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CHAPTER 14

Youth and *Média-engagé*: Is This West Africa's Heterolinguistic Cinéma-monde?

Carina Yervasi

‘La parole, c’est quelque chose. Quand tu l’as sur le cœur, ça te saisit. Si tu ne la sors pas, ça ne va pas . . . Ma parole ne restera pas en moi’.

[‘Speech is something powerful. When it’s in your heart, it grabs you . . . My voice will not stay inside me.’] An elderly witness (played by Zégué Bamba) spoken in Bambara to the court in *Bamako*. (Abderrahmane Sissako, 2006, Mali/USA/France)

‘J’ai toujours essayé de me servir de ma voix, que ce soit en chantant ou en parlant, pour combattre l’injustice et les inégalités.’

[I have always tried to use my voice – singing and spoken – to fight injustice and inequality.]

Angélique Kidjo¹

On 17 March 2014, #TweetUp226, Sawat Production and Adiska Entertainment published the lively music video entitled ‘We Are Happy From Ouaga’ on YouTube. Using Pharrell Williams’s ‘Happy’ as a soundtrack, the filmmakers beautifully shot and edited a video of citizens from the capital city of Burkina Faso, Ouagadougou, lip-synching and dancing to Williams’s words of joy and insouciance. While there are many ‘Happy: We Are From . . .’ videos on YouTube that use this same conceit of lip-synching Williams’s song, this one had particular poignancy in Burkina Faso. A mere seven months later, these images of citizens offering a soundless lip-synched ‘Happy’ became the active voice of a nation during the October 2014 insurrection against president Blaise Compaore as he tried to change the nation’s constitution in order to run for office yet again. Something had to give and it would not be the Constitution. People took to the streets in a popular grassroots movement called Le Balai Citoyen (The Citizen’s Broom), initially waving push brooms and then small hand-held brooms, familiar to many in West Africa for sweeping away, both literally and figuratively, unwanted pests and debris. Images of this popular uprising and of a government overturned were captured on cell phones and amateur and professional

cameras throughout the crisis. Droit Libre TV,² a Burkina Faso-based web television production company, for example, reported on the 27 October women's March of the Spatulas in a short documentary entitled *Ouaga: Les spatules battent le macadam* (2014), in which women speak out against the government and demonstrate in the city streets brandishing the ubiquitous large wooden cooking utensil. Many videos throughout October 2014 including *Modification de l'article 37: La révolte s'intensifie* (*Change to Article 37: The Rebellion Intensifies*) and *Avec le Balai Citoyen, au coeur de la lutte* (*At the Heart of the Fight with the Citizen's Broom*), were made by Droit Libre TV to depict the citizen-led anti-government demonstrations, which culminated on 30 October. After this violent day of discontent in the capital, which included the burning of the national assembly building, the president dissolved parliament, called for a state of emergency and resigned. Blaise Compaore fled the country on 31 October to neighbouring Ivory Coast.

Now, the people of Burkina Faso had something to celebrate. Their voice did not stay inside them; the voice of the citizens had been heard. Theirs was a citizens' movement that changed their country's political fate. It unfolded in sound and image on the world stage of the Internet.³ And like its counterpart in Senegal, *Y en a Marre* (Fed Up), youth and music were front and centre, starring in videos of their own political triumph. The use of youth and music in these videos is not by chance. Rather it is a deliberate strategy used by the organisers of both movements. *Y en a Marre*, Senegal's largest youth-led hip hop-centred civic organisation (Appert 2011, Bryson 2014, Gueye 2013), was founded in January 2011 by musicians FouMalade (Malal Talla), Thiat (Cheikh Omar Cyrille Tour) and Kilifeu (Mbessane Seck) and journalists Fadel Barro, Alioune Sané, and Denise Sow. *Le Balai Citoyen* was founded in the summer of 2013 by reggae musician Sams'K Le Jah (Karim Sama), hip hop/rap artist Smockey (Serge Bambara) and lawyer Me Guy Hervé Kam. In order to maintain their grassroots character, neither group is affiliated with any official political party. In francophone West Africa⁴ these two groups are at the forefront of civic engagement (see Figure 14.1), having won the 2016 Amnesty International Ambassador of Conscience Award for their work with youth activism. For *Le Balai Citoyen* the vehicular language is French, whereas *Y en a Marre* almost exclusively uses the urban Wolof of Dakar, which mixes Wolof, French, Arabic, and some English (McLaughlin 2001; Versluys 2006). Yet despite their linguistic differences both movements are witness to the ways that digital media can share political engagement and energy (Bryson 2014; Enz and Bryson 2014; Appert 2011).



Figure 14.1 Young activists with homemade signs attend a rally organised by Y en a Marre co-founders and musicians Matador and Thiat in early 2011, *Y en a marre / Fed-Up* (Adams Sie, 2013, Senegal).

At the heart of these documentaries and reportages that depict engaged activism is civic voice. Civic voice attends not only to language and discourse, but also to the role of speaking out in a democratic process, making speech ‘something powerful’ indeed. It is a voice that engenders the potential of the political towards organised politics (Dahlgren 2009: 101) and participation in the democratic processes of each country, whether it is youth voter registration, governmental oversight, or public action. This engagement is similar to the concept of ‘democratic-participatory culture’ theorised by Nico Carpentier in conversation with Henry Jenkins. (Jenkins and Carpentier 2013: 272). The films and videos produced as a result of and for the voice of engaged citizenship can best be described as *média-engagé*, due to their emphasis on political engagement. By analysing language, voice – a democratic civic voice – and worldwide collective access through the Internet, it seems evident that locally produced documentaries by and about Le Balai Citoyen and Y en a Marre are part of a growing trend of transnational francophone media using new technologies of image-making and distribution. They have much to offer recent scholarly debates about world cinema and media, particularly francophone cinéma-monde.

How do these videos use the combination of sound and voice to cooperate as key connectors to the francophone world in cases where French is not always used? How does the authority to speak, either literally or figuratively, develop as a long-term social and political goal in these documentaries? How might youth-centred media across West Africa redefine political media in terms of ‘civic voice’ to engage local viewers as well as the world audience looking in at that nation? And, finally, how can these civically engaged West African documentaries as *média-engagé* support the larger claims of a ‘francophone’ media enterprise and complement or expand the concept of *cinéma-monde*?

To answer these questions, this chapter is concerned with the audible – the play and interplay of speakers, listeners and participants; of voice, music and sounds on the soundtracks of politically engaged francophone media – and its relation to francophone documentaries about citizen- and youth-led movements in Senegal and Burkina Faso. The voice of young people in Burkina Faso’s *Le Balai Citoyen* and Senegal’s *Y en a Marre* democracy movements becomes a unified ‘civic voice’ and captures the energy of a local movement for a global audience. Theirs is a media distinctly motivated for political change in their countries, lending credibility to the idea that this documentary work is not only media entertainment, but is also *média-engagé*. Through discussions of four documentaries, I focus on the development of civic voice in young citizens in these two countries: *Avec le Balai Citoyen, au coeur de la lutte* (Droit Libre TV, 2014,) and ‘*Le Balai Citoyen*’: *Smockey et Sams’K le Jah veulent assainir le Burkina!* (*The Citizen’s Broom*: *Smockey and Sams’K want to sanitise Burkina Faso!*) (Droit Libre TV, 2013) from Burkina Faso and *Y en a marre/Fed-Up* (Adams Sie, 2013) and *Yoole (Le sacrifice)/ Yoole: The Sacrifice* (Moussa Sene Absa, 2010) from Senegal. These documentaries have an objective: communicate to and with their citizens and be understood by the world.

Expanding the Concept of Cinéma-monde

While neither documentary nor civic voice are explicitly discussed in Bill Marshall’s 2012 article, ‘Cinéma-monde? Towards a concept of Francophone cinema’, his articulation of *cinéma-monde* as a potentially ‘francophonising,’ (44) and therefore ‘minorising’ (47) process of world cinema in French can be broadened to embrace documentaries. Even as Marshall pays primary attention to fictional films, language and finances, his reading of a ‘documentary mode’ (47), developed in an analysis of *Loin* (André Téchiné, 2001, France), highlights ‘borders, movement, language,

and lateral connections' (Marshall 2012: 47) and a sense of realism or constructed reality that documentaries share with narrative film. Both the digitally shot documentary films of Adams Sie and Moussa Sene Absa in Senegal and the dynamic videos made by and of youth voices found, for example, in Droit Libre TV's Burkinabè documentaries on the Internet fit within the larger frame of Marshall's 'world cinema' and attend to those four key themes. Additionally, by referencing Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka: pour une littérature mineure* (Marshall 2012: 44), Marshall invites a closer examination of any media, including documentaries, considering the characteristics that these two philosophers use to define 'des littératures mineures' (Deleuze and Guattari 1975: 29). Minor works in Deleuze and Guattari's taxonomy feature deterritorialised language and are 'attuned to politics' ['immédiatement branché sur la politique'] (30) and forge new alliances (32). These three traits of minor literature seem particularly significant for the media projects of these two activist groups.

As Marshall proposes, 'put[ting] the accent back' (2013: 45) in cinéma-monde theoretically echoes Hamid Naficy's work in *An Accented Cinema* and practically probes the complicated relationship that the French language has to francophone film. Marshall is inarguably right to reveal the 'guilty secret' of francophone cinema: 'that these films are not always in French, or rather, that the term "Francophone" forces a problematisation of what "French" is and what its relationship is with other languages' (43). What Marshall calls the 'Francophone cultural and linguistic world' (45) of films, he claims 'is interesting only when all its accents, contexts, and mixings are *made audible*' (45; emphasis in the original). That Marshall brings the 'audible' and linguistic relationships between French and its 'accents' into his definition of francophone cinéma-monde is the clearest example of the importance of language for his argument. Marshall's 'accents, contexts, and mixings' support my attention to voice, engaged politics and language of contemporary transnational francophone documentaries. Film critic Olivier Barlet offers in his article 'Enjeux documentaires' (2012) an insightful definition of documentary to better understand these videos and the ways in which the public's interaction with the language and voices of the social actors are fundamental to getting political messages to cross borders:

Making a documentary means establishing a listening relationship with the filmed subjects . . . In fiction, the actor is supposed to ignore the camera, but in documentary being conscious of the camera allows the spectators to be interlocutors of the filmed subject, who addresses not only the other people being filmed around them and/or the filmmaker (who may choose to appear on screen), but all who will see the film.⁵ (291)

The videos for and by these groups must ‘establish a listening relationship’ with all constituents of the film. This includes addressing cross-border communities for international audiences, making use of this movement to convey their voice, and developing lateral connections with other such nascent youth and civic groups as LUCHA or Filimbi (Democratic Republic of Congo) or Sassoufit (Congo-Brazzaville). Put together, these features represent a new kind of media, touching on Marshall’s ‘francophonising’ and ‘minorising’ processes, as they harness political engagement when the voice of the documentaries becomes ‘civic voice’. In what follows, I will show how ‘civic voice’ can be used in place of Marshall’s concept of making ‘audible’ accents, contexts and mixings (2012: 45), especially in relationship to the current popular movements of *Le Balai Citoyen* and *Y en a Marre*, whose documentaries critically engage image and sound.

From Voice to ‘Civic Voice’ to Political Engagement in the Era of Digital Media-making

The energised voice that Smockey uses in *‘Le Balai Citoyen’: Smockey et Sams’K le Jah veulent assainir le Burkina!’* when talking about ‘democratic rule’ (1:30) or the quietly emphatic way that Thierno, a young citizen, communicates ‘mal gouvernance, quoi’ [badly run government] in Moussa Sene Absa’s *Yoole: The Sacrifice* (4:25–4:30) are both evidence of ‘civic voice.’ The popular music of reggae and rap/hip hop artists featured at many of the recorded public rallies and on soundtracks are key elements that promote civic voice in these documentaries as a form of ‘social collective’ (Chanan 2007: 16). But the combination of youth, voice, language, and music to create civic voice is not new. In writing about earlier Ghanaian hiplife music, Jesse Shipley defines this youth-centred music form as a ‘polylinguistic lyricism’ (2013: 13), or a voice that must transcend one national language. For sociolinguist and film scholar John Kristian Sanaker, voice is a part of ‘language behavior as cultural expression’ (2010: 106). For film scholar Boulou Ebanda B’béri voice is ‘the specificity of the practices of expression themselves’ (2009: 812), and for Shipley, voice is the possibility of ‘socially authoritative and free-thinking public speakers’ (2013 4). But whereas B’béri lays claim to the need for an authoritative voice –using, for example, the leitmotiv of ‘Ma mère raconte . . . ’ in Haitian film director Raoul Peck’s film, *Lumumba: la mort du prophète/Lumumba: The Death of A Prophet* (Peck, 1992, France/Germany/Switzerland) – Shipley asserts that hiplife ‘provides the youth with transformative possibilities’ (6), that they need no other authority

than themselves. For Shipley, the youth in that movement 'are their own authority' (24). The voice and music of youth, as Shipley defines them, are all the authority that the movements of *Le Balai Citoyen* and *Y en a Marre* need to develop civic voice in their media.

While youthful music is crucial to these movements (and I analyse examples of this later), I would argue that more than holding the authority to speak and be heard, this media and its music must attend to publics and the networks they participate in. Defining these networked publics, which need a sense of agency and an openness to participate in social and political change, can be linked to the idea of 'democratic-participatory rhizome' advocated in the work of Nico Carpentier (Jenkins and Carpentier 2013: 272). In other words, for any public to succeed as a participatory culture it needs to be attached to civic engagement and the promise of change. This is how an ordinary citizen like Sabarane Lam in Adams Sie's *Fed-Up* can voice his concerns (5:30–6:24) and become invested in the social movement implicitly promised in *Y en a Marre*'s 'democratic-participatory' civic voice. Being able to analyse this essential move from individual voice to civic voice in documentary is indebted to the work of media scholars Kate Nash (2014) and Trish FitzSimons (2009). Before the publication of their recent work, many theories around 'voice' in documentaries relied on Bill Nichols's concept of voice as a quality of the filmmaker's presence or self-reflexivity in film. Nichols's metaphor of voice as filmic texture or what he describes as the 'moiré-like' quality of a film's fabric (Nichols 1983: 18) functions more generally like the 'modes' of documentary film (Nichols 2010), rather than a clearly defined way to discuss the complexity of voices and sound in documentary.

The voice as 'civic voice' that I am postulating is more closely related to the features of voice and its place in creating a democratic 'discursive community' (Nash 2014: 384) that Nash and FitzSimons theorise. FitzSimons in particular is the first to question the role of voice both as a metaphor of authorship and its privileging over other voices that had become prominent in documentary studies (2014: 133). In critiquing the way 'voice' is unproblematised by Nichols, she examines the multiplicity of voices 'braided' throughout the documentary that share 'the authority . . . with subjects and broadcasters. . . film-makers and audiences' (FitzSimons 2009: 139). Nash picks up this thread of multiple voices in her 2014 article, 'What is interactivity for? The social dimension of web-documentary participation' by focusing on how interaction online is a form of democratic participation and investigates how 'documentary's social functions' (Renov 2004: 12) can create a 'documentary community' (389) around such voices. Along with Nash, media culture theorists

Jenkins and Carpentier (2013), Peter Dahlgren (2009) and Chelsey Hauge (2014) examine and explain how youth activists, who are invited to share 'equal power relations' (Jenkins and Carpentier 2013: 271), can become vocal participants through and in the new technologies of both traditional and web-based documentaries. While Nash warns against the easy slippage of 'voice-as-authorship with those of social voice' (2014: 393), this 'community' has the political potential to make the documentary address 'the viewer as a citizen, as a member of a social collective, as a putative participant in the social sphere' (Chanan 2007: 16). Droit Libre TV, for example, posts its videos both on its own website and in social media. With nearly 11,000 YouTube subscribers, Droit Libre TV creates and simultaneously relies on this 'documentary community' to promote its democratic programmes. Their six-minute short *Avec le Balai Citoyen, au coeur de la lutte* has over 19,000 views and multiple comments. After viewing this video and reading the comments – not all of which are positive or in French – one is left with the impression that through this media posted online, anyone with access to the Internet (and not only those who want to demonstrate in the streets) is given an opportunity to participate in a democratic 'social collective' like Le Balai Citoyen.

Voice, music and political engagement work simultaneously for Y en a marre and Le Balai Citoyen to create their participative civic voice of internationally engaged citizens. In short, these documentaries focus on documenting democratising voices for the nation and transnationally across borders. But both voice and crossing borders bring back the troubled question of language.

French Language in 'Francophone' World Media

No one can deny that the francophone world exists because of France and this nation's wide arm of geopolitical interventions over the past several centuries, including colonialism, (so-called) civilising missions, economic aid, neo-colonialism and finally, more recently, ongoing diplomacy. West African francophone cinema, a recent mid-twentieth century art form and commercial venture, survives in part as a consequence of this past as well as from ongoing funding from such organisations as Fonds Images de la Francophonie, Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, CIRTEF (Conseil international des radios et télévisions d'expressions françaises), and Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes, all of which are linked in one way or another to the French government (Hoefort de Turégano 2005). France's interest in having a media presence in West Africa could be considered benevolent when it comes to maintaining the

French language⁶ and funding media projects, but it has also created a handicap that, in the past, pressured filmmakers to rely on this funding because their home nations were often too poor or had difficulty justifying funding for the arts. At the same time, while French is present in West African francophone nations either as an official language of government or the language of education, it is not necessarily the predominant language of films and locally produced media.

Most films and videos across West Africa have been redefining the visual and linguistic medium for decades. Francophone cinema, from its very early years, was created in a paradoxical space, where international economic and artistic co-productions, not to mention transnational projects, were (and are) the rule rather than the exception. Francophone cinema creates a heterolingualistic space where French and local languages co-mingle or where no French is spoken at all (Bourget 2015). Francophone media share this same multinational and polylingualistic quality of earlier francophone cinema. One trait of heterolingualistic spaces is that they reflect language usage in unpredictable ways such as 'denaturalis[ing] the monolingual concept of language' or rendering the construction of all languages in a linguistic landscape visible or audible (Simard 2015). Here, I am referring to all sorts of linguistic and multivalent intermingling such as in Ousmane Sembène's cinema, in which the interplay of French, Wolof and occasionally Arabic is used to political effect. For example, in *Xala* (1975, Senegal) the main character's daughter advocates speaking Wolof as a political act, refusing to speak French with her father, while in *Guelwaar* (1992, Senegal) the son of the dead activist refuses to speak or understand Wolof in favour of a French that matches his French passport. This heterolingualistic space is taken to the extreme in Abderrahmane Sissako's most recent film *Timbuktu* (2014, France/Mauritania), where the role of linguistic miscommunication is deeply developed through the interplay of speech with no less than six languages spoken and translated (Arabic, Bambara, English, French, Songhay and Tamashek) throughout the film by occupying Jihadists, mercenaries, courts, and local and immigrant populations. Media works featuring Y en a Marre communicate in both French and Wolof and both are used to question power and invite critical reflection. Rap musicians Xuman (Makhtar Fall) and Keyti (Cheikh Sène) offer weekly Internet news bulletins, *Journal Rappé*, in French and Wolof respectively, which present ready examples of this linguistic co-habitation and give rise to a participatory 'civic voice' in a multivalent space. John Kristian Sanaker (2010) suggests that films and videos made in such 'incompletely Francophone countries' as those in francophone Africa as well as Algeria, Canada, Morocco and Tunisia,

for example (105) – where ‘francophone’ is defined as much by a socio-cultural phenomenon as ideological structure (105) – use local languages to paint a clearer picture of the plurilingual societies in which the films and videos are made. In addition to the use of multiple languages in these films, space is the single most important signifying feature of African film, claims film scholar Justin Ouoro in ‘Enjeux esthétiques du cinéma d’Afrique noire francophone’:

Reminiscent of the manner in which new sovereignties permitted Africans to reappropriate their territory after independence, African cinema yoked itself to the return of African space for Africans with its goal of reterritorialising African values.

The realistic reproduction of material space, whether the space of the bush, the concession, the village or the city, appears as a distinctive mark of cinematographic expression in sub-Saharan Africa. (2011: 58)

The ‘audible’ of Sanaker’s heterolinguistic space of francophone West African media is comparable to Ouoro’s ‘reterritorialized space’ in film and video of ‘Africa for Africans.’ Together, the combination of language and space, which are the material and ‘distinctive marks’ of media expression in sub-Saharan Africa, defines, along with civic voice and music, the *média-engagé* by and about *Le Balai Citoyen* and *Y en a Marre*. National, transnational, and Pan-African by nature, using local terrain, and French and local languages in sub-Saharan Africa, *média-engagé* cuts across and connects countries where French and other languages are still audible in daily life and where representation of the local landscape itself is a reterritorialisation of the nation through the visual medium.

Grassroots Message and Participatory Democracy

Droit Libre TV’s *média-engagé* offers *Le Balai Citoyen* both local participation and a global presence by way of its Internet short entitled *Avec le Balai Citoyen, au coeur de la lutte*. In one of the many short featured interviews, Rasmane Zinaba, member of *Le Balai Citoyen*, remarks on the strength of young people to create local change: ‘C’est un jour historique (4:10–4:20) . . . la jeunesse de Burkina est en train de créer l’histoire, une histoire positive de son pays . . .’ (4:50–4:59) [This is a historic day . . . The youth of Burkina Faso are making history, a positive history for their country . . .]. That Zinaba’s emotional and politicised address to an Internet audience is in French whereas *Y en a Marre*’s is predominantly in Wolof, should not be lost on us, but it is not something to become obsessed by within a heterolinguistic landscape. The vehicular language

of Burkina Faso is French and *Le Balai Citoyen* uses it almost exclusively, whether representing *Le Balai Citoyen* in Bobo-Dioulasso or in Ouagadougou. What is important in Zinaba's testimony is that the youth are speaking out and making changes at that historic moment in October 2014. Furthermore, the exclusive use of French by *Droit Libre TV* should not be seen as a 'betrayal' of local languages (Adejunmobi 2004: 53). Rather, according to linguist Moradewun Adejunmobi, using French even where local languages are available may 'signify a redrawing of the borders of belonging in order to reflect the acquisition of new affiliations spread over a wider territory than previous affiliations' (2004: 54). With about 70 living languages in Burkina Faso, French allows for such 'lateral connections' and affiliations across other Burkinabè ethnic and linguistic groups as well as other francophone nations in *Droit Libre TV*'s sphere of communication. This is why privileging local voice turned civic voice, as opposed to national origin, is a crucial element to be analysed in any consideration of *cinéma-monde*'s 'audible' and heterolinguistic space of francophone media.

As I pointed out earlier, music, another element of the 'audible,' has a long-standing relationship to these organisations and creates a dynamic intersection between voice and nation and political engagement. To raise consciousness about the immigration crisis in coastal sub-Saharan West Africa, Senegalese filmmaker Moussa Sene Absa, for example, highlights the role of local music in his film *Yoole: The Sacrifice* (hereafter *Yoole*). Moving between Barbados with its English- and Arabic-speaking Muslim community and Dakar's French narration and youth-centred interviews and hip hop songs in Wolof, this digitally shot documentary focuses on sound as the expression of youthful disillusionment in Dakar. Sene Absa's use of heterolinguistic audible elements, places emphasis on local voices using French, English, Arabic and Wolof to do so. Through short and often disjointed vignettes, punctuated by music and poetry, the documentary aims to trace the desire to leave, but also wishes to reveal the causes of this national sacrifice.

In *Yoole*, which uses the true story of the tragic discovery of the corpses of eleven young Senegalese men in a boat drifting in the Caribbean to talk about challenges facing young people in Dakar, Sene Absa pieces together an imaginary and unavoidably fragmented narrative of agency, frustration, disappointment and resignation. Sene Absa places black and white images of former Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade's early campaign speeches of 'Sopi' ('change' in Wolof) alongside extreme close-up, colour images of young men (0:08–1:15). After telling the story of Barbados, Sene Absa sets up the comparison between the ghost ship and youth in Dakar

by returning to the extreme close-ups of young men who are sometimes silent, sometimes speaking in both French and Wolof about governmental disarray and economic hardship (4:20–5:42). For Sene Absa the ghost ship was tantamount to a sacrificial offering. In an online interview at the Tarifa African film festival published on YouTube in 2012, he laments that

These young men were sacrificed . . . When an African offers up a sacrifice, he chooses the most beautiful animal. We are sacrificing our most beautiful youth, which is the beauty of our world. That is the thing that most moved me . . . These young men are so disappointed. That is the truth that this reality revealed to me.⁷ (2:15–2:55)

This collective sacrifice is echoed in *Yoole*'s sound track featuring Daara-J's 'Exodus,' which begins with a lyrical French voice singing 'au revoir famille et terre . . .' ['good-bye family and homeland'] and continues by rapping in Wolof about young men being forced to leave their country for 'Barsah ou Barsakh' (7:07–7:37). This Wolof expression meaning 'Barcelona or death,' a play on words of Barsah as Barcelona and Barsakh as paradise, is explained in the documentary by psychologist Serigne Mor Mbaye speaking French. Towards the end of the documentary Ousseynou, a Senegalese immigrant in Portugal, is interviewed (1:01:11–1:01:45) and reveals the temptation of leaving by sea and arriving in Europe for the reality it is: a false hope for change: 'Europe is only a lure' (1:01:30). Where the young voices of the ship remain forever silent, the young men interviewed by Sene Absa, who directly witness the problems of a collapsing economy and rising unemployment, begin to use a rhetoric of accusation and protest, that Y en a Marre would further develop in January 2011 as civic voice in its platform for democratic participation, contributing to the collapse of Abdoulaye Wade's government in 2012.

The interplay of languages as civic voice in Sene Absa's documentary marks the rise of politically engaged music and of Wolof in Dakar as the use of French declines. This is evident with Y en a Marre's 2013 hit single 'Dox ak sa Gox' [literally 'marcher avec sa collectivité'/'walking with your community'] – the lyrics of which can be found on Y en a Marre's Facebook page in Wolof. Sponsored by Oxfam, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and OSIWA (Bryson 50), *Dox ak sa Gox* is also the title of Y en a Marre's own web-series and Internet platform created as Observatoire Citoyen de la démocratie et bonne gouvernance [Citizen's Observatory of Democracy and Good Governance], which alternates between French and Wolof.

Further evidence of this civic voice made of languages, youth and music is in Adams Sie's short film *Fed-Up*, when young rappers Matador



Figure 14.2 Young participants cheer and hold up their brooms at the end of a rally in Ouagadougou with Le Balai Citoyen co-founders and musicians Smockey and Sams’K le Jah in *‘Le Balai Citoyen’: Smockey et Sams’K le Jah veulent assainir le Burkina!* (Droit Libre TV, 2013, Burkina Faso).

(Mohamed Bendjabar) and Thiat address huge crowds at a demonstration in 2011 demanding that the government listen to the people and stop cutting the electrical current in Dakar. Speaking in Wolof, Thiat tells the crowd that the government is wrong about young people being ‘unhealthy’, because ‘the world today will say that we’re . . .’ and without a pause adds in French ‘une jeunesse consciente et éveillée’ [conscious and awakened youth] (4:59–5:01). The message in *Fed-Up* of youth culture’s fully awakened consciousness, civic voice, and political participation is also present in the 2013 documentary *‘Le Balai Citoyen’: Smockey et Sams’K le Jah veulent assainir le Burkina!*, in which the narrating voice says over an image of young people demonstrating in the street that the government would have to start listening to the ‘opposition and the youth’ (00:15–00:17) in the ‘popular movement’ to which Smockey et Sams’K le Jah lend their voice. They appear on the platform with brooms and incite the demonstrators to get out their brooms to ‘clean up’ their country. They repeat more than once ‘on est là pour faire le balai’ [we’re here to get our brooms out, to clean up] (00:30). The two musicians understand that

the voice of the country's youth should not be discounted in an election. Through the metaphor of cleaning house, they want to activate youth participation to change their government via the democratic process of elections. Sams'K le Jah declares very explicitly that they are there to respond to the interests of youth, who want real results and real change ('une jeunesse qui veut d'un mouvement des choses concrètes') (5:14–5:22), where each person has a voice and each person has a force to offer to the movement ('Chacun compte une voix. Chacun compte une force') (6:55–7:06) (see Figure 14.2). In other words, with civic voice comes the possibility to share power in a democracy.

Conclusion

Francophone media representations of such recent youth-led popular movements as Senegal's *Y en a Marre* and Burkina Faso's *Le Balai Citoyen* engage local political and democratic renewal in their respective nations by sparking a participatory civic voice that acquires transcultural and transnational viewership. These documentaries symbolise new technological trends in media-making worldwide, especially as democratising tools for youth and *média-engagé*. This is done in true minorising fashion that francophone cinéma-monde advocates by deterritorialising language in favour of civic voice, by attending to local democracy, and by forging alliances internationally across a heterolinguistic landscape. While these documentaries problematise the privileging of 'cinema' in cinéma-monde, they can also be included in an expanded understanding of cinéma-monde; one that would recognise multiple platforms for producing, viewing, and participating in the visual culture of the twenty-first century; would engage multiple publics in multiple languages; would critique assumptions about authority; would not easily untangle the complexities of belonging. These documentaries ought to be a part of the revolutionising of cinéma-monde so that it embraces its most minorising and democratising forms.

Notes

1. Angélique Kidjo, in a press release from Amnesty International, is quoted as saying 'I have always tried to use my voice – singing and spoken – to fight injustice and inequality' when she won, along with *Le Balai Citoyen*, *Y en a Marre* and LUCHA (Lutte pour le changement, Democratic Republic of Congo), Amnesty International's prestigious Ambassador of Conscience Award 2016. Available at <<http://www.amnesty.org/en/press-releases/2016/05/musician-angelique-kidjo-and-african-youth-activists-honoured-with-amnesty-international-award>> (last accessed 1 August 2016).

2. Droit Libre TV is an Internet television station that broadcasts in French. Its programming can be found at <<http://www.droitlibre.net>> and, according to their website, the station covers human rights issues across Francophone West Africa in Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo.
3. During and after the period of the Arab Spring, covering late December 2010 through to mid-2012, it is important to acknowledge the ways that the Internet and social media contributed to other social movements including *Y en a Marre* (January 2011) and part of *Le Balai Citoyen* (summer 2013). See Elisa Adami (2016) and Maximillian Hänska-Ahy (2016).
4. The nations most commonly grouped together as Francophone West Africa are Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo.
5. All translations from French are my own, unless otherwise noted.
6. According to the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* (hereafter OIF), which publishes statistical analysis every four years on the usage of French in the world, there were 274 million French speakers in the world in 2014. Use of French in Europe is down 8% from statistics of 2010, but has grown substantially in sub-Saharan Africa. Sub-Saharan Africa represents 54.7% of all speakers of French worldwide (OIF 2014: 20–22). One of the more interesting findings in Senegal (some 29% of the population speaks French) is that in Dakar French usage is declining with the rise of Wolof and English (45–51). With French as the language of instruction in some thirty-two countries in the world, including both Burkina Faso and Senegal, one could argue that maintaining the French language in sub-Saharan Africa is about developing a linguistic as well as a cultural sphere of influence.
7. (2:15–2:55) Available at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FehKoqNG-zg>> (last accessed 6 January 2016).

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