

PREPARATIONS FOR HEALING OF MEMORIES TRAINING – COTONOU 2022

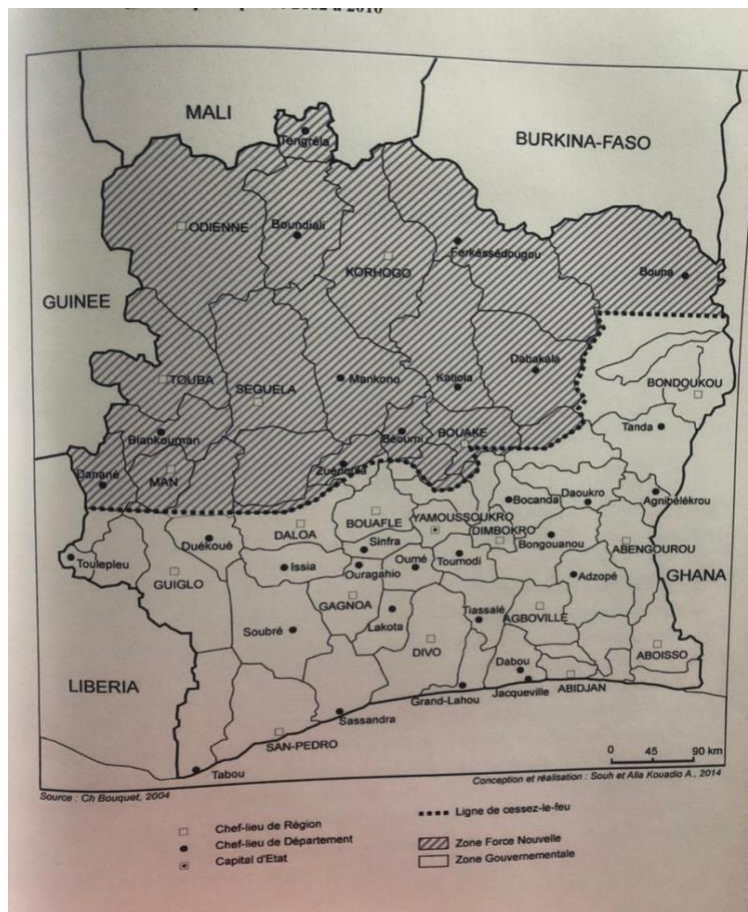
COLLECTIVE WOUNDS

THE VIEWS OF SOME VICTIMS OF THE CRISES OUTSIDE OUR USUAL CIRCLE OF CONTACTS

I/ Since its independence, Côte d'Ivoire has been a driving force in West Africa. Its prestige has no doubt been due to its economic prosperity and its relative political stability. Relative because even in this early period several leaders such as KRAGBE GNAGBE, BIAKA BODA, to mention only those, had been removed from the political arena.

Moreover, after the death of its first president, Felix HOUPHOUET BOIGNY, the country was permanently seeking to settle its succession disputes. Three presidents succeeded one another from 1994 to 19 September 2002 and the attempted coup d'état against the regime of President Laurent GBAGBO.

Thus separated into two parts, the country entered a spiral of crises that led to war after the 2010 presidential elections. Since then, serious human rights violations have been committed by all the forces involved. As a result, we are witnessing a social fracture resulting in a whole range of wounds.



Map of Côte d'Ivoire showing its division into two parts during the military and political crisis from September 2002 to 2010

II/ The events or situations experienced by our people, or by certain communities within it, are the result of a manipulation on the part of our political leaders.

To succeed in satisfying their political ambition, they set up several situations with the sole aim of rule and divide. Among these situations or events we can mention the use of certain concepts such as Ivorianness, xenophobia, the creation of a mass grave.

Côte d'Ivoire thus experienced a fracture of its social fabric which damaged Ivorian society as a whole. The following images of the attack on the Nahibly camp in the west of the country allow us to better understand the extent of the damage.



III/ The social and political attitudes in our country that have caused or still cause wounds are :
The manipulation of the population by politicians, the scheming, the exploitation of past frustrations for personal ends, the injustices, the marginalization of certain so-called minority communities etc. The marginalized, discriminated and humiliated groups are those who are not in power.



Bodies exhumed from a well



Communities and the police during the attack on the displaced persons' camp at Nahibly in July 2012.

IV/ These wounds are illustrated by mistrust among the population, psychosis that translates into fear, malice, injustice, tribalism, nepotism, exile, silence of the victims, frustration and the spirit of revenge. We are all affected by all these wounds.



People fleeing the fighting during the military attack in September 2002



Marks of burns on the bodies of former detainees in Abidjan, from melting plastic used in order to extract confessions.

V/ An area of silence we can mention:

- in the political domain: “being caught up” (meaning that only people from the same political side or region as the ruling class can hope to obtain positions in the public service).

- in the social domain: the high cost of living.

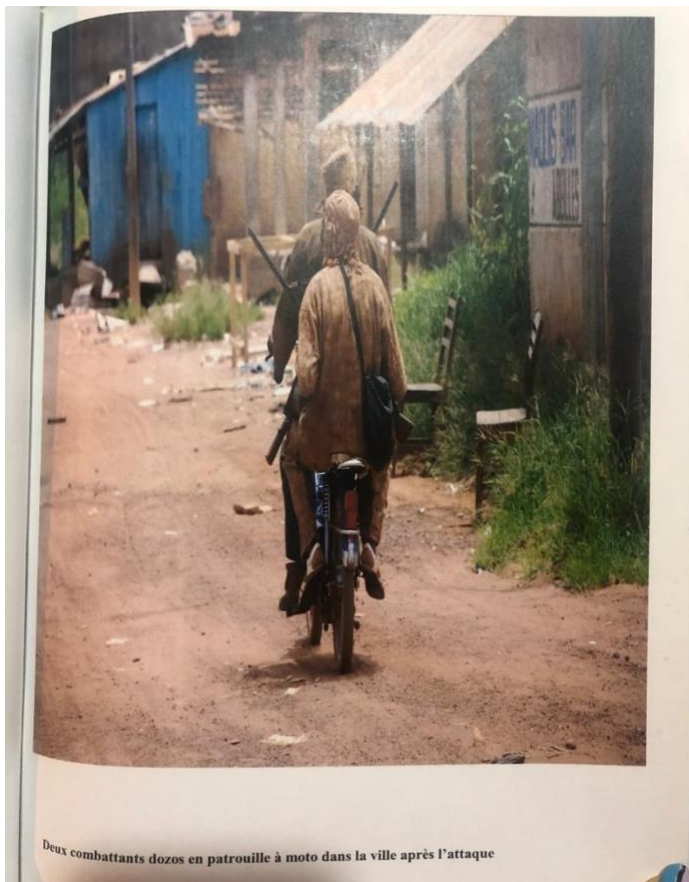
The reasons for this silence are, among other things:

- Fear;
- Imprisonment;
- Death;
- Kidnapping;
- Arbitrary arrests.

VI/ The other: envoys and militias in the pay of political leaders.

Them: government leaders

Us: people as a whole, in all their diversity



VII/ The steps to be taken for the healing of certain deep wounds are:

- Reconciliation, restitution and reparation;
- Sincerity in our actions;
- True repentance of the perpetrators;
- Forgiveness;
- The release of all political prisoners.

Our dream for our country is political change with other leaders than those we have known so far.



Members of our Ivorian delegation meeting victims of the crises



Adolphe with a witness of the 2011 post-election crisis Mr. Tibault (right)