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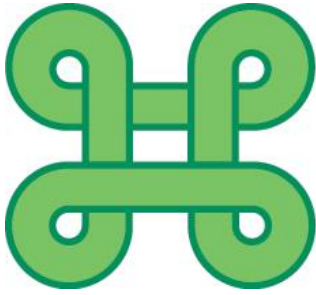
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Centre for Research on Peace
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STAGING A “REVOLUTION”: THE 2011-2012 ELECTORAL PROTESTS IN SENEGAL

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Abstract

This paper advances a resource mobilization perspective on the 2011-2012 electoral protests in Senegal. Motivational explanations, in the form of grievance accounts, have already been used to explain successful protest mobilization in this case. Yet here, the emphasis is placed on the intensive industry behind protest actions, demonstrating that mobilization must also be practically feasible. This requires prior networks and key actors who are willing to invest substantial financial and human resources in the organization of protests. In Senegal, this role was to an important extent taken up by political actors, following own power-attainment goals.

Keywords: electoral protests – social movements – resource mobilization – Africa – Senegal

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1. Introduction

In the run-up to the presidential elections of 2012 in Senegal, widespread protests took place against then-President Abdoulaye Wade's attempts to change electoral rules in his favour. As several African leaders have done before him (see e.g. Posner & Young, 2007), the incumbent president tried to secure a third term in office when nearing the end of his presidency. He introduced a new legislative proposal to adjust the required majority to win the election in the first round, and put forward a new interpretation of the constitution to allow for his third term. The first strategy was thwarted by large-scale protests before the National Assembly on June 23 2011, the day of the legislative vote. Despite further protests, Wade did participate in the presidential elections of February 2012. After Wade's victory in the first round of the election, the opposition rallied behind runner-up Macky Sall, who eventually won the elections in March. Unlike some African leaders, Wade accepted his defeat and left office peacefully.

It is quite common in the literature to explain mass mobilization by referring to individual or group motivations such as political and economic grievances (e.g. Gurr, 1974). In the case of the Senegalese electoral protests as well, the grievance explanation has been given most attention. Several researchers have for example already referred to rising civic consciousness among the Senegalese population (e.g. Gellar, 2013), as well as economic hardship and (youth) unemployment (e.g. Resnick, 2013). The latter cause has also been prominently featured by Western news media, which quickly link youth unemployment to violent rioting (e.g. BBC, 2012; Nossiter, 2012) - particularly in images (e.g. BBC, 2011). Lastly, movement activists themselves also tend to refer to the 'will of the people' when explaining their success in mobilizing the masses, often framing protests as spontaneous outbursts (Polletta, 2006).

This paper, however, will emphasize additional conditions for successful mobilization, in particular the practical feasibility of mobilization. The theoretical frame is based on social movement studies, in which a motivational or grievance-based approach constitutes only one major dimension to explain movement successes (for an overview, see McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1988). Two other major dimensions in social movement studies focus on resource mobilization and political opportunity structures. Influenced by the work of Olson (1971) on collective action challenges, the resource mobilization perspective was advanced by McCarthy & Zald (1977) to raise attention to the importance of access to resources and minimal forms of organization for engagement in social conflict. Linked to this approach is a focus on the existence of prior formal and informal networks as a resource conducive to mobilization (Diani & McAdam, 2003; McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1988). Political opportunity structures (POS)

can be regarded as resources external to a group (Tarrow, 2002, p. 77-85). Several factors have been advanced as determining opportunities: e.g. access to the system, the (in)stability of political alignments, divided elites, influential allies, state strength (weak/strong), inclusive/exclusive state strategies, and repression.¹

Although the presence of political opportunity structures will also be addressed here, the major focus of this study is inspired by the resource mobilization approach. Studies making use of the different insights from social movement theory are not often undertaken with regard to protest mobilization in Sub-Saharan Africa. As will be argued here, going beyond grievances to emphasize the practical feasibility of protest mobilization can be of specific importance for this region as it greatly increases our understanding of what it means to stage protests in a developing context. The approach requires an in-depth empirical investigation of internal movement workings and decisions, which is primarily based on interviews conducted with protest organizers in Dakar².

By emphasizing organizational networks and strategic actor decisions I will highlight the intensive industry behind protest mobilization and nuance aspects of the motivational explanations for the Senegalese electoral protests as described above. The role of political parties and their youth movements in organizing (violent) protests will be particularly stressed and the respective mobilization capacities of political parties and *la société civile*³ in Senegal

¹ One major critique of the POS approach can be found in Meyer (2004, p. 135): "*In seeking to examine the exogenous factors that could affect the development of a social movement, analysts accrete new variables they judge to be significant in the case under examination. [...] Thus, opportunity variables are often not disproved, refined, or replaced, but simply added.*" Consequently, a whole range of possible POS variables exist in the literature.

² Field visits were undertaken in February/March 2014, and November/December 2014. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with leaders and organizers of the '*Mouvement 23*', as well as key observers of the movement (e.g. civil society members who did not take part in the M23). In total, 32 interviews were conducted. In addition, 3 interviews were conducted with high-ranking members of the PDS. During my visits it was also possible to acquire internal movement documents which are used in the analysis. An additional source of information is formed by 35 informal interviews with local residents, politicians, and youth movements in the neighbourhoods around one of the central protesting squares, the *Place de l'Obélisque*. Finally, I also make use of news reports, blog posts, and television images, which were mainly acquired from the independent news channel Walf TV.

³ Civil society (*la société civile*) as the concept is used in Senegalese political discourse - and here - refers to NGOs such as human rights organizations, women's organizations, development organizations etc.

will be compared. By doing so, I will challenge the view that the 2011-2012 electoral protests constitute an active *révolution citoyenne*, and argue that the objectives of key actors raise questions on the ability of the protests to bring about deeper democratic change.

In the following section I first give a more detailed overview of events in the run-up to the presidential elections of 2012 in Senegal. The subsequent section examines factors that have been raised by other authors to explain successful protest mobilization, in particular economic and political grievances at the population level. Then, I will turn to my analysis of the electoral protests which emphasizes movement capacities and underlying social networks. These will also be contextualized within the Senegalese political field. In the conclusion, I evaluate the results with regard to current knowledge on protest mobilization in (Sub-Saharan) Africa.

2. Electoral protests in Senegal: An overview of events ⁴

On the 16th of June 2011 President Wade's Council of Ministers adopted a law proposal that would change prevailing rules regarding the presidential elections to be held in February 2012. The most important changes were the direct election of the President together with a vice-president, and the introduction of a 25% voting majority (instead of 50%) to win the elections in the first round. The election of a vice-president together with the president seemed to be put in place to the benefit of Wade's son Karim and raised accusations of a *dévolution monarchique*, while the 25% rule would clearly benefit the incumbent president (see the first round voting results below).

The day before the vote in the National Assembly, the 22nd of June 2011, several protests already took place in Dakar, some of them running together with vandalism and tyre-burning. However, the largest, yet authorized, protests took place on the day of the vote, the 23rd of June, in Dakar and elsewhere in the country. Manifestations were led by political opposition parties and civil society organisations such as the *Y'en a Marre* movement⁵ and the *Rencontre Africaine de Défense des Droits de l'Homme* (RADDHO). Some protests were characterized by low-intensity violence such as rock throwing, and police forces used tear gas and made several arrests. The law proposal was subsequently withdrawn. The events of the 23rd led to the creation of the *Mouvement 23* (M23), a coalition of opposition parties and civil society

⁴ The information provided here is generally uncontested and can be retraced to newspaper articles (e.g. *Le Soleil*), academic papers (e.g. Resnick, 2013), and the interview material used for this paper.

⁵ The *Y'en a Marre* movement is sometimes translated as 'Fed Up' in English news articles.

groups with the common goal to work for the departure of the president. The movement organized manifestations against Wade's plans to run for a third term in office and tried to build support for this goal by, among others, convening with religious leaders.

Things started to heat up again when the Constitutional Court –appointed by the president (Resnick, 2013, p.631) - approved the legality of Wade's candidacy for presidency on the 27th of January 2012. Numerous protests for the withdrawal of Wade, organized by the M23, took place between this date and the first round of the presidential elections on February 26th 2012. Several protests turned violent with at least four deaths⁶ - nine according to Resnick (2013)⁷. Protests raised domestic concern with several prominent religious or intellectual leaders calling for peace, while international actors such as the US, France, the European Union and the African Union made several calls for stability as well. The first round of voting, however, took place in relative calm. Abdoulaye Wade (34, 82%) and Macky Sall (26, 57%) went through to the second round of voting on the 25th of March. The month of March passed by without major disturbances. The second round of elections was won by Macky Sall with 65,8% of the votes.

In the next section, I focus on possible protest motivations that have already been raised in the literature. This mainly concerns the grievances that have accumulated against the presidency of Abdoulaye Wade since his coming to power in 2000.

3. The Waning Popularity of the Wade Regime

When Abdoulaye Wade, the unrelenting opposition leader and presidential candidate of the PDS (Parti Démocratique Sénégalaise), defeated Abdou Diouf of the long-reigning Parti Socialiste (PS) in the second round of the elections in 2000, this *Alternance* was widely

⁶ This death toll is based on news reports in the Senegalese newspaper *Le Soleil* (the only journal with an archive available online). *Le Soleil* is perceived as close to the government but this number is also concurred by *La Gazette du Pays et du Monde* (9-16 February): 1 student (Mamadou Diop), 1 police officer (Fodé Ndiaye), and 2 civilians killed by police gunfire in northern Podor – unfortunate accidents according to officials. More deaths after this date seem unlikely.

⁷ In comparative perspective, Senegal is not among the African countries that are in recent times most at risk of severe electoral violence (see Straus & Taylor, 2012). It does, however, witness forms of violent harassment. The most serious case of election violence occurred in 1993 when the vice-president of the Constitutional Council, Babacar Sèye was assassinated after the presidential elections, and before the publishing of results (Villalón, 1994, pp. 189-190).

heralded as a victory for democracy in Senegal. It did not take long, however, before critical voices started to point out increasing authoritarian and clientelistic tendencies in Wade's rule (Dahou & Foucher, 2004; Galvan, 2001, p.56, Mbow, 2008). Notable issues raised were press censorship and threats against journalists, ousting of former coalition parties, a weak justice system, regular changes of the prime minister, and a strengthening of the position of the president. For example, although a constitutional referendum of 2001 did reduce the presidential term from 7 to 5 years, the 7-year term was reinstated in 2008, in one of the many rounds of constitutional revisions during Wade's 12 years in power (see e.g. AfriMAP/OSIWA, 2012, pp. 49-65). These evolutions were also reflected by the change in the Freedom House score from "Free" to "Partly Free" in 2009 (Freedom House, 2014), and the lowering of the Polity IV regime type score from 8 to 7 in 2008 (Polity IV, 2014).⁸

Although cracks in the regime were visible, the Wade government could still rely on goodwill because of the favourable economic situation (Dahou & Foucher, 2004). Indeed, in the presidential elections of 2007, Wade was re-elected with an absolute majority of the votes (55.9%) in the first round. Notwithstanding accusations of hasty elections (Mbow, 2008, p. 165) and electoral fraud, Osei (2011, pp.185-186) argues that Wade's re-election can for the most part be attributed to his popularity. For example, data from the Afrobarometer⁹ Round 3, conducted in 2005, show that the presidency was the most trusted political institution, with 59,2 percent of respondents stating they trust the presidency "a lot", and only 10,9 % stating "not at all" (Osei, 2011, pp. 206-207).

Notably, in the Afrobarometer Round 4, conducted in May/June 2008, the percentage of respondents that trust the president "a lot" had dropped to 30,27%, and the percentage that trusts the president "not at all" has risen to 33,70%.¹⁰ During his second term, the Wade regime did run into considerable difficulties. The economic situation deteriorated, which was highlighted by urban (youth) unemployment and clandestine migration, compounded by rising food and petrol prices since the global food price spike of 2007-2008 (Resnick, 2013). Moreover, the population was confronted with numerous electricity cuts, and, particularly in

⁸ In 2013, the Freedom House score changed to "Free" again, the Polity IV score remains unchanged.

⁹ Afrobarometer is an independent, non-partisan research project that measures the social, political, and economic atmosphere in Africa. Afrobarometer surveys are conducted in multiple African countries and are repeated on a regular cycle. All data are available online via www.afrobarometer.org.

¹⁰ Following Osei (2011), I exclude missing cases and refusals, but include the 'don't know' category. The two percentages do not differ significantly from each other.

Dakar, recurrent flooding of the *banlieues*. While the population faced these challenges, Wade also made the controversial decision to build the *Monument de la Renaissance Africaine* in Dakar with an approximated cost of 28 million dollars.

Several of these issues already led to protest mobilization. For example, rising food prices led to protests in March and April 2008 (Antil, 2010) and the inauguration of the Renaissance monument led to protest in 2010 (Al Jazeera, April 3 2010). Furthermore, electricity cuts led to rioting and vandalism against offices of the state-owned electricity company Senelec in Dakar and other areas in October 2008 (Antil, 2010) and on the 27th of June 2011 (Le Soleil, June 28 2011). These latter protests are also commonly seen as connected to the June 23 protests against Wade's law proposal.

Meanwhile, resistance at the political level developed further. When Wade ousted his prime minister Idrissa Seck in 2004, the latter –after a detention period due to accusations of corruption – started his own party “Rewmi” in 2006 (Mbow, 2008, p.164; Resnick, 2013, p. 631). Subsequent prime minister Macky Sall left the PDS due to a clash with Wade in 2008 and formed the *Alliance pour la République* (APR) (Kelly, 2012, p.125; Resnick, 2013, p.631). Moreover, after Wade's victory in the 2007 presidential elections, a coalition of opposition parties, including the PS, the Alliance des Forces de Progrès (AFP), and former left-wing partners of Wade in 2000, boycotted the legislative elections several months later. This “Front Siggil Senegaal” (Front to Save Senegal) also joined the *Assises Nationales* in 2008, a national conference to discuss necessary reforms to overcome the country's pressing societal challenges. Although invited, the PDS did not take part in the conference. Front Siggil Senegal developed further into “Bennoo Siggil Senegaal” (United to Boost Senegal) with the addition of new partners (Kelly, 2012, pp.126-127; Resnick, 2013, pp. 631-632). This coalition defeated the PDS in most major urban areas in the local elections of 2009.

Gellar (2013) also notes a spectacular rise in citizen movements under the Wade regime and argues that these have been crucial for democratic consolidation in Senegal. These movements generally advocate greater *citoyenneté* in Senegal, including political and economic reform. Some new formations included the *Mouvement Citoyen* of Penda Mbow, “Bes Du Ñak”/*Mouvement citoyen pour la Refondation Nationale* (Mansour Sy Djamil), “Fekke Ma Ci Boole” of Youssou Ndour, and “Yamalé” (Bara Tall). Several movement founders also went into politics and made bids for the presidency in 2012. Well-known are also the more grass roots initiatives of the *Collectif des Imams et Résidents de Guédiawaye* and *Y'en a Marre*, formed by rappers in Dakar and particularly popular among urban youth.

According to Gellar, these movements stand proof of a growing internalization of democratic culture in Senegal, which was crucial for the protests against Wade. This viewpoint can be supported with research from Bratton (2013), who finds that between the 2002 and 2008 Afrobarometer Rounds, the percentage of Senegalese preferring democracy over other kinds of government increased, whereas the percentage of Senegalese who are satisfied with the extent of democracy in their country declined. Several movements, however, emerged primarily focusing on economic issues. The *Collectif des Imams*, for example, is mainly concerned with rising (electricity) prices, power shortages, and flooding, while *Y'en a Marre* started out as a movement against electricity cuts and rising food prices, before advocating a more civic *Nouveau Type de Sénégalais* (NTS). This nuances the somewhat artificial boundary between economic and political grievances.

There was ample evidence of the waning popularity of the Wade regime, especially during his second term. Participation in the electoral protests can therefore broadly be explained by the economic as well as political grievances that accumulated among the population of Senegal during that time. Clearly, malgovernance and Senegal's slow growth were key issues in the presidential elections themselves with electoral promises focusing on youth employment, food prices, electricity provision, and so on (see e.g. *Le Soleil*, 23 March 2012). Moreover, the *Mouvement 23* primarily based its campaigns on democratic values and citizenship. The following section, however, will bring to attention the organizational and financial resources necessary to stage protests, indicating that grievances as such cannot sufficiently explain movement success.

4. Organizing a Revolution: Strategy, Blueprints, and Performances

The section is structured as follows: Firstly, I analyze the start of the movement and events on the 23rd of June 2011. Secondly, I look at movement activities between the 23rd of June until the validation of Wade's candidature and the start of the election campaigns. Then I analyze the election period itself, followed by the aftermath, including the M23 today.

4.1. "Touche pas à ma Constitution" and the 23rd of June 2011

The law proposal introduced by Abdoulaye Wade included two controversial changes. The first was the direct election of the president with a vice-president, similar to the American system.

Although quickly used by the opposition to accuse Wade of preparing his son as his successor, it has to be said that the position of vice-president was already created in the constitution in 2009, when it had led to little controversy. The argument that a direct election of the vice-president constituted democratic progress could therefore still be held. The second controversial proposition, namely electing the president with just more than 25% of the votes in the first round, could only be defended with difficulty. According to PDS interviewees, even many of Wade's ministers and members of parliament struggled with the proposition and found the idea a strategic error as it would indicate that the ruling party itself was no longer sure of a victory in 2012. Just before the closing of parliament, the law proposal was sent to the assembly to be considered under procedure of urgency. The ECOWAS Protocol on Good Governance prohibits substantive changes to electoral rules 6 months before an election, and the reopening of parliament was only planned for October.

When word broke out of the law proposal via Senegal's largely independent press, Alioune Tine, the head of the *Rencontre Africaine de Défense des Droits de l'Homme* (RADDHO) gathered prominent civil society members to oppose the proposal together. This led to the initiative *Touche pas à ma Constitution*, brought together a week before the vote in the National Assembly. The participants started attacking the proposal, mainly via press declarations. Each member also made contact with other civil society networks: business associations, labour unions, youth and women movements and so on, to meet up and discuss further actions. The steering committee also met with leaders of the opposition coalition "Bennoo Siggil Senegaal" (BSS) to put up a joint initiative. These were not represented in the National Assembly because of the legislative boycott in 2007.

It is important to note the pre-existing ties that existed between these actors. Civil society movements often cooperate on projects and their members know each other relatively well, at least in Dakar. They are also represented in umbrella organisations or networks such as the CASC (*cadre de Concertation et d'Action de la Société Civile*). There was some prior agreement between members of this latter network that Wade's repeated changes of the constitution had to be stopped and that former attempts had failed because opposition was too fragmented. Connections with opposition parties were particularly formed by the experience of the *Assises Nationales* and many interviewees estimated that about 90% of the members of the *Assises* later also took part in the M23.

Of course, opposition parties set up actions of their own to decry the President's electoral proposal. Political youth movements in particular opted for a well-known medium for

awareness-raising, namely instigating riots in the city. On the 20th of June, for example, political youths created a disturbance by blocking roads at the busy Sandaga market of Dakar: « *il fallait coûte que coûte réussir le coup, et le coup ce n'était pas s'opposer à la police, ça nous intéressait pas, le coup était de se faire arrêter, de créer un scandale pour que le monde entier sache que Abdoulaye Wade est en train de faire des choses qui sont anti-démocratiques au Sénégal* » (political youth). A generational clash is visible in these actions. On the 22nd of June, a meeting between civil society actors and politicians took place near the *Place de l'Indépendance* in Dakar. Whereas most prominent figures saw the meeting as an assembly to make arrangements for the following day, many youths, from political parties as well as civil society (notably the *Y'en a Marre* movement) chose instead to take protesting to the streets: « *il y avait une forte mobilisation des jeunes, nous avons parlé aux jeunes que ces leaders-là, ce qu'ils voulaient faire ici, ce qu'ils faisaient au salon de Dansokho* (Note : coalition gatherings often took place in the house of BSS leader Amath Dansokho), *qu'il faudrait qu'on arrête l'Assemblée Générale, qu'on les pousse à descendre avec nous [...] il y avait une forte présence de la presse et c'est ainsi que les populations de Sénégal ont été donc informé* » (civil society/political youth¹¹). These sorts of 'violent performances' continued to play a part in the actions of the M23, and will be further discussed below.

The manifestation of the 23rd itself became a great success, and many would refer to it as a historical mobilization of the Senegalese people. *Le Monde* (2011) recounts estimates ranging from one thousand to several thousand protesters at the Place Soweto. The M23 would later cite – probably exaggerating- hundreds of thousands of protesters across the whole of Senegal (internal document meant as press declaration, 28 June 2011). The opposition manifestation as well as a less successful PDS manifestation took place at the Place Soweto directly before the National Assembly, which was an unusual, and perhaps daring, choice by PDS officials. Protests indeed degenerated into violence¹², notably characterized by rock-throwing. Escalation might have been purposeful as the Place Soweto is quite deprived of rocks to throw and several, especially young, protesters arrived on the scene carrying stones. Police responded with tear gas and clashes went on into the city until the afternoon.

¹¹ Membership of civil society movements and membership of political parties are not often mutually exclusive.

¹² Discussions on who started the violence are manifold. Most state that PDS-minister Farba Senghor provoked protesting youths who then started throwing rocks. Others insist that the youths who started the violence were hired "*provocateurs*" of the PDS.

Already on the 23rd, preparations and coordinating efforts were deemed necessary. To steer the manifestation in the right direction, the members of *Touche pas à ma Constitution* split up in three groups: one group protested at Place Soweto, one stayed at the headquarters of RADDHO, and one group travelled in-between to transport food, water, and wounded. When violence broke out, the group at RADDHO took on a coordinating and information-sharing role indicating where police forces were present, where tyres had to be burned to block roads etc. Meanwhile, party youths as well as members of *Y'en a Marre* undertook various actions elsewhere in Dakar. One political representative noted rather proud that his militants had vandalized PDS-members houses during the protests to give a clear sign to Abdoulaye Wade (see also *Le Soleil*, 24 June 2011).

In the end, it can be said that pressure of the street led President Wade to withdraw the law proposal. However, according to PDS representatives, the president had already abandoned both the direct election of the president with a vice-president, and the 25% proposition following the advice of his MPs. Therefore the situation could have been similar to the one of Nigerian President Obasanjo, whose extension of term limit was denied by his Senate (Posner & Young, 2007).

4.2. The M23: build-up of a protest movement

After the success of the 23rd, most protest organizers decided to continue the campaign as the *Mouvement 23*, now against Wade's possible candidacy¹³. The name M23 came from Macky Sall, who judged that *Mouvement des Forces Vives de la Nation de 23 Juin*, based on the Guinean example, was slightly too long¹⁴. As I will demonstrate, during this phase, the movement relied to a large extent on political party blueprints for organizing manifestations, as well as political financial and human resources. At this point, several civil society organizations also opted out of the movement. A notable example is *Forum Civil*, the Senegalese branch of Transparency International, which lost some members to the M23 because of this decision.

Whereas preparations for the 23rd were conducted rather hastily, the M23 now formed a permanent structure with a general assembly, a coordination committee, secretariat and

¹³ The presidential term had been limited to 2 mandates in the constitutional referendum of 2001. As Abdoulaye Wade had come to power according to the rules of the previous constitution, he argued that he was still allowed to run for a third mandate because of the non-retroactivity principle.

¹⁴ The Congolese rebel group that goes by the same name was not yet formed at the time.

various commissions (finance, organisation and mobilization, diaspora...). Particularly important was the creation of departmental cells throughout the national territory: *“donc ça donnait l'impression que -, mais c'est dans tout le pays qu'il y a eu ça”* (party member 1) ; *« si c'est Dakar seulement, le régime (...) peut dire, bon, ça c'est pas grave, [...] mais quand il y a quelque chose à Dakar, Thiès etc, c'est une pression plus grande.»* (party member 2). Finding local contacts in all regions of Senegal was no easy task, however, and not always successful as can be derived from constant calls to establish and 'revive' committees in internal documents. To establish departmental committees it seems that the movement relied to a large extent on membership contacts provided by the opposition parties of BSS. Although denied by some interviewees, one meeting summary states: *“travailler si possible avec fichier des comités départementaux établi par BSS”* (internal document, 16 January 2011). Lists of departmental activists also contain for the large majority political party representatives (internal document, 21 December 2011). Local cells were also supported with financial means: *« Oui, et maintenant pour l'argent, [...] aux structures locales, qui étaient franchement dans des conditions d'organiser la manifestation. Ça c'était pour éviter de jeter de l'argent. »* (party member 1). *« [...] si on ait une vingtaine de personnes, une dizaine de personnes, on ne peut pas faire une marche qui réussisse comme telle et on peut peut-être aller déposer à la préfecture une motion de protestation »* (party member 3).

To acquire the necessary financial resources, the M23 relied on monthly contributions. Repeated calls for contributions indicate that this was not the most stable source of income and indeed, for the organization of manifestations many admit that political leaders covered the large majority of expenses, especially the 'big four': Macky Sall (APR), Moustapha Niasse (AFP), Ousmane Tanor Dieng (PS) and Idrissa Seck (Rewmi). One important expense is the direct transmission of a manifestation on television, with figures ranging from 4000\$ to 17000\$: *« Tout ça, c'est une stratégie (...) en place pour d'abord informer l'opinion et les Sénégalais pour que les gens partagent le combat »* (civil society member 1). Other expenses can be viewed from the following proposition for a protest march in Dakar¹⁵ (1000 CFA equals approximately 1,75 \$):

¹⁵ Whether the proposition was approved or not is not known, but this can be doubted as the document itself states that ambitions might have to be tempered due to resource constraints. Other manifestations have been estimated at 2 394 000 CFA (internal document, 17 October 2011) and 20 000 000 CFA (civil society member 4).

Table 1: Budget Proposition of the M23 Organisation Commission

Transport :	
Département de Dakar : 1500 Cars x 12 000	= 18 000 000
Département de Guédiawaye : 500 Cars x 15 000	= 7 500 000
Département de Pikine : 1000 Cars x 15 000	= 15 000 000
Département de Rufisque : 500 Cars x 25 000	= 12 500 000
3 000 Cars x 35 = 105 000 Personnes.	
Report	= 55 000 000 F
Tee Shirts à 1000 ? 10 000 x 1 000	= 10 000 000
Sono	= 1 000 000
Location Camion	= 1 000 000
Support : Affiche, sensibilisation	
Report	= 67 300 000F (approximately 115.000\$)

Source: internal document (31 October 2011).

This budget proposition reveals that M23 manifestations were largely based on political party blueprints on ‘how to organize a successful manifestation’, as for parties this is an important instrument to compare relative strength, which is crucial in coalition formation. For example, although some civil society members defend the image that all protesters gathered spontaneously and by their own means, it is clear that a lot of logistic efforts had to be undertaken to organize transport. As with political meetings, this is done by hiring *cars rapides* to vehicle militants and sympathisers from the *banlieues* (Guédiawaye, Pikine, Rufisque) and elsewhere to the meeting grounds (Dakar centre), which necessitates a strong organizational presence in local neighbourhoods, and budgetary decentralization.

The form of the manifestations also reveals common political practice. It is always deemed necessary to hire animation (e.g. musicians, rappers) to make participation more attractive to the general public and sound installations and podiums have to be provided – usually by the larger political parties. Speeches by political leaders similarly always take place (although speech times led to quite some internal struggles within the M23). From a mobilizing perspective, the participation of party leaders is regarded as crucial: “[*la stratégie*] permet de motiver les militants et manifestants qui seront certainement ravis d’apprendre que leur leaders sont les premiers sur la place” (internal document, 15 February 2012).

Typical instruments of mobilization clientelism in Senegal are also the provision of food and water (as on the 23rd of June), and of T-shirts, hats, and other party paraphernalia. These instruments were also widely made use of by the M23. In the beginning, the M23 prohibited signs of party affiliation, yet this was not always implemented successfully, and many party colours as well as banners could be seen on M23 manifestations (see also Cissé A., 2012; Marro, 2012). Ultimately, it seems that civil society members of the M23 had to eventually give

up on the idea of party neutrality to safeguard the success of manifestations: *“les partis et coalitions peuvent permettre à leurs militants d’enfiler des T-shirts à leurs couleurs”* (internal document, 15 February 2012, yet – based on interviews - this was likely already decided around October).

A poignant example is the M23 manifestation of the 23rd of September 2011, which had the goal to give *‘la parole au peuple’* by inviting different socio-professional organizations to speech. Many see the organization of the event as proof of successful civil society mobilization. For example, Gellar (2013, p. 136) notes: *“at a mass meeting in September 2011 [...], the leaders of Y’en a Marre determined which political leaders and party representatives were allowed to speak and how much time they had to present their message.”* In reality, however, speech times are largely agreed upon beforehand and the role of *Y’en a Marre* as moderator reflected the goal of politically non-aligned organizers to bring civil society more to the foreground, as opposed to political parties. One party representative, however, argued that the help of parties was asked at the last minute because fears had arisen that the manifestation would be unsuccessful. More importantly, he also showed convincing communications demonstrating that political parties had actually contacted the different organizations (the handicapped, teachers, veterans etc) present that day and planned the podium programme of the event. Furthermore, in comparison to previous events of the M23, the number of participants was rather low – hundreds not thousands – and the idea of a failure was even raised (Cissé F., 24 September 2011; RFI, 24 September 2011).

The practicalities of protest organizing are usually left in the hands of political youth movements¹⁶. They set up podia and sound installations, safety grills, and organize security for their leaders. Moreover, they are also seen as ‘protest specialists’, who take the lead in marches, prepare and synchronize slogans, and indicate for example whether to applaud or boo deputies entering parliament on the 23rd. Another task left for youths is to engage in ‘low-intensity’ violent actions to attract media attention and keep the idea of a political battle alive. *“Non, ça [seulement des manifestations paisibles] n’aura pas eu un effet. (...) le pouvoir dirait « oh laissez manifester et après ». Mais quand (...) on a commencé à voir tous les jours, toutes les nuits des manifestations avec des pneus qui brûlaient et que les télévisions du monde entier commençaient à montrer ça et que la communauté internationale a commencé à s’intéresser aux troubles au Sénégal. »* (civil society member 2). Therefore burning tyres on

¹⁶ When asked, interviewees mostly define youths as between 16 and 35 year olds. Political youth movements often implement a 35 years age limit. Men are largely in the majority.

strategic traffic locations in Dakar¹⁷, throwing rocks at police forces on arrival –which, according to their own standard operating procedures, use tear gas to disperse protesters- and further clashes with police officers are not to be seen as spontaneous outbursts of violence. On the contrary, actors are quite aware of the effect of these actions on Western media and plan their actions carefully: « *c'était une stratégie mise en place que les jeunes exécutaient par quartier, chaque groupe prenait un quartier, quelques fois ils ont besoin d'un peu d'argent pour acheter d'essence pour brûler les pneus, on leur donnait ça* » (civil society member 2). Overall, violence remained quite limited, weapons were rarely used by rioters, and mostly collected old tyres and wooden tables were burned. Therefore these actions seem to correspond more to 'performances' meant to create the image of widespread violence.

However, as already noted, a generational clash was visible within the M23 with youths advocating more 'revolutionary' actions than adults. An often repeated example is that of youths shouting '*on va au palais*' (multiple interviewees) during manifestations while political and civil society leaders dismissed such actions as irresponsible. Youths from both political parties as civil society also took the initiative to organize an *M23 des jeunes* to set up more autonomous actions. These actions were rooted in the recent past as political youths had long been frustrated by the passivity of their leaders and had undertaken several opposition initiatives during Wade's second term, for example against the creation of the post of vice-president in the constitution. There is also some evidence that political youths played an important role in the electricity riots of 2008 and 2011, e.g. « *Mais ici le 27 juin il y a eu une coupure jamais égalée à Dakar, puisque le dispositif était déjà là, les gens ont balancé des sms, il fallait justement que quelqu'un a marre, c'est les jeunes du M23, bon pas les jeunes du M23, mais les jeunes de l'opposition qui ont démarré cette manifestation du 27 juin. Et ainsi de suite la banlieue a pris, les autres se sont organisés et c'était tout le monde qui manifestait.* » (civil society/political youth).

4.3. The M23 and the 2012 electoral campaigns

When elections drew closer, the fragile coalition of civil society organizations and numerous political parties started to unravel. Furthermore, opposition parties themselves were far from united at this point with 9 presidential candidates in the M23 and a split within the BSS between

¹⁷ For example, university students as well commonly bring their vindications to attention– often recurrent delays in the payment of scholarships - by blocking major traffic routes around de *cité universitaire* such as the Avenue Cheikh Anta Diop and the Corniche.

Moustapha Niasse and Ousmane Tanor Dieng (Benno ak Tanor). The major goal of the movement was thwarted by the ruling of the constitutional court to validate Wade's candidature, which led to serious internal divisions on the next course of action. At first the plan arose to keep protesting until the candidacy was withdrawn: "*l'intention qu'on avait c'était d'occuper la Place d'Obélisque comme les Egyptiens ont occupé la Place Tahrir.*" (civil society member 3). Yet protests would gradually diminish and the comparison with the Arab Spring would soon be found flawed (see also Châtelot, 2012). One reason was surely the continuous repression that took place after manifestations were prohibited and authorizations were no longer sought. For example, the day of the validation of Wade's candidature, a young student (and, often left unmentioned, a PS militant), Mamadou Diop, was killed when he was hit by a police truck. He was soon heralded as a martyr of the revolution by the opposition - an interesting framing exercise in a case which is fogged by much uncertainty. The death of a police officer during this period, beaten to death by protesters or violent infiltrators¹⁸, is however commonly ignored. Besides repression, another reason for the declining success of the M23 manifestations was the interference with the election campaigns of the opposition candidates.

Initially, it seemed that the majority of the M23 had rallied behind the idea to do a boycott of the elections if Wade's candidacy was not withdrawn (see e.g. Le Soleil, 6 February 2012)¹⁹. Some interviewees also cited civil society concerns that mobilization at the *Place de l'Obélisque* and the *Place de l'Indépendance* would fail if political parties went campaigning. Several opposition leaders, notably Macky Sall, were not entirely convinced, however. Since his departure from the PDS, he had travelled throughout Senegal to prepare for the elections and felt confident of the results. A few days after the validation of candidacies, Sall left Dakar to campaign in the rest of Senegal. He was quickly followed by Moustapha Niasse, Ousmane Tanor Dieng, and –to a lesser extent - Idrissa Seck. Smaller political parties, with no real chance of winning the presidency, stayed put and continued protesting. The consequences for the M23 were strongly felt. Manifestations became decreasingly successful: « *Finalemment, on s'est rendu compte que c'est Dakar qui bougeait, peut-être Mbour un peu, Thiès un peu, bon, mais c'est Dakar* » (party member 3), and movement structures became quickly devoid of political party members: « *Le secrétariat était vide [...] juste avant la validation de la*

¹⁸*Infiltrateurs* are commonly mentioned regarding manifestations in Dakar. The term refers to criminals who make use of disruptions to steal, vandalize, but rarely murder. Sometimes *clochards* and other poor youths are actively recruited by protest organizers – in secret -to have more participants and power when things degenerate.

¹⁹ More radical ideas proposed by youths were, for example, sabotaging the voting process and burning electoral material.

candidature, de la campagne électorale. En ce moment-là, les représentants des partis politiques avaient disparus, pratiquement. Et certaines personnalités de la société civile également avaient disparu. Donc dans le secrétariat, il n'y avait plus que deux personnes, de la société civile. » (civil society member 4).

When Macky Sall came out as the runner-up in the first round of the elections, all other opposition candidates rallied behind him for the second round²⁰. A grand electoral coalition under the name Benno Bokk Yakaar (BBY) was formed uniting the opposition against Wade. At this time the locus of action shifted from the M23 headquarters to the BBY: « [...] *on était avec les partis politiques, on était en train de lutter pour un même idéal, c'est-à-dire, le départ de Wade. Mais, les partis politiques, après se sont retrouvés entre eux (...), ont commencé à réfléchir sur la plateforme BBY sans même informer la société civile. Donc, c'est quand ils se sont trouvés d'accord que nous avons été mis au courant.* » (civil society member 5). This rendered civil society members vulnerable to others' accusations that they had been playing politicians' game all along. Their efforts had not entirely been rendered obsolete, however. To increase his support, Sall promised to reduce the presidential mandate from 7 to 5 years after being elected. This had been a demand of many members of the *Assises Nationales*, in which Sall never played a prominent role. The month of March passed by without major manifestations and most efforts were invested in Sall's campaign.

4.4. Aftermath

After Macky Sall won the elections and Wade peacefully left office, government and administrative positions were quickly taken up by members of the grand BBY coalition. However, not only political colleagues within the M23 were given positions, many former civil society members were co-opted within state institutions as well. Notable examples are Abdoulatif Coulibaly (critical reporter), Abdoul Aziz Tall (Yamalé), Alioune Tine (RADDHO), and Penda Mbow (*Mouvement Citoyen*). These re-alignments continue to stir debate within Senegalese society. For example, in February 2014, the newspaper *L'Observateur* (February 24th 2014) still headlined: « *La politique décime la société civile: reconversion des technocrates dans les sphères étatiques* ». Concerns center on how former prominent civil society members

²⁰ This was presented as the natural path to follow, but in Senegalese coalition politics, returns to the ruling party are not entirely uncommon. For example, after first supporting Abdoulaye Wade in the first round of the 2000 elections, PS-defector Djibo Ka returned to Diouf in the second round after being promised the position of prime minister (Vengroff & Magala, 2001, p.139). Some interviewees indeed claimed that support was not immediate and needed prior agreements between parties.

are no longer heard of in the policy domain and strictly refrain from criticising the current regime. This also rekindles an old debate on the motives of civil society actors (e.g. AfriMAP/OSIWA, 2012, p. 75): are NGO's simply a means of getting closer to power and is there, ultimately, a difference from politicians?

After months of silence after the elections, the majority of the members of the M23 decided to continue the movement as an association. Some members did not join the association arguing that the M23 corresponds more to a general sentiment and does not need to be bureaucratized. Still others formed factions of their own and split off from the main M23. However, the M23 decided that a renewal of membership was not necessary, therefore everyone is technically still a member. This leads to the schizophrenic position that many members of government are also members of the M23 which plays primarily a watchdog role. Political actors have largely abandoned the M23, though. This could be seen from the celebration of 1 year of revolution on the 23rd of June 2012, which was quite sober. A second problem is that the M23 has accepted some 18.000\$ from Macky Sall for their headquarters, which raises serious doubts concerning their neutrality. Finally, some argue that the M23 has now become just one of many NGOs focusing on corruption, economic development etc.

4.5. Who mobilizes? Political Parties and Mobilization Capacities

Narratives often play a major part in recounting and remembering social movement actions, in particular cycles of resistance (Polletta, 2006). This is also clearly visible in the Senegalese case. Interviewees commonly refer to the spontaneity of resistance, e.g. *“les gens sont venus de leur propres moyens”* (civil society member 5) or people came from *“toutes les couches de la société”* (multiple interviewees); and refer to the *“conscience citoyenne émergente”* (civil society member 6) or consistently speak of *“la révolution citoyenne”* (civil society/political youth).²¹ As mentioned, the celebration of Mamadou Diop as a martyr of the revolution also plays a major part in this narrative-making. Referring to people's network connections -as in

²¹ The latter interviewee also stated, however: *« Mais les sénégalais qui étaient là-bas le 23 juin, il n'y avait pas cette culture de constitutionnalité. Ils étaient venus certains parce que c'était le chômage grandissant, ils étaient venus des autres parce que c'est les coupures d'électricité, d'autres étaient venus parce qu'ils avaient compris le sens du projet de loi, d'autres aussi ils étaient venus parce qu'ils se trouvaient pas dans la politique du gouvernement d'Abdoulaye Wade. »* Indeed, for many protesters, it is likely that the deteriorating economic situation played a stronger role than constitutional concerns for deciding protest participation (see also Mueller, 2013).

the case of Diop's political militancy- is almost taboo in this. Unprovoked, interviewees often state things such as: « *j'ai vu des collègues, ils n'ont jamais fait de la politique, mais ils se sont mobilisés* » (party member 2) ; « [...] *qui n'ont jamais milité dans aucune organisation de la société civile ou aucun parti politique (...) qui sont venus spontanément.* » (civil society member 7). These statements are likely to be correct, but they do ignore the networks and organizations taking the initiative to stage and plan protest actions in the first place. Indeed, further probing reveals numerous strategic actor decisions, for example to gather media attention, and elaborate organization and planning behind manifestations. Political parties played a major role in this.

La société civile in Senegal is not known to have strong organizational capacities and seems mainly visible via charismatic leaders (see also AfriMAP/OSIWA, 2012, pp. 74-75). They generally do not stage demonstrations, but rely on declarations: “ça [Note: civil society declarations], *c'est bon pour nous, on n'a pas un problème avec ça*” (PDS representative). In addition, they usually work from limitedly staffed offices in the capital without strong connections with the rest of the country. When participating in manifestations, the practical functions are usually taken up by experienced party representatives. In the case of the M23 many respondents state things such as: “*ils ont du monde derrière*” (civil society member 8), “*les partis politiques, c'est la masse*” (party member 1), and “*la force de frappe*” (civil society member 9), « *la société civile, ils sont trop faible et (...) il faut des moyens humaines, il faut des moyens financiers, il faut une capacité de mobilisation* » (civil society member 1).

The comparative advantage of parties is by far their financial means and experience, as well as their presence on the ground in local political structures. To gather protesters in an underdeveloped context, transport, food and water, are crucial for success as forgoing the chance to gain a daily income must for many be compensated: “*Si tu demandes un rassemblement, la plupart, ils te demandent le billet de transport*” (party member 2). The role of new social media in uniting previously unconnected activists in Africa has been widely discussed, especially in the context of the Arab Spring (e.g. Allagui & Kuebler, 2011). Yet although calls were actively made via facebook, twitter, and online fora, evidence suggests that protest mobilization in Senegal mainly relied on established membership lists, known contacts, and telephone communications. Local contacts are then responsible for gathering protest support, for example by appealing to youth movements.²² This has also been found

²² For example, the ‘*Associations Sportives et Culturelles (ASC)*’ in Senegal are commonly politicized. Politicians provide financial support to these youth movements, but expect participation in meetings

crucial to stage ‘nationwide’ protests in Senegal. It is revealing that the arguably most successful civilian mobilization by the *Y’en a Marre* movement strongly based itself on political mobilization strategies, primarily the building of local structures (*esprits*) in the capital and elsewhere in the country.

These findings do not imply that protesters were only party militants. For example, political parties see their own role more as forming a solid base for successful protests: « *si par exemple il y a eu 15.000 personnes à la Place de l’Obélisque, la moitié sont des militants des partis politiques (...) ça permet aussi aux autres de pouvoir sortir de chez eux* » (political youth). The idea of free-riding clearly does not come to mind here, on the contrary having demonstrators already on location motivates others to join. Civil society organizations were also not obsolete in the protests. As stressed by both political parties and civil society members, the participation of civil society gave the necessary credibility and legitimacy to the opposition. For example, cooperation with civil society reinforces the image of a “citizen’s revolution”, whereas the participation of political parties alone would create the image of a purely political conflict, making it more difficult for outsiders to take position.

Successful party mobilization can be related to the ongoing ‘passive revolution’ in Senegalese politics, which can also be seen, in this context, as an opening up of the political opportunity structure. Fatton’s (1987) ‘passive revolution’ refers to the gradual liberalization that took place under Senghor and Diouf without strong pressure from the street, and which transformed Senegal from a de facto one-party state to a multiparty democracy. The main goal of this democratization was to reinforce the hegemonic position of the PS by dividing the opposition. This pattern of gradual liberalization without consolidation has been maintained under Diouf (see e.g. Beck, 1997; Villalón, 1993).

Several researchers have noted the flip side of this liberalization for the ruling party. In the long run, it encourages internal splits with defectors taking their own chances in the multiparty system, and it encourages opposition cooperation through a learning process (e.g. “repeated games”) (Mozaffar & Vengroff, 2002). For example, Galvan (2001, p. 54) sees the defections of Djibo Ka and Moustapha Niasse from the PS as crucial determinants of the political

and manifestations in return. This is related to the political clout that is attached to the number of people one can gather.

alternation of 2000 (see also Mozaffar & Vengroff, 2002). These prominent PS figures saw their chances to the presidency reduced with Diouf remaining in power, and left the PS, taking their supporting factions with them.

The parallel can be drawn with the departures of Idrissa Seck (Rewmi) and Macky Sall (APR) from the PDS (Kelly, 2012, p. 125; Resnick, 2013, p. 5). After exit, these prominent figures take their supporters with them causing considerable draining of ruling party members. Moreover, aided by their former positions in power (and gathered resources in these positions), they can become quite formidable political opponents. As opposed to the idea that many political parties in sub-Saharan Africa, especially opposition parties, are generally weak and unstructured (see e.g. Bogaards, 2013), the gradual breaking up of factions from the ruling parties has led to more effective political pluralism in Senegal. When these opposition parties cooperate, this can lead to, among others, successful protest mobilization.

By engaging in protests, political actors follow their own objectives, however: *“les partis politiques, ce que les intéressait c’était d’avoir un scrutin transparent, un fichier fiable qui pouvait leur permettre de gagner les élections »* (party member 4). With Wade finishing his second term and his popularity declining, party leaders would want to resist a third term strongly, often spending more money outside the M23 without civil society knowing. When elections with Wade became inevitable, resources were quickly shifted to electoral campaigns. Smaller parties making the decision to stay in Dakar to protest and raise awareness were later also rewarded with positions within BBY. The M23 today, now an unnecessary vehicle for power attainment, is left aside.

Many other actors in the networks behind manifestations seem to pursue personal goals rather than being motivated by broader political and economic grievances. The position shifts of NGO actors have already been noted, but leaders of citizen movements as well quickly reveal political ambitions: *« quand on va vers des élections, (...) il y a beaucoup des partis politiques qui naissent, beaucoup des mouvements qui naissent (...) Et plusieurs mouvements comme ça sont nés comme ça, parce que c’était l’horizon 2012, on allait vers des élections. »* (political journalist), and citizen movements recurrently transform into new parties. Finally, political youths often wish to be rewarded with administrative positions, or use their ‘manifestation fame’ to climb party ranks.

5. Conclusion

Although academic discussions on social movements in Africa certainly take place (e.g. de Waal & Ibreck, 2013), the literature remains to an important extent deprived of in-depth analyses on how movements in Africa are formed, how they structure themselves, what actions they undertake, and, ultimately, how they demise. Coalitions of opposition parties and civil society actors especially, are regularly formed in Africa. This type of mobilization also took place in Guinea (2009), Niger (2009-2010), and, more recently, Burkina Faso (2014), and all protests reacted to presidential controversies. It is striking that these movements have only been scantily discussed in African studies. This study therefore attempts to clear the path towards a deeper and more detailed analysis of protest organization in Africa, and an increased understanding of African social movements.

The resource mobilization perspective on the M23 in Senegal brought to attention the practicalities of protesting – organizing transport, acquiring media interest etc – which reveal to what extent the movement had to rely on financial and human resources. These were mainly provided by political parties. This also demonstrates the intentionality behind the cycle of resistance in Senegal in the run-up to the elections. Indeed, nationwide protests are actively sought and staged (and financed). Local protests therefore do not solely depend on the level of grievances, but also of organizational strength on the ground. Furthermore, violence – usually of a low intensity – is used to attract media attention, both from national and international sources. With regards to the latter, actors seem to pick in quite ingeniously on Western assumptions of political instability and violence in ‘Africa’; whereas in reality the scale of conflict and violence in (Sub-Saharan) African countries diverges widely.

The motivational dimension to explain mobilization success remains important, and democratic and economic grievances at the population level were also what rendered old and new opposition parties more popular. Political opportunity structures could also be identified as internal divisions and defections within the ruling party strengthened opposition forces, as well as their means for protesting. However, it is clear that grievances and opportunity structures – though in important ways connected to the resource mobilization argument – do not solely account for mobilization. Mobilization requires a practical feasibility with actors and prior networks ultimately deciding to undertake organizational efforts and devote sufficient means to the movement goal. The key political actors involved in this largely follow their own objectives to reach power, whereas even leaders of citizen movements and civil society organisations seem to follow personal goals as they are co-opted by the state. They are also

the actors that make up the new regime after the presidential elections. These features of the mobilization of 2011-2012 in Senegal cast doubt on the ability of the protests to fundamentally change prevailing political and economic relations, as is entailed in the meaning of a 'revolution'.

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