

Full Length Research Paper

Peasantry and economic violence in Cameroon rural milieu: An ethnosociology of the Lomié subdivision in the second decade of the 21st century

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The purpose of this article is to demonstrate that the peasant populations of Lomié, as well as rural populations in Cameroon and Africa more broadly, are experiencing a significant disruption in their connection with nature due to the economic impact of forestry and hunting capitalism entering African peasant communities. In the case of the studied villages in Lomié, it becomes evident that there is a deep and fundamental connection between the sociohistory of these communities and their methods of economic production. It is important to highlight that there is a connection between the profound cultural dynamics, including myths, rituals and mysticism within the community, and the economic production system. The introduction of forest resource management into the capitalist framework disrupts this production system entirely. Peasant economic resilience in this context should be founded on the creation of alternative economic production mechanisms, as part of the socio-economic development dimension that should accompany sustainable forest resource management. However, these efforts face obstacles due to legal circumventions. This dynamic completely undermines the potential for top-down economic resilience. In reality, the local community organization is focused on developing resilience strategies at the grassroots level. Nevertheless, there is a noticeable lack of local human initiative, as individuals often turn to alcohol and other forms of narcotics for solace. This further exacerbates the vulnerability of the socio-economic situation in the Lomié communities.

Key words: Peasant economy, socioeconomic changes, social resilience, political economic dynamics.

INTRODUCTION

In the sense of the classic economic paradigm, access to the wealth of nations (Smith, 1776) is based on the production of goods and market exchanges. Before the great European revolutions of the 18th century, access to wealth was based on land ownership. After the

revolutions, the advent of industrial society made industrialization the *sine qua non* condition for development and modernity. However, in postmodern society, with the advent of information and communication technologies, access to the wealth of nations is

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conditioned by obtaining the right information at the right time (Kiyosaki, 2014). The latter requires knowledge of new information and communication technologies. These determinants have placed economic dynamics in a global manner within a logic of global accumulation systems (Amin, 1988; Kalecki, 2010), which are paradoxical with respect to peasant economic dynamics in Africa. Especially since in many cases, the peasant environment only has nature as its resource. Furthermore, it does not favour market exchanges and does not have the postmodern tools of accumulation. Even if the peasant had them, his socialization and his way of thinking are not based on the capitalist mentality. Rather, they are based on a moral economy (Siméant, 2010; Carrier, 2018; Steinmüller, 2020) and an economy of affection anchored in a system of mechanical solidarity (Durkheim, 1893). The concept of particularism in development economics, as discussed by Mahieu (1996), highlights the importance of considering the unique characteristics of each community. Failure to account for this particularism can lead to a mismatch between the universal economic production models promoted and the well-being of peasant populations. This discrepancy arises because the economic satisfaction of these populations is often rooted in ontological values that are determined by sociological and anthropological factors. This article seeks to explore the relationship between economics, societies and cultures through empirical evidence, using an ethno-sociological perspective.

The peasant economy of the populations of Lomié is facing changes linked to the interest aroused by the forestry and mining resources of this locality. The meeting with external actors such as the State and expatriates interested in natural resources creates a reconfiguration of the socio-economic organization. This brings up to date, but in a more accentuated way, the problem of the worsening of inequalities of development, the persistence of underdevelopment and the internal mutations of capitalism (Ela, 1990). In short, in a word, it is about the vulnerability of the peasant socio-economic system of Lomié in the face of socio-economic changes. A questioning of the relationship between economy-societies and cultures calls into question the new paradigms of rural development (Tahani, 2006) in Lomié in a Cameroonian society where, the peasantry, long confronted with political and economic violence from the urban elite, becomes the place of the emergence of a decolonial activist paradigm (Gervais, 2015). In a world where Universalist paradigms such as modernization and participation in development are manipulated by the meta-powers of the capital (Leka Essomba, 2018) at the local level supported by exogenous paternalistic financiers, what can the peasant of Lomié do in the face of daily economic violence? What insight could one have of the influence of the peasant anthropological relationship on the modernist, participatory and pro-capitalist economic dynamic that has penetrated Lomié for several decades? What relationship do these socio-

economic changes have with the economic soul of the Lomié peasant? How does the social resilience of the peasant economy of Lomié operate in the face of the violent changes in the economic structuring underway?

This contribution aims to address questions that arise from the observation that the exploitation of natural resources at the community level in Lomié deprives peasant populations of their land, forests and other resources. These resources have traditionally shaped their socio-economic dynamics, as noted by Abéga and Logo (2006).

However, the first postulate is that the anthropological link which exists between these populations and their natural environment of origin is an ontological obstacle to the socio-economic transhumance advocated by the mutations resulting from contact with the meta-powers of the exogenous capital (entrepreneurs and forestry concessionaires and mining). The balance of power, if there had been the intention to create it, would be in an impossible balance given the place of capital in the socio-economic interactions of this century. Meanwhile, the dominant paradigms of Universalist dynamics in development economics contribute to further marginalizing economic particularisms, including that of the populations of Lomié, who, by way of social resilience, console themselves in alcoholism, smoking and sex, when they do not respond with resistance through circumventions qualified as illegal. This article does not look at the illegality of peasant populations as delinquency or a crime, but as a mechanism of social equity imagined in a context of vulnerability and marginalization.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this research investigation is a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative aspect involves measuring the opinions of local and indigenous populations regarding the exploitation of forest resources, as well as assessing the intensity of conflicts related to forest management. On the other hand, the qualitative approach involves gathering ethnographic data pertaining to the socio-history of the locality and gaining a deeper understanding of the interactions and social representations of community members. The study was conducted in the villages of Nlongzock, Pohempoum 1 and 2, and Eschiambor, all situated in the municipality of Lomié. We administered 100 questionnaires to peasants, conducted 16 individual interviews, and held 5 focus group discussions. These data collection efforts were preceded by documentary research and complemented by direct observations carried out by a sociologist.

Direct observations led to tangible evidence illustrating how changes in peasant activities contribute to the current economic violence in Lomié. We gained insights into this contribution to local community socio-economic development through the accomplishments of local development projects, the interactive dynamics between the local population and wood loggers, and the attitudes of the involved actors.

Five focus groups were done during our investigation in the villages located between Pohempoum and Echiambor. The focus group were mixed, including both male and female. Our objective in carrying out the focus groups was to obtain consensual information

on the opinion of local populations in relation to perspective of peasantry and economic violence from the prism of the hegemony of forestry as the main rural economic activity, to have common opinions on their experience of the relationships that they have with the foresters and finally to elucidate information which could lead to confusion when carrying out individual interviews.

The questionnaire as part of this survey allowed us to have quantified data on the relationships between wood loggers and riparian in the villages located on the Eschiambor-Nonzock axis. This helped to measure the information relating to rural economic violence in Lomié, the opinion of the local actors concerning social forestry as well as the degree of their involvement. It equally helped to measure the facts relating to the mutations of peasantry, the involvement of the local population in the sustainable exploitation of forests, the proportion and category of people within local populations directly benefiting from the mechanisms of the social dimension of forest certification.

RESULTS

Ethno-historiographical approach to peasant economy in Lomié

Many authors have been interested in the history of Cameroon from a holistic stand point. Ethno-sociohistory is also an interesting approach which has not been taken into consideration concerning some localities of this country. For the case of Lomié, which is a subdivision in South-eastern Cameroon, the etymological and ethnomic approach of the locality and its villages is not available in the literature. That is why from field data resulting from interviews (oral sources), this ethno-sociohistory is done and can be completed by other researchers.

Etymological and ethnomic approach to Lomié

A man named Mindjala, originally from Pohempoum which means “path of the white skin”, visited his maternal uncle. He offered him a meal of weasel meat, also called “mi” in the local language. He insisted that his nephew consume the head “lo” in the local language. From that moment on, Mindjala began to be called by a new nickname “Lomi”, that is to say, the one who ate the head of the animal “mi”. In 1924, the Germans arrived in eastern Cameroon and first settled in an area north of the current town of Lomié, where they encountered a warrior leader, who killed white people and ate their flesh. In the flight of this cannibalistic chief, they settled in another area in the south of present-day Lomié where they found a hospitable chief named Lomi; ancient Mindjala. So, they asked their new friend Lomi to show them a better location than the one where they had settled. Lomié led them to a plot of land where he cultivated his fields, on the current site of the town of Lomié. From then on, the Germans named this place after the donor “Lomi”, and the name later changed to Lomié. From there, they continued the fight against the cannibalistic warrior leader, whom they captured and hanged in front of the

court of the current sub-prefecture of Lomié. There is currently a tree in front of the Lomié sub-prefecture; it is said that this tree is a regrowth of one of the cannibal warrior chief's hanging poles. This is why this tree is still called the “hanging tree” today.

This story highlights two interesting factors for the intelligibility of the traditional foundation of the peasant economy in Lomié. The first, which falls within the field of domestic economics, concerns the meaning and symbolism of bush meat, including the place of hunting in the maintenance of social relationships. Ethnologically there is a way of consuming bush meat in Lomié, a way of offering it as hospitality and a way of accepting it. This is the reason why traditional hunting rituals were developed to maintain this peasant economy. This relationship is far from the commercial relationship at the origin of hunting capitalism which developed there during the encounter with the outside world and the consequent poaching. The second concerns protection against any external threat which has pushed some of these populations into sometimes inhumane practices. However, it must be recognized that practices that could be considered barbaric were security recourses for deterrence.

Ethnomic sociohistory of the Pohempoum village

The Pohempoum village is made up of the Nzime and a few Baka¹ who arrived there by alliance or by service. The word Nzime comes from Nzim, which refers first to amazement and then to a patience which tends towards laxity. The people of the Pohempoum village are therefore naturally a peaceful, welcoming and very hospitable people. They go shopping and sell their products in Lomié. Among the economic income products, the populations of Pohempoum have a rubber plantation, the latex of which is exploited for the community, a community forest of 5,000 ha and produce agricultural fields. They also live on bush meat and fish bought at the fish market. They also go to school and to work for those who work in sawmills. The village borders to the south with the village of Doumezoh and to the north by the village Biba 1, which is also divided into Biba 1 and 2. However, the village Biba 2 was deported on the road to the commune of Messok. The Nonzock camp is an old hamlet in the village of Pohempoum. We were able to identify four small shops and an unused shopping center. The two villages of Pohempoum have a population of around 1000 inhabitants, living from forestry, agriculture and artisanal hunting. There is a primary school in Pohempoum 1 and a project to build a nursery school is in sight in the village Pohempoum 2. The two villages of Pohempoum are separated by a small river.

¹ Pygmy group of people living in eastern Cameroon.

Chief Lomié was succeeded by his heir, Chief Mabiga Jean, who had been established as 1st degree traditional chief. Upon his death, he was replaced by the current Chief Mabiga 2, who assumes the function of 2nd degree Chief and is in the process of becoming 1st degree Chief of the Nzime canton.

Ethnomic sociohistory of the Baka camp of Nonzock (Moukougouya in Baka language)

Nonzock or Makongouya in Baka means the elephant track. This name was given because there were many elephants passing through that community. The Baka of this camp first lived in the Bantu village of Biba 1 with the Nzimé. The arrival of the road on the Pohempoum side pushed these Baka to mobilize in the current area of Nonzock in the 1990s, with the aim of moving closer to the road. The Baka of Nonzock is from the Yé Makomba lineage and their wives come from the Yé Silo lineage. This camp has a population of around 70 people and is completely excluded from sustainable forest exploitation. However, we involve them in this research work because they live near FMU 10037 and are often in conflict with forestry operators. We will return to this conflict in the chapter reserved for the inventory.

Ethnomic sociohistory of the Eschiambor village

The term 'Eschiambor' is derived from the Nzime word 'Esiénbot.' 'Essien' in Nzime means 'gathering' or 'union,' and 'Bot' refers to 'men.' Translated literally, it signifies the 'gathering of peoples' or 'union of peoples.' This village was established in 1885 by an individual named Sankanla, who hailed from the village of Mpan Kobéra near Yokadouma.

Sankanla's elder brother led a war against the people of Yokadouma, which they ultimately lost, leading them to come under the authority of the chief of Yokadouma. Unwilling to live in servitude, Sankanla left Mpan Kobéra and settled near a crossroads on the present-day site of Eschiambor, a name that originated from the German pronunciation of the village.

Over time, this crossroads evolved into a popular gathering place, eventually becoming a periodic market. It was this coming together of a diverse mix of people that gave rise to the name Eschiambor. Following Chief Sankanla, the village of Eschiambor has been led by several chiefs, including Chief Mandim, Pa Ndjomo, Chief Assama, Baga Paul, Mbga Christophe, Chief Olene and the current chief, Mingamayé Daniel Herbert.

The residents of this village primarily engage in agriculture, forestry, hunting, and fishing for their livelihoods. The village has a public primary school and an Integrated Health Center established by the State of Cameroon. In 2014, the Community Forest partially supported the Integrated Health Center's equipment and

funded the salary of a parent teacher at the primary school. Social changes in these communities have been documented by researchers like Ahmahan (2017), Balandier (2004), Koffi (2007) and Bendjelid et al. (1999), shedding light on the impacts of logging dynamics (Tönnies, 2015; Cohendet and Diani, 2003). These changes can be seen as both opportunities and challenges for local development, as discussed by Bourque (2008).

Peasantry as the main economic activity of Lomie

Forestry, due to its scale and the perception of satisfactory remuneration for farmers, has become the primary choice for the majority of young people in Lomié, as noted by Essaga in 2016. It now dominates the economic activities of peasants, running in parallel with agriculture, which is mainly undertaken by women, as well as informal trades in small local shopping centers, such as motorcycle taxis and small-scale food product vending. The latter is often practiced by students when they are not attending classes. Another activity that engages various segments of the population in addition to forestry is the production of charcoal.

Three Forest Management Units (FMU) (FMU 10,036 and FMU 10,037 belonging to the SIM [Société Industrielle de Mbang]² and FMU 10,041 belonging to Pallisco-CIFM) cover the site chosen for the study in addition to the community forests (mainly that of Pohempoum). The choice of these FMUs respected the desire to work with a forest operator with a stable forest certification system and another without a forest certification system for the moment.

The FMU 10,036 measures 65,055 ha and was allocated to the SIM in the 2010s. It was put into operation in 2014 after an environmental and social impact study which had been carried out by the consulting firm Rainbow Environmental Consult (REC). It is located to the South-East of Lomie and borders the villages located between the Municipality of Lomié and that of Messok. Its main entrance is located at the village of Eschiambor. FMU 10 037 measures 51,685 ha and adjoins FMU 10 036 to the west. It was allocated in 2000 to the logging company KIEFFER.

The latter will soon transfer it to the AZIM Company, which will in turn pass it on to the logging company called INGENIERIE. The SIM which is its current owner will therefore buy it from INGENIERIE and is its fourth owner. The villages in which we worked and which directly border FMU 10 037 are Pohempoum 1 and 2 and the Baka Hamlet of Nonzock. FMU 10,041 measures 64,961 ha and is located between the municipality of Mindourou and Lomié. It was awarded in 1997 to the logging company Pallisco-CIFM which operates it till this day. The villages

² SIM is a French acronym which means "Mbang Industrial Company".

located on the Eschiambor-Kongo axis are all bordering this FMU. The village in which the work was done is located on the axis of the Eschiambor village. The Malen village was also included in the study. FMU 10 041 was certified in 2005 by the accredited Organization for Wood Legality (OWL) called BVQI-Eurocertifor and in 2008, it was certified by the Bureau Veritas Certifier which is the Forest Stewardship accredited organization Council (FSC) in Cameroon.

This hegemony of forestry in peasant economic production calls into question the field of political ecology (Buttoud, 1995; Boutinot, 2014; Arnould, 2002; Barhod, 2001) for better participation of populations (Cissé, 2004; Ndiaye et al., 2010). Peasant communities who thought on the basis of customary law must now negotiate their space for peasant economic production with other actors including the State, owner of all land, and concessionaires (Joiris and Bigombe Logo, 2010). From now on, populations must be involved, yet they anthropologically maintain a relationship of usufruct with this nature (Joiris and Bigombe Logo, 2010).

Lomie: A forestry that disowns and divides

At the Eschiambor village level, the President of the CPF told us that, *“The SIM does not collaborate with the populations. We wrote them a letter requesting collaboration after the overlap that occurred in 2014 between the boundary of the FMU and that of the community forest. They didn't react. They don't want to collaborate with us”* (Interview of January 22, 2016, Eschiambor).

In fact, the Mbang Industrial Company, when it launched its exploitation activities on FMU 10,036 in 2014, was obliged to create a road passing through the Essienga Mileme community forest in the Eschiambor village. This road also destroys fields of local populations and, moreover, there is a problem of boundary overlap between FMU 10,036 and the community forest. This then revolts the local populations and gives rise to an open conflict which will result in the loss of 36 ha of community forest for the villagers in reward as compensation for 400 sheets of metal. Table 1 shows the responses from the different opinions that collected the dynamics of relationships between foresters and local residents.

The current state of relations between Loggers and Riparian, the first observation on the basis of the data presented in this table is that the responses reporting the existence of conflict are predominant. Because 69% of people describe these relationships as conflictual compared to 31% who think that there is harmony between Loggers and Riparian on the Eschiambor-Nonzock axis. This situation is explained and understood better when we consult the results of the interviews carried out in the field. Table 2 presents the responses of

the populations to the question: “Are the operators carrying out development projects in this village?”.

Looking at Table 2, the vast majority of the population believes that forestry operators do not invest enough in the development of local communities. The proportion of people, who answered “no”, 59%, is much higher than the 37% who answered “yes”. It was noted here that the 4% of those without answers are women. Looking at the distribution of responses according to the villages, we realize that in the Baka camp of Nonzock, everyone believes that forestry has never carried out a project in their area. And direct observation on the ground did not point out any achievements in the camp; with the exception of the road which was recently opened by the SIM and its partners to evacuate the logs from FMU 10 037 and which connects this camp to the village Pohempoum 2. However, their accusing finger does not point at the Logging operators, but at the Bantu populations of the neighbouring Pohempoum village. To this end, Mr. Ambassa Jean, Chief of the Baka Camp of Nonzock (Interview conducted on January 13, 2016 in Nonzock) said:

“The people of the village say that the forest is not for us. They cannot give us the metal and the money from the forest. What we don't want is for them to cut off the Mbalakala and the Mabi. We eat the Poh. That's what they cut. They don't even tell us”.

This accusation may have some basis. The second evening of our stay in Pohempoum; nearest neighboring village to the Baka Camp of Nonzock, we were sitting in a bar/shop not far from the village crossroads and a debate on colonialism was started by us. A resident of the village (field notebook, Pohempoum, January 16, 2016), defending the determinism of the superiority of whites over blacks, used the following terms:

We cannot compare ourselves to white people. Between white and black, it's like the Baka and us. We are superior to the Baka. It was God who made it like that. It can't change. God has given us everything we need to rule over them. Even as they already refuse to be called Pygmy; because they say that they are already more developed than animals, the truth is that they are for us as animals are for them. They surpass the animals and we also surpass them. This is the same way white people overtake us.

This type of declaration is part of the paradigm of the colonial roots of current forest management (Bigombe Logo et al., 2020).

However, it must be recognized that this camp has a chiefdom and is adjacent to FMU 10037. This means that the loggers could have dealt directly with the Hamlet.

Another Baka, originally from Payo whom we met in Echiambor told us that, *“The people there deceive us*

Table 1. Responses on forest/riparian relationships.

Sex and age	Responses		
	Harmony	Conflict	Total
Men (Above 50)	8	20	28
Women (Above 50)	8	3	11
Men (Below 50)	13	35	48
Women (Below 50)	2	11	13
Total	31	69	100
Frequencies (%)	31	69	100

Table 2. Numbers and frequencies of responses from populations on the action of Foresters on local development.

Village	Responses			Total
	Yes	No	No response	
Nonzock	0	12	0	12
Pohempoum	0	28	4	32
Eschiembor	37	19	0	56
Total	37	59	4	100
Frequencies (%)	37	59	4	100

because we are the Baka. The farmers and people of the village are all Nzime. Can a Nzime cheat a Nzime? Even though we work in the forest, they don't pay us well. But, we are happy. I work like this in a Nzime's field. How are we going to do? » (Interview of January 23, 2016, Payot).

It should also be noted here that the very day we arrived in the Pohempoum 2 village, we observed a remarkable scene. The chef's wife served us food, and then a gentleman came in and sat down. The chief explained to us that this was his son-in-law. We called him to come eat with us and he asked us to start, he was going to join us. A few moments later, two Baka came and sat on the bamboo bed next to the door. We wanted to call them to come and eat, but were caught by hesitation. After a few minutes, the chief's son-in-law went out and returned with two snags of tough grass stems. Naive as we were, we asked him if he wanted to go and set traps with these sticks. Laughing, he answered yes.

Afterwards, the Chief's wife entered and the latter spoke to her in the local language. She responded violently, signifying her rejection of the idea. So, this is how the Chief explains to me that these Baka had taken the money from the chiefdom to clear the land and they did not finish their task. That's why he wanted to nag them, but since the mother refused, they can leave. This scene allows us to understand the power of a Bantu chief over the Baka, even when they have a Baka chief. The real issue here is a Hegelian fight to death for territorial recognition (Fukuyama, 1992) and an appropriation, even if imaginary, of "lands without masters" (Bigombe Logo et

al., 2020) of the 21st century.

At the Pohempoum village level, it was noted that out of the 32 respondents, 28 estimated that forestry concessionaires do not carry out projects for local development. Which makes a percentage of 87.5% and those who answered yes are only 4/32, which makes a percentage of 12.5%. However, those who answered no mostly specify that it is the income from the Community Forest that helps to buy the roofing metals for the modern houses. Even the Annual Redevance Fee (ARF), they do not know where it is going.

At the level of the Eschiembor village, it was realized that there are more "yes" than "no". The first have 37 votes out of 56 that make a percentage of 66.07%. While the runners-up have 19 votes out of 56 that make a percentage of 33.93%. We would like to point out here that all the people who have recognized that forestry operators are carrying out projects insist on the clarification that it is Pallisco which is collaborating with the village. Since Pallisco has been operating FMU 10,041, of which the village Eschiembor is bordering, there has only been one problem of overlapping boundaries between this FMU and the community forest in the year 2007. When the complaint was received to the Pallisco administration, it quickly compensated with an amount of one million francs. It is true that this overlap caused the loss of 70 ha of the Essienga Mileme community forest, which belongs to the Eschiembor village. On the other hand, relations with the SIM are very negative from the point of view of the populations. By the way, the village chief of Eschiembor said:

Table 3. Opinion of the population on satisfaction with logging companies.

Village	Responses			Total
	Satisfied	Unsatisfied	No response	
Nonzock	0	12	0	12
Pohempoum	4	28	0	32
Eschiambor	14	37	5	56
Total	18	77	05	100
Frequency (%)	18	77	05	100

SIM people are bad guys. They don't even consider us. They have two FMUs here, 10036 and 10037. They do not collaborate with the populations. To reach FMU 10036, they must pass through our community forest. Unless they take a plane to land there. By creating their road, they destroyed our fields and passed through our community forest. We asked them to compensate with 600 sheets of metal. They only gave 400. When they started their operation, they cut down the trees from our community forest over an area of 36 ha. We sent letters of request without follow-up. We even filed a complaint with the sub-prefect; because the forestry administration is complicit and does not want to do anything. They came here to break up my house with their truck and refused to compensate. We don't know what to do anymore. They even refuse to employ young people from the village in their logging work. They want to build their sawmill here in the village, we asked that they do it here so that the day they leave, we can benefit from it. But they prefer to do it in the bush three km from the village. They despise us so much and since they have a lot of money, we can't compete with them. (Interview of January 22, 2016, Echiambor).

A notable of the village gives his position by saying: *"What we are going to do is that we are going to block the road one day so that they no longer pass through our forest. This way, we'll see how they're going to do with their trucks. Because we are overwhelmed"* (Interview of January 23, 2016, Eschiambor).

All these complaints date back to 2014 when FMU 10036 became operational. However, we have consulted the document on the environmental and social impact study of the operationalization of FMU 10036. It would therefore be for the respect of the conditions of sustainability on the environmental level that the SIM wants to move away the sawmill of the village. During an interview with Mr. Abono Emmanuel, we learned that the land on which the SIM is currently installed is also the subject of a conflict and because of the populations of Pohempoum who lived there. When AZIM arrived, he did not know how it happened for this land to be declared neutral. The populations made requests which were unsuccessful, to the point of getting tired and giving up. We were also interested in capturing the opinions of local populations on their cohabitation with logging companies

on the one hand and their satisfaction with forest exploitation on the other. Table 3 presents the results of this opinion survey.

A simple reading of Table 3 shows that not all the Baka interviewed are satisfied with the way in which the forests are exploited. They tried to understand their reasons and they made us understand that it is because they do not benefit from the forest in the same way as others. The Baka believe that they are side-lined in the sharing of forest assets. They are only called to be forest guides. Due to their migratory movements, the Bantu believe that the Baka do not have a forest. No Baka from the Nonzock hamlet³ has had benefited from the sheet metal that the commune often shares, through the Peasant Forest Committee (CPF). Furthermore, during the focus group discussion that we held in Nonzock, all the baka affirmed that they are never consulted when a company wants to come and exploit a forest surrounding the hamlet. However, the fruit trees most prized among the Baka are among the most sought after by Loggers. The Baka uses Moabi to make Shea oil, to eat the fruits and to treat several illnesses using the bark of this tree. Padouk would also be a medicinal plant; because its red sap is boiled and consumed to strengthen the hematocytes in the body.

However, during an interview with a sawyer from the Lucas mill, he told us that the species that his company and that many other companies are looking for are: Sapelli, Iroko, Douchier, Padouk, Samena and the Moabi, the ayous... The Moabi is increasingly becoming an endangered species, although it is a non-timber forest product (NTFP).

In the Pohempoum village, 77% of people responded that they are not satisfied with the way the forests are exploited. From observations, there is small village elite that manage forestry in Pohempoum. Those who are not part of these village elite feel marginalized and dissatisfied with the management of forestry benefits.

During the focus group discussion held in Pohempoum, there was a serious disagreement between the two strategic groups. This revealed problems in the

³ In Cameroon, a hamlet is a small village in which a community of pygmies live. It is generally an appendix of a sedentary population's village since pygmies have essentially been nomadic in the past years.

management of forestry funds at the village level. Some of these populations are also dissatisfied, because they think that the Forest People Committee (FPC) should redistribute funds at the village level. However, the FPC has opted for the policy of improving housing. Thus, almost all of the existing tin houses in this village are almost built and handed over to the current owners. The strategic group of the marginalized also believes that the choice of beneficiaries of these sheets of metal is not fair. This group is therefore not in direct conflict with the forest concessionaire, but with the people who are in direct contact with this concessionaire. In conclusion, we note that there is a predominance of conflict in forester/river relations. This conflict leads to secondary conflict within the local population.

About the intra-community conflict from peasantry economic violence

The communities of Lomié are hierarchical and are each headed by a village chief. The village chief is surrounded by notables and a few active people who occupy positions of responsibility within village forestry. The latter have the responsibility to defend the interests of the populations at all levels where they could be challenged. It is then this core which is in direct contact with the logging companies. Faced with the conflicts mentioned, this core often finds itself unable to manage the balance of power with the forest concessionaires; who have significant financial resources and an important relational network within the authorities and the state administration of the subdivision of Lomié. This situation pushes them to symbolically renounce their responsibilities towards the populations they are supposed to represent. The compromised core leadership is looking for ways to create and maintain a hypocritical relationship with some of these companies, with the aim of receiving some donations from them.

However, what they receive is not enough for redistribution in the village. They then grab it and share it among themselves, excluding the majority of the populations. For example, we learned during a focus group in the Pohempoum 2 village, and he said this before the Chief himself, that this chief and his direct hierarchical authority took a sum of ten million from the Geovic Company⁴, in compensation for the destruction of the village's community forest for mining, which they shared with the city authorities, while excluding the vast majority of the village population.

The majority of the village population, feeling marginalized, engages in tacit or implicit opposition to all the actions of the small village elite that often leads to minor acts of rebellion and the cowering of the marginalized. The latter then become hostile and

repulsive to any community regrouping initiative. For example, we were chased away by a man from the Pohempoum village because we had been welcomed by the chief.

In the Eschiambor village, we cited the case of three women who told us that the small village elite shares the metal sheets and other forestry goods among themselves, while rejecting these women because they are not married. Furthermore, we encountered a clan war brewing at the border with the Malen village. There is a small Kako group there, who arrived there by marriage decades ago and who now consider themselves to be from the Eschiambor village. The latter are excluded in the redistribution of forestry goods because the Nzime populations believe that these Kako are from the Malen village and must return home. A member of the Kako group (Interview of January 24, 2016, Malen) told us:

My children were kicked out of school. I went to see the President of the CPF to give me the money for my children to go to school, he refused. They say that we are the Kako and that we should not receive any money from the forest. Look, they have houses made of sheet metal and they refuse us sheet metal. We'll see if we're not from this village. We're going to show them.

When we arrived at the Eschiambor village crossroads, during a focus group, a retired teacher raised this problem. Our visit to the area coincided with the contact tour of the Governor of the Eastern Region. A notable suggested: *“As the Governor is coming there tomorrow, we must end this Kako problem once and for all. We have to go there with machetes so that the Governor sees that we are angry”*

The Baka of the Nonzock hamlet told us that they have no problem with the forestry operators, but it is the Bantus who refuse them the benefits of forestry. This disintegration of internal social relations (Durkheim, 1893) often calls for recourse to meta-social weapons of battle. We notify here that the wife of a village chief, in a distraught situation, came to confide in us saying:

My son, if God ever helps you, knows that you have a family here. I go to the field very early and come back very late to send my children to school. My husband was in charge when he wasn't the boss. We had all our children when he wasn't yet a chief. Since he became chief, they have spoiled him. All his money goes into drinking. He doesn't even take care of his family anymore.

The first daughter of this chief also told us that she went to the bush to cry for days at the start of the 2015 to 2016 school year because she was not enrolled in school, while her father had money and just drank with it. After a focus group, a villager, speaking about his leader, told us that the latter is incompetent. Because he had been mystically spoiled.

⁴ Geovic is an iron exploitation company.

DISCUSSION

It was acknowledged that the reports of the populations are made up with the weapons of the weak according to Scott (1985). In their everyday forms of resistance, rural class use tactics including sabotage, foot-dragging, evasion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance and slander. Scott argues that peasant rebellions can only be understood in the light of a peasant system of values which is irrevocably linked to their subsistence requirements. In *Weapons of the Weak*, he takes up a similar subject, this time looking at ordinary, everyday peasant resistance and the reasons open revolts are so rare. One of his main goals is to resolve empirically debates within political science over the concepts of false consciousness and hegemony. Nevertheless, it can be seen that the mutations of peasantry economic activities imposing forestry as the main local productivity activity goes along with transformation in the way communities relate. This is an attempt for capitalism to impose itself in communities which lived in the mechanic solidarity model by Durkheim's approach (Durkheim, 1893). The consequence is that there are a lot of conflicts amongst the local population and rural economic activities supposed to bring local development instead turn into factors of poverty and disharmony in the community and hence the need to think social resilience in the Lomié municipality.

The concept of social resilience, often linked to vulnerability of which it is the consequent causal correlate, has been mobilized in several social science disciplines to analyse and manage the dynamics of spaces and social groups in the face of rapid and uncertain changes (Koffi, 2014; Buchheit et al., 2016). While some consider it as a quality, others understand it as the mobilization of an unsuspected force to overcome trauma (Koffi, 2014). In the case of the populations of Lomié, deprived of full free access to the forest by the latter's sustainable management processes and not having structured social resilience mechanisms, it is relevant to understand their new life paths. A study of oppressed people shows that they often develop trauma and identity reconfigurations (Weksler and Elhija, 2013).

Oppressed peoples, whether in the context of Latin American or African colonization, develop habits of fatalism and determinism. An observation of the pygmies of Cameroon shows that they are extremely addicted to the consumption of alcohol, tobacco (drugs) and sex. These activities seem to encourage an escape from their oppressed destiny for an illusion of satisfaction.

In the specific case of our field, socio-economic resilience, instead of being a factor of resistance to the violence of the peasant economy, rather creates a community resignation added to socio-political compromises. In fact, the involvement of the vast majority of logging companies in the illegal cutting and trafficking of forest resources occurs with the complicity of certain

local authorities and the tolerance of local populations. However, the national economy pays heavily for the losses linked to this governance, and the local development of local populations suffers. For the case of Lomié, the abusive consumption of narcotics, the illegal practices on forest resources such as poaching and disorderly logging, the division of geography peasant economy are both mechanisms of resilience in the face of economic violence. They are also an expression of resignation to participation in the destiny of community development.

All these facts reveal a failure in the development process for the lack of consideration of the fundamental and ontological link between the sociohistory of these communities and their mode of economic production. Forest exploitation through logging is not their fundamental and ontological mode of economic production, but agriculture, hunting and collecting of forest resources for local consumption. These traditional modes of economic production have become part of their culture over millennia and they are contrary to a capitalistic exploitation done by wood loggers, with negative impact on the environment. According to Peruisset-Faché (2003), traditional societies developed their cultures over millennia and left a world that is more or less intact. The industrial revolution, supported by triumphant capitalism, sounded the death knell for these cultures by causing the extermination of peasant populations and multiplying ecological and human disasters. Moreover, economic motives such as profit-making, and overall economic logics such as capital accumulation, appear to be created by systemic functional efficiency, rather than historical, social and cultural agency. In bourgeois materialism, economic rationality is the direct impress on the mind of a seemingly natural efficiency (Peet, 2014). Concerning Lomie, profit making is not the ontological driving force of the community life, but living in harmony as a group. That is why any crisis historically led to the displacement of part of the community and the creation of a new community. In between the nature, their culture and the capitalistic invasion of forest resource exploitation by big companies, the population of Lomie is lost and this leads to the intra community conflicts observed in this study.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to demonstrate that the peasant populations of Lomié, and through the principle of transferability, the rural populations of Cameroon and Africa, are facing a violent rupture of the link they have with nature because of economic violence linked to the entry of silvicultural and hunting capitalism into African peasant environments. This is a problem close to the work of Peruisset-Faché (2003). This author demonstrates that the advent of capitalism has completely

destroyed the relationship that exists between nature and human cultures. In the case of the villages of Lomié which were studied, it appears that there is fundamentally and ontologically a link between the sociohistory of these communities and their mode of economic production. It must be emphasized that there is also a link between the deep cultural dynamics (myths, rites and mystics) of the community and the economic production system. The inclusion of forest resource management in the paradigm of capitalism completely disrupts this production system.

Peasant economic resilience in this context should be based on the creation of alternative mechanisms of economic production within the framework of the dimension of socio-economic development which should accompany the sustainable management of forest resources. However, this is hampered by the twists and turns of circumventing legality. Such dynamics absolutely undermine the possibility of top-down economic resilience. What remains is for the internal community organization to think about resilience mechanisms at ground level. However, there is a resignation of local human energies, which instead find their consolation in the consumption of alcohol and other forms of narcotics.

This further weakens the socio-economic situation of the communities of Lomié. Beyond the economic violence caused by the socio-economic structures of the exploitation of forest resources, there are other factors such as climate change and soil impoverishment which risk making the system of life and economic production more vulnerable of the populations of Lomié. In this national and international context where the fight against extreme poverty is a major challenge, it is important that internal and external mechanisms for adaptation and peasant economic resilience should be anticipated. This has to be done in dialectic between the new socioeconomic dynamics and the fundamental and ontological structure of their communities.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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