

Moral Economy of Land Claims among the Urban Youth of Kampala

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Land claims in Buganda are at the center of the royalist political speech and of the tensions between the kingdom and the central government. They are a major stake in the campaign towards the 2011 elections. They seem to have been critical in the outburst of the riots in Kayunga and Kampala in September 2009.

It is worth noting that the demonstrations in September 2009 and mobilizations around land were carried essentially by the urban landless youth. Nevertheless, the *mailo* system, which is defended nails and teeth by the monarchy, favors the landlords. These mobilizations look very different from the ones of the Bataka during the Protectorate, who were asking for a new distribution of land and criticizing the conservative royal establishment.

This paper is based on this apparent paradox. Taking into account the important communication and mobilization efforts carried by the kingdom for the last 15 years, what is the “moral economy” carried by these mobilizations? How does this youth formulates, understands, transforms the land question in Buganda? What are the political imaginaries at stake? How do these youngsters imagine themselves inside the political and social architecture of the re-imagined monarchy and “ganda community”? What do they expect from the landlords and from the *mailo* system? What is the part played by their different characteristics in terms of family history of involvement in politics or with the kingship, gender, social position, clan, associational and political party belonging? This research is based on extensive interviews carried among protagonists of the mobilizations in Kampala, sociology of the numerous associations involved, and analysis of the sequence of the riots in 2009.