

Law, Religion and Reconciliation in Africa



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26 EDUCATION, RECONCILIATION AND PEACE: THE CASE OF THE IVORIAN MILITARY-POLITICAL CRISIS FROM SEPTEMBER 2002 TO MAY 2011

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INTRODUCTION

The right to education is a right inherent in the state. It is mentioned in many legal instruments, both national² and international.³ This is the case of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,⁴ the relevant provisions of which show that education is a fundamental human right. Article 13 of the Covenant is clear on this point. It states that everyone has the right to education. It “aims to strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”.⁵⁶

Armed conflicts, whether internal or international, are always a source of disorder and confusion in the regions where they occur. The loss of human life, disabling and displacement of populations in search of zones of peace are multiplying. Public and private property are not spared during conflicts. It is, therefore, right that international justice has decided to be the voice of the weakest by punishing “the most serious crimes that affect the international community as a whole”,⁷ including crimes of war, genocide, aggression and against humanity.⁸

Children are the segment of the population most exposed to the horrors of war. Yet, they have to go to school. The socialisation of human beings takes place not only at the school and university level, but also in the villages, through the transmission of “habits and customs” during initiation sessions. Traditional education, therefore, occupies a prominent place in the socialisation of young people. However, their

1 PhD Student, Alassane Ouattara University. Faculty of Legal, Administrative and Management Sciences.

2 Law No. 2016-886 of 8 November 2016 on the Constitution of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire: “School is compulsory for children, under the conditions determined by law”.

3 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, G.A. res. 217A (III), U.N. Doc A/810-71 (1948), s. 26.

4 United Nations Office or the High Commissioner for Human Rights. 1996. “Factsheet No. 16 (Rev.1) – Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights”. Geneva: OHCHR, August.

5 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, G.A. res. 2200A (XXI), 21 U.N. Supp. (No. 16) at p. 49, UN Doc. A/6316 (1966), 993 U.N.T.S. 3, *entered into force* 3 January 1976, s 13.

6 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). n.d. “On democracy and human rights”, ohchr.org.

7 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 2187 U.N.T.S. 90, *entered into force* July 1, 2002, art 8.

8 Rome Statute, art 8.

widely proclaimed right to education is constantly violated during armed conflicts. This was the case in Côte d'Ivoire during the political conflict that took place from 19 September 2002 to 4 May 2011.⁹ In order to restore this fundamental human right, the country has made education an essential part of its stabilisation strategy – that is, a tool for reconciliation and peacebuilding in the aftermath of armed conflict.

From the Latin “*educatio*” and “*educare*,” which mean to raise and to nourish, education is the “action of forming and enriching the mind of a person.”¹⁰ It is also the “implementation of the means necessary to ensure the training and development of a human being”.¹¹ Education predates the existence of the state. It allows for the transfer of formal and informal knowledge and interpersonal skills, as well as practices that continue in traditional and even colonial pre-colonial society. The aim of education is to “develop the moral, physical and intellectual faculties” but also the “knowledge, practices” and “good manners” necessary for society.¹²

As for the concept of “peace”, it must be considered, at the level of international relations, as “the situation of a State which is not at war with any other State or which is not at war with another particular State, whether that situation results from a peace treaty or from the mere prolongation of a state of non-aggression”.¹³ But, generally speaking, peace is “a non-conflictual situation which presupposes, in individual or collective relations, not a good understanding, but at the very least an absence of litigation or litigation”.¹⁴ Peace is “tranquillity, the absence of trouble and agitation.”¹⁵ Education is part of the process of reconciliation and peace.

All states emerging from armed confrontation prioritise the rehabilitation and construction of social buildings, including hospitals, military barracks and classrooms, as part of their policy to rebuild a country torn apart by the horrors of war. The construction of the new classrooms in schools is accompanied by the mobilisation of sufficient financial resources to ensure the recruitment and training of teachers. However, the impact of education on the reconciliation process is the subject of much debate. It is therefore legitimate to ask whether education can be validly combined with the process of reconciliation and peace. The search for an answer to this question leads us to the realisation that education contributes to the achievement of reconciliation and peace. However, this observation should not make us lose sight of the difficulties of the Ivorian education system.

9 Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. 2014 *Commission Dialogue, Vérité, et Réconciliation: Final Report* [Final Report of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission], December, Decision of the Constitutional Council No. CI-2011-EP-036/04-05/CC/SG of 4 May 2011 on the proclamation of Mr. Alassane Ouattara as President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire.

10 Centre National des Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales (CNRTL). 2012. “Éducation” [Education], cnrtl.fr

11 “Education,” *Dictionnaire LeRobert* [LeRobert Dictionary].

12 Méallet M. 2018. *Dictionnaire universel* [Universal Dictionary]. Malakoff: Edicef, 438.

13 Cornu G. 2018. *Vocabulaire juridique* [Legal Vocabulary]. Paris: Édition PUF, 1080.

14 Cornu, *Vocabulaire juridique*, 1080

15 Cornu, *Vocabulaire juridique*, 1080.

EDUCATION AS A CONTRIBUTION TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF RECONCILIATION AND PEACE

Education policy is not new. In pre-colonial and even colonial society, education was the responsibility of families, clans and ethnic groups. Knowledge was transmitted from generation to generation with multifaceted initiations depending on the ethnic group. During the colonial era, educational policy was reversed by enrolling young people in schools to learn the culture of the metropolis. This education policy continued after the country's accession to sovereignty, as evidenced by the first government of the first President of the Republic, which, although limited, included a Minister of National Education.¹⁶ It has not stopped, even in times of armed conflict. More importantly, education has contributed to reconciliation and peace, because it has reduced ignorance. Since the end of the armed clashes, the government has implemented a training and employment policy. Thus, since 2012, at the end of their training, learners become "finished products" and engage in income-generating activities.

The decline of ignorance

Every individual who learns socialises harmoniously, because learning is acquiring the knowledge to do or not do something. In other words, learning is learning.¹⁷ The learner moves away from ignorance. They become closer to intellectual knowledge and are not as easily manipulated. They avoid clinging to baseless populism. The government of Côte d'Ivoire, aware of this reality, is instilling in young people interpersonal skills, interpersonal skills and interpersonal skills, both in times of armed conflict and in the post-crisis period. This policy has led to the training of many graduates.

Graduate training

Côte d'Ivoire has produced many graduates despite the political conflict. This attitude is a factor of reconciliation and peace. Young graduates then take jobs and start families, so that they cannot be manipulated and take up arms. The reduction of poverty is a criterion for lasting peace, because "the man who is hungry is not a free man". So, he is ready to give in to any temptation. However, the young graduate who has a job moves away from poverty and temptation.

The Ivorian State has spared no effort to mobilise material and human resources for young people. Indeed, in the midst of the armed conflict, even though the country was still divided in two, President Laurent Gbagbo regularised the situation of volunteer teachers in the Centre, North and West zones, which were occupied by rebel groups. This policy of restructuring the school with a view to reconciliation continued with the new government of President Alassane Ouattara. Thus,

¹⁶ The first government of President Félix Houphouët Boigny, on 3 January 1961, was composed of 15 ministers, including the Minister of National Education, Joachim Bony.

¹⁷ *Larousse universel*. 2018 Edition. Paris: Édicef, 77.

exercising his discretionary power, the President of the Republic, by Decree No. 2016-660 of 3 August 2016, appointed “60 inspectors on an exceptional basis in the Inspectorates of Public Primary Education in Côte d’Ivoire”.¹⁸

In the post-crisis period, the administrative authorities led a wave of teacher recruitment. First of all, as part of the implementation of the 2019 government social programme (PS-GOV), contract teachers have been deployed throughout the national territory. Secondly, the integration of the latter into the public service as public servants is now a reality. A total of 5282 primary school teachers,¹⁹ 3111 middle school teachers²⁰ and 1889 secondary school teachers²¹ were recruited into the civil service in 2022.

Although the construction of school infrastructure has been lacking since November 2002 due to the armed conflict, it must be noted that since 2011, the policy of creating school and university buildings has gained momentum. The reconstruction of the Félix Houphouët-Boigny University and other public universities in the country, including the universities of Nangui Abrogoua, Gon Coulibaly, Lorougnon Guédé and Alassane Ouattara, has been carried out. In total, the rehabilitation of public universities cost “110 billion CFA francs” in 2011.²² There has also been the construction of classrooms at the primary, secondary and university levels with the opening of the University of Man,²³ as well as the Virtual University.²⁴

Cultural mixing

Education ensures cultural diversity. The mixing of practices in the communities takes place at school. This cultural mixing takes place through orientations, transfers and assignments in the education system. Students are of different ethnicities at school. This is the case for teachers, who are assigned to all administrative districts in the country according to their qualifications, including primary teachers, secondary school teachers and university professors. The movement of populations during conflicts is a factor in the export of cultural practices. A study by the Office

18 Decree No. 2016-660 of 3 August 2016 on the exceptional appointment of sixty (60) inspectors of public primary education.

19 Decree No. 2022-425 of June 24, 2022 on the exceptional appointment of five thousand two hundred and eighty-two (5282) former contract teachers as assistant teachers, grade C3.

20 Decree No. 2022-435 of 4 July 2022 on the exceptional appointment of three thousand one hundred and eleven (3111) former contract teachers as middle school teachers, grade A3.

21 Decree No. 2022-424 of 24 June 2022 on the exceptional appointment of one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine (1889) former contract teachers as secondary school teachers, grade A4.

22 M.T. 2021. “Universités : 110 milliards FCFA pour la réhabilitation” [Universities: 110 billion FCFA for rehabilitation], Abidjan.net, 17 December.

23 Decree No. 2015-776 of 9 December 2015 on the creation, attributions, organisation and functioning of the University of Man. 1000 students

24 Decree No. 2015-775 of 9 September 2015 on the creation, attributions, organisation and operation of a public administrative institution called the Virtual University of Côte d’Ivoire, abbreviated UVCI.

of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, reported by the National Institute of Statistics, counts 8 948 displaced persons in the region of Duékoué, Guiglo, Toulépleu, Zouan-Houien and Bloléquin during the armed clashes.²⁵ The children of internally displaced persons, who are of school age, attend school in these localities. Through recreational play, young learners discover and adapt to the lifestyles of others, such as the eating habits of others. In Rwanda, for example, students were divided into two main groups. There are those whose action was initiated by genocide survivors and those who are considered to be the perpetrators of the genocide. These two groups of students showed great solidarity.²⁶

In addition, administrative staff, teachers and even mature students start families through marriages. This leads to a cultural melting pot through ethnic mixing. The spirit of hatred and conflict is fading in the population due to marriages between people of different ethnicities. Moreover, the state does not train young people to fend for themselves, but rather supports them in lucrative jobs.

Occupation of lucrative occupations

The Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR) has conducted research on the causes of the armed conflict in Côte d'Ivoire. It has taken care to analyse the consequences of this conflict and has made recommendations to ensure that this sad reality is no longer experienced. Among the recommendations, education in democratic culture occupies a prominent place. According to the CDVR, this is a matter for "political parties, schools, the media".²⁷ The institution in charge of reconciliation is showing the way forward, among other things, the training of young people. At the end of their training, they participate in the production of wealth through private or public employment.

Private employment

Youth employment policy is at the heart of the Ivorian government's agenda. The reduction in the unemployment rate is reflected in education policy. These are mainly unemployed youth, school dropouts and demobilised. All these people were subscribed to the vices of society, namely assaults, rapes, robberies, alcoholism, so

25 Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. Ministry of State, Ministry of Planning and Development, National Institute of Statistics (INS), United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), Joint Internally Displaced Persons Profiling Service (JIPS). 2015. *Profilage des Personnes Déplacées Internées, Retournées et Rapatriées de Côte d'Ivoire Rapport Final d'Etude Abidjan – Novembre 2014* [Profiling of Internally Interned, Returnee and Repatriated Internally Displaced Persons from Côte d'Ivoire Final Study Report Abidjan – November 2014]. Abidjan: INS, UNCHR, JIPS, May.

26 Junod R. 2015 "Le programme d'éducation à la citoyenneté démocratique" [The Democratic Citizenship Education Programme], in Junod R and Rutayisire P. *Citoyenneté et réconciliation au Rwanda* [Citizenship and Reconciliation in Rwanda]. Geneva: Éditions IES, 127-155.

27 Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. 2014. *Rapport Commission Dialogue, Vérité et Réconciliation* [Report of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission], December.

that at the end of the political crisis it was almost impossible to talk about security and peace.

Rather than cracking down on arrests and imprisonments, the government of Côte d'Ivoire has adopted a policy of financing the economic activities of young graduates seeking their first job. Apprenticeship in the trades is growing in all regions of the country. Training programmes and projects are aimed at young people, who are still supervised in vocational training schools. The state has understood that unemployment and underemployment are factors at the root of insecurity and even armed conflicts, and therefore of the absence of peace. Some vocational schools are being rehabilitated and others are under construction. Instruction in these schools consists of learning a trade, including carpentry, masonry, electrification, plumbing and animal husbandry. Better still, the Ivorian government has set up six vocational training centres as vocational high schools to mentor young people to obtain the technician's certificate in innovative activities, among others, hospitality, industrial maintenance and tourism.²⁸ Also, the "Youth Employment and Skills Development Project" has²⁹ made it possible to settle 59 000 people over the period 2012-2020. The figures reflect the success of this policy. Already in 2015, 12 337 young people who learned a trade were able to start their own businesses thanks to the financial support of the government.³⁰

In the end, the state made training its priority. Even better, 2023 has been declared the "Year of Youth".³¹ As a result, the state is trying to keep youth unemployment at bay. This political will has its roots in the policy of training leading to qualifications. In addition to private activities, young graduates also enter the public service.

Integration into the civil service

The Ivorian civil service is known as the "career civil service".³² In principle, all recruits must remain there until retirement. The recruitment of students who have graduated from training schools contributes to the cohesion of the nation. The student whose parents were victims of the armed clashes, brings their families comfort. The financial resources that are the fruit of their work are used by their families. The students are now in stable employment until they retire at age 60 or

28 Government of Côte d'Ivoire. 2022. ""Enseignement technique et professionnel: six centres de formation professionnels érigés en lycées de formation professionnels" [Technical and vocational education: six vocational training centres erected as vocational training high schools], 7 October.

29 Government of Côte d'Ivoire. 2022. "Emploi jeunes: des résultats probants qui témoignent des efforts du gouvernement pour faciliter l'insertion socio professionnelle des jeunes" [Youth employment: convincing results that testify to the government's efforts to facilitate the socio-professional integration of young people], 18 January.

30 Government of Côte d'Ivoire. "Emploi jeunes".

31 Ouattara A. 2022. "Message to the Nation from H.E. Mr. Alassane Ouattara, 31 December 2022.

32 Act No. 92-570 of 11 September 1992 on the general status of the civil service.

65.³³ As leaders, occupying a respectable place in society, they work to rebuild the social fabric, and thus to pave the way for reconciliation.

The recruitment of young graduates concerns all sectors of activity. However, basic social services are the most affected, including health and social affairs. From 2014 to 2017, 13 009 young high school and university graduates were recruited.³⁴ They treat the usual pathologies that are rampant even in times of peace, but, above all, they ensure the care of the physical and moral suffering caused by war. Social workers and special educators are also recruited. The public service recruited 1 231 people between 2014 and 2017. The latter participate in the resocialisation of the victims of armed confrontations. Psychological care for victims of conflict is their favourite task. In this regard, social workers make a significant contribution to peacebuilding in post-conflict situations.

In addition, “schooling is compulsory for all children of both sexes between the ages of six and sixteen”.³⁵ The state is committed to reintegrating into the school system young men and women who have dropped out of school due to the breakdown of families, the death of parents and the destruction of school buildings as a result of armed clashes. The schooling of young people is so important that the government has provided for prison sentences and fines for refractory parents. Thus, “a parent who violates the obligation to attend school provided for in this law shall be punished by imprisonment of two to six months and a fine of 50 000 to 500 000 CFA francs or one of these two penalties only”³⁶

Finally, security personnel trained at the National Police Academy participate in the security of the national territory and the protection of people, a guarantee of peace. The entry into service, on November 10, 2022, of 1 451 police officers at the end of their training at the National Police Academy is a current illustration of this.³⁷ Despite its undeniable role in the cohesion of the nation, it is clear that the Ivorian education system is experiencing difficulties.

33 Decree No. 2012-652 of 11 July 2012, setting the legal retirement age for civil servants governed by the General Civil Service Regulations.

34 Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. Ministry of Civil Service. 2018. Statistical Yearbook of the Ministry of the Civil Service 2014-2017, 2018 Edition, 87.

35 Law No. 2015-635 of 17 September 2015, amending Law No. 95-696 of 7 September 1995 on education, art 2-1.

36 Bamba S. 2015. “L'école désormais obligatoire en Côte d'Ivoire” [School is now compulsory in Côte d'Ivoire], LeBabi.net.

37 Government of Côte d'Ivoire. 2022. “Securite/École De Police D'abidjan : 1 451 Eleves Sous-Officiers De La Promotion 2021-2023 Reçoivent Leurs Epauettes De Fin De Formation” [Security/Abidjan: 1 451 Students Non-Commissioned Officers of the Class of 2021-2023 receive their Shoulder pads at the end of the course], 11 November.

EDUCATION, IMPLEMENTATION DIFFICULTIES IN THE IVORIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

The attempt to rehabilitate the school system faces several difficulties. First, there is the lack of redesign of the school curriculum, which does not take into account the sociological realities of the moment. Textbooks have not been thoroughly revised. Secondly, it is not easy to perceive the aid provided by donors. This aid is seen as overt support for either the rebellion or the legal government. The aid granted in the Centre-North and West (NOC) zone by non-governmental organisations is not well appreciated by the government of Abidjan, and vice versa.³⁸ Finally, in addition to these cases of mistrust, there are inadequacies in the curricula and the porosity of educational policy.

Gaps in curricula

Education is a process of imparting formal and informal knowledge and interpersonal skills. In this regard, it should be noted that “to think about a reform of the education system is to think about its structure, its mode of organisation or to try complex timetables and disciplinary arrangements”.³⁹ In the aftermath of armed conflict, the national curriculum should be dominated by lessons focusing on the causes and consequences of conflict. It should also present strategies for calling for forgiveness and reconciliation, facilitated by a sufficient number of quality human resources. The political authorities are trying to reform the education system. However, an in-depth analysis of the latter reveals the neglect of inter-ethnic alliances and the traditional mode of devolution of power.

Neglect of inter-ethnic alliances

The Ivorian education curriculum does not take sufficient account of inter-ethnic alliances. “Inter-ethnic alliances or pleasant kinship ties are a social institution that allows conflicts to be resolved in a sustainable way.”⁴⁰ They come in several forms depending on the use. There are, among other things, inter-ethnic alliances and patronymic alliances. These alliances have many functions, including “the establishment of lasting peace.”⁴¹ For the most part, they arise from misunderstandings or even armed conflicts. These are strategies designed

38 Triplet AC. 2015. “Internationalisation et transformation du système éducatif en situation de post-conflit” [Internationalisation et transformation of the système éducatif en situation de post-conflit], *Revue Tiers Monde* [Third World Magazine], 41.

39 Pasco D and Léziart Y. 2005 “Sociologie du curriculum et choix des savoirs à enseigner en eps : l'exemple du programme pour la classe de 6e des collèges” [Sociology of the curriculum and choice of knowledge to be taught in PE: the example of the curriculum for the 6th grade class of middle schools], *Carrefours de l'éducation* [Education Hubs], 2005(19):107-120.

40 Amoa U. 2009. “Pactes de stabilité et construction de la confiance dans le processus de cohésion sociale” [Stability Pacts and Building Trust in the Social Cohesion Process], *Synergies Afrique Centrale et de l'Ouest* [Synergies Central and West Africa] 3:85-99.

41 Amoa, “Pactes de stabilité”.

to avoid the recurrence of conflicts. The alliance is so fundamental that Professor Urbain Amoa has proposed an “inter-school alliance following the example of the former students of the Lycée Technique and the Lycée Classique d’Abidjan”⁴² or “between the Lycée Sainte Marie in Abidjan (and) the Lycée Houphouët-Boigny in Korhogo”.⁴³ Alliances are based on myths, legends or historical facts. They exist within the same cultural area as well as between distinct cultural areas.⁴⁴ Within the same cultural area, alliances within the Gur people, including the alliance between the Lobi and Djimini peoples, as well as the alliance within the Kru people and between the Niaboua and Bakowé peoples, are good examples.⁴⁵ Among the intercultural alliances, it is worth noting those between the peoples of the Abbey and the Dida,⁴⁶ as well as between the Senufo and the Yacouba.⁴⁷ There are also those who form on the basis of surnames, such as the Senufos, between the Coulibalys and the Ouattaras.

Those in power do not seem to understand enough that lasting peace also requires the inclusion of kinship or inter-ethnic alliances in the school curriculum. Conflicts are often resolved, or at least avoided, by pleasant alliances.⁴⁸ Alliances allow us to forget the frustrations generated by conflict. The Ivorian education programme did not take advantage of this to create evacuation frameworks. These positive behaviours, which contribute to the cohesion of the nation, should occupy a privileged place in educational programmes, but alas. This is the case with the traditional devolution of power.

Failure to take into account the traditional mode of devolution of power

The programme does not take into account political contradictions at the traditional level. Yet armed conflict has its inescapable roots in the idea that each people has of the way in which political power is acquired and exercised in a traditional way. As Côte d’Ivoire has several ethnic groups, the way in which supreme power is attained varies from one group to another. The Agni-Brafé people, who came from Ghana under the leadership of Aka Essoin, created the Sanwi kingdom which became the kingdom of Krindjabo. Among the Agni-Brafé, power is held by a king

42 Amoa, “Pactes de stabilité”.

43 Amoa, “Pactes de stabilité”.

44 The cultural areas of Côte d’Ivoire are Akan, Gur, Krou and Mandé, which are subdivided into Northern Mande and Southern Mandé.

45 Republic of Côte d’Ivoire. Ministry of National Education. 2010. *History and Geography* CM1. Abidjan: NEI-CEDA, 59.

46 The alliance between the Abbey and the Dida is an alliance between the Akan people and the Krou people.

47 The alliance between Senufo and Yakouba is an alliance between the Mande people and the Gur people.

48 See Republic of Côte d’Ivoire. Ministry of National Education. 2023. “Leçon 9: Les alliances interethniques, les cultures des Kwa et des Krou et la Cohesion Sociale” [Lesson 9: Inter-ethnic alliances, Kwa and Krou cultures and Social Cohesion]. Côte d’Ivoire Collège Numérique.

who is always chosen from the royal line.⁴⁹ This practice is also ongoing among the Baoulé. Among the people of the lagoon, known as Atchan or Tchaman, power is a matter of generation. It is passed down from generation, to generation and a generation can remain in power for more than 15 years. The leader is chosen from among the generation that is in power. In the case of forest peoples, the chief is appointed by the community based on many criteria, including age, personality, frankness and generosity.⁵⁰ This divergence in the appointment of the city's ruler has an impact on the duration of power and the process of ascension to the supreme magistracy. Where some believe they should hold power for life, others believe the opposite. This leads to tensions that weaken national cohesion. The school system should take the time to denounce these forms of holding power, while explaining that access to power must be democratic. This awareness-raising work with a view to raising awareness among young people throughout the country is not sufficiently taken into account in educational programmes.

As with the traditional devolution of power, transitional justice is also not taken into account in educational programmes. Transitional justice is "the set of strategies that allow the passage of a conflict situation and violence to a situation that leads to peace".⁵¹ Such justice is useful for peace in that it sets the record straight and establishes accountability without bringing the guilty to justice. It compensates victims of armed conflict and "facilitates the rapprochement and reconciliation of divided communities".⁵² The school curriculum should not neglect transitional justice in order to remind learners, each time, of the efforts that are made to redress the wrongs suffered by parents who are victims of conflict. In the end, all these shortcomings lead to the porosity of education policy.

The porosity of education policy

Education policy emphasises information and training. He aspires to shape a new being, a "New Ivorian". The New Ivorian is the one who turns away from violence, who is studious and who is committed to producing satisfactory academic results. The New Ivorian must learn the lessons of past conflicts. The New Ivorian is a republican out of respect for the institutions of the state. The New Ivorian relentlessly strives for excellence in all the actions he undertakes. The concept of the New Ivorian invites us to "kill the belligerent and lazy spirit of incivility, of

49 RCI MEN, *Histoire et géographie*, 37.

50 RCI MEN, *Histoire et géographie*, 41.

51 Djie Bouin W. 2018, *Le droit à un procès équitable et la justice transitionnelle dans la reconstruction du système juridique et politique ivoirien* [The right to a fair trial and transitional justice in the reconstruction of the Ivorian legal and political system]. PhD Thesis in Public Law, University of Toulouse, 7.

52 Meffre A. 2005. "La justice transitionnelle à l'épreuve du Sierra Leone: analyse critique, Institut d'études internationales de Montréal" [Transitional Justice in Sierra Leone: A Critical Analysis]. Research Notes, March. Montreal: Centre d'études sur l'intégration and globalisation (CEDIM)/Institut d'études internationales de Montréal.

chronic backwardness erected into an inglorious system".⁵³ All these qualities of the new Ivorian are not effectively taken into account in the school curriculum, as evidenced by poor academic performance and the persistence of violence in schools and universities.

Poor academic performance

The educational system is the credo of intellectual formation and, therefore, of the acquisition of knowledge. Academic performance gives an idea of the good understanding of the subjects taught during the school year. The verification of this knowledge acquisition is measured by the learners' end-of-year results, in particular through the averages of the transition to the following year and the results of the end-of-cycle diplomas. Academic performance in Côte d'Ivoire has been poor, with a national pass rate of 47.63% in 2003-2004, compared to 42.27% in the 2002-2003 school year.⁵⁴ This rate is relatively low, although it has seen a slight increase of 5.36%. This was the case even after the armed conflict. There have been years of hope with relatively good academic results, with PEBC's national pass rate increasing from 59.11% in 2015-2016 to 60.08% in 2016-2017.⁵⁵ However, since the 2017-2018 school year, PEBC's result is consistent with the regression table. It increased from 60.14%, to 57.31%, then to 53.17% and finally to 41.27% during the year 2020-2021.⁵⁶ These results are increasingly unfavourable, such that the government has decided to organise a general assembly on education to diagnose the ills of Ivorian schools.

With regard to the transition from primary school to the sixth grade, progress, although generally satisfactory, remains in favour of young boys, although the gap is not significant: 45.08% of girls compared to 46.79% of boys admitted to the sixth grade during the 2007-2008 school year, compared to 90.96% of girls and 91.36%

53 Guibessongui NS. "La doctrine Ouattara de l'ivoirien nouveau décryptée" [The Ouattara Doctrine of the Ivorian, newly deciphered], Abidjan.net, 3 November.

54 Bédé C. 2004, "Côte d'Ivoire : Les résultats du BEPC proclamés hier: 47,63% d'admis" [Côte d'Ivoire: The results of the BEPC proclaimed yesterday: 47.63% of admissions], *Notre Voie* [Our Voice], 20 July.

55 Gouvernement of Côte d'Ivoire. 2017. "BEPC 2017: la Ministre Kandia annonce un taux de réussite national de 60,08%" [BEPC 2017: Minister Kandia Announces National Success Rate of 60.08%].

56 See Government of Côte d'Ivoire. 2018. "BEPC 2018 : 226 619 admis sur 376 819 candidats, soit un taux national de réussite de 60,14 %" [BEPC 2018: 226 619 admitted out of 376 819 candidates, a national pass rate of 60.14%], 7 July; Government of Côte d'Ivoire. 2019. "BEPC 2019: un taux de réussite national de 57,31%" [BEPC 2019: a national pass rate of 57.31%], 9 July; Government of Côte d'Ivoire. 2020. "BEPC-session 2020 : un taux de réussite de 53,17% [BEPC-session 2020: a national pass rate of 53.17%] 28 July; Government of Côte d'Ivoire. 2021. "Résultats du BEPC session 2021: un taux de réussite de 41,27% contre 53,17 % en 2020" [Results of the PEBC 2021 session: a rate of success 41.27% compared to 53.17% in 2020]; Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de l'Alphabétisation/Direction de la Stratégie, de la Planification et des Statistiques (MENA/DSPS). 2021. "Rapport statistique d'analyse 2021:le problème de la qualité du système éducatif ivoirien" [Statistical Analysis Report of the Education System 2020-2021: the problem of the quality of the Ivorian education system]. Abidjan: DSPS.

of boys during the 2019-2020⁵⁷ school year. In lower secondary education, many students do not complete their studies. For example, in the 2007-2008 school year, 67.3% of learners did not complete their studies. In 2020-2021, 43% suffered the same fate. At the level of general secondary education, it should be noted that 70% of 18-year-olds do not complete their education by obtaining the baccalaureate.

The results of school diplomas reflect this current reality. Two examples deserve to be cited to illustrate the point, namely the result of the Brevet d'Études du Premier Cycle (BEPC) and that of the Baccalaureate. For the 2020-2021 school year, out of 468 668 candidates, 193 398 were declared admitted; that is, a national success rate of 41.27% compared to 53.17% in 2020. This equates to a drop of 11.90 points. In addition, the pass rate for the baccalaureate in 2021 was 9.24%,⁵⁸ compared to 39.66% in 2015.⁵⁹ In other words, 70.76% of candidates failed the baccalaureate in 2021 compared to 60.34% in 2015. It is clear that, overall, failure rates are high. It must be inferred from this that the behaviour that is taught in school is not acquired satisfactorily. Ivorian schools are struggling to engage in the reconciliation process, as evidenced by the persistence of violence in schools and universities.

The persistence of violence in schools

Learning should take place in a peaceful environment. Instability is not conducive to the acquisition of knowledge. Learners and trainers can only play their full role in a healthy environment, free from conflict or violence of any kind. However, the Ivorian school environment is often the scene of confrontations, both verbal and physical – confrontation between learners, confrontation between learners and trainers and confrontation between learner and administration. These clashes take place within the framework of the trade unions.

The systematic analysis report on the issue of the quality of the education system carried out in 2021 provides a timely illustration of this. Forty-one (41) elementary schools were on strike during the 2020-2021 school year. Conflicts between schools, through clashes between groups of students, affect the quality of education. Lost time is never made up. “108 hours of classes”⁶⁰ are lost and are not made up each year. In secondary schools, the situation is no better. In 2020, 132 high schools and colleges out of 2 331 schools, or 6% of schools, were disrupted by strikes, and each of them experienced an average of 64 hours of class stoppage during the 2020-2021 school year.⁶¹

In addition, in addition to school stoppages due to strikes, physical and verbal violence are constantly imposed on students. Education through quarrels and punishment through chores cause learners to drop out of school. These practices

57 MENA/DSPS, Statistical Analysis Report of the Education System 2020-2021.

58 MENA/DSPS, Statistical Analysis Report of the Education System 2020-2021.

59 MENA/DSPS, Statistical Analysis Report of the Education System 2020-2021.

60 MENA/DSPS, Statistical Analysis Report of the Education System 2020-2021.

61 MENA/DSPS, Statistical Analysis Report of the Education System 2020-2021.

are more important at the primary school level. There were “3 622 students who were victims” of beatings, while 5 759 students were victims of chores.⁶² However, since 2012, Ordinance 0075/MEN/DELIC of 29 September 2012 prohibits corporal and humiliating punishment of children in schools.⁶³ In addition, young girls are victims of rape and genital mutilation. 256 cases of female genital mutilation were identified and 25 cases of rape were identified. These practices, although condemned by the government, justify learners’ absenteeism. Sexual touching is also a bad practice for learners.⁶⁴ Even if these facts are not attributable to the education system, they have a negative impact on families’ adherence to education policy. The school environment is not yet conducive to training. Violence in schools can escalate into clashes between communities at any time. Under these conditions, reconciliation and peace must be built through education.

CONCLUSION

Education is at the heart of all power, so much so that governments always work for the well-being of the population through an education policy that they consider effective. This strategy allows them to consolidate their power by gaining the trust of the population. The people must be enlightened to understand the leader’s aspirations. It’s a bit like the days of slavery, when the boss had to train the slave to carry out orders. The shepherd trains the flock to help it take the expected steps. This was also the case in colonial times, when education was not on the margins of governance. Moreover, Jules Ferry, the theoretician of colonial expansion, had made education compulsory in France by the law of 8 March 1882. He believed that “colonisation is a duty of civilised peoples” whose mission is to bring light to the natives.⁶⁵ They can only do this if they are educated or trained themselves. This shows that education is a prerequisite for all human work. Already in 1982, Arthur Verdier established the first Ivorian school in Elima with a view to ensuring the efficient management of the commercial activities of the coffee plantations.⁶⁶

From the beginning of the crisis until today, education has worked towards reconciliation, although education policy is riddled with shortcomings. Indeed, from the first hours of the armed rebellion in Côte d’Ivoire, the belligerents have preserved education and training, each as far as it is concerned, on its territory. In the so-called Centre, North, West (NOC) area, although run by the rebels, the education of young people has never stopped. Teachers have been recruited at both the primary and

62 MENA/DSPS, Statistical Analysis Report of the Education System 2020-2021.

63 Order 0075/MEN/DELIC of 29 September 2012, prohibiting physical and humiliating punishment for students in school settings.

64 MENA/DSPS, Statistical Analysis Report of the Education System 2020-2021.

65 Lègre OH. 2010. *Histoire des Institutions et du Droit Colonial* [History of Institutions and Colonial Law]. Abidjan: Édition Lumière De DEASSA, 54.

66 Gnaoulé-Oupoh B. 2000, “L’école coloniale en Côte d’Ivoire” [The colonial school in Ivory Coast], *La littérature ivoirienne* [Ivorian Literature]. Paris: Éditions Khartala, 13-27.

secondary levels. Volunteers who did not have salaries organised to continue the educational work after the teachers fled the state, deeming the area unsafe.

Education emphasises ethnic mixing, ethnic diversity and therefore the futility of confrontations, because in reality, in times of war, one kills one's brother and not the enemy. Socio-educational infrastructures are being built in all regions of the country to address the thorny issue of regional disparities. The school's facilitators are redeployed without distinction of region, religion, politics and other identity markers. They have learned to live together again. This is the case of the University of Man, created in 2015.⁶⁷

The opening of the Alassane Ouattara High School of Excellence in Grand Bassam is also part of this dynamic of social cohesion and living together. The authorities are eager to eradicate illiteracy, because the seeds of internal armed conflict thrive in non-intellectual circles. This high school, which has a capacity of 1000 students, opened its doors during the year 2019-2020 with 300 students, including 160 students in sixth grade and 140 students in second.⁶⁸

Cultural mixing also involves the revaluation of cultures. The Generation Festival among the Atchan peoples, the festival of the Dan people called Tonkpi Nihidaleyni is held every year in Man. To this end, the edition held from 7 to 12 February 2023 in Man had as its theme "culture and hospitality". This theme is a topical demonstration of the will to move towards peace, to re-establish social cohesion through cultural play, factors of tolerance and forgiveness.

Religion occupies an important place in the Ivorian education system. There are many denominational schools at the primary, secondary and university levels. They ensure the education of young people by instilling in them the value of forgiveness, in which religion is an agent of peace and reconciliation. Denominational schools impart knowledge to learners taking into account both positive law and religion. In short, it is not inaccurate to say that education, law and religion have been the cement of national reconciliation.

67 Decree No. 2015-776 of 9 December 2015 on the creation, attributions, organisation and functioning of the University of Man.

68 Government of Côte d'Ivoire. 2022. "Alassane Ouattara High School of Excellence in Grand-Bassam: a high-standing establishment for quality training" www.gouv.ci, July 8.