule conference during which France urged African countries to indulge in the pluralist democracy, popular uprisings put an end to the autocratic regime of Moussa Traoré. This depicts the frailty of state institutions and the political power which were laid bare. In such, reforms undertaken by Alpha Omar Konaré, the one who took over faced enormous hardships to bear expected fruits so as to live up the

challenges. Nevertheless, Mali was then regarded as a showcase of democracy in the Sub-Saharan Africa for genuine undertakings of new authorities, but, since then, they have failed to find appropriate policies to solve for good the Tuareg rebellion fostered by the dialectic North-South. In being more resilient, the uncertainty, the suffering must help build a strong and robust plinth for peace, unity and even serve for lessons susceptible to arouse harmonious reconciliation among the authorities of the Republic of Mali and their populations. The foreign military intervention which is a two edged sword since it offers the latter opportunities to keep dictating its ways could have been avoided if the local and the sub-regional armies were strong enough to face the predicament.

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