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Dans un environnement marqué par la croissance, sans cesse, des productions scientifiques, la diffusion et la promotion des acquis de la recherche deviennent un impératif pour les acteurs du monde scientifique. Perçues comme un patrimoine, un héritage à léguer aux générations futures, les productions scientifiques doivent briser les barrières et les frontières afin d'être facilement accessibles à tous.

Ainsi, s'inscrivant dans la dynamique du temps et de l'espace, la revue « **AKIRI** » se présente comme un outil de promotion et de diffusion des résultats des recherches des enseignants-chercheurs et chercheurs des universités et de centres de recherches de Côte d'Ivoire et d'ailleurs. Ce faisant, elle permettra aux enseignants-chercheurs et chercheurs de s'ouvrir davantage sur le monde extérieur à travers la diffusion de leurs productions intellectuelles et scientifiques.

AKIRI est une revue à parution trimestrielle de l'Unité de Formation et de Recherches (UFR) : Communication, Milieu et Société (CMS) de l'Université Alassane Ouattara. Elle publie les articles dans le domaine des Sciences humaines et sociales, Lettres, Langues et Civilisations. Sans toutefois être fermée, cette revue privilégie les contributions originales et pertinentes. Les textes doivent tenir compte de l'évolution des disciplines couvertes et respecter la ligne éditoriale de la revue. Ils doivent en outre être originaux et n'avoir pas fait l'objet d'une acceptation pour publication dans une autre revue à comité de lecture.

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La revue *AKIRI* n'accepte que des articles inédits et originaux dans diverses langues notamment en allemand, en anglais, en espagnol et en Français. Le manuscrit est remis à deux instructeurs, choisis en fonction de leurs compétences dans la discipline. Le secrétariat de la rédaction communique aux auteurs les observations formulées par le comité de lecture ainsi qu'une copie du rapport, si cela est nécessaire. Dans le cas où la publication de l'article est acceptée avec révisions, l'auteur dispose alors d'un délai raisonnable pour remettre la version définitive de son texte au secrétariat de la revue

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Exploring Patriotism Teaching Mechanism in the Schools of Mali

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Abstract

This is a qualitative research to fathom the mechanism of patriotism teaching in the schools of Mali. The literature we read through is interested more in the implications of patriotism in ancient Greece and Rome, and the issues of teaching patriotism in a modern world of globalization and in a multiracial nation with a past of manifold tension. In Mali, the lack of patriotism is perceptible in every compartment of public life. Rebellions, embezzlement of public monies and encroaching upon the interests of the country are revealing phenomena that corroborate this assertion. This study investigates what is taught about patriotism in Malian schools, how it is taught and what should be taught. To answer these questions, we adopted a methodology based on searching the literature, interviewing school officials, ancient pupils and students of the past regimes of Mali, and investigating the mechanism of teaching patriotism in Malian schools. This research has found some flaws with the subject, content, method and language of teaching patriotism in these schools. It suggests a tripod dimension for the subject of patriotism, a content based on live case studies and historical facts, and a method of teaching patriotism based on theoretical and practical procedures.

Keywords: Civics; Mechanism; Morals; Patriotism; Subject.

Analyse du mécanisme d'enseignement du patriotisme dans les écoles du Mali

Résumé

Cette recherche est une étude qualitative visant à examiner le mécanisme de l'enseignement du patriotisme dans les écoles du Mali. La littérature que nous avons consultée s'intéresse plus aux implications du patriotisme en Grèce et à Rome anciens, les problèmes liés à l'enseignement du patriotisme dans un monde de globalisation, et au sein d'une nation à histoire compliquée. Le manque cruel du patriotisme est perceptible dans tous les compartiments de la vie publique au Mali. Les rebellions, le détournement des fonds publics, le piétinement des intérêts de l'Etat sont des phénomènes révélateurs corroborant cette affirmation. Cette étude cherche à répondre aux questions relatives à la matière enseignée en matière du patriotisme, comment elle est enseignée, et ce qui doit être enseigné. Notre méthode est basée sur la documentation, l'interview des sujets de recherche, et des enquêtes dans les écoles sur le mécanisme de l'enseignement du patriotisme. Cette recherche a découvert plusieurs tares au niveau de sa matière, de son contenu, de sa méthode d'enseignement, et de la langue d'enseignement. Elle propose une matière à trois dimensions, un contenu basé sur des cas d'études réels et des faits historiques, et une méthode d'enseignement basée sur des procédures théoriques et pratiques.

Mots clés : Civique ; Matière ; Mécanisme ; Moral ; Patriotisme.



Introduction

“No place like home”, the English saying goes. This saying sums up the quintessence of love people bear for their countries. This love is necessary despite the fact that the world is on the turn to be a no-man’s-land pushing people to repudiate belonging to collectivity. Individuals are getting so free-minded that they look to prescribed allegiance to a particular entity a transgression of their individualities and freedom. This might be the reason behind J. Lamarre’s (2006: 29-41) refutation of the role of religion and tradition in regulating societies. Building on what philosophers have expounded on the matter, he asserts that imposing values and norms through Civics and Morals subjects in schools is no longer possible because we are living today in a society where autonomy is the highest value. This is in line with what M. Gauchet (2002: 109-169) propounds when he writes, “We have recently switched towards an estranging and disengaging individualism where the authenticity exigency becomes antagonistic with subscription to collectivity¹.” This seems to express more what A. Maurois (1968) hinted at about humanity, “Humanity is sleeping on a restless bed. When it is too hurt, it turns over through wars or riots. Then, it goes back to sleep again for centuries².” Humanity is stubborn and sometimes repeats the same mistakes. Even so, whatever humanity may do, it cannot get rid of love for itself.

Love for one’s collectivity is natural and instinctive. This is what Freud (1957: 67-102) concluded when he asserted that everybody has some level of narcissism with which he or she was born, and it is vital for the normal development of his or her personality. After childhood, our hazardous self-love starts to deteriorate and yield space to the love for the others. The others include one’s family, hometown, country, etc. Though some observers decry some degree of love for one’s country on the ground of what German, Japanese, and Italian nationalists showed during the World War II, which resulted in chaos round the world, it is also thanks to this love for the country, commonly called Patriotism, that the world was saved from destruction of that time. People’s love for their countries made them sacrifice their lives to defend them and defeat Hitler and Mussolini. Thence, patriotism becomes necessary for the existence of nations in the big entity of the world. Its instilment to children becomes mandatory no matter what its detractors would say.

Patriotism in nations is as old as nations themselves. This is observable in ancient civilizations throughout the world. In history, patriotism for the Greeks meant to be ready all the time to

¹ Translation mine

² Translation mine



serve, support, fight and die for one's native land, if necessary. Pericles' oration for the dead of the Second Peloponnesian War is an evidence of the honor paid to the Greek patriots fallen for their homeland. This kind of patriotism was the pith of the victories the Greeks had on each other and on other nations (E. Whelan, 2021).

In Rome, patriotism was no more different than it was in ancient Greece. Romans developed patriotic affection for both the Roman Republic and their native city or region. This affection extended to the Emperor as head of the big family, Rome (E. Whelan, 2021).

In Africa, patriotism played a tremendous role in the wars of Ghana's, Mali's, and Songhai's emperors against invaders and their rival entities of the time (M. Kaat, 2014: 46-89). The driving forces of these peoples was the love and affection they had developed through their interaction with nature and its inhabitants.

In present day Mali, this feeling is called FASO KANU or love for one's fatherland. KANU or love in Bambara is said to know or see no foible in the loved one. This implies defense and sacrifice for the fatherland. These implications pop up in the historic popular stories of different localities' conquerors throughout the country: Sunjata's battles against Sumagurun, Soni Ali's conquests, Bakaridjan's and Tiemandali N'Tji's redemptions for their fatherlands.

This patriotic fiber continued in the western-Sudanese people before the independence of the country and after it. It was infused into children through the traditional conduits of storytelling by grandparents and parents around the fire. The society became modernized and more complex. Children were sent to school. The role of infusing patriotism into children was entrusted to schools. Since the independence of the country, the successive authorities have been teaching patriotism to children. More than sixty years of schooling on patriotism, Malian citizens could have shown the impact of these patriotic teachings. Unfortunately, this is what is lacking cruelly.

March revolution of 1991 was to be a starting point for good governance and building a patriot citizen. The contrary ensued. Mali knew its most outrageous cases of unpatriotic endeavors. Public monies embezzlement phenomena soared to involve billions of CFA. Country's interests were trampled, or simply forged into personal ownership. The transitional period head of State declared in Kita during a public communication in 2023 that some Malian citizens had tampered with their country's interests to an extent bordering on high treason. State companies were sold off to be paid back by State officials. Rebellions have been a source of gain for many

communities. The youths, considered as the future of the country, start their professional careers with corruption and embezzling public funds. On account of all this, it becomes appropriate and urgent to investigate what is wrong with Malian patriotism despite its natural aspect and the scores of years of its teaching in schools.

Through exploring teaching mechanism, this study is interested in a historical display of patriotism teaching in Mali, in order to pinpoint the snags that cripple its teaching and contribute to forming citizens lacking in patriotic fiber and citizenship. Our investigation took place during the last trimester of school year 2023-2024. The research questions that directed this research are:

- What has really been taught about patriotism in Malian schools?
- What is wrong with what has been taught so far?
- What should be taught about patriotism in Malian schools?

To answer these questions, our plan for this paper goes as follows:

- Introduction
- Methodology
- Results and Discussion
- Conclusion

1. Methodology

This is a qualitative-descriptive research owing to the skimpy literature wrought so far around the subject. The methodology we adopted for its design consisted of three different phases. The first involved examining the literature that has tackled the issues of patriotism teaching in Mali. In the dearth of literature thereof, we had recourse to the official program of Civics and Morals Education at fundamental and secondary level in order to examine the themes through which patriotism is taught. This was combined with a content analysis of the schoolbooks in which these themes are elaborated. The second phase consisted in investigating the procedures and mechanism of teaching patriotism through interviews that involved some officials and pupils of ten schools in the educational outreach center of Kalabacoro in Bamako. The uniformity of program, the regulations and pedagogical recommendations in all schools, public and private, made us dispense with widening the range of our investigation. However, the climate of every school tickled our curiosity to push for further disclosure, leading to the number of schools we had. We did not observe significant differences in the schools we toured during this investigation. The ten schools were randomly selected based on their accessibility. Ten

Principals and 20 teachers were purposefully selected in these schools on the ground of their background in teaching Civics and Morals Education. Fifty pupils were randomly called out on the spot during our tour to be tested off-handedly about what they learned. The last phase involved interviewing former pupils and students of Modibo Keita's and Moussa Traore's eras: three for Modibo's, and nine for Moussa's.

Built on the data gathered thereby, we adopted a qualitative-descriptive design consisting in reporting our research subjects' impressions and experiences, which is complemented with the records of the literature visited. We are not after proving the reliability of any hypothesis, least of all refuting a theory preconceived around the matter. Our aim is to contribute to the enrichment of the solutions to a crucial problem seemingly neglected by researchers.

2. Results and Discussion

The results of this research revolves around four educational dimensions: School subject, content of teaching, language of teaching and methods of teaching patriotism. These four dimensions will constitute the gist of our analysis of patriotism teaching mechanism under the different regimes that governed Mali.

2.1. Mechanism of Patriotism teaching under the Regime of Modibo Keita

In the colonial era, formal education in French colonies of Africa was a key element in the assimilation of local people and turning them into Frenchmen through impress upon the love of France by means of an imposed curriculum taught by certified teachers. This is well presented by A. Moradi and D. Cogneau (2014) in the following statement:

French ideology aimed at assimilation; to turn Africans into Frenchmen, education was considered key. Schools could not operate without government permission, they had to employ government-certified teachers and follow a government curriculum, and French was the only language of instruction. The 1905 Law on the Separation between the State and the Churches limited the activities of mission schools, and the State became the main and expensive provider of education.

When Mali obtained its independence under the guidance of Modibo Keita, the latter introduced a program of patriotism teaching in schools. His aim was to gain back a patriotism traditionally infused into children by ancestors, parents and griots through family education, storytelling and the nation's history, but superseded by French assimilation teachings.

According to our interviewees, patriotism was theoretically taught in the fundamental schools of Modibo Keita through a subject called *Instruction Civique et Morale* or Civics and Morals Instruction. The lessons of Civics and those of Morals were taught separately even if by the

same teacher. This was combined with some practical cases to verify children's understanding and assimilation. At secondary level, children were taught patriotism and love for their country through a subject called *Formation Idéologique et Politique* (FIP). The socialist regime's authorities passed the notions of socialism, love for the country and loyalty to the political leaders of the country through this subject. If Civics and Morals Instruction was of less importance on the grade sheets, barely tested during the examinations, FIP was of a tremendous importance for the State and on the grade sheets of pupils. Ideology teachers were super teachers. They had direct connection with the authorities. Our respondents said that students refrained from asking many questions about the regime because they thought that their teachers were the regime's spies. This may explain why they were put under arrest after the coup against President Keita in 1968.

As for content, according to our respondents, there was a partition between the content of Morals and that of Civics. The former was relevant to the social and societal values, while the latter was related to State and international institutions. The values taught therein pertained to ancestral teachings of social life and personal behavior and conduct. They also included banning abhorrent conduct and contemptible behaviors. The courses of Civics attempted to initiate young Malians to the modern political amenities bequeathed by the colonization. Constitutions, judiciary institutions and system, municipality organs, and the regime's ideological mottos were some of the elements taught in Civics classes. Furthermore, the State production corporations were presented to pupils with their utilities and contribution to the wellbeing of the nation. These classes also bore notions that endeared to children their political leaders, more specifically President Modibo Keita and his RDA³ party. There were anthems dedicated to the party, and some patriotic songs of allegiance to RDA leaders. This was more so at secondary level where some Ideology teachers came from abroad to teach socialist ideas. They were teachers of first class in knowledge and eloquence.

As concerns the language of teaching, French was the language used to teach patriotism. This was the case in teaching other subjects. This could partially be explained by the fact that French itself was a subject taught in schools. Speaking it or listening to it spoken was other means to enrich the linguistic capacity of children. Another explanation may be the legacy of the assimilation with which the colonial administration sought earnestly to encrust the colonies. None of the people we interviewed on the teaching procedure affirmed an attempt of the

³ Rassemble Démocratique Africain (African Democratic Rally).

authorities to teach in another language than French. On the contrary, speaking French was an obligation, and the pupil who was caught speaking other languages than French at school was to carry what they called “SYMBOL”. It could be anything weird to liken the guilty to donkey or another animal. Our interviewees confirmed that they could understand whatever taught in French. Not only had they good teachers that taught them well, but they were also enrolled in school at late age. Some of them went to school when they were fifteen. Their mental capacity did not constitute a hindrance to language proficiency. This was spurred by a good method.

Patriotism was taught in the time of Modibo Keita through a combination of theory and practice. The practice side was an attempt to link theory to the pupils’ living. One of our interviewees said their teachers used to cross-examine them about what they did as acts related to what they had learned in Morals. Every pupil was to talk about a practical case he went through and behaved according to the instruction he received in his Morals class. This practical aspect was reinforced by the patriotic bodies, such as Vigilance Brigade, put afoot by the regime to keep up morals and social values. It was more evaluative than procedural; a formative evaluation that could not wait the final summative evaluation owing to the importance of what had to be infused. The theory aspect were executed through stories locally or internationally known. The teacher had some freedom of choosing his teaching material according to what he wanted to infuse into pupils.

At secondary level, classes were delivered in a lecture system. An ideology teacher could talk two hours on end before telling pupils to ask him about what he said. Theories of philosophers were forwarded to sustain their claims. Case models were given to shape the political personality of pupils. The stories of nations’ struggle, more specifically socialist ones, were narrated to hearten pupils.

2.2. Mechanism of Patriotism Teaching under the Regime of Moussa Traore

Under the regime of Moussa Traore, patriotism was taught through a subject called Civic and Moral Education (CME). Teaching institutions was also lodged in the chapters of History, making thus teaching patriotism unrestricted to only Civic and Moral Education. Patriotism was taught at fundamental level from Third Form. It was also taught at secondary level where it was a common-core subject for all streams of study. Secondary level pupils were cut off patriotism teaching after students’ riot in 1978. According to our respondents, the military regime thought that students’ movements stemmed out of the materials they were exposed to through ideology classes. We could not chance on any document or somebody who remember exactly when

patriotism was back in schools. Some of our respondents believe that patriotism teaching was back in the 1980s when the authorities caught fear that the schools would produce citizens devoid of love for their country.

The content of patriotism teaching was as rich as in the time of Modibo Keita. Fundamental level was prescribed for teaching values and inculcating good conduct. Institutions were taught about at 7th, 8th, and 9th forms. At secondary level, the ideological dimension of patriotism teaching was stuffed with the ruling party's creeds, UDPM⁴. This was the same measure as taken during the regime of Modibo Keita. The former pupils of that time we interviewed were proud of their Civic and Moral Education course. It contained sensitizing constituents that urged pupils to love their country. It was well conceptualized and comprehensible. World theorists' thoughts were also brought about.

French was still the language of teaching patriotism in the time of Moussa Traore as it was in era of Modibo. Pupils understood what was taught in French because of the belated age of schooling of that time. Seriousness in schools and training of teachers could also be a factor contributing to the language proficiency of pupils of that time. Infringing the rule of speaking French as official language of education was also sanctioned by "SYMBOL".

As for the method of teaching patriotism, it consisted of theory and practice. The theoretical course was delivered in classroom. It was based on lecture at secondary level, and moralization at fundamental level. The practice aspect was narrow if not inexistent. It was implemented through Scout Movement. The adhesion to this patriotic movement was not mandatory. Pupils could join the movement if they liked. However, the adhesion of outstanding pupils was recommended, if not necessary. In this movement, knowledge about State institutions was reinforced. Their respect and veneration was mandatory and doctrinal. In the matter of patriotism, scouts in the time of both Modibo and Moussa were as disciplined as soldiers.

2.3. Mechanism of Patriotism Teaching after March Revolution of 1991

Patriotism has been taught through Civic and Moral Education (CME) since March revolution of 1991. According the school program of CME of 2012, inspired from a former one in 1994, the objective of CME is to train enlightened citizens, free, aware of their duties and rights, and able to judge by themselves with a sense of respect for the law.

⁴ Union Démocratique du Peuple Malien (Democratic Union of Malian People)



After March revolution in 1991, CME took up its former characteristics in the time of Moussa Traore. Today, in First, Second and Third Forms, it is delivered orally aiming to moralize children with good conduct in the society. Teachers and school Principals wedge the weekly timetable subjects with it as a necessity for the formation of children's social personalities. It lasts about fifteen minutes twice a week, and children are not tested therein.

Starting from Fourth Form, pupils start reading about the themes of Morals and Civics. They have then books for program content, but they do not have a specific notebook for the lessons thereof. The duration of the class goes up to a maximum of 20 minutes. Moreover, the subject is not as important on the grade sheet as the other subjects. Its mark is weighed by a factor of only one. This status of the subject continues through junior high school.

Starting from Seventh Form, the subject of CME is more elaborate through lesson layouts and the importance schools attach to it. Pupils have a specific notebook for the subject, and the lessons are more extensive than just short summaries committed to memory.

At secondary level, teachers have more freedom with the constituents of CME. Many of the teachers we interviewed about the program decried the volume of time allotted to CME. This is why they choose the themes that are relevant to current issues. This also results in teachers having different centers of interest. It depends greatly on the specialty of the teacher. Teaching CME does not require specialization at secondary level. We met law-majored teachers delivering CME. They told us some of their colleagues are Arabic-majored. This confusion about teaching CME is greatly imputed to the status of the subject itself, which implies that it does not require many rulebooks.

The content of CME after March revolution until now has still been the same as in the time of Moussa Traore. Social values and good conduct are taught alongside the Civics content, international and national organizations, national emblem, etc.

According to the program of 2012, the content of CME teaching in First, Second and Third Forms revolves around initiation to social life, children's upkeep and protection, environment upkeep and protection, discipline, social rule respect, love of good and rejection of bad, love of work, solidarity, respecting people, and executing one's duties.

From the Forth Form, one can perceive a real partition between Civics and Morals themes. Civics takes on initiation to civic life, communal institutions, administrative organs, State institutions, regional services, different kinds of freedom, etc. Morals takes on hygiene,



personal qualities, etc. The content of Civics program in Sixth Form is about constitution, State institutions, army, human rights, national flag and anthem, civism, patriotism and chauvinism, international community, democracy, children's rights, etc. Morals goes around the old themes such as hygiene, virtue, family, equality, altruism, economy, cooperation, etc.

From the Seventh to the Ninth Forms, CME revolves around more elaborated themes, even though it takes on the same ones as in previous classes. One can perceive a notable repetition of the themes at all levels, even if they are more elaborate at some levels. All this takes place in pedagogical procedures and steps recommended to teachers.

At secondary level, teachers have different interest in the themes to fit in the time allotted to CME. For example, a law-majored teacher of CME showed us what he works on in his classes of Tenth Form. He focuses on the conceptualization of some key terms in Civics before talking about African societies, secret Malian societies, traditional institutions, and issues related to country. In Eleventh Form, he deals with themes related to Mali (history, regimes, public life, constitution and institutions, organizations, etc.). In Twelfth Form, he tackles the issues of traffic, the notions of State and sovereignty, and the problems of development.

French is still the language of teaching patriotism in Malian schools. However, some few experimental schools teach in local languages. These schools are popularly termed Curriculum Schools. Local language therein is the medium of teaching, and it is left off gradually as the pupil goes up in levels. The oral teaching of morals in First, Second and Third Forms is executed through local language. After this level, French is mandatory for both teachers and pupils. However, some teachers said they have recourse to local languages to pass some notions and missions. A school Principal who teaches CME at his school stressed the importance of having recourse to national language. From his experience, children are more infused by the message delivered in their mother tongue. He said children got so emotional in his classes delivered in national language that some of them shade tears.

As for the method of CME teaching, it has been restricted to theory. The practical aspects that backed theoretical ones in the time of Moussa and Modibo have been thwarted. For instance, Scout movement hardly exists today, and rare are pupils who know about it. The pragmatic aspect that characterized teaching patriotism through FIP in the time of Modibo has fallen into oblivion. Today, pupils learn by rote the lessons about both institutions and moral values and recite them to prove that they understand it. Sometimes, it is difficult to part CME lessons from those of Reading, as both are composed of texts to be read and recited. Teachers write lessons

on the black board before explaining it in French or just making pupils read them and repeat them because they know children would not understand their explanation in French.

However, the program of 2012 we reviewed instructs otherwise. It clearly states that CME lesson should be delivered according to the active methodology. Owing to the nature of the lesson, teacher should rely on intuition and active reflex. In that, he would have recourse to addressing children's affection or their intellect by the means of living stories and updated events. He should make his teaching more practical by bringing in resource-persons, going on investigation and research outings, visiting firms and services, going on trips to villages, etc. Today, this aspect of teaching is lacking cruelly. We never met a school where teachers teach likewise.

2.4. Flaws of Patriotism Teaching in the Schools of Mali

2.4.1. About the Concept

We did not chance on an official definition of CME per se during our research. However, in view of the content displayed above, and the meaning that teachers and school officials give to this subject, more specifically the Civics dimension, the subject is related more to political and democratic orientation of citizens towards the affairs of the country. This was also what an investigation, conducted by Aga Khan Development Network, on civic education found for conclusion. The contours of both terms used by practitioners on the field, *éducation civique* and *éducation à la citoyenneté* revolve around how a person should behave and react to the political and the democratic process of doing things in the country (Réseau Aga Khan de Développement, 2007). The subject, for sure, will train citizens primed with democratic notions and modern citizenship. They will know about every single instrument related constitution, elections, political activities and activism, laws and regulations. However, this does not necessarily involve any love for their country. Rather, it is about learning theories about abstract and concrete entities without forcibly developing any love for them. Such teachings cannot efficiently lead to one's fatherland love that the local definition of patriotism "*Faso Kanu*" connotes. Hence, it is not too wide of the mark if one says that patriotism or love for the fatherland is not taught in the schools of Mali.

2.4.2. About the Mechanism

During our tour in schools, 100% of the respondent teachers decried the academic status of the subject through which patriotism is taught. They are unanimous that the fact that the subject is not mandatory, and pupils are not tested in it in examinations constitute a factor of its academic



relegation. In addition, this lonely subject weighs very light in the balance of school disciplines credits. In secondary schools, its mark is weighed by a factor of only one. Because of this status, pupils have no respect for it. It is viewed as a second-class subject, and placed among the electives. This resulted in teachers not delivering it at normal frequency, especially in public schools where control is less. Students take CME time on their schedule as a time away for refreshment before the time of other disciplines. What compounds the problem is that patriotism is infused into schoolchildren through only this subject, Civic and Moral Education. The failure of teaching it is the failure of infusing patriotism into children with all the consequences this might imply.

As for books and content, children start reading books in Civic and Moral Education from Fourth Form as mentioned above. We assume that these books are pedagogically well conceived. The instructions that are given to teachers for the execution of their classes are sound and plausible. However, the content of the books go wide of what is envisioned for infusing patriotism. Though teaching national and international institutions could be a pathway to knowing one's country, the content thereof is akin more to subjects of Modern History and Reading than teaching patriotism. The organizations are presented. Sometimes their history is narrated without linking them to their social utility. Their role may be stated, but their utility for the life or the survival of the State and the International Community is seldom pointed out.

As for social values, they are also presented or defined to children. Children are told to do something or not to do it after having learned its definition. Generally, they do not understand the definition, and the pith of the lesson is lost. Eighty percent of children we called out to test their knowledge about the institutions could define them in French, but they could not explain what they are in Bambara, let alone talk about their utility. The definition they gave seemed to be mechanical or a litany void of sense.

Children's compliance with the values is not compact because it is not based on any conviction of the pertinence and the utility of what is learned. It is a kind of indoctrination consisting in memorizing some principles abstractly without linking it to real life through showing its utility. Presenting values and institutions to schoolchildren cannot help make them patriots loving their country no matter what happens, especially when they are taught in a language they do not understand.

French is the official language of education in Mali. National languages have gained an official status lately, but the use of one of them as the language of administration and education is still



raising hectic debates. Teachers must explain their lessons in French, and children must understand that and ask about what they do not understand in French. Teaching CME is not an exception to that. All the 20 teachers we interviewed affirmed that their children understand their lessons in CME. However, the case of the children above who defined values and institutions without being able to explain them in Bambara prove that children do not understand their lessons in CME. The claim seems to rest on a false scientific basis and inappropriate ambition.

Decision makers in Mali and in African countries in general, are eager for seeing schoolchildren speak French from an earlier age like their counterparts in France. This stems from a complex of inferiority in front of everything French and the trend of colonial and historical assimilation that was rife in former French colonies in Africa. When a French child goes to school, he has already a bank of vocabulary, no matter how big it is. He comes to school to learn the French alphabet in order to be able to write and read what he knows. This is the first objective of schooling for a native speaker of a language used in education. This is not the case for an African boy. When he comes to school, he must exert an effort that doubles that of a French boy. He has no vocabulary bank in French. This might be less so in some countries where French is spoken in the street. It is not the case in Mali where national languages prevail in social life. A Malian boy has to recognize the letters of the French alphabet, and then know how to draw them. The next step is to associate them in writing in order to produce different sounds and pronunciations. Psycholinguistic theorists have profusely expounded these psychological processes in the human brain when a person generates and understands a language. Language acquisition involves knowledge and other language-related mechanisms. Students are supposed to use language within the three areas of psychological processes in language learning and teaching: cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor. The ability to speak and write a language within these three competences, and the ability to read and write spoken forms require an interdependent relationship of memory, perception, thought, meaning, and emotion in human brain (M. Demirezen, 2004: 26-36). In addition, as psycholinguistics researchers have proven it, inner and extrinsic difficulties need to be overcome in teaching listening. This involves speed of speaking, uncertain word number, and prior understanding of the topic (M. Dey & M. Sawalmeh, 2021). This procedure requires more linguistic and psychological operation in the Malian child than in its French counterpart. He has to condition seeing an object to a particular written word and a particular voiced sound. He has to recognize it well and pronounce it well, in order to use it. A French boy is conditioned to linking objects to meaning, and he has the

social ability to pronounce what he sees. As corollary, we cannot adopt the same methodology to teach the two boys, because realities are different. It is more so when it comes to the age of schooling.

In the time of Modibo Keita, children used to be schooled in late age. It was frequent to see children aged ten in First Form. Learning was easier for such children compared to today's children who go to school at six, and some at five. If children of Modibo Keita's era could understand their lesson in Morals and Civics, nowadays, children have problem overcoming the different linguistic, psychological and mental operations in order to learn a foreign language before a certain age. According to Piaget's stages theory, children should reach the appropriate stage of cognitive development before being taught certain concepts (M. Saul, 2024), particularly when schools are not fully functioning as they used to be.

Owing to teaching malpractice, attributed not only to teachers' proficiency and professional competence, but also to administrators' professional gap, Mali schoolchildren are below the standard in linguistic capacity. This insufficiency affects their learning. In CME teaching, children do not understand what is said in French. To obtain grades, they learn their lessons by rote without knowing what they mean. CME lessons today are recited like songs that have no linkage with the objective of patriotism teaching.

Consequently, what is learned about patriotism is meaningless, and it will have no impact on the psyche and conscience of children. It is as if patriotism were not taught at all. The importance of CME today is restricted to stuffing fake marks into children's grade sheets to help them pass to an upper level.

2.5. Suggestions for Teaching Patriotism

The subject through which patriotism is said to be infused is not reflecting the objectives thereof. As we said earlier, building a democratic citizen is not forcibly building a patriot. The young politicians of Mali today, though democracy-literate, are probably the most corrupted class of these illusion merchants. This necessitates some therapeutic measures to curb the plague.

This would require imploding the still existing subject into three dimensions. This tripod subject would comprise teaching social values, yielding thus a first dimension called Morals. The second dimension would take on the elements of the already existing subject. Through it, pupils will learn everything that observers evoked in teaching Civic Education and Education to



Citizenship according to the findings of the investigation conducted by Aga Khan Development Network on civic education in Malian schools as pointed out above. This includes the sum of knowledge necessary for a citizen to participate in the political life of the country, and another wider range related to electoral education, education to democracy, decentralization, genre equity, human rights, and sustainable development. The third dimension would concern how to develop love and affection for one's country. This third dimension would be called Patriotism Education.

The content of Morals, Civics and Patriotism Education should rest on factual case studies and real historical events. For Morals, case studies should stress the consequences of executing or infringing social mores. The factual aspect of this teaching is to show that the situation provided is not of mere theory or given for granted.

For Patriotism, historical case studies could relate to local historical events and sub-regional, regional or international happenings. The local events are meant to infuse love and affection for the country and to develop a citizen proud of his people and country. The international events are studied to develop jealousy for the country and the eagerness to preserve its interests as other people do for their countries. History study can provide us with a sense of identity. It also teaches about the society, other people, and the process of change over time. This is combined with the morals, values, and citizenship teachings History can infuse into learners (University of the People, 2024).

As we indicated above, French is no longer a language through which an urgent instruction should be imparted in Mali. It is too difficult to grab at an early age for a non-native boy. Moreover, the weak proficiency of schoolchildren cannot make them understand the notions of patriotism and assimilate thereby the lesson it reports. Consequently, patriotism should be taught through a language that children understand easily. This can only be possible if they learn it in their native languages or in a language that they speak most. This would impose teaching patriotism, for example, in Bambara in Bamako and Segou, Fulani or Bambara in Mopti, Songhai in Gao and Timbuktu, Tamacheq in Kidal, etc. This is so pertinent that some notions of local values are not translatable into French. In addition, teaching in local languages would increase children's participation in learning process, and teachers would feel less shackled in the teaching process.

Teaching patriotism should not be restricted to theoretical delivering of patriotic notions. To link it to practice, as this is not always feasible, it should involve executing daily or weekly



activities and posing actions that cultivate love, affection and jealousy for the country. This may imply mounting national flag every day, chanting national anthem, repeating patriotic slogans after class or before it. This will make teaching patriotism more tangible and easily embodied. Some ancient methods should be of use. Scout movements should be vivified and generalized to all cycles of fundamental and secondary schools. Patriotic camps should be organized, and traditionalists should be involved in the narration and the distilment of patriotism notions and social values. This could be fortified with the practical interpellation consisting in asking children about the action they did in the sense of the social value they have learned. Politicians should also be involved in teaching political activism, democratic institutions, and the notions of civism. In fewer words, the way of inculcating patriotism to children should involve a wider range of actors than just teachers or schools.

Conclusion

Patriotism is necessary for the survival of any nation in a world of tantalizing ambitions of domination and annexation. The bigotry of the nationalist leaders in Japan, Germany and Italy, during the World War II, should not create a phobia to get rid of it. It is thanks to this very patriotism that humanity was salvaged from a complete destruction. Patriots all over the world coalesced to face Hitler and the likes. In such an earnest necessity, we observe in some nations today a complete indifference towards the interests and the existential identity of their countries. In Mali, the lack of love for the fatherland might be partially ascribed to entrusting its inculcation to schools. The so-called intellectuals who attended these schools became the most harmful citizens towards the interest of their country. This phenomenon might be imputed to the quality of the mechanism through which patriotism is infused into children. The content of the school subject thereof does not reflect the ambition targeted. The method of inculcating the notions is inefficient, more specifically when it uses a language that children misunderstand. To allow hope to rise up again in producing citizens primed with patriotism, the content of teaching should be grounded on factual contemporary and historical case studies. The method should blend both theory and practice, and the means of infusing patriotic notions should be diversified and involve other agents than just schools and teachers.



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