CROSS BORDERS PERSPECTIVES - 21 SEPT 2020

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Slide 1: Dear colleagues, good afternoon, thanks for welcoming us to this so interesting webinar. We are Patricia Mothes and Sandra Cadiou, researchers from Toulouse University in France. We are currently working on concepts of knowledge and power in education. Moreover, we have also both been volunteering for 2 and 4 years into a collective fighting for UAM rights in Toulouse (South West of France). We here present UAM scholar integration context in our country: France. This study is based on a one year work we conducted in 2019, gathering various clinical interviews of UAM and association volunteers, documentary work and proper experience analysis. More of this work results has been presented for EERA 2020 and will be also in Suresnes next November. First of all, we'll describe French context concerning UAM situation, globally speaking. Then we'll point out major issues concerning UAM education. Before beginning, let us precise how is organized UAM « welcoming » in France. By their arrival on French territory, UAM are asked to go to the DDAEOMIE, which is State organization in charge of minority assessment. 90 % of them are assessed major and brought back to the street. In Toulouse, they can ask for help to a collective which provide them food and place to live, and also juridic assistance to be recognize as minors, and schooling. That is the collective we belong to.

Slide 2: Let's have a look at French situation. France has been a country of immigration since the second half of the nineteenth century, although it had no official immigration policy until 1945. The question of immigration has usually been brought to public attention and to political debate in times of unemployment and general destabilization of wage conditions, and in times of urban crisis. From the Second World War, France has been suffering from both a labor shortage, and a low birth rate. Immigration would be part of the solution, and it explains that education of immigrant children in France is still a huge political question. If immigration is still considered as a social problem, UAM reveal to be a very specific issue, both because UAM immigration is quite a recent phenomenon, but also because their situation is very questioning. First of all, there has been a huge increase of declared UAM entering France between 2016 and 2020: from 8 thousand to more than 16 thousand, that is to say twice more. But we can underline a certain permanency. For example, relative to the age: generally 15 to 17. And relative to gender: there is an overwhelming presence of male UAM. People coming is rather mainly from Africanorigin: black young men, especially from Guinea or Mali, that is to say ancient French colonies. This can probably be explained because it's easier to emigrate to a country you already speak language, but it also reveals importance of post colonialism remains in French political context.

Slide 4: Now let's talk about French paradoxes concerning UAM education. Globally speaking, and regarding French human rights history, French juridic context is supposed to encourage schoolarisation, by free access to schooling without any nationality condition. Also every child under 16 must go to school and if there is no more compulsory after 16, minors under 18 are encouraged to go to school. That is juridic frame. But considering reality, it is a bit different. We insist particularly on difference between minors migrating with their parents and UAM. First, in one hand, level assessment is necessary before choosing schooling way, but on the other hand, parents' presence is necessary to take assessment. Obviously when migrants are UAM, that is to say unaccompanied, they are without their parents. Consequently, it's more easier for minors coming with their family to be schoolarized that for UAM. Secondly, in one hand, assessment should come to schooling, but on the other hand, according to

rectorat it depends on the number of free places into classes. It means that even if you have passed assessment, rectorat can decide whether you'll enter school or not. Difficulty is also reenforced by UAM age. Considering french school system, it's much easier to enter school when you are 8 ou 10 than when you are 16, illiterate or hardly, or if you have been dropped out for years.

Slide 5: First of all, we underline the paradoxical French situation: minors should be in school but assessment compromises schooling. Secondly, if migrants want papers, they must get professional studies, that is to say, it is better for them to go on vocational high school rather than to go on general studies. It means less choices, also less possibilities for belonging to up classes and they mightly stay in poverty. This could be considered as a detail, but it is revealing about how French state consider UAM: not only as minors to be taken in charge and helped, but overall, as future workforce to be economically useful. Thirdly, and as a consequence of what is said here, we want to highlight integrated racism in the French postcolonialism situation. For centuries, France has been a colonial power, using African countries to solve French economic issues. UAM situation tends to show this situation is going on, even if it's shaped differently. To conclude, UAM share different disadvantages in vulnerability: minor in age, male (have to succeed and send money to family back) and black. They also suffer structural oppression as migrants, which leds them to be victims of multiple crossed oppressions. This should be considered when talking about UAM schooling, and teachers training. Thank you for your attention.