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Between Afropolitans and new Sankaras. Class mobility and the reproduction of academics in Burkina Faso

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Using the notion of Afropolitanism, which refers to highly mobile and well-connected "Africans of the world," this article examines the relative privileges of university graduates within Burkina Faso across generational divides. Comparisons emerge between cohorts graduating in the 1970s and the 2010s. While graduates of the 1970s enjoyed access to a privileged status through their local university education and a related network of global cosmopolitan qualifications and credentials, contemporary students have only limited access to this route of class mobility. The frustration engendered by this helps to explain the shape of the uprising that ousted the president of Burkina Faso in 2014, as the diminishing access to Afropolitan identities pitches the younger generation of students into different emerging constellations of political mobilization.

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