THE BANTU FAMILY ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A CASE OF CLAN SOLIDARITY IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

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This paper aims to explore the specificities of Bantu family entrepreneurship. Based on the case of family entrepreneurship in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), we used three reading grids related to the context: the clan solidarity, the economic crisis and the Congolese family legislation. We analyzed qualitative data (Miles & Huberman, 1994) collected from three Bantu family entreprenuerships of Bukavu – an important urban center in eastern DRC. Our results indicate the central role of clan solidarity and the social responsibility of Bantu entrepreneurship. From a managerial point of view, the Bantu founder should assume a role as manager of the business and as a father of his clan members. The successor of the founder must ensure that he gradually reduces extended family influence in the business. This does not mean to abandon systematically family members. The successor should rather find a balance between the social responsibility and the growth or at least the survival of the business.

INTRODUCTION

Despite the development of research on entrepreneurship in other countries and the importance of family entrepreneurship in Africa, the specificities of Bantu family entrepreneurship remain poorly understood. In order to best explore these specificities, we sought to capture the Bantu family entrepreneurship in situ. First, Africa and particularly the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) context are marked by an acute economic crisis. The crisis has impacted negatively the income and lifestyle of families, mostly in urban centers. Second, instead of initiating an effective social security system, the Congolese government has appealed to clan solidarity. Consequently, stimulated to undertake to solve everyday problems, many urban families have not benefited from either private or public financial mechanisms. Far from their original rural home, these urban families could not also ensure their daily consumption from farming. Most of them had to rely on clan solidarity to undertake, for the survival of family members.

Bantu family entrepreneurship is the initiative of starting a business characterized by actions, motivations and aspirations of a family and based on clan solidarity. Such solidarity predominates in rural areas. But it was strongly expressed in urban centers, since the family was brought to coordinate production and consumption for the welfare of clan members. As custom and family laws impose obligations of solidarity to the rich person of the clan (Congolese Family Code of 1987), the Bantu entrepreneur would be called to ensure the well-being of his clan members. The same case applies to the successor, regarded as manager of a community heritage.

Then, three reading grids were used to attempt an understanding of the specificities of Bantu family entrepreneurship. First, Bantu clan solidarity could make entrepreneurship a kind of totem. This means Bantu entrepreneurship could symbolize cohesion to ensure the survival of the clan members mainly in urban centers. Second, the economic crisis could strengthen the role of patriarch or “father” devoted to the founder and his successor. They would be called to ensure, through entrepreneurship, the protection of the family in search of more vital forces for the clan members. Third, departing from the Bantu custom and the economic crisis, the legislation would strengthen family bonds of clan solidarity within the business.
Thus, clan solidarity should be deployed in different phases of Bantu family entrepreneurship: on the creation, in the daily management and in the passing of the business on to a successor. As manager, the Bantu founder of family entrepreneurship could benefit from the opportunities of cultural context and
solidarity impulses to mobilize the resources of the family. In return, the entrepreneurship would be held in a social responsibility to help members of the founder clan. It would be a win-win relationship. The founder would receive the necessary human and financial resources from his family. She or he should also participate in the welfare of the clan members. This type of exchange between the business and the extended family could continue after the succession phase.

To effectively capture these potential specificities of Bantu family entrepreneurship related to clan solidarity, we opted for an in-depth analysis of a limited number of cases (Yin, 1994). We analyzed the qualitative data (Miles & Huberman, 1994) obtained from three Bantu businesses of Bukavu – an important urban center in eastern DRC. The cases include a family business of first generation under the control of its founder and two of the second generation. Of these, the first family business experimented yet the succession process; the second has actually reached the milestone of the succession (more than ten years since the accession of the second generation in control of the business).

This study highlights the social responsibility of Bantu family entrepreneurship in a situation of widespread economic crisis. We found that indeed clan solidarity is at work within the Bantu family entrepreneurship. In the creation phase, the founder uses financial and human resources of his family, on favorable terms. But in return, through the current management, the founder responds to various and varied stresses from his clan: employment, income transfers, education of children from extended families ... Since the phase of succession, the successor inherits not only the management of the business but also the constraints from the clan solidarity. Moreover, this successor is undergoing a kind of clan relations setbacks. Indeed, during the second generation, family members tend to have a logic of return on their past investment. Some of them do not hesitate to claim their inheritance rights over family property. If the manager does not meet their demands, they threaten to break up family entrepreneurship.

From the managerial point of view, this study suggests that the Bantu founder should expect to assume the role as manager of both the business and his extended family. With the departure of the founder, the successor must ensure that he gradually reduces the influence of the family in the business. This does not mean she or he should systematically abandon family members. Instead, she or he will reorganize the clan’s solidarity so that the business is less and less sought to meet the needs of the family. Thus Bantu family entrepreneurship in the DRC can hope to secure its survival and growth while assuming its social responsibility. Such conclusions and suggestions can be extended to other contexts where family members have no other options than family business initiative to ensure their well-being.

We divide this study into four sections. First, the context of Bantu family entrepreneurship allows us to develop proposals on the links between clan solidarity and family entrepreneurship. This clan solidarity is based on the Bantu custom, promoting a broader conception of a family and assistance bonds. The independence of the Congo (in 1960) and the custom provide references of time and spatial contexts to understand the effect of both the cultural factors and the economic crisis on the emergence and the development of family entrepreneurship. Family law, also based on the economic crisis and on the Bantu custom (specifically on clan solidarity), allows to understand the strengthening of ties of mutual assistance between members of the clan. The second section is about the research methodology and describes the three family firms selected, our interlocutors and the procedure used for collecting data. The third section presents the results obtained in connection with the proposals developed and following the different phases of family entrepreneurship. The fourth section finally provides conclusions and suggestions.

THE CONTEXT OF BANTU FAMILY ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Clan Solidarity

One of the first ethnographic studies on the Congo emphasizes a broader conception of the family (De Cleene, 1944). De Cleene (1944, p. 85) noted that:

"(...) in the Congo, the family is nowhere as an individual organization, easily discernible in the social complex of which it forms part. (...) In any case, family has an independent and
Clan is a sociological unit that refers to a real or mythical ancestor, with a common symbol of cohesion: a totem (De Cleene, 1944; Durand, 1987; Muderhwa, 1993). Identified by this totem, the clan is headed by a chief who speaks and acts on behalf of ancestors (De Cleene, 1944). Elungu (1987) reflects the role of this patriarch in these terms: "He is the leader, the master of ceremonies in which, driven by the rites, the activity will mystify practice, always in search of more life, more force for members, more strength and cohesion for the group." Then clan cohesion is governed by the law of solidarity; this obliges all members to mutual assistance, not only for subsistence, making the clan a body of a collective economy, but also in all other circumstances of daily life; the clan is, concludes Mulago (1973), a basic unit of social, historical, economic and even religious identification.

More specifically, in a still famous book "Bantu Philosophy", Fr Tempels P. (1945) showed that among the Bantu clan peoples, the universe of forces is organically built on an ontological hierarchy: the supreme force "God," the creators of the clan "archipatriarchs" the dead in order of birth, living men, animals and plants and ultimately minerals. This hierarchy places men at the center. Above, the larger forces are intermediaries with the supreme force and the lower forces were created to serve men. It means men are strong or "forces" through their links with the supreme force, the clan and the family, but also with their links with descendants and their heritage. Tempels (1945) found in the "Bantu philosophy" a gradation in the essential quality of man following the intensity of the vital force. Thus, the condition of the life force of a man is far from zero, from "Mufu (death)" or from a man of moderate importance ("mutu mutupu") to a powerful man who has a say in the community ("mutu Mukulumpe"), or chief ("mfumu"), or father ("tata"). Similarly, someone becomes by the investiture a "mfumu", meaning a superior vital force, who may reinforce or maintain anything or anyone that falls under his hierarchy. In this connection, Tempels (1943, p.77) noted that:

"God is the possessor, the seeker, the enhancer and the preserver of life. His great and holy gift to man is the gift of life. Other creatures are, according to the conception of Bantu, the minor vital forces, that exist in the divine plan, with the sole purpose of maintaining and enhancing the vital gift to man ... Similarly forces below are available to men to serve in building, maintaining and protecting the life of "muntu". Following the Divine Plan, and following his will, all life can and should be respected, preserved and strengthened in the "muntu"."

Based on Tempels “Bantu philosophy” and Aristotle “Organon”, Kagame (1956) -with the advantage of being an African professional philosopher (Tempels had been criticized for not being African nor philosopher, but having gone to philosophize instead of African philosopher)- has shown the ability of Bantu languages to conceptualize the "being" (or force) from the radical "ntu": "Umuntu" plural "Abantu" (the being with skills), "ikintu" "ibintu" (the being who has no skills), "ahantu" (locator being) and "ukuntu" (the modalities of being: quantity, quality, relation, position, action, passion, possession).

The role of both entrepreneurship and founder may be deduced from this Bantu ontological hierarchy and universe of forces. In this conceptualization, the company "ikintu" ("ibintu" in the plural) shall be for a man ("umuntu") an inferior force. It made to serve and help strengthen the "muntu" vital force. Since members of the clan ("abantu") could use the company ("ikintu") to preserve and enhance life, the firm "ikintu" and its modalities "ukuntu" (quantity, quality, relation, position, action, passion, possession) become the symbol (totem) of cohesion from which they identify for the mutual assistance, the conservation and the enhancement of the life force. From this “Bantu philosophy” we deduce the following propositions related to entrepreneurship:

Proposal 1
Entrepreneurship is a totem, a symbol of family cohesion.

Furthermore, from the relationship between forces, men reinforce or reduce forces. As, the founder of a family firm can build and maintain everything that falls within his hierarchy ("ikintu","abantu") and as a clan is the family unit and the body of a collective economy, the founder becomes the patriarch. He becomes a leader; this means he is a head ("mfumu") or a father ("tata") of the clan members under his hierarchy.
Proposal 2
The founder is the head of the clan "mfumu," "Tata" (father to maintain or strengthen what falls under his hierarchy).

By the investiture, the successor could become also a leader "mfumu," father "tata" and a powerful man who has a say in the community "muntu Mukulumpe." Hence, we deduce the following proposal concerning the investiture at the head of the company:

Proposal 3
The investiture as head of the company could enhance a man—the successor of the founder—to be a "muntu Mukulumpe" (A powerful man who has a say in the community).

This first group of proposals shows how clan solidarity would assign a social responsibility to the entrepreneurship and to the Bantu founder or his successor in family business. As we show below, the economic crisis and the Family Code (1987) could reinforce the social responsibility of family entrepreneurship. Especially in urban centers, an entrepreneur has to become a patriarch and family business a totem for cohesion and mutual assistance between clan members.

The effect of the crisis on Bantu entrepreneurship
Although Bantu family entrepreneurship in DRC is located in a globalized world, where for example elsewhere there are bicentennial family businesses (Les Hénokiens), barely half a century has passed since the DRC’s independence. Upon accession to national sovereignty (June 30, 1960), entrepreneurs of colonial origin suddenly and massively left the country. The first attempt of Bantu entrepreneurship was very ephemeral. The transition conditions, political crisis and serious management problems meant those "Acquéreurs" (i.e., those Bantu who took up colonial businesses) quickly disappeared from the economic landscape. Even, during the decade that followed the disturbances of independence, the Congolese economy dependent on exports of minerals, especially on copper production and exportation, continued experiencing enormous difficulties. For example, since 1974 the copper prices on the world market fell continuously. From approximately $ 3,370 per metric ton in April 1974, the price went down to $ 1,350 in December 1974 and to $ 1,280 in December 1975; in addition, inflationary pressures on capitalist economies from 1974 affected the Congolese (Zairian) economy, totally dependent on the outside (Kannyo, 1979). By the end of the 70s, the sharp fall in world metal prices and rising interest rates deprived the Congolese economy of outside income. The late 1970s marked a period of drying up financial resources and lack of institutional mechanisms for financing small and medium enterprises. Thus, funding for small urban businesses came mainly from families.

Proposal 4
Funding for the creation of the family business is mainly from the resources of the family.

The construction of a modern economy has provided hope for an improvement of the living conditions of populations. Particularly during the years before and just after the Congolese independence, urban populations were to earn substantial income from their work in large companies or government offices. This encouraged school attendance as the means to access an easy life. Kasongo-Ngoy (1989) notes that many primary, secondary and higher schools were created and were taken literally by storm; everyone, he says, had a thirst to study and a hope to reach one day the bourgeoisie class. This bourgeoisie was however dependent on the state revenue from exports of raw materials and on the control exercised by officials on economy. But with the crisis, the possibilities of political and administrative rents have been reduced significantly. The privileged class was called to be reduced. The crisis severely hit the urban population. If during the colony period, urban populations were forced to return to original rural areas when they were unemployed, with independence there has rather been a massive move from rural to urban areas and the formation of slums. The rural exodus combined with the effect of the crisis and unemployment have pushed many families to engage in entrepreneurial activities to provide employment for family members.

Proposal 5
Entrepreneurship is a survival mode of life in urban families.
In fact, today Bantu entrepreneurship in the DRC is mainly from the second wave of initiatives. It has however emerged in a context of widespread economic crisis. In urban centers mainly, large private enterprises and the Administration have difficulty paying the salaries of officers. The economic crisis was of such magnitude that the credit institutions have also not even been able to finance entrepreneurial initiatives of families. However, these families, away from their original rural area, could not take the livelihoods of working the land. They were supported on clan solidarity to solve the problem of survival. This clan solidarity was recognized and even strengthened by the Family Code, with some repercussions on family entrepreneurship as shown in the following.

The Family Code and the obligations of family entrepreneurship
The economic crisis described above had an impact on family law. Congolese law relied on African customs to reaffirm the solidarity that should exist within the family. The Congolese (Zairian) Family Code of 1987 formalized family solidarity. The law therefore establishes the concept of parental authority that is not necessarily held by a single head of the family clan, but by any person socially and economically able to support members of the community. The reference is to belong to the same "house", that is to say, the existence of a common parent, whatever the legal status of the person within the family. This belonging gives rights and obligations of relief, assistance and respect within the family (art. 714). Thus, the founder of a family business as the rich person, he must rescue these obligations, support and respect vis-à-vis members of his family.

Proposal 6
The founder brought relief to parental authority, support and respect to members of his family clan.

The Congolese government has also failed to organize a system of social security —an institutional solidarity. Instead it has called for clan solidarity —for a non institutional solidarity. Thus through the law, the Congolese government relied on custom to impose obligations of solidarity among family members. However, unlike the Western doctrine in which the liberality needs no consideration from the beneficiary. Kalongo-Mbikayi (1997) argued that, by the original notion of liberality, the legislature intended to meet the customary conception that any assistance requires from the beneficiary a sort of moral and social obligation to show to the benefactor. So Camilleri (2007) observed that the recruitment in the family corresponds to a need for family solidarity, but it also allows "economic exploitation of parents hired."

Proposal 7
Bantu entrepreneurship could take advantage of family human resources at low cost.

However, the domestic authority, the maintenance of the extended family, of the community and the clan, are the constraints on the Congolese family entrepreneurship. The creator of the family business and his successor should not entranch themselves without running the risk of undermining community cohesion at the risk of prosecution or, at least the anger of the ancients (and ancestors). The Congolese government has obviously relied on the previous existing solidarity of Bantu custom. The legislation passes then on the people the duty to care for each other. The State has held no real social security system despite the unemployment (and employment without salaries). Solidarity takes the form of various obligations. These are directed at the family business and extended beyond the nuclear family: the obligation of aid and assistance within the family, duty of fair distribution of income and family assets, child support obligation, and parental authority exercised by any person socially and economically able to support members of the community (Family Code, 1987). The successor within the family business found in a network of relations of solidarity that go beyond the narrow circle of his nuclear family.

Proposition 8
The successor inherits the constraints of the clan solidarity.

From these contextual elements, the specificities of Bantu family entrepreneurship can be summarized by three reading keys. First, the solidarity of clan type rooted in custom. This solidarity assigns social responsibility to entrepreneurship and to the entrepreneur (founder and successor). Second, the economic crisis in the sphere of modern economy deprived the family entrepreneurship of institutional funding. This justified alternative financing from the family. Third, from the failure of the modern economy, the legislation on family provides a binding to the clan solidarity. It strengthens the social
responsibilities of family, assigning obligations of mutual support to family members in the business. Such would be the specificities of Bantu family entrepreneurship to explore, especially in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To explore the Bantu family entrepreneurship characteristics related to clan solidarity, we opted for an in-depth analysis of a limited number of cases (Yin, 1994). Three Bantu entrepreneurship have been studied: a family business of first generation under control of its founder (FBG1) and two of the second generation. Of these, the first business experimented yet the succession process (FBG2); the second has actually reached the milestone of the succession — more than ten years since the accession of the second generation on control (FBG2').

Five interviews were conducted in two stages: in July 2006 (FBG2' and FBG1) and in February 2007 (FBG1, FBG2' and FBG2') — at seven months’ interval. The concern of obtaining comparable information guided the choice of firms, interlocutors, questions and sequence of interviews. The three firms are located in Bukavu, an urban center to the east of DRC. They all were created by Bantu entrepreneurs after the Congolese independence (1960). The respondents were the creators’ children, oldest sons and senior managers. Except in FBG1, where we interviewed the daughter of the creator. In FBG1, indeed, the father is the senior manager and his elder son, the brother of our interlocutor, is still at school and has not yet joined the company. The sequence of interviews went through a back-and-forth process between these companies for a comparison across cases at the same time of collection and within-case comparison by repeating the similar questions at two different times in order to validate the previously data collected. At Time I (July 06), FBG2' is the test case for the interview in FBG1, while at Time II (February 07), FBG1 is the pilot case for the interview in FBG2' and at the same time II (February 07), FBG1 and FBG2' cases are the drivers for FBG2 interview. FBG2 is indeed one additional case, while sharing some features with other cases, it differs significantly in one or more points (Hlady Rispal, 2002). Compared to FBG2', the distinction relates to recent succession and the relatively large presence of family members and, compared to FBG1, it relates to withdrawal of the creator.

Considering that FBG2' has really passed the first generation, this company was chosen as the starting point for interviews. FBG2' provides a summary view on the generational change. In addition, as a pilot case, we benefited from a strong opening of our interlocutor in FBG2’. He did not hesitate to deliver information that to others would have been confidential. The atmosphere was also supported by an in-depth interview. Unlike the other three interviews in the offices of the interlocutors, the two interviews for FBG2' were carried out in the family house and during the rest days (Saturday and Sunday). This advantage must however be balanced because other interviews at the working place offered the advantage of immersing ourselves in the actual experience of these managers (interruptions, phone calls, directs contacts with some partners … have enriched the data collected).

To optimize interviews, we chose to avoid any question about figures. It is known that such questions are taboo in Africa (for example, managers are afraid to unveil their business volume, the number of employees for fear of taxes or union membership obligations). We focused our questions on the relationship between business and family according to clan solidarity. With our interlocutors’ agreement, the interviews were fully recorded on a recording device and following the guidelines of our protocols. We played back and transcribed interviews. This first work was the opportunity to conduct a preliminary analysis. It gradually allowed us to define the new protocol for the next interview and to get an idea of the links between family solidarity and entrepreneurship (see table 1 for an overview of the conduct of interviews and profiles of the interlocutors).

After these details on the procedure used, in the following we will analyze the qualitative data (Miles & Huberman, 1994) obtained from these three Bantu entrepreneurship. We will present and comment on the similarities between those firms that demonstrate our initial proposals. It is also about how the clan solidarity actually unfolds in the different phases of Bantu family entrepreneurship: at the creation, in the daily management and in the succession.
### Table 1. Sequences and objectives of interviews and profiles of interlocutors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time I</th>
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<tr>
<td>July 2006</td>
<td>February 2007</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>FBG1</th>
<th>FBG2</th>
<th>FBG2’</th>
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<tr>
<td>1st Interview</td>
<td>3rd Interview</td>
<td>2nd Interview</td>
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<td><strong>Contact person</strong></td>
<td><strong>Contact very open</strong></td>
<td><strong>Contact very open</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2nd Interview</strong></td>
<td><strong>4th Interview</strong></td>
<td><strong>2nd Interview</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Cross-case</strong></td>
<td><strong>Comparison</strong></td>
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<td><strong>comparison:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Comparison</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Data from the</strong></td>
<td><strong>Verification</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data from the</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>first series of</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data from July 06 and</strong></td>
<td><strong>second series of</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>questions obtained</strong></td>
<td><strong>February 7 Results</strong></td>
<td><strong>questions obtained</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FBG2’</strong></td>
<td><strong>in FBG1 and FBG2’</strong></td>
<td><strong>FBG1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd series of questions,</strong></td>
<td><strong>Verification of data obtained in July FBG2’</strong></td>
<td><strong>Intra-case Comparison,</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Collection of new data,</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Audit data from FBG2’</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PILOT CASE of FBG2’</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PILOT CASE of FBG2, FBG1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Profile of the interlocutor</strong></td>
<td><strong>Degree in Management</strong></td>
<td><strong>Master in Management</strong></td>
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**THE RESULTS**

**On the creation of family entrepreneurship**

In all three cases, the founders had received a real or perceived support from parents for the start to engage in small trade. In FBG2’, the father sold a cow and gave his son a portion from the sale. In FBG2, the founder would have received from his father a few Zaïres (currency of the time) that he began selling peanuts. And, as the founder father of FBG1 was a trader, he has always believed that his son has certainly inherited its experience in trade. Also in three cases, the founders had a level of study limited to essential. They were forced to abandon long and costly studies with an uncertain outcome. This is evident in the following statements when asked about the profile of the founders of the company:

"They went only to primary school and that's all. What do you think, all these old guys who have money today, they didn’t go to school." (FBG2, February 07).

"(...) he (talking about his father) was studying at St. Therese. Then when the studies (hesitation), when he reached a level where he felt he could stop, just able to read and write, since it was at that time, then he went into this business '"(FBG2’, July 06).
"Just when he graduated (end secondary school), so he has not found ways to continue the university then he began "(FBG1, February 07).

In this way, relatives and particularly the brothers’ founders —in this patriarchal society— experiencing the same financial difficulty in further studies, are also recruited by the family firm:

"(...) when he saw his younger brothers were not able to perhaps finish the studies, while also they have initiated work together; that's how they started to work "(FBG1, February 07).

"(...) as he finished his studies (secondary school) the family, clearly, was not able to lead him to university, that's how old (the founder) was hired to start working with him " (FBG2', July 06).

Founders worked with their wives, before being joined by younger brothers when the volume of activities increased. The brothers are privileged emissaries for foreign missions. But the founders attached only to family members that are useful for the business in the early stages. The family members are less demanding in terms of remuneration. Many of them still live under the roof of the founder of the business. This founder is somehow their foster father. In the opinions of our interlocutors, there is a link between the provision of family resources, both human (brothers of the founder) and funding (from the father of the founder), and certain benefits that should be recognized to family members. This is evident from the following statements:

“(…) somehow, they (the founder brothers) have also greatly helped because it’s the family business. They started with the old (the founder) in Kinshasa, Kikwit. (…) It is clear that the grandfather helped him. And that’s why somehow I also told myself that they, it’s true it was his personal effort, but somehow, there was still a small departure from the family, that’s why we cannot completely rule out family members to be eligible for certain benefits derived from the family business”. (FBG2', July 06).

If financial resources to start the business are not clearly from the family, such obligations to assist founder brothers still exist, but less strongly:

“If money was from the grandfather, so there could be a lot of problems; You, you eat, you do not give anything to your little brothers.’ But I think he gives them because he tries to give them something anyway” FBG1, February 2007.

Overall, from the three cases the founders mobilize financial and mostly human resources of the family for early development of the business. It is also the case in hard periods:

“(…) the one great advantage here, in this difficult time, usually they (family members) are people who can be counted. For example, an example during the war, when everyone flees, workers flee because everyone has to save his life, but someone in the family can say it is our business, I remain (for protection of family assets).” (FBG2’, February 2007).

In return, family entrepreneurship should contribute to the welfare of family members. Entrepreneurship is therefore a symbol of family cohesion. The founder of the business also assumes the role of father toward his relatives who are in business. These results are in line with proposals 1 and 2 on respectively entrepreneurship as a totem, symbol of family cohesion and the founder as a “tata” (father) to maintain or strengthen those under his hierarchy. And, with respect to proposal 4 on financing, the funds come primarily from the family. Moreover, in the early stages of development, the family supplies human resources on favorable terms (costs). This last result is also in the sense of proposal 7 related to the advantage of family human resources.

In the daily management of family entrepreneurship
From the interviews, family business is like a second chance. Failing to have pursued further education and without hope to access the bourgeoisie of the diploma, founders and their brothers prefer to take this second opportunity:

“I think the family business here at home (Bukavu) is primarily the result of chance. The chance is to say that someone who faces challenges of life starts to look for survival. While
unable to work because he has no training or not find work, then he teams up only in the business world. That chance, that's what I call luck. He is associated (he launches) in business with either the opportunity to succeed or to fail. So once he has succeeded, around him starts to graft the family members. You see, to enjoy the perks that this and that. And so far, it's still an individual company, not even that I do not call a family business. Of course the family somewhere, by feeling of allegiance, because here at home if anyone has any small ways, people naturally come to you (him) "ku sengera" (allegiance). Since even the "shi" custom (the majority of inhabitants of Bukavu) is to be always around someone who has something.” (FBG2’, July 2006).

Unemployed family members often turn around family business. The assumption is that there must be some equity of access to family business. Sometimes this can lead to a real dilemma:

“It is always difficult because there are family members who come (...) if you say no to someone, ‘oh! You are against me.’ If you say yes; “oh! There is discrimination (...).” (FBG1, July 2006).

In all three cases the support to other family members is common and almost binding:

“It’s like everywhere. What will he (the founder) do, as he has some properties, he is the head of the family (...) I can say for example in the family of my father, I think they are five. We then try each month to give everyone something to meet his basic needs.” (FBG1, July 2006).

In FBG2’, although he does not completely agree with wages to some unemployed family members, our interlocutor finds, however, such transfers justified:

“(…) because they are already in the family. And the old man (founder) was accustomed to such transfers, once he gave them a monthly salary; to grandparents, to aunts, to children of (phone interruption)” (FBG2’ July 2006). “(…) and that’s the tragedy of our parents who have made this bad service (a bit nervous). And when you do, when you suddenly change it, as did our young brother of C (another family business of second generation), this lead to the revolt. Since our parents have almost used to it.” (FBG2’, July 2006).

In all the three cases, family business provides income transfers and employments to family members. As unemployment is concentrated in urban centers, family entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur are all asked to ensure the survival of families in urban centers. These results are consistent with our proposals 5 and 6. This means family entrepreneurship is a survival mode of urban families and the founder is like a father for his extended family. However, the closer to the founder a family member is, the greater the chance to hold a key position within the business. The obligations of an entrepreneur depend also on degree of relationship with the founder. The transfer of income to mother, father and children of the founder is regular. The transfer to distant relatives occurs at special moments, such as someone developing a life-threatening illness.

In the succession phase in family entrepreneurship

In all three cases, unlike their parents who deliberately decided to go into business, founders’ children planned their future elsewhere:

"(...) I never thought I could work in a family business anytime." (FBG2’, February 07).

"(...) in my mind, I have never been prepared to work there. And now suddenly he (founder) said ‘You must work there’, so it was not easy for me. Then it took pressure, “Now you drop me, when I need your help, you must help me” and after pressure from the mom and from the little brother T; I had to return home here in Bukavu (to work in family business)"(FBG2’, February 07).

"(...) I went to the ISDR (High School of Rural Development), I took the first year, after that I have studied. He (his father) had said, “No, I see that you should stay close to me. We must work
together.” I then said “No.” (...) Yes, I told him that I prefer to continue studying. (...) Oh, oh, oh, oh! I said “Niet.” He said besides, “You must get married.” Ah what else! In this resistance, that’s how he called other people, friends. (...) I was 27, not, 26 years. So we talked, he convinced my friends, those which I was close. He convinced other elders who have pounced on me. Friends convinced me and stuff, I have to. I dropped the study. Then we started working with him (...)(FBG2, February 07).

"You know, I do not know what drove dad. As I, here, what interested me was the medicine, but you see him in his head “No just do this and this economy. (...) You will help me. (...) in Europe if the dad is a doctor, he also wants his child to become a doctor.” He said “You’re not awake you!” But when you’re used to listen to this, eventually it starts to interest you. "(FBG1, February 07).

In the three cases, it was by deterrence that fathers managed to integrate their children in the business. This integration remains a recent phenomenon. Parents agree that the future of children can be insured from the management of the family patrimony. Thus, they seek to instill in them an interest in management. The family business also allows them to be close to each other. Founders inspire in the children the need to address both the enterprise and the family. In this logic, the company is regarded as an organization created and animated to meet the needs of the family. In most cases, the first to integrate the business is the eldest child. Also, if the elder may be exempted from taking care of business, it is not conceivable for him not to endorse the father’s responsibility when his father dies. In both companies of second generation, the successors have actually inherited constraints as heads of families.

“(…) I’m still in the patterns of old, knowing that my father died and as the eldest I continue, I am the head of the family (…) as I said in fact the old man died; the old remained alive, so I basically continued the role as the old did. So on one side as a father, then as a father, of course I pay the school fees of children, I would give advice because the old had been very insistent on it, in his will he had been very insistent on this, he said (with passion): “You are the father, you’re their dad. To children you give them food, medical care and especially the advice.” So I am first a father, I advises. Then each child, and indeed even little brothers have still call me Daddy, “baba jambo” (hello father), that’s how even my mother can, even when she can even call me big brother “baba” (father), that’s how she calls me and that’s how lucky I am. (…) until now I am still the father of the family as old wanted, and I practically trying to meet the needs of all my kids as he would. This was his wish.” (FBG2’, July 2006).

“(…) and you can never leave the family, because it is assumed that they found you capable of leading this family. Because this family needs someone to manage it so it does not become like a family without a guide. That’s it (…) including relations of old, your own relationships and it’s all the family. So if we found someone who does not even cover 50% of these relationships, it is a failure. Because then you’ll cut your family relationships maintained by the old. And if you cut, first of you already stay isolated as a family. When you stay alone without external relations sucks, because when there is a mess (problem), people will learn only when you are already after sore point (injured), you have already committed one and other damages. But I think it’s the family initially the most important. The company also comes after, but they go together. If you manage as required the business, you also managed the family. If you manage the family badly, the company will not move forward. If you manage the company badly, the family cannot progress.”” (FBG2, February 2007).

Thus, it appears, according to the proposition 8, that the successor inherits not only the management of the company but the constraints of an extended family. The constraints mean also a very delicate management of a family staff, particularly those who have worked for a long time with the founder.

“(…) as he works there since the age of 18, he may be now at 32 years (of service), myself I was a kid I saw him there (…) he is strict, but really it is not the right man there, that's
true. Once I have already thrown him out, but I felt the pressure from family saying he will die. But it's true since he does not know, he does not know, outside (interruption). And that's just the drama and somewhere I have always condemned the old because he did not create other openings that allow him, once he leaves institution (family business) to do something else. And I always regretted it.” (FBG2’, July 2006).

Faced with the dilemma, the successors try to find positions for their uncles where abuses will be reduced:

“So I thought until I was to put him at the reception (hotel), but I'm thinking to his starting point, the work of filing, in Kalemie where I am preparing activities in the maize crop in August.” (FBG2’, July 2006).

“I have rejected him and I pointed him in the work site. And by then as there are still construction sites. (...) I have found for him an occupation in our construction sites, where he will do no damage. I cannot entrust him an amount of $ 10,000. He then became an employee. So far it's like that, that makes at least four years, five years we work with him like that. » (FBG2, February 2007).

To avoid many potential conflicts, the successor also supports family members who want to set up their businesses. For this, he shall prove that he has acquired a stake. This is the ideal but reality is often quite different. In case of abuses, the founders easily take actions against their brothers; successors by cons have more difficult.

“Old had already said he cannot give him anything. The old man died while he was busy trying to negotiate again to be helped. Then we, we were still obliged to give him another amount of 10,000 dollars. So $ 6,500 cash and we bought her a van to operate (in transportation) so he could not touch on that money. Today «shuuì » (telling that all this slips like the wind), zero, zero. So, it's annoying element that exists here now.” (FBG2, February 2007).

“Well, with the old it was clear. (If) you had stolen, you had stolen, the law is the law, it was the prison and justice. It was like that (...) The old man would be alive that maybe he would bring him to justice because he has hijacked. But me, being here, I say the peace has a price. And when you ask the old men, they tell you that it is useless to go to justice, and then you must close your eyes. This is the great tragedy that we have, and that's why I have to find, as I say, a legal form where there are shareholders and each one can only expect his rights to the end of the year as profit, before, during the year, there is nothing. I want to move towards this.” (FBG2’, July 2006).

However, even if the nomination to head the company increases the power of the successors, they find it difficult to sanction abuse of their uncles. They also face enormous difficulties in responding to requests and pressures from family members. Unlike their fathers, they struggle to assert their authority as heads of an extended household.

“We have already seen much. It means like you, you are just invested, but just after investiture (family ceremony often chaired by the elders and the wise) it's over, everyone goes about his business, this becomes very light. For me, with the experience I have today if I had previously seen someone who is living like me today, or like F (another successor of a family business), I should have refused the nomination. (...) You see a guy like me; you start as heir to manage dads of fifties of age. Those who could have to think at least more than you, but they are the ones who start to think less than you. This is not interesting.” (FBG2, February 2007).

The successors are forced to meet the demands of their extended families to preserve the peace. Otherwise, antagonistic groups are created. They claim the division of family assets, with the risk of eliminating the family business. To meet the needs of an extended family, the successors are trying to invent other formulas to avoid heavy pressure from the extended family. They include in the company the cousins as employees hoping that they will take care of their immediate families. They also
participate in training of those cousins hoping also they could acquire useful skills to the family business.

“(...) I also recently started to pay his computer training and in management, I do it quickly so he can come lend a hand. He is the son of our uncle; the youngest brother of our father, his son must be aged 23 now, almost 23, yes 23 years. So that's our concern. (...) It is our desire to integrate them. We hope having capable people who are able to work. Let us say our uncle, we want to integrate this child (his child) why, because he has, how to say it, during the lifetime of the old man, he has only eat (which means he did not work). » (FBG2, February 2007).

“Thus having already educate the children, and helping their children to grow, I tell myself that it’s already a way to get rid of this responsibility, since I have already prepare the child to bear the burden of his family. That's how I'm currently thinking. And this will help because once the business will change in time, since I will stop playing this role of big brother there, it will be a private company now. And of course there will also require that they continue to live through their children that I had also help training by paying school fees, so that's how we try to reconcile. It is not complicated to me to reconcile the two. It's only the question to put in place structures and respect. » (FBG2’, July 2006).

Successors express the wish to transform the structures of the company. The objective is to ensure, in the future, a separate management of the company and of the family. Thus, their oldest sons could continue to play the role of head of family according to custom. But there is no question for those children to become the head of the company. The oppositions are such that failure would be certain. The legitimacy of these grandchildren of the founders would be challenged by children and own brothers of the founders. Thus, Proposition 8 that the successor inherits the family obligations must be upheld. In contrast, Proposition 3 should be qualified, because the power of the successor is not always reinforced with the investiture.

CONCLUSION

Clan solidarity is the central feature of the Bantu family entrepreneurship. This clan solidarity has its roots in the Bantu tradition that promotes a broader conception of family and support bonds between members. The Congolese government relied on this tradition to consecrate an even more compelling to the clan solidarity (Congolese family code of 1987). In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Bantu family entrepreneurship emerged after the independence in 1960, and since then it has suffered strong pressure from the national economic crisis. It is within this context that the family entrepreneurship appears as a symbol of cohesion to ensure the survival of clan members. In fact, being away from their rural home and on the basis of clan solidarity, family entrepreneurship allows urban populations to cope with the crisis of the modern economy. A Bantu entrepreneur mobilizes financial and human resources of the family. In our cases, the financial resources to start the business came from founders’ fathers. The founder’s father, even if the original capital in the company of the first generation did not come from him, still considers that it is his experience that he has transmitted to the founder. However, in all three cases, the founders worked successively with their wives before being joined by the brothers. Whatever the shape of the original family contribution, this strengthens the obligations in current management to respond to family needs: employment, income transfers... Initially, the founder ensures management of the family and he plays the role of father for his brothers. Indeed, the younger brothers often live under his roof. With the growth of the company, the founder joined in the company other unemployment members of his clan to whom he continues to play the role of patriarch. The analysis results suggest that transmission of simultaneous role of father in business and in the family can survive only when the founder has transferred power directly to his child. However, the company's survival may be compromised when the grand-son of the creator is directly placed at the head of the company by his father. Successors are under great pressure from family members to the point that they consider clearly separating the family and the business —for the survival of the company. It is therefore not intended to perpetuate a model of transmission of authority at the head of the business and of the family simultaneously.

From the managerial perspective, the successor must ensure that he gradually reduces family influence in the business. However, as the economic crisis persists and family members have no other alternatives to cope with survival, the successor will assume corporate social responsibility. In that
sens, among other things he participates in the training of their cousins. The objective is to ensure more
techniques among family members and / or to be sure that cousins will take care of their very close family
members (fathers, mothers and children). Ultimately, Bantu family entrepreneurship is called upon to
assume its social responsibility without compromising its growth or survival.

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