'Enough is enough'

The charismatic revolution of a Senegalese hip hop movement

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Preface

In my first year at the research master in the African Studies (RESMAAS) at the African Studies Centre (ASC) at University Leiden, I spent quite some time figuring out what was to be the topic of my thesis. With the RESMAAS being an area study, a multidisciplinary master's program, there was seemingly endless amount of topics possible. Needless to say, in the run up to this thesis, various other possible topics have passed the revue. Yet, when I came across the Y'en a Marre phenomenon, I almost immediately felt this was the topic I had been searching for. What struck me about Y'en a Marre were the ideas that appeared to be roaming around in the movement; about getting people to think critically about their surroundings, about taking matters into their own hand, as the opposed to waiting on others to bring about the aspired change. These were young people frustrated with traditional politics, spreading a message about civic responsibility, about the rights and obligations of a society. These ideas very much resonate with some of my own ideas, as I, too, often find myself frustrated with my surroundings and (inter)national politics, in which it sometimes feels as if individualism and consumerism are the only habits we can live by. Inspired by the initial things I read and saw about Y'en a Marre, I decided that my research had to feature their story. However, as this research was also a quest for my own motivations, it also needed a personal element.

The decision for this topic was thus partly made with possible self transformation in mind. I did not solely want to study the phenomenon 'over there', but also investigate what elements I myself could take from it. This adds a personal layer to the research, one that I tried to reflect on in various ways, and self reflexivity has therefor been an important part of the research process. This personal aspect also brought challenges, as it brings along the potential of being blinded by ones' own idealism. In the dialogue that is a research, a researcher must obviously always consider their participants' opinion, but it is important to do the same with their own. Although this may seem evident, doing this research, I have stumbled upon a couple of situations in which I was confronted with a discrepancy between how I thought things would be, and how they were interpreted by participants. This has refuelled my fascination for cultural translation, and taught me some lessons in humbleness. By putting even more focus on listening, in trying to confirm my interpretation with the participants, not taking things for granted and by reflecting on situations with my research partner and Senegalese friends, I have tried to make these moments into learning opportunities. By including some of these moments into this thesis, I hope to provide you as a

reader with an opportunity to reflect on them, perhaps even learn from them. Because, above all, that is what this research is and has been: an incredible learning opportunity.

The research itself, the six-month long fieldwork in Senegal, and the year of writing that went into the thesis that lays in front of you now have been challenging and enduring. That I have made it to this point of completion is thanks to the amazing people that I met along the journey that is this thesis. The beautiful souls who were happy to share their knowledge and experiences, and whose willingness to talk with me, to help me with my quest, fills me with gratitude. I have learned so much, about the world, about Senegal, about change, about people and about myself. I feel blessed to have been given this possibility, and would now like to thank some of the incredible souls that have made this happen.

First and foremost, let me give my thanks to my partner in crime, my research partner Wouter Roos. Even though unforeseen circumstances prevented us from writing our thesis together, forming a team in Senegal has been truly amazing, and your contributions and reflections have made this thesis to what it is now. From sharing our doubts in nightlong conversations, to being my go-to-guy when things were tough. Our endless adventures, with buying a bicycle in the Gambia and driving it back to Senegal being amongst the top ranking experience in the whole trip, really made this fieldwork to an incredible experience. I will never forget the dinners we prepared on Tefesu Bir and in the Ouakam house, nor the waves we battled and surfed at Plage Yoff (that's were Chloe and Taylor come in too, much love for you guys!). You have been an amazing friend, and an inspiration.

Then I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Mayke Kaag, who has been kind enough to step in at a later stage, as I was left without a supervisor due to unforeseen circumstances. Her insights and literature recommendations have brought an extra layer to this thesis, giving it the historical and cultural backing necessary for it to stand on its own. Our talks have contributed to making this thesis a comprehensive whole, something I have struggled with from the beginning. I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Rijk van Dijk, whose perspective and literature recommendations have brought me insights as to how to connect the overarching themes in this thesis. Many thanks also go out to Prof. Dr. Mirjam de Bruijn, for being an academic inspiration, for letting me do my thing and accepting the way I do things, for being real with me, and for meeting me in Dakar. Then I thank the incredible ASC for taking me in as a student and letting me be part of their academic community. The program has been one filled with interesting topics, challenging debates and an overall good feeling. For this I especially want to thank Dr. Azeb Amha, Prof. Dr. Han van Dijk, Dr. Harry Wels, and Dr. Karin Nijenhuis, and of course my classmates Mimi, Isabella, Joosje, Miriam,

Samia, Soumaya, Juul, and all the wonderful people of the one-year master's program. A very special thank you goes out to Ella from the ASC library, whose welcoming character ensures that I will be coming back to Leiden, long after I have finished these studies. Additionally, I want to thank Leiden University and the Uhlenbeck scholarship programme, for making this whole thing work financially.

Now let me move back to Dakar: there is Youssoupha (aka Rhapsod aka "Original Comme Cere"), roommate, first real friend in Senegal, translator, truly AFREEKIND and a brother for life. You are musically, lyrically and spiritually on point, and have been a brother from the day Wout and I walked into the Ouakam house. Hanging out has been so easy, so laid-back, and it made Senegal feel like a second home almost instantaneous. Now of course, this could not have been the case without us being accepted in the house by Anta, Sahad & little Rachma. The warmth was already in the house upon arrival, and when everybody finally got together under one roof, the house truly felt like a home away from home. I thank you for your kindness and your willingness to take Wout and me, not only into your home, but into your family. The family Sarr, Madame Sarr, Felwine, Ngnima, Majnun, Alibeta, Mossane, Rokhy, and the others, it has a been blessing meeting all of you, and share thoughts and experiences together.

There is Max, my Senegalese Buitenveldert brother, for the inspiration, for the amazing place you are running that gave us a hideout from the busy city life of Dakar. You provided us with a place where I could relax, come to myself, be one with nature and spend some of the best nights I have had in Dakar. The way you struggle for Tefesu Bir, a place where people can calm down and be themselves in a city of millions, is nothing short of amazing. In a similar fashion I want to thank Hans and Roos (and little Gabi!), whose friendship and experience with Senegal have made this trip so much easier on me. Spending days at Yenn, reflecting on Senegalese life, spending Christmas together, going to see Toumani Diabate play at the National Theatre, and Sahad in Toubab Diallow, it has been such a pleasure and just thinking about it brings a smile to my face. What you guys go through to live your ideals is nothing short of amazing, and inspirational for sure. I want to thank Mamadou, for the tea breaks, that turned into lunch breaks, that turned into a weeklong trip to Labé, Guinea to meet your incredible family. I am filled with joy, knowing that our friendship is anchored in the ground there, and am looking forward to us becoming neighbours in that magical place. I also wish to thank Ousmane, for the Wolof lessons over buying breakfast and football matches we watched and discussed together.

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Introduction

The Y'en a Marre (YEM) collective emerged in 2011 in Senegal. Y'en a Marre means 'we are fed up' or 'enough is enough' in French. They have organized protests against injustice, inequality and ineffective government, and are most known for their participation in mobilizing Senegal's youth to vote during the presidential elections in 2012. Their voting contributed to the election of current president Macky Sall, at the expense of the then ruling president Abdoulaye Wade, who was by many considered to be authoritarian and nepotistic. The aim of the mobilisation to vote was to prevent Wade's controversial bid for a third term in office, and the movement claims no political affiliation once however. YEM was originally founded by a group of friends, who were sitting together during one of the many power outages and decided that 'enough is enough', and that they had to do something about it, and about Senegal as a whole. The group, amongst others consisting of celebrated rappers Thiat and Kilifeu (from hip hop group Keur Gui) and journalists Fadel Barro and Aliou Sané, were quickly thereafter joined by some of the major hip hop artists in Senegal, like Fou Malade and Djilly Bagdad. They frequently use hip hop music to express the messages and opinions of the groups' members, and hip hop culture is at the core of the movement. The combination of their hip hop identity and democratic ideals made them extraordinary, and through iconic actions and language use, the movement quickly attracted the attention of both national and international media.

From its start, YEM's main goal is larger than the ousting of President Wade. They aim to create what they call a *Nouveau Type de Sénégalais* (NTS). The idea behind NTS is that "…strong national institutions can only be founded on a society of responsible and engaged citizens who act with integrity and demand the same from their leaders." (Nelson: p.13) In developing NTS they ultimately try to create a new type of Senegal. Having contributed in successfully ousting Wade from power, Y'en a Marre tries to use the momentum gained from that to "…channel the energies that young people deployed during the presidential election to get rid of Adoulaye Wade, and to turn them into a positive force, not only to uphold Senegalese democracy and pursue the struggle for good governance and against corruption, but also to embody the struggle for development." (Fadel Barro in Nelson: p.17) Fostering a NTS however, proved in many ways to be a more complex and nuanced process than the ousting of a president. Where the "war" that YEM waged against president Wade and his government ultimately boiled down to the question of whether the Senegalese population was for or against Wade, the idea of a NTS has much more angles to it. In other words, changing who is president, although an incredible achievement, is one thing, changing

the mentality of the entire population quite another. Nevertheless, the struggle waged by YEM sparked interest in various places, on the continent and worldwide. Various artist and youth based movements, like Le Balai Citoyen in Burkina Faso and LUCHA RDCongo in Congo, have started to engage with society in a similar way to Y'en a marre. The movements' connotations with youth, hip hop and democracy have also not gone unnoticed in (western) academia and media, with Y'en a Marre being the most treasured endeavour. The African Studies Quarterly dedicated an issue specifically to the Senegalese movement, President Obama organised a meeting with some of the originators of the movement and quite recently the Y'en a marre has been granted a Prince Claus Award as a "recognition of their work in the field of culture and development"[1], and an Ambassador of Conscience Award by Amnesty International.[2] These are mere examples of the extensive attention Y'en a Marre has received internationally, which have resulted in Y'en a Marre being among the most well-known contemporary movements from the African continent in the world. Its founders and most prominent members are now travelling across the globe, being sought-after guest for other movements, interviewers, seminars and workshops. In every announcement, interview or article, the ousting of president Wade is mentioned, confirming that this was a pivotal event in the history of the movement. It begs the question of how YEM has gotten to this position. How was it possible for this group of hip hop artists and journalists, actors from outside of the political realm, to wage a proverbial 'war' against a sitting president, and to even come out of it as victors? How is it that YEM was able to challenge president Wade's authority and become the face of the resistance against him for so many people, both Senegalese and international? And why has it proven to be so hard for YEM to maintain their momentum after the 2012 elections?

These form the central questions of this thesis. To come to an answer to these questions, I will investigate where the authority of both YEM and president Wade came from. The choice for the term authority is not random. In order to come my interpretation of how the phenomenon YEM came to its position, I will make use of perhaps the most influential scientific contributions when it comes to authority; the contributions of Max Weber. Authority, or domination, according to Weber, is

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[1] http://www.princeclausfund.org/en/activities/announcing-the-2015-prince-claus-laureates.html

[2] https://www.amnesty.org/fr/press-releases/2016/05/musician-angelique-kidjo-and-african-youth-activists-honoured-with-amnesty-international-award/

"the probability that certain specific commands (or all commands) will be obeyed by a given group of persons. It thus does not include every mode of exercising "power" or "influence" over other persons. Domination ("authority") in this sense may be based on the most diverse motives of compliance: all the way from simple habituation to the most purely rational calculation of advantage. Hence every genuine form of domination implies a minimum of voluntary compliance; that is, an *interest* (based on ulterior motives or genuine acceptance) in obedience. (Weber, 1978: p.212, original emphasis)

Weber's point here is that, different than for instance power, authority includes a subjective role for the dominated. In the case of authority relations, there is subjective action on both sides of the relationship. This is important, as Senegal is considered a democracy, and we can thus assume that the Senegalese people, to a considerable extent, were free to choose Abdoulaye Wade as their president. The same goes for YEM, the Senegalese were not forced to follow them. One could argue that the Senegalese people rallied behind either one of them, purely out of material interest or calculations of possible advantages. Yet, Weber argues that taking those as the basis of solidarity results in a fairly unstable situation. (1978: p.213) He claims that there is an additional element, "the belief in *legitimacy*". (ibid.) Weber distinguished between three pure types of legitimate authority: traditional, charismatic and legal authority. (ibid.: p.215)

- Authority is traditional if legitimacy is claimed for it and believed in by virtue of the sanctity of age-old rules and powers. The persons exercising authority is a personal master, and people are his subjects. Obedience is thus owed to the person. Traditional authority is often what we call patriarchy. The rule over others is without question. The authority is handed down from the past, and given by legitimacy by custom: 'We've always done it this way…'. In the words of Weber, traditional authority is "the authority of eternal yesterday." (1947: p.78)
- Charismatic authority rests on the devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person. This person is someone whose extraordinary qualities demand the obedience of others, as is for instance the case with prophets. The authority rests on the idea that people have a duty to recognize the 'proof' of the authority, in the case of the prophet this may be a miracle. If this proof and/or success elude the charismatic leader for too long, it is likely that his authority will disappear. Pure charisma comes as a calling, a duty, and is commonly foreign to economic considerations. Charismatic authority in its pure form cannot last very long, it is not set up to deal with everyday concerns. In periods of traditional authority

however, charisma counts as a great revolutionary force. In other words: "If this is not to remain a purely transitory phenomenon, but to take on the character of a permanent relationship, […] it is necessary for the character of charismatic authority to become radically changed." (1978: p.246) For charisma to be transformed into an everyday phenomenon, the anti-economic character must be altered. It must be adapted to some form of fiscal organization. Hence, it must become traditionalized, or rationalized.

- Rational-legal authority rests on the belief in rules. People obey individuals who are elevated, by those rules, to positions of authority. This type of authority is commonly the case with elected leaders. By electing them, their legitimacy is anchored by the people. This type of authority is central to 'rational' societies, in which the person in authority him or herself is subject to an impersonal order, often the law. People obey an individual as a representative of the impersonal order, not the person himself.

It is important to note that the three types indicated above are ideal types. Ideal, or pure types are created by observing characteristic traits of as many cases as possible, and then combining those traits together to construct abstract concepts, that can then be used for analysis and research. The ideal type hardly ever matches examples in reality, and are better understood as a theoretical standard by which real cases can be compared. In each of the three ideal types of authority, authority specifies both who has it and what it/whom it covers. For Weber, these types are created by the basis of legitimacy. Weber was intrigued by how raw and brutal power is transformed over time into legitimate authority. The general tendency of modern time has been the increase of rational-legal authority, like our 'modern' society. As a result, charismatic and traditional authorities diminish. Yet, charismatic authority has made its comeback through history. This happens especially in times of crisis, when people tend to be scared and are looking for someone who has an answer for the crisis, and lead them out of the chaos.

Looking at the story of YEM, there are already some elements that seem to resonate Weber's tripartite authority theory. For instance, that hip hop artists (generally considered to by charismatic by profession) challenge a democratically chosen president in times of economical hardship. In this thesis I will take you through my research of YEM, in doing so further exploring its resonance with Weber's theory, thereby deepening my analysis and examining to what extent Weber's theory is still of relevance today. I will begin by providing an overview of Senegal's postcolonial socio-political history, as a way to put the YEM phenomenon into the context of the country's history. This allows me to interpret the dynamics between the different types of authorities at play in Senegalese society. Having

provided this historical background, I will discus the two terms most commonly associated with YEM, hip hop and youth, and how they have been interpreted in academia, before taking a closer look at hip hop in Senegal. This will provide the necessary framework in which I can embed an in-depth description and analysis of the case that is YEM. Following this, I will postulate my conclusions. In line with my idea of what this thesis represents, a learning experience, these conclusions consist of my interpretation of the phenomenon YEM and are not set in stone. My intention is not to provide you with clear-cut answers to my research questions, instead I want to raise questions with you as a reader, to challenge and encourage to reflect on this phenomenon. For now, however, let me start by taking you through the methodological choices and considerations that went into this research, before introducing the methods and research questions.

Methodology

Being a student of a research master African Studies, it is inevitable that you are confronted with the ethical dilemmas of studying 'Africa'. There has been a long history of especially white, European men, amongst them Africanists, who made their way on to the African continent and exploited the continent and its people, be it for their kings, Gods, profit, or simply because they might have thought they were doing the right thing. Although I consider myself lucky to live in a time where researchers, journalists and many others alike are able to dig deeper and uncover these unjust historical acts and structures, I am fully aware of the fact these phenomena have not ended, and quite possibly never will. The migrant 'crisis', as it is dubbed, that is currently a hot topic in many European countries, is an example of the continuous racist biases and privileges present in the contact between the African and European continent. It is because of this, that the ethical dimension weighs heavy in this research. I consider it an integral part of being a future Africanist to continuously look at ways in which intercultural communication and action can be improved, so that evermore people(s) on this planet feel respected. In fact, I deem it to be partially the duty of a social science researcher to lead the way in this respect; making others conscious about intercultural, or just inter-human, communication as a way for the researcher to position him/herself within society. This starts off with knowing oneself, or at least have an idea of how you yourself make sense of the world. Expressing these beliefs creates an opening for others to try to look through your lens. Not in order to try to convince them of your view or take on things, but to get a deeper understanding of the other, which I believe ultimately leads to a deeper understanding of the self.

The thesis that lays in front of you conveys my take on the case of YEM, presented without the claim of it holding the ultimate truth. It is my interpretation, therefore I will be present in the texts, sharing my personal insights and ideas, reflecting on my feelings and impressions. Doing this, I hope to remind you of the fact that the lines of thought through which the case is analysed are ultimately mine, although considerably aided by the work of researchers before me, on whose shoulders I could stand to do my work, and my informants, supervisors and teachers along the road. This analysis is up for debate, as I believe communicating with others, exposing ourselves to them and sharing worldviews with each other, ultimately leads to a better understanding of each other and the self. So with that in mind, let me take you through the considerations that ultimately led up to this research, which will, to some extent, allow you to look through my lens, as I look at the YEM case.

Constructivist approach

As shines through in the above, I am of the belief that there is not one universal truth. I think of every individual as having his or her own truth, their own way of 'sense making'. There might be a world out there, but the way we see and experience this world is different to all of us. Put in another way, we all have different interpretations of what we see, because we can only access representations of the world in our own consciousness. This way of metaphysical exploration of existence is commonly revered to as a relativist ontology. Out of this belief I conclude that one truth is not better than another, it is just different. This, in turn, leads to questions about how we as people come to our truths, resting on the assumption that we cannot 'just know things', but that we learn in a specific way. As a consequence of my relativist ontology, I believe that all people construct their world in a unique way, depending on their history, their background and the social forces acting on them. Knowledge is created by the individual and cannot exist without them having to construct it. Seen this way, knowledge is thus subjective; there are multiple interpretations to any situation. 'Truth' is only true for certain people, at a certain time, under curtain conditions. These ideas are classified as a subjectivist theory of knowledge, or epistemology. This relativist ontology and subjectivist epistemology form the basis of philosophical paradigm called constructivism, which, to conclude this section, comes down to assumptions that 'truth' about what is what is socially negotiated, and the true meaning of knowledge is ultimately constructed within the individual. Now, let us look at what having a constructivist mind-set implicates with regard to my research.

The assumption that every individual makes his or her own truth means that this also counts for the researcher and his or her research subject. This means that, "…researchers, too, act from an experientially informed standpoint. … Research designs, formulations of questions, choices of observational sites and persons interviewed, analytic frames, *and writing* all construct the perceptions of the subject of study, rather than objectively reflecting it." (Yanow: p.16, original emphasis) Seen this way, a researcher is thus always present in his or her research. If this is the case, then how do we deal with this? Must a researcher for instance include an analysis of his or her positionality? Cecelia Lynch argues that "whether acknowledged or not, the questions asked, the methods followed, and generally the way the questions and methods shape the research findings, all reflect the scholar's (initial, at least) ideological presuppositions. This intentionality and ethical stance cannot be separated from the research procedures or results." (Lynch: p.711) If we follow her line of thought, then researchers would have to reflect on their own assumptions. This dependence on reflexivity,

according to Philip Carl Salzman, "falls back on the romantic virtue of sincerity" (Salzman: p.811), and leads him to the following question: "as we have learned from Freud, with people so skilled at and relentless with self-deception, what weight can be put on their self-reports, other than admiration for the elegance of creative fantasy and the tenacity of determined delusion?" (ibid.) As I think Salzman makes a valuable point there, I will go on further illustrating his argument regarding postmodernist reflexivity in anthropology.[3] Salzman claims that by having no sound basis for judging different reports, in fact rejecting objectivity all together, postmodernism turns anthropology into fiction, and thereby "has turned its back on discovery and focused its attention on moralizing and political commitment" (ibid.), concluding that this strategy denies anthropology's contribution to knowledge, and that the postmodern anthropologist thus has no more to say than his or her research subjects. (ibid.) Due to this assumed absence of objectivity, there can be not reality, only many subjective realities, which aligns to some extend with my line of reasoning earlier on. Salzman acknowledges the inherent subjectivity of the researcher, but as a way of dealing with this, he points to the basic assumption of scientific method: "that people in general and scientists in particular are not in the least objective but are, on the contrary, highly subjective at the very least, often self-serving and self-deluding, and not infrequently crooked. It is for this reason that in science any idea or theory must be tested, that is, assessed against independent evidence, and this assessment must be replicable, that is repeatable by other researchers. Objectivity does not reside in individuals but, rather, in the results of the collective, intersubjective process." (ibid.) He then summarizes by quoting Karl Popper: "the *objectivity* of scientific statements lies in the fact that they can be *inter-subjectively tested*" (Popper in Salzman: p.811), before pointing to the history of anthropology, in which "the succession of new understandings and frames commonly results from new researchers taking a different view, rather than from a change of heart by the original theorists or researchers." (Salzman: p.811) As an alternative way to improve ethnographic research, he suggests collaborative, team research, in which the various researchers involved challenge and test each others perspectives and insights. He concludes by stating that "[p]erhaps it would not be unfair to say that we have accepted and adopted reflexivity rather too cavalierly and uncritically." (ibid.)

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[3] Postmodernism is close to constructivism in the sense that constructivist metaphysics underlies many postmodern assertions. This makes Salzman's argument on postmodern reflexivity usable in my discussion of constructivism.

These are valuable insights, and by assessing them, I hope to provide you as a reader with a better understanding of how I feel incorporating reflexivity into my research, and research in general, can, as opposed to Salzman's dismissal, actually improve the studies that come out of it. What I find striking about Salzman's remarks, is the total distrust of anthropologists when it comes to them describing themselves. These are professional researchers, with years of training and experience, whose insights in the self are worth paying attention to. Maybe not for pure factual purposes, but adopting reflexivity in research gives, even whilst taking into account the possible flaws in there, insights into how the researcher has come to his or her decision, how s/he struggled with certain things. It makes the research alive and personal. Cecelia Lynch gives a good example of the benefits of reflexivity when she describes the effort undertaken by Saba Mahmood's study on the women's mosque movement in Egypt.

"Through this [the frequent elaboration by Mahmood of her own assumptions and reaction to the movement participants' judgments and actions when they differ from her own] exposure of the relationship between herself as interlocutor, her reactions and questions to the women regarding aspects of their statements and actions that make little sense to her, and her reporting of their reactions to her questions, we see a form of ethical reflexivity in action. The degree of transparency through which this reflexivity takes place—laying bare her own assumptions and details of her background and multiple identities—can never be complete, but the sensitivity and intelligence of the effort makes Mahmood's analysis and findings regarding the women's mosque movement all the more trustworthy, in Schwartz-Shea's terms." (Lynch: p.716)

Thus, while acknowledging that Mahmood's reflexive efforts can never be complete, they lead to more trustworthiness. This trustworthiness is a term that comes up in Schwartz-Shea's study on evaluative criteria in qualitative research.

"It [trustworthiness] offers a way to talk about the many steps that researchers take throughout the research process to ensure that their efforts are self-consciously deliberate, transparent, and ethical—that they are, so to speak, enacting a classically "scientific attitude" of *systematicity* while simultaneously allowing the potential *revisability* of their research results. As a tool of assessment, it facilitates discussion of criteria for judging the overall quality of a research study and the degree to which others—scholars, laypeople, policy actors—can build on its analysis. (Schwartz-Shea: p.101, original emphasis)

This shows a different take on research. Whilst maintaining a scientific attitude, trustworthiness allows for 'revisability' of research results. Although it appears subtle, this is quite a different stance than the classic take on the scientific method as provided by Salzman, who speaks of research as something that must be replicable, repeatable by other researchers.

Where replicability ultimately boils down to a closed question, the research is either replicable or not, revisablity is softer, more open to different interpretations. There seems to be more respect for the research, not denouncing it right or wrong, but, even though there might be flaws, acknowledging that they can be revised. Now, I know that this is also possible with the more classic take on research, but the concept of revisability seems to encourage this kind of thinking from the beginning. It is build on different assumptions. "'Trustworthiness' not 'truth' is a key semantic difference: The latter assumes an objective reality; the former moves the process in to the social world." (Riessman in Schwartz-Shea: p.103) There is more of an inherent trust in the capabilities of researchers, and in their judgement. "For example, if "I trust you," we can pursue a project together. Likewise, if the results of a study are judged trustworthy, they can be implemented or built upon." (Schwartz-Shea: p.103) This is a different mind-set than Salzman, whose solution to his inherent distrust of the anthropologists' analysis of the self is to start working in team formations. Yet, this does not solve his issue, as a group of researchers, working within the same episteme, might collectively share certain biases, in which case working together would not be helpful, or at least will prevent certain perspectives from being challenged by the others. Trustworthiness, on the other hand "…captures researchers' very human longing to produce research for a social purpose (even if that purpose is furthering academic research rather than immediate real-world applicability). […] It rivals the positivist standards of "validity and reliability" in its clarity while, at the same time, emphasizing the humanistic aspect of interpretive research." (ibid.) It is thus not fiction, and should be seen as serious scientific work. The kind of work that, through its personal character, makes research and its conductors more approachable. In this sense, reflexivity within anthropology does not turn its back on discovery, as Salzman argues, but it sets out to discover a different way of doing science, which might contribute to a different positioning of social science within society. Less of the ivory tower stuff, more amongst the people. Trusting on the researcher's qualities, they will always be able to distinguish themselves through their scientific effort, and in this way contribute to society. But that does not mean someone who is not a scientific researcher cannot contribute to scientific discussions, after all the researcher too, acts from an experientially informed standpoint. The increased approachability allows for the incorporation of many more views than those of scientists alone, forcing the researcher to go into discussion with their research 'subject', opening up the research process. Thus, the assumption that every individual constructs their own reality, including researchers, also has consequences for the relation between the researcher and his research 'subject', and the way

the research is to be conducted. As both researcher and his 'subject' act from a similar basis, their relation can only be one of dialogue. A researcher is never able to "disappear behind the method" (Anderson: p.206), and Giddens' double hermeneutic has taught us, "the 'findings' of the social sciences very often enter constitutively into the world they describe." (Giddens, 1982) This dialogue, however, can according to Laura Lengel "never be perfectly equal, but it still presents both parties with the opportunity to see things differently, to change, to make things better, to move past a reified status quo, and to mutually develop new possibilities." (p.246) Having a dialogue means being open to the interpretation of others, especially when it comes to one's own position. Being a Dutch student in the African Studies who went on fieldwork in Senegal, I was conscious of the historical connotations that my research could have. In the words of Balmurli Natrajan and Radhika Parameswaran:

"Given the dominance of Western Europe and North America in todays global political-economy, the emphasis on traveling abroad perpetuates a relation of intellectual dominance, in which scholars from the 'First World' remain the agents of 'knowledge production'. Refusing to view the act of going abroad as derived directly from a 'power position' fails to engage the question of how the ethnographer has historically appropriated the authority of 'knowing the native better that the native him/herself." (p.40)

I deem it important to be conscious of this history, because it undoubtedly influences my research. It influences how others see me, and it influences me with the people I meet and the situations I find myself in. However, this should not withhold researchers like myself, from doing research. Research can contribute in altering these historical power relations in multiple ways, for instance by bringing to light these imbalanced power relations, but also by consciously seeking for references. In this research, I have included too little Senegalese academics to the bibliography, something I regret. I partly blame this to my limited knowledge of the French language, insufficient for fully understanding academic articles in French. There are however, enough academics of Senegalese descent who write in English; references that I could and should have used. I have, whilst searching for literature, mainly paid attention to the subject I was looking for, not to the cultural background of its writers. I am culpable for this, for as a master student in African Studies I am conscious of the inequality present in academia when it comes to African academics, and their 'Western' colleagues and conscious that my naivety in this area contributes to maintaining these skewed balances. I have been aware and more attentive to these issues in other aspects of my study,

for instance in the ways I have sought to produce knowledge. In this, I have been inspired by Participant Action Research (PAR).

Seeking alternative forms of knowledge production

Gaventa & Cornwall wrote in their article on PAR: "Countering power involves using and producing knowledge in a way that affects popular awareness and consciousness of the issues which affect *their* lives, a purpose that has often been put forward by advocates of participatory research." (p.71, added emphasis) The 'their' in this respect should in my opinion be directed to all those involved, including the researcher. Gaventa & Cornwall continue by stating that "the participation in knowledge production becomes a method of building greater awareness and more authentic self-consciousness of one's issues and capacities for action." (ibid.) Leaving them to conclude that by gaining access to knowledge, and partaking in "its production, use and dissemination, actors can affect the boundaries and indeed the conceptualization of the possible." (ibid.: p.72) Seen this way, using and contributing to research may stimulate alternative meaning making, leading to a wider set of possible lives imagined. The effects of this should not be taken lightly. The possible lives imagined have influence on the way people judge their lives and the life of others. One example of this could be the generational struggle between parents and their children, in which different imaginaries lead to different goals and expectations of life, which in turn form the basis of many family conflicts around the world. A similar argument could be made concerning the different cultures around the world. Expanding the conceptualization of the possible through contributing to research may in this respect lead to more empathy, as those involved learn about the others', and possible new world views. I like to stress again that this goes for both the researcher and his or her subject(s), for I believe that doing research also offers researchers an opportunity of using and producing knowledge in a way that affects popular awareness and consciousness of the issues which affect *their* lives. This puts the researcher on an equal level with his or her research subjects, with the possible difference that the incentive for the research might have come from the researcher, yet this is not exclusively the case. The researcher might find out that s/he has a lot in common with his or her subjects. In the words words of Cecelia Lynch: "More often than not, given our interconnected political, social and economic spheres, we study social groups whose identities overlap as well as differ from our own." (p.714) If we acknowledge this, the research becomes a cooperative effort, a learning process for all. To stress the importance of these on equivalence based relationships, the term that has been applied throughout this

research for both 'participants' and ourselves, the 'researchers', has been that of 'contributors'. Additionally, by labelling ourselves contributors as well, my research partner and I intended to put our positions as researchers up for debate. This was inevitable, as being 'aspirant academics' linked to 'Western' universities, researching the (international) dynamics surrounding YEM, we became part of the dynamics that we studied. In fact, the research process itself became part of the research.

In the above I have tried to describe the philosophical approach of this research. I have argued that the point of incorporating reflexive elements within my research is not that of me giving the best description of myself as possible. The point is to incorporate a layer of thinking, of consciousness, of reflecting, that hopefully makes the reader think about these insights, these interpretations, ultimately to form their own thoughts and conclusions about them. These "[i]nterpretations are […] always provisional, as one cannot know for certain that a new way of seeing does not lie around the corner." (Yanow: p.16) There is no absolute truth, just trustworthiness. I have tried to show that, through incorporating reflexivity in research, its trustworthiness increases, and that this trustworthiness is to be positioned as the most important criterion for judging research. I have argued that contributing to knowledge production, in a relation based on equivalence, contributes to increased empathy, whilst at the same time putting the researchers' position up for discussion. These are the philosophical underpinnings of this research. In practice, in conducting this research, these underpinnings proved challenging, thought-provoking, and have ultimately made the research into the thesis that is in front of you right now. In order to give you an example of what I mean by this, let me now take you through some of my experiences in the field.

A (small) collection of experiences
Coming out of the Léopold Sédar Senghor International Airport in Dakar, the first thing my research partner and I realised was that our French was not on an adequate level. This was quite a disappointment, as we had spent multiple nights each week for months practicing our French in online courses. It did however, make clear what would be the main goals in our first month: finding a place to stay and bringing my French up to a level where it needed to be. We were happy to find both a place to stay, and an intensive French course within two weeks. With the house in the neighbourhood of Ouakam and the course situated in (downtown) Plateau, we had to cross the city from north to south daily. This provided us with the opportunity to get a feel for the city and explore its public transport systems in the form of busses, *car rapides* and *ndiaga ndiayes*. Learning how to navigate my way through these

chaotic systems gave me a sense of direction in the city rather quick. It also brought me loads of insights into how the *Dakarois* go about in their day-to-day business, resulted in many interesting conversations and interactions, and last but not least, saved us a lot of money. All this cumulated to the fact that six weeks in, I felt quite comfortable with the city and its people, and was ready to really start focusing on the research.

In the first weeks we tried to establish contact with some aspired contributors, who could help us getting more sense about what it means to be young in Dakar, and how YEM works with that. We did not make connections up front, as we had faith in the contingent nature of our research; it will occur when we are there. What contributed to this idea was that everybody seemed to have their opinion ready with regard to YEM, and we wanted to go in as unbiased as possible, cautious not to be automatically put in certain boxes. Looking back on it, this was naïve. Following the success of the 2012 elections, the movement had gotten tremendous amounts of attention, and its members probably had given hundreds of interviews before we came in. Having spent most of our preparation time on theory and methodology, we found out that we were not able to express clearly what we wanted, and additionally lacked in-depth knowledge of the case. This resulted, especially in the first couple of interviews, in us being confronted with the more or less standard stories, or we ended up chasing certain people for months, with varying success, who then turned out to be to busy to contribute to our research in a significant way. Yet, going into the research with a not to focused mind-set was not all bad. It allowed us to move freely, and visit places and events that we perhaps otherwise would have missed out on, like panels from Agit'Art and the conference Les Ateliers de la pensée. The discussions during these cultural and academic events have given me various insights with regard to questions of leadership and authority in Senegal, like how some of the country's leading academics have a role to play in the change to come, but it is not that of political leadership, or how it is to some extent expected from older artists to pave the way for a new generation. Going to these events has contributed tremendously to the overall framework this thesis is set in. This open mind-set also allowed us to take on things, of which we were not exactly sure how they would unfold or fit within the research, like the workshop we organised at the G-Hip Hop cultural centre in Guediawaye.

After a couple of months in Dakar, taking interviews, going to various cultural centres, protests, concerts and all around just living in the city, the research started to take more definite shape. By this time, it had come to our understanding that one of our initial supervisors surprisingly changed his mind with regard to our collaborative effort. My

research partner and I felt forced to look for our individual take on things. We decided to keep working on our research together, as this provided us with reflexive moments through discussing our own and the others' actions. We also decided that we would each have our own focus within the research and that we would write individual theses. Wouter's thesis applies game theory and focuses on the interaction between YEM and NGOs, whereas mine focuses on leadership positions YEM in the socio-historical background of Senegal, hip hop and Senegalese hip hop. After loosing the backing of one supervisor for our original plan, we thought of this as the way forward, the path of least resistance. It made us rethink our research strategies, and along the way we got a better understanding of what we wanted, and how to explain that to other people. People did not automatically understand the stuff that my research partner and I were talking about, even though we might have been using similar terminology. We ourselves had been struggling to define our research and our roles as researchers, but now it became clearer to me that if we wanted to work together with assumed contributors, and challenge our position as researchers, we had to motivate them to do so. The incentive was on our side, nobody was waiting for us to come by, we had to establish it. It is not that I did not know this up front, but this realisation helped me in getting a more proactive attitude towards the research. Essential in a good collaboration is trying to understand the others' position, but working together also inevitably leads to expectations about the other. In turn, assessing these expectations can proof valuable in the discussion about ones' own role and interpretations.

An example of this are the events that took place before, during and after the workshop on being young in Dakar, that we organised with the help of Mallal Talla, aka Fou Malade, head of cultural centre G-Hip hop, and Amadou Fall Ba, in charge at hip hop culture association Africulturban. In the interviews with Mallal and Amadou, my research partner and I expressed our desire to go beyond the interviews, and their classic interviewer – interviewee interaction, and move towards something more substantial. After a couple of brainstorm sessions, what came out was the idea of this workshop, in which we would bring together youth from Guediawaye and Pikine, talk about their experiences of being young, and ultimately bring those experiences together in a hip hop track made by all those involved. In the run up to the workshop we had some communication struggles with Mallal, of which more will come later on in this thesis. Yet, it was not until after the workshop that I understood that we had not been really understanding each other all along. After the workshop – of which all parties involved agreed on its success – the idea was to organize a similar event during the upcoming G-Hip Hop festival, that is held yearly. Having years of

experience in working at all kinds of festivals in the Netherlands myself, I was happy to be part of this, as it meant that I could incorporate some of my other skills into the research. My previous experience made me think of festivals in a certain way. For instance, that the organizer, in this case Mallal, gets everything together, books the acts, stays in contact with everyone, etc. After not having received any additional information, apart from the initial idea of organizing the workshop at the festival, and also having had no contact with Mallal, we were not quite sure what was going on. Add to that the fact that the dates as mentioned on the Facebook page of the festival did not correspond with the actual dates the festival was held on, so by the time we arrived at the festival site we were one day late, and found the grounds empty. This, as you can understand, resulted in some confusion on our side. A confusion that only grew when we met Mallal again a couple of weeks later, and he, visibly annoyed, expressed how he was not content with us. Having not have spoken about the matter since, they were the last of our days in Senegal, I can only assume that he envisioned us to have taken the lead on this project, something that goes against my earlier experience with organizing festivals in the Netherlands. What this example shows, is that apart from talking the same language, having people from different cultures contribute to the creation of knowledge together also needs cultural translation. As I now have, to a certain extent, illustrated the consequences of my methodological choices on experiences in the field, let us move towards the methods applied and the rationale behind them.

Methods

As has undoubtedly become clear in the above, the chosen approach for this research has been a qualitative one. Qualitative research best captures the complexity of human experience and choosing a qualitative path allows me to open my position as a researcher for challenge and debate. (Ballinger: p.3) This is important, due to the contingent nature of this research, which put the emphasis on making choices on the basis of what was in front of me at the time, instead of having everything planned up front. This means that there was a direction of interest, but that events during the research as well as the research itself were left open to the emergence of new questions and new avenues of inquiry. Earlier on I have described some of the pro's and con's of this approach, in this section I will provide in more detail the methods that were used as a result of this approach. The research was mostly done in the style of ethnography, and was initially aimed at forming an inductively generated conceptualisation of *Dakaroise* youth, within the context of hip hip activism, and through incorporating contributors in the research. The events taken place during the research resulted in the focus being shifted towards conceptualisations and structures of leadership. This was further enhanced by the decision of my research partner and me to each write our individual thesis, which led to a strategic rethinking of the whole research. As we wanted to maintain the reflexive benefits that working together provided us with, most parts of the research were still done together, although we were now walking down our own individual avenues of inquiry. The search for other reflexive elements has manifested itself in self-reflexivity via a logbook and through discussing the topic and our position during interviews and in the organised workshop. Now, let me take you through the methods that have been applied as a result of the contingent nature of this research.

Participant observation

The most important aspect of participant observation is that it enables the researcher to make sense of context. As Charlotte A. Davis has described in her book 'Reflexive Ethnography', participant observation is not the most important method of data collection. "Rather, participation in the everyday lives of people is a means of facilitating observation of particular behaviours and events and of enabling more open and meaningful discussions with informants. Without ethnographer's participation as some kind of members of the society, they might not be allowed to observe or would simply not know what to observe or how to go about it." (p.81) This makes sense, as when you first arrive in a country everything is new to you. You have to get used to ways of doing, in order to make a distinction between what is

considered 'normal' and what is 'atypical'. The first month, in which we literally and figuratively learned the 'language' of Dakar, proved vital in this respect. The many hours spent in public transport, the tea breaks with my favourite fruit vendor Mamadou en route to my French class, living with musicians Youssoupha and Sahad who reheares and hang out around the house all the time, celebrating *tabaski* with the family of our newfound friend Papa, surfing and getting to know the local surfing community, the many hours spent at *Tefesu Bir* talking with Max, our Senegalese Buitenveldert brother, it all contributed to getting to know how things were done. This, in turn, resulted in us blending in with the city, experienced in its day-to-day business.

Another way in which participant observation has proved helpful in this research, is that by participating in Dakar's social life, I have gotten to know a lot of people in a short amount of time. Dakar is a small world in this respect. Those active in civil society, academia and also many musicians and other artists all seem to know each other in one way or another. By going to events like conferences, concerts or protests, there is a big chance of running into people you have seen before elsewhere, or people who are somehow connected to them. This makes it relatively easy to get to know the 'talk of the town', and get to know what issues are prominent on everybody's mind.

Unstructured/Semi-structured interviews

Just like participant observation, interviewing stands as one of the classic research methods in the social sciences. In this research we have undertaken unstructured and semi-structured interviews. The choice of doing the one or the other depended on the situation. Only if it was a more formal interview, with for instance some of the NGO workers, or if there was a set time limit to the interview, we tended to go for the semi-structured variant. All the others were unstructured, which is also the variant I personally prefer, although we generally ended all the interviews with a question regarding our position as researchers, and what the interviewees thought of that. An unstructured interview leaves room for a wide range of topics to be addressed. Because the interviewee knows, or is likely to wonder why s/he is asked for an interview, there is some sense of direction in the conversation. Yet, by not pinning it down on certain questions, topics that at first hand do not connect to the focus of the research, but ultimately proof to be valuable insights might come across. An example of this is that I only 'discovered' leadership as a theme quite late in the research, as earlier on I was much more focussed on terms like youth and civil society. When I ultimately 'found' leadership, and listened to all the earlier interviews once more, I discovered that leadership

was addressed in almost all of them in one form or another, I just had not seen it because of my focus on other parts. Another related example is the influence the setting of the interview has on the interview. Conducting the unstructured interview with Chismo on the grounds of the Cheikh Anta Diop University, we ended up talking a lot about campus life, the position of the university within society and exchanged our experiences with regard to student activism. This provided valuable insights when I started reading into the history of Senegalese (student) activism later on. That Chismo was student as well, and we could share experiences, contributed to a more 'natural' connection, in which the interviewer – interviewee setting shifted to a more equal-based exchange of experiences.

Getting the interview arranged proved quite challenging at times. Most of the contributors we had initially identified were people with very busy schedules. This was the case with Thiat, whom we had been in contact with for over one and a half month before we finally got to sit down together. In the meantime, we stayed in contact over phone and he invited us to his concerts, and took us to meetings. So by the time we actually set down with him, there was trust and respect from both sides, something he acknowledged and said it brought him pleasure and motivation that people travel so far to get acquainted with the work he does. It did not always go that way though, as we learned from trying to arrange an interview with Thiat's fellow YEM member Fadel Barro. Again, months went over it, the contact was established via a mutual acquaintance, we had multiple phone calls and a cancelled meeting, but when my research partner accidentally walked into Fadel in person and introduced himself, he basically acted as if my research partner was non-existent, which ended our efforts of pursuing an interview with him. Nevertheless, apart from this and some other difficulties, like people being out of the country while we were in Senegal, we got hold of most of the people we wanted to talk to.

'Discourse Analysis'

According to Foucault's classic definition, discourse is seen as ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and relations between them. This definition and the philosophy behind it aligns to some extent with my argument in the methodology; it rests on the assumption that there is no ultimate truth. Instead of this ultimate truth there are, in the Foucauldian view, decentred powers that produce regimes of truth/knowledge. Discourse, as communication practices, systematically constructs our knowledge of reality. Discourse analysis then, "allows us to see how power works through language, literature, culture and

the institutions which regulate our daily lives." (Loomba: p.63) It studies the connections between the visible and the hidden, the dominant and the marginalized, between ideas and institutions, the individual and society. In this research I have looked at the interpretations of language by our contributors, especially with regards to terms like youth, activism, hip hop, civil society, YEM and leadership. Certain groups or individuals have power to create and formulate ideas about our world that come to be almost unquestioned truths (i.e. the 'normal'). Movements like YEM seek to challenge the existing status quo in Senegal; they try to create an alternative reality. The partly do so via introducing an alternative discourse, an alternative interpretation. When it comes to the shaping of dominant discourse, media is a powerful force. The ways they linguistically cover YEM are therefore taken into account in this research. The same goes for academic articles and NGOs. The last group commonly has to justify their doings to their donors, and this provides interesting insights as to how NGOs frame YEM in order for it to align with the organizations' goals and ideology.

The discourse that is analysed in this thesis comes from news articles, websites, press releases, academic literature research, films, vouchers, and, very importantly, the lyrics of the songs that YEM has produced. Additionally, via the workshop we have organised at G-Hip Hop, we have tried to work together with the local youth in order to get an understanding of how they formulate and experience being young in Dakar. This ultimately cumulated into a song about the topic. Although the very present Fou Malade had a heaver influence on the lyrics than we initially hoped, the produce of this workshop has been taken into account as well.

Socio-political history of postcolonial Senegal

Although the road towards the 2012 elections showcased a lot of protest and demonstrations – some of them resulting in violence – the actual handing over of power happened rather peacefully. This meant that Senegal, for the second time since independence in 1960, had seen a successful major transition of the political guard. It reaffirmed the view that many on the outside had of the country, namely it being a stable democratic beacon in a region plagued by unrest, of which the attempted coup in neighbouring Mali just a week before the Senegalese elections is a clear example. The truth is, Senegal has been doing relatively well in the sense that it has no history of military rule or coups d'état, and has a history of competitive politics that stretches back to 1848. (Schaffer: p.14) Yet, this does not automatically make Senegal democratic. The fact that "neither legal opposition nor contested presidential elections were allowed by the constitution from 1966 to 1976" (Lambert: p.36) would by many be judged as undemocratic. However, in his book 'Democracy in Translation', Frederic C. Schaffer warns for such a limited conceptualisation of democracy. He states: "Those who rely on ideals of democracy as standards against which to measure and define political practises around the world risk ignoring how local populations understand their own actions." (p.7) If we are to understand something about Senegal's political history, it is thus important to take into account the way in which Senegalese people conceptualize the political. In the first decennia after independence, there were two major pillars of the Senegalese democracy: The Parti socialiste (PS) and the Muslim brotherhoods. However, times have been changing, and as society transformed so have these once main societal power structures and the role they are playing within society. By addressing some leading events in the country's socio-political history, I will illustrate how Senegal's socio-political landscape is defined, how it has changed, and how these changing dynamics have opened up spaces, once tightly controlled by the two main pillars, to other actors.

Political clientelism & the brotherhoods under president Senghor

The PS – before 1976 called the Union Progressiste Sénégalaise – ruled Senegal for forty years, from independence onwards. It was only in 2000 elections that longstanding opposition leader Abdoulaye Wade from his Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (PDS) was voted into presidency. During the forty years PS was in power, there were two presidents. The first one, Léopold Sédar Senghor is the most famous one, and he ruled Senegal the first twenty years after independence, after which Abdou Diouf took over for another twenty years. Senghor, a famous poet commonly associated with the *Négritude* movement, became

President of the Republic of Senegal on the 5th of September 1960. Within a few years he would establish a presidential regime, that had a strong nationalistic character and a remarkable cultural ideology. Senghor saw artists as having a vital role in the process of decolonization. By freeing themselves from colonial restrictions, they were to make true African art. This art would be an addition to the world palette, and ultimately would contribute to the civilization of the universal. The goal was assimilation, and this was to be achieved at the hand of a strong state. Under Senghor, "funds – as much as 25 or 30 percent of the state's budget – were allocated to the Ministry of Culture and were used to build presses, theatres, museums, art schools, archives, and workshops." (Bryson: p.38) The creative output of this investment was directed by the state, which exported much of it out of Senegal for political gains. This went as far as to a point where Devin Bryson claims that "culture became the de facto tool in Senegal for engaging with global, national, and local political issues." (p.39) The strong emphasis on the 'African', as expected by the state from the artists resulted in critiques that Senghor was "accommodating and reinforcing French colonial ideology". (ibid.) The not-so-strong aversion of the ex-coloniser by Senghor was a point of criticism more often made in postcolonial Senegal, for instance during the violent student demonstrations of May 1968, which were partly motivated by an anti-French sentiment. (Ndiaye: p.129) This is not entirely surprising, as the University of Dakar was, in terms of education "more French than truly Senegalese – at least during the first decade of independence." (ibid: p.127)

Problems at the university were a sensitive issue to the socialist regime, as the institution was seen as "a key that gave access to the gates of social control" (ibid.), supplying the state's apparatus with fresh blood. To ensure this line of succession, and to create the future of Senegal as imagined by the state, Senegalese students, and youth in general, were kept in accordance to the state's ideal through repression and *encadrement**.[4] The Senegalese state has "consistently attempted to design solutions that integrate the young into the social hierarchy by institutional means, whether political, economic, and/or legal." (Diouf: p.48) President Senghor thus not only had a strong presence in politics, but also in the

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* Encadrement: "Deriving from *cadre* (frame), *encadrement* combines implications of state control and subjugation with those of spatial circumscription." (Diouf: p. 42) It has no adequate English translation.

social, cultural and economic life of many (young) Senegalese. He was able to do so as a result of his alliance with the Muslim brotherhoods.

These brotherhoods, of which the Tijaniyya brotherhood is the largest in membership (although divided in branches) and the Mouride brotherhood the most dynamic and cohesive (and larger than any one of the individual branches of the Tijaniyya brotherhood), form a system that "…is built on the organization of disciples into associations tied to religious centres led by the family dynasties that developed after the deaths of a generation of 'founding fathers' in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The power of the leaders, or *kilifa* (from the Arabic *khalīfa*), of these brotherhoods rests for a large part on their descent from these founding fathers. "A *kilifa* is a leader who has moral authority by virtue of age, heredity, custom, and gender[.]" (Schaffer: p.41) The distinctive associational form of the brotherhoods, know as the *daaira*, links followers to each other and to the leadership and is reinforced and celebrated in an extensive symbolic system of ritual ceremonies and pilgrimages." (Villalón: p.63) To this day, the maraboutic model is visible everywhere in Senegal. You will see pictures of marabouts in busses, in homes and in offices. In fact, "[f]or the vast majority of the Senegalese population, relations with a marabout are an integral component of an individual's life." (Villalón: p.134) People submit to the spiritual guidance of a marabout, who is seen as a bearer of divine grace and wisdom, because they believe it can help them to achieve salvation. In reverse, the marabout also needs to cultivate their following as to maintain his position. The strength of this system was recognized by the French and as a result, much of the colonial political and economic regime was built on collaboration with the brotherhoods. In fact, the marabouts were acting as intermediaries between the administrative authorities and their followers. President Senghor acknowledged this and skilfully continued these collaborations. "At the elite level this involved mutually beneficial relations, based on state concessions to religious authorities in exchange for political support – most famously in the form of religious injunctions known as *ndigals*." (ibid.) In doing so the marabouts provided the PS with a wide and otherwise unavailable audience, making them amongst the most influential political figures of the country. At the same time, "the language of Islam pervades public discourse as political leaders invoke widely popular religious ideas to legitimize their rule" (ibid.: p.106), thereby strengthening both their position, and that of the maraboutic families.

Now, it is important to note that in the time of Senghor's presidency the largest percentage of Senegalese lived in rural areas, from 77 percent in 1960, to 64 percent in 1980.[5] Additionally, in 1988 "a best estimate is that only about 9 percent of the country's 2.9 million people aged twenty or older have more than a primary school education" (Schaffer: p.32), of which 85 percent lived in urban areas. Judging from these numbers, it is fair to say that under Senghor, and at least the first 10 years under his successor Abdou Diouf, the vast majority of the Senegalese electorate were dependent on farming, had had little to no formal education and as a result not many spoke French, the official government language. This is of importance, first of all, because "[t]he francophone, mostly urban minority has access to rich and varied sources of information on politics and démocratie. For those Senegalese how do not understand French well, the flow of information follows considerably narrower channels." (Schaffer: p.35) This allows for various interpretations of what democracy entails, even more so since concepts like democracy, or the French *démocratie*, have no direct equivalents in Wolof, Senegal's most spoken language. Members of the political elite have tried to use this language gap to their advantage, projecting traditional Wolof words and metaphors into new political contexts. (ibid: p.52) Frederic C. Schaffer, in his book 'Democracy in Translation' – to which I refer a lot in this chapter – shows that in Senegal this has resulted in divergent meanings of democracy. The Wolof corruption of the term democracy, *demokaraasi*, has for instance come to mean something different than its origin. An example provided by Schaffer explains: "The equality of democracy is an equal right to participate in decision making; the even-handedness of *demokaraasi* is a fair distribution of material benefits." (p.83) This difference in meaning comes with different expectations. In the case of *demokaraasi*, voting can be seen as a service done by a voter for which s/he gets something in return, often an economic payoff. According to Schaffer, who wrote his book in 1998, many Senegalese regard these kind of transactions as legitimate and moral. (Schaffer: p.92) Groups of people, called *clan* or *tendances*, would align themselves behind a leading family that offers these kind of transactions in exchange for electoral support, together accumulating into a system of clientelism, dominated by the PS, especially in rural areas. In these rural areas people depend on each other for survival, something not to be taken lightly in the frequently drought-struck Sahelian region. This dependence means that for instance, if someone falls ill, solidarity groups to which that person is associated such as family, neighbours or religious associations, will step in to help. This is why village cohesion is

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[5] https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/senegal/urban-population

deemed important. The focus is on consensus, on group conformity, more than on individual electoral choice. Voting differently than those around you (i.e. solidarity groups), can lead to conflict. In this case people often rather conform to those around them, or simply do not vote at all (ibid.: p.98), resulting in a situation where voters' preferences get overrun by the needs of the community. Schaffer breaks it down as follows: "In an environment dominated by economic uncertainty, vulnerable electors use their votes to make their environment less precarious, whether by exchanging votes for material reward or solidifying bonds with religious leaders and community members." (p.114) As indicated above, these economic uncertain environments are mainly located in rural areas, where individuals are often part of several overlapping solidarity groups on which they depend for survival. Schaffer found a connection between the presence of overlapping groups and the habit of conforming to the voting behaviour of these groups. "Individuals who belong to several nonoverlapping groups, non of which is essential to their welfare, are like to feel *less* pressure to conform their (electoral) behaviour to the expectations of any one group." (p.98, emphasis added) The opportunities to participate in such nonoverlapping networks are bigger in urban areas, which could be an indication as to why the urban areas showed a higher support for opposition candidates, especially PDS; urbanites might be more independent in their electoral choices. (ibid.) The ever-increasing urbanization in postcolonial Senegal – a trend that has not stopped to this day – could, if we follow up on Schaffers' insights, potentially contribute to the destabilization of the two pillars of Senegalese democracy. It eventually did, 2 years after Schaffer published his book, but more on that later. Let us first look at the time when Senghor made room for his successor Abdou Diouf, because this is when cracks in the two pillars of Senegalese democracy are starting to show.

Alteration under president Diouf
As postcolonial prosperity held off, pressure on Senghor's administration increased. This pressure led to a revision of the constitution in 1976, now allowing a restricted multiparty democracy, consisting of three parties, each one representing a different political ideology. President Senghor picked the moderate socialist ideology for his party, that from then onwards was called Partie Socialiste, while assigning the liberal democratic and Marxist-Leninist ideologies to the opposition parties. Despite the slight opening of the political landscape, the severe economic situation of Senegal in the late 1970, exacerbated by serious droughts, meant that even President Senghor understood that it was time for a change. This resulted in the moving forward of Prime Minister Abdou Diouf, who had been prepared by

Senghor for years, to the position of President. Being known as a technocrat, Diouf would face the hard task of negotiating the challenges that would come with the structural adjustment programs Senegal was to be signing on to. Senghor's resignation on January 1, 1981 was the first for an African head of state, and resulted in positive reactions from around the globe, as it was viewed as a move towards democracy. However, as Lambert has put it evidently "it was hardly democratic, as it allowed his handpicked successor and co-partisan, Abdou Diouf, two years to consolidate power and run as an incumbent in the 1983 presidential election." (p.36) The strategic move, helped by some radical political action like the popular termination of Senghor's three party system (Sajnani: p.57) and a law against the embezzlement of public funds (Ndiaye: p.131), worked out well, as Diouf won the 1983 presidential election. His initial popularity nevertheless quickly reduced when it became clear that Senegal's financial situation and its contracts with the IMF meant heavy cuts in government spending. This resulted in the state's disengagement from the sectors of health and education, thereby, amongst other things, threatening the unofficial guaranty for Senegalese university students to obtain a job in the country's civil administration after having earned their degree. (Lampert: p.38) The frustration amongst students led to protests against the government, that culminated in an *année blanche* in '87-'88, a total paralysis of the Senegalese educational system leading to the universal repetition of the school year. (Diouf: p.54) The government cuts also severely affected the public services, which allowed cultural associations, consisting of young Senegalese, that emerged in the neighbourhoods to appropriate these services, thereby challenging the authority of the government. (ibid.: p.53)

As indicated above, cracks were also starting to show in the other pillar, the maraboutic orders. To understand why this happened let me remind you of the fact that all important marabouts are descendants of the 'founding fathers', founders of the major religious centres during Senegal's colonial period. After the death of a founder, the eldest living sons were the successor (*kaliph*) of the order. As these eventually also died, tension raised within the orders, as struggles erupted between the *kaliphs'* brothers and his sons about who was to take his position. Eventually, the orders came to a similar agreement that succession would pass through the founder's sons before proceeding to the next generation. (Villalón: p.134) This agreement, although a solution for the tensions of that time, puts stress on the period of transitioning towards the next generation, when the sons of the earlier generation *kaliph*'s make their claims for succession. With each generation, the number of claimants increases, each making their own case in a bid for followers and thus influence. The crisis surrounding the '88 elections coincided with the tensions of transitioning to the

third generation *kaliphs*. That times were changing became evident after the Mouride *kaliph* pronounced a *ndigal* in favour of the PS in the run-up to the '88 elections. "It came in the face of massive popular dissatisfaction and was evidently widely ignored, which made clear that such pronouncements had the potential to backfire. Significantly, there has not been another such statement by any important caliph." (ibid: p.135) This reticence, in time of political crisis, an upcoming generational shift and a society with an ever-growing number of urban disciples, "has opened up possibilities for younger marabouts to adopt more controversial positions, for or against the regime, in a bid for followers and influence, a tendency which grows with the increase in the number of potential claimants to maraboutic status with each generation." (ibid.)

In these increasingly changing and thus stressful conditions the presidential elections of 1988 were held. Sitting President Abdou Diouf won the election, yet the results were immediately challenged, by both opposition leader Abdoulaye Wade and the *Dakaroise* youth. It appeared the straw that broke the camel's back and Dakar was, for months to come, to be the scene of violence in a way it had not seen before. The city's youth went after symbols of the state and attacked gas stations, public buses, government vehicles. (Lambert: p.38) The violence has been interpreted as "a furious response to the ongoing attempts at *encadrement* and authoritarianism" (Diouf: p.56), of submission to elders, as a way of breaking out of assigned places. *Dakaroise* youth had made a violent and definitive step into the political arena, and made a clear statement, namely "the refusal to allow the institutions established by the new ruling class to direct the process of democratizing Senegalese society." (ibid: p.57) Runner up Abdoulaye Wade was accused of having organized the protest and was arrested and convicted. This conviction, according to some, enhanced his position as an opposition leader, as he was now seen as "the political face of Senegalese youth", meaning that his slogan *Sopi* (change), would become "a rallying cry for youth and an expression of frustration with the stagnant economy and the Socialist Party." (Lambert: p.39) It would however, take another twelve years before he could capitalize on this position, because the frustration felt after the '88 elections and the apparent incapability for change was to take on an even more extreme expression.

The youthful protesters did not see the change they were hoping to see after the postelection violence. In fact, according to Mamadou Diouf, the disappointment that was felt about the insignificant role granted to them gave rise to another wave of violence that took place between '89-'91 and came to be called the Senegalo-Mauritian crisis. (p.58) During this crisis a rage came down upon the Moors living in Senegal, especially Dakar and dozens were

killed. "Youth unleashed an unheard-of violence and threw itself body and soul into campaigns of vengeance that were amplified by more or less fanciful rumours." (ibid.) It was not until the Mauritanians were repatriated, that the violence would come to an end. The extreme nature of this violence seemed to have surprised many, including the Dakaroise youth themselves. What came after is what can be seen as a truly remarkable episode in the socio-political history of Senegal, namely *Set/Setal*. A commonly used definition is the one given by Diouf:

"*Set/Setal* is the mobilization of human effort for the purpose of cleansing in the sense of sanitation and hygiene, but also in the moral sense of the fight against corruption, prostitution and delinquency. The movement's primary concern was to rehabilitate local surroundings and remove garbage and filth. It also undertook to embellish these sites, sometimes naming them, often marking them with steles and monuments to bear witness by recalling moments or figures from local history or appealing to the private memories of families or youth associations." (p.59)

The movement made the city of Dakar its canvas and many walls and buildings throughout the city were decorated with artistic expressions and new, modern music (*mbalax*) filled its air. Some, like Devin Bryson see in *Set/Setal* Senghor's cultural legacy for Senegal (p.43), as art is used to "reconfigure the country politically and socially." (p.36) Others stress the importance of the cleansing experience, as it was also seen as an internal cleansing, "a cleansing of one's heart and mind". (Lambert: p.41) Diouf saw *Set/Setal* as a celebration of local memory, an indigenous appropriation of the city as opposed to the nationalist agenda of the PS. (p.62) The focus was on the local, on the capability of reliance on the self, on what is nowadays called grassroots organising. Writing the article in 1996, Diouf claimed that the crisis of *Sopi*, that is the impossibility to create change, had as a result "the desertion of the political and political modes of expression", which he saw confirmed in *Set/Setal* and opted as a possible explanation for the relative absence of drama in the 1993 elections. (p.61) To some extent Diouf is right. Although there was a shift in the political landscape, PS had agreed to reform the electoral code and the main opposition party, Wade's PDS, entered the government in a show of consensus about this new code, the outcome of the elections did not show the expected change. The high abstention of the young and the urban dwellers (generally more PDS/opposition oriented), and the high mobilization of rural voters (traditionally behind PS), allowed the PS's clientelism to remain intact and functioning, with President Diouf winning the elections. The results were disputed by supporters of the opposition and the new code had "failed to restore confidence of many disaffected urban dwellers in the integrity of the electoral process." (Schaffer: p.29) Additionally, the loud

promise for change by the opposition had now weakened their own legitimacy. (Villalón: p.132)

The '93 elections were also the time in which a younger marabout of a powerful family came out publicly in resistance to the historical domination of government by PS, and did so explicitly in Islamic terms. (Villalón: p.130) The marabout, Moustapha Sy of the Sy family in charge of the Tijaniyya order, led the Moustarchidine movement, a movement specifically aimed at appealing to Senegal's disaffected youth. "The movement was significant in that it signalled a major departure from the established relations between maraboutic authorities and the political elite, especially in that it blurred the distinction between 'Sufis' and 'Islamists'." (Villalón: p.65) Although the scope of this research does not allow me to elaborate too much (for a more extensive treatment of this subject see Villalón 1999 & 2004), what it comes down to is that the 'moderate Sufi Islam' of the earlier marabouts had always worked in tandem with the government. State and religion, although working together, were separated by law and were both comfortable in this status quo. The Moustarchidine movement incorporated 'modernist' Islamic rhetoric into the marabout system and started critiquing the government from this Islamist stance. It was in fact the first serious contestatory political movement built on a religious basis in Senegal (Villalón: p.65), and "demonstrates that the dynamics of succession and the need to distinguish oneself from the large number of potential claimants to the founder's inheritance provide incentives for younger marabouts to undertake innovative and risky activities." (Villalón: p.143) Moustapha Sy sided with the opposition after the elections, and his movement was involved in riots that left six policemen dead. This lead to the banning of the movement and multiple jailing's of Moustapha Sy. According to Leonardo Villalón, "Marabouts need followings, and hence competition for disciples is inevitable. The competition for disciples reflects the marabouts' desire for leverage over the state, which constitutes both the means of appealing to a following and the value of having a large one." (p.143) As a result of this competition, religious authority is fragmented, leading to the conclusion that "in the years for following the explosion of postelectoral violence in the summer of 1988, and continuing through the early 1990s […] the legitimacy of *both* religious and political authority in Senegal was eroded significantly and consistently." (Villalon: p.64, original emphasis)

During the seven years that followed President Diouf was not able to turn around Senegal's economic downfall, leaving ever more people, especially the young and urban dwellers, without jobs or possibilities. The president had to deal with losing state power, as there was less under state control due to the forced liberalizations. With the increasingly

harsh environment increased also the desire for change, that further strengthened by the often unreachable 'modernity' as by now viewed on television screens all over the country. Confidence in the political system as a medium for change was low and the rest of the '90s were marked by constant manipulation of the rules of the political game by the PS through constitutional amendments and reforms to the electoral code designed to ensure its continued hegemony (Villalón: p.132), with the alteration of the two term presidential limit as a shining example. This made president Diouf eligible for the 2000 presidential elections.

'Sopi' under president Wade

In the presidential elections of 2000 change would come, at least that was the way it was seen then. With the knowledge we have now, in 2017, the extent to which things really changed is debatable, to say the least. The year 2000 was, nevertheless, a historical moment in Senegalese post independent politics, for it would mark the end of PS rule. Longstanding opposition leader Abdoulaye Wade was the one to bring about this political turnover. He did so in a way that was not seen before in Senegal. While the PS held on to their clientelism, characterized by its fixed, static town meetings, based on tradition, praise singers, separation of elders and youth and munificence in the form of food and party t-shirts and caps as a form of low-cost clientelization. (For a more detailed description of old-style political campaigning in Senegal see Foucher 2007) Wade toured cities in what was called *marches bleues*, blue marches. These were a small caravan of cars, with one truck carrying a sound system blasting Senegalese pop music. Wade would only occasionally show himself out of one of the cars, or for some short speeches. Behind these cars would form massive crowds following the caravan, symbolically taking over the town. The marches, until then mainly a method of protest preferred by the youth, were a way of showing that Wade stood with the people. (Foucher: p.123) During these marches Wade specifically called out to the youth to take their responsibilities if the PS were to hijack the elections, thereby hinting at the violence of '88/'89. In addition to these marches, NGOs had made an "unprecedented effort" (ibid.: p.124) via, inter alia, the distribution of t-shirts (ibid.: p.118), to encourage more people, especially the young, to vote. In doing so they tried to make the overall voter population less partisan. The blue marches, in their open character, also spoke to this group, and contributed in reducing the relative share of voters inside clientelistic networks on the total. In addition, Senegal's young were also motivated to vote through songs by many of the countries hip hop artists, who by then were "acknowledged as the definitive voice of massive youth protest against the Diouf regime." (Sajnani: p.60) (see also Appert: p.251) On top of that Wade,

being the only candidate that garnered enough votes to go into the second round of elections, formed a coalition consisting of almost all opposition parties on the political spectrum. Adding up all these different aspects, Wade ultimately won the presidential elections, thereby securing the first change in ruling political party since independence.

The *sopi* that was sought after for so long was finally there, assumedly. It was on the day of his election that Wade created his first major uproar by kneeling down for the caliph of the Mouride brotherhood in Touba, the brotherhoods' holy city. This resulted in tension amongst the brotherhoods and their relation with the government. During the elections, most of the candidates had flirted with the marabouts, but none of the major religious leaders had spoken out for one of the candidates, making Wade's move a surprise and a harbinger for deteriorated relationships with the Tijaniyya order. (Villalón: p.66) Politically however, Wade's presidency started as promised, with Wade changing the presidential term from seven to five years and limiting presidency to a maximum of two terms. But the Senegalese were to find out soon that the desired change was only short-lived, as Wade already in 2003 changed the presidential term back to seven years. The promises of change that won him his presidency were not converted into legislation and "many of the authoritarian practices that characterized Senegal in the '80s and '90s persisted under his administration. Key state institutions remained politicized. Wade fortified his ruling party by retaining institutions that he could pack with loyalists – a practice that he had condemned during his quarter-century in opposition." (Kelly: p.122) He was able to do so because the PS, now the major opposition party, was struggling to cope, having lost their forty years' access to state resources. With the PDS in need of officials acquainted with the government's administrative procedures, many former PS leaders joined PDS. (Kelly: p.124) This left the already weakened opposition unable to recover before the 2007 elections, which Wade won again, even though many had turned against Wade by this time, including a lot of the hip hop artist that had publicly encouraged to go and vote in 2000. During his presidency Wade continued much of the practices that he had campaigned against during his time in opposition. He structurally weakened political opposition, leaving it splintered with up to 174 parties in 2010. (ibid.) He went on initiating megalomane projects like a new international airport, an expensive toll road and most controversial, the African Renaissance Monument, a 49-meter-tall bronze statue in Ouakam, Dakar. These big projects, with corresponding costs, stood in stark contrast with the daily power outages, severe financial situations and chronic unemployment of many Senegalese, who were also suspiciously watching Wade's political recruitment of his son Karim. In 2009 Karim Wade ran for mayor of Dakar and suffered "a humiliating defeat"

(Lambert: p.44), as a result of a gathering that came to be known as *Assises Nationales*. The event, where parties, labour unions and civil society organizations came together, became the focal point of opposition coordination, which amongst other things prevented Karim Wade from being chosen mayor of Dakar. This did not stop his father from appointing him as Minister of State for International Cooperation, Regional Development, Air Transport and Infrastructure, with a budget that made up around 46 percent of the total national budget. (ibid.) Unsurprisingly, this confirmed the suspicions that many Senegalese had with regard to Wade and the possible recruitment of his son. Wade did not stop there, and continued to make decisions that were frowned upon. Amongst these decisions was the seeking of a third term, on the basis that the two-term limit was added during his first term, and thus did not apply to him. He himself had stated the exact opposite in December 2007, in the sense that the constitution did not allow him to run again. In 2011 however, he ushered the now famous '*Maa waxoon, waxeet*', meaning 'I said it, I can take it back' in Wolof. On the day the Constitutional court was to decide the legitimacy of this claim, June 16, 2011, Wade proposed a constitutional amendment, trying to reduce the percentage of votes that were required to avoid a runoff in the first round of the presidential elections from 50% to 25%. His proposition for the creation of a post of Vice President did not go down well, most likely because of the situation regarding his son Karim. The frustration amongst Senegalese reached a peak as a result of these Presidential actions, and "pushed formerly neutral organizations into politics. For instance, by coordinating social movements like Don't Touch My Constitution (Touche Pas à Ma Constitution!) and the M23, the RADDHO [Recontre Africaine pour la Defense des Droits de l'Homme (Senegal's African Assembly for Human Rights), a prominent NGO in Dakar] connected angry citizens and newly enfranchised youth to politicians and parties with similar interests. The 'June 23 Movement' (M23) organised a massive demonstration on this date, in front of the National Assembly. They were faced by riot police, resulting in clashes that left multiple demonstrators dead, and many imprisoned. (Gueye: p.27) The protests led President Wade to retract his propositions, yet he persisted in his claim on running for a third term. This ultimately resulted in Wade losing the elections, but more on that down below. For now, let me recapitulate the above, so that the line of argument I am trying to make becomes more evident.

For its first postcolonial decades Senegal's democracy rested on two pillars, the political in the form of the PS and the religious in the form of the Muslim brotherhoods. The state was considered secular, but well-organised clientelistic networks ensured mutual benefits for both the political and the religious elite. The vast majority of the population was

living in rural areas and had had very little formal education. This resulted in high levels of social control, many overlapping solidarity groups and limited access to information. However, as postcolonial prosperity held off, urbanisation increased continuously. The political stagnation, and limited possibilities especially for the younger generations gave rise to growing frustration. Tension further increased with generational struggles amongst the leading marabout families, which resulted in the blurring of the state-religion divide. These phenomena accumulated into an eroding of political and religious authority, and the call for change strengthened. The sought after change seemed to arrive in the form of Abdoulaye Wade, who, in becoming president in 2000, ended 40 years of single party rule by the PS. His election was, at least partly, the result of new, more politically outspoken actors in the form of NGOs and (hip hop) artists. Wade's presidency did not turn out to be much of a change; he followed the authoritarian style of his predecessor, his frequent misuse and adaptation of the constitution to his own benefit and pampered his allies through nepotism. This left many Senegalese disillusioned, not believing the desired change will ever come from politics. During my fieldwork I noticed a lot of Senegalese still have this belief. They see politicians as opportunists who will resort to nepotism as soon as they get to power. This results in a sentiment where people explicitly stay away from politics, as they want to keep their hands clean. That this was still the case in 2016, four years after civil society groups and hip hop artists stepped up to prevent Wade from having a third term, is exemplary for the profoundness of this sentiment. Yet, it also says something about the exceptional nature of what happened during the 2012 elections. In order to get a more profound understanding of what it is that actually took place then, and how I made sense of it, let me take you through an analysis of how academia has treated two terms that YEM is commonly associated with.

The interconnection between Youth & Hip hop

"Today, young people are emerging as one of the central concerns of African studies. Located at the heart of both analytical apparatuses and political action, they also have become a preoccupation of politicians, social workers, and communities in Africa." (Diouf, 2003: 2)

"[H]ip-hop is situated at once as a cultural phenomenon and institutionalized social reality on the global scale the likes of which we have not seen before with similar musical genres." (Malone & Martinez Jr., 2010: 534)

Although the quote of Mamadou Diouf is already 14 years old, it is still ever so relevant today. 'Youth' is a topic commonly addressed when 'Africa' is discussed, and with the apparent 'population explosion' hitting the continent somewhere soon, it looks as if it is going to be a hot topic for another while. A similar connection, though be it on a less frequent scale, can be found when the effects of globalization come to the table: the rise of hip hop around the world. This seems to be one of those cases where an example fits a theory so well, that it keeps on popping up when the theory is addressed. It is undoubtedly true that hip hop has made a remarkable journey across the world over the last 35 years, and has not missed out on Africa, with places like Nairobi and Dakar being home to vibrant hip hop cultures. Now, since "[…] hip hop is one of the fastest growing and most widespread youth cultural phenomena in Africa" (Ntarangwi, 2010: p.1317) and the case central to my research, Y'en a Marre, is a movement regularly labelled as a 'youth' and/or 'hip hop' movement, I will use this chapter to analyse these two terms and the way they have been applied and studied. In doing so, I will critically review how hip hop and youth are often connoted with each other, and illustrate what their frequent usage tells us about the assumptions imbedded in these terms.

Youth in the context of the African continent

The first thing that comes to mind when thinking about youth is that it is a stage or period between child- and adulthood. That being said, youth has no biological age boundaries and is thus no clearly defined category or demographic group. Youth is, at least partly "…a socially constructed or constituted category" (Abbink: p.5) resulting in local variations and specificities to appear frequently, if not always. Yet even within certain localities, "…the meaning and definition of adulthood can shift easily from situation to situation, making ambiguities even larger." (Van Dijk et al.: p.5) On top of that, there is a constant influx of

'new' youth, meaning that "[a]s a social shifter, 'youth' is in existence endlessly" (Van Dijk et al.: p.2), this as opposed to the individual experience of youth, which supposedly comes to an end when adulthood is reached. Youth thus appears to be a transitory, or liminal phase, in which movement is intrinsically imbedded. But apart from the more outwardly generational transitory phase and social category of youth as a way to structure society, youth has also become a specific identity marker, in which being young sets you apart from someone who is not. To put it in the words of Christiansen et al: "Youth is both a social position which is internally and externally shaped and constructed, as well as part of a larger societal generational process, a state of becoming." (p.11) They go on stating that "We need to look at the ways youth are positioned in society and the ways they seek to position themselves in society, to illuminate the ways the category of youth is socio-politically constructed, as well as the ways young people construct counter positions and definitions." (ibid.)

Youth has, in the almost 60 years that most countries in Africa have gained their independence, been seen as playing different roles with regard to these nations. Right after the colonial period, youth were seen as the symbol of the future by many young African nations. "As bearers of the twofold project of modernity [economic development and national liberation] and the return to the sources of African cultures, they were called upon to promote and respect the political and moral obligations of citizenship and of political, social and cultural responsibility, with a view to constructing African democracies." (Diouf: p.4) Yet, things did not go as planned "particularly in the light of the failure of the nationalist political enterprise, which had set itself the double objective of economic development and social justice, African societies increasingly are looking to young people as instruments of change." (ibid: p.2) This way of looking at youth has been observed by others, like Rodgers & Young, who state that youth often is associated with radical political thought and a revolutionary spirit (Rodgers & Young, 2016). Given as one of the potential reasons for that is that the youthful experience of the world inherently consists of a "fresh contact", one wherein social problems are not taken as such but are rather seen as opportunities for positive change. (Diouf: p.3) However, with change also comes insecurity, especially for those that have something to hold on too. The change that young people in Africa brought with them came to be seen as threatening when economic crises hit Africa in the beginning of the 1970s. Their earlier status as 'agents of transformation', which was achieved "only because they were thought of as channeled and supervised by adults" (ibid: p.4), was lost as they no longer represented national priority. "This loss of status is reflected in the physical and intellectual collapse of the institutions of supervision and education, the absence of health coverage, and

the massive and aggressive presence of young people on the streets, at public garbage dumps, and in urban and rural undergrounds." (ibid: p.5) Older elites, be it in politics, religious movements or the military, hold on to their power, and joblessness does not allow for a transition into adulthood, leaving some to conclude that youth have "no well-defined place in society", resulting in them being "vulnerable and dependent." (Abbink: p.2)

The youthful population in Africa has been, and is still growing. They now form the majority of the African population. In Senegal in 2014, sixty-three percent of the population was under the age of twenty-four.[6] As a result of the economic downfall and the introduction of the infamous Structural Adjustment Plans (SAP), neoliberalism found its way into sub-Saharan Africa. As a result, governments were forced to a severe reduction of government expenditure, open markets to foreign goods by cutting on subsidies and other protective measures, privatize state-owned corporations and severely devalue their currencies, which led to deterioration of quality of life for many. The SAP's were of (negative) influence on how many parts of sub-Saharan arrived in the times of rapid globalization. This phenomenon of global interconnectedness influenced the condition of young people in Africa. They were now faced by "the interaction of local and global pressures: the fragmentation or dissolution of local culture and memory, on the one hand, and the influences of the global world, on the other." (Diouf: p.3) In this 'limbo' phase of African youth, Alcinda Honwana sees what was called 'waithood' by Diane Singerman in her work on youth in the Middle East. Waithood, according to Honwana, is "proof of the multifaceted realities of young Africans' difficult transition to adulthood, which goes beyond securing a job and extends to aspects of their social and political lives." (p.51) Contrary to Singerman, Honwana claims that 'waithood' should not be seen as a sort of passivity amongst youth. She states that "they [youth] are proactively engaged in serious efforts to create new forms of being and interacting with society. […] waithood represents the contradictions of modernity, in which young people's expectations are simultaneously raised by the new information and communication technologies that connect them to global cultures, and yet constrained by the limited prospects and opportunities in their daily lives." (p.51) The influence of this 'new' information can be substantial for they can contribute to a wider set of possible lives imagined by those getting access to it. Or as Arjun Appadurai wrote: "The new power of the imagination in the fabrication of social lives is inescapably tied up with images, ideas, and opportunities that come from elsewhere, often moved around by the vehicles of mass media."

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[6] http://www.indexmundi.com/senegal/demographics_profile.html

(p.54) To him, "[t]he importance of media is not so much as direct sources of new images and scenarios for life possibilities but as semiotic diacritics of great power, which also inflect social contact with the metropolitan world facilitated by other channels." (p.53) Key in this is nuanced way in which the imagination is altered, and the subtle or surprising ways this is done. The influence of new ideas thus does not mean that these ideas are blindly taken over, they merely contribute to envisioning an alternative reality, or to the perception of what the future might hold. When these alternative views are combined with the earlier mentioned adaptive capabilities of young people, it is conceivable that they create their own ways of making sense of the world around them. This then leads to a statement like that of Diouf, who claims that, as they are "…excluded from the arenas of power, work, education, and leisure, young Africans construct places of socialization and new sociabilities whose function is to show their difference, either on the margins of society or at its heart, simultaneously as victims and active agents, and circulating in a geography that escapes the limits of the national territory." (Diouf: p.5) Given the large number of examples in the literature (See for instance: Clark: 2012; Marsh & Petty: 2013; Ntarangwi 2010; Perullo 2005) it seems that hip hop has been a common alternative place of socialization among African youth. In the literature on this topic hip hop is accredited several characteristics that, together with the circumstances African youth find themselves in, could serve as an explanation as to why it is specifically hip hop that has become "…one of the fastest growing and most widespread youth cultural phenomena in Africa." (Ntarangwi: p.1317)

A hip hop ideology
The first thing to consider is the time in which hip hop made its way to the continent. As mentioned above, in the 1980s and from there onwards, many African states have been confronted by SAP's. By simultaneously cutting back on government expenditures whilst opening up the local market to that of the global one, many state sponsored projects and programs, amongst them those targeting youth, were closed down, while at the same time a lot of foreign consumer products were introduced to the local markets. The result is what Ntarangwi calls one of the "unintended outcomes of structural changes accompanying these models of socioeconomic and political practice, the availability of electronic devices and global communication channels, especially among Africa's urban youth". (Ntarangwi: p.1317) In a time when there is a less well-defined place for young people in society, there is thus an abundance of images, ideas, and opportunities that come from elsewhere. One stream of this new information is hip hop, that during the 1980s became extremely popular,

especially amongst Afro-Americans. The music and images showed rappers commenting on their way of living, whilst also delivering social critiques. This is one of the most common associations of hip hop, "[i]ts valence as a medium through which to oppose domination and authority". (Fredericks: p.133) It is however important to note that, although dominant, the 'American' hip hop has not been blindly taken over. Viewing global hip hop in such a way would be a failure to develop "…an appreciation of the complexity of localization." (Pennycook & Mitchell: p.28) Others, like Malone & Martinez have tried to define global hip hop by calling it the 'organic globalizer', and state that in spite of its reach around the world, "…hip hop ultimately remains […] a grassroots phenomenon that is born of the community from which it permeates". (p.532) They point to the interesting quality of hip hop that allows it to create "a space for addressing social and political issues on at the local level", whilst its global appeal also offers the possibilities that "transcend geographical and cultural boundaries". (p.532) Hip hop is thus something very local, yet global at the same time. To see how this works together, Alim suggests viewing hip hop as a mobile matrix. "Viewing Hip Hop as a mobile matrix suggests that there are at least two levels of meaning working simultaneously in Hip Hop's globalization: the imperative to identify with global Hip Hop (with Black America as a dominant frame of reference for many contexts) and the imperative to create something that pushes local boundaries and distinguishes oneself from both local and global Hip Hop styles (mediated by a demanding and competitive ideology of style that obligates Hip Hop artists to "come wit the next shit")." (Alim: p.113) This ideology results in a situation where hip hop is constantly changing, constantly adding new sounds to it spectrum. Because change is fundamentally embedded in hip hop's identity, it is able to adjust and redefine itself. It leaves room for people to create their own, local interpretation of hip hop, yet it all remains together under the banner of hip hop. Alim, professor in linguistics, defines it as follows: "Youth all around the world have engaged hip hop and created their own hip hop nation language varieties and communicate with each other through the prism of style – a diversity of styles as *lingua franca*, if you will – to form a global style community. Unity within the global hip hop nation does more than merely tolerate diversity, it demands it." (Alim: p.122) This demanding of diversity as to become part of the unity is a fundamental quality of hip hop. This unity transcends national and cultural boundaries, and offers a space for those who might want something else than the societal situations that they are born in. Hip hop is something you can belong to; it offers "…a new avenue through which to reconfigure a new sense of belonging and critiquing the status quo". (Ntarangwi: p.1323) At the same time hip hop, through its competitive ideology, offers an alternative status

formation. Yet, if it is diversity that stands as one of the most important qualities of hip hop, what is it that binds hip hop together? An answer to that question can be found in the work of Morgan (2005), who emphasizes the importance of the hip hop mantra of 'keepin' it real', which "…represents the quest for the coalescence and interface of ever-shifting art, politics, representation, performance and individual accountability that reflects all aspects of youth experience". (p.211) This "hip hop ideology of authenticity" can be, and should be, understood "…not so much as an individualist obsession with the self but rather as a dialogical engagement with community." (Pennycook: p.103) Authenticity is defined in relation to others; it depends on social contexts and "horizons of significance". (Taylor in Pennycook: p.103) So, while it is a binding factor in global hip hop, a 'global ideology', authenticity is firmly grounded in the local. Or, as Pennycook states: "By looking at authenticity in this way, we can understand the hip hop ideology of keepin' it real as a discursively and culturally mediated mode of representing and producing the local." (p.112) In a time where there is increasing global and local pressures on youth, authenticity appears as a go-to ideology, because of its capacity to grasp this new multi-layered reality.

Through the vehicle of mass-media and electronics, that as a result of SAPs and increasing globalization have made its way to the African continent, many young people, especially those living in urban areas, have engaged with hip hop culture. That it is them to do so has a range of explanations, amongst them the most important ones being the youth's need to look at other places of socialization after loss of status as a result of economic crises, the fall of many of the nationalist projects of African nations starting from the 1970s onwards, accompanied by rapid urbanization, leaving them no clearly defined space in society. Hip hop has come along as an alternative, it provides youth with a sense of belonging. It is inherently local, yet connected with the global hip hop movement through its 'keepin' it real'-ideology. This ideology produces and represents the local authentically, as it is defined in relation to others; the community. Change is fundamentally embedded in hip hop identity, whilst also commonly associated with 'youth'. This does however, not necessarily mean that all hip hoppers are young. The focus is on grasping this rapidly changing reality, finding your place in it. That is something that could speak to all, both young and older. Hip hop, with its 'keepin' it real'-ideology, has, because of its ability to represent and produce the local authentically and to provide a sense of belonging in this globalizing world, a great potential, an example of which is the case down below.

Hip hop in Senegal

As written in the above, hip hop arrived on the African continent via electronic devices and global communication channels whose availability was an unintended outcome of the structural adjustment plans. (Ntarangwi: p.1317) Senegal, and especially its capital Dakar was no different. At first it was mainly youth from wealthier areas, who possessed more international connections through for instance family abroad, that encountered hip hop. While Senegalese hip hop initially commenced by rapping songs from the US, it was not until long that the English and France was joined by Wolof-rap and other local languages. To be noted is the group Rap'Adio whom in 1998 released a Wolof album full of social commentary that, according to Catherine M. Appert "struck a chord with Senegalese youth, igniting what local rappers still refer to as Senegal's 'hardcore' or 'underground' hip hop movement." (p.238) This would define hip hop in Senegal as a fairly recent phenomenon.

Rapper as modern-day griot

However, there are some, amongst them both academics and Senegalese rappers, who claim that hip hop has a much longer history, going back to West African oral traditions like that of the *griots,* the traditional West African bards. These *griots* arguably "…were [among] the very few who could speak truth to monarchs without fear of punishment." (Gueye: p.38) Although the role of the *griots* has somewhat shifted in contemporary Senegal, there remains respect for their arts and cultural position, and their apparent ability of social critique. This becomes clear in earlier forms of protests during President Wade's political regime. J.O. Ifekwunigwe in her 2013 article on Senegalese boat migration, which she sees as a form of protest itself (p.223), provides the example of the song 'Sunugaal' ('our canoe' in Wolof) by Didier Awadi. The song, "a popular 2006 rallying cry and lament […] is a diatribe against President Wade's political regime [,]" "…continuing a grand *griot* tradition." (p.222) By putting it this way, Awadi, one of Senegal's most well-known rappers, is framed as a modern day *griot*, even though he himself once specifically said that "the role of the *griot* here is different from the role of the rapper" (Awadi in Tang: p.85). This use of the rapper as a modern *griot* trope is often mentioned as an example of the 'African' in hip hop, as if hip hop was granted authenticity through it. This way of framing hip hop has recently become criticized, for instance in the works of both the earlier quoted Appert (2016) and Sajnani (2013). The rapper-*griot*-trope is first and foremost criticized because of the difference in position with regard to power. The *griot* was, and to some extent still is, closely connected to those in power, as the livelihood of the *griot* in the form of patronage depends on it.

Senegalese rappers on the other hand, see themselves as a counter-hegemonic force (Sajnani: p.158), dedicated to keepin' it real. Additionally, seeing rappers as modern day *griots* does not do justice to the local specificity and history of Senegalese hip hop. Many Senegalese rappers position the modern *griot* in the distinctively postcolonial *mbalax* music genre. (Appert: p.247) *Mbalax* is the music genre through which Senegal's most famous singer Youssou N'dour acclaimed world fame and it is everywhere in Dakar (although this might also be due to the penetrating sound of its ever present drums). From the speakers inside local transport like the *car rapide*'s, to the cities biggest stages, and from the small boutiques around the corner to the most exuberant weddings. The placing of the modern *griot* within *mbalax* is not strange, seeing how the genre originated from the transferring of traditional *griot sabar* drums and rhythms to electrified western instruments. (ibid.: p.245) Apart from that, *mbalax* also took over the praise singing for patrons in return for money, characteristic for modern day *griots*. (ibid: p.246) The similarities go as far as that in many contexts, "particularly celebrations of naming ceremonies and marriages [*mbalax* and acoustic *griot* performance] have become interchangeable". (ibid: p.245) This patronage relationship makes most *mbalax* artist depending on the rich and powerful, which in turn makes for very little *mbalax* singers critiquing the status quo. Add to that the fact that Youssou N'dour was Senegal's Minister of Tourism between 2012 and 2013, and thus very close to power, and it becomes evident how hip hop artists who seek societal change, do not like to be seen as modern *griots*. The explicit stance of some of these artist in this regard leaves Sajnani to conclude that "nowhere are the opposed tendencies of *griots* and HipHoppers more materially manifest than in contemporary Senegal". (p.162) The rapper as modern *griot* trope detracts from the local specificity of Senegalese hip hop and is all the more reason to delve further into its own particularities.

Hip hop Galsen

As noted above, when hip hop first arrived in Senegal it was very much a reproduction of the American hip hop. This resulted in some having the understanding that "rap was […] an escapist form for idle youth who were overly fascinated with the West." (Gueye: p.24) Although this might have been true for some artists, many of the rappers that I have spoken to, point to the importance of the own reality in hip hop. When talking to Djilly Bagdad, one of the most known rappers from Medina, part of 5kiem Underground and member of Y'en a marre, about *Dakaroise* hip hop and the influence that American hip hop has, he said that "The only thing is, don't forget, what they [American hip hop artists] are rapping about is

their reality. They are driving Maybach or whatever else, here you are taking *car rapide*. Power cuts. If you use what trendy is, use it, but also don't forget about your own reality. Don't always let them sell you the dream, when you wake up its not there." (Djily Bagdad, personal interview) Interesting here is how he makes a distinction between the copying of a certain style – 'what trendy is' – which does not bother him, and the copying of content, which raises more aversion. To him it makes no sense to talk about someone else's reality. Something that is confirmed by Fou Malade, when he talks about hip hop as being "all about implementing daily reality in an artistic way. You need local reference to keep the music interesting and engaged." (Fou Malade, personal interview) Seen this way it is no surprise that Senegalese hip hop is often called hip hop *galsen*. *Galsen* stands for Senegal in the French street slang 'Verlan' and is Sen(e)gal backwards. It is used to distinguish Senegalese hip hop from alternative interpretations of hip hop culture. (Abrahams: p.7) One commonly referred to distinctive feature is the high level of politicization of hip hop *galsen*, ever since its beginning (Fredericks: p.134), although the same rappers might also make 'ego-trippin' rap. Rappers like Didier Awadi of Positive Black Soul or the earlier mentioned group Rap'adio are all known for their critical voices. Notable is the fact that Y'en a marre is not the first time that hip hop artists got involved in presidential elections. Former President Wade's call for *sopi* – change – had a strong focus on Senegal's young, and rappers actively mobilized youth to help bring that sought after change about. It contributed to Wade being elected president in 2000. He, however, failed to live up to the expectations, and it was during the 2007 elections that "in the context of political scandals and a faltering economy, rappers began to critique Wade." (ibid.) Although he would win that election and would go on to reign until the infamous elections of 2012, it is clear that at least a part of hip hop *galsen* has been critically engaging with politics and society since a long time. The question then becomes, why is it that a large part of Senegalese seems to be engaged in socially conscious music? A possible explanation for this can be found in the words of Fou Malade, who sees hip hop artists as representatives of the people. (Fou Malade, personal interview) This has been noted by others as well, such as Rosalind Fredericks, who states that "through rap, young men, especially, are able to assume the role of spokesmen for, not only their generation, but their communities, city, even nation." (p.136) This role of representative is not simply given to them; it has to be earned. The credibility that hip hop artists seek is first of all given to them by their own neighbourhood. Seen this way you can speak of a dual dependency, in which the hip hop artist is a spokesman for the people. These people, to a certain extent, depend on them to make their voice heard, while at the same time, hip hop

artists rely heavily on their neighbourhood for credibility. According to Fou Malade "credibility is a tool, not a goal. It can per definition not be used as self-enrichment, because it is directly linked to the community and you will loose it. This will cause a divorce between you and hip hop." (Fou Malade, personal interview) The dependency of rappers on their neighbourhoods is quite possibly that what drove Fredericks to the following observation: "In these neighbourhoods [the poor periphery], responsibility to remake the "place" in line with hip hop's aesthetics and ethics is taken extremely seriously. Resonating with the wider understanding of hip hop as lived culture, many of Dakar's hip hop generation derive from hip hop an obligation to give back to their neighbourhoods and their fellow disadvantaged youth." (p.139) This focus on the own locality was perfectly voiced by Djilly Bagdad when we spoke about hip hop's future in Senegal: "This is your neighbourhood; this is your Senegal." (personal interview) Representing the neighbourhood forms a feasible first step for hip hoppers. This socially responsible side of hip hop – its abundant presence is often mentioned as a distinctive feature of hip hop *galsen* – results in a slowly growing respect for hip hop amongst elders in Senegal. (Appert: p.252) According to Amamdou Fall Ba of the hip hop cultural centre of Africulturban "it is not a conflict of generation; they just think hip hop is a joke. Because every time they see hip hop on television they see sex, alcohol and drugs. They pay attention to the hype. But people like us we know hip hop is a tool, a tool for social living, for leadership, good governance, social justice. A lot of things. Alternative education, from nothing to something, zero to hero, each one teach' one, empower the youth." (personal interview) Hip hop is not helped by the media on this point, says Fou Malade. He claims that media show hip hop as being something of the young "as to limit its legitimacy". (personal interview) Yet, even though it might be found a joke by some, hip hop has an undeniable presence, especially in Dakar. There are, if I may believe Amadou Fall Ba, over three thousand rap groups in Senegal, two thousand of them are in the *banlieus*. Also noteworthy are the various hip hop cultural centre's like the ones I have visited during my research, G-Hip hop in Guediawaye and Africulturban based in Pikine.

Hip hop as a tool

These centres offer courses, organise concerts and in general provide a place to go to and hang out for the neighbourhood's youth. Through hip hop they try to educate youth. "We are not here to control the ideas of the young, we just show them: this is what we think is good for you." (Amadou Fall Ba, personal interview) Throughout our interview it is clear in which direction he thinks they should be going, and does not mince words explaining it.

"People need to have the know-how. There is people in universities with Master-2, but they don't have know-how. We need people who can do engineering and logistics at our concerts, but we have no one who can do it. There are just artists, not people who can talk about the business, talk about strategy plan, how to take the money, how to support the artist, how to make the framework. We don't have this kind of person, we just have artists, but not people who are very… smart." (ibid.)

The need that he is talking about becomes evident once you have visited a couple of concerts in Dakar. I cannot recall one concert in which at a certain moment the sound was actually well-balanced and clear – and this includes concerts at the national theatre – something that was confirmed by my Senegalese musician friends. Additionally, I think I have never met so many people stating they were artists as I have in my time in Dakar. Of course this might partly be due to the nature of my research, but even outside of that, I have met so many people that defined themselves as artists first. It would only be after that, that they would acknowledge having other jobs or so. It is because of this that I see where the cultural centres come in. There is funding and there are activities. The people in charge hold a mirror in front of the, mostly, boys coming in. What do you want? Why do you want to do it? Yet, although I think this is a good thing, and the two centres that I have visited multiple times are doing good in offering possibilities for youth, there is something that pinches a little. These centres run on money that comes in from foreign donors, because although the government starts noticing the work these centres do – I will get to that a little later – the local funds offered are by far not sufficient to keep the centres running. This leaves them in a dependent situation.

"For me, I work with everybody. They say George Soros/OSIWA is bad, but if they can give me the money to do what I want, I'll do it. What we can do with the money is more important for me than where the money comes from. We need to fight this situation, but we need to be more realistic too. There are however, no other donors, so Africulturban is forced towards these donors. Because in Senegal, or even in other Muslim countries, there is no one to give it to them, but they do have critique." (Amadou Fall Ba, personal interview)

This can create interesting situations, like the one described by Abrahams, in which Africulturban worked together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on the sensitization against illegal migration. (p.3) At first it seems surprising for Africulturban to work on illegal migration, a term that so clearly leads to a hierarchy of mobility. Yet, Abrahams argues that the way Africulturban, and hip hop Galsen more generally, use the terminology of illegal migration not simply as a reproduction of the European securitization of migration. In fact, the local take on illegal migration voices a discontent with those leaving

Senegal, especially artists, to make money elsewhere whilst not being committed to or fight for their country of origin. (Ibid.: p.16) This thus seems to be a perfect example of what Amadou Fall Ba means when he says that he does not care where the money comes from, for it is about him being able to do what he wants. However, this money most come from somewhere, and in that sense he, and the other cultural centres are always dependent on whatever funds are out there at a certain time. This dependency forces them to be flexible, something that became clear on the evening before my research partner and I were to organise an *atelier* at G-Hip Hop.

The 'Atelier' at G-Hip Hop
It is eleven at night when my research partner gets a phone call from Fou Malade, asking if we were willing to pay the electricity bills for the centre. This struck me as remarkable, as we had, during the three meetings before, clearly stated that we were students who were not on a big budget of some organisation. Our stress levels increased, as we were fearing for the continuation of the *atelier.* To our surprise was that the telephone conversation ended in an air of normality. All was good, he would go on and try someone else, leaving my research partner and I perplexed and curious of what we would find the next day. (We later found out that calls like this are more common in Senegal, as people depend on each other when financially tight) As we went there, nothing was mentioned about the phone call the night before, and everything seem to go on as normal, indicating that probably someone else was found willing to pay the bills. It seems to underline the idea that they have to be flexible financially, and that its not the first time this is the case. Apart from an experience with their financial fragility, the workshop we organized at G-Hip hop also provides insights in the workings of this cultural centre. Something that will become clear by reviewing the events that took place before, during and after our workshop,
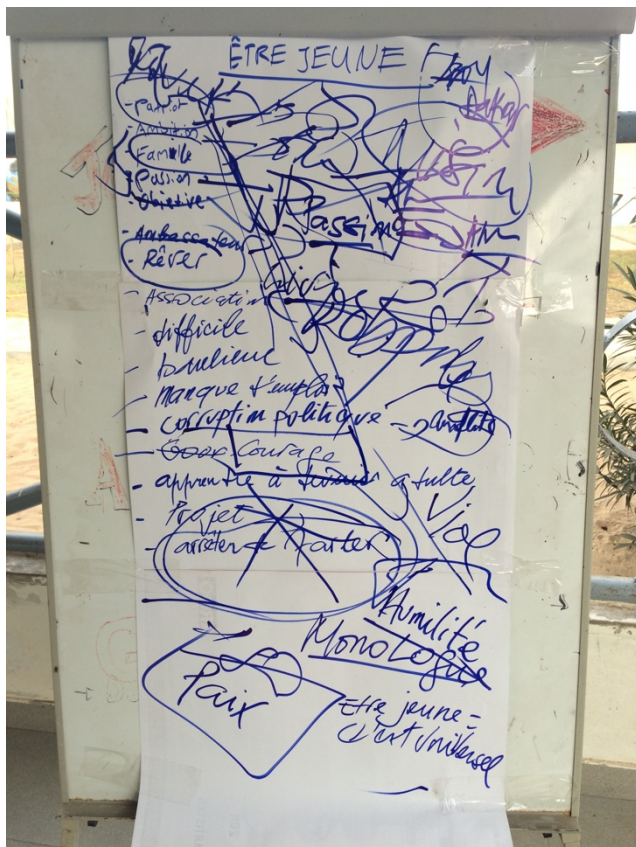
As part of our initial research plan, my partner and I tried to get in contact with the founders and main figures of the Y'en a marre movement. One of them is Mallal. Besides being the head of G-Hip Hop, he is also a well-known hip hop artist with a longstanding career. During our first interview with him, which took place over lunch at his house, we ended up talking about the position of youth in Dakar, our research and how maybe we could already 'do' something whilst there, in addition to just sending back the thesis once finished. It was not for long until the idea of organising a so-called *atelier* together came up. This *atelier* was to be about experiences of being young in Dakar and how these experiences are of value for researchers like us. The idea concretised quickly, and the used terminology

suggested that it was an already existing format that was applied here. We let this happen on purpose, as we were keen to know were this working together would take our research. The general plan was as follows: We were to come together, my research partner and I would give a small presentation on the politics of youth in the arena of international development, and explain those present, the Guediawaye youth, that their experiences were of interest to us, and to others. We would then sit down together and talk about everybody's experiences, after which we would try to bring them together in a rap, using all the available talent, from rappers to beat-makers. Through this *atelier* we hoped to create an understanding of why their personal experiences are of importance, not in the last place because of the huge amounts of money going around in projects regarding 'African youth' these days. We wanted them to voice their own experience, in their own way, as a way to counter this business that is run in their name. We hoped to inspire consciousness with regard to the value of their own experience, by having them tell their own stories, instead of someone else speaking on their behalf.

The next step was to inform the boys over at G-Hip Hop about the plan the three of us had made. This meant going to Guediawaye with Fou Malade for the second time. Just like the first time we took a taxi to get there, which we were told to pay (again) without consultation, making us wonder if we were put in a specific role. Once we arrived at the centre it became clear that we had now entered a known format. In the meeting, Fou Malade told the everyone present, that includes my research partner and I, what they were supposed to do. This ranged from arranging DJ equipment until the outlining of the expected artistic output. The artists present were to look up speeches from presidents, especially the Senegalese, about youth, and then comment on the statements made by these men in a rap. The *atelier* was now instantly politicized. At the end of the task assignments my research partner and I were addressed. Without giving us notice in advance, we were publicly told that we were to pay for the rent of plastic chairs, lunch, video recordings and the beats from the beat makers. It felt like a blow below the belt, as it was hard to say no in front of all these guys, and we had explicitly indicated before that were mere students on a tight budget. It made us question if we were really doing this *atelier* together, or that we were just an opportunity to make some money. I think the answer is somewhere in between. As we talked to the guys at G-Hip Hop some more after the meeting it became evident that there were regularly people coming in, doing *projets*. That on the day of the *atelier* one of the guys told us that he had made an attendance sheet and wondered if we had our own logo to put on there, was a clear example of how used they were in facilitating this kind of events. It was

also an example of how, willingly or unwillingly, misunderstood we were in our intentions and (financial) possibilities. We might have been a bit naïve when it comes to the collaboration part. Yet, although things were not how we imagined them, we now found ourselves given the opportunity to have an inside look of what happens when an organisation approaches G-Hip Hop, and how they handle it. Although this was different than initially imagined, it was definitely not less interesting. The *atelier* was to take place on Saturday, which was two days after the meeting mentioned above, from 10.00 until 17.00. That this was not a problem for any of the seven guys present also says something about them and the situation G-Hip Hop finds itself in. In combination with the 'electricity bill' call the next day, this situation is probably easiest described as a whole lot of guys, with a whole lot of time, and very little funds. That some international journalists that we spoke to teasingly wondered if we had already been requested a financial contribution by Fou Malade made clear that this situation was not a temporary thing.

On the day of the *atelier* my research partner and I decided to take the bus to Guediawaye. We had gotten used to taking public transport everywhere, and thought it to be a subtle statement that we were more than a financial source. Upon arrival we find that nothing is set: hardly any people, no chairs, no camera, nothing that indicated that there would be a workshop that day. Yet, as we went about, renting chairs, getting drinks from the *boutique* and further organising the place, action started happening. A flip over was brought, as were the speakers and turntables. With this activity, more people started dropping in and before we knew it, there over twenty people ready to take part in what ever was happening. We started of with an explanation of the day, before going into a short introduction round in which everybody shortly stated what it meant to them to be young in a *Dakaroise* suburb. These statements were then summarized into a keyword and added to the flip board. At the end of the circle was Fou Malade, and what followed was something probably best

described as a one-man show. The ideas and topics addressed by the youth present were used to create a heavily moral story about how each one of them is responsible for their own project, that they should enforce their passion, about how there will always be with opinions about you, but that you should not let anybody tell you something (sometimes including your family). You are to be the ambassador of your own project, and that is the position from which you start the dialogue. This message is brought in a passionate way. Fou Malade, not for nothing a well-known artist, is a great talker and easily gets the present youth into his story. The links and conclusions he draws align with his vision, that he explained to us in the previous interviews. Yet, it stings a bit that there is a whole group of young people, spending over one and a half hour, listening to the interpretation of what youth is and should do by the oldest guy present. After a lunch break we moved back into the circle for a discussion on when and where you feel young, orchestrated by Fou Malade. Different situations were addressed, such as being dependent on your parents for a long time, being told what to do, and not having a job. Sharing these experiences created a positive, engaged atmosphere. One by one people started to tell their memories, often recognized and confirmed by the others. It set everybody present, including ourselves, on equal footing. After everyone had their turn, the shared experiences were to be translated into a rap song. This was because the bars that were written beforehand and during the break were deemed not good enough by Fou, thus the shared experiences of being young were now chosen to form the basis of the rap that was to be made collectively. This resulted in a somewhat guided, yet beautiful and energetic text[7] and scene, with everybody jumping around screaming out the lyrics. After the *atelier* many of the present youth came to us, stating how they had liked the day and that it was a long time since they had done such a thing. We on the other hand felt as if it was mostly them who did it, and all they needed was a small spark to ignite the fire. The sharing of experiences created a special atmosphere, and afterwards, connections were easily made. These resulted in us going back to Guediawaye a couple of times to hang out, and make beats and songs with the Carre Connection, an upcoming hip hop crew, regulars at G-Hip Hop.

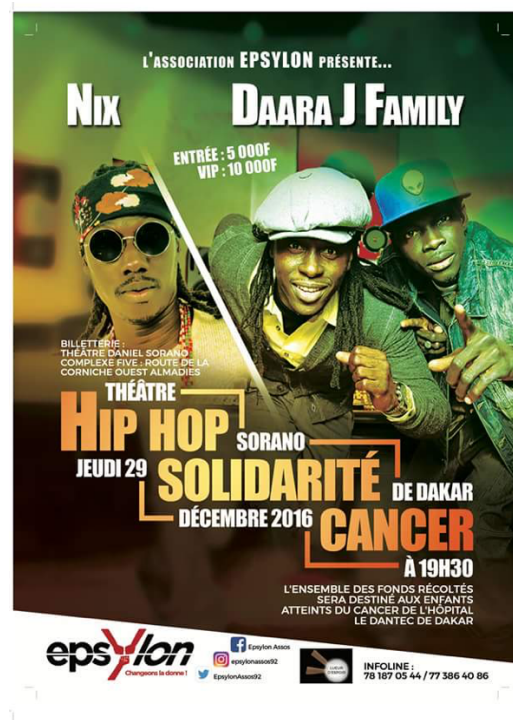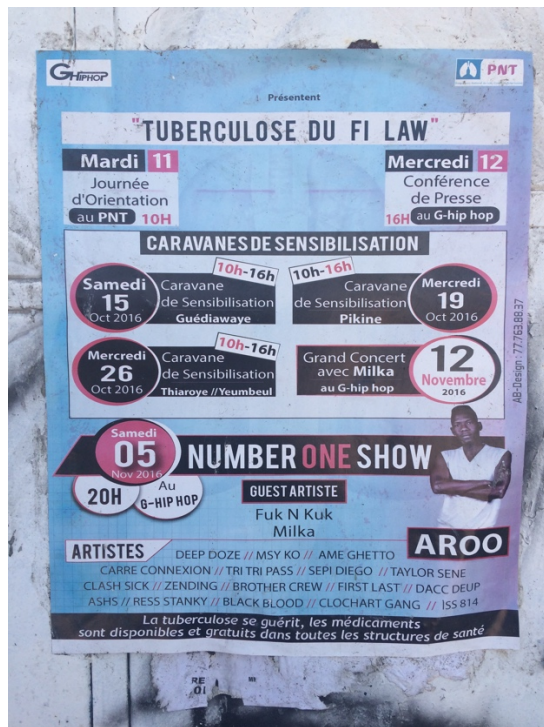*Institutionalization of Hip Hop Galsen*
What the example of our *atelier* shows is that a cultural centre like G-Hip Hop creates possibilities and pastime for the youth in the neighbourhood, but that this is through a certain lens. It might not always be like this, but in our case it was very clear that there was an

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[7] The translated text can be found in the appendix

underlying (political) ideology behind what was happening. I would like to stress that, in itself, this is not a bad thing. Yet, I can not help but noticing the irony in the message of standing up for yourself and not letting anyone tell you anything, whilst at the same much of what happens at the centre needs the approval of seniors. The situation G-Hip Hop finds itself in is a difficult one. There are a lot of youth, with a lot of time in Guediawaye. In terms of funding the centre depends mostly on the projects it can run or produce with development oriented organisations, something that, as the example of 'illegal immigration' and Africulturban already showed, is not uncommon in Dakar. Hip hop Galsen, through its social consciousness, but also lack of financial sources, is moved in interesting directions. The following images show some of these directions. Interesting to note is that the artists mentioned on the posters are amongst Senegal's biggest 'hard-core' hip hop artists.

The presence of these cultural centres has contributed to the increased institutionalization of hip hop in Dakar, and their work has not gone unnoticed. The city hall has followed their liking and created Maison de Culture Urbaine (MCU), which is run by 7 organisations, amongst them the earlier mentioned G-Hip Hop and Africulturban. The way this city hall project is viewed differs. Amadou Fall Ba of Africulturban sees MCU as the city hall way of trying to work with the hip hop centres. They do so by giving money and a building, for "they don't know hip hop". For Fou Malade, it is a confirmation that the government recognizes the importance, presence and power of hip hop, yet also claims that it is the governments way to try and control it. He is quick to note that hip hop is

"uncontrollable, as it is all about spontaneous action. There is no sovereignty in hip hop." (personal interview) This is part of a hip hop ideology, in which everybody can 'attack' everybody. It keeps hip hop moving, as "the next best thing is just around the corner". (ibid.) New music is constantly produced and shared, and the overwhelming presence of smartphones in Dakar makes for a huge potential target audience. The music is uploaded on Youtube and Facebook, making it easily accessible for this audience. When talking to Djilly Bagdad he mentioned a more old-school distribution network, that is according to him getting more and more into place. There are a lot of people organizing themselves in so-called hip hop associations. This is something we noticed at G-Hip Hop as well; most of the boys were in a group and these groups, like Carre Connection, also tend to run an association with a social function, focused on the neighbourhood, in line with their rap group. These associations potentially strengthen the ties the group has with the neighbourhood, thereby getting the sought after credibility in return. These networks serve as an alternative distribution network. "Like some hip hop association in every neighbourhood, like if I have an album, I know somebody to call in Pikine, to give them the album. People will go there and buy it. Now that network is getting build slowly." (Djilly Bagdad, personal interview)

Hip hop artists seek credibility, which is to be given by others. In Dakar, this has resulted in a strong focus on the neighbourhood, as they are the once to provide the hip hop artists with the desired credibility. This focus is translated in various ways, like speaking out on behalf of the people, starting associations for the benefit of the people or opening cultural centres. This shows a very pragmatic, social side of hip hop, one characteristic of hip hop Galsen. Hip hop is used as a tool for education, for improving social living, for creating leadership and many other things. That this is a welcome effort is evidenced by the great shortage of people with practical know-how. Although hip hop Galsen's efforts are starting to get more and more recognized and respected (even by the Senegalese government), there is still a structural lack of financial resources. In their socially conscious efforts, many hip hop artists have found a partner in development oriented organisations, with relatively big budgets and present in large numbers in West-African hub that is Dakar. This makes for sometimes interesting combinations, in which hip hop is linked with combating various diseases, but also topics like 'illegal immigration'. It does suggest that the availability of various kinds of funds is of influence on the kind of projects that are taking place. This is for now however, taken for granted, as there are simply no other parties willing to fund the social conscious efforts of hip hop Galsen. This sets hip hop Galsen apart from *mbalax*, that is much closer to the *griot* practice, where artist sing the praises of the wealthy and getting financial

rewards in return. Hip hop Galsen is about daily reality. It interprets that reality, frames it. By doing so hip hop Galsen 'makes' places that attracts predominantly young Senegalese, because they can associate and relate to these places. It creates a world to which they feel they belong, a logic they can follow. This logic is then translated into action, for instance by the earlier mentioned cultural centres. They form their curriculum through hip hop, making hip hop a tool for social living.

Case: Y'en a Marre

In the introduction I have tried to introduce YEM as it is commonly seen; a group of Senegalese, pro-democracy hip hop artists, whose actions have helped getting, the then president, Abdoulaye Wade out of power. This has garnered significant (international) attention for the movement, making its leaders known civil society actors in Senegal and sought after speakers on conferences all around the world. Then, in order to get a better understanding of this phenomenon, I gave an overview of Senegal's postcolonial socio-political history, analysed some of the terms the movement is commonly associated with, such as 'hip hop' and 'youth', after which I looked more closely at the hip hop culture in Senegal. By applying this approach, I hope to have provided you as a reader with the information that will allow you to judge this phenomenon in your own way, through your own lens. For it is my goal in this thesis; not to draw indefinite conclusions or give answers, but really to raise questions. It is why I chose to present you the case only after I provided this background, as the questions that will follow have a specific direction to them. Now that this is clear, let us have an in-depth look of what YEM has done since their first appearance in 2011.

The starting of a movement
The story of YEM starts on January 16, 2011, when a group of friends sat together during a massive black out, waiting for electricity to come back on. This was the umpteenth time this happened, and the frustration grew to a level where the group said 'enough is enough' (*Y'en a Marre*), and decided they had to do something against it. Although YEM is often referenced with regard to their efforts for getting President Wade out of office, it was in these early stages of the movement already clear to them that the problems faced by many Senegalese did not solely stem from Wade's presidency. This was why they launched the concept of the New Type of Senegalese (NTS) on March 19, 2011, through a manifesto. In an interview with Sarah Nelson, Aliou Sané, one of the main YEM members, says about the manifest that "[i]t lays out the basic principles of a citizens' republic for the advent of a New Type of Senegalese. […] It means that the manifesto addressed not only the state and the role it should play, but it called on the citizen to take a hard look at himself and to say, "I'm fed up with myself" ("*Y'en a marre de moi*"). Fed up with the citizen who sees the problems in the community around him but stands idly by, who does nothing to change things, who takes no action to try to move forward and goad the state to act, who doesn't demand that the state

fulfill its side of the contract." (Sané in Nelson: p.14) Yet, although President Wade was thus seen as only a part of the problem, YEM as a movement only really became visible for the larger public through their protests against him.

A big moment was the huge protest in front of the National Assembly on June 23, 2011. In the run-up to these events, President Wade had proposed amendments to the constitution, like wanting to lower the percentage a presidential candidate would need for a victory in the first round of voting. (Lambert: p.46) The police had responded forcefully to a protest a day earlier, June 22, thereby unknowingly strengthening the momentum of the protesters the day after. The protests on the 23rd turned violent, as crowds chanted "touche pas à ma constitution", threw rocks and burned tires, and the riot police retaliated with tear gas and water cannons. (Gueye: p.26) Amongst those arrested during the day were Thiat, Fou Malade and Simon of YEM and Alioune Tine, President of the human rights organization RADDHO, Senegal's African Assembly for Human Rights, who was one of the instigators of the oppositional movement M23. M23 is a collaboration between political leaders, civil society, artists, independent personalities, religious leaders and other civilians, and was born on June 23, 2011. The protests were a success in the sense that M23, together with YEM were able to build up enough political pressure for the Presidents' propositions to be withdrawn. This however, meant by no means that the battle was won, as Wade was still trying to contest for another term in office. To put it in the words of Marame Gueye, the demonstrations on June 23, 2011 "constitute for *Y'en a Marre* the beginning of a war against Wade and his government." (p.27) Over the coming months YEM's activism would show itself in various forms, some of them I will highlight below.

Y'en a Marre's activism

In order to spread their message, YEM organized 'caravans', touring the local branches, or *esprits*, of the movement. During these caravans they "worked with the local esprit members to hold a community-wide meeting in a public square. YEM would then make presentations on the vision of YEM, answer questions, and lead brainstorming sessions with local community members about local problems." (Fredericks: p.142) However, there were also moments that called for a different approach and when YEM had to rely on what they do best: hip hop. Each campaign that they launched had an accompanying rap, videos were shared on the internet and 'urban guerrilla poetry' was used to target public spaces. This urban guerrilla poetry is the use of urban guerrilla warfare tactics to recite short poems to often unprepared audiences. (ibid.) This was necessary as speaking out against President

Wade could have serious consequences for artists at that time, as the campaign's supporters were targeted by the government and at times allegedly beaten and imprisoned. (Lambert: p.48) YEM dodged this censorship by producing lyrics and them distributing them to other (artist)members, who would then perform the songs in public areas, hopping on buses singing, rapping and distributing flyers. (ibid.) This use of cultural forms, according to Devin Bryson, makes their music "more than just an angry soundtrack to a revolution but instead, a direct tool of public, collective action". (p.46)

In the wake of the June 23 protests YEM brought out the *Faux! Pas Forcé!*, which was written by its members Simon and Kilifeu. (Gueye: p.28) Its title is consciously polysemic; when spoken, the words may translate not only into 'False! Not Forced!', but also in 'Must Not Force' or 'False Step Forced'. (Lambert: p.46) This song, which is apart from its title completely in Wolof, serves as a fierce public discussion with President Wade. He is confronted with his appropriation of Senegal's resources (Gueye: p.30), he is told that bringing out the army will not help, as youth are determined to fight until the end (ibid. p.32), and he is blamed for putting Senegal's Muslim brotherhoods up against each other. (ibid.: p.33) This is all done whilst addressing him by his first name, something that, for a person younger than the addressee, is considered disrespectful in Senegal. (ibid.: p.29) Yet, despite this warning and the heavy language it was conveyed by, President Wade did not step down. In fact, on 27 January, 2012, the Constitutional Court ruled in favour of Wade contesting another term in office, meaning he got only closer to his goal of maintaining in power for a third term. This meant that the only way to get rid of him now, was to eliminate him by vote, which was the strategy that YEM took on with the song *Daas Fanaanal* and accompanying campaign. *Daas Fanaanal* was a grassroots voter-registration campaign, and is in my opinion one of the most noteworthy of all YEM campaigns. It is said to have added 300,000 new voters to the rolls. (Lambert: p.48) This is a huge amount, not only considering the clientelistic nature of Senegalese politics as explained earlier in this thesis, but also due to the historically difficult process of acquiring voter cards. (Gueye: p.36) *Daas Fanaanal* focuses on the importance of voting, and urges people to go register, and goes against "the pre-established rhetoric which framed the voter card as a privilege that government officials granted some citizens." (ibid.) The song *Daas Fanaanal*, like *Faux! Pas Forcé!* has a strong message and carries specific references to Senegalese culture. Its title translates to an action; the sharpening of a knife, to prepare it for a slaughter (for instance during the Muslim sacrifice feast, called *Tabaski* in Senegal). Metaphorically it depicts one's early preparedness for a conflict or challenge. (ibid.: p.34) The accompanying registration campaign had themes

that built on this metaphor, such as *Ma carte mon arme* (my card my weapon). *Daas Fanaanal* turned out to be a success, as during the first round of the elections, President Wade did not receive the necessary percentage of votes (despite his earlier proposals this was still 50%) to be elected president directly. Instead, it now took a second round, a run-off between the number one and number two in terms of amount of votes received, President Wade and Macky Sall respectively, to decide who was to be Senegal's next president. This placed YEM in a somewhat complicated position. Their fierce opposition to Wade was by some Senegalese viewed as an implicit endorsement of Sall. (Lambert: p.47) This subject came up multiple times in my conversations with Thiat, and his response was always clear. He did and does not think that change is going to come from inside 'the system', whilst at the same time admitting that this is a point of discussion within YEM. All of the YEM-members I have spoken with nevertheless agree that the biggest change is to come from the Senegalese people and their mentality towards the nation and one another, hence YEM's focus on NTS and "trying to energize Senegalese to assume responsibility for politics in their country." (ibid.) The song *Doggali*, issued only a few days before the electoral second round of March 25, 2012, was a confirmation that YEM was focussing on 'finishing' President Wade. *Doggali*, which translates to 'finishing up a killing' (Gueye: p.37), was YEM's way of tackling potential voter fatigue and serves as a strong reminder to go and vote. It describes the questionable conditions that Senegal found itself in after President Wade's two earlier terms, urges Wade to make way for a new generation, and expresses that "[a] triumph over Wade signifies that power would be returned to the people who themselves are re-invented because they understand their right and recognize their duty." (Gueye: p.39) In doing so, *Dogalli* goes beyond a simple support for Macky Sall, or denunciation of Wade, and taps into what YEM claims to be ultimately aiming for: a New Type of Senegalese.

The post-Wade era

The attempt to oust President Wade ultimately was successful. In the lead up to the run off, Macky Sall had convinced all the eliminated candidates, amongst them the disqualified candidate and Senegalese superstar Youssou N'dour, to support him. Combined with the efforts of YEM, civil society groups and citizen action, this gained him 65,8% of the votes, thereby making the second political power transition in post-colonial Senegal a fact. The role YEM had played did not go unnoticed by the now President Sall, who received the prominent members of the movement when they came to congratulate him with his victory. He asked YEM to join his administration, an offer that YEM declined. They felt they had a different

role to play. A role that Aliou Sané dubbed as being a "sentinel of democracy", in an interview with Sarah Nelson. (p.16) This sentinel position is seen as integral to a thriving democracy in Senegal, and is built on "a strong public opinion, supported by civil society and social movements." (ibid.) This is however, easier said then done. During their 'war' against President Wade, their case was clear. Being against something or someone is very straightforward, its either yes or no, and everything you do can be directed towards the same goal. Contributing to the building a new type of society is far more complex than that. Thiat nevertheless spoke full of confidence when asked about this subject, whilst also acknowledging that a new approach might be necessary.

"We are still willing to go on the streets, but organising protests is for a puncture problem, like, this is the problem, we go to the street right now and fix the problem right now. But building a new type of society is not about going to the street right now and fix right now. Its about building mentalities of people. Changing the way of thinking of people, the way of… the behaviour of people. So that need time and needed new approach." (Thiat, personal interview)

This does however, not mean a change of the YEM identity.

"Of course we are gonna use the same vehicle, like hip hop, like urban guerrilla poetry, meeting, talking to people, lectures, going to universities and schools and whatever. We are going to use the same instruments to mobilize and let people know, make people being aware and stuff like that. The only different thing is in 2011 we were faced to somebody who was planning to change the constitution and a lot of laws and whatever, and we needed by that time to change it right now. But now, if we still focus on the president, we're gonna fail. We gotta focus on the system." (Thiat, personal interview)

YEM members like to point out the fact that this bigger picture of changing society has always been their main goal, even when campaigning against Wade. After Wade's defeat they have tried to emphasize this positive, constructive character, adjusting the public image of conflict and protest that grew large during the anti-Wade campaign. As the above quotes by Thiat indicate, this does not mean that they were going to leave everything they had built behind, but instead going forward on what they had already established. For instance, with regard to the *esprits*, the local branches of the movement: "Though the immediate impetus for forming the *esprits* was to mobilize youth voter registration, the broader vision was to catalyse active citizenship practices." (Fredericks p.142) I think it is worth giving the *esprit* concept a closer look, as it is exemplary for the movements ideology, identity, potentiality, and organisational structure.

The *esprits* concept has an ambiguous character within the YEM movement. It is an expression of the willingness to do something, to say 'I want something different for Senegal', and in that sense *esprit* is the spirit that drives the desire for change, characteristic for YEM. Yet, YEM also calls its local branches *esprits*, who stand in contact with the core group. To put it in the words of Djilly Bagdad: "We have a core, me and a few other friends. But now the core is even larger. The YEM representation in any neighbourhood has their own vocabulary, *esprits*. There they discuss the problems of their own community, that's how it works. So those head of spirits might come every Tuesday, with us the core, just to discuss... like, anybody brings up a problem in their neighbourhood...". The *esprits* can be tied to the neighbourhood but the concept is not exclusively connected to it. The Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar for instance, also has its own *esprit*. *Esprits* can thus also be seen as focus or action groups with a specific goal, sometimes but not necessarily connected to a geographical location. The 'Tuesday's' that Djilly is revering to in the earlier quote, stand for the weekly YEM meetings that are held at the old apartment of Fadel Barro in Parcelles Assainies, Dakar. It is in this apartment that the movement was started. The apartment itself has turned into somewhat of a museum, with photographs, newspaper clippings and manifestos to the wall, illustrating the movement's history. In the main room stands a big table, especially considering the modest size of the room, above which the pictures of the 'founding members' hang. Every Tuesday evening there is an 'open' meeting during which anybody can come in and discuss things with YEM, while these Tuesday meetings thus also serve as a weekly possibility for heads of *esprit* to talk to the core group. This core consists of YEM's founders, Fadel Barro, Aliou Sané, Thiat, Kilifeu, Denise Sow and Fou Malade, and some members that were added later on. I never really got clear exactly who they all are, but I think that is exemplary for the movement, as this quote by Aliou Sané indicates:

"You can see it even in the structure of the organization: there is no single person who is *Y'en a Marre*. We have an inner core group, which we've now broadened to include some coordinators from various *esprits*; we have a structure we call the General Assembly, where all of the important decisions are made; but around that inner core, we have sprouted *Y'en a Marre esprits* everywhere, and the idea with those *esprits* is to create leaders everywhere. So *Y'en a Marre* has lots of leaders. If I, Aliou Sané, mess up as a leader, the movement goes on; if Fadel messes up, the movement goes on; if Thiat messes up, the movement goes on; if Malal messes up, the movement goes on." (Aliou Sané in Nelson: p.21)

Although I very much like Sané's ideas about leadership within YEM, we must not forget that one of the main reasons why YEM has gotten the attention it had, was because of the fact

that some of its most prominent members are amongst the most well-known hip hop artists in Senegal. Considering Senegal, a country where hip hop is huge, especially amidst youth, who form the largest group in Senegal's demography, having this star ensemble ensured having an extensive outreach, especially in urban areas, right from the start of the movement. Their fame and credibility as rappers was in fact the main reason why they were asked to join YEM, and why they continue to rap next to their activities with the movement, as the following statement by Djilly explains.

"In our music, we talk about everything, very free. We have club songs, for parties and have fun. We have songs that talk about social issues, we have songs also that are really politically engaged, sometime pan-africanist even. Sometimes I talk about myself, like ego-tripping hip hop. When YEM started, when they had the idea, they called my like, who has, first of all the street credibility and also engaged and they call us and then explain about YEM, like we wanna do this and that. And we all had the same idea but nobody said anything. Once somebody said it, we like of course we have to, and then YEM is like, individually I have my own career, I have my own stuff I'm doing, but when YEM needs me, I put my stuff on stand-by and come. Its like a player, somebody play for Ajax, if Holland needs you, you leave Ajax, its like the national team. When YEM needs us, its like a national team. And after that, we can also go by our own teams and do our own stuff however we feel it." (Djilly Bagdad, personal interview)

Without their fame, which was further enhanced through their actions during protests and the repercussions by the state that followed, something that according to Rosalind Fredericks resulted in a cult of personality surrounding YEM (Fredericks: p.142), YEM could not have done what it did and would not be what it is today. The fact that they were at the front of the demonstrations, clearly visible and recognizable in their black t-shirts with big white letters that read 'Y'en a Marre' was a significant change with regard to the earlier hip hop artist involvement, for instance during the 2000 presidential elections. In the words of Fou Malade: "Hiphop has changed since YAM, before you could just say something, now if say something you have to stand for it. Be with the people on the street, show support." (Fou Malade, personal interview) They bring considerable weight to the table and are the face of the movement. Even though the movement itself might not even want it to be like this, their status as individuals, with a certain prestige, who can speak on behalf of YEM, makes them the people the media seek out for a quote or a statement. This became all too clear when I was visiting a protest against the FCFA, the West African currency that is guaranteed by the French treasury, on Place de L'Obélisque in Dakar. There were about 200 people, and at least 15 journalists, with or without (semi-professional) cameras, documenting the event. As soon as Thiat arrived, nearly all of them surrounded him. After answering all their questions, Thiat

spoke publicly, thereby reinstating the focus on the protest, leaving me wondering about what I had just seen. It reminded me of something Mohammed 'Chismo' Sissoko said in one of my talks with him. Chismo, being the head of the YEM *esprit* at Cheikh Anta Diop University and core member of the movement, told me that the problem he sees in leadership in Senegal, is that, most of the time, the first one to say something is automatically seen as a leader by the rest. Yet, he said, leadership is more than solely nice thoughts, "leadership is creating action", despite the fact that perhaps not all possible consequences have been thought over. YEM has definitely been creating action, and has challenged many others towards action. In line with Chismo's words, this would qualify them as leaders. But what does that even mean? In what one of my talks with Thiat he told me the following:

> "Every generation have a mission, and once you find out that you have the choice to do it or to do not. So we just choose to do it. To assume our responsibility and say hey, this is what we should do. And then after somebody else will keep doing it. Maybe in 2 years, 1 year, 6 months, some new fresh brain or new fresh face will come out. And we have to go away and let them take the lead. That's how we should be. We can't be here forever. That my philosophy of being democracy in my mind. And also believe in changes and believe that I don't have the control of the right. I don't have the control of you know, everything." (Thiat, personal interview)

This, in my opinion, indicates some part of the hip hop identity of YEM. As shown earlier, within hip hop there is always the possibility of the next style or artist 'taking over'. Everybody can 'attack' everybody, with those on top having earned their way to the top, but also conscious of the fact that their 'reign' may not last forever, there is always a new generation. Additionally, the grassroots focus of YEM, with the *esprits* being a local entity where people living within that locality can voice their discontent, shows similarities with hip hop artists as mouthpiece for their respective communities, as is prevalent in Senegalese hip hop culture. It also sheds some light on Sané's words earlier on, because if YEM succeeds in challenging others to take action, specific leaders, or NTS in YEM vocabulary, might not be needed, since everybody is one. This is however, easier said then done, something that becomes clear when the initial momentum of ousting President Wade out of power is past its peak.

Fostering a 'Nouveau Type de Senegalaise'
There were a lot of eyes on YEM, as they had been so visibly present during the campaign against Wade. Yet, as expressed by Thiat in one of the quotes above, their ultimate goal of changing the Senegalese society is more complex than changing its presidency. One of the

ways the movement tried to show that is has bigger plans than simply being against Wade, was by developing *Dox ak sa gox* (walk with your community), which is YEM's democracy and good governance watch, that was funded by Oxfam and OSIWA. In this project they train their *esprit* members, so that they learn how to read budgets and monitor local governance, enabling them to track what is happening at local and regional levels. This information is then to be transferred onto *le Site du monitoring*, a monitoring website, making it publicly available to all Senegalese. In this way they try to develop a better insight amongst the general population into the workings of local and regional politics, allowing them to control whether the politicians in charge are doing the work they should be doing. As a way to promote *Dox ak sa gox*, members of YEM, including many of the core members, toured the cities where the projects offices were to be installed, in doing so creating extra attention for the installation of these offices, whilst also organizing 'citizens' juries'. These juries are gatherings aimed at manifesting meetings between elected representatives and the people living in their respective localities. In a dialogue form, these juries create the opportunity for people to express themselves towards their elected representatives, and question them with regard to the political solutions they might have for the problems brought up by the citizens. In a typical YEM fashion, the project was supported by a hip hop track and accompanying video clip, which set forth the main goals of *Dox ak sa gox*. Another emblematic YEM aspect of the campaign were the black t-shirts with big letters reading the name of the project, in style reminiscing the shirts worn during the anti-Wade campaign. Yet, where the progress of that campaign was always clearly visible, the output of *Dox ak sa gox* has seen less visualization. Although there have been trainings all over the country, and there is footage online like the earlier mentioned rap video clip, a ten-minute documentary of the movements' travels across Senegal for the promotion of the project and the organization of the juries, and even a couple of short clips that were broadcasted on TFM, a television channel that belongs to Youssou N'dour's media imperium, *le Site du monitoring*, seemingly the most prominent part for making the project and its outcomes visible, is still lacking.

In this aspect the project *Sunu Gox* (Our Locality) does a lot better. *Sunu Gox*, launched in 2016, is a combined effort between the French NGO GRET and YEM, and is financed by the European Union. It is based in the suburbs of Dakar. At the time I was there, they were still planning the whole thing, but Djilly described it as followed: "Also, we have another project [Sunu Gox] that we work with the EU, for Dakar and its suburbs, like how we can use the music to sensitize people to keep the environment clean." (Djilly Bagdad, personal interview) On the GRET website it reads: "It [Sunu Gox] aims to promote urban

solidarity and citizenship by strengthening citizen movements and grassroots organizations in their capacity to act for the environment and the improvement of basic services in the suburbs of Dakar."[8] This is deemed important in the ever-growing Dakar agglomeration, where inhabitants of the suburbs face challenges of the rapid urbanization, such as environmental risks, a liveable environment and a lack of access to these basic services. *Sunu Gox* supports grassroots organizations in improving their living environment. It can be seen as a way for YEM to strengthen its capacities with regards to management of the movement, its connections with grassroots organizations and garner more credibility amongst all parties involved, whilst having the backing of GRET, a professional NGO that caries the ultimate responsibility and provides technical support and professionalization of the movement. Conform with the YEM 'style', the project has a rap song and accompanying video clip carrying the projects name. In the video YEM artists are seen wearing t-shirts in the recognizable YEM style, although they are now white instead of black. The first step of the project, which was mapping out the neighbourhoods and identifying and documenting the present environmental issues within the open source platform of Open Street Map, has been made at the time of writing this thesis.

Another project that YEM has run after the presidential elections of 2012 is *Citizen Mic/Citoyenneté Hip Hop* in 2017, in partnership with the Ford Foundation. The aim of this program was to encourage young rappers to produce text on the issues of citizenship, governance and democracy. Out of the initial applications, the thirty best were chosen. These then received three days of training on the tools of local governance, after which they were to produce and perform a song in the (semi-) finals, which gave them a shot at the first prize: 1.000.000 FCFA and a home studio.

As has become apparent by now, all the above described projects have been financed by international NGOs. Being a movement that is so outspoken about their national character, their focus on enabling people to help themselves, I was curious how the movement's members look at this somewhat paradoxical relationship with international NGOs. This curiosity was further stimulated when I started to actively follow YEM activities on social media. Under almost any post or mentioning of the movement, there is comments on how YEM are pawns of 'the West', and supposedly have hidden agendas. Quite often these comments specifically reference to George Soros as the man who pulling the strings. Soros

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[8] http://www.gret.org/projet/projet-de-renforcement-de-citoyennete-de-solidarite-environnement-sain-banlieues-de-dakar/

grew famous as a successful investor, and is the founder of the Open Society Foundations, of which OSIWA is the West-African component, and one of YEM's funders for *Dox ak sa gox*. It seemed to me as if working with international NGOs results, at least to some Senegalese, in a sceptical response, to some extent similar of how working in politics is viewed upon in Senegal. It is as if when you are working with NGOs it is automatically assumed there is some sort of double, or hidden agenda, which then affects your credibility as a person or a group. YEM is clearly conscious of this and when asked about the *Dox ak sa gox* project specifically, Djilly Bagdad answered simply with "I've never even seen the money" (Djilly Bagdad, personal interview), pointing the construction that was set up with a local partner of Oxfam and OSIWA, LEAD Afrique Francophone, who were in charge of the financial management for the project. When I asked him about working with the European Union on the *Sunu Gox* project, he gave a little insight into why he thinks YEM is working with them.

"A lot of people has problem with YEM, like, when we first started there was no NGO, there was nothing. I pull out 5000, another friend pull out 20000, we get a sept-place saying we're going to St. Louis, where we'd sleep in one of our friends house. They move the furniture in the living room, we lay there we get up. We go door to door, and then we'd be tired and go back. But when the NGO come and give you money and say oh, you wanna go to Casamance that can be over 20 hours on the road. If they give us a 4-wheel drive, we'll take it and go, because we will be more efficient. If we go door-to-door campaign, when we have a big truck and ride all over the city to announce that we have a big meeting at five o'clock, you will be more efficient than going door to door. If they give us the means to do that, we'll take it. But if we had the African Union do that, we would say EU 'go help Indian people', but they don't." (Djilly Bagdad, personal interview)

In the beginning of the movement, there thus was not a whole lot of money to go around, with individual members putting in small amounts, and a dependency on the kindness or support of friends and family in order to make it work. This recalls the financial situation of the hip hop scene, as it was drawn earlier in this thesis. Similar to what I found in that scene, the financial possibilities are limited, and so are the options for securing funds. In order for these movements and organisations to do what they want to do, they cannot be to critical about the origins of the funds and the morality behind that. They are securing funds from these donors due the lack of other donors, "we were accepting a deal with EU because there was no one else" (ibid.), and the fact that it makes the work of the movement more efficient. Yet, considering the poor reputation international NGOs have amongst some, I can understand why it is frowned upon when a movement, that is so outspokenly Senegalese and that claims to be helping the Senegalese help themselves, starts working with some of these NGOs. It shows the difficult situation YEM found itself in; big goals, small budgets, and a

highly political landscape to manoeuver through. Conscious of the critiques and the assumed influence of NGOs on the movement, Djilly states the following:

> Usually NGO have their own way, or their own strategy and they call like, people will apply if they fit the description then they give it. But for YEM is different, we have our own project, even when there is no NGO. If OSIWA think, oh this is a good thing as far as the local governance, then 'oh you wanna go to […] we give you 2 4x4s. Oh, you used to stay at your friend's house? Go and have a motel to stay. We give you money to eat. We take it and do it. But never an NGO would influence YEM, like we are giving YEM money so you guys have to do what, dictate what we have to, never. Everything we do we have our YEM rhythm, everything we do, we do it the YEM way. We have our brain to think, so this is our, this is the strategy we opting, this is how YEM thinking. If they want, they can finance that, we do it the YEM way. If not, forget it. (Djilly Bagdad, personal interview)

Collaborating with Y'en a Marre

Now, it is clear why YEM works with NGOs; they are movement with big ideas that need big money. Yet, I was also curious as to why the NGOs want to work with YEM, and where the criticism on this collaboration might come from. In order to gain more insights, I visited and had interviews at the NGOs that were among the first to start working with YEM: Oxfam, Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) and Enda LEAD Afrique Francophone (from now on LEAD). In the following are the results of those visits, that will provide you as a reader with a better understanding of why it is YEM that became so popular amongst NGOs.

Oxfam is an international NGO that aims to eradicate poverty in the world by "mobilizing the power of people" against it.[9] The organization is for a large part of its fundraising dependent on donations and the revenues of its shops. OSIWA is part of the global network of Open Society Foundations, which is an international grant making network founded by investor and former hedge fund manager George Soros. Oxfam and OSIWA have substantively worked together with the YEM in terms of funding, and setting up a system in which a shared local partner of both – LEAD – would deal with the bureaucratic aspects of handling this money. LEAD is based in Dakar and aims, by inspiring leadership and through capacity building, especially among youth, to contribute to a more sustainable world.

Upon arrival it became clear that we were dealing with different kinds of organisations. OSIWA has a fancy, modern building – one that definitely stands out in Dakar – in Mermoz, a relatively posh area where quite some embassies can be found. When

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[9] https://www.oxfam.org/en/about

entering, we had to hand in our passports in order to get a visitors' pass, then were kindly asked to sit down and wait at the reception, after which we were picked up taken to a big conference room to conduct the interview. Oxfam's regional office is also located in Mermoz. It is a relatively common three-story building that is painted green and white, the colours of Oxfam. In front of it is a yard, encircled by a block fence, in which multiple SUV's are parked. Both the fence and the cars – and even their number plates – were in Oxfam colours. Inside a routine similar to that of OSIWA was followed. We had to hand in our passports for a visitors pass, were asked to remain seated at the reception, before we were taken into a big conference room – with more big black leather office chairs than the room seemed to allow for – where we conducted the interview. The experience at the LEAD office, which is based right in the middle of Plateau, Dakar's old city centre, was quite different. With its five stories, the building is big. Apart from being the LEAD office, it is also the head office of ENDA, the umbrella organisation of which LEAD is part. Upon arrival we make ourselves known at the guard, who easily waves us through and tells us to just walk upstairs, 'it's on the first floor, the first right'. Here we are greeted by the director, who directly welcomes us into his office for the interview.

I am well aware of the fact that these impressions are of a contingent nature, but the difference in style and appearance still struck me. I understand that having to hand in my passport for a visitors' pass is part of security regulations, and that it also may have to do with the size of the organisation and/or its organisational structure. Yet, it also forms barriers. This starts from stylized outside of the building, to the physical fence/closed door, and continues on this inside, where we were only had access to the reception area and the conference room. The experience at LEAD, with the open door directly on street level, the easy-going security procedure and the way we were received in the director's office, came across as more accessible. Of course this might also be due to the strategy of the organisations. I can imagine that organisations like OSIWA or Oxfam do not want people walking in all the time, as this is not their strategy of engagement. Then again, the same probably goes for LEAD, who nevertheless have a very different appearance. An appearance that leaves me with an impression of transparency, openness and approachability.

Despite the difference in style, however, the ideology of the three interviewees was not too far apart. Unsurprisingly all three described the hardship of being young in Dakar, be it as "marginalised group" (Fall, Personal interview, 14 Nov. 2016), stressing joblessness (Gueye, Personal interview, 25 Nov. 2016), or describing them as vulnerable people (Kane, Personal interview, DATE). The social category of youth is not so much focused on age, but

also on economic issues and social aspects like whether or not you are married, have a job, a house and/or can support a family (Kane, Personal interview, 6 Dec. 2016). This group of Senegalese do, according to mister Gueye, hardly get involved with developing the country (Gueye, Personal interview, 25 Nov. 2016). At the same time, they are politically severely underrepresented. Their dependent situation leaves youth vulnerable for forms of exploitation. Mister Fall stated in our interview with him that youth can be found at the forefront of demonstrations, but often because they are being used by the elite. He also mentioned youth being exposed to extremism. (ibid.) Its easy to see how these men look at youth and see the potential for change. However, this does not mean that they see change and the role youth is to play in it in the same way.

OSIWA sees itself as advocating an open society and has an open call for projects, which can be found on their website. Yet, they also proactively engage with those "taking the lead" (ibid.). This means so much as that they identify local organisations that OSIWA sees as possible "actors of change" (ibid.), and they help them to submit project that OSIWA pushes for. These actors of change can be people working with youth, or as mister Fall said: "The best way to work with them [youth] is to work with those people who can get connection to them." (ibid.) In our interview with mister Kane at Oxfam we got an insight into how these actors of change come to place. "The first thing to consider is the emergency of peoples needs." (Kane, personal interview, 6 Dec. 2016) A leader comes up with a response to the difficult situation the people find themselves in. S/he gives a solution to this, presents an alternative. That is, in the words of mister Kane, "the first source of credibility" (ibid.), and credibility is in his eyes fundamental for leadership. The second source is about the leaders' past, their experience. It is seen as credible when you did not have connections to power, or politics in the past. Credibility can nowadays not come from political action, "because of the mind-set of the Senegalese people" (ibid.), which is that all politicians are the same. As mister Kane said "in Senegal we do not vote to elect someone, we are voting so sanction on peoples who are very bad". (ibid.) This is the result from a widespread belief that once someone with a political background comes to power, s/he will just do the same those before him or her, which often comes down to nepotism and corruption. This is, according to mister Kane, an explanation for why youth leaders come up. They were not affiliated to political parties and they raise new voices. Mister Gueye sees leadership as more than credibility; it is a "state of mind". (Gueye, personal interview, 25 Nov. 2016) Especially when it comes to youth, leadership can help open their minds that "maybe you can do something else than drinking tea on the corner". (ibid.) They want to create consciousness

amongst youth, and others, of their position and the possibilities they have and show them that it is sometimes necessary to "act and think outside the box". (ibid.) It is about inspiration, about giving an example so that people want to follow. This is what LEAD tries to do as well, by instigating action they want to lead by example, whilst still aiming for sustainable impact. It is important for youth to identify with someone, says Mister Gueye, to have a role model that has "a positive attitude" and who is "successful". (ibid.)

When following the logic of the organisations mentioned above, it is quite obvious that they focus on youth for change, and that YEM fits their mold for leadership; they come with an alternative, have a positive attitude, are already successful hip hop artists, and have not been previously involved in politics. This logic sees leadership as something that youth can be inspired to, and it permits (financial) assistance to movements like YEM. Yet, it is also important to note that this narrative of youth and leadership legitimizes the presence and activities of these NGOs in Senegalese society. To a certain extent, these organizations depend on the (success) stories that come from the application of their strategy in their field of work, in this case Senegal, for their own survival. They must seem to be contributing to change, and sell this image to their respective donors. This results in pictures like the one on this page. Shown in this picture is Fadel Barro, who is quoted as saying "It is your society, so also your responsibility". This picture was posted on the Oxfam Novib official Facebook page during Dutch election time in February 2017, with an accompanying text stating: "Rapper Fadel unleashed a revolution in Senegal by calling young people to go to the polls. Vote too!"[10] Apart from the fact that Fadel Barro is not a rapper but a journalist, there was no reference to YEM, nor a link to any further information about Fadel Barro and the 'revolution' he had supposedly unleashed. The only link in the accompanying text was one to a Dutch website explaining how to vote. Although

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[10]

https://www.facebook.com/oxfamnovib/photos/a.124781974209226.14590.11528902182518
8/1343622852325126/?type=3&theater

this carries some reference to what Fadel Barro has been doing in Senegal, I think it is fair to say that he is being used as a poster boy here. This, according to Chismo, is one of the challenges YEM is currently facing after the defeat of Wade and the extensive international attention YEM got as a result of that: There is no shortage of international developmental organisations wanting to work with the movement. These are organisations with money and ideas, but who mostly want to make use of the fame YEM has gotten. These organisations are often just looking for poster boys. (Chismo, personal interview) In the case of Oxfam, it must be that that they were first major NGO to start working with YEM, have worked with them substantively and can, by doing so, even partly be accredited for the interest of other NGOs. Their poster of Fadel Barro however, is an example of a general tendency in the realm of international NGOs, especially those working with 'civil society' groups like YEM.

There is another aspect related to the presence of international NGOs willing to invest large amounts of money into Senegalese civil society. Both OSIWA and Oxfam not only support those that come up 'naturally', but also actively search for actors that want change ('those taking the lead'). Thing is though, that both these 'natural' and 'formed' leaders need to want the sort of change that OSIWA and Oxfam are willing to support. In a country like Senegal, where there is not a whole lot of money going around in civil society or activism, this can have considerable impact on the targeted groups, the way 'development work' is looked upon, and last but not least on local partners. As there are very limited resources available, it is reasonable to think that those local actors seeking funding, adjust themselves strategically to the criteria of international NGOs. This is, in itself not a bad thing, but it is interesting to think that the mere presence of such an NGO could potentially have impact on the field they are addressing and the ideas that people come up with, a thought that I will address further in the conclusion section. This field also consists of LEAD, who are as a local partner for large part of its revenue dependent on the themes, projects and budgets of their international partners. In order to keep doing what it wants to do, without losing their own view and identity, they have to navigate the precarious terrain of international development organisations and charities. This terrain is characterized by relatively short-term contracts and is under influence of the donors/public opinion. This is so, because whilst Oxfam is for instance largely dependent on their own donors, LEAD is to some extent dependent on the donors of Oxfam, without direct access to them. Hence, "keeping your back straight" (Gueye, personal interview, 25 Nov. 2016), while also making sure you can operate is a difficult task for the local partner LEAD. An interesting thing is that, through their work with international organisations, LEAD is now locally seen as credible and is asked to do work for the

Senegalese government as well. (ibid.) This puts LEAD in a different position than YEM, whose members go to great lengths to claim the movements' independence from both international NGOs and politics.

YEM is an interesting case to study. As seen in the above, there are a couple of apparent paradoxes within in the movement, that are deemed necessary for it to function the way it does. On the one hand there is the outspoken national character, that blends with Pan-Africanist ideals, on the other hand the collaboration with international development organisations. This results in critique, especially nationally, on how the movement is apparently following the agenda of these international organisations, and thus not truly independent in working in the interest of the Senegalese people. YEM however, feels forced to work with international organisations, because there is no one else, which the following quote by Thiat illustrates: "NGOs capitalize the movement, but they can't capitalize the ideology. They are a necessary evil. YEM is a state of mind." (Thiat, personal interview) There is the claim that there is no real leader within YEM, yet it is clear that the movement would not be where it is today if it was not for the credibility and fame of some of its core members. Even if they might not want it themselves, these are the members that are sought out by the media, they are the face of the movement, and are the ones making the strategies and the most important decisions. Additionally, these core members benefit individually from the (international) attention they have been getting. In my interview with Djilly, he told me that "invitations to Europe are 90% of the time related to YEM", meaning "hip hop in Senegal, activism, engagement, and how we use the music for this." (Djilly Bagdad, personal interview) The above paradoxes make the movement not only interesting to study, but also hard to read. The dynamic between them, the Senegalese people and politicians, (inter)national media and international development organisations creates a lot of different interpretations of what the movement is. This will never come to an indefinite conclusion, but that is also not necessary. By having provided you as a reader the broad background of hip hop and activism in Senegal, and on how the concept of youth has been analysed by some academics, I hope that reading the case above illustrates why I find this movement so interesting. Now, with this background and the case in mind, let us flow towards my conclusions, in which I will give you my insights, my making sense, into all this data that you have been reading until now.

Conclusion

In the above it has hopefully become clear that YEM is not a clear-cut case, as their actions and the way they come to them can be viewed in different ways. Its presence in the last five years of Senegal's socio-political history is nevertheless unmistaken, and it is my guess that they, be it as individuals or as a group, will remain a force to be reckoned with for the coming years. That this has been a remarkable effort from a group consisting of hip hop artists and journalists is beyond dispute. In this thesis I have tried to set the movement into the context of Senegal's postcolonial history, the global hip hop movement and the position of youth within Senegal. By putting into this context, it is clear that YEM did not come out of nowhere, nor were they solely responsible for the ousting of president Wade, their most mentioned achievement. In what follows, I will recapitulate the most important aspects of this thesis, ultimately culminating in a set of questions that I will reflect upon, in the hope that you as a reader will do the same and perhaps even learn something from. Because, and allow me to echo myself here, that is what this thesis has been to me, a learning experience.

The YEM phenomenon

What I have argued is that postcolonial Senegal's democracy was built on two pillars: the PS and the maraboutic families. These two pillars held each other in place through mutually beneficial relations. Plainly said, the religious families ordered, via *ngidals*, their following to vote for the ruling party, who in return made state concessions to the religious families. For the main part, the authority of these families rest on tradition. The authority of the ruling party was, at least officially, based in the legal-rational realm, although the traditions of clientelism and village cohesion indicate some aspects of what Weber has called traditional authority, where legitimacy is claimed for and believed in by virtue of the sanctity of age-old rules and powers. Yet, as postcolonial prosperity held off, an ever increasing percentage of the Senegalese population moved towards urban areas, looking for a way to sustain oneself. This urbanization resulted in a decrease of overlap in the solidarity groups on which people depended for survival, after all, there were more possibilities in the city. On top of that came the tensions that come with the generational successions in the maraboutic families, where, in search for followers, some of the younger marabouts, utilising their charismatic powers, crossed the separation between state and religion, the traditional pillars of power, in the process further crumbling state and religious authority. The 2000 elections appeared to be a definitive blow to the old system. Long-time opposition leader Wade had reinvented himself as a man of the people in his *marches bleues*, thereby distinguishing himself from other

politicians, challenging the old ways of political campaigning. This newfound élan and his call for *sopi* gained him the support of youth, artists and NGOs alike, who found themselves deceived quickly after Wade gained presidency and resorted to the same authoritarian and clientelistic form of politics of his predecessors, even trying to position his son into power. But, where Wade's rise might indicate the first big show of political force by the, on average, increasingly younger, urban population, he learned in 2012 that he himself could be outwitted by those who helped him into power.

This youth did not come out of nowhere. As a result of the lack of postcolonial prosperity, *encadrement* could not provide new generations with a well divined place in society. Being held back by traditions, and by older generations not willing to give up their place of power, political and economic stagnation followed. Traditionally leaned on to do the hard work, they were now surplus of a political system and society failing in its transition towards modernity. This makes them a relatively easy influenced, put-upon group, and their disadvantaged character has made 'youth' a specific focus group for NGOs. Once again seen as vital instruments for change, there is now huge money going around in the development industry specifically linked to this social category. This has not gone unnoticed by Senegal's increasingly institutionalized hip hop scene, a big scene in which relatively little money is made. Although hip hop evolved (and it for a large part still does) organically in Senegal, first arriving in the country via cassettes and cd's from the US and France, hip hop centres like Africulturban and G-Hip Hop and aligned promoters are now able to connect international development organizations with youth in the suburbs and some of hip hop Galsen's most popular artists. The money and knowledge that comes in via these organizations allows the hip hop centres to offer the youth various courses, utilising hip hop as a tool for developing skills that reach far beyond the hip hop sphere alone. Additionally, this connection provides established and upcoming artists with an income otherwise not easily found. However, it is important to remember that hip hop Galsen was already there before this collaboration with NGOs. It served and still serves as a new sociability, in a fast changing and globalizing world. It has been able to grasp the local reality of many Senegalese youth under the global hip hop banner as a result of its competitive character, 'coming up with the next shit', and its 'keepin' it real' ideology. This culture, that found its origin in the US, has now a typically Senegalese component. The realness, or authenticity, is defined in relation to others, the community, and has provided a new sense of belonging, of making sense of the world around you. Hip hop artists are representatives of the people, and gain recognition and credibility by relating to the people, speaking for them, giving them

their reflection on their struggle so that people can identify with them. These hip hop centres, but also a movement like YEM show the pragmatic side of hip hop, not only providing a way to look at life, but also to act upon it. They work with NGOs out of necessity, but do not let themselves be defined by it. They try to play to game to their advantage, letting the NGOs have their poster boys and stories for donors, so that ultimately more money comes in to their own hip hop projects. They do not really care where to money comes from, as long as they can do their thing. Yet, when things become political, as is the case with YEM, these financial flows are frowned upon by some in Senegal, a country struggling with how to cope with acts of its 'Western' partners and corresponding 'Westernization', whilst maintaining its Islamic character and identity. YEM nevertheless shows to me some of the possibilities of what hip hop can do. By cultivating their own culture, a distinctive Senegalese hip hop movement was to contribute significantly in the ousting of a sitting president. There was much more to it; it would not have been possible without events like *Assises Nationales*, connecting labour unions, civil society and politicians for change, or Senegalese NGOs like RADDHO politicizing and feeling forced to the organizing of protests. And of course it says a lot about international media, academics and NGOs seeking a story to sell. Truth is, a story of hip hop artists starting a revolution for democratization is a great story, and says a lot about the appeal of YEM.

These are a group of people that experienced a calling, who feel they have a duty to fulfil: "Every generation have a mission, and once you find out that you have the choice to do it or to do not. So we just choose to do it." (Thiat, personal interview) As representatives of a younger, hip hop generation, they have been challenging older structures, by calling out a senior, in this case the president. As hip hop artists, they went beyond critiquing from the side-line. They stood for what they expressed in their songs, being in the front rows during protests, getting arrested in the process. According to Weber, charismatic authority can rest on the devotion to the heroism, or on exemplary character. Their extraordinary qualities then demand the obedience of others. Through their actions, and the fact that they had celebrated hip hop artists among them, YEM was at the forefront of the fight against Wade. They became the face of the resistance, which I think, resulted in a lot of people looking at them in search of what to do, or how to contribute. Their outspoken character, their fame, and their willingness to cross societal borders made people follow them. These aspects of the movement align with the type of authority Weber described as charismatic. Weber wrote about this type of authority that it rests on the idea that people have a duty to recognize the 'proof' of the authority, like a miracle does for a prophet. The incredible momentum built up

during the 'war' against Wade in the 2012 elections, must have filled the Dakar air with tension during that period. The fact that this culminated into Wade's defeat, a man known for his tricky and cunning moves, must have felt like a miracle to some, or at least something that many had not considered possible. Weber argued that charisma, a great revolutionary force, is timely. In other words, charismatic authority, "if […] not to remain a purely transitory phenomenon, but to take on the character of a permanent relationship, […] it is necessary for the character of charismatic authority to become radically changed." (Weber, 1978: p.246) Most importantly, its anti-economic character must be altered. I think this posed the biggest issue for YEM, because they, at least partly, rose to their position of authority during the Wade-protests, because there was no personal (financial) gain in it for them. People were sick of politicians promising change that, once in power, turned out to be no different then their predecessors. YEM was grassroots organised, there appeared to be no double agenda; it is what set them apart from politicians. But with the ousting of Wade, YEM's focus was back on their long-term goal: fostering NTS. A process about which Thiat said the following:

"We are still willing to go on the streets, but organising protests is for a puncture problem, like, this is the problem, we go to the street right now and fix the problem right now. But building a new type of society is not about going to the street right now and fix right now. Its about building mentalities of people. Changing the way of thinking of people, the way of… the behaviour of people. So that need time and needed new approach." (Thiat, personal interview)

Here he seems aware of the fact that YEM's approach needs to be altered according to the problem they are facing. Changing people's behaviour begs a different, more long-term approach than going on the streets and protesting. Yet, he also stated the following:

"Of course we are gonna use the same vehicle, like hip hop, like urban guerrilla poetry, meeting, talking to people, lectures, going to universities and schools and whatever. We are going to use the same instruments to mobilize and let people know, make people being aware and stuff like that. The only different thing is in 2011 we were faced to somebody who was planning to change the constitution and a lot of laws and whatever, and we needed by that time to change it right now. But now, if we still focus on the president, we're gonna fail. We gotta focus on the system." (Thiat, personal interview)

This indicates that YEM's long-term strategy involves a lot of the same methods applied during the election period. This is understandable, as these methods are emblematic to the movement; it is what gained them their fame. But building a new type of society is a complex process, compared to the ousting of a president. Using the same approach for a different goal, may result in a different outcome.

If we look at the projects YEM has run since the ousting of Wade, there are indeed elements that remind of the past, like a song dedicated to the project, accompanied by a video clip and the typical YEM t-shirts. These elements form a routine, an important, recognizable aspect of every YEM project. In order to form this routine, there needs to be a structure in operation, which point to the fact that the movement has seen at least some institutionalisation. This is, according to Weber's theory, necessary, if YEM does not want to become a purely transitory phenomenon, which they clearly do not. However, changing from a non-financially based revolutionary movement towards a more solid organizational form that needs money to stay afloat is quite a change. Large amounts of funding raises expectations and questions about influence. YEM, by accepting these, moved closer towards the NGOs, which increased their upward accountability, as opposed to the downward accountability they earlier on had towards their followers. Even though they still use 'the same vehicle', the institutionalisation with the backing of NGO funding leads them away from those who gave them their legitimacy, Senegalese youth. In doing so, they weakened their charismatic authority. Yet, if we follow Weber, a changeover was inevitable, as charismatic authority only lasts limited time. A choice had to be made. YEM chose to work with foreign NGOs in order to make their work more efficient, and in doing so, has given up some of their legitimacy amongst Senegalese. It is difficult to say whether a different choice would have done them better on that part. Fact is that a change was inevitable after the ousting of Wade. The international attention they got after this success gave them opportunities not easily accessible in a country like Senegal. But changing a society and its mentality is more difficult than changing a president, and requires a solid basis to begin with. Their quick start made them very visible, very early on in their existence. After a couple of less prominent years, YEM now seems to have a structure in place, and projects are set up and rolling. As this only started happening in the time I was in Senegal and afterwards, it remains to be seen whether the movements transformation through institutionalization allows them to play a role in the change they envision for Senegal. In any case, the fact that they continue to accept NGO funding for their projects means that the discussion regarding their position is not to fade away any time soon.

Personal reflections

Apart from learning a lot about YEM, Senegal, activism and the realm of 'civil society', during this research I also learned a lot about doing research and being a researcher. I was too naïve going in, thinking everything would fall into place once arrived in the field. Doing

research involves hard work, and being a researcher requires a lot of thinking and reflecting. I have learned that if you want others to contribute to your research, you need to have a clear story to begin with, otherwise the 'other' will not know what you are talking about. You have to dare to put your own position on the line, by openly speaking about it. During our research there have been a couple of moments where I truly felt a connection was made with contributors, and funnily enough, these were moments where the interviewer – interviewee distinction disappeared, and I did not feel like a researcher anymore. These were moments with Chismo, where the scenery of the university allowed to connect on the different level, but also the atelier at G-Hip Hop, where the sharing of experiences culminated in an open and energetic atmosphere. In these moments, a cultural translation was made, and it became clear that there were much more coming grounds between two 'researchers' from Amsterdam, and their 'interviewees' in Dakar.

Doing research means opening up and sharing your ideas with others. As a researcher you are constantly trying to make sense of what is happening around you. When in the field you find yourself in situations earlier unimaginable. Speaking your mind, asking questions, openly questioning yourself, I feel it all helped to better grasp what was happening. I was very fortunate to have found a house in Dakar where I lived amongst Senegalese musicians and academics, which allowed me to discus my findings, and make interesting connections. Having to explain what brings you to Dakar in an informal setting really helped me to give my research more direction.

The fact that my research partner and good friend Wouter was there with me along the way meant to pairs of ears and eyes during every event. It has proven insightful to discus our experiences, as quite often we would have a different reading of what had occurred. As we decided, when we were already two months in, to each write our own thesis, though still do our research together, reflecting on what happened to us became even more interesting. We were now seeing things more from our own perspectives, and challenging the perspective of the other. This deepened both our analyses, and resulted in a more profound treatment of the subject. Having to change the course of our research whilst in the field, although challenging, proved in this way beneficial, as it kept us focussed on our own individual research set up, and allowed us to make conscious choices along the way. This was convenient, as going 'open' into this research had benefits, as expressed in the above the contingent nature of our research brought us to places and into situations previously thought impossible, but a lack of structure also meant there was a danger of coming up with an incoherent research. By reflecting together, we helped each other keeping focus, making rational decisions, and

working out of reason. This ultimately resulted in the thesis as you have just read it. By discussing my doubts, and including my personal thoughts into this thesis I hope to have given you a look through my lenses as I looked at the phenomenon that is YEM. Putting myself in the text to this extent had the intention of showing that this thesis is no objective reality, and always revisable. I hope I was able give you insight into my reflections, and as a way to end this thesis in the way that it started, i.e. with the incentive to ask more questions, let me finish with a couple of question that hopefully stimulate you as a reader to reflect so more, and in that sense contribute to this research yourself.

1. In this thesis multiple interpretations of leadership and authority have been addressed. For NGOs it is important that leadership can be developed, it is where their story leans on. Yet, if we look Weber, charismatic authority is a calling, an extraordinary aspect of someone's character or skill. What do you think, can leadership be created, or could it, given specific circumstances, happen to anyone without earlier preparation?

2. The NGOs involved in, and working with Senegalese civil society are carrying significant amounts of funding into a field where there is not too much funding going around. In such a situation, it is likely that actors in the field try to adapt to the wishes of those NGOs, in order to secure funding. This could be a stand in the way for a more 'natural' development of the field, with local actors for instance looking at ways to establish change without that much money in mind. The question is then, how do you feel about this? Do you consider it desirable for NGOs to come into a field with money and ideals, thereby possibly disturbing a development, that could possibly not align with the ideals of these NGOs?

3. In this research I have found myself confronted a lot with my role as a researcher. I have tried to keep this thesis close to my own experience, as I believe that my interpretation is the only one for me to give. I have tried to collaborate with others to make this research a collective effort, with varying success. I did that, as I hoped that it provided an opportunity for others and for myself to reflect on my position as a researcher. My final question to you is, how do you feel about my position as a research, judging by this thesis? Has this thesis has given you an incentive to think about subjectivity, trustworthiness and the way we come to, and judge our knowledge? If so, would you be so kind as to share those thoughts with me? You can find my email dress on the title page, many thanks in advance!

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Appendix I

My thoughts are like a tree listening is what waters it
I don't want to to school anymore daddy don't force me
Me, selling on the side walk is what I propose
My absence at home is due to my desire to make it

--

I have a tongue I can speak, I can make the difference between millet
and hay
If I follow you, you will fool me I have shoes I can walk
Ancestors wisdom forbade me to beg
Sun is burning earth is boiling I'm going to dig a well to get water

--

Wants to represent me without knowing me wants me to lead but don't
trust me
They don't even try to know my motivations everything I say is
neglected
Daddy your son has grown now it seems like the bird made its net
Spread it wings honored the family it seems like your goal was reached

--

I rap and say things that could pay a salary, I'll become a boss that
pays salaries
My kids and the kids of my kids will grow up and succeed without
knowing the ditch
I'm not going to wait for you to have a job, eating everything the
people hands over to you
That's why we're in the streets, learning about the city and bringing
up hip hop