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REPLAY 1970  
Another Roadmap for Arts Education  
Lubumbashi Working Group

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The Lubumbashi Working Group for Another Roadmap for Arts Education will work on three stories that express the political, intellectual and social context of the 1970s, the first decade after independence that saw the installation of dictatorial regimes. How emancipatory ideas of the previous decade have developed into propaganda and what it influences artistic creation and art education, what challenges are still present today.

Story 1: 3D (Decolonization - Democratization - Decentralisation) vs Authenticity

The first university to be established in the Congo in 1954, towards the end of colonisation, is a Catholic university based in Kinshasa. It was initiated by the Catholic University of Louvain and took the Latin version of the name of this city "Lovanium".

In the late 1960s, the university suffered the shock news of the turbulent international (social movement worldwide) and national (Mobutu seized power and dictatorial excesses of the regime).

On 4 June 1969, the Kinshasa university students rose up against Mobutu. Their claim is based on three points designated 3D: Decolonization - Democratization - Decentralisation. The uprising ended in a bloodbath, the Mobutu's army fired into the crowd, several dozen students are killed. The exact number is still not known.

The University Theatre Company staged the play *Antigone* written by Jean Anouilh during the Resistance in France to decry the abuses of totalitarian nazi power. Among the actors, André Yoka plays the prince Hemon, who died to avenge Antigone. This piece is considered the final step in the preparation of the student protest.

Two years later, in June 1971, students are preparing to celebrate the anniversary of the uprising and to honour their martyrs. The Mobutu's regime, anxious to see a new protest, decided to close the university and forcibly recruit all students of the University of Kinshasa into the national military. Some months later, it is the entire university system in the country which will be reformed: the three universities in the country merge into one: the National University of Zaire (UNAZA). Each of the three cities campuses (Kinshasa, Lubumbashi and Kisangani) will specialize in specific fields. The humanities will be deemed sensitive by the government and be placed in Lubumbashi, to keep it away from Kinshasa, the centre of political power.

Almost at the same time, significant changes are made to the country by the movement of "*recours à l'authenticité*." All European names are changed to African names. Later, companies owned by European will be confiscated and entrusted to Zairian. Mobutu has taken over calls to decolonise the institutions, but without creating a more just and democratic society.

Lubumbashi then become, thanks to this reform, one of the most important research centres in humanities in Africa, but threatened by the political power. His literary artistic and intellectual production and his teaching methods can be read back now, 40 years after to reveal the dealings of elite that seeks to define a space between a student revolutionary ideas of the 3D and the policy of *authenticité* which shields a dictatorship system of predation, backed by neo-colonialist forces.

### Story 2: The literary quarrel between Mudimbe and Ngal

Valentin Yves Mudimbe (after *authenticité* Vumbi Yoka Mudimbe, keeping its original VY initial as a subtle snub to the policy imposed by Mobutu) is Dean of the Faculty of Letters in Lubumbashi between 1972 and 1974. Another researcher present and notorious in Lubumbashi is Georges Ngal (now Ngal Mbwil has Mpaang) who is the chair of literature.

Both are raising similar questions about the place of the African intellectual dealing with the Christian faith, the revolution, the African intellectual production in a system of thought and institutions from the West. They created the Mont Noir publishing house and eschewed the organization that the Mobutu dictatorship intended to put in place (the famous Union of Writers in Zaire).

But a quarrel starts from the rivalry between the two academic figures. It will be expressed by the publication of two novels that could be seen as disguised biographies mingled with mockery of one vis-à-vis the other. In 1973 Mudimbe writes *Entre les Eaux, un Prêtre, Dieu, la Révolution*, whose hero, a "loser" named Pierre Landu seems a caricature of Ngal. Two years later Ngal retorts by writing *Giambattista Viko ou le Viol du discours africain*, which depicts a researcher arrogant and disrespectful of African values, which seems to be Mudimbe. The quarrel will even reach the court before the pressures coming convince Mudimbe to withdraw the complaint.

Beyond the anecdote, this quarrel and the books published illustrate the internal tension and the delicate position of the intellectuals of that time. The exile they both went through (Ngal in France and Mudimbe the USA) is another common point between the two fates.

### Story 3: The collaboration with artists

Lubumbashi is the city where was founded the Hangar, Atelier d'art indigène, created in 1947 by Pierre Romain-Desfossés.

The desire of Romain Desfossés was to reveal the "African soul" of his followers is in resonance with some ideas behind *authenticité* and was still present in the intellectual tensions of the 1970s.

1970 will also be a moment of vitality of artistic creation. Many collaborations between researchers and artists will take place during this period in Lubumbashi, especially in the field of popular painting. Some examples: Tshibumba and Johannes Fabian, Bogumil Jewsiewicki, Jean-Pierre Jacquemin and painters of Mami Wata, etc.

How then read the paternalistic methods of Romain-Desfossés that have left traces in the way European deal with Congolese artists on the one hand and the legacy of Congolese intellectuals questioning their identity between a tension to redefine a relevant system of thoughts and their place in the contemporary world? Who did the Marxist ideas in late 1960s push the consideration of the popular painting as a medium through which a emancipation can be triggered?