

Fields Magazine - June - 2015

**FIELDS**

*Clans*



## *Staff & Thanks*

---

### **Founder and Editor in Chief**

Saran Koly

### **Design & Layout**

mrtim.co

### **Copy Editor**

Louise Scrivens

### **Translation**

Jonathan Stone

### **Cover illustration**

Eiko Ojala

### **Fields is edited and published by**

Fields Creatives.  
Gleimstrasse 37,  
10437 Berlin,  
Germany.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED FIELDS JUNE 2015

DISCLAIMER: CONTENT MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED WITHOUT PERMISSION. VIEWS AND OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY AUTHORS MAY NOT REFLECT THOSE OF THE PUBLISHER OR THE EDITORIAL TEAM.

# Contents

---

## **EDITORIAL**

Where Do I Belong

## **PERCEPTIONS**

Hââbré – The Last Generation

Reviving The Ancient Inuit Tradition

WOONGO – How Masks Can Reveal Stories

Mystical Wanderers

## **OBSERVERS**

Uzupis – The Mysterious Republic of Artists

The Montmartre of Vilnius

Defying the Political Dynasties

Who is the Klu Klux Klan?

## **VERBATIM**

Dismantle the System of Domination

What is your Clan?

## **CULTURE**

Redefine the Clan

West Side Story – A Cinematic Approach of Gang Phenomenon

## **STYLE**

The Return of Exoticism

I am Not Exotic, I Got Style!

Editor's Pick

## **PORTRAIT**

Benny Wenda – The Struggle of Independence

where

do

i

belong?

saran koly

*As global nomads and eternal wanderers, we are often asked:*

"Where are you from", "where is home". These questions often raise our insecurities, sometimes discomfort. "Where do I belong", the answer usually doesn't define whom we are but whom we think we are talking to. Why do they want to know? We don't fit in boxes, and certainly not in a mind that wants us to be one or the other.

"Where do I belong? Is it a place? Is it a state of mind?"

We are not one or the other; we are an interesting breed of sounds, colours and most of all feelings. We belong to a community of communities. We empower each other, educate ourselves, share knowledge and respect our values. But sometimes, we ignorantly harm each other and we need to fix that.

In this issue activists from West Papua to Mauritania reclaim respect for their identity and ask you to take action.

Let's embark on a journey to explore the intricacies of humans as social animals.

# CONTRIBUTORS.



## **AURÉLIE TOURNOIS**

Paris, France

Journalist, founder of Dancingfeet.fr, music passionate, eyes turned towards Eastern Europe.

[WWW. DANCINGFEET.FR](http://WWW.DANCINGFEET.FR)



## **FABRICE MONTEIRO**

Dakar, Senegal

Belgian-Beninese, trained industrial engineer, professional model and photographer. His work is at a crossroads between photo journalism and fashion photography.



## **JOANA CHOUMALI**

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Studied Graphic Arts in Casablanca, Morocco and worked as an Art Director in Abidjan before embarking on her photography career.

[WWW. JOANA-CHOUMALI.SQUARESPACE.COM](http://WWW.JOANA-CHOUMALI.SQUARESPACE.COM)



## **MARINA RAFENBERG**

Athens, Greece

Franco-Greek-Polish freelance journalist, believes in multiculturalism, loves to travel, sip coffee on a terrace and watch movies with Audrey Hepburn.



### **PAULA ANDRADE**

São Bernardo do Campo, Brazil  
Photographer, accounting student,  
passionate about travel, music, arts  
and rabbits.



### **RON STALLWORTH**

Retired detective Ron Stallworth  
infiltrated the Ku Klux Klan in Colorado  
Springs in the 1970s and he wrote a  
book about it, Black Klansman.



### **SÉLIM HARBI**

between Tunis, Tunisia and West Africa  
Documentary photographer and  
multimedia author born in Tunis.  
Founder of Afreekyama the first  
narration and multimedia creation,  
Pan-African collective.

[WWW.AFREEKYAMA.COM](http://WWW.AFREEKYAMA.COM)  
[WWW.SELIMHARBI.COM](http://WWW.SELIMHARBI.COM)



### **SOUMAÏLA SUNJATA KOLY**

**Montpellier, France**

Sunjata real name Soumaïla Koly is a  
multi-faceted artist. Writer, filmmaker  
and cinema lover.

[WWW.SUNJATA.FR](http://WWW.SUNJATA.FR)  
PHOTO CREDIT – MARC GINOT



**1**  
**PERCEPTIONS**

# 'HÂÂBRÉ<sup>1#</sup>' THE LAST GENERATION

TEXT AND PHOTOS – JOANA CHOUMALI

Abidjan in the 1980s. I remember Mr Ekra, the man who drove me to school. Mr. Ekra had large scars marking his face from his temples to his chin. For me, these geometric shapes were both fascinating and normal.

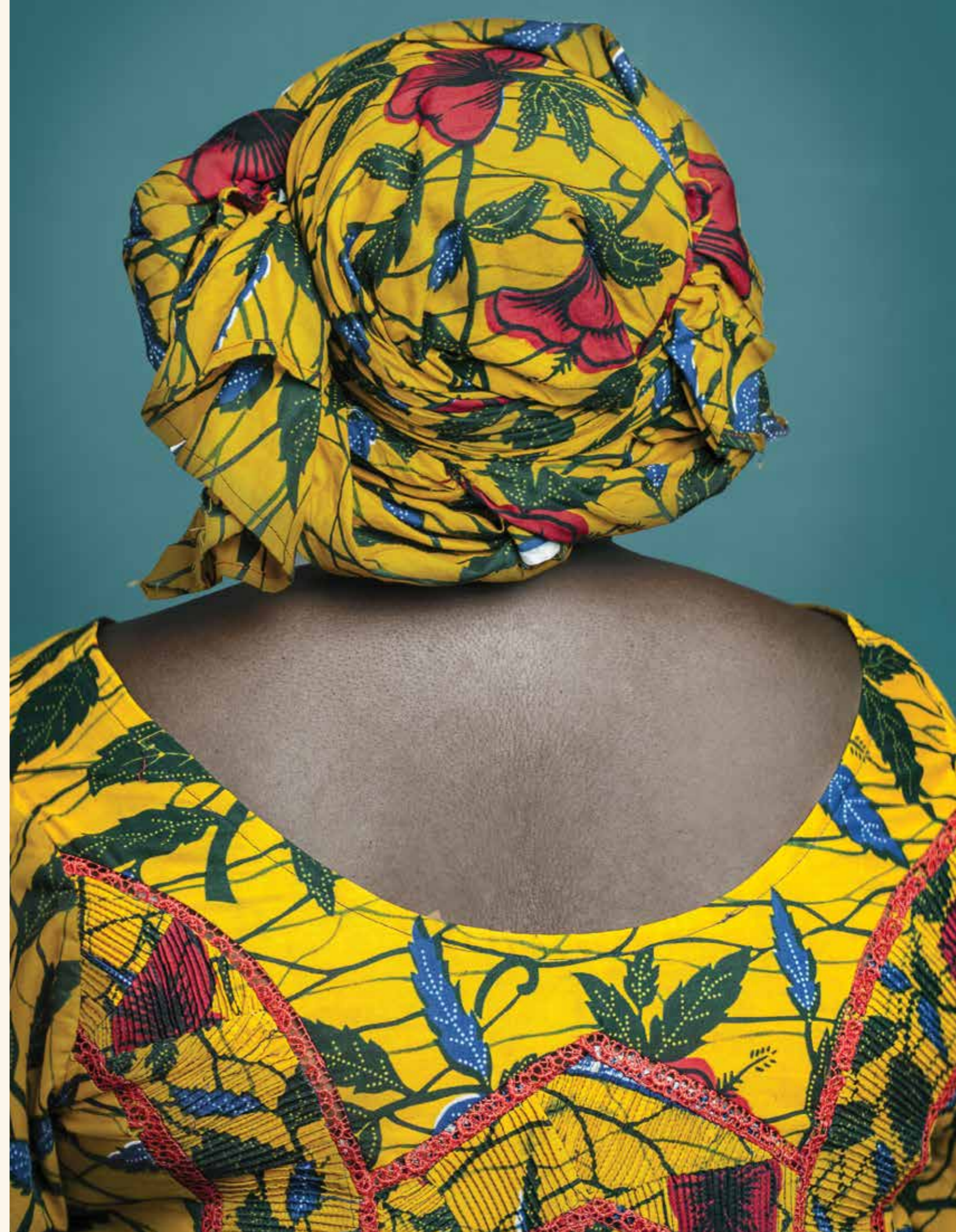
**The years went by and this practice disappeared little by little.**

More recently I thought about Mr Konabé, the ladies' tailor I'd known since my teen years, who also had scars. I decided to ask him how he felt. I wanted to understand why he had a scarred face and how a scarification ritual worked. I wanted to know how it felt during, after and in the years following the act. I discovered that his wife also had them - this "permanent makeup" - that she proudly wore during her youth but was now the object of ridicule and humiliating nicknames.

**Torn faces. Trampled pride. Ridiculed identity.**

"They wrote on our faces. It was so we wouldn't get lost in life, to be able to recognise each other." To belong...

*{1# – In Ko, one of the languages of Burkina Faso in West Africa, "Hââbré" means "to write" and also refers to the practice of scarification.}*





To be a member of a clan, family, ethnic group or a village. It's more reassuring in childhood. Like Martine who said: "I didn't feel any pain, that's how much my heart was in it..."

To belong. At any price...

"They wrote on our faces. Back then, we recognised each other. Today, we no longer recognise each other."

If we no longer recognise each other, how can we be known? How can we be in this ever-changing African society? How do we recognise a brother? To what can we attach ourselves to prove our identity?

I am curious to know how and why a practice that was integrated, useful, accepted, valued and claimed proudly by every member of a group, later became a burden. How does it become a source of ridicule? How does it end up that they feel anger and shame after they were considered so normal for such a long time?

Without an answer to these questions, this contradiction will remain etched in my mind. I feel the need to photograph these men and women, this last generation of scarified Africans. This "endangered" segment of the population. I wonder about it and I contemplate giving evidence, to record these graphics, beautiful or ugly, depending on the era in which we live.

Contradiction...contrast.



Scarification seems to me like a form of graphic art, from the dexterity of scarred hands, to the rudimentary tools. They each had their own style, their own reputation. Yet today, the majority of those that I meet would like to erase them, if possible.

To fit in with the masses, to be "normal", to not be labelled, to no longer be judged by this facial ID card they wear in spite of themselves.  
To be "modern".

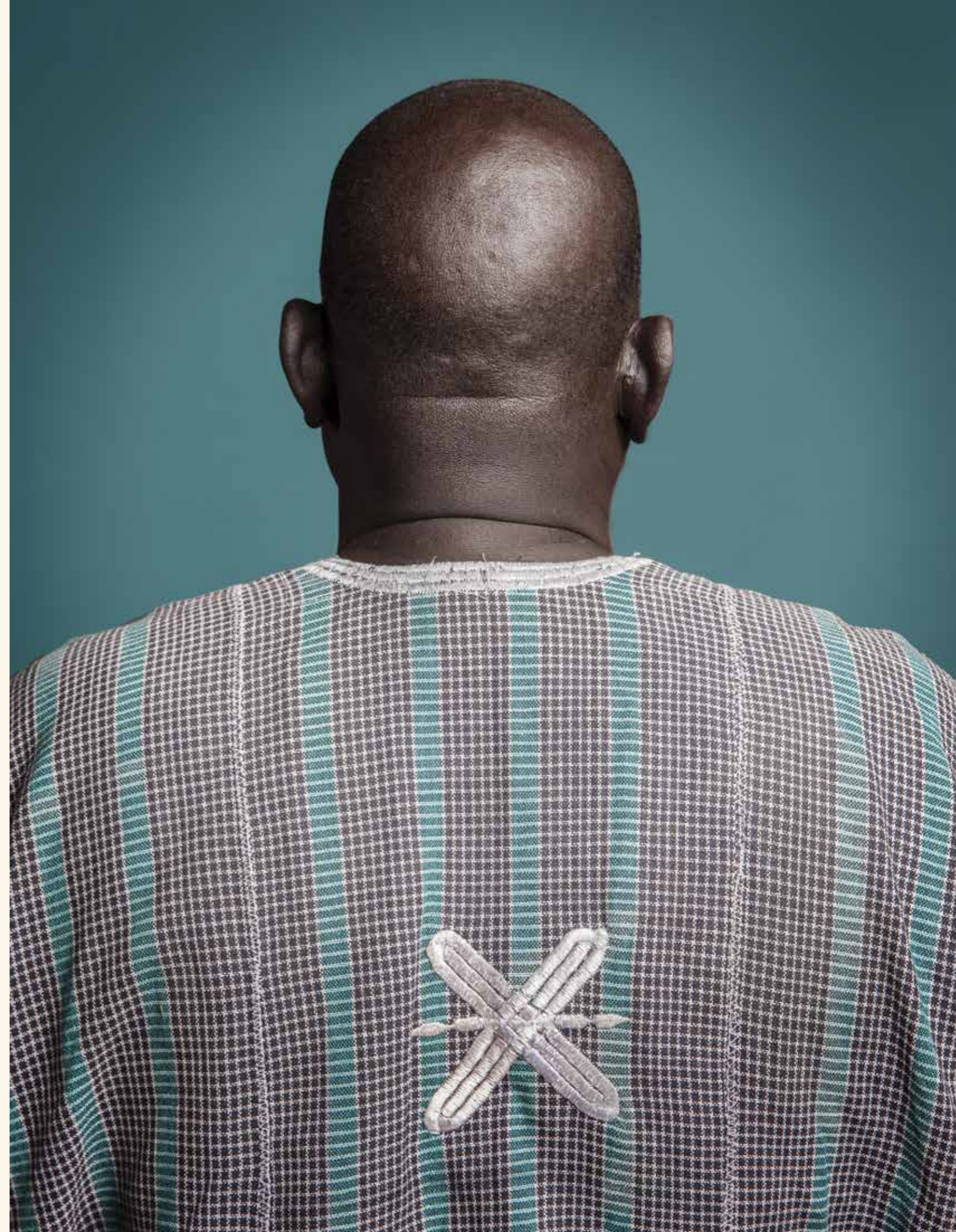
I decided to photograph them in the studio, against the same backgrounds and with the same lighting. I wanted to focus on what was most important: the shapes, the lines, and the graphics. But also capture the continuous pain, the repressed anger. With neutral stares, they all said they never had the choice.

Amongst the negatives, the scars appear white on these black faces. The negative becomes a black and white image and yet there is something different about them. A reversal of the image, the roles, the time.

The scars demand our attention. We can see nothing but them; these graphic shapes that strangely resemble the clothing patterns worn by their bearers.

This is not by accident.  
The unconscious takes over and backs us into a corner.  
The contemporary African identity; this paradox.

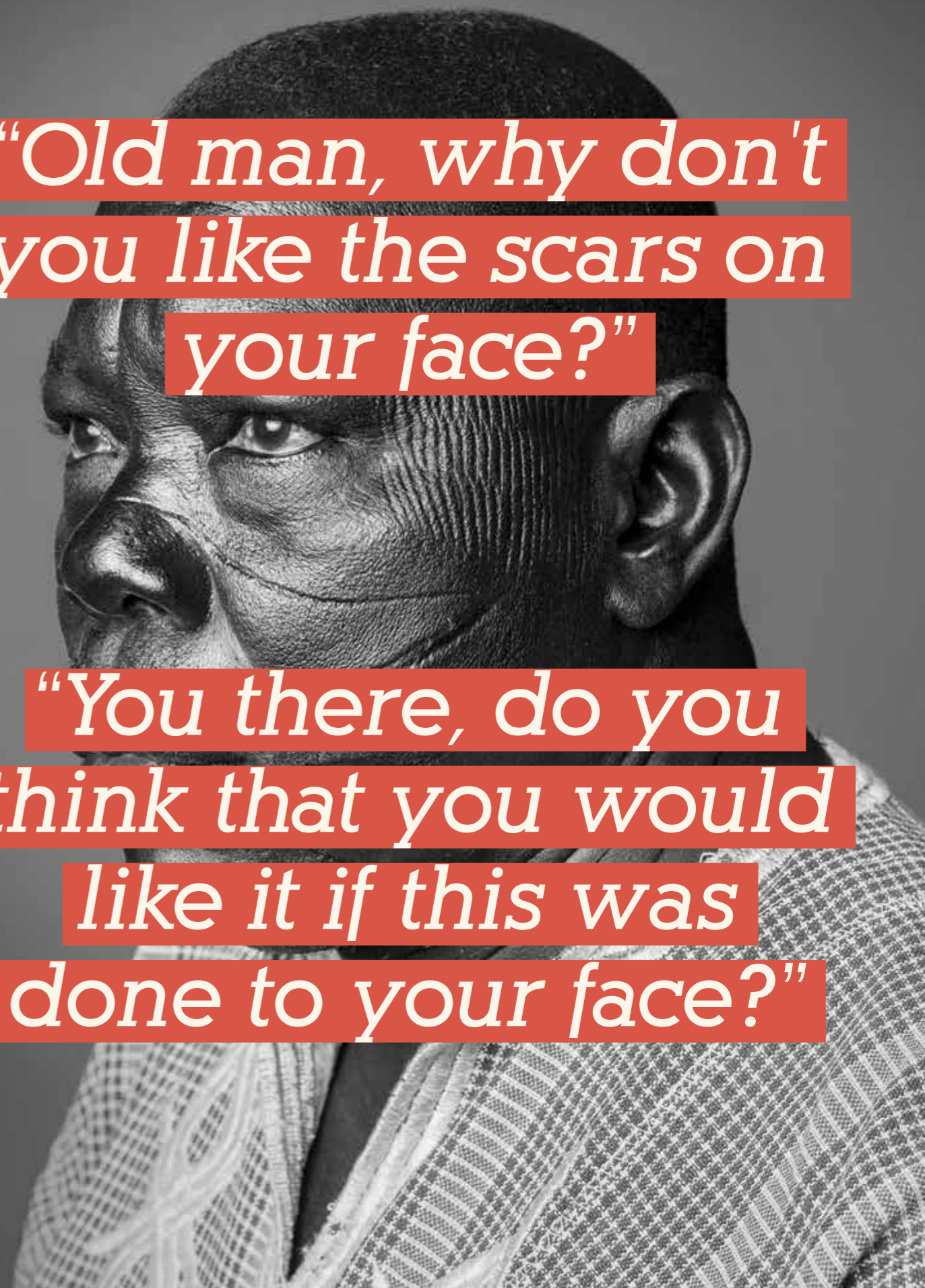
Paradox.





*“Old man, why don't you like the scars on your face?”*

*“You there, do you think that you would like it if this was done to your face?”*





I take the shortcut to ask myself if it would not be simpler to have proof of a single origin clearly marked on my face. What psychological comfort do I think I could expect? But it's impossible in my case. I would have to choose. And I don't know how to choose. I myself embody the paradox of this contemporary Africa.

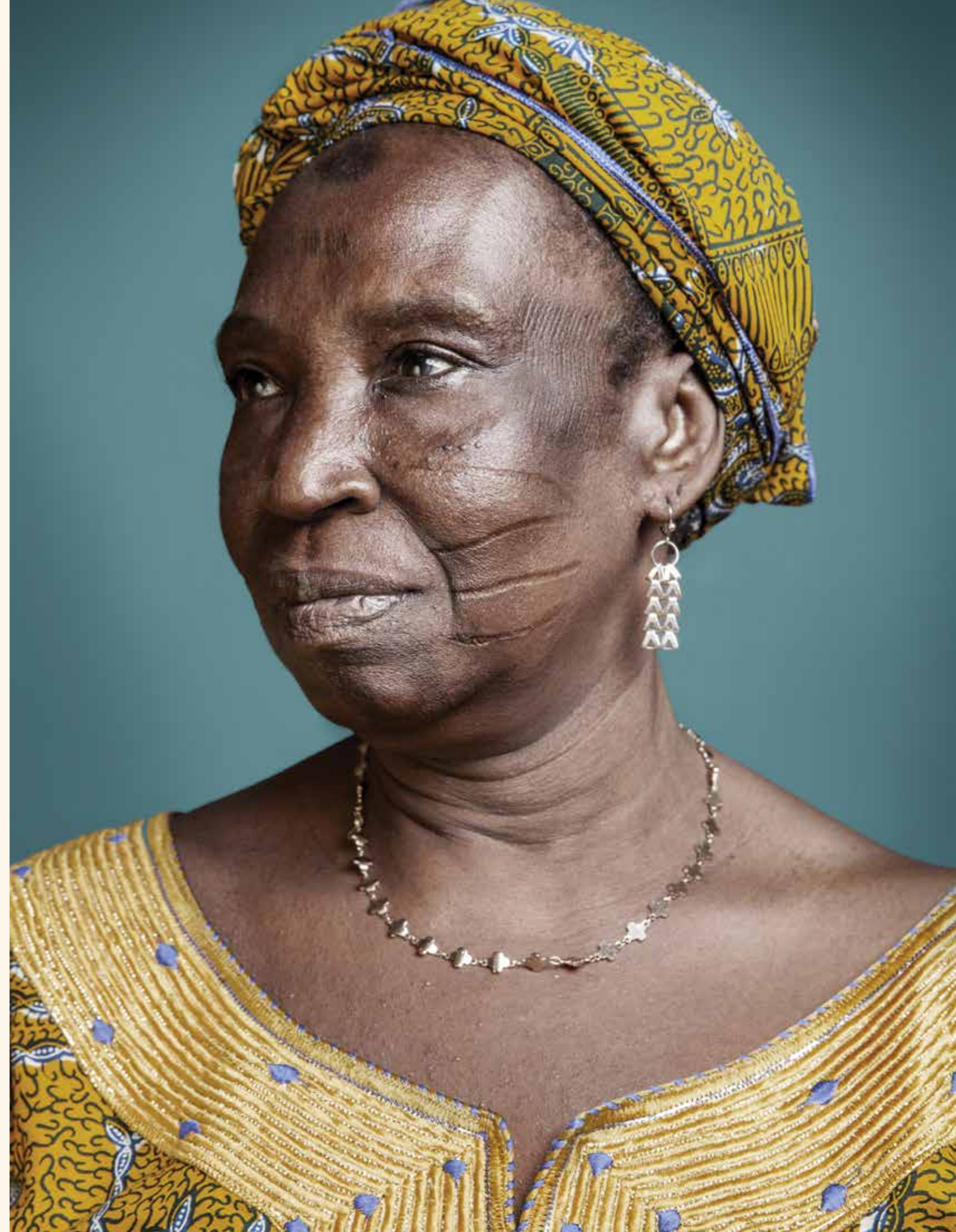
For the African woman of mixed origins that I am, this question felt like getting a whack in the back of the neck or a boomerang right in the face.

I am often perceived differently. Never how they expect me. It is easy to see the beauty in others, but when they hand you the mirror, nothing is simple anymore. How would I live with scars on my face? To live my entire life with the seal of my roots, my origins, on my face...and besides, if I could, what would I choose?

To be clearly and indelibly aware of my roots. Unequivocally. In a world where choice is omnipresent.

'Hââbré' represents the last generation living with scars on their faces. I am doing this series in order not to forget. To not forget this time faced with change. To preserve the encounter. To pay homage to the image, to the facial landscape.

By accepting this contrast, by photographing these people out of context in a studio, failing to find an answer to my questions, I chose to remember Mr. Ekra and his extraordinary "facial ID card".



# REVIVING THE ANCIENT INUIT TRADITION

---

PHOTOS – ANGELA GZOWSKI



Inuit traditional face tattoos have been forbidden for a century, and almost forgotten. Filmmaker Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, and activist Aaju Peter, are determined to revive this ancient tradition.

"Inuit underwent the most intense and rapid cultural changes of any surviving culture. While the First Nations and Metis (non-Inuit Native Americans) suffered as much or more than their arctic counterparts, their cultural changes took place over hundreds of years, whereas Canadian Inuits were colonised much later, and went "from the ice age to the space age" in one generation. As a society, we are still reeling from the transition.

Today, evangelical Christianity is a shockingly strong force in arctic Inuit communities, causing tension around discussing anything that remotely touches on the old spiritual beliefs. The Inuit that attended residential schools, the generation that had their culture beaten out of them, and had their mouths washed out with soap when they spoke their native language – these people are hurting and confused. In some cases, the mere mention of traditional tattoos is enough to send a person into a spitting rage."

Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, activist and director of the documentary *Tunniit : Retracing the lines of Inuit Tattoos*.  
[www.unikkaat.com](http://www.unikkaat.com)



< Alethea Arnaquq-Baril

*Aaju Peter is an advocate for Inuit rights to seal and sealskin products as well as the Inuit right to be involved in issues related to Arctic waters. Aaju received the Order of Canada on Dec. 30, 2011. >*



**WOONGO**<sup>1#</sup>

## HOW MASKS CAN REVEAL STORIES

TEXT AND PHOTOS – SELIM HARBI

The mask is an ambiguous and mystical object, an instrument of metamorphosis and deceit. It embodies beauty and terror, symbolises the gods, and manifests the invisible and the supernatural. It is more than a simple disguise behind which man seeks to hide, but a visible manifestation of the spirit. African civilisations have always favoured the mask's function and shape; its beauty is defined by necessity; the mask's value is based on its usefulness. At the beginning of the century the Surrealists called it "negro art", thus relegating the mask to being merely a carved head seen through the aesthetic prism, and distorting its meaning.

*(1# Woongo means "masks" in the Moré language, which is spoken widely in Burkina Faso.)*

In WOONGO people engage in subtle games to tell the story of their lives behind a mask. Exploring a fine line between documentary and production, reality emerges for a brief moment to remind us that the two worlds from both sides of the mask finally become one. What about African masks today? How are they perceived in African societies? As simple wooden objects or artefacts for worship with supernatural powers? As artwork or ornaments? Is the mask not the best tool to understand the contemporary realities of the continent considering how it has witnessed time? WOONGO introduces a broad spectrum of reflection on contemporary African reality, a sense of time, tradition and identity.



## LASSO

28

DJ Trésor mixes in different scrub and boxes of Ouagadougou, "a city that shakes butts," he says. The night is his world. He lives with his brother in a side room of the district of "Goungin" and his parents remained in the village. He dreams of producing videos clips for local bands.

Mask of the master of ceremonies

Ethnic group – Tchokwé, Democratic Republic of Congo.



## JUNIOR

24

Dancer, he hides, not without shame, his homosexuality. His true passion is sewing. At the back of the workshop where he works: a Koranic school. He dreams of "making clothes for the stars and for the poor as well."

Androgynous mask

Ethnic group – Fulani



## JUDITH

23

Student in management, she dreams of a career in fashion, finding a husband and starting a family. Difficult thing especially when "here they prefer corpulent women."

Mask of fertility SANGA

Ethnic group – Dogon, Mali



# MYSTICAL WANDERERS

CHARLOTTE PEZERIL  
PHOTOS - FABRICE MONTEIRO



The Baay Faal community, which belongs to the Murid brotherhood of Senegal, has endured stigmatization by external observers since its constitution at the end of the nineteenth century, first by French colonists. Denounced as "crazy" and considered "bad" Muslims because they do not observe all traditional worship practices, the Baay Faal, however, assert their full inscription in Sufism and have tried since the 1970s to establish their legitimacy. This goal is partially achieved today, although the community must face a new challenge: the incorporation of marginal urban and young disciples often disconnected from the maraboutic hierarchy.<sup>1#</sup>



{1# Charlotte Pezeril, « Histoire d'une stigmatisation paradoxale, entre islam, colonisation et « auto-étiquetage ».

Les Baay Faal du Sénégal », Cahiers d'études africaines 4/2008 (No 192) , p. 791-814}



**2**  
**OBSERVERS**

# UZUPIS THE MYSTERIOUS REPUBLIC OF ARTISTS

TEXT AND PHOTOS – AURELIE TOURNOIS



More than 20 years after Lithuania's independence, an exuberant Vilnius continues to grow. As soon as you set foot outside of the historic centre, entirely designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the capital is a gigantic construction site. At the eastern exit from the old city, separated by the Vilnia River, an entire neighbourhood has declared its independence.

On the river's edge, at the entrance to a small bridge beside an image of the Mona Lisa and a blue smiley, a sign proudly displays the words **UZUPIO RES PUBLIKA**. Below, behind a life-sized carved zebra, other signs are covered with absurd slogans: "The republic of apples, where they eat only apples, bake only apple pies, and drink only apple juice. No bananas, melons or eggplants!" Next to it, a portly bearded man smokes a cigarette while holding a beer.

"People here are eccentric, it comes from the spirit of the place", says Editor-in-Chief of the Uzupis Herald Tomas Cepaitis. "It's so calm that you can think freely," he adds. The newspaper in which he publishes word puzzles "in the style of Raymond Queneau", Cepaitis makes a living from his literary translations. "I don't like complicated themes, I prefer crazy stories," he declares.

Cepaitis, also Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzupis, recounts, between sips, his somewhat unusual version of the genesis of the micro-nation's constitution, founded on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1997.

He said: "At the time, our President Romas Lileikis had no hot water and asked me if he could take a bath at my house. I agreed, and offered him some tea. He was feeling so good that he began to flirt with my wife! I suggested that he write a constitution in order to get his attention."

Posted on a neighbourhood wall in 19 different languages, it reveals the character's vision. You can read 41 commandments there, such as: "Man has the right to be lazy or to do nothing at all... Cats have the right to dislike their masters, but must support them in difficult times... Man has the right to take care of dogs until death do them part." This text was created in the Café Uzupio – now a meeting place for the government – and is attached to the talent incubator, a place of residence and art exhibits.

*"People here are eccentric, it comes from the spirit of the place"*

The structure was created seven years ago in a building formerly used by squatters. Sarunas, a guitarist and singer, has lived there for a long time. He now occupies a recording studio there. Under a Peruvian hat that never seems to leave his head, his forty-something features seem youthful. He laughs when he recognises his fellow citizens being rowdy in the studios, on a video filmed in 1993 when they were in their 20s. Here, everyone knows each other, at least by face. "I like to walk down the street, run into an acquaintance, and to say hi to him with a simple handshake," he smiles.

"Uzupis is like a countryside in a city," Cepaitis likes to think. We cannot avoid ourselves or be alone. My Ministry was established with the goal of leaving Uzupis' doors open." To become a citizen, as well as take on responsibilities within the government, is within everyone's reach. "You can declare yourself Minister of the clouds or the sky", explains Algimantas Lekevicius. He chose to become head of Uzupis television.

Equipped only with his cell phone, he films every event in the neighbourhood, where he has lived since 1984. During the week, he works in the field of finance in Vilnius. But it's in his ceramics studio, next to the shelves overflowing with colourful pottery that he suggests: "When you live in such a creative community, you end up feeling the need to create something with your hands." A few minutes later, he grabs a clay hand and blows successively in the five flutes shaped like fingers with holes drilled through them, symbolising the "open mind" of Uzupis. The ritual is reminiscent of the terse answer filmmaker and poet Romas Lileikis offers to anyone who asks him about his true role in government, which is: "responsible for the wind that blows the flag".

### **A CHILDHOOD DREAM**

On the eve of the proclamation of the Republic of Uzupis, the neighbourhood is changing. At the beginning of the 1990s, 20 years of rampant crime led to buildings being deserted, attracting a new population of artists occupying the premises more or less legally. "The centre of Vilnius flourished with our taxes and they gave us nothing" denounces Lekevicius.. It was at that moment when the Republic was proclaimed. "The people felt abandoned," explains Sakalas Gorodeckis, Prime Minister of Uzupis. He adds: "They wanted safer streets."

"In 1997," Lekevicius remembers, "one of our first initiatives was to erect a Christmas tree in the main square."

For many, the former mayor of Vilnius, Arturas Zuokas, vested in 2000, was devoted to reviving the neighbourhood. It was also he and his wife's initiative to erect a statue of the angel Gabriel blowing a trumpet in the main square, now the symbol of the Republic born on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2002. He lives in a large pavilion in the neighbourhood, a few metres from Sakalas. The politician seems as fanciful as his friends from Uzupis. By typing his name in Google a video can be found in which he crushes a car with an infantry vehicle in the streets of Vilnius. A communication operation to warn poorly parked drivers - Lithuanian style.

In the middle of the 1990s, the desire to build a community was directly linked to Lithuania's newfound independence. "What the soviets tried to destroy, we rebuilt," the PM says proudly. A sentiment shared by his colleague in foreign affairs: "When I hear our national anthem, I feel very proud. It may seem ridiculous considering the size of our state but during the Soviet Union, I always took the side of the smallest countries in sports competitions.

People always take the side of the strongest; they don't want to support the losers for fear of becoming one. But our constitution states: 'Don't fight, Don't win, Don't surrender.'

For Cepaitis building his own state was above all a childhood dream: "When I was young, we went for a vacation in Pervalka, on the Curonian Spit, on the edge of the Baltic Sea, with family from Moscow. There were four of us children and we pretended to create our own state, in which I was the king. I like the idea of a monarchy. The Republic considers the people as more important than the individual. In my opinion, private life matters most."

*Algimantas Lekevicus,  
head of Uzupis television. >*





< Tomas Cepaitis,  
Editor-in-Chief of the Uzupis Herald

**"The Vilnius "hype" now wants to settle there, forcing rents up, attracting renowned artists, lawyers and financiers."**

Between a celebration to honour freedom in Tibet and the cult of Frank Zappa, admired by Lithuanians for his satirical psychedelic music, the local government rivals the imagination in the race for unusual events. Like the year when pretzels were tossed from the sky from an airship, and beer and vodka fountains were installed in the streets.

During the spring equinox, the citizens gather to go to the cinema or listen to poetry readings. "It's cold until March. When spring arrives, we are happy to meet after the harshness of winter," says Valdas, a resident who rents apartments to tourists. A few days ago, for St. Patrick's Day, the river could be seen coloured green. "These events are our way to live harmoniously," Gorodeckis boasts proudly.

Even though the people of Uzupis gather at these celebrations, Lekevicius admits that there is a loss of enthusiasm, just the same. It's a phenomenon explained by the influx of a more relaxed population, who lack initiative to renew themselves. The entire neighbourhood is a huge construction site. Boutiques pop up like mushrooms and tourism is well underway.

Diana runs a ready-to-wear and accessories boutique on the main street. She is delighted to see art galleries and small boutiques flourish: "I think that the neighbourhood is expected to grow more and more". A few days ago, a new bakery had also opened its doors a few metres away. It was an official opening that Lekevicius, smartphone in hand, was quick to capture.

## VIEWS ON MODERNITY

Is it a Utopia or a farce? Even its representatives have difficulty answering that. "Uzupis is a place to play, but it's a serious game," Uzupis television head Lekevicius declares.

For PM Gorodeckis, it's mostly an excuse to gather around worthy causes and to stimulate the creativity of the residents. The micro-Republic has its own calendar of folk festivals of a puzzling variety. The most important is undoubtedly Independence Day when on 1<sup>st</sup> April tourist passports are stamped with the Republic's visa and concerts and artistic performances are organised at the Angel of Uzupis in the main square and in the surrounding cafés.

# The Montmartre of Vilnius

AURÉLIE TOURNOIS

Walking along the eponymous main street in Uzupis, a croissant drawn on a storefront catches the eye. As soon as the door is opened, the familiar scents of macarons, éclairs and other pastries titillate the senses.

"Are you French?" inquires Dominyka, a 25 year-old employee with blonde hair, speaking perfect French. A musician, her desire is to move to Paris, where she has already lived for several months previously. The bakery is always full. Having come to live here "a little by chance," Thierry Lauvray, owner of the property, is a former Compagnon du Devoir <sup>1#</sup> from Normandy, who came to Lithuania 10 years ago.

Further along, the Bel Ami restaurant has been providing French cuisine for the past two years. The attraction to French culture is also evident in the neighbouring businesses. Diana, owner of Alice Gifts, has already visited Paris, Marseille, Avignon and Cassis.

Through the speakers in her shop, music from the songs of Edith Piaf *La vie en rose* and Henry Salvador *Jardin d'hiver* can be heard successively, and soaps from Provence perfume the room. "I'm trying to create a chic French ambiance" she smiles. Uzupis,

often referred to as The Montmartre of Lithuania is also twinned with the Parisian neighbourhood.

Even though French music concerts (featuring the accordion, no doubt) regularly take place, Tomas Cepaitis hopes for more cooperation between the two communities: "I feel a little guilty that there isn't an official French celebration in Uzupis. As Minister of Foreign Affairs I need to make that happen."

{1# The Compagnon du Devoir is a French organization of craftsmen and artisans dating from the Middle Ages, but still active today.}



## DEFYING THE POLITICAL DYNASTIES

MARINA RAFENBERG  
IMAGE - ALEXIS-FRANÇOIS MORAND

**ON JANUARY 25TH, THE RADICAL LEFT-WING PARTY SYRIZA WON THE GENERAL ELECTIONS IN GREECE, REPRESENTING A RENEWAL IN A COUNTRY DOMINATED FOR MORE THAN 40 YEARS BY LARGE POLITICAL FAMILIES AND THEIR CLANS.**

On January 25, Alexis Tsipras was cheered on the streets of Athens. The leader of the radical leftist party Syriza had just won the general election, promising an end to the austerity policies which have dominated Greece over the last five years. The cheering crowd rejoiced the party's proposed economic turning, but especially celebrated the renewal of the Greek political class; considered largely responsible for the current crisis.

At the age of 70, Kostas, a bookseller in a popular Athens neighbourhood, voted for Alexis Tsipras' party to "try something new" and "to be done with the two big parties who have been scheming for many years".

Since the fall of the Greek Military Junta in 1974, the New Democracy Party (conservative) and the Pasok party (socialist) have shared power and have been dominated by large political families.



In 1974, Constantin Karamanlis returned from exile in Paris and won the general election with his New Democracy Party. He was prime minister four times and president twice. Thirty years later, his nephew Costas also held the position of prime minister, from 2004-2009. On the right, another family made its mark: the Mitsotakis. The father, Constantin, was prime minister from 1990-1993. His son Kyriakos is a current member of the government and his daughter, Dora Bakoyannis, is also a current member holding titles of the mayor of Athens and minister of foreign affairs.

On the left, Andreas Papandreou, founder of Pasok and already from a long line of politicians, was named prime minister in 1981. His son George, the former prime minister who had to face the beginning of the crisis and accept intervention from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Union (EU), was not re-elected in the last general election.

For the first time in 92 years, his family, which has given Greece three heads of government, is not represented in the Greek parliament. An obvious sign of the change. "Giorgakis" (little George) was mocked by the Greek media.

Echoing a view held by a number of Greeks, bookseller Kostas said: "these families weren't in power because of their skills or for their desire to serve the people, they cared only about growing their money and that of their relatives".

Historian Olivier Delorme says for the Greeks in Greece and the Balkans: "the state does not belong to the nation but to an oligarchy connected abroad". Adding in this context: "It is legitimate to avoid taxes as they don't serve the proper functioning of public services; they get lost in the pockets of those who have the power from father to son".

How were these families able to stay in power for so many years? "They have always been supported by society, the media does their advertising and they managed to be pertinent during crucial times for Greece", analyses Kostas, while drinking a strong espresso.

The self-taught bookstore owner remembers the Greeks' "joy" at the end of the dictatorship. "We were happy to rediscover our freedom of expression. Prime Minister Karamanlis promised us jobs and to improve our quality of life. And it's true that throughout this period until the 80s and 90s, there was no unemployment and public debt problems were not on the agenda..." he explains with a touch of nostalgia.

"We closed our eyes to the stories of corruption and to the client state in place, because we were living well and everyone put up with it..." he admits with a sombre look, before arriving at this conclusion: "an unprecedented crisis had to happen before we could finally react against these Mafioso operations!"

***"We closed our eyes to the stories of corruption and to the client state in place, because we were living well and everyone put up with it..."***

This passiveness towards these large families and their clans is also explained by the country's history. "In Greece, clientelism has always existed", notes historian Tassos Sakellariopoulos, whose office is a few steps from the closely watched residence of former Prime Minister Antonis Samaras. Since the creation of the Greek state in 1830, the largest families of Attica and Peloponnese have been placed at the head of the state. At the end of the war of independence against the Turks, the insurgents did not gain power as it was entrusted to the economic elite.

Until the dictatorship of the colonels<sup>1#</sup>, the client state system operated with "clan leaders". "These people worked in constituencies and promised gifts to electors if they voted for their members", adds Sakellaropoulos.

### **BENEFITS UNDER THE EUROPEAN UNION**

In Greece, the electoral system is based on regional representation, while in the US, for example, members of the Kennedy family had to be elected in the different states to attain the highest positions.

Michalis Spourdalakis, political science professor at the University of Athens, explains: "With this type of scrutiny, it is easy to transfer clientele from father to son, to create clans locally. The clientelist state continues to exist a little differently, but always with this local basis.

The Papandreou family had the city of Patras (Peloponnese); the Mitsotakis, Chania (in Crete); and the Karamanlis, Serres (north)." After 1974, "the client state became more sophisticated", notes Costas Bakouris, the director of the Greek chapter of Transparency International.

The parties were present throughout society. "In the universities, in law enforcement, in the unions, party members were influential", emphasises Bakouris. He adds that without supporting one of the big parties, it was difficult for a student to get a job after university or get the best internships.

In 1981, with the victory of socialist Andréas Papandréou, the left's sympathisers were no longer excluded from the ministries and from government as was the case after the civil war (1945-1949) and during the dictatorship. "The Pasok, who wanted to satisfy its voters, hired prolifically, and corruption became democratised," says Sakellaropoulos.

*{1# Using a NATO plan to protect Greece against a communist invasion, a handful of junior officers led by George Papadopoulos, fearful of the upcoming election and the rise of the left, overthrow the Greek government and declare martial law, outlawing strikes, labour unions, ...}*

***"the major political families helped put this system in place in order to keep their parliamentary seats and to transfer them to their heirs".***

In the same year Greece also joined the EU and benefitted during three decades of subsidies or The Delors Packages, as the Greeks refer to them.

"The disastrous management of these funds often responded to clientelist causes," notes Spourdalakis. Numerous scandals were exposed; in particular the misappropriation of European aid intended for farmers but used to purchase luxury automobiles. The allocation of European funds was not controlled by the state or by Brussels.

Bakouris notes "the major political families helped put this system in place in order to keep their parliamentary seats and to transfer them to their heirs".

"Konstantinos Mitsotakis, for example, had baptised a hundred children in his region, a link that might force him to be accountable. The electors could ask the candidate to hire their children for the public telephone company," he adds.

The Greek administration's stasis also contributed to create this favouritism. "In order not to fall behind on certain issues, we used to seek the help of someone important", says Spourdalakis.

"Payoffs were also common practice," adds Kostas, whose bookstore is adjacent to a ministry and who got wind of several scandals. "To get a contract, whether it was to supply toilet paper or to build a hospital, you had to give the appropriate officials and ministers an envelope filled with money," he added.

A former employee of a large German company admits that in order to win tenders, his company was ready to disburse 2% of the contract amount to reward the politicians.

### NEW POLITICAL CHAPTER

The new Prime Minister Mr Tsipras, a civil engineer by trade, does not owe his ascension to his family. During his campaign, he played up this status and many times accused the big political dynasties of bankrupting the country and for favouring other powerful families and the large corporations. At the first cabinet meeting, Tsipras declared: "We will put an end to the conflicts of interest and turn the page on the client state."

"This is a great opportunity for Alexis Tsipras. Unlike the large political families, he hasn't had time to network locally and can truly reform the State," says Sakellariopoulos but asks the question: "Will the party resist the demands of its constituents?"

At the Syriza headquarters in Koumoundourou Place, the argument of political renewal is constantly put forward. "We have just been elected and we have not been able to implement clientele policies like the two traditional parties", states 40-something Syriza's Secretary General Tassos Koronakis.

"Until recently, all government officials were replaced as soon as there was a change of government, in order to provide jobs to relatives. Our government has not made the same mistake. Only the advisory positions were given to people aligned with the political ideas of the ministers," he adds.

But attempts to perpetuate the client state are still numerous. The Minister of Education and Culture Aristides Baltas witnessed it when taking office: "Some people wanted to approach us to establish recruiting networks and to get the engine running. Our response was clear: when we become the Pasok, we'll let you know!"

Tsipras has a daunting task. For Bakouris, if Tsipras wants to end this client state and break the bad habits, he must undertake substantial reforms adding: "the voting system in which we place a checkmark for a member from a list of candidates from the same party should be removed. There must also be more transparency in tenders and less bureaucracy".

According to Bakouris, the new government "displays a greater desire than the previous one". He remembers in particular that during the Samaras government, Haris Theoharis Secretary General for Tax Revenues was dismissed because "he was hunting the big sharks and he was told not to touch them".

## WHO IS THE KU KLUX KLAN ?

SGT. RON STALLWORTH, RETIRED

Between 1978 and 1979 I, a Black man, gained membership to the Ku Klux Klan and successfully led an undercover investigation into the Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA, branch of the group. How I was able to do this is described in my book, *Black Klansman*<sup>1#</sup>. As part of that investigation I was able to prevent three acts of cross burnings in the city over a seven month period; an act that in some cases has been outlawed in some states in the US.

To the Ku Klux Klan the act of burning a wooden cross - in my city they were planning on burning 17 foot by 13 foot crosses - is considered a sincere form of religious expression of their Christian faith. Some Klan groups (there are many) view the burning cross as a symbol of the "Light of Christ, dispelling darkness and ignorance. It is the fire of the cross that reminds us of the cleansing fire of Christ that cleanses evil from our land." On the other hand, from its very beginning, 1865, the Ku Klux Klan was dedicated to the cause of a domestic terror campaign against those they considered their enemies: northern whites who were working against the southern losers of America's Civil War (1861-1865), and the newly freed black slaves.

(1# Stallworth, Sgt. Ron (2014), *Black Klansman*, Police and Fire Publishing)



The Klan burned crosses and wore white hooded sheets in order to strike fear into those they considered enemies, especially the slaves who were known to hold strong superstitious beliefs in ghosts and otherworldly spirits. The original Klansmen sought to capitalise on this mystical belief by terrorising the slaves into believing the white-sheeted horse and riders were the ghostly spirits of the fallen confederate soldiers and their steeds, returned to an earthly form to ensure that the ways and traditions of the antebellum south were properly observed and maintained by the freed men and women. "Their white sheet impersonation of ghostly spirits continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century; though the superstitious fear was no longer paramount and was merely part of their terroristic tactics", coupled with the burning of a cross on the property of their intended victim. Both of these practices continue today.

Another paradox of the Klan's religious perspective can be observed in the words of their "naturalisation", the induction ceremony. It is replete with references to "Christian, God, Creator, Pray and Sacred." There is even a section in the oath, when inductees use part of the The Glory Be Prayer used in the Catholic Church:

**"GLORY BE TO THE FATHER  
AND TO THE SON,  
AND TO THE HOLY SPIRIT..."**

During the Klan's naturalisation ceremony the inductee will kneel before the Grand Wizard or leader and be sprinkled with what is referred to as "holy" water while he hears the words:

"...beneath the uplifted fiery cross, which by its holy light looks down upon you, to bless you with its sacred tradition of the past....I dedicate you in body, in mind and in spirit..."

The ideology of the Ku Klux Klan is a wide-ranging encompassing religious, racial, political, and particularly anti-Semitic ideology. At its core the Klan believes that whites are threatened by non-white minorities led by a Jewish conspiracy known as Zionist Occupied Government (ZOG). They are a white supremacist organisation which puts Jewish and black people at the top of their hate list.

The Klan's basic political philosophy centres on distrust of the government and a belief that "the government is more concerned with improving the lot of non-white minorities and ethnic immigrants". They hold strong to a firm conservative stance regarding the state's rights as opposed to a strong federal government; except where it concerns involvement in military affairs, anti-gun control laws, anti-gay rights, pro-life rights and no foreign entanglements that doesn't directly benefit America - supported by its constitutional mandate.

The Klan began as a staunch Protestant congregational group. They held a strong anti-Catholic bias because of that faith's link to the Pope in Rome. This was in addition to a pro-American, anti-ethnic immigrant/foreign influence. Since the 1980s many Klan members have taken to a religious doctrine known as Christian Identity. At its core Christian Identity is based on the racist beliefs that whites are the true descendants of the Biblical lost tribes of Israel and are truly God's chosen people while Jewish people are viewed in a negative light and other non-whites are considered lesser human beings.

Other Klan members have adopted a basic fundamentalist view of religion. This is an extreme belief which they believe to be Christian; a view that mankind is living in the apocalyptic end of time and will be facing an Armageddon-type battle against racial minorities and Jewish people. They are very conspiratorial in their thinking with everything pointing towards their basic world view.

The Klan also uses race in their religious doctrine to vilify black people by preaching the potential of their miscegenation with whites, thereby making the white race impure. Part of this conspiratorial belief, arguably, has seen fruition with the ascent of Barack Obama, who has a white mother and a black father, to the Presidency of the United States.

### **ANTI-SEMITIC**

Another aspect of the Klan's ideology in its relationship with black people - one so replete with inconsistencies - is that Jewish people; who they feel so superior to, are seen as having such manipulative control and power over black people. This being due to the fact that the Klan ignorantly considers black people: "unintelligent, lazy and inferior".

In *Black Klansman*, I explain how in 1978 a faction of the Ku Klux Klan, known as the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, were recruiting members through newspaper classified advertising. I answered the advert with a letter pretending to be a white sympathiser and began a seven-month undercover investigation which later included telephone communication between myself and the local chapter leader; the Grand Dragon and Grand Wizard David Duke. All three of these individuals believed they were dealing with a fellow white supremacist when communicating with me over the phone.

They took me into their confidence and revealed privileged information such as the dates, times and location of their planned cross-burnings, which my local police department was able to prevent.

The question still remains, is the Ku Klux Klan a Christian organisation, a domestic American terrorist organisation, or both? Or is it simply a 150-year-old American institution with a bastardised perspective on race and religion that continues to haunt us into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

*{2 Official Website of The Knights Party, USA}*

*{3 Akins, PhD, J. Keith; (2006), The Ku Klux Klan: America's Forgotten Terrorists, Law Enforcement Executive Forum}*

*{4 Ku Klux Klan: A History of Racism and Violence (2011), Compiled by the Klanwatch Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center}*

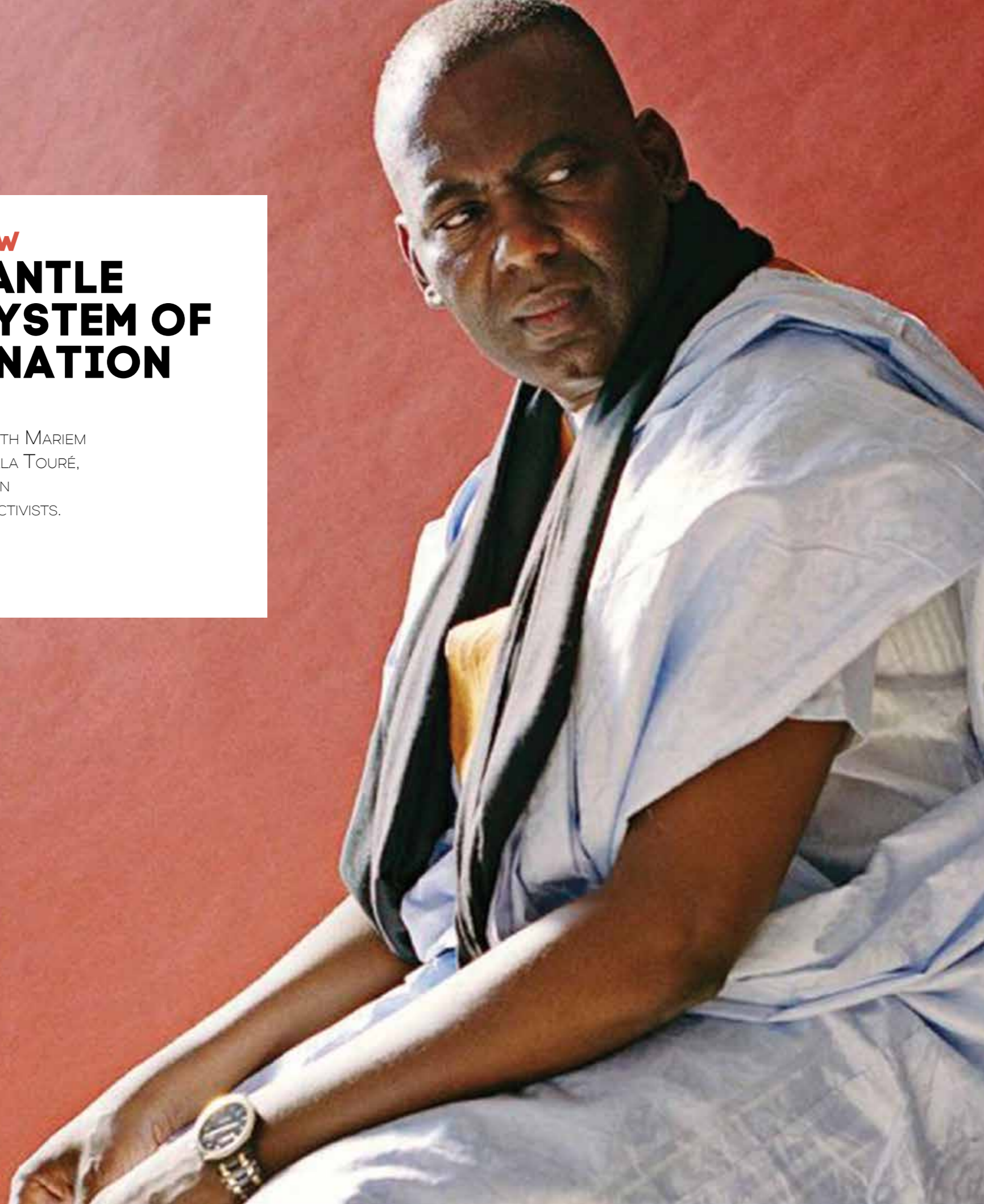
**3**  
**VERBATIM**

.

**INTERVIEW****DISMANTLE  
THE SYSTEM OF  
DOMINATION**

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARIEM  
CHEIKH AND BALLA TOURÉ,  
TWO MAURITANIAN  
ANTI-SLAVERY ACTIVISTS.

SARAN KOLY



In Mauritania, slavery is a contemporary reality. Activists are working tirelessly to change the situation. Biram Ould Abeid<sup>1#</sup>, president Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement (IRA) who was awarded a UN Human Rights Prize in 2013, has been imprisoned since November 2014. The human rights organisation Amnesty International says "anti-slavery activists are subject to never ending harassment and intimidation". Mariem Cheikh and Balla Touré two IRA officials, recently released from jail, depict a shocking situation.

**IS MAURITANIA A DIVIDED COUNTRY? WHY?**

**Balla Touré** – If it's a question of population, yes, Mauritania is divided. On an ethno-cultural and racial basis, there are three groups in Mauritania: the Haratin (slaves and former slaves), Negro-Mauritians (Peuhl, Soninke, Wolof and Bambara whose existence is not officially recognised) and Arab-Berber (Arab and Berber tribes), also called the Beidane.

*{1# Arrested on Nov. 11, 2014 when he had just joined the caravan against slavery in Mauritania,*

*Biram Ould Abeid has been sentenced to 2 years in prison for "non-armed rebellion"*

*biramdahabeid.org/}*



The continuation of slavery by the Arab-Berbers against the Haratins based on the exclusion of Haratins and Negro-Mauritanians from the circles of power (political, economics, policing and the military) has created a discord between the Beidane and other national communities. This dissension between the communities has resulted in many tragic events to the detriment of the black population.

#### HOW DID THIS HAPPEN IN THIS COUNTRY?

**Balla Touré** – State racism is rampant in Mauritania. This racism, skilfully woven at the topmost levels of the State, has resulted in unequal distribution of country's wealth and power, slavery's shameless continuance in an Islamic country, genocide and deportation perpetrated on Black Africans between 1989 and 1992, the expropriation of farmlands by the Arab-Berbers, a policy of assimilation and sociolinguistic and cultural alienation, and their consequences.

This State, which was to protect and guarantee the rights of citizens, has otherwise invested to treat Mauritania's black population as second-class citizens, by maintaining racial domination based on the Arab-Berber feudal groups. These groups are organised in companies of religious leaders, businessmen, and tribal leaders holding the machinery of power, like security and defence.

In fact, the State Racism and the exclusion of the Black communities are further aggravated by the continuing practice of slavery, despite laws enacted to criminalise this practice in Mauritania. The perpetrators of genocide and proven cases of slavery enjoy continued impunity, land continues to be expropriated, the authorities systematically block any attempts to promote and teach the Black communities' languages and cultures, and the media is all but closed to the Pular, Soninke, Wolof and Bambara languages.

This is all evidence demonstrating firm commitment of all the regimes that have succeeded in Mauritania to make our country into what many delight to call "trab'el beydhan" – a country in which everything benefits only the Arab-Berber.

Since Mauritania's independence, the successive governments' racist policies strove to perpetuate the Arab-Berber domination over all the other communities and in this, no sector is free from being monopolised: All the main banks belong to groups from the Arab-Berber community and despite many attempts, no group of Black business people has been successful in obtaining a license to create a bank, with any of the regimes that have been in power.

Also, the victims of slavery, racism, and exclusion are fed up with their lot in life, reaching a level today where Mauritania's peace and stability are threatened. Added to this is the stubbornness and persistence of racist leaders to govern a pluralistic nation unjustly: the denial of political dialogue, the state of siege, of questionable intention, which is located in the southern part of Mauritania, the intimidation of human rights defenders, especially those who fight against slavery, the lack of political will to restore the rights of victims or assignees following the events of 1989 to 1992 land expropriation, and the inhuman conditions of repatriation of the Mauritanians deported to Senegal.

## WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE HARATINS IN MAURITANIA?

**Mariem Cheikh** – The situation of the Haratins in Mauritania is very pitiful and has been for more than seven centuries, but I will limit myself to the Haratins community's suffering since the creation of the modern State. This suffering is the result of slavery that has victimised this community since the creation of the State, causing it to face extreme ignorance and marginalisation.

**Ignorance:** The reason for this is the refusal to build schools in the Haratin residential communities known as Adwaba. In the few cases where it was agreed to build schools in these Adwaba, very often the teachers were in short supply due to lack of monitoring by the authorities, and also from the harshness of life in these communities.

**Side-lined:** The proof of this systematic marginalisation is that over the past three decades and following the subsequent rural exodus caused by the drought affecting this country, some young Haratins have been able to acquire diplomas and qualifications. Despite this, the doors of the State and the public service have always remained closed to them and their material situations have not improved.

**Marginalisation:** The marginalisation of this community occurs at various levels. At the community level, in the Adwaba, they are deprived of basic infrastructure and revenue generating projects (clinics, roads, water supply, development of arable land and other micro projects such as raising poultry and farming, etc.) The second level of marginalisation impacts executives from this community who are never called upon, except for publicity purposes.

## WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE NEGRO-MAURITANIANS WHO WERE REPATRIATED IN 2008?

**Balla Touré** – The return of Mauritanian deportees of Senegal was organised as part of a tripartite agreement between the Mauritanian and Senegalese governments and UNHCR (the UN High Commissioner for Refugees UN).

Under the agreement, returnees' were to recover their civil status and documents with all their citizens rights and all goods looted during the deportations. Nearly seven years after repatriation, among more than twenty four thousand people, just a little over eight thousand returnees received parts of civil status. Most returnees groups were unable to resettle in their former villages which are occupied now . The temporary facilities that were installed are still for adequate access to vital basic services (drinking water, household energy, health).

Having borne claims several times to the incompetent authorities who have not kept their promises, in 2014, several dozen returnees, women and men, undertook a protest march from Boghé to Nouakchott (320 km). Instead of a responsible authorities' response, the marchers were greeted at the entrance to Nouakchott by police forces who repressed them with extreme violence.

## WHAT HAS TO CHANGE IN MAURITANIA? HOW DO WE GET THERE?

**Mariem Cheikh** – Our organisation was, in the beginning, founded on a moral awareness. It was based on the desire to fight the slave mentality, racism, and the contempt upon which the Mauritanian State and society was founded. It aimed to deconstruct the foundations of this decadent order who justified, through the jurisprudences of the Vigh, segregationist practices brought against the overwhelming majority of the Mauritanian population, which is comprised of slaves and former slaves, the Haratins. We aim to redefine the relationships between communities within the State, by providing greater equity to cultures side-lined by the Mauritanian Constitution, as well as history. These cultures are those of the Haratins, the Berbers, and the Bambaras. It also seeks to revive the marginalised cultures and languages of the Fulas, the Soninkes and the Wolofs.

It also backs the Mauritanian Arabic community in its efforts to support the causes of other oppressed Arabic people such as the Palestinians, among other worthy causes to defend.

The Initiative pour la Résurgence du mouvement Abolitionniste (Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement known as IRA) works for the advent of justice and equality for all Mauritanians. It mercilessly fights slavery as well as racism and other types of violations against the integrity of the human person, namely torture, child labour, contempt for women, and human trafficking. We also work for a change in power to achieve better governance in the fields of politics, economics and religion, the opposite of what we have known since independence.

The IRA did not choose who is the victim and who is the executioner. These are slaves who come to us and who ask us for help when the authorities have chosen to side with the prominent enslavers. The State and its protégés deny the existence of slavery. We note only the cases of slavery that come to us.

All Mauritanian communities share the legacy of the slave mentality, but the Beidanes, more specifically, see the fight against slavery as a real threat to their privileges, which are based on the domination and the oppression of slaves. This community therefore uses the State's resources to fight against the abolitionist movement, which continues to expand, making great headway in the cities as well as in the rural areas. Accusations of racism against the abolitionists are this community's last desperate attempt to win. They are doomed to failure.

## HOW CAN FIELDS READERS TAKE ACTION?

**Balla Touré** – readers can help our fight for dignity by disseminating information about the situation in our country in line with our concerns. Their actions can help to influence favourably first, the civil society and the decisions of international stakeholders. For example, they can initiate petitions denouncing racist Mauritanian authorities and slavery and calling for the release of our friends Biram Da ABeid, Djiby Sow and Brahim Bilal Ramdhan.

# What is your clan?

PAULA ANDRADE



## **RAMON PATRÍCIO**

57 – Artisan  
São Bernardo do Campo – Brazil

I am in the clan of the artisans; it's always great to share knowledge with younger or even older people, I have a different culture than the one in the country I live in at the moment. I enjoy meeting with people with whom I share the same roots, and also with people from other countries. Being part of a community is very important, people need to be united for a common goal.



## **PRISCILA ALVIAL**

25 – Fashion producer  
São Bernardo do Campo – Brazil

I am from the fashion clan; I like to meet people with a different style. Fashion is a sociocultural phenomenon that expresses the values of society at a specific time. In my clan, everyone is welcome! With our virtual relationship to one another we are physically disconnected, get out, meet with friends, share ideas, information, unite with your clan, the world needs more of this.



## ANDRIO CANDIDO

28 – Actor, Writer and  
Community Cultural Officer  
São Paulo – Brazil

I belong to many clans but to synthesise, I would say "peripheral artist", "artist at the fringe", sometimes I play in different artistic languages, many times it is impossible to dissociate them, but there is always a margin. Margins. We need to be part of a clan. It is impossible to live alone in contemporaneity, we are always connected, sometimes without our consent, but listen, alone we'll get faster and together we'll get farther.



## DÉRIK NOMOTO

21 – Electronic technician  
São Bernardo do Campo – Brazil

My clan is the rockers, we are a group of people that meets to listen and talk about a music we are passionate about, of course we talk about other subjects, but we are connected by Rock music. We've known each other and have been friends for years just because we listen to the same music. I think belonging to a clan, teaches us how to live together in society. We should respect what is so difficult to find these days, especially in the streets of São Paulo where we all walk through, everyday, and we all need each other to follow our paths but this is also where no one says a "thank you" when it's needed.



## MARIA JAQUELINE

50 – Hairdresser  
São Bernardo do Campo – Brazil

I consider myself, part of God's family. I am a member of a church that takes its fundamentals from the Bible. I believe that, as a legitimate daughter of God, who chose to walk on his side, I have a mission and a role on earth. I must adore God and follow his principles with all my faith and all my heart. Then I know, I will be protected from all the bad things from this life and I will be prepared for the infinite life with God. In the community, I am stronger, and I have brothers and sisters, I am not alone. I can always count on them, just like a real family.



## MARIANA MIGUEL

26 – Social Assistant and Actress  
São Paulo – Brazil

My clan is that of women, particularly black women. I am part of a collective in São Paulo called Em Alto e Bom Tom (in a Loud and Good tone). The collective organises meetings of black women who want to save and redefine the representation of the image and the history of black women in society. Through Art and a re-appropriation of Africanity as a matrix of the Brazilian black identity, we want to deconstruct stereotypes imposed by the media. We want to walk together in this journey for the decolonisation of our bodies, our hair, and our thoughts. A clan plants love, saves identity, cultivates respect and brings equity.



**4**  
**CULTURE**

.

# REDEFINE THE CLAN

6 ARTISTS FROM DIFFERENT CORNERS OF THE  
WORLD REDEFINE THE CLAN



## LA BALKANISATION DE L'AFRIQUE

Laye Samb

[WWW.BEHANCE.NET/LAYESAMB](http://WWW.BEHANCE.NET/LAYESAMB)

Illustrator - Dakar, Senegal.

My illustrations represent two ethnic groups spread around several countries in sub-Saharan Africa: the Tuaregs, "Kel Tamasheq" and the Fula. These nomadic people lived in the margin of the capitalistic system put in place by the colonisers. They ignored the imaginary borders established during the Berlin Conference\* of 1884 {1 The Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 marked the climax of the European competition for territory in Africa, Neither the Berlin Conference itself nor the framework for future negotiations provided any say for the people of Africa over the partitioning of their homelands. The Berlin Conference did not initiate European colonisation of Africa, but it did legitimate and formalise the process.}, and they have managed to preserve their cultural identity up to now.

## AFTER THE MOTHERLAND

Hoda Afshar

[WWW.HODAAFSHARART.COM](http://WWW.HODAAFSHARART.COM)

Photographer, Visual Artist – Melbourne, Australia

The sympathetic attitude towards veiled women has long created a division between the practices of Western feminists and those of Muslim 'sisters'. Grouped into a single generalised category, Muslim women are seen — and represented—as exploited, restricted and suppressed. This approach places them in an unequal relationship to First World women, and constructs Western feminists as individuals who have the 'freedom' to make their own decisions. 'After the Motherland' intends to critique such representations and hierarchical binary divisions, while tracing their trajectory in the practices of both Western feminist artists and feminist artists from Islamic backgrounds. Whereas the former often engage in rebellious acts such as getting naked in order to represent themselves as modern, liberated, and having control over their own bodies and sexualities, Muslim feminist artists often represent themselves as women who live effectively restricted lives, tradition-bound and oppressed. In this work, I aim to bring to light the socially coded forms of representing the female subject in the art world, questioning the structures in which these stereotypes are created, and giving a voice to those Muslim women—often excluded from critical debates on feminism—whose perspectives do not fit neatly into a limited narrative about oppression.







## MAORI MOKO

Eiko Ojala

[WWW.PLOOM.TV](http://WWW.PLOOM.TV)

Illustrator – Tallinn, Estonia

While living in New Zealand, I have been fascinated by the respect New Zealanders have for their nature and their land. The Maori tattoo "Moko" is a unique expression of cultural preservation. My illustration is a contemporary reflection on how "Moko", which is strongly inspired by the nature; is leading us back to the roots, showing our vulnerability and need to respect mother earth. I dedicate this work to Jimmy from Hawke's Bay, New Zealand.



## FAMILY TIES

Zohreh Parhizkari

[WWW.BEHANCE.NET/ZOHREHPAR](http://WWW.BEHANCE.NET/ZOHREHPAR)

Illustrator – Tehran, Iran

A clan is a community in which people live closely together, each person is a part of the others, whether in happiness or in sorrow. In the Middle East, and particularly in my dear country "Iran", families have very strong ties. The oldest member of the family is the head of the clan. That person is well respected. In this illustration, the chief of the clan stands higher than the others and the three lines on his face symbolise his superiority.



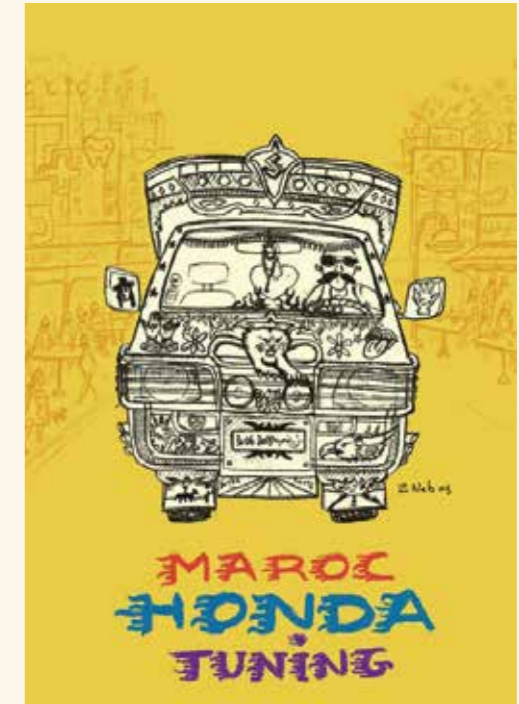
## L'HOMME SEUL ASSIS AU BALCON

Pascal Konan

[K-PASCAL.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://K-PASCAL.BLOGSPOT.COM)

Visual Artist – Abidjan, Cote-d'Ivoire

As an artist, I decided to work with e-waste. These unrecoverable electrical and electronic equipment that the world pours into our countries. I wanted to give them new life by using them in my creations. Letters represents the main character. In the background, a landscape made primarily with electronic pads. This is a reproduction of "Agbogbloshie", a suburb of Accra, Ghana, the largest e-waste landfill in West Africa. As a human community, we pretend not to see the impact of our actions. Yet we are affected. We are all marked. We are all survivors.



## MAROC HONDA TUNING

Zineb Benjelloun

[WWW.BEHANCE.NET/ZINEBENJELLOUN](http://WWW.BEHANCE.NET/ZINEBENJELLOUN)

Illustrator – Casablanca, Morocco

"Moroccan tuning" is an art designed and practiced by men, truck and van drivers. Football teams, animals, cartoon heroes, religious invocations, sometimes hearts and flowers ... They have created a burgeoning imagery that accompany them at all times on the road. The "tuning" sometimes reveals the owner's personality, but it mostly evokes a rich collective, mystical and eccentric imagination, which says a lot about the benefits and dangers of the road, especially on the men truck drivers.

## WEST SIDE STORY

# A CINEMATIC APPROACH OF GANG PHENOMENON

SOUMAÏLA SUNJATA KOLY

West Side Story successfully illustrates the phenomenon of gangs in the US. Adapted from the eponymous musical comedy, this film directed by Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins borrows from the romantic tragedy of Romeo and Juliet to address the issue of gangs that were plaguing the US in the 1950s. Beyond its commercial and popular success, this 1961 film, a 10-time Oscar winner, insightfully addresses the racial divide undermining American society. The directors have tapped into a scourge of dramaturgical issues using a synopsis based on the principle of the duel.



The Jets and the Sharks clash in a deprived New York neighbourhood. The first gang, young whites struggling to maintain control of their street, must confront young Puerto Rican immigrants. In an environment of fistfights set on a background of racial hatred, Tony falls in love with Maria and the two belong to rival clans. Maria's parents have already promised this young woman to her brother's best friend. Reviewing West Side Story makes us realise how cutting edge it was in terms of describing the changing social cohesion in our contemporary societies. The conflicting logic or identity markers prevail over the impulses of the heart.

Two hostile worlds collide, driven by a fierce desire to dominate. These ethnically homogenous adversaries find solid points of reference in this almost comfortable dialectic. The whites unite against the Puerto Ricans. The main point of friction occurs when love introduces a transgression.

***“In West Side Story, there is not a good side and a bad side but blind spots, areas of ambiguity, fragile moments that provide the pleasure of facing the human condition’s extreme complexity”.***

Diversity is a problem for each side and the lovebirds’ brief romance disrupts the trench warfare between the Jets and the Sharks. It injects the irrational and the unknown into stereotypical ways of thinking. The turn of increasingly more violent events that the coexistence of the two communities takes is an acidic satire of the US melting pot. An idealised dream became a nightmare when tested by reality. Woe to he or she who dare venture outside the pre-established boundaries. Through Shakespearian prose the directors found the essential spirit of impossible love, doomed to fail because it is faced with so much adversity. It takes many forms, complete opposition, inner reluctance, outside obstacles and uncertainties within. When the territories are so clearly defined, leaving their borders is equivalent to treason.

To emphasise the notion of one’s own space, the directors focus their camera on the colourful walls of graffiti in the name of the ruling gang. Even though the clash of egos and communities are at the plot’s forefront, there is a subtext of the confrontation between love and hate. The lovers hold hands to feverishly declare their love. During the duel the two warmongers attached at the wrists for a knife fight that will forever be one of the most awe-inspiring scenes in cinema.

Robert Wise, the film director, was able to intelligently sidestep the pitfall of Manichaeism in this masterpiece. Why do we like that which is so different from ourselves? Why since the dawn of time do we need enemies to be united? Why do we build ourselves stronger when faced with opposition than we do through association?

Alain Musset, Director of Studies at the School for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences (EHESS), rightly pointed out that the end of the movie takes place in a courtyard enclosed by a series of fences like a metaphor for the way North American society compartmentalises its different communities. According to Musset: “The dialectic between opened and closed, between public and private spaces, between the various ‘shells of man’, to borrow Abraham Moles’ term, occupy a central theme in West Side Story. The street is no longer only a setting, it’s one of the main actors in musicals. The ultimate public space, it is threatened by the rise of inter-ethnic violence and by the gang activities that take over it. Governments must recognise their inability to control this trend.”<sup>1#</sup>

*(1# 24 juillet 2006-West Side Story (Robert Wise) Compte rendu : Alain Musset, directeur d’études à l’EHESS, Groupe de géographie sociale et d’études urbaines. Les Cafés Géographiques - cafe-geo.net)*

Both in substance and in form, West Side Story is a novel approach to remind us of the ethnicisation of American society. The film's stroke of genius was to recreate on film, the impasse of violence opposing the socio-cultural components of the country in absurd jousting. The protagonists end up forgetting the origins of these almost endemic battles. During a time of a booming economy and triumphant modernism, man has returned to the Stone Age in which barbarism prevailed over reason or over the values of decivilisation.

A whole wave of violence ensues in order to gain a monopoly over a place in a neighbourhood housing the Big Apple's poorest members of society. Speaking of themes, the quality of the soundtrack, the importance of choreographed scenes and the focus on the social crisis, this feature film was a turning point in American musical cinema.

It influenced the most famous artists in the world. Some choreography in Michael Jackson's Bad video is similar to the film's most beautiful dance moments. Indian cinema, known as Bollywood because of its roots in Mumbai, found fertile ground there to depict the difficulties of the caste society.

Hip hop music also used art to stem the tide of gang warfare, especially with the "Stop the Violence" movement, a collective piece lead by KRS-One to castigate black on black crime - fratricidal conflicts that were tearing apart the African-American community. The work remains unfinished, as the most talented of the Hip Hop community, like Notorious B.I.G. and Tupac, lost their lives because of their gang affiliations.

West Side Story's artistic ideals pervaded well beyond American borders, especially in Africa where singing and bodily expression are an integral part of peaceful conflict resolution methods.

Post-apartheid South Africa, with musical comedies like Darrell Roodt's *Sarafina!*<sup>2#</sup> or Mark Dornford-May's *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*<sup>3#</sup> has also used this effective device to carry out the necessary catharsis to national reconciliation. More than ever when cinema meets music to take a clear look at humanity, art refines our morals.

*{2# Sarafina! is a 1992 South African film about teenagers fight against apartheid in the Soweto Uprising, starring Leleti Khumalo, Whoopi Goldberg and Miriam Makeba. The original Broadway production of "Sarafina!" opened at the Cort Theater in New York on January 28, 1988, ran for 597 performances and was nominated for the 1988 Tony Awards for the Best Musical and Score.}*

*{3# U-Carmen eKhayelitsha is a 2005 film version of Georges Bizet's Carmen, set in a modern-day South African township.}*



**5**  
**STYLE**



## THE RETURN OF EXOTICISM

JON ABBINK

One of the less attractive aspects of "development" in Africa is the expansion of consumerist tourism directed at what are called the "last remaining primitive or vanishing tribes" of the world. This topos of the "native tribes" is familiar from colonial discourse, which had both political and cultural aspects and expressed claims to hegemony. But in current postcolonial conditions, images of primeval indigeneity and "tribal identity" are being recycled in amazing fashions within new discursive formations, driven by tourism and mass TV viewing audiences.

The issue inevitably raises questions of a political and moral nature: political because of the enactment of power difference, moral because of the unquestioned, unreflective imposition of the foreign visitors with their desires and interests on their African "hosts", and the commodifying effects of this. There is a challenge to answer these political and moral problems raised in the ongoing exercise of cultural appropriation.

*< Stock photo © Britta Kasholm-Tengve  
Serengeti, Tanzania - October 14, 2008: Female  
tourist visiting masai village taking pictures of  
women sitting outside hut made of cows dung.  
One of the women is doing pearl work for  
traditional jewelry.*

This process of visual and cultural depiction of the exotic Other, although leading to increased face-to-face contacts and engagement between Westerners and "tribals", does not lead to better inter-cultural understandings and other such noble aims. Mostly we see commodification <sup>1#</sup>, subjection of the other, superficial, emotional exchanges, commercialisation of subaltern ethnic groups (notably in Africa), a perpetuation of inequalities, and certainly a process of transformations of the cultural integrity of the groups depicted.

People who still doubt the negative impact of tourism... The cultural others, perceived as remote from "us" in way of life and customs, yet close in their elementary preoccupations with love, sex, death, violence and the quest for excitement, are "appropriated" in a discourse that they themselves have not chosen and try to defend themselves against. This is a factual development which one can deplore or encourage, but it has a substantial impact, and more on the people on the receiving end (the "tribal groups") rather than on the visitors.

{1#- 2001 "Remarks on the Commodification of Culture", in V. SMITH & M. BRENT (eds.), *Hosts and Guests Revisited: Tourism Issues in the 21st Century* (Elmsforth, NY: Cognizant Communications Corp.): 380-390.}

The means by which this process of visualisation and appropriation is effected are: sensationalism, purposeful culture shock and commercialisation of the so-called "primitives" and their products and of the photographs taken among them <sup>2#</sup>. It is time to recognise that this is also an aspect of "development" and is even officially supported by numerous western and international (UN) agencies planning and scheming for development. The usually unquestioned assumption here is that tourism is good for development, as it raises GDP, diffuses technology, and enhances global flows of goods and people.

That the social and cultural effects of photo and film-tourism are often questionable, in that power differences increase, that new local exploitative elites emerge, that local people's behaviour inevitably changes for the worse (because they are forced to adopt an exploitative attitude toward visiting outsiders), that new western hegemonies are established (as many tourist enterprises are not locally owned), that humiliation and degrading interaction often take place, seems to be of no consequence to the economic planners and promoters of development. There is only one model: produce marketable commodities, develop trade, monetise everything, invest in material growth, build facilities, and acquire money and wealth <sup>3#</sup>.

{2# -Tornay, S. 2008 "Du corps humain comme marchandise. Mythe primitiviste et harcèlement photographique dans la Vallée de l'Omo, Éthiopie", *Afrique et Histoire*7: 329-340.}

{3# This text is an excerpt of Jon Abbink, "Suri Images: the Return of Exoticism and the Commodification of an Ethiopian "Tribe" ", *Cahiers d'études africaines* 4/2009 (No 196) , p. 893-924 [www.cairn.info/revue-cahiers-d-etudes-africaines-2009-4-page-893.htm](http://www.cairn.info/revue-cahiers-d-etudes-africaines-2009-4-page-893.htm). }

*I am not exotic,  
I got style!*

FASHION STATEMENTS FROM ETHIOPIA'S OMO VALLEY PEOPLE,  
CAPTURED BY PHOTOGRAPHER ERIC LAFFORGUE

The Omo Valley region, a two-day journey driving south from the capital Addis Ababa, is growing with new roads, large farms and local immigration. The tribes continue to live modestly, but are beginning to step into consumerism, with access to products made in China and made in everywhere else. They mix these pieces and their traditional dress with great ingenuity.







A flood of second-hand clothes has invaded Africa; Ethiopia is no exception. Purchases are always carefully chosen for their colours. Ironically, many garments are made in Africa and come back a few years later on the continent after having been worn in the West.



With rare exceptions, the tribes don't know football, only a few villages have a TV and broadcast the matches of the English Premier League. The proliferation of second hand t-shirt is not linked to a sporting passion. They are buying them to blend harmoniously with their traditional decorations (beads, necklaces...)



These Hamer girls are wearing their traditional clothing made of goatskins and beads. The young Hamer girl, on the right opted for fabric clothing. The cost is much higher but the last less than. They are seen as a wealth and fashion element.



Mobile phones have arrived in the region, the richest buy phone cards that they throw after use. The Banas and Hamers recover them and make earrings. The cards are rigid, geometric and in plastic, ideal to last.



This photographer's jacket, probably a gift, has been torn in two by the Menit of the village of Turmi (left) and the Banas (right) to benefit two people. It's practical with plenty of pockets, which makes it a valuable accessory in the region.



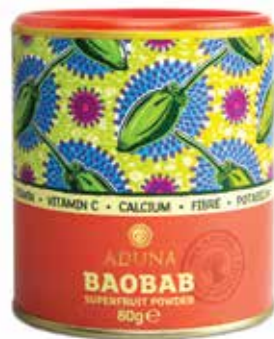
Two years ago, when I met her (photo in her hands) this Hamer woman from Turmi was topless and wearing a traditional headdress. Now, she is dressed in Western style, she only kept her necklace beads reminiscent of her affiliation with the Hamer tribe. She recently joined a church and priests ordered her to dress that way.



Two years ago, a merchant from Addis brought, without believing in it, a stock of hair clips from Turmi market, a small town populated by Hamers. The success was immediate. Since then, men and women have taken on these accessories. The plastic strips are most appreciated because of the colour, but they are more expensive.

## EDITORS PICKS

GOODS WE THINK YOU SHOULD NOTICE.



### ADUNA. FOOD FOR THE SOUL.

Baobab fruit and Moringa? We are in! Aduna means 'life' or 'world' in Wolof (language spoken in Gambia and Senegal). The logo is borrowed from a Ghanaian Adinkra symbol called "Owia Kokroko", which stands for vitality, renewal and the power of the sun. Aduna's mission? Bring superfoods and African vibrancy into the daily lives of people all over the world.

[WWW.ADUNA.COM](http://WWW.ADUNA.COM)



### TWINS FOR PEACE. WHEN IT'S COOL TO BE GOOD.

French twin brothers Alexandre and Maxime decided to make cool shoes that help children. I can already hear a cynical "ok another white saviour story", well yes they are from the West and they want to find ways, together with local partners to offer the right help to children in need. At FIELDS, we salute this. We also have to admit, it was love at first sight with the colourful GACHA collection, a unique and limited edition of handcrafted beaded shoes. Buy one pair of shoes and give one to a child.

[WWW.TWINFORPEACE.COM](http://WWW.TWINFORPEACE.COM)

#BECOOLBEGOOD



### OWL

Nicely Crafted affordable glasses designed in Berlin by three friends: David, Lars and Philip. They want you to own as many glasses as you can. Let the hipster in you take control and start the collection!

[WWW.OWLOPTICS.COM](http://WWW.OWLOPTICS.COM)

## CITIZENRY FOR THE WELL-TRAVELLED HOME.

Global nomads, this is for you! Hand-dye and woven rugs from Peru, Argentinean leather chair, Ugandan baskets! We know that your dream lair, the one you'll use as a comfy, cosy base for your global explorations, will be filled with Citizenry beautifully designed and curated home goods. Globe-trotter founders Carly and Rachel are making sure artisans are happy and high quality handmade goods reach you directly. No middleman involved .

[WWW.CITIZENRY.COM](http://WWW.CITIZENRY.COM)



## OLIBERTÉ MADE IN AFRICA WITH STYLE

Handcrafted shoes and bags use materials sourced from Mauritius, Kenya, Tanzania, Congo and Liberia and are produced in Oliberte's Fair Trade Certified™ factory in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

[WWW.OLIBERTE.COM](http://WWW.OLIBERTE.COM)





**PROFILE**  
**BENNY WENDA**

**THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE**

# WEST PAPUA – A SOUTH PACIFIC NATION UNDER INDONESIAN OCCUPATION

My name is Benny Wenda <sup>1#</sup>, I am a tribal leader as well as an independence leader for my nation of West Papua, which is under illegal Indonesian occupation. West Papua is the western half of the island of New Guinea in the South Pacific, just 250km north of Australia. The eastern half of the island is Papua New Guinea. The people of New Guinea are Melanesian and arrived there some 60,000 years ago. There are about two million people in West Papua, belonging to 250 tribes and there are more than seven million people in Papua New Guinea, belonging to 800 tribes. Each tribe is subdivided into clans of a few hundred to a few thousand people.

For 60,000 years, my ancestors lived in peace and harmony with one another on our land by ourselves but a few hundred years ago we were colonised by the Dutch. They treated my people well, building schools and hospitals and in 1961 they promised us our independence but just a few months later, everything changed.

{1# [www.bennywenda.org](http://www.bennywenda.org) / [www.freewestpapua.org](http://www.freewestpapua.org)}

"Indonesia wanted access to our country's vast quantities of natural resources" such as timber, natural gas and especially minerals like gold and copper. The Ndugu-Dugu (Grasberg) mountain in West Papua was filled with gold and has since become the world's largest gold mine. The Indonesian military invaded my country in 1962 and in an attempt to appease a communist friendly Indonesian government, the government of the United States of America succeeded in arranging for the Netherlands to relinquish control of West Papua to Indonesia; despite the fact that we were due to receive our independence.

Although the United Nations promised to fulfil our self-determination through an independence referendum in 1969, the Indonesian government rigged the vote; handpicking just 1,026 Papuans and forcing them at gunpoint to vote for Indonesian rule. This has resulted in the illegal occupation of West Papua which continues to this day. Ever since my country was initially invaded by Indonesia, my people have been suffering under a silent genocide during which time over 500,000 West Papuans have been killed.

"The Indonesian authorities look upon us as subhuman" and continue to rape, torture and kill us with no regard for our human rights. I am an eyewitness to this brutality and oppression. When I was just a child, my mother was beaten up and my aunts were raped, all in front of my eyes by the Indonesian military. When I found out about the history of my people's suffering I wanted to help to liberate my country and I became a leader for the West Papuan independence movement.

*"The Indonesian  
authorities look  
upon us as  
subhuman"*



In 2002 I was arrested on trumped up charges and was due to be jailed for 25 years, partly for raising the West Papuan national flag. I was tortured in prison and three times I was nearly killed but I managed to escape. With tears in my eyes I escaped West Papua, knowing that if I returned, the Indonesian government would surely kill me. I now live in exile, campaigning continuously with my friends and family for the independence of my country and for the freedom of my people.

I was granted political asylum in the United Kingdom and I now reside there, working to educate others about my people's struggle for independence. I also travel around the world as a spokesperson for my people; meeting with many people such as civil leaders and parliamentarians including presidents. It is my mission to tell governments, international forums and everyone in the world about the illegal occupation of West Papua and to help increase global support for my people's liberation from Indonesian colonialism.

I have recently returned from a visit to South Africa where I helped to start new chapters of the Free West Papua Campaign and gave many public talks at institutions such as radio stations and universities. I also met with several parliamentarians including Chief Nkosi Zwelivelile Mandela, the grandson of the great Nelson Mandela, who showed a strong spirit of goodwill for my people's cause and told me that he and his family would always be there in support.

It is through such continuing international campaigning that I am sharing the voice of my people with the international community; sharing our cries for help against the brutal genocide and illegal occupation which we have suffered for more than 50 years.

The wave of human rights atrocities against West Papuans is never ending. Last December five West Papuan children and a West Papuan adult were shot dead just for peacefully protesting and in January this year villagers were attacked and their homes burned down just for supporting a new independence referendum for West Papua. These constant human rights violations that continue to unfold within the ongoing illegal occupation of West Papua fill myself and my people with so much pain and suffering and we look to people all around the world to please take up our cries for freedom and spread our message globally.

There are many ways in which everyone can help to support the people of West Papua: Please tell your friends, your family and colleagues about what is really happening in West Papua. My people need as much awareness and solidarity as possible so every single new person who knows about our suffering and our struggle is very important for our cause.

Please help to build political support by writing to your elected representative and asking them to support self-determination for the people of West Papua so that we may freely have our own referendum on independence.

Please visit the website of the Free West Papua Campaign, the international organisation I founded, which is dedicated to mobilising worldwide support for the freedom of West Papua. The website, [www.freewestpapua.org](http://www.freewestpapua.org) contains very useful information about how people everywhere can take action to help to support my people's freedom struggle.

Finally please keep my people in your hearts and prayers. We are suffering under a 21<sup>st</sup> Century genocide and the illegal occupation of our country. More than one in four of us have already been killed. International support for West Papua is growing every day and my people are fully confident that one day we will at last be free, but we desperately need support from people all around the world like you to help raise our profile and advocate for our right to self-determination. Please support this forgotten struggle for freedom in the South Pacific. Support the people of West Papua.



