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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The aim of this paper is to investigate whether climate change is the cause of the crisis in the western Sudanese province of Darfur.

**Findings:** Explains the importance of water resources, soil condition, and agricultural land in the Darfur region.

**Originality/value:** The approach and the results are original and valuable to the impact of climate change on the conflict in the western Sudanese region of Darfur.

**Keywords:** Sudan, Darfur, Rainfall, Desertification, Water Resources, Agricultural, Soils, Vegetation, Climate Change, Conflict.

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### SUDANESE IN POLAND

Poland, with no colonial past, and with economy targeted at countries from its own region, has still exceptionally poorly developed, considering its potential and possibilities, relations with African countries. This fact also affects potential migration flows. It is particularly evident in recent years when, on the one hand, there has been a significant influx of economic migrants to Poland, mainly from Ukraine (up to 3 million) and, on the other hand, migrations from African countries have remained on the same, exceptionally low level for more than 20 years, with no greater importance from the perspective of politics, economy and the overall migration situation in Poland. However, it does not mean that there are no such migrations at all. The case of Sudanese in Poland, to whom this text is devoted, is an example of such tendencies, and at the same time so interesting by showing that even such small diasporas can be quite active in the accepting communities they came to live in.

The first Sudanese in Poland, also defined as Ethiopians (as Sudan for many centuries was called Ethiopia), could have appeared even in the period of the so called Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as captives from the Ottoman Empire, which used them as soldiers and with which the Polish-Lithuanian State often fought wars. Yet, it is difficult to talk about a more noticeable stay of Sudanese

in Poland until the 1960s. Only when African countries started to regain independence and socialist Poland established diplomatic relations with them by concluding international agreements on cultural, educational and scientific-technical cooperation, did the visits of the Sudanese to Poland begin to be more commonplace.

Sudan was the first country from Sub-Saharan Africa with which Poland signed such agreements immediately after Sudan gained independence in 1956. They were essentially connected with a wide range of state scholarships offered for studies in Poland, in the name of solidarity with developing countries. As a result of its implementation, since the 1960s until the 1990s Poland educated annually about two thousand students from African countries, among whom the Sudanese citizens represented the most dominant group. Quantitatively, the educational peak occurred in the 1970s and only after 1999 did the number of Sudanese studying in Poland start to decline rapidly turning into the system of paid, commercial studies, mainly in English. Earlier, all foreigners used to study in the Polish language, forced to initially participate in a year-long preparatory course and language learning, and only after its completion were they allowed to take up five-years of higher education, most often polytechnic and medical, rarely economic and humanistic. That system had one advantage because almost all African graduates of Polish studies were quite well integrated into the Polish environment. However, Poland has never tapped this potential, neither locally nor in their countries of origin to which they mostly returned. As a rule, administrative authorities immediately forced their returns. Only some graduates got married to the Polish citizens (with few exceptions almost exclusively men came to study in Poland). In practice, only the marriage to a Polish citizen guaranteed the right to stay in Poland although even such people left Poland after some time. There were also those who managed to undertake the doctoral studies or in case of doctors

to get an internship. Then, they extended their stay even by several years, in isolated cases deciding for a permanent stay. Generally, however, up to the 1990s, only few Sudanese stayed in Poland accepting the role of the so-called black Poles. Economic unattractiveness of Poland (especially in the 1980s), formal difficulties in case of the decision to stay and lack of a wider African environment effectively discouraged them from staying in Poland.

Only after 1989, when, on the one hand, there was a shortage of administrative means to force returns to home countries, and on the other hand, there appeared wider opportunities for stay in Poland and earn a living on the free market, many former students, doctoral students and interns decided to stay and never returned to Sudan. It should be added that not all of them had the possibility to legalize their stay, often by negligence or ignorance, which in isolated cases caused that they stayed in Poland illegally for many years. Moreover, in the 1990s the Sudanese who previously studied in the countries of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) came to Poland. The number of new people coming to study in Poland from the African countries, including those from Sudan, initially dramatically dropped in the 1990s, yet, on the other hand, for the first time in the history of Poland there appeared immigrants from this continent, whose objective was to apply of refugee status, or even for the settlement permit in Poland.

From among new Sudanese immigrants (including women on a wider scale), some applied for legalisation of their temporary stay while others applied for refugee status or concluded marriages with Polish citizens. Over time, all of them received consent to settle in Poland and then were granted Polish citizenship. Yet, there were still those who did not take any steps to legalise their stay and they fell into permanent illegitimacy for many years. In the late 1990s, the total number of Africans in Poland reached

most likely almost 3 thousand, with the biggest group of Nigerians and only 84 Sudanese, whose number has only slightly changed until today. Even if some came to Poland, at the same time others left and generally until today the number of Sudanese fluctuated but has never exceeded 100 people. It should be noted that they were, and they are almost all African Arabs, the Sudanese from the North. Only single Sudanese came over these years from the South, and currently there are no records of the Southerners in Poland. The last two, whom I personally met, have already left<sup>1</sup>.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the development of labour market and growth of bazaar trade in Poland have fostered the stay of Africans, including some Sudanese. Despite difficulties, many of them were granted work permit or consent to run business activity, and the same they received the permit to stay and over time the chance for citizenship. The easiest way to find a job in Poland was to work as a teacher of English. In learned professions

<sup>1</sup> On a side note, it is worth mentioning here the conclusion of marriage in Poland on 17 August 2013 by Teny Riek Machar to Edyta Kijewska, who was commonly called in Sudan „Kivi”. The spouse was the oldest son of the first Vice President of Sudan, vice-president of the ruling Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM), and the same the famous warlord from the Nuer tribe, Riek Machiara. „Kivi” graduated from the Warsaw School of Economics (SGH) in Warsaw. In 2008 she left for Kenya as a volunteer, but finally she settled in the South Sudan where she met her future husband. First, she was the project manager of the construction of the headquarters of the Ministry of Telecommunications and later she set up her own company. She also participated in the cycling relay race (Afryka Nowaka) on the Route Torit-Nimule and also took part in canoeing along the Nile in which we had the opportunity, together with Professor Róžański, to participate. The wedding ceremony took place in Poland near Wolibórz (the birthplace of the bride) in the church in the nearby Bronisławów, and the lavish wedding reception with traditional Nuer dances took place in the Magellan Hotel. Vice President Riek Machar was present with his wife Angelina Teny accompanied by all the family and numerous friends, who left Juba for three days on that occasion. For more information, see: <https://www.epiotrkow.pl/news/Afrykanskie-wesele-wolborzanki,17224> [access January-March 2020].

worked usually doctors on condition that they graduated from medical studies in Poland. Some of them, thanks to their good command of several foreign languages, found employment in foreign companies or in consular representations of other Arab states in Poland, in individual instances, at universities. Those, who had some capital, as a rule as support from families living in their home countries or in exile, started their own business activity.

The fact of signing by Poland the Geneva Convention of 1951 and accepting refugees became one of the “gates” used by some Sudanese, both previously studying in Poland, as well as the new ones coming to Europe. The Sudanese, in view of the situation in their own country, usually had no problems in receiving a positive decision in response to their application for refugee status. Nevertheless, by the end of the 1990s only 15 of them were granted refugee status. Besides, many of them, like majority of refugees, did not stay in Poland for longer, aiming to go to the West as soon as possible (most often to the UK). They were mainly motivated by a wider range of opportunities to get a better paid job there and a big Sudanese diaspora which was a source of support for them. Especially since Poland’s entry into the European Union, many Africans, including also the Sudanese, even long settled, with a good command of Polish and well-integrated, have gone to the UK, like many native Poles.

It is difficult to answer accurately the question of how many Sudanese are there in Poland today<sup>2</sup>. This, however, applies to all nationalities. There are no statistics that would record a not fully defined category of a nationality, religion or ethnicity. All statistics, on both Polish citizens and foreigners, register people only dependent on what current status they have, through which

<sup>2</sup> The author presents here the aggregated sources he obtained in the Migration Policy Department of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration.

procedures they went and what type of relationship they entered into with the Polish state, whether they, for instance, acquired the property, pay taxes, or if they have the refugee status, residence card or Polish citizenship. Moreover, these data do not add up and there is no certainty that people with a given status are still in Poland. The majority of Sudanese, for instance, who obtained Polish citizenship, have never renounced the citizenship of their country of origin even if they applied for and were granted the refugee status. Similarly, people with the residence card may not actually stay in Poland although this is a statutory requirement to have centre of vital interests in the territory of Poland. Many people may also be invisible to statistics, like, for instance, the citizens of the European Union, among whom, at least theoretically, may also be people of Sudanese origin. As long as such people have no need to take up a job under the Polish law or do not need to register their business activity, buy a property, a car, register a marriage, etc., they have no need to register their stay in any way. In fact, majority of UE citizens, living in other countries, have also poor awareness of the fact that they stay illegally in other EU countries even if their stay exceeded 90 days. Similarly, there are no statistics of people born in Poland whose at least one parent was Sudanese. They are simply Poles, even if they are somehow connected with the Sudanese diaspora.

According to data from the Office for Foreigners (as of 1 January 2020) the citizens of the Republic of Sudan had 50 valid residence cards (out of 425 996 cards in total), including two people who were granted refugee status. Overall, in case of the Sudanese there has been only a slight increase in this category, because four years earlier, in 2016, there were 40 valid residence cards for the citizens of Sudan, while the total number of residence cards held by foreigners in Poland doubled as in 2016 it amounted to only 211 869.

It should also be added that at the same time, at the beginning of 2020, 41 citizens of Sudan awaited the issuance of temporary residence permits, based on the placement of a stamp in the passport or a temporary identity document, and two people awaited permanent residence. In 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued 95 long-term visas for the Sudanese citizens because of work or studies undertaken by them in Poland. Moreover, it should be noted that some Sudanese citizens treat Poland as a transit country and, after obtaining a visa, move to other EU countries.

At that time, the Polish Border Guard refused entry to Poland to only one Sudanese citizen. Similarly, in the first half of 2019 only one illegal (irregular) stay of a Sudanese citizen in Poland was recorded. Moreover, also reports of the prison service on the number of foreigners staying in prisons in Poland indicate that until the end of 2019 among 1310 foreigners confined in custody and prisons no citizens of the Republic of Sudan were reported.

According to data from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in the academic year 2018/2019 – 23 Sudanese citizens studied in Poland (while one year earlier – 21).

In the first half of 2019, 6 work permits were issued for the Sudanese citizens (10 such permits were issued in the whole 2018). Overall, about 10 work permits for Sudanese citizens are issued annually since 2016. It should also be noted that, according to data from the Social Insurance Institution, the number of Sudanese citizens declared in Poland for the Pension insurance as at 30 September 2019 was as follows: 42 people (including 29 employees and 8 self-employed). Generalising, Sudanese citizens in Poland are currently working in different branches, mainly as specialists or teachers although they more often take up jobs as workers and contractors of simple services. Within the last three years 9 work permits have been issued for the Sudanese citizens within these groups.

From 2009 to 2018, 26 Sudanese citizens were granted Polish citizenship. There is also a group of several dozens of other people who were granted Polish citizenship before 2009 and who still live in Poland<sup>3</sup>.

When analysing the above data, it should be noted that Poland is still not perceived by Africans, including Sudanese, as the preferred destination for migration. Many of those who came to Poland confirm that they came here by accident, regardless of whether their goal was to find a job, go to university or receive refugee status. Moreover, few of those who stayed here shorter or longer, still stay in Poland permanently. What is particularly noticeable is the low number of people applying for refugee status, especially in the context of the fact that Sudan is one of the biggest refugee countries, both in the category of sending as well as accepting countries (according to data of UNHCR, as of September 2019, 1 million people). Obviously, the vast majority of refugees in the Republic of Sudan are refugees from South Sudan, hit by internal conflicts (about 770 thousand). Moreover, a significant group are Eritreans and citizens of Chad. By the end of 2019, in the very Khartoum stayed also about 93 thousand Syrians (only about 13 thousand of them had a legalised stay) and about 4 thousand Yemenis. The Office of the High Commissioner points out that the vast majority of people applying for refugee status in the Republic of Sudan never complete endless procedures (about 63%) and try to move on their own through the Sahara desert to Libya and further across the Mediterranean Sea to Italy. Not surprisingly, they hardly ever get to Poland. This year, further increase of the number of refugees is expected in Sudan, which

<sup>3</sup> Access to detailed statistics from before 2009 is currently quite difficult because those were “paper” statistics” in catalogue collections. These, which are easily accessible, do not include such insignificant category of migrants as Sudanese who disappear in the general category of “others”.

along with great economic problems of this country (among others annual inflation of 73%), may influence the overall deterioration of the situation in the country, particularly in terms of food, and strengthen the pressure to migrate.

In the context of various migrations, a rather outrageous case of “migration after death” is worth mentioning. 14 remains of the Sudanese bishops from Faras from thousands of years ago, thanks to one Polish physical anthropologist, were transported to Warsaw. Those remains were examined and later kept in the National Museum repository and after 40 years they were buried in the communal grave with the inscription “Priestly Tomb” in Bródnowski Cemetery in Warsaw. Today, the Sudanese community in Poland, although professing Islam, wonders how to give due honour to “their saints”<sup>4</sup>.

Reverting to those Sudanese, who lived and stayed in Poland permanently, started families, set up business activity and became part of the Polish society, they seem to be satisfied with their life decision. They no longer plan to return or migrate to another country. They maintain close relations within their small diaspora in Poland and at the same time they do not separate themselves from the Polish society. They established two cooperating with each other Non-Governmental Organisations, namely: the Nile-Vistula Association and the Harambi Foundation, now the Euro-African Foundation, in order to promote and support various socio-charitable and economic initiatives, spread tolerance and popularise knowledge about Sudan in Poland. They organise

<sup>4</sup> The present burial place: Bródnowski Cemetery, Sector 10 A, Św. Wincetego 83, Warsaw, Poland.

For more information, see: K. A. Mich, *Z Nubii do Polski – biskupi farascy na cmentarzu Bródnowskim w Warszawie*, in: W. Cisko, J. Różański, M. Ząbek (ed.), *Bilad as-Sudan. Polska a strefa Sudanu*, Bernardinum, Pelplin 2017, pp. 247–259.

charity fundraisers for Sudan and are permanent co-organisers of the African Film Festival “Afrykamera” and “African Evenings” within the “Day of Africa” as well as many other events.

Moreover, the Sudanese community in Poland spontaneously react to events in its country, by organising, for instance, mass meetings supporting anti-government protests or gathering on April 6, on the anniversary of overthrowing the Nimeiry regime. Besides, the Sudanese, if only they can, try to act in order to improve and intensify diplomatic and economic relations between the two countries. For several decades, Poles have been present in Sudan by conducting their scientific and economic activities. Sudan is one of Poland’s key partners in Africa and bilateral relations within the last years have been developing incredibly dynamically. In the capital of Sudan, Khartoum, operates only Polish Honorary Consulate, whereas in Warsaw there is no Sudanese diplomatic post and the Sudanese must go to Cairo to get visas to Poland, and the Poles must go to Berlin. However, it is possible that with the co-participation of the Sudanese associated with Poland it will soon change for the better.

In conclusion, as I mentioned in the beginning, the micro Sudanese diaspora in Poland, despite its few members, became a permanent element of the Polish reality.

KATARZYNA GRABSKA

### ‘WASTING TIME’: MIGRATORY TRAJECTORIES OF ADOLESCENCE AMONG ERITREAN REFUGEE GIRLS IN KHARTOUM

#### Wasting Time

Look at us? We are here (in Khartoum), we came here to change our lives, and nothing has happened. There is no change here. Me, for example, I am already 26. If I were in Eritrea, I would be married by now, and would have a child. I would be a woman. But here, how can I get married and have a child here? Even my mother who is in Eritrea, every time when I call she talks to me about marriage, but how can I get married here? I am still a girl (*guol*), people still call

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me *menesay* (youth or young). I should be a *sabeyti* by now (a married woman). We are missing our time here.

*Helen, 26 from Eritrea, in Khartoum for 6 years.*

Helen<sup>1</sup> was one of the young Eritrean refugee women in Khartoum whose lives I have been following since 2014. I interviewed her first for a research in September 2014, and then repeatedly between 2014 and 2016. Helen's comment mentioned above points to the experience of waiting while in transit towards a 'better' place but also about how this waiting affects transition from adolescence to adulthood for young women. Migration and displacement impacts one's life course in the present and in the future. In this article, I consider how forced migration of Eritrean adolescent girls to Khartoum affects their lives in critical moments of transitions and how the act of moving independently across borders is often experienced as waiting towards a better future, and wasting time in the present.

To entangle the diverse and complex experiences of Eritrean refugee girls and young women in Khartoum, I deconstruct two notions: that of *waithood* and that of *mobilities*. In doing so, I engage critically with the concept of *waithood* as defined by Alcinda Howana who says:

I use the notion *waithood*, a portmanteau term of "wait" and "-hood", meaning 'waiting for adulthood', to refer to this period of suspension between childhood and adulthood. On the one hand,

<sup>1</sup> Names of research participants were changed for anonymity. All interviews took place between March 2014 and April 2016 in Khartoum, Sudan. They were conducted in English, Arabic, in Tigrinya, Amharic or Bilen and translated into English. Life stories were recorded and transcribed.

young people are no longer children in need of care, but on the other, they are still unable to become independent adults<sup>2</sup>.

As Howana shows, the notion of *waithood* was first used by Navtej Dhillon and Tarik Yousef<sup>3</sup> and Dianne Singerman<sup>4</sup> in their work on youth in the Middle East and North Africa<sup>5</sup>. *Waithood* has become to encompass the multifaceted nature of youth transitions to adulthood, which goes beyond securing a job and extends to social life and civic participation. While this interpretation of *waithood* implicitly invoked a sense of passivity, Howana tried to show how young people caught up in 'waithood' actively make sense out of this experience. As she argues, "despite the challenges, youth in *waithood* are dynamic and use their agency and creativity to invent new forms of being and interacting with society"<sup>6</sup>. While such view of waiting gives wider possibilities for interpreting the everyday experiences of young people, it has mainly been employed to analyse the experiences of African male youth. With exceptions of some studies in West Africa and emerging work in Ethiopia<sup>7</sup>,

<sup>2</sup> A. Honwana, *The time of youth: Work, social change and politics in Africa*. Washington DC 2012, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> N. Dhillon, T. Yousef (eds.), *Generation in waiting: The unfulfilled promise of young people in the Middle East*, Washington DC 2009.

<sup>4</sup> D. Singerman, *The economic imperatives of marriage: Emerging practices and identities among youth in the Middle East*, Washington DC-Dubai 2007.

<sup>5</sup> A. Honwana, *The time of youth...*, op. cit., p. 29; A. Honwana, "Waithood": *Youth transitions and social change*" *Response to Syed Mansoob Murshed*, in D. Foeken, T. Dietz, L. de Haan, L. Johnson (eds.), *Development and Equity: An Interdisciplinary Exploration by Ten Scholars from Africa, Asia and Latin America*, Leiden-Boston 2014, pp. 28–40; M. Sommers, *Stuck: Rwandan youth and the struggle for adulthood*, Atlanta 2012.

<sup>6</sup> . Honwana, *The time of youth...*, op. cit., p. 30

<sup>7</sup> V. Hertrich, M. Lesclingland, *Adolescent Migration and the 1990s Nuptiality Transition in Mali*, „*Population Studies*” 66 (2012) 2, pp. 147–166; A. Erulkar et al., *Migration and Vulnerability among Adolescents in Slum Areas of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*, „*Journal of Youth Studies*” 9 (2006) 3, pp. 361–374; A. Erulkar, T.-A. Mekbub, , *Invisible and Vulnerable: Adolescent Domestic Workers in Addis*

trajectories of migrating or displaced girls have been much less studied. I question this perspective by arguing that adolescent girl refugees and migrants are often subjected to the similar sense of stillness and being stuck, while actively acting upon their situation, even if at times not realising their own transformations and transitions.

I analyse the narratives of Eritrean adolescent girls and young women of waithood in the context of the paradigm of mobilities, while critically examining the understanding of the world that is inherently rooted in mobility<sup>8</sup>. As these narratives demonstrate, mobility is a scarcely distributed resource, both affected by and affecting social relations, including gender and age. Aspirations for and desire of moving elsewhere shape experiences of and different transitions associated with one's life course. The transition from adolescence to adulthood is of critical importance, where aspirations of being elsewhere and the impossibilities of achieving this goal impact the experiences of 'becoming an adult'. While in transit and faced with protracted uncertainty<sup>9</sup>, Eritrean refugee adolescent girls in Khartoum are negotiating time and waiting while aspiring to move elsewhere. Brun refers to this state of waiting in protracted refugee situations as 'permanent impermanence', the type of uncertainty of the present that shapes the experience of the past and the future<sup>10</sup>. The aspirations for mobility (and the actual experience of immobility and waiting) permit us to

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Ababa, Ethiopia, „Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies” 2 (2007) 3, pp. 246–256.

<sup>8</sup> J. Urry, *Climate Change and Society*, Cambridge 2011.

<sup>9</sup> C. Horst, K. Grabska, *Flight and Exile: Uncertainty in the context of conflict-induced displacement*, „Social Analysis” 59 (2015) 1, pp. 1–18.

<sup>10</sup> C. Brun, *Active waiting and changing hopes: Toward a time perspective on protracted displacement*, „Social Analysis: Journal of Cultural and Social Practice” 59 (2015) 1, pp. 19–37.

investigate critical questions of how personhood and identity are transformed and constituted.

In what follows, I first situate the discussion within the wider literature on migration, adolescence and transitions. I then turn to sketching the context of Eritrean young women's presence in Sudan. Third, I outline my methodological approach by privileging narratives of adolescent girls. I then analyse Helen's migration story while examining waiting in transit and the intersection of migration with transitions in Helen's life course. I examine how gender and age influence how time, place and transition to adulthood are experienced in this transitory context. How is time and waiting dealt with in the context of transition into adulthood? How seemingly 'being stuck' in transit shapes the experiences of the present and the choices of refugee girls and young women for the future? At the end, I offer some concluding thoughts.

### Migration, Adolescents, Transitions

Adolescence and migration<sup>11</sup> both connote a journey. Adolescence is a temporal context-specific stage between childhood and adulthood. Migration implies both a temporal and spatial shift. Achieving an identity of an adult woman is part of the transition from childhood to adolescence to adulthood. Yet, in the context of migration, the type of adult or adolescent identity that girls and young women aspire to can be transformed and negotiated.

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<sup>11</sup> I use migration and forced migration interchangeably here, because most of my respondents referred to their move to Sudan as *migration*, as *moving*. This is not to deny the fundamental difference between forced and voluntary movement, but rather to acknowledge that the motives for the movement might be diverse and might change during the different phases of movement.

Stuart Hall<sup>12</sup>, building on Foucault, notes that identity must be conceptualized as the relationship between subjects and broader discursive practices. It has long been established that adolescence is “a socially constructed and multiple identity whose relations to other social formations are constantly in flux”<sup>13</sup>.

The period of adolescence is a crucial one in an individual’s lifetime – a period of critical transitions when major life decisions are taken, albeit in context-specific ways<sup>14</sup>. The spatial shift implied in migration is one such critical transition that intersects with other choices that are being made<sup>15</sup>. Bucholtz<sup>16</sup> points out that age is not the only important factor that determines adolescence. Youth is a flexible and social category and is based on locally and context-specific practices and norms. Adolescence in western psychological thought has been regarded as the primary preparation for adulthood. While it is an important phase in people’s lives, with spatial movement having significant implications for its outcomes<sup>17</sup>, transition into a particular type of adulthood is often closely related to the decision to migrate<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> S. Hall, *Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities*, in: A.D. King (ed.), *Culture, Globalization and the World System*, Basingstoke 1991, pp. 41–68.

<sup>13</sup> J. Austin, M. N. Willard, *Introduction: Angels of history, demons of culture*, in: J. Austin & M. N. Willard (eds.) *Generations of youth: Youth cultures and history in twentieth-century America*, New York 1998, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> M. Bucholtz, *Youth as Cultural Practice*, „Annual Review of Anthropology” 31 (2002), pp. 525–552.

<sup>15</sup> K. Gardner, *Lives in motion: The life-course, movement and migration in Bangladesh*, „Journal of South Asian Development” 4 (2009), pp. 229–251.

<sup>16</sup> M. Bucholtz, *Youth as Cultural Practice*, op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> For example migration prolonging stages of adulthood with marriages and child bearing being postponed.

<sup>18</sup> V. Hertrich, M. Lesclingland, *Adolescent Migration...*, op. cit.; M. Termin et al., *Girls on the Move: Adolescent Girls and Migration in the Developing World. A Girls Count Report on Adolescent Girls*. New York 2013.

To follow the local meanings of youth, refugee girls are defined on the basis of social age. Eritrean young women and girls who participated in the research left their places of origin before having attained social adulthood (womanhood: being a woman: *sabeyti* in Tigrinya), which is locally understood as being married (ideally followed by attaining motherhood – *ade qolu* – and establishing one’s own household). The vast majority of young refugees interviewed for this research were considered and considered themselves as girls (*gual* – which also denotes being a virgin) and youth (*meneseyat*). Only very few were referred to and self-identified themselves as children (*qol’u*) despite the fact that some were younger than 18 years-of-age. The terms *gorzo* refers to female youth who are not married (girls). *Gorziako* means that a girl has achieved a status of being ready for marriage (in the past associated with the moment she started menstruating).

The transition into adulthood in the context of migration implies a double challenge. As Meenakshi Gigi Durham argues, “the psychological transition of adolescence, already charged in terms of gender and sexuality, is then imbricated with the conundrums of the other transition – the diaspora identity that demands delicate negotiations of race/ethnicity, nation, class, language, culture and history”<sup>19</sup>. The Eritreans in Khartoum found themselves constantly navigating the gender norms defining their communities with those determining the local Sudanese context.

In the past decade the number of children and young people that are leaving their places of origin in search of better livelihoods or protection has been increasing rapidly. The large majority of these children are adolescents, and many are girls<sup>20</sup>. Migration,

<sup>19</sup> M.G. Durham, *Constructing the “new ethnicities”: media, sexuality, and diaspora identity in the lives of South Asian immigrant girls*, „Critical Studies in Media Communication” 21 (2004) 2, p. 141.

<sup>20</sup> M. Termin et al., *Girls on the Move...*, op. cit.

including forced migration, is predominantly a youthful activity. It is these young migrants and refugees who are responsible for the much-valued remittances and who, optimists hope, will benefit themselves. The age of young migrants is critical because once they include adolescents and especially those who are legally children, the policy and popular discourse undergoes a marked shift. In Eritrea, Sudan, and worldwide, the independent movements of under 18's are described very negatively as trafficking and exploitation. Yet, there is a need to better understand how movement of young people, especially adolescent girls, intersects with their own aspirations.

Here, I examine how physical mobility embodied in the migration from Ethiopia and Eritrea to Khartoum affects adolescent girls' sense of time and transition into adulthood. I follow Samantha Punch's<sup>21</sup> concept of youth transition to describe and analyse the passage of young girls into adulthood and how (local and diasporic) identities are transformed as a result. This concept allows me to examine the agency of migrant adolescent girls and young women<sup>22</sup>. By following the lives of some of the girls over longer period of time (some two years), and for some, in several locations, transitions are analysed in its temporal and spatial dimensions.

### Eritreans in Sudan

For over a decade a continuous flow of people have left Eritrea, unable to bear life in what they describe as a prison state. Yet, the

<sup>21</sup> S. Punch, *Youth transitions and interdependent adult-child relations in rural Bolivia*, „Journal of Rural Studies” 18 (2002) 2, pp. 123–133.

<sup>22</sup> A. Whitehead, I.M. Hashim, V. Iversen, *Child Migration, Child Agency and Inter-generational Relations in Africa and South Asia. Working Paper T24*, Sussex 2007.

current outflow of Eritreans to Sudan has to be contextualised within the migratory dynamics of the region as well as historical presence of Eritreans in Sudan. Sudan is marked by a diversity of population movements. A host and a producer of refugees, internally displaced and migrants, the country faces some of the largest population movements. Yet, there are no comprehensive statistics concerning international migration. The refugee population rises to over 2 million when internally displaced people and asylum seekers are included, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees<sup>23</sup>. This makes Sudan a major refugee hub in East Africa and a major way station for those hoping to reach other destinations. Recent statistics talk about 130,000 officially registered refugees from Eritrea in Sudan, with numbers most likely three-four times more. It should be noted that almost all Eritreans receive a refugee status in the country. A majority of refugees reside in the camps in the Eastern part of the country, while there is an increasing group residing in urban centres, especially in Khartoum.

The country has been a host to Eritrean refugees and migrants for over three decades. After the 1952 Federation with Ethiopia, and then the de-facto annexation by Ethiopia, many migrated first to Addis Ababa. In the 1950s, less privileged Muslims left for nearby Arab countries, first as migrant labour, but then in the 1960s, as Eritrea's nationalist struggle against Ethiopia intensified, increasingly as political refugees<sup>24</sup>. Most of the Eritrean refugees residing in Sudan stem from the independence war against Ethiopia. A large Eritrean diaspora was created as a result. Some estimate that around one million Eritreans live outside the country across

<sup>23</sup> UNHCR, *Factsheet. Khartoum: Sudan*, Geneva 2014.

<sup>24</sup> A. Kifleyesus, *Women who migrate, men who wait: Eritrean labor migration to the Arab Near East*, „Northeast African Studies” 12 (2012) 1, pp. 95–127.

Africa, the Gulf, Middle East, Europe, the US, Canada, Australia and Israel<sup>25</sup>. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front won the de facto independence from Ethiopia in 1991 (de jure in 1993). Many decided to return to build a new state and contribute to its growth. While relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea at first seemed to normalise, they deteriorated further into war a couple of years after Eritrea introduced its own currency in 1997. Another war broke out in May 1998 over a border dispute, but more concretely over differences relating to ethnic tensions and economic approaches. It resulted in 100,000 deaths and millions of dollars diverted from much needed development into military activities and weapons procurements. It also led to the closing of the border between the two countries, with families being divided by the new political situation.

This situation did not result in an opening of political space; authoritarian rule under Isaias Afwerki persisted despite initial promises, and multi-party system and governance reforms failed. A highly militarised state was created that was "shaped by war and run by warriors"<sup>26</sup>. While this was initially supported by pastoralists and peasants who were not much affected by the rules, urban educated elites increasingly resisted the idea of unending military service instituted in 1995. The national military service for anyone over 18 years old is mandatory, and although officially marked at 18 months, it usually extends without time limits<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> International Crisis Group, *Eritrea: Ending the Exodus? (Africa Briefing N°100)*, in: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/eritrea/eritrea-ending-exodus> (08.08.2014; accessed: 25.08.2020).

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>27</sup> Human Rights Watch, „*I Wanted to Lie Down and Die*”: *Trafficking and Torture of Eritreans in Sudan and Egypt*, New York 2014, in: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/02/11/i-wanted-lie-down-and-die/trafficking-and-torture-eritreans-sudan-and-egypt> (accessed 25.08.2020).

Girls and young women have a chance of being discharged from the military service once they get married and have their first child. Yet work opportunities beyond mandatory military service and subsistence agriculture are limited. Those with better education have to work for the government for \$15 a month after completing military training. Daily life is a survival struggle for families without relatives abroad sending remittances. Escaping to Europe offers both the promise of a better life and the ability to support loved ones back home. This pressure is especially felt as the result of recent outflow from Eritrea is visible in daily lives of those who stay behind. Television and social media contribute to the desire of moving elsewhere, and the dream of being part of the globalized world of capitalist opportunities skilfully portrayed by the media and those who made it to Europe and elsewhere. As a result, since 2001, increasing numbers of young people have deserted national service and crossed over to Ethiopia, Sudan or Djibouti as transit points to third countries with well-established Eritrean communities. Their aim continues to be to obtain a meaningful asylum and better economic opportunities.

The government instituted a ‘shoot-to-kill policy’ to deter potential deserters, but quickly this evolved into ‘a chaotic “pay-to-leave” trade in which the threat from the Rashaida ex-paramilitaries was crucial to generate revenues’<sup>28</sup>. Linking up with other Sahelian and Saharan criminal elements (already active along traditional smuggling routes toward Europe), a complex smuggling network through which Eritrean migrants were

<sup>28</sup> International Crisis Group, *Eritrea: Ending the Exodus?...*, op. cit., p. 8; Human Rights Watch, „*I Wanted to Lie Down and Die*”..., op. cit.; R. Humpris, *Refugees and Rashaida: Human smuggling and trafficking from Eritrea to Sudan and Egypt* [=New Issues in Refugee Research 254], UNHCR 2013, in: <https://www.unhcr.org/research/working/51407fc69/refugees-rashaida-human-smuggling-trafficking-eritrea-sudan-egypt-rachel.html> (accessed 25.08.2020).

channelled was established. As a result, vicious human trafficking exposing migrants and asylum seekers to gross human rights abuses emerged.

Most of the young Eritrean girls and women interviewed in Khartoum, as well as their relatives who came to visit from Eritrea, explained that many young people have left Eritrea:

In the evenings, we used to go out on the main street in Asmara, to have a walk, to find friends, to chat, to relax, to drink tea and go to bars. But now, when you go out especially on the weekends, almost no young people are there. You only see the old people, those who have health problems, everyone else is gone.

Since 2002, with the introduction of obligatory national service, there has been a significant increase of outmigration of young people from Eritrea. Some have referred to it as an 'exodus', claiming that some 40 per cent of the young people are gone from Eritrea<sup>29</sup>. Whether these numbers are correct, it is hard to confirm. However, the dominant Eritrean asylum seeking population reaching Sudan and Ethiopia is young and predominantly male, but increasingly becoming female. There are also growing numbers of young children crossing the borders on their own<sup>30</sup>. While often much less visible due to their strategies to remain undetectable within the wider community of strangers in Khartoum, Eritrean adolescent girls and young women increasingly move to Sudan independently.

<sup>29</sup> N. Andom, *Demystifying Irregular Youth Hemorrhage from Post-2000s Eritrea: Driven by Politics or Economics*, Conference Paper for Migration and exile in the Horn of Africa: State of knowledge and current debates, CEDEJ, Khartoum, 16 – 18 November 2015, unpublished.

<sup>30</sup> UNHCR, *Factsheet. Khartoum: Sudan*, op. cit.

## Narratives as a method and as analysis

The study is situated in the field of feminist anthropology in which difference is the point of departure<sup>31</sup>, and gender is studied as a social, political, economic and cultural construction and practice<sup>32</sup>. To placing gender<sup>33</sup> and age analysis at the core of migration research, I focused specifically on the experiences of adolescent girls and young women. The analyses that follow are based on a qualitative research project (2014-2016) carried out among Eritrean and Ethiopian girls and young women refugees who came to Sudan when they were adolescents. In this paper, I focus specifically on the narratives of Eritrean respondents.

In Sudan, I worked with a team of research assistants who were refugee girls themselves. We adopted feminist methodologies in order to break away from the hierarchical power dynamics and to minimize harm and control of the research process. Through different networks, I hired four Eritrean young women: ages 22, 25, 26 and 27. One came as a five – year-old child, and the other three had spent five-six years in the country. They first became respondents, and later research assistants, contributing to data translation, collection, analysis and some writing. Most migrants and refugees in Khartoum are in a particularly delicate situation as they often have no legal documents for their residence in the

<sup>31</sup> H. Moore: *A Passion for Difference. Essays in Anthropology and Gender*, London 1994.

<sup>32</sup> Ortner S., *Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?*, in: M. Zimbaldist Rosaldo and L. Lamphare (eds.), *Woman, Culture, and Society*, Stanford 1974, pp. 67–87.

<sup>33</sup> S.J. Mahler, P.P. Pessar, *Gender Matters: Ethnographers Bring Gender from the Periphery toward the Core of Migration Studies*. „International Migration Review” 40 (2006) 1, pp. 27–63.

country. They face high security risks, often being subjected to random policy arrests, imprisonment and at times deportation. Thus, I needed to be particularly careful in order not to endanger further their situation.

Fifteen life stories of Eritrean girls and young women were collected, recorded, transcribed and translated into English. Moreover, thirty qualitative questionnaires were administered among Eritrean adolescent girls who had come to Khartoum in the past seven years. Five focus group discussions were conducted with Eritrean refugee girls. Two discussions were held in an Eritrean refugee school. They included both girls who had arrived more recently (in the last five years) and those who were either born or had come as small children to Sudan. Two other discussions included groups of girls and young women who had arrived in the last five years. One was with girls who had arrived more than five years ago. In addition, family members (mothers, husbands, brothers, other sisters) of refugee girls who either migrated or visited the respondents were also interviewed. Ethnographic methods, including participation and observation were also adopted to contextualise the emerging narratives.

In international media, Eritrean girls' and young women's narratives of escaping Eritrea and then reaching Europe via Sudan usually centre on the dramatic part of their journeys, in order to bring to light the horrific violence that often accompanies girls' and women's migratory trajectories. Yet, in this way, girls' agency, reasons, experiences and aspirations related to migration are often silenced. To give silence a chance, to paraphrase Ghorashi<sup>34</sup>, and to excavate the meanings of transitions in refugee girls and young women's lives, I chose to resort to life stories as a method and to

<sup>34</sup> H. Ghorashi, *Giving Silence a Chance: The Importance of Life Stories for Research on Refugees*, „Journal of Refugee Studies” 21 (2008) 1, pp. 117–132.

girls' and young women's narratives as an analytical tool for two reasons. One, in order to account for the effects of migration on girls' transitions into adulthood, I needed to acquire a longer-term perspective of their lives, told on their own terms. Only then, as researchers, we are able to discern the points of negotiations, transitions and transformations that are often invisible to girls themselves as well as researchers. Second, resorting to life stories and focusing on narratives of research participants offers a subjective view of research participants' own lives. Narratives contain people's perceptions and, often, their own interpretations of meaning derived from lived realities. Thus, narratives offer data that have already been interpreted by the narrator before the researcher even reaches the data analysis phase of the research process. In this way, the research participants become part of analysis process – part of knowledge creation, by contributing their – what Haraway calls – “situated knowledge”<sup>35</sup>. Narratives provide a commentary not only on personal experiences, but also on wider societal norms, dynamics and transitions in particular time and place in which they are embedded. As Shelley Day Sclater argues:

Narrative analysis is not only a way of finding out about how people frame, remember and report their experiences, but is also a way of generating knowledge that disrupts old certainties and allows us to glimpse something of the complexities of human lives, selves and endeavours. It illuminates not only individual lives but also broader social processes<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> D. Haraway, *Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective*, „Feminist Studies” 14 (1998) 3, pp. 575–599.

<sup>36</sup> S.D. Sclater, *Narrative Research: Narrative and Subjectivity*, in: C. Seale, D. Silverman, J.F. Gubrium, & G. Gobo (eds.), *Qualitative Research Practice*, Sage 2004, p. 103.

This co-creation of knowledge underscores subjective nature of the world around us, and the way we perceive transitions that we are part of. While often disturbed in social and human sciences, subjectivity in personal narratives is key. “It is precisely because of their subjectivity – their rootedness in time, place, and personal experience, in the perspective-ridden character – that we value them”<sup>37</sup>. In what follows, I focus on one dominant narrative by Helen, as I followed her more closely than other over the past two and half years. While in no way less or more representative, her life story represents common concerns, experiences and aspirations of Eritrean adolescent girls and young women in Khartoum.

### Helen

September 14, 2014. Helen walks into my house in Khartoum. She looks frail and somehow very thin. She wears a black *abayya*, an Islamic dress to cover up her colourful leggings and a tight top underneath. She also has a red scarf covering her head, to better blend into a predominantly Muslim society in Khartoum. The dress code is an important signifier that Eritrean women have learned to use carefully in order to remain invisible and avoid offences and potential arrests from the police. Helen was recommended to me by Ruta, another young Eritrean woman about 20 years old, with whom I had been carrying out research for the first half of the year. Helen came from Karen in Eritrea, when she was 20 years old. She has been living in Khartoum for the past 6 years, and for the last 6 months she has been working as a nanny with an expat teacher in one of the international schools.

<sup>37</sup> Personal Narratives Group, *Interpreting Women’s Lives: Feminist Theory and Personal Narratives*, Bloomington 1989, pp. 263–264.

She is originally from Elaberid in Eritrea. She finished high school and the first year of collage in Asmara. Her father was a famous builder in the area and the family used to be well to do. This was the reason that she was also able to go to college.

When I was at school, I was more interested in school, in studying. In my class in town, I’m the first girl in all 8<sup>th</sup> grades. I’m interested in different kinds of work to improve lives of women. I wanted to work for women to change their lives. These were my interests. I got academic awards in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade. I even represented our town in Asmara for a national youth conference. I was presenting on women’s issues. There were some Eritreans who came from Diaspora, but they had no clue about how hard our situation in Eritrea was. They were just saying propaganda about the good lives in Eritrea and the equality for women and men. But this was not true.

When I was small, I wanted to work for women’s issues. Until 12<sup>th</sup> I was in Sawa (national service) and in college, I was debating in women’s issues. I remember, when I was 13 or 14, I was a winner in a debate on TV and I received an award. I was very happy because I became well known then in the school and in the district. I got that by defending women’s issue, by arguing that women have the same status as men. When I was small, I wanted to finish my studies and be a doctor. And then to get married – to be adult woman. This was my hope. But then... in 2008... everything changed.

During our first conversation, Helen told me that the military wanted to take her to the national service and this was the reason why she decided to leave Eritrea for Sudan. Yet, later on, as she started working with me in the research and we also became much closer as friends, she told me a slightly different version of events. She explained that the military came and took her father, for one year. He had to stop working and earning money. Then they released him, but after one year they came back to take him again to the military. He decided to escape. As they could not find him, they

arrested Helen's mother and took her to prison with a born-baby. This was the moment that Helen decided to leave college and help the family. There was no one else working in the family.

This was the time that our lives changed completely. I am the oldest of nine children. The whole responsibility was on me when my father was in hiding and my mother in prison. I then told the military that they should release my mother and take me. We all cried a lot. When they released my mother, this was the moment that I decided to go to Sudan. I was the oldest, and my father could not provide for our family any longer as he had to hide. So the responsibility for the family is now on me.

..... I did not tell my parents that I was going to leave for Sudan. They are aware of what can happen to girls on the road, and they are afraid for them. A high school teacher paid for my journey. I was good at school, and he knew that I needed to leave. This is the reason he helped me.

..... I left with a group of people, I was the only girl in the group. We were 10 in the group but I did not know any of the other people. We walked for 12 days and arrived in Sudan on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April. My feet were swollen and were hurting me (she was crying when telling me the story). I continued the journey with pain and crying. On the way, the *samsari* (the agent) was trying to rape me. But one of the men in the group helped me. I was so afraid the whole time, that I did not sleep for 12 days.

At the border I got sick at that time. My leg was swollen, too much fluid. I tried to wash my feet with water, but the pain was getting worse, as if I put them in the fire. I cried too much at that time. They (the boys and men in the group) waited for me. They didn't leave me. They all stayed with me I had pain but I simply walked. In Shagarab (UN camp in Eastern Sudan) I had too much pain for 2 months. .... We were lucky that we crossed the border without being stopped by the Rashaida. They usually kidnap Eritreans and then demand huge ransom money. Some are even tortured or girls are raped. Fortunately, nothing happened to me. But I know of many girls who are taken by force (raped).

... Then we crossed to Shagarab. I stayed there for three months. I was very sick. Some other girls helped me. One day, I was waiting for my registration card in front of the UNHCR office. They told us to wait from the morning. I did not eat anything, I was so weak. We had to wait for a long time. I did not want to miss the chance of getting my card. There is nothing to do there, you just wait for your registration and a refugee card. Then you go to Khartoum. But that day, I was waiting for so long and it was so hot, that finally, I fell sick and fainted. Some men helped me out.

Helen finally arrived in Khartoum. She first stayed without a job for 6 months, and later managed to get work with Sudanese families as a domestic worker. The work was exhausting. She had to work long hours, was not treated well by her employers, the sons tried to rape her, she did not get much food, and had to eat leftovers. The salary was very meagre, some 35 USD per month, which was not enough for rent and her own food. Finally, after changing her work several times, she got a part-time employment as a nanny with an expatriate teacher. Her English was good and she was smart. She had a good relationship with her employer and good working conditions. Her salary was then 200 USD per month. She rented a nice room together with a friend, was able to buy new clothes and send money home. This was the time that she felt her life was taking a more positive turn.

During one of our visits, she received a phone call. It was an Eritrean smuggler who informed her that her younger brother, who was 17 years old, arrived in Kassala and that she needed to find money to pay for his journey. Otherwise the brother would not be released. When I asked Helen how she felt about this news, she started crying. She said: "I should be happy, I have not seen my family in 6 years, but I do not have any money to pay for my brother. It is too much now!" She was stressed and left very fast.

Later on, she borrowed money from different people and paid for her brother. He stayed in Khartoum for about 5 months, before departing through Libya for Europe. Helen had to organise over 4,000 USD for his journey. She was stressed the whole time, about borrowing money, and also by not knowing whether her brother was alive. Finally, in June 2015, he arrived in Holland where he claimed asylum as a minor. Helen told me that she can rest then. Yet, about a month later, she got a phone call that her younger sister, 16 year old was in Kassala and that smugglers were demanding money. Helen was devastated. "I am happy they are coming. But I do not have money to take care of them. This stresses me out!", she told me. During our numerous encounters, Helen repeatedly commented how she feels stuck in Khartoum, and how she has not achieved what she had planned for when embarking on the migratory journey. "Others (Eritreans) are moving, they are going, even when they take the dangerous route through Libya. For me, there has been no change. I am still here *"wasting my time"* (my emphasis).

### **Permanent Impermanence: Waiting in an Inbetween Place**

Refugee narratives about their journey to and through Sudan are filled with waiting and "wasting time". They wait to cross borders, they wait for ransom money to be paid, they wait to register with the UN, they wait for their cases to be heard at the UN office, they wait to get jobs, they wait to move forward... "My plan was to come to Sudan, stay a bit, earn some money, and then move somewhere else", explains Abareth who has spent some six years in Sudan. This plan of "moving somewhere else" is a common narrative for most of the Eritreans. They see Sudan and Khartoum

as a transit point to a better life that can only be attained beyond Africa. Khartoum does not offer the opportunity to fulfil the dreams and aspirations that many Eritreans and other refugees and migrants have about 'better life'. At the same time, the narratives of hardship about life in Europe are suppressed and ignored as refugees are searching for solutions to their lives. While the simultaneous practice of multiple identities and migration has not been addressed extensively by scholars, the idea of moving further across space is often linked to larger life projects. Susan Ossman uses the term "serial migration" to refer to multiple international migrations over the course of a person's life<sup>38</sup>. Eritreans for that matter are a good example of a group that hopes, plans and engages in serial migration. Yet, the opportunities of moving further are few and far between, and thus, most Eritreans become stranded for years in Sudan. In this transit and protracted uncertainty<sup>39</sup>, Eritrean adolescent refugee girls in Khartoum are negotiating time, waiting, and identity while hoping to move elsewhere.

Girls who were not married and had no children often talked about "wasting time." Helen's narrative cited at the beginning of the paper is evocative of this prolonged and frustrated state of the inability to achieve life goals and being stuck. The issue of time passing and being wasted was a major concern for most of the girls and young women. It was also a concern for their families, as they saw their daughters wasting time and being stuck in adolescence rather than establishing their own families and having children. The idea of time was also related to the social status of girls within their wider community and their transition to adulthood, which could be attained through marriage and birth

<sup>38</sup> S. Ossman, *Moving Matters: Paths of Serial Migration*, Stanford 2013.

<sup>39</sup> C. Horst, K. Grabska, *Flight and Exile...*, op. cit.

of children, as well as their ability to make independent decisions as adult women (within the limits of their household gender and generational relations).

On the other hand, the issue of waiting and being stuck also resonated with the inability to attain their aspirations of helping families, of moving further. Helen explained: “I decided to leave Eritrea because of what happened to our family. The political situation forced me to do so. I had to leave in order to help my family.”

With limited work opportunities in Khartoum (most girls work as domestics, cleaners, tea makers, or waitresses earning between 35-100 USD per month), Sudan does not provide a viable option for a better life beyond survival. Most girls and young women expressed their desire of moving somewhere else, what they referred to as “another country beyond Africa” in order to expand their chances of a ‘better life’. These desires correspond to what Magnus Treiber has described as “becoming by moving”: “Another world is outlined, in which a worthy existence and the hope – for life could be possible – ‘somewhere’ and ‘somehow’. The achievement of an imagined better life thus is intrinsically tied to a progressive movement”<sup>40</sup>.

Thus, for Eritrean girls wasting time pertains to a specific situation. Their options are visibly constrained: no possibility of returning to Eritrea (a risky option of potential life imprisonment or even death), lack of opportunities to pursue a (desired) life in Sudan, and the risky and often deadly journey to another place. That desired life is imagined as being free from oppression, being able to study, getting a good job and being able to significantly

<sup>40</sup> M. Treiber, *Becoming by moving. Khartoum and Addis Ababa as migratory stages between Eritrea and ‘something’*, in: A. Mustafa, D. Barros, D. Berthet, R. Marina (eds.), *Spaces in Movement. New Perspectives on Migration in African Settings*, Köln 2014, pp. 189.

and structurally change the lives of themselves and their families. Not being able to achieve this exemplifies the enormity of the absence of choice and sense of accomplishment in the lives of Eritrean youth.

### **Active waiting: alternative pathways to adulthood and migration**

While waiting was also part of experience in Eritrea, Helen took a conscious decision to act upon her family’s difficult circumstances. Her dreams and aspirations that she had in childhood had to be put on hold, while other possibilities of transition towards adulthood had to be considered. In the qualitative questionnaires, all respondents commented that there has been no change in their lives since they arrived in Khartoum. Yet, the description of Helen’s life over the past 6 years presented above, as well as life stories of other Eritrean women and girls reveal a different narrative. Although life is often portrayed by refugee girls and women as ‘doing nothing’ yet, during the waiting for somewhere else, the everyday life happens as well. Some girls manage to get married; some get new and better work opportunities; some are joined by their sisters or brothers from Eritrea; others get pregnant. Frances Pine describes such moments in an elegant way when she says, quoting Jane Guyer that the near future “... becomes reinhabited by forms of punctuated time”<sup>41</sup>, while the more distant future is a place of hope, dreams, or intimations of some possible utopia<sup>42</sup>. To further elaborate on Guyer’s nuanced

<sup>41</sup> J.L. Guyer., *Prophecy and the near future: Thoughts on macroeconomic, evangelical, and punctuated time*, „American Ethnologist” 33 (2007) 3, p. 409.

<sup>42</sup> F. Pine, *Migration as Hope: Space, Time, and Imagining the Future*, „Current Anthropology” 55 (2014) 9, pp. 95–104.

perceptions of past, present and near and far future, the process of migration generates a “time that is punctuated rather than enduring: of fateful moments and turning points, the date as event rather than as a position in a sequence or a cycle, dates as qualitatively different rather than quantitatively cumulative”<sup>43</sup>.

Being an adolescent girl and young woman in Khartoum is punctuated with social restrictions, felt immobility, and lack of opportunities. While references to wasting time are abandoned, young girls are, in fact, actively “doing things” while waiting. They are actively acting upon their state of perceived immobility. For example, they contribute to changing gender relations and identities by challenging established trajectories into adulthood for girls. Other ways of becoming an adult and a woman become possible: through gaining independence such as living away from family, making one’s own decisions, controlling one’s own earnings. Thus, the idea of being stuck does not reflect their actual experiences. Brun refers to this as agency in waiting, bringing a more nuanced interpretation of ‘being stuck’ in waithood advanced by Howana<sup>44</sup>.

For Eritreans, marriage and fertility remain strongholds of womanhood. As a female fighter from the war of independence in Eritrea explained to Victoria Bernal<sup>45</sup> in her study entitled “From Warriors to Wives”, “Eritrean women are valued according to their degree of fertility” and *tegadelti* (women who took part in the war) could not compete with civilians. Many were infertile because of the wounds or the hardships they suffered in the bush; others had sacrificed many years of their childbearing age for the struggle.

Yet, *tegadelti* womanhood was not always what refugee adolescent girls and young women imagined about their own

<sup>43</sup> Ibidem, p. 104.

<sup>44</sup> C. Brun, *Active waiting and changing hopes...*, op. cit.

<sup>45</sup> V. Bernal, *From Warriors to Wives: Contradictions of Liberation and Development in Eritrea*, „Northeast African Studies” 8 (2001) 3, pp. 129–154.

ways of being a woman. Instead, they bring another dimension to the changing norms around gender identities and womanhood. While the socially accepted ways of becoming a *sabeyti* (a woman) might not be easily attainable in Sudan, Eritrean youth are slowly carving out alternative ways of becoming an adult woman. Most of the girls talked about the fact that the experience of escaping Eritrea brought changes into their lives. They referred to the fact that they have become responsible and independent. In Helen’s decision to leave Eritrea, and her feeling being responsible for her family as the oldest child when faced with household’s loss of income, we see the beginning of a transition from being a dependable child to an adult. She explained:

Even though my mother wants me to get married because I am 26, I cannot and do not want to do it here. I want to study first, I want to get a good job. (...) Although I am still single, here I had to grow up very fast. Now, I am responsible for my family in Eritrea. I am the oldest one. I have a responsibility here for them and for myself. I earn money, and I pay for my expenses. I am somehow grown up now. No one else is responsible for me here. I can also decide what I want and how I want to live my life.

The narratives of Eritrean refugee adolescent girls and young women in Khartoum demonstrate that (forced) migration has contributed to challenging established trajectories into adulthood for girls and to open other pathways for becoming an adult woman. In specific, the narratives reveal that migration and the resulting geographical shift have been a way of developing **a new sense of self-hood**. Helen commented:

I think my family respects me more now. I have been able to help them a lot, I paid for my brother, and then for my sister to escape to Khartoum. I also helped my brother to get to Italy through Libya. But this is a huge burden for me.

Through the new experiences at destination, many girls gained a sense of independence and widened their social world beyond the circle of their own household and childhood relationships. Forced migration and its related events such as living alone far away from family, earning money and becoming financially independent, as well as at times being able to help family at home financially, assisting younger siblings in accessing education and in moving to Khartoum and beyond were often perceived by girls and some of their family members as a way to becoming an adult. Gaining responsibility through the act of independent migration, and thus gaining some level of independence, growing up, and making decisions not only is an alternative adulthood, but gave some young women and girls a sense of themselves as adults in a different way. It was expressed by girls and young women referring to 'I have learned' or 'I am grown up now'.

In this way, migration and a geographical shift for adolescent girls has been a way of **developing themselves**, yet having significant consequences on their own lives. They are developing a sense of self in the place of migration, and in the wider world. This is also illustrated by girls' awareness that there is really no option of going back now. For Eritreans, becoming a person is linked to a movement forward in the world, to moving<sup>46</sup>.

One way of improving the available choices and expand decision-making for girls was through **access to paid work** in the place of migration. Most girls found work upon arrival in Khartoum. In terms of available jobs, there is limited choice in the urban labour market for adolescent girls. In Khartoum, the labour market is also rather limited with domestic work, work as street tea-sellers, cleaners, waitresses in restaurants, being the main areas of

<sup>46</sup> M. Treiber, *Becoming by moving...*, op. cit.

employment. While there are also girls involved in sex work, none of the girls interviewed for the study admitted doing such a work.

While in Khartoum, each individual situation is complex and depends on the migratory experience, for all, access to work and a certain degree of economic independence is linked to a wider capacity to take one's decisions and to manage one's life. Migration opens other ways of becoming an adult and most of the migrants, by earning an income assumed *de facto* a different role in the gender division of labour within the household. They often assumed adult responsibilities towards themselves and their family members. Migrant and refugee girls and young women highly value economic independence and the capacity to stand on their own feet. Yet, not all work gives life-long stability. None of the interviewed girls and young women in Khartoum perceived their occupation as leading to life security and as a viable long-term income generating activity, and most looked towards further migration to advance their hopes and fulfil their aspirations.

While **marriage** retains ideally its importance as a social institution and as fundamental step in the life trajectory into adulthood, the timing, prospects, decision-making, circumstances and purpose of marriage are changing. Marriage is often postponed by Eritreans who move cross-borders to escape early arranged marriages and/or to evade constraining gender norms. In some cases this sacrifice is made to assist younger siblings in migrating to Khartoum and beyond. For some young women migration translates in an increased decision making in the choice of a husband and in choosing whether to marry or not.

While some Eritrean girls and young women deliberately decide that marriage would not be necessarily their main life priority, for some others this is less of a choice. For Eritreans who had been raped or had been subjected to violence during the migratory journey it is difficult to find a husband, and they often end up

bringing their children alone. For those who become mothers as a result of a rape the situation is even worse.

Migration contributes to postponing marriage and it may represent a significant turning point in refugee girls' life trajectories especially when linked to acquiring economic or social autonomy. The way in which migration intersects with marriage choices and possibilities is strongly linked to gender orders, both in places of origin and in places of destination.

Alternative transitions into adulthood are also influenced by the act of sacrificing themselves that adolescent girls and young women often do for the benefit of their own families. Helen justifies her motivation to escape from Eritrea by her deeply felt obligation to help out her family. The idea of putting own life on hold in order to advance the goals of others in the family is located in social gender norms and relations that underpin Eritrean communities<sup>47</sup>. The social position as a girl and as the oldest in the sibling order, combined with strong family bonds and the importance of individual social identity as rooted in the collective identity, underpinned Helen and other girls and young women's decision to both migrate and postpone their own life projects.

### Concluding thoughts

In this article, I problematised Howana's notion of waithood as a suspended phase between childhood and adolescence. Looking through the prism of narratives of Eritrean girls and young women in Khartoum, waithood does not represent the actual experiences

<sup>47</sup> V. Bernal, *From Warriors to Wive...*, op. cit.; M. Belloni, *Cosmologies of Destinations: Routes and routes of Eritrean forced migration to Europe*, [PhD Thesis], University of Trento 2015; N. Adom, *Demystifying Irregular Youth Hemorrhage...*, op. cit.

of migration to Khartoum for adolescent girls and young women. While initial plans envisioned by the girls before their departure from Eritrea might not have been realised yet, upon reflection, all respondents were able to identify small steps of change and transformation in their lives. Thus, the idea of 'being stuck' and waiting does not represent their experiences. It is rather the daily struggles, navigations, and search for greater decision-making capabilities that influence transitions into alternative forms of adulthood.

In the context of permanent impermanence, the aspirations for mobility (and the actual experience of immobility and waiting) permit us to investigate critical questions of how migration affects transitions from adolescence to adulthood. The case study of Eritrean adolescent girl migrants demonstrate how global capitalism, transnationalism and local socio-political circumstances influence their decision to migrate, as well as their identity as youth. The changing notions of transition to adulthood are also by-products of migratory trajectories and experiences. While not being able to attain the 'life elsewhere', the idea of moving 'somewhere else' remains an important one in determining girls' transition into adulthood.

As shown, physical mobility also results in social immobility. Thus, immobility is an integral part of mobility. This is especially so given the current context of migration and refugee regimes that privilege move of some and constrain and penalise the movement of others. The notion of movement, while highly gendered, is also intrinsically linked to the notion of becoming, and transiting into another phase of life course.

While migration intersects with transitions to adulthood and other choices that are being made at the critical time of adolescence, it is also itself a spatial transition in one's life. Gender and age relations are highly regulative of these processes and to need to

be incorporated into our understanding of waithood and how waiting produces alternative subjectivities.

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**Abstract**

Eritrean adolescent girls' migration to Khartoum exposes the interplay between aspiration and desire of becoming an adult linked to a specific geographical location, dreams of being else-where, impossibilities of returning, and realities of uncertainties and being-stuck inbetween. This paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork among Eritrean adolescent refugee girls and young women in Khartoum (2014-2016), who see Sudan as a transit place to an imagined 'better place' elsewhere. Aspirations and desires of moving elsewhere shape the experiences of and the different transitions associated with one's life course. The transition from adolescence to adulthood is of critical importance, where aspirations of being elsewhere and the impossibilities of achieving this goal shape the experiences of 'becoming an adult'. These transitions are also gendered, both in space and across spaces. The paper is driven by narratives of adolescent refugee girls who reflect on their migratory experiences and transitory adolescence experienced temporarily and spatially. Using insights from feminist narrative research, I examine how these refugee girls and young women narrate and experience migration and transitions in a transitory context of Khartoum. Through hope for mobility and the experience of waiting while faced with protracted uncertainty, I analyse how time, personhood and transition to adulthood are experienced.

**Keywords:** Eritrea, Sudan, refugees, adolescence, girls, waiting, agency, transitions

## Résumé

**'Perdre le temps':  
trajectoires migratoires d'adolescence parmi les filles réfugiées  
érythréennes à Khartoum**

La migration des adolescentes érythréennes vers Khartoum met en lumière l'interaction entre l'aspiration et le désir de devenir adulte, liée à une place géographique spécifique, les rêves d'être ailleurs, l'impossibilité de rentrer, les réalités d'incertitudes et de coincement entre les deux. Ce chapitre est basé sur un travail de terrain ethnographique réalisé parmi des filles et des jeunes femmes réfugiées érythréennes à Khartoum (2014–2016), qui percevaient le Soudan autant qu'un lieu de transit vers un «meilleur endroit» imaginé ailleurs. Les aspirations et les désirs de déménager ailleurs façonnent les expériences et les différentes transitions associées au cours de la vie. La transition de l'adolescence à l'âge adulte revêt une importance cruciale, dans laquelle les aspirations d'être ailleurs et les impossibilités d'atteindre cet objectif façonnent les expériences de «devenir une adulte». Ces transitions sont également différenciées selon le sexe, à la fois dans l'espace et à travers les espaces. Le chapitre s'appuie sur des récits de filles adolescentes réfugiées qui réfléchissent à leurs expériences migratoires et à leur adolescence transitoire vécues de manière temporaire et spatiale, suspendu et en attente. En utilisant le savoir basé sur les principes de recherches narratives féministes, j'examine comment ces filles et jeunes femmes réfugiées racontent et vivent la migration et les transitions dans un contexte transitoire de Khartoum. Par l'espoir de la mobilité et l'expérience de l'attente face à une incertitude prolongée, j'analyse la manière dont le temps, la subjectivité et la transition vers l'âge adulte sont vécus.

**Mots clefs :** Érythrée, Soudan, réfugiés, l'adolescence, filles, l'attente, transitions

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## **CROSSROADS OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN AFRICA AND QUESTIONS ABOUT MONETARY UNION**

The European experience of regional integration and monetary union as one of its highest form has often been put forward as models, schemes or blueprints for regional integration, particularly in Africa. In the light of events over the crisis period 2008-2011, that model is looking increasingly tarnished. As pointed out by Emmanuel Tumusiime-Mutebile, the Governor of the Bank of Uganda, the European Union experiences still provide a guide to both the positive steps to take and the mistakes to be avoided in the construction of a monetary union. There have been in fact three failed or flawed attempts at monetary union in Europe: the initial Werner Plan, the European Monetary System and finally the Euro project on which the verdict is still out<sup>1</sup>. Many important questions remain without an answer about the viability of the common currency in African Regional Economic Communities (RECs), especially in light of the serious crisis experienced by the

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, *Towards a common currency in the Eastern African Community (EAC): issues, challenges and prospects*, Kigali 2012, p. 25.

European Monetary Union (the Euro area) in 2010 and which is still ongoing, and which was hitherto considered a model of successful currency union. Nevertheless, some doubts arise when monetary union is confronted with the issue of whether it is feasible to create a currency union in a loose convergence situation highly relevant for the proposed unions in Africa<sup>2</sup>.

Some analyses emphasize that African economies seem too different on many accounts to allow for sustainable monetary union. These differences range from production structures to institutional effectiveness. The importance of independent monetary system is partly reflected in what the Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter said: “the monetary system of a people reflects everything that the nation wants, does and suffers”<sup>3</sup> and as is known in this form of integration, monetary policy which is a core state power, a monopoly of the state and a symbol of national identity must be transferred to supranational level. The more potential cost of monetary union – obligatory loss of monetary

<sup>2</sup> Macroeconomic convergence criteria normally centre around economic indicators that are related to macroeconomic policy formulation and performance. These include the level of inflation, interest rates, exchange rate performance, and budget deficit and government debt to GDP ratios. The African Monetary Cooperation Programme provides a blueprint for macroeconomic convergence in the African context and was formulated with the objective of ensuring the adoption of collective policy measures that foster a harmonised monetary system and common management of institutions. The programme has a long-term perspective and involves: 1/ the adjustment of member countries exchange rate to equilibrium levels, 2/ eventual current and capital account convertibility, 3/ the pursuit of market-oriented monetary policy. The ultimate aim is to evolve (through the regional central banks) towards a single monetary zone by 2021, with a common currency and continental central bank.

K.S. Masalila, *Overview of initiatives to promote convergence in the context of regional integration: an African perspective*, „IFC Bulletin” 32 (2010), p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, *Towards...*, op. cit., p. 10; S. Blockmans (ed.), *Differentiated integration in the EU. From the inside looking out*, Brussels 2014, p. 13.

sovereignty at the national level will for sure originate from the ineffectiveness of one common monetary policy held at supranational level to fit the needs of all member countries – the more they differ.

Nevertheless, the sad experience of colonial forcible monetary integration or postcolonial inconsistencies and fragile standing of many economies, the introduced and implemented law at the treaty level in the Abuja Treaty or in other sources of integration ideas like Agenda 2063, show the perfect immense belief in continent’s capabilities to move into the African monetary union.

### What is Agenda 2063?

In May 2013, at the African Union (AU) Summit, Heads of State and Government in their 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration (the AU’s golden jubilee summit), laid down a vision for Africa. This vision becomes Agenda 2063. Agenda 2063 is a strategic framework for the socio-economic transformation of the continent over the next 50 years. The year 2063 is not a random choice date. It emphasises the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The Agenda builds on and seeks to accelerate the implementation of past and existing continental initiatives for growth and sustainable development. It is a transformative vision and a policy framework to achieve an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa. What may be the most important in it – it is driven by its own citizens, Africans, and represents a dynamic force in the global arena. It promotes a high standard of living, modern and liveable habitats, transformed and climate-resilient economies and a modern agricultural sector. It emphasises democratic values, capable institutions, gender equality and empowered youth, as well as an Africa that can finance its own growth and development.

There are then seven core ideas and aspirations that generally cover the areas of interest introduced by the Agenda and are to achieve:

1. A Prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development,
2. An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance,
3. An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law,
4. A Peaceful and Secure Africa,
5. Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics,
6. An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children,
7. An Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner<sup>4</sup>.

Only a glance at the mentioned above ideas show Agenda as a very demanding and ambitious plan enough, to extent when one considers the environment in which it would be worked out, developed and exist, and which is expected to shape it for best benefits.

One of the challenges it would face is for sure probable lack of financial resources for its implementation and lack of political commitment expressed by the part of African leaders who have a knack to agree in public to matters they do not actually believe in or fully support. As Agenda 2063 raises among Africans hopes and dreams of a vibrant and prosperous continent, stirs up emotions and excitement, the same that was present when the Organization

<sup>4</sup> African Union Commission, *Agenda 2063, the Africa we want*, September 2015.

of African Unity (OAU) was established in 1963, this date itself may unfortunately raise concerns that lead to a conclusion about misty results of the ideas that were spoken out in 1963! OAU is today a history, but its successor, the African Union (AU) with immense potential, launched with a genuine desire to promote unity, development and sustainability reflected in the idea of a United States of Africa, is bogged down by endless talks and empty promises, failing to serve its people when they needed it most. Post-independence plans yielded only modest results in terms of the overarching objective of structural transformation. The failure of plans was largely due to discontinuities in the planning process, stemming from political instability, institutional and bureaucratic weaknesses, poor strategic design and implementation, and setting over-ambitious targets.

To mention, by the way, demanding and ambitious plans, over-ambitious targets in African integration touch sometimes in research papers an ironic string. Some analytical studies on regional integration underline and bold incoherence between expectations drawn 'in papers' and reality in daily political and economic practice. Names given to most African regional groupings have tended to reflect the goal rather than stage of integration that has actually been reached. Some use the name "Community", others "Common Market" to indicate the destination aspired for. Goals allow some to say that African regional integration exists, but yet too often on paper only. Some regions are doing better, others should speed up. In any case, real and comprehensive regional integration and cooperation starts with tremendous political homework, with political vision, leadership and readiness to entrust regional organizations to lead the process. No doubt, integration will not happen overnight, as it will take several generations, but many preliminary decisions should already be taken.

First of all – there is a need for a clarity of objectives – what comes first, at regional, sub-regional or continental integration level. Second, there are no ready-made solutions as each integration process is individual, with its own conditions and dynamics. Thirdly, for integration to comply with modern requirements, appropriate tools and instruments should be used, as traditional approaches and formulas have changed considerably over time. Lastly, there is a need for realistic priorities, based on realistic needs, with realistic timetables, for implementation<sup>5</sup>.

A striking dilemma in this context is also that Africa has been acting under a dangerous paradox. The more frameworks and programmes have been adopted, the more their outcomes and effectiveness have been of diminishing returns. Therefore, fewer action plans and more real activity and action are urgently needed. Otherwise, a powerful and emotional rhetoric of the Agenda 2063 promising wonderful things would fail to deliver.

Based on this logic, one may ask a question why Africans and the world (meant as a general environment of the African continent – global stakeholders) should believe that Agenda 2063 will work this time, when a lot of them for sure remember the past decades initiatives that have failed? How can the African Union itself persuade that once more an introduced Agenda and its vision are no longer only ideas?

There is also one more thing that came on me when I was studying Agenda 2063. Ironically, only a few, if none, of those who are today keenly excited about African affairs or conduct research on Africa, including myself, may have opportunity to enthusiastically welcome a finally prosperous and integrated Africa,

<sup>5</sup> M. Maruping, *Africa in the world economy – the national, regional and international challenges*, Hague 2005, p. 148; P. Ustubs, *Reasons for regional integration and why the EU should support it*, „Regional International Observer” 1 (2013) 2 (September), p. 6.

the United States of Africa, simply because the drawn perspective of Agenda 2063 is too long. It also may accompany delays in implementing ideas and action making them faint to final expiring for the same reason.

### My concerns about regional integration

When we take into consideration, mentioned in point 2 of core ideas and aspirations introduced by the Agenda 2063, ‘an integrated continent’, ‘politically united’, we think about a bundle of results connected with economically and politically integrated community at regional and of course continental level that define the African Economic Community (AEC) as such. Integration in these areas would allow building interlocking partnerships and institutions at community level among member states, at regional and at continental level to help absorb the disruptive changes and reduce associated community and state fragilities. Building the capacities of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to find regional solutions to regional problems.

Today’s general environment for conducting integration process and implementing ideas of the Agenda 2063 is far better for Africa than it was when the OAU was established or when it was transformed into the AU. Africa today has turned the corner. The continent of ‘the lost decades’ not so long ago, has fortunately somewhere disappeared. Today’s Africa is home to several of the world’s fastest-growing economies and the progress on a number of social indicators seems impressive.

The desire to integrate African economies on a regional, and ultimately, continental basis in the past was and is today strong. It is shared amongst African elites and their international development partners. Consequently, many formal initiatives have

been established to further this goal, under the over-arching umbrella of the African Union's plan to achieve a continental common market by 2028. The African Economic Community adopted a trade-led mainstream economic integration model with steps that lead to a complete economic union. The African paradigm is of linear market integration, that reflects gradualist approach to integration, the same that marks the pace towards integration in Europe. The starting stage is a *free trade area*, followed by a *customs union*, a *common market*, and then the integration of monetary and fiscal matters to establish an *economic union*. The achievement of a *political union* features as the ultimate objective.

Talking about regional integration in Africa, one inevitably goes back to the historical periods of a forcible integration of the continent by the European colonial power states, among which France and Great Britain were the most powerful and governed the most territorial areas in Africa. As today's attempts to conduct integration process are led in postcolonial era, one may once again come to an inevitable question: how many of European integration ideas are present today in African integration, besides the linear model of gradualist approach?

As this question defines a broad scope of discussion problems, I concentrate on the international primary sources of law that define and govern the integration process.

In European case, the linear economic and political integration was reflected by treaties that step by step made the integration process 'decade by decade' more advanced. The 1951 Treaty of Paris establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, established the free trade area with a common market features between six European member states<sup>6</sup>. The 1957 Treaty of Rome

<sup>6</sup> France, Germany, Italy and Benelux countries: the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg.

establishing the European Economic Community, established the customs union between these six member states and introduced the two Communities more: the European Economic Community and European Atomic Energy Community, EURATOM. The Single European Act signed in February 1986 marked the first significant formal transformation of the Treaty of Paris and the Treaty of Rome and created instruments in implementing the European Union's single market. According to its Article 1, The European Communities and European Political Cooperation shall have as their objective to contribute together to making concrete progress towards European unity. The European Communities shall be founded on the Treaties establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Economic Community, the European Atomic Energy Community and on the subsequent Treaties and Acts modifying or supplementing them. The European Communities opened the floor for the next more advanced than a free trade area or customs union stage of regional integration – the common market. The 1991 Maastricht Treaty on European Union amends and augments the 1957 Treaty of Rome and the 1987 Single European Act. It prepared for the coming of the European Community's open internal market after 1992 and gave floor to the further development of the European Union into economic and monetary union, prescribing a number of harsh requirements to fulfil by future participating states in form of convergence criteria. The Title II of the Treaty, among others, gives the provisions for the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), including the implementation of the third stage of EMU which establishes a single currency by 1999. According to Article A of this Treaty, the High Contracting Parties establish among themselves the European Union. This Treaty marks a new stage in the process of creating an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe, in which decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizen. According

to Article B: the Union shall set itself the following objectives: to promote economic and social progress which is balanced and sustainable in particular through the creation of an area without internal frontiers, through the strengthening of economic and social cohesion and through the establishment of economic and monetary union, ultimately including a single currency<sup>7</sup>.

Now, when one starts researching African integration in postcolonial era, one pays attention to the 1991 Abuja Treaty provisions. Signed on 3 June, 1991 the Abuja Treaty is undoubtedly one of the most important sets of primary international act of law, that lays the legal foundation for the process of continent-wide integration. The major aim of the Abuja Treaty is to create an African Economic Community (AEC) as an integral part of the Organization for African Unity (OAU) designed, among others, to enhance regional and continental economic integration and to expand trade in industrial products, and effect structural transformation of industry for the purpose of fostering the overall social and economic development of the member states. The African Economic Community is an organization of states, members of African Union establishing grounds for mutual economic development of regional economic communities. The stated goals of the organization include the creation of widely known from the linear model and theory of the international economics forms of international regional integration as follows: 1/ free trade area, 2/ custom union, 3/ common market, 4/ economic and monetary

<sup>7</sup> *Treaties establishing the European Communities, European Communities, The Netherlands 1978*; E. Jones, A. Menon, S. Weatherill (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the European Union*, Oxford 2012; *Single European Act*, in: „Bulletin of the European Communities” Supplement 2/86, European Communities Commission, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg 1986; *Treaty on European Union*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg 1992.

union with a common currency and a common supranational central bank.

The Abuja Treaty is a concretization of the objectives of the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos which in 1980 reaffirmed the commitment to establish an African Economic Community by the year 2000 for national and collective self-reliance including the creation of an African Common Market as a prelude to the African Economic Community. Chapter XIX of the Abuja Treaty titled “Relations between the Community and regional Economic Communities, regional continental organizations and other socioeconomic organizations and associations” in Article 88, stresses the importance of establishing the African Economic Community “through the coordination, harmonization, and progressive integration of the activities of regional economic communities.” It further enjoins member countries “to promote the coordination and harmonization of the integration activities of regional economic communities of which they are members with the activities of the Community.” Article 3 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union also underscores the need “to coordinate and harmonize the policies between the existing and future Regional Economic Communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union”<sup>8</sup>.

As one studies Article 4 of the Abuja Treaty, its point 2 letters ‘a’ to ‘p’, it becomes obvious that it collects together for member states a set of goals that meet the objectives of the African Economic Community. Among others, for example I choose: 1/ creating a free trade area by the liberalisation of trade through the abolition,

<sup>8</sup> UNECA, UNIDO, *Report on Regional Strategy for Rational Location of Industries in the Context of the Abuja Treaty*, Gaborone 1995, p. 1–2; African Union, *Treaty establishing the African Economic Community*, Abuja (Nigeria), 3 June 1991; African Union, *Constitutive Act of the African Union*, Lome, July 2000.

among member states, of customs duties levied on imports and exports and the abolition of non-tariff barriers in order to establish a free trade area at the level of each regional economic community, 2/ introduction of common policies by the harmonisation of national policies in order to promote Community activities, particularly in the fields of agriculture, industry, transport and communications, energy, natural resources, trade, money and finance, human resources, education, culture, science and technology, 3/ creating a customs union by the establishment and maintenance of a common external tariff, 4/ the establishment of a common market, 5/ introduction of freedoms that are characteristic for common internal market by the gradual removal, among Member States, of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital and the right of residence and establishment, 6/ the attempt to create a common fund for community cohesion by the establishment of a Community Solidarity, Development and Compensation Fund.

The presented set of goals in the Abuja Treaty, in case of the European integration, can be found in a number of primary international law provisions.

Going further to Article 6 of the Abuja Treaty, it becomes clear that once again in a single treaty article a complex gradual process is established that once again in case of the European integration such is defined in a number of treaties.

According to Article 6 point 1 and 2, the Community shall be established gradually in six stages of variable duration over a transitional period not exceeding thirty-four years.

*At first stage:* strengthening of existing regional economic communities and /.../ establishing economic communities in regions where they do not exist.

*At second stage:* at the level of each regional economic community and within a period not exceeding eight years, stabilising tariff

barriers and non-tariff barriers, customs duties and internal taxes /.../; there shall also be prepared and adopted studies to determine the time-table for the gradual removal of tariff barriers and non-tariff barriers to regional and intra-Community trade and for the gradual harmonisation of customs duties in relation to third States.

Strengthening of sectoral integration at the regional and continental levels in all areas of activity particularly in the fields of trade, agriculture, money and finance, transport and communications, industry and energy, and co-ordination and harmonisation of activities among the existing and future economic communities.

*At third stage:* at the level of each regional economic community and within a period not exceeding ten years, establishment of a Free Trade Area through the observance of the time-table for the gradual removal of tariff barriers and non-tariff barriers to intra-community trade and the establishment of a customs union by means of adopting a common external tariff.

*At fourth stage:* within a period not exceeding two years, co-ordination and harmonisation of tariff and non-tariff systems among the various regional economic communities with a view to establishing a customs union at the continental level by means of adopting a common external tariff.

*At fifth stage:* within a period not exceeding four years, establishment of an African Common Market through: (i) the adoption of a common policy in several areas such as agriculture, transport and communications, industry, energy and scientific research, (ii) the harmonisation of monetary, financial and fiscal policies, (iii) the application of the principle of free movement of persons as well as the provisions herein regarding the rights of residence and establishment, (iv) constituting the proper resources of the Community as provided for in paragraph 2 of Article 82 of this Treaty.

At *sixth stage*: within a period not exceeding five years: (i) consolidation and strengthening of the structure of the African Common Market through including the free movement of people, goods, capital and services, as well as, the provisions herein regarding the rights of residence and establishment, (ii) integration of all the sectors namely economic, political, social and cultural; establishment of a single domestic market and a Pan-African Economic and Monetary Union, (iii) implementation of the final stage for the setting up of an African Monetary Union, the establishment of a single African Central Bank and the creation of a single African Currency ... /.../<sup>9</sup>.

In comparison with the line of primary international law governing the European integration outlined above, one notices an inquiring difference of the provisions' quality at treaty level in Africa. Unlike in Europe, the Treaty of Abuja defines, does, covers, manages, directs and supervises the whole (!) gradual process of integration all by itself alone (!) It. to some extent. may put member states of African integration in a worse position, comparing to member states that take part in European integration. I mean the treaty ratification case. When a member state in Europe ratifies one or two treaties and implements their rules at national level, it does not always mean that it will ratify the full texts of the other coming treaty, as it has done before. The European experience of the mentioned Maastricht Treaty shows us that even when a single state is willing to tighten its regional integration, political and economic connections by ratifying treaties one by one, it has a possibility to exclude, to limit its access in some procedures and make some provisions not binding at its national level. Such possibility, opened to member states in European integration treaty provisions, is called 'opt-out' clause or exemption clause. Negotiating

such clause is a kind of refuse for a single member state and a will to maintain its sovereignty in some fields defined by treaty provisions. The 'opt-out' clause Protocol enters into force together with the implemented treaty by a single state and is valid for a defined in a Protocol period of time. For example, according to the Maastricht Treaty's Protocol on certain provisions relating to for example Denmark and its point 2, in the event of a notification that Denmark will not participate in the third stage (of EMU), Denmark shall have an exemption. The effect of the exemption shall be that all Articles and provisions of this Treaty and the Statute of the ESCB referring to a derogation shall be applicable to Denmark<sup>10</sup>.

The mentioned bundle of goals in the Abuja Treaty, theoretically may raise to me problems of participation. If any contracting party of the Abuja Treaty, a member state of the OAU (now AU) is not willing to be a part of the exactly continent-wide monetary union, but meets with enthusiasm customs union, the Treaty does not give such possibility of choice. In Europe, member states willing to create customs union or common market, but suspicious about monetary union had a choice in a form of 'opt-out' clause. A contracting party, a member state of the AU ratifying the Treaty of Abuja, means expressing full agreement to all (!) its provisions and strict obligation to follow a prescribed schedule of action towards completion of integration process. More, there have not been so far any Protocols concluded on 'opt-out' agreements in the Abuja Treaty. This is a substantial difference. As contracting parties of the Treaty are member states that enthusiastically belong to their own regional free trade areas or customs unions and as one knows often duplicate or overlap their membership – if one of them is not enthusiastic about monetary union or any other

<sup>9</sup> African Union, *Treaty establishing the African Economic Community*, op. cit.

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem.

forms prescribed by the Treaty to deepen the integration, it still has a “solution” to avoid. As one knows, all member states of the OAU ratified the Treaty. Unfortunately, then they fail to complete the process, which for some of them is a natural motion taking into account economic and political standing of many member states. We witness such scenario nowadays. Member states that sluggish do not do it on purpose. It is a matter of their nature: political, economic and social<sup>11</sup>. The convergence process prescribed in the Treaty for Third Stage 2007-2017 – establishment of a free trade area through the observance of the time-table for the gradual removal of tariff barriers and non-tariff barriers to intra-community trade and the establishment of a Customs Union by means of adopting a common external tariff – to be completed by the end of 2017 is exactly not achieved! One can imagine that if such scenario prolongs for the next Stages and goes beyond Treaty’s transitional periods, such member state or member states may have been excluded in future from the African Economic Community. According to Article 6 point 5 of the Abuja Treaty, the cumulative transitional period shall not exceed forty years from the date of entry into force of the Treaty<sup>12</sup>. Any legal mechanisms do not exist

<sup>11</sup> There are two aspects behind Agenda 2063 that may raise concerns and doubts. One is perfectly political and second, economic. *Political* of nature concerns are connected with the African state and its developmental capacity. The nature and condition of contemporary African states is defined to extent with postcolonial and neocolonial mark, disabling states systems. One of the questions is what quality of transformation, regionalism and development ‘failed states’ might provide acting in accordance with Agenda 2063 ideas. *Economic* of nature concerns and continually present to extent defined by the question how the nature, current structure and operations of African (sometimes fragile), neocolonial economies, resource-dependent would promote and conduct not only basic development required for completing the stages of the African Economic Community, but also ambitious and demanding forms of regional integration as the monetary union.

<sup>12</sup> As there were 40 years between the Treaty of Paris and the Maastricht Treaty (1951-1991), reflecting the development of the European integration,

to exclude a member state from the AEC pace in this context. Future developments of member states’ position and shrinking schedule time may press for the need to make amendment of the Treaty’s provisions, which means its future reform. Helpful in such pessimistic scenario will be excluding member states staying integrated regionally in groupings that already exist and are governed by their own regional treaties like for example upon South African Development Community (SADC) Treaty<sup>13</sup> or East African Community (EAC) regional agreements<sup>14</sup>. At this time, we do not know yet to what extent such regional treaties will be supplementary when the process of creating the African Economic Community will be completed. Knowing that member states must not ‘opt-out’ and being aware of absence of legal procedures excluding a delaying member state, as well as those prolonging transitional period, we reach the point to ask a question about capabilities for contracting parties of the Abuja Treaty to move for monetary union.

the Abuja Treaty also gives 40 years to member states that ratified its provisions to develop integration and complete the process by creating the African Economic Community.

<sup>13</sup> For example, Article 5 constitutes SADC objectives, among others development, economic growth, progressive achievement of the free movement of capital, goods, services and labour. *Treaty of the Southern African Development Community*, 17 August 1992, Windhoek.

<sup>14</sup> For example, in 2013, the ‘tigers’ of African regional integration, East African Community member states: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda signed a Protocol setting out the process and convergence criteria for the EAC monetary union. This represents a further step toward regional economic integration after the region successfully ratified the protocols on customs union and the common market. The introduction of a regional common currency is envisaged for 2024. The national currencies of member countries would be replaced by a single, common currency as it happened in July 2001 in the Euro area after the transitional period ended.

## Monetary union – a picture of demands

Article 44 of the Abuja Treaty in passage 2 letter (g) provides a general direction to the process of attaining monetary integration through establishment of the African Monetary Union by the harmonisation of regional monetary zones, which is understood as a prelude for consolidation of RECs – creating regional monetary zones – to introduce one African-wide single currency.

In August 2003, the Association of African Central Bank Governors announced that it would work for a single currency and common central bank by 2021. This idea in first days of the year 2018 seems impossible to come alive, but the announcement itself expresses a fascinating nostalgia and attempts taken in a new environment defined with new regionalism and globalisation to catch the sentimental wave woken up long decades ago when Pan-African integration movement was paving a rough going road. Monetary integration itself is an older story than Pan-African integration ideas, as it was born upon colonial domination. Therefore, nowadays, the more such announcements made, the legal provisions and strategies coined, too ambitious, far-sighted ideas of Agenda 2063 and provisions of the Abuja Treaty, the more important and vital they are as made all by Africans – not any exogenic force, forcible<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Much of African regional integration history, monetary and broadly economic integration shows that they initially arose from colonial, political ideas of subordinating nations via forcible integration, rather than economic or developmental agendas. Africa has had a chequered experience of monetary and financial cooperation, dating back to the pre – and post-colonial eras. During the colonial period the participation in an integration arrangement was based on treaties (SADC), decrees and conventions (CEMAC, ECOWAS and WAEMU) to specific ordinances (COMESA/EAC). The main features of the arrangements ranged from currency boards based on the French franc or the British pound

Monetary cooperation in a form of monetary union seems an inevitable consequence of regional integration on the continent according to the provisions of the Abuja Treaty. Under Article 6 passage 2(e), in the fifth stage of establishment of the Community, an African Common Market would be introduced, among others, through the harmonisation of monetary, financial and fiscal policies. This feature is typical for advanced regional monetary cooperation. At sixth stage, as passage 2(f) point (i) states, consolidation and strengthening of the structure of the African Common Market, would be obtained through, among others, the free movement of capital. This, in my opinion, needs making once more a parallel of context with the European Union integration and primary law.

Researching the European integration, one notices that it took member states 33 years (!) to achieve the freedom of capital movement. I count this period taking as the beginning date the year 1957, when the Treaty of Rome in Article 67 declared such freedom and the completing date of the year 1990, when the Directive of 24 June 1988 for the implementation of Article 67 of the Treaty (88/361/EEC) came into force. The quality of free capital movement enabled the Common European Market to operate efficiently and opened the door for the monetary union

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sterling to free access to member states' capital markets or convertibility of member states' currencies.

P. Honohan, S.A. O'Connell, *Contrasting monetary regimes in Africa*, Washington DC. 1997, p. 8; P. Masson, C. Pattillo, *The monetary geography of Africa*, Washington DC. 2005, p. 5; N. Fabris, G. Rodic, *The efficiency of the currency board arrangement*, „Journal of Central Banking Theory and Practice” 1 (2013), p. 160.

The monetary arrangements that time between European power states and overseas territories were purely to support the administration of the colonies and in the interest of metropolis. CFA Franc Zone in French West and Equatorial Africa – a monetary zone – is the best example. No convergence criteria for “member” countries at that high stage of regional integration were formulated. The integration itself was purely a forcible one.

projected in the Maastricht Treaty. Once more, in this context I propose paying special attention to the fragment of Article 67 which delivers, in my opinion, an extremely important message I consider absent in Articles throughout the Abuja Treaty. I mean that special fragment of Article 67 in which it says: "... to the extent necessary to ensure the proper functioning of the common market"<sup>16</sup>.

Citing this fragment, I am not trying to persuade that omitting the phrase "to ensure proper functioning" changes anything in integration pace among Regional Economic Communities (RECs) but is to some extent inquiring to me. African economies may need a longer transitional period than a fixed point for completing fifth or sixth stage to safely and smoothly move into the freedom of capital movement. Political consensus in this particular case has unfortunately nothing to do. 'Unfortunately' because a case is much more serious than only expressing a political attitude of being 'for' or 'against' by this or that government. The case is perfectly economic. Making freedom of capital movement too early in ambitious attempt may put exchange rates of participating African economies, operating in a volatile environment, not structurally diversified and extremely sensitive to international price changes, into a harsh stress test causing a permanent depreciation of a currency in floating system or a call for immediate administrative devaluation in fixed system when capital in different forms, not only cash, outflows. In my opinion, any floating exchange rate and peg of perfect African origin would exist smoothly under market depreciation pressures forces unless it is supported by the exogenous force. As one knows, the example of such is the assistance

<sup>16</sup> *Treaties establishing the European Communities*, op. cit.

of the French Treasury standby the CFA franc of WAEMU and CEMAC – CFA franc zone<sup>17</sup>.

Any exchange rate regime is naturally connected, justifies and provides stability to any geopolitical arrangement. Economic dimension supporting political dimension is important to extent defined by negative spillovers on socio-political contract existence and its stability in case of economic disturbances and societies' outbreak of anger exhorting for changes when far recovery after slowdowns or crises means long-lasting poverty. Economic success means improving the capacity of geopolitical arrangement. Improving the capacity of an arrangement has the same function as any exchange rate regime. They both serve to tie members of an arrangement in their inter-dependence and in fact create a community of fate. This makes monetary arrangements, unions doubtful projects for those who prefer independency in monetary affairs. By this logic, exchange rate regime and in a broader sense a monetary authority, power may serve as a tool to influence or impact one member of an arrangement by another one. It is a natural evolution of relationship reflected in such, as hierarchy of member states within an arrangement places and divides them naturally into core and peripheral members. Finally, exchange rate regimes support geopolitics internationally, beyond the borders

<sup>17</sup> Since the early 1920s the stability of French franc overseas France and colonial economies as well, have been guaranteed by the operational accounts (*compte d'operations*) led by the French Ministry of Treasury, that played the role of assistance.

L.H. Gann, P. Duignan (ed.), *Colonialism in Africa 1870–1960*, vol. 4: *The economics of colonialism*, Cambridge 1975, pp. 133–134; E. Chrabonszczewska, *Strefa franka francuskiego* [=Monografie i Opracowania 292], Warszawa 1989, p. 17, 31; UNECA, *Assessing regional integration in Africa III*, Addis Ababa 2008, p. 218.

of an arrangement improving international standing of a cooperation and making an arrangement more influential<sup>18</sup>.

Exchange rate regimes in sub-Saharan African countries vary greatly and have evolved over time. The exchange rate regime has bearing on economic outcomes, but alongside other macro-economic policies as well as the strength and depth of institutions. As in other regions, there is considerable variation in regimes across sub-Saharan Africa and over time. One distinguishing feature relative to other developing regions is the higher prevalence of pegs. Nearly 60% of countries in sub-Saharan Africa had a peg in 2014. A peg of African currencies to other international currencies like U.S. dollar, Euro or pound sterling is a contemporary legacy of economic and political dependence during the colonial period. In postcolonial time many African authorities represent the attitude known as a “fear for floating”.

The *pegged* exchange rate regime category comprises hard pegs (countries with a currency board or countries without a separate legal tender, including monetary unions) and conventional single-currency pegs. The *intermediate* category comprises basket pegs, pegs within bands, crawling pegs, and floats with rule-based or discretionary intervention (managed floats). The *floating* category comprises the independent floats when a currency's value is set by market forces of demand and supply, and not by financial administration authorities.

Hard pegs have been the dominant category among the sub-Saharan African pegs due to the CFA-franc zone. Conventional pegs have gained some ground, especially for the classification, for example, Sao Tome and Principe adopted a *de facto* peg to the euro in 2010. Among countries with pegs, the euro is the most

<sup>18</sup> T.G. Grosse, *W poszukiwaniu geoekonomii w Europie*, Warszawa 2014, p. 217 et cons.

popular anchor currency, followed by the U.S. dollar. Pegged regimes have been very resilient in sub-Saharan Africa, with more than 99% of all hard pegs and 87% of conventional pegs persisting from one year to the next. Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo were *de facto* pegging their currency to the U.S. dollar, at least until 2014, as do Guinea and Zimbabwe which are dollarized<sup>19</sup>.

Beside the ability to anchor inflation which is a good side of a peg, its basic weakness is that fiscal and structural policies must bear the burden of adjustment. Here may come troubles. The lesson of the Euro area, begun in 2009, showed that disabled monetary policy under a single currency and supranational central bank, the European Central Bank can only “watch” affected single economies sink in slowdown. Imbalanced national economy standing “on only one leg” – on the fiscal policy is fully dependent on its performance. It is always real economy developments that light up and bold even slight inconsistencies or market deficiencies, making them threats endangering the scene. Such demanding, doubtful and concerning is monetary integration. The example of such was observed not long ago and as a possible scenario for future endangers obviously, in my opinion, the monetary union project.

The positive outlook and optimistic prospects on African growth drawn in 2011 and 2012 had to be changed for the following periods. From 2013, there was a decline of the share of Africa's exports in global merchandise exports from 3,3% in 2013 to 3,0% in 2014. This decline is partly due to unfavourable movement in global commodity prices, which since the second half of 2014

<sup>19</sup> P. Honohan, S.A. O'Connell, *Contrasting monetary regimes in Africa*, op. cit.; C. Allard et al., *Trade integration and global value chains in sub-Saharan Africa*, Washington DC 2016, p. 31 et cons.

have fallen dramatically, by more than 60%, dropping even below the level of the 2008 global financial crisis. This price variability has had a significant impact on investment and economic growth, since many African countries' trade is heavily concentrated on natural resource products, which account for 2/3 of the continent's merchandise exports. Political instability in North and Central Africa, energy crises throughout the continent and the onset of the Ebola crisis in 2014, combined with a crash in commodity prices on world markets – all have contributed to Africa's recent lower-than-average growth rates and have affected individual sub-regions differently. Moreover, to negative impacts, prospects of optimistic growth had to be changed by the International Monetary Fund in October 2015. Lower growth amid persistent risks. Economic activity in sub-Saharan Africa has weakened markedly. Lower than projected growth at 3,75% in 2015 and 4,25% in 2016, however, still remains higher than in many other emerging and developing regions of the world. The largest contractions between 2010 and 2014 are seen in Libya from 5% to –24%, Equatorial Guinea from 16,7% to –0,31%, Liberia from 6,1% to 0,5%, Botswana from 8,6% to 4,3%, Kenya from 8,4% to 5,3%, Lesotho from 7,9% to 3,6%, South Africa from 5,3% to 1,5%, Zambia from 10,3% to 6% and Zimbabwe from 11,4% to 3,8%<sup>20</sup>.

High commodity prices played a particularly central role in the region's eight oil exporters – Nigeria and Angola, but also in several hard metal exporters – for example, Guinea, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Zambia. Growth among oil-exporting countries (not only mentioned above, but also CEMAC member states),

<sup>20</sup> African Union Commission, *Strategic Plan 2014-2017*, Addis Ababa 2013, pp. 36, 37; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, *Macroeconomic policy and structural transformation of African economies*, Addis Ababa 2016, p. 9; Transition Report op. cit., pp. 6–7, 81.

which represents about half of sub-Saharan Africa's GDP, is expected to decelerate sharply, from 6% in 2014 to 3,5-4,25% in 2015–2016, under the combined effects of lower export income and sharp fiscal adjustment. The main channel in the region of transmission the weak global environment is to be through depressed commodity prices. Endogenous shocks of the commodity price decline may also have a huge disastrous effect on poverty eradication progress in many countries in Africa. Since most countries do not have the fiscal space to respond to such shocks and are highly commodity-dependent like Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad and Angola, they face deleterious impacts on building inclusive and accountable institutions, economic diversification and structural transformation<sup>21</sup>. The realignment of commodity prices amounts to a formidable terms-of-trade shock for oil exporters in the region, cutting national income by as much as 15 to 50% of GDP since mid-2014 and has also severely affected other commodity exporters, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, and Zambia, and to a lesser extent Niger and Sierra Leone. While these developments have been supportive for oil importers that do not rely much on nonrenewable resources for exports, especially in East and West Africa, many of these countries have also had to contend with tighter global financing conditions that have coincided with the decline in commodity prices. The third factor has been the highly accommodative global financial conditions, which have boosted capital flows to many countries in the region, facilitating higher private and public investment. Two of the three factors have become much less supportive. Commodity prices have fallen sharply and financing conditions

<sup>21</sup> UNECA, AU, AfDB Group, UNDP, *Assessing progress in Africa toward the millennium development goals [=MDG Report ]*, Addis Ababa 2015, p. 4.

in states' budget within not diversified economies have become more difficult, endangering with budgetary deficit and public debt. There is a risk of still lower growth if the external, exogenic environment continues to weaken. Existing vulnerabilities, especially on the fiscal front, could also come to a heated if the external environment were to turn even less favorable, via further declines in commodity prices, stronger growth deceleration in China, or a disorderly global asset reallocation<sup>22</sup>.

In the second half of 2016, the near-term prospects of oil exporters in particular worsened, notwithstanding the modest uptick in oil prices. The adverse effects of the decline in prices of 2014–2015, first mainly felt within the oil-related sectors, have spread to the entire economy, leading to a more entrenched slowdown. Consequently, output among oil exporters is expected to shrink by 1,3% in 2016 weighed down by a deep contraction in Nigeria, but also in Chad, Equatorial Guinea, and South Sudan, while Angola will barely escape recession. As the new external environment has affected the region's countries differently, based on the structure of their economy (oil exporters versus importers and resource versus non-resource intensive countries), the upshot has been increasingly divergent economic paths across sub-Saharan Africa. By contrast, non-resource-intensive countries continue to perform well. Growth for this group as a whole is expected at 5,5% in 2016 – just below the average 6% experienced during 2000–2014 as they benefit from a lower oil import bill and an improved business environment while strong infrastructure investment continues to help sustain the growth momentum. Countries such as Cote d' Ivoire and Senegal in West Africa, or

<sup>22</sup> Regional Economic Outlook, *Sub-Saharan Africa, Dealing with gathering clouds*, October 2015, IMF Washington, p. 1; Regional Economic Outlook, *Sub-Saharan Africa, Multispeed growth*, October 2016, IMF Washington, p. 3.

Ethiopia and Kenya in East Africa, are still foreseen to grow at a 6 to 8% clip in the next couple of years. The strong growth momentum of non–resource-intensive countries like for example of Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, or Senegal, remains undiminished. However, this high growth is unlikely to have positive spillovers on the hardest-hit countries, as intra-regional economic and financial linkages tend to remain limited<sup>23</sup>.

As the effects of the shocks permeate the entire economies in the most affected countries, other, that are more lagging with fragile macroeconomic indicators may also have started to take a turn for the worse. One observation here is important in the context of the African Economic Community. Oil-exporting countries and oil-importing countries (non-resource intensive) are not symmetrically affected by the shock. The same situation has been observed within CFA franc zone, in which WAEMU and CEMAC economies are differently vulnerable to exogenic oil price shocks as the latter is composed by member states oil-exporters and the former is not. One of the striking results is different real exchange rate of WAEMU CFA franc and CEMAC CFA franc. This obvious divergence within CFA Franc zone (!) raised and fueled ideas of dividing CFA franc zone into two groupings: WAEMU and CEMAC – what in fact happens when within a monetary union two currencies have different values! Some doubts and questions arise on me in this point.

One important issue rises across multiple membership and continuous interaction of states within a REC. Let us go back to CEMAC example. Although CEMAC itself is not a 'building block' of the African Economic Community, it nevertheless poses risk to the integration concept of the African Economic Community. It

<sup>23</sup> Regional Economic Outlook, *Sub-Saharan Africa, Multispeed growth*, op. cit., p. 1–2, 5.

is done via CEMAC's member states alone, oil-exporters that are also the member states of the other groupings: RECs creating 'building blocks'. The sub-region remains largely dependent on oil revenues. A substantial and prolonged drop in oil and other commodity prices potentially linked to a slowdown in global growth is the greatest risk for the CEMAC. Such a decline would significantly impact the fiscal and current account balances and would force a more sudden and faster decline in public investment. Moreover, the region's heightened security risks could also have a negative impact on growth. Without increased momentum of reform, the medium-term growth potential would be more limited and impede achievement of development goals. CEMAC's member states also pose a high political stability risk. The continuation or worsening of the crisis in the Central African Republic and the displacement of populations to neighboring CEMAC member countries could lead to instability. The continuation or worsening of the crisis in northern Nigeria could lead to the displacement of population and greater instability that could affect CEMAC countries (especially Cameroon). The rise in piracy in the Gulf of Guinea could affect marine shipping, especially of petroleum products exported by countries in the sub-region. A possible return of instability in Chad could also cause a degree of instability in other CEMAC member countries. Greater political instability could lead to higher spending on security and could deteriorate the fiscal balances<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> J.P. Trevino, *Oil price boom and real exchange rate appreciation: is there Dutch disease in the CEMAC*, Washington 2011, p. 10; IMF, *Central African Economic and Monetary Community 2013* [= Country Report" 13/322], Washington DC., pp. 6, 10; IMF, *Regional Economic Outlook, Sub-Saharan Africa, Dealing with gathering clouds*, (October), Washington 2015, p. 94.

## Conclusion

Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the world's most vulnerable regions to natural disasters, due, in large part, to low adaptive capacity. Climate change will add to this vulnerability. Natural disasters negatively affect economic and social indicators, especially over the longer term. While their short-term impact is often mixed, they can nevertheless contribute to vulnerability and pose challenges for macroeconomic management. Sensitivity to rapid changes in international economic environment also makes the region vulnerable. Those multi-oriented weaknesses are responsible for the uneven performance and vague future prospects. Treaties and other international acts of law prepared in friendly home and foreign environment encouraging for ambitious movements and plans may need postponing when the full implementation of law would be costly or attempts made by states need to be delayed in unexpected circumstances like international supply, demand shift shock or financial crisis. Building resilience in economic security by creating policy buffers is not always possible when policy space is limited or constrained. The mentioned bundle of regional weaknesses may here explain the matter. It is thus obvious that the impact of mentioned disasters is proportionately higher for low-income, fragile countries and poor households where an inability to adapt is the highest. As low-income, fragile countries and small states will have little alternative to retaining risk alone, there must exist regional mechanisms for quick and targeted action<sup>25</sup>.

The situation of 2014-2016 puts undoubtedly to me monetary policy authorities to the test. It has a lot in common with ambitious

<sup>25</sup> C. Allard et al., *Trade integration and global value chains...*, op. cit., p. 78.

integration projects defined in the Abuja Treaty and in Agenda 2063 of the African Economic Community integrated economically and politically around monetary union. The optimum currency areas theory does not doubt that economies based on commodity and raw materials are vulnerable to terms of trade shocks and so they are not naturally predisposed for the monetary union. Commodity price shocks can contribute to financial fragility through various channels. First, a decline in commodity prices in commodity-dependent countries results in reduced export income and fiscal retrenchment to deal with lower revenue, all of which can adversely impact economic activity and agents' (including governments') ability to meet their debt obligations, thereby potentially weakening banks' balance sheets. Second, a surge in bank withdrawals following a drop in commodity prices may significantly reduce banks' liquidity and potentially give rise to a liquidity crisis. Third, if the authorities fail to curtail public spending in the face of declining revenues, payment arrears might start to accumulate, putting suppliers in a difficult financial situation and potentially at risk of defaulting on their bank loans. Fourth, if large enough, commodity price shocks can also put downward pressure on the domestic currency. The currency depreciation can then lead to bank losses in the presence of net open foreign exchange positions in their balance sheets, or if unhedged borrowers are unable to service their loans. Periods of declining commodity prices tend, indeed, to be associated with more deteriorated financial sector conditions, including higher non-performing loans (NPLs) and a greater number of banking crises. This result holds for both the full sample and for sub-Saharan African countries. In the face, therefore, of the large terms-of-trade shocks and strong appreciation pressures on the U.S. dollar, most countries have allowed the exchange rate to adjust. This has been most notable among oil exporters whose currencies are not pegged to the euro,

with the Angolan kwanza and Nigerian naira having declined by 26% and 17% respectively, against the U.S. dollar since October 2014. Large exchange rate movements have not been limited to commodity-reliant countries. The large majority of frontier market economies' currencies have experienced depreciations of similar or higher magnitude, including in Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia reflecting existing or rising domestic vulnerabilities in some cases in Ghana, South Africa, Zambia, but also increasing overall risk aversion, as in many other frontier and emerging market economies around the world. In some other countries in the region, severe pressures on the exchange rates have also been triggered by growing macroeconomic imbalances, compounded by lower tourism receipts in the Gambia or a poor harvest in Malawi. Here, in this context, the ambitious plan of establishing the African Economic Community conflicts clearly with the recognition that declines in commodity prices are an important source of financial fragility and raises questions about the appropriate framework to ensure financial stability in face of these shocks. There is not much that macroeconomic policy can do to prevent commodity price shocks. The adverse effects of commodity price shocks on financial fragility tend to occur more severely in countries with poor quality of governance, in those with weak fiscal space, as well as in those that do not have a sovereign wealth fund, do not implement macro-prudential policies and do not have a diversified export base<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> R.E. Caves, J.A. Frankel, R.W. Jones, *Handel i finanse międzynarodowe*, Warszawa 1998, pp. 211, 404-405, 700; IMF, *Regional Economic Outlook, Sub-Saharan Africa...*, pp. 6, 18, 20.

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**PONTIFICAL FOUNDATION AID TO  
THE CHURCH IN NEED – THE OVERVIEW  
OF AID ACTIVITY  
IN SELECTED AFRICAN COUNTRIES**

**Introduction**

The aid projects of the Pontifical Foundation Aid to the Church in Need (ACN)<sup>1</sup> in Eastern and North-Eastern Africa have a major impact on the development of the region. It is important here to understand the concept of aid projects. This does not limit itself to Church aid, but engages also in humanitarian and developmental aid. Thus, the Organization acts on behalf of many countries and focuses generally on social and pastoral aid while carrying out many humanitarian projects. In developing countries of the world, the activity of church organizations is of great importance. They are involved in education, health care and various aspects of social life. A valuable feature is aid to the structures of the religious life

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<sup>1</sup> Founded by a Dutch Norbertine, Father Werenfried Van Straaten, in 1946, the organization has had the status of a papal organization in the Vatican City State since 2011. ACN International, *Our History*, in: <https://acninternational.org/our-history> (accessed 21.09.2020).

of a particular community. Due to continuous staff shortages and lack of basic necessities, very often the parish is the only aid unit that saves life by the provision of health services, thus, having an impact on the widely understood development. Without external support, the young parish communities, where often poverty prevails, are not able to function and carry out their missions on their own. ACN is an international organization that is based on national branches, currently there are 28 such offices, which help with organized aid according to the needs and socio-environmental condition of a specific area. ACN has been operating in Poland since 2006. Fr. Waldemar Cislo is the first Director of ACN. The head office is located in Warsaw<sup>2</sup>.

In 2019, Africa set a sad record for the second time in a row, as the continent with the highest number of murdered priests, religious and church workers. The huge number of kidnappings and the spread of Islamist terror are also alarming. The increase in violence was particularly dramatic in Burkina Faso. Christians are under increasing strain in many parts of Africa. Especially, where they form a minority, they are discriminated against, persecuted and driven away. This explains why the “land of the Sahara” was a priority region for ACN in 2019. ACN monitors the religious situation in Africa and presents reports to enable it help the most needy and those in danger<sup>3</sup>. In its Report from 2017 –

<sup>2</sup> <https://pkwp.org/> (accessed 21.09.2020).

<sup>3</sup> G.J. Marlin & Ch. Sarkis Boghjalian (ACN United States), *Persecuted and Forgotten? A report on Christians Oppressed for Their Faith 2017–19*, Brooklyn 2019, in: [www.churchinneed.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Persecuted-For-gotten\\_digital.pdf](http://www.churchinneed.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Persecuted-For-gotten_digital.pdf), (accessed 22.09.2020); for example: Central African Republic: “The massacre of more than 110 people, mostly Christians – including two priests and a pastor – at a Church-run displacement camp highlighted the scale of the internal conflict afflicting the country”, p. 25, Egypt: “January 2019 Police closed down the only church in Manshiyet Zaafarana village, Minya, leaving 1,000 Copts without a place of worship”, p. 27, Sudan: “March 2019. More than 70 chur-

2019 there were three African countries where crimes against Christians have been held, including massacres.

Despite the often catastrophic situation, Africa continues to be a continent of hope for the Catholic Church. With a total of 234 million Catholics, more than one-sixth of all Catholics worldwide live there. Every ninth priest and every fourth seminarian in the world is African. In times of famine, violence and political instability, it is always the Church that stands by the side of the people by providing assistance where the state fails. That is why our foundation views its task in supporting the African Church, not only in her pastoral mission, but also in her social and humanitarian commitment.

ACN’s main focus in Africa is the education and training of priests, religious and the laity. High on its priority list is also supporting initiatives that strengthen and protect families in crises and conflict situations. We also help parishes purchase off-road vehicles so that pastoral workers can reach people living in remote areas or under the most difficult road conditions. Further aid is being provided for the construction of churches and chapels, which are a source of identity, especially in areas with a Catholic minority.

## 1. ACN projects

To illustrate the nature of ACN’s contribution, some selected projects from several African countries are presented here. The projects cover activities in recent years and are selected subjectively in order to show the scale of the aid and thus the needs of the local population.

ches have been attacked, with 32 of them burnt down, in Sudan’s Nuba Mountains over the last 12 months”, p. 35.

### a. South Sudan

The political conflict that has been going on for years, as well as the wildfires and floods ravaging the country, not only cause suffering but also lack of development prospects. ACN's aid projects in South Sudan are primarily related to pastoral aid. Pastoral assistance is understood here as a wide-range of help to organize parish life and evangelization. The organizational structure of the church's life is based mainly on one archdiocese and 6 suffragan dioceses with a couple of smaller structures of Eastern Churches consisting mainly of immigrants from neighboring African countries. The Archbishop is Msgr. Stephan Ameyu Martin Mulla. Basically, contacts with representatives of the local church on the part of ACN take place through bishops and senior religious superiors without whose approval it is impossible to obtain help. Every project must be accepted by the church authorities. As usual, the aid provided to the parish communities which aims at pastoral care is consequently developmental and humanitarian. The parish's impact on society, especially in the poor countries of Africa, is evidence of this. In 2019, fourteen projects were carried out in this African country for a total amount of almost € 500,000<sup>4</sup>.

The main aid project in 2019 was the construction of a pastoral house in the Diocese of Tombura – Yambio. The cost of this project was €119,130 euro. The project was realized at the request of Fr. Sungerukauri who represents Bishop Edward Hiiboro Kussal. Bishop Kussal has been bishop of this diocese since 2008<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> The data comes from the ACN's archive.

<sup>5</sup> Gcatholic, *Diocese of Tombura–Yambio (South Sudan)*, in: <http://www.gcatholic.org/dioceses/diocese/tomb0.htm> – (accessed 13.07.2020).

The second largest financial aid project was a contribution to the construction of a monastery and a multi-purpose hall at the congregation premises of the Daughters of St. Paul in the Archdiocese of Juba. The cost of this project was €80,000 euros.

30,000 euro was donated for immediate assistance to the victims of the floods in the parish of St. Peter and St. Paul in the Diocese of Malak.

25,000 euro was given for the formation of priests in the Diocese of Rumbek and 30,000 euros for the renovation of the catechetical centre.

30,000 euro was donated through a Polish missionary working in the Diocese of Rumbek for medical and food aid for refugees.

The diocese of Rumbek also received finances for the purchase of a car for pastoral work. The car was financed together with MIVA Polska<sup>6</sup>.

70,000 euro was donated by the Diocese of Tombura-Yambio to Father Diko to build a pastoral and catechetical complex and a shelter for the homeless.

40,000 euro was allocated in the Diocese of Diko for the renewal of the house and chapel of the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In the Diocese of El Obeid, two projects were carried out:

The first project costing 32,000 euro, was dedicated to the support of priests and sisters in this diocese.

The second project is 24,000 euro for the reconstruction of a chapel and parish house near the military base in the Nubian Mountains.

<sup>6</sup> MIVA Polska – “Mission Vehicle Association” is a Polish aid organization for missionary transportation in the missionaries countries.

### b. Egypt

The Centre for Diaconic Services was established in 2010 by the patriarchate of the Coptic Catholic Church. It offers a range of social and pastoral activities and initiatives. It concentrates above all on the empowerment of women, families and young people. In addition to this, there are various aid programmes for those in need, including practical life skills, literacy courses, on-going educational programmes, a range of meaningful leisure activities for children and young people, as well as guidance in living a life of faith and many other worthwhile activities according to the program. These activities are organized in a number of different centres.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the range of opportunities has now become limited. Direct face-to-face gatherings are no longer possible. Recently however the centre been able to launch on an internet service, with the aim of initiating and offering some online courses. This is targeting the womenfolk and intended to help families overcome the difficulties of limited social contact, the closure of schools, kindergartens and sport clubs, and to live life constructively and well. The idea is to teach the women to acquaint themselves with the new technologies and how to use them effectively. This will give them the required confidence in the use of information technology to accompany their children in using them. Currently many of the leisure activities have become impossible while part of the learning takes place online. The children now spend more time using the Internet. This is an opportunity, which poses its own danger. Thus, the idea is to help their mothers to appreciate the positive aspects of the internet while at the same time shielding their children from its potential dangers. The mothers are also being given help and ideas as to how to better organize this time. How can relationships and communication within the family be improved; faith and family

values deepened; while at the same time limiting as far as possible the negative impacts on the family and especially on the children. These are all aspects that remain relevant, with or without the advent of the coronavirus pandemic. Currently there are 150 women taking part in these three-month courses.

### c. Cameroon

Like Nigeria, neighboring Cameroon also suffers from increasing outbreaks of violence. In 2019, conflicts between the separatists of the English-speaking regions of the country and the French-speaking central government have further increased. So far, 2,000 people have been killed and 400,000 have had to flee their homes. The Catholic Church laments the abductions of priests and Church personnel. Not without reason, Cameroon is therefore one of the countries in Africa that ACN supports the most.

For a long time, this African Republic of Cameroon with its 24 million inhabitants was considered relatively stable in contrast to its crisis-ridden neighbours. However, what began in 2016 with protest marches against the marginalization of the English-speaking population escalated into an ongoing armed conflict that is inhibiting social and economic life. In addition, the violence of the terrorist group Boko Haram has spilled over from Nigeria to Cameroon at the border in the north.

The Catholic Church, to which 38% of Cameroonians belong, raised its voice again in 2019 against violence and human rights violations in the country, which are committed by both state security forces and separatists. As a result, the Church is in the middle of the front in her efforts for peace and reconciliation and is under attack from both sides. ACN will not leave the local Church stranded in this situation. The focus of our help is on training future priests. Fortunately, there are many vocations, but the local Churches do

not have the resources to pay for their training without outside help.

#### d. Democratic Republic of Congo

The Democratic Republic of Congo is four times the size of France in area and has rich mineral resources, including gold, diamonds, ores and oil. Despite this wealth of natural resources, a majority of the 85 million inhabitants live in deep poverty because of greed and corruption in the political and economic spheres. In addition, there are armed conflicts between incessantly changing rebel groups. The change of government was the central event in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2019. The Church had participated in the protests against long-time President Joseph Kabila in the run-up to the elections. And the protests were successful. The President dropped his candidacy. This was an important milestone in the fight against corruption and despotism in the political system. Since then, hopes have been resting on the new President Félix Tshisekedi. In late November 2019, the bishops of the dioceses of Butembo Beni and Uvira addressed an open letter to the President to draw his attention to the continual violence and insecurity in the east of the country and to call on the government to finally take effective measures against it. The Church is an unmistakable voice in the Congo when it comes to pointing out grievances and promoting social change.

The Church often has to step in where the state fails in solving social, political and development problems. In order to fulfill her tasks, she could once again count on ACN's support in 2019.

In the Archdiocese of Bukavu, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Archbishop François-Xavier Maroy and the Council for the Laity are running a special programme with young adults in 13 parishes. The aim is to teach them about true love before they get

married. As “God loves the enjoyment felt by human beings” and as Pope Francis puts it, “A person can certainly channel his passions in a beautiful and healthy way, increasingly pointing them towards altruism and an integrated self-fulfillment that can only enrich interpersonal relationships in the heart of the family” (AL 188). “Indeed, the grace of the sacrament of marriage is intended before all else to perfect the couple’s love” (AL 89), writes Pope Francis in *Amoris Laetitia*, and to this end, “Training in the areas of emotion and instinct is necessary” (AL 148). The cost of this two-years program for 26 married couples and 52 young adults is 15,000 euro.

Another programme related to the question of family is to educate young people on “responsible parenthood” (as described in *Humanae Vitae*, 10). The goal is to perfect the love of the spouses by educating them about their emotional life and thus teach them a sense of parenting. This explains why married couples are being trained to become counsellors and experts in Natural Family Planning (NFP) in many countries in Africa. In the diocese of Kumbo, Cameroon, for example, 54 couples will teach this topic every month during the current course, so that by the end of the course more than 5,000 couples will have learnt about the Natural family planning methods permitted by the Church. The project leaders Sebastian and Clarisse summarize the results thus: There are fewer abortions and fewer maternal deaths; parents can devote themselves more carefully to the upbringing of their children, thanks to the more widely spaced births; couples discover a greater respect for the dignity of the woman, and not infrequently for the first time; the spiritual life is enriched and conjugal love is deepened<sup>7</sup>. ACN is supporting this program with 12,000 euro.

<sup>7</sup> *Responsible parenthood in Africa*, „ACN Australia News”, in: [www.aidtochurch.org/news/the-mirror-publication/responsible-parenthood-in-africa-1](http://www.aidtochurch.org/news/the-mirror-publication/responsible-parenthood-in-africa-1), (accessed 21.09.2020).

In February 2017, Christ the King Seminary in Malole in the Archdiocese of Kananga in southern Congo was looted, ransacked and partially set on fire by rebels. With the help of ACN, the seminary has been rebuilt. There are now 97 seminarians studying there – more than ever before! We supported their education with 8,000 euro in 2019. Another 7,200 euro was donated to priest teachers at the seminary in the form of Mass stipends.

### e. Media support in Africa

ACN supports a number of radio stations in Africa<sup>8</sup>. Over the past five years, the Pontifical Foundation ACN not only has helped stations in Guinea-Bissau and the Democratic Republic of Congo, but also in Angola, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, the Central African Republic, Tanzania, Togo and Zambia. ACN has made financial contributions to 35 projects for the acquisition of new technical equipment and five projects for the production of new radio programmes.

## 2. ACN mission to the persecuted people

“They did bad things to us. They beat us up and raped us ... The worst thing was that even girls as young as nine were raped”<sup>9</sup>. These are the words of Rita Habib, a Christian woman from the Nineveh Plain. Ms Habib described how Daesh extremists (ISIS) kidnapped her from Karakosh. Initially, she was held in nearby

<sup>8</sup> [www.acn-intl.com](http://www.acn-intl.com), (accessed 21.9.2020).

<sup>9</sup> K. Sulavany, *Christian woman kidnapped by IS reunited with father after four years*, in: „Kurdistan 24”, <https://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/987a77c3-56c3-44b7-a8f9-e6a8d63d0e00?> (05.04.2018, accessed 06. 08.2020).

Mosul, then transferred to Syria. There she was repeatedly bought and sold on the Daesh sex slave market. Her account of the persecution is one of many received by ACN. As a relief and pastoral care association in nearly 140 countries around the world, ACN is committed to monitoring and evaluating human rights violations against Christians around the world.

### a. “Persecuted and Forgotten” Report

One of the forms of making the persecution public is the Report “Persecuted and Forgotten? Report on Christians Persecuted for Their Faith in 2017–2019”. This Report summarizes the results of current ACN research by analyzing incidents of hatred and discrimination. The latest issue of “Persecuted and Forgotten” in 2019 examines key events in 12 countries that are of special concern to Christians suffering from human rights violations. The report, covering the 25 months from July 2017 to July 2019 (inclusive), is based on reports from ACN employees who visited countries recognized as sites of persecution of Christians, such as northern and central Nigeria, Pakistan, Syria and other parts of the world that cannot be disclosed for security reasons<sup>10</sup>. The report shows that in countries such as Egypt, Pakistan and many other places, Christian women suffer the most when they are kidnapped, forced into conversion and sexually abused<sup>11</sup>. Despite the growing amount of information on the subject, the extent of the crises affecting Christians persecuted for their faith remains little known and

<sup>10</sup> For this article it is choose only African part of „Persecuted and forgotten” Report.

<sup>11</sup> H. Fisher & E. Miller, *Gender Persecution: World Watch List 2018 Analysis and Implications*, in: „Open Doors International”, March 2018, in: <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Gendered-persecution-WWL-2018-analysis-and-implications-FINAL.pdf> (accessed 22.09.2020).

understood. Although the statistical surveys provided considerable insight into the issues of persecution, some of the data reported proved to be useless as it could not be shown that the violence was religiously motivated in these cases<sup>12</sup>. Research has consistently shown that violence against Christians is increasing. In June 2018, the Pew Research Center stated that in 2016, Christians were harassed in 144 countries<sup>13</sup>. According to these calculations, when it comes to persecution, the followers of Christ are classified as the largest religious group in the world, slightly ahead of Islam<sup>14</sup>. In January 2019, Open Doors estimated on its 2018 World Watch List that 73 countries with 245 million Christians “exhibited extreme, very high or high levels of persecution”<sup>15</sup>. In 2017, the list included 58 countries with 215 million Christians<sup>16</sup>. The same poll found that 11 Christians are killed every day for their faith in the 50 countries where the situation is worst<sup>17</sup>. This assessment is not exhaustive as state oppression is inherently quite different from single acts of violence and the types of persecution are not uniform in any particular country.

<sup>12</sup> R. Alexander, *Are there really 100,000 new Christian martyrs every year?*, in: „BBC News”, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-24864587> (12.09.2013, accessed 22.09.2020).

<sup>13</sup> K. Kishi, *Key findings on the global rise in religious restrictions*, in: „Pew Research Center”, <http://www.pewresearch.org/facttank/2018/06/21/key-findings-on-the-global-rise-in-religious-restrictions> (21.07.2018, accessed 22.09.2020).

<sup>14</sup> The same Pew Research Center survey showed in 2016 Muslims were harassed in 142 countries.

<sup>15</sup> Open Doors, *World Watch List Trends*, in: <https://www.opendoors.org/za/christian-persecution/world-watch-list-2017-trends> (accessed 22.09.2020).

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>17</sup> L. Lowry, *11 Christians killed every day for their decision to follow Jesus*, in: „Open Doors”, <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/stories/11-christians-killed-every-day-for-their-decision-to-follow-jesus>, (13.03.2019, accessed 22.09.2020).

The most important finding of the report is that between 2017-2019, persecution of Christians decreased after the period of genocide in the main countries of the Middle East. The situation in Africa is an important observation.

### b. Persecution in Africa

Across Africa, violence against Christians by jihadists remains at the highest level. In July 2019 in Burkina Faso, Bishop Laurent Birfuoré Dabiré of Dori said Islamists had killed four Christians and threatened to murder others if they refused to convert to Islam<sup>18</sup>. In Niger, in June 2019, Bishop Ambroise Ouédraogo of Maradi told ACN that “time and time again” there were Islamist attacks on Christians<sup>19</sup>, and Sister Catherine Kingbo from the same diocese indicated that in the last 15 years this threat changed the country but it remains yet to be known. “The evil of Islamist attacks is spreading”. Violence and intimidation have shown the real motives behind the actions of extremists, who – drawing on substantial resources outside the continent – want to force Christians into forced – conversion. In Madagascar, a country with an overwhelming number of Christians, Cardinal Désiré Tzarahazana of Toamasina warned in June 2018 that radical Islamists were “buying people” and pointed out some plans to build 2,600 mosques

<sup>18</sup> M. Petrosillo & J. Newton, *Burkina Faso: Stop support for jihadists – says bishop*, in: ACN United Kingdom News, <https://acnuk.org/news/burkina-faso-stop-support-for-jihadists-says-bishop>, (accessed 05.06.2019).

<sup>19</sup> J. Pontifex, J. Newton & M.O. Flaherty, *Nigeria – A New Emergency, Aid to the Church in Need*, in: ACN United Kingdom, <https://acnuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Nigeria-A-New-Emergency.pdf>, (accessed 09.09.2020).

*They may have guns, but we have Jesus!*, „ACN International”, in: <https://acninternational.org/news/niger-they-may-have-guns-but-we-have-jesus/>, (03.07.2019, accessed 22.09.2020).

in the country<sup>20</sup>. In the north and in the middle belt region of Nigeria, jihadists continued their terrorist activities against Christians and Muslims. Nigeria is the country where the most Christians are killed. In Nigeria in 2018, 3,731 people died<sup>21</sup>. In the central part of the country, Makurdi bishop Wilfred Anagbe told ACN that “there is a clear agenda for Islamization in all areas where Christians today dominate”<sup>22</sup>. On an April morning in 2018, about 30 armed bandits burst into the church at the beginning of Holy Mass and murdered 19 people, including two priests<sup>23</sup>. All available evidence suggested that Islamists from the Fulani herdsman tribe were behind the attack, refuting claims that religion played little or no role in their violence. Meanwhile, elsewhere in northern Nigeria, Boko Haram continues to attack Christians, Muslims, and adherents of other religions. These militias seem to be resistant to a government counter-offensive.

In the Central African Republic, where various religious groups are targeted<sup>24</sup>, attacks against Christians were carried out in the

<sup>20</sup> M.O. Flaherty & A. de la Hougue, *New Cardinal highlights threat of ‘extremist Islam’ from abroad*, in: ACN United Kingdom News, <https://acnuk.org/news/madagascar-new-cardinal-highlights-threat-of-extremistislam-from-abroad/>, (15.06.2018, accessed 22.09.2020).

<sup>21</sup> Open Doors, *World Watch List 2019. The 50 countries where it’s most dangerous to follow Jesus*, in: [https://www.opendoorsusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/WWL2019\\_FullBooklet.pdf](https://www.opendoorsusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/WWL2019_FullBooklet.pdf), p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> J. Pontifex, J. Newton & M.O. Flaherty, *Nigeria – A New Emergency...*, op. cit.

<sup>23</sup> ACN Polska, *Prześladowani i Zapomniani. Raport o prześladowaniach chrześcijan*, Warszawa 2019, in: [https://pkwp.org/uploads/tiny\\_mce/pliki/Prze%c5%9bladowani%20i%20zapomniani.%20Raport%20o%20chrze%c5%9bcjanach%20prze%c5%9bladowanych%20za%20wiar%c4%99%20w%20latach%202017-2019.pdf](https://pkwp.org/uploads/tiny_mce/pliki/Prze%c5%9bladowani%20i%20zapomniani.%20Raport%20o%20chrze%c5%9bcjanach%20prze%c5%9bladowanych%20za%20wiar%c4%99%20w%20latach%202017-2019.pdf), p. 12.

<sup>24</sup> *Central African Republic*, in: United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, „Annual Report 2018”, Washington, DC 2019, in: <https://www.uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/2019USCIRFAnnualReport.pdf>, p. 30, (accessed 23.09.2020).

context of a serious internal conflict, with accusations of violence and provocations against both Christians and Muslims. At least 112 civilians, including two priests and a pastor, were murdered in November 2018 in a Catholic refugee camp in Alindao<sup>25</sup>. In other parts of Africa, the threat to Christians comes from the government. In Sudan, the regime multiplied the power of persecution in 2017–2019 by demolishing the church in Khartoum<sup>26</sup>, allowing Islamic converts in South Darfur to be severely beaten, and attacking 70 churches in the Nubian mountains<sup>27</sup>. Hopes that the overthrow of President Omar al-Bashir in April 2019 would end the regime responsible for the unprecedented repression against Christians faded the following month as the Transitional Military Council reaffirmed its commitment to enforcing Sharia law. Morocco has also seen increased government restrictions on Christians<sup>28</sup>. Justice Minister Mohamed Aujjar, speaking on a public television on June 19, 2018, denied the existence of Christian citizens in the country<sup>29</sup>, despite the fact that they number 25,000. In Eritrea, the state suddenly and ruthlessly turned its anger against the church. According to sources related to the Polish Military Contingent, in June 2019, during a week, the government confi-

<sup>25</sup> Amnesty International, *Central African Republic: ‘Everything was in flames’. The attack on a displaced persons camp in Alindao*, in: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr19/9573/2018/en/> (14.12.2018, accessed 22.09.2020).

<sup>26</sup> *Sudanese authorities demolish Evangelical church in Khartoum suburb*, „Sudan Tribune”, in: <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article64728>, (14.02.2018, accessed 23.09.2020).

<sup>27</sup> *Sudan arrests, tortures Christians in Darfur over apostasy charges*, „Sudan Tribune”, in: <http://sudantribune.com/spip.php?article66526>, (31.10.2018, accessed 23.09.2020).

<sup>28</sup> Open Doors, *World Watch List 2019...*, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> US Department of State, *International Religious Freedom Report 2018: Morocco country report*, in: <https://www.state.gov/reports/2018-report-on-international-religious-freedom/morocco/>, (21.06.2019, accessed 23.09.2020).

scated and closed all Catholic hospitals, health centers and clinics with care for at least 170,000 people. people per year<sup>30</sup>.

### Summary

In December 2018, the Prince of Wales told the large community at Westminster Abbey in London: “I have met many Christians who face oppression and persecution with steadfast faith and courage”<sup>31</sup>. In his speech at a service dedicated to Christians in the Middle East, he stressed the need to support ecumenical cooperation. He said, “Extremism and division can be prevented. They are never inevitable”<sup>32</sup>. Although there has been a decline in violence against Christians in some parts of the world, the past two years have not brought the long-awaited breakthrough where religious hatred gives way to tolerance. There are no indications that it will happen anytime soon. The consolidation of authoritarian regimes and populist nationalism bode badly for Christians in countries as diverse as India, Burma (Myanmar) and China, where Christianity is seen not only as a foreign religion but also as a factor of undesirable Western influence. In parts of Africa, Islamist violence is wreaking havoc on Christian communities. In Iraq and Syria, Christ’s followers “vote with their feet” by continuing to emigrate; every person who leaves makes the situation of those

<sup>30</sup> J. Pontifex, *Eritrea: Sick forced from their beds as 21 hospitals and clinics forced to shut*, in: ACN United Kingdom News, <https://acnuk.org/news/eritrea-sick-forced-from-beds-as-21-hospitals-and-clinicsforced-to-shut/>, (20.06.2019, accessed 23.09.2020).

<sup>31</sup> H. Sherwood, *Prince Charles calls for co-existence in speech on persecuted Christians*, „The Guardian”, in: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/dec/04/prince-charles-calls-for-greater-understanding-between-faiths> (04.12.2018, accessed 23.09.2020).

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem.

who stay worse. Pope Francis, as announced in June 2019, wanted travels to Iraq in 2020<sup>33</sup>, now we know that this visit is cancelled due to coronavirus pandemic. The question therefore remains: what proportion of the Christian community will be there? This question is not only applicable to Iraq, but also to Central African Republic, Cameroon and other countries of the world. Regardless of the challenges of the future, the assistance offered by ACN will not only help them withstand persecution but also to live normally in accordance with religious beliefs and conscience. The testimony of hope of the persecuted, against all odds, is the greatest source of inspiration for all those who commit themselves to supporting them.

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<sup>33</sup> *Pope Francis Expresses Wish to Visit Iraq in 2020*, „Zenit”, in: <https://zenit.org/articles/pope-francis-expresses-wish-to-visit-iraq-in-2020>, (10.06.2019, accessed 23.09.2020).

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## Résumé

### Aide de la Fondation Pontificale à l'Église en détresse – aperçu des activités d'aide dans certains pays africains

La Fondation Papale „L'Aide à l'Église en Détresse” (ACN International) réalise les projets d'aide et promeut leur développement dans le monde entier. Le soutien particulièrement important englobe les initiatives réalisées en Afrique de l'Est et du Nord-Est. Les projets d'aide ne se limitent pas à l'aide pastorale, mais ils sont souvent liés au domaine humanitaire. Dans les pays du monde en voie de développement l'activité des organisations ecclésiales accomplit un rôle considérable. Elles se chargent de l'éducation, de la cure sanitaire et des autres aspects de la vie sociale. L'aide dans la constitution des structures de la vie ecclésiale est précieuse entre autres car la paroisse reste souvent la seule entité de secours pour chaque domaine de la vie, et par cela même influence le progrès compris très largement. Sans le secours de l'extérieur des jeunes communautés paroissiales, souvent marquées par la pauvreté,

ne sont pas capables de fonctionner indépendamment et accomplir leur mission.

La deuxième mission importante de l'ACN c'est l'information du monde quant aux formes contemporaines de persécutions à cause de la foi confessée et l'agir contre ces comportements honteux.

Pour donner des exemples de la contribution de l'AED (ACN International) à ces deux espaces de la vie, voici des projets choisis de quelques pays africains. Ils englobent les activités des années récentes et ont été sélectionnés subjectivement pour démontrer l'échelle de l'aide ainsi que les besoins de la population locale.

Vient de paraître également le Rapport concernant l'état des persécutions récentes dans le monde entier. On y trouvera aussi les cas choisis des persécutions en Afrique.