



ISSN: 0976-3376

Available Online at <http://www.journalajst.com>

ASIAN JOURNAL OF  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Asian Journal of Science and Technology  
Vol. 10, Issue, 08, pp.9951-9954, August, 2019

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### SOCIO-HISTORICAL APPROACH OF EMANCIPATION MOVEMENTS IN AFRICA

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#### ARTICLE INFO

**Article History:**

Received 09<sup>th</sup> May, 2019  
Received in revised form  
24<sup>th</sup> June, 2019  
Accepted 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2019  
Published online 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2019

**Key words:**

Tyranny, Freedom,  
Love, Beauty,  
truth, Duty.

#### ABSTRACT

Semantically, the notions of culture and media remain different. However, they are not antinomic, but rather, complementary in terms of their social functions. In fact, cultures are conveyed by individuals and can only be expressed through them (Abdallah-Preteille, 2001). That is why it is generally accepted that one cannot claim to know the cultural identity of others without communicating with them, without exchanging, without allowing them to speak, to express themselves as a subject. The media intervenes precisely at this level, to play this important role. With this technique, communication becomes utilitarian and therefore, communicating becomes synonymous with exchanging, initiating dialogue, and perpetuating a person-to-person relationship. In this role of bringing individuals together, the media disregards the difference in origins, nature of behavior and tradition of the latter, rather than taking them in their cultural diversities (Pierre Moulinier, 2001). So in the light of the African case, the present reflection focuses on the real issues of the media, in defense of the cultural identities of the continent. Through a sociohistorical approach, the author wants above all to demonstrate that media and culture are vehicles for the union and integration of different peoples.

**Citation:** Edmond Doua. 2019. "Socio-Historical Approach of Emancipation Movements In Africa", *Asian Journal of Science and Technology*, 10, (08), 9951-9954.

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## INTRODUCTION

In response to the multiple turbulences resulting from social changes, in this case socio-political and economic changes, the invasion by technology, increased migratory movements, the phenomena of urbanization exacerbated and unexpected, men are forced to adapt deal quickly with these sometimes repeated changes. This is the case of certain populations who, struggling with the avatars of acculturation, seek to manifest processions of symptoms that associate themselves very quickly with the confrontation of systems of conflicting norms and values. In order to provide a solution to this problem, the human sciences are initially challenged. In a practical way, their actions consist of responding to social needs and trying to solve a series of concrete difficulties, mainly related to the integration of migrants into host societies. The various actions undertaken lead to changing the points of view and changing the positions of each other. Social interaction becomes, therefore, an object of special reflection and the interest is more given to the systems that form partners caught in the contact of this interculturality. However, it is not always clear that these social actors mutually accept each other and many pitfalls will enamel their relationship in society. The basic reason is that men have always shown their ability to differentiate themselves and to produce cultural variations. In addition, in the confrontation with the multiplicity of cultures, men are regularly embarrassed by the existence of the

difference with the other, considered foreign. So how can one treat the latter, moreover completely foreign to the new culture, when his own is totally or partially ignored by those who welcome him? In addition, what definition does one give to one's status, when the problem of one's cultural identity and the information concerning it arises? And finally, what media approach should be adopted, in order to allow social actors, different cultural identities and diverse, to accept each other and succeed in the integration challenge? The example of the African continent, will help to better dissect this problem, both historical and contemporary.

*"Everyone calls barbarism what is not his use"*

**Definition and social functions of culture:**

One cannot speak of cultural identity without peeling the concept of culture which remains very complex. Culture is defined on the one hand, as a sum of knowledge relating to various sciences or human arts, and on the other hand, as the strict organization of this knowledge, the fact that they are structured together, assimilated, and that they form a coherent whole. Finally, this concept refers to a certain development of faculty on the intellectual level, considered in civilized man as having a certain primacy over other faculties (Vinsonneau, 2000).

The culture includes, in addition, the manner to think and feel about all customs, institutions and works. Dance, for example, before being a show, is a reciprocal imitation. By the establishment of a society, a communication, an absolute language, in other words an exchange of pure signs that has no other meaning than itself, which does not relate to anything else (Lacoste, 2002). However, whether they come from Africa, America, Asia, Europe or Oceania, all humans would be producers of cultures irreducible to each other and therefore subject to the necessary exchanges but also and especially to incessant transformations. With cross-cutting objectives common to all areas such as heritage conservation, artistic creation, dissemination, training, animation, research, communication, administration, culture is at the heart of many mutations, of threats, with sometimes reactions taken here and there on the question of its survival. Faced with this new situation, threats will hover over cultural identities, with however reactions from social actors, in order to safeguard and promote their culture.

***Clash of cultures and identity strategies:***

Cultural practices are symbolic markers of social identities (Coulangeon, 2016). In fact, alongside property and consumption, material goods, aesthetic preferences, and cultural practices participate in modern societies in the rituals of identifying social life (Yannic, 2009). Thus, in response to the multiple turbulences resulting from social changes, in this case socio-political and economic changes, the invasion of technology, intensified migratory movements, the phenomena of exacerbated urbanization, men are forced to adapt and deal quickly with these sometimes repeated changes. Therefore, they try to give themselves new frames of reference, new grids of interpretation of reality, in a word, another place in the world. Also, the theme of interculturality appears quickly in the respective fields of psychopathology and the sciences of education. It is generally observed that individuals, caught between two opposing cultural systems, always display various attitudes that are more or less variable between extremes. Nevertheless, despite these two extremes, individuals have the opportunity to make a choice. It then presents two scenarios, with different possible consequences. In the first case for example, accepting invasion by foreign characteristics, individuals can stop recognizing themselves in the cultural system of their origins adopting primo, a posture of submission and secundo assimilating in the new universe discovered. In the second case, by closing themselves to the intrusion of the new culture that is to say by opposing a resistance, they realize, on the contrary, a separation of their being and they can consequently be excluded from society, temporarily or permanently. But between these two poles observed, various positions, varying according to the situations crossed and the reactions lived, are almost probable. In this case, these positions are regularly translated by various manipulations and interpretations of cultural codes and practices. This explains why, when two individuals are usually caught between two or more cultures, they work systematically to safeguard their sense of identity. To achieve this goal, they necessarily seek to transform certain representations and values that they strive to put at the service of their ontological project, while trying to meet the requirements of the new cultural environment in which they are called to live. From the psychological point of view, however, we note that an individual is better integrated when he manages to develop certain cognitions and some conducts to ensure the economy of tension.

These tensions are obviously the corollary and resultant of the clash between the cultural code of its origins and that of the universe where it will be necessary to adapt, remaining, however, anchored in the first. Thus, in the face of an almost foreign culture to which the social actor is led to adapt, and most often against his will, the latter develops, instinctively and spontaneously, various identity strategies. In order to provide a solution to this problem, the human sciences are initially challenged. In a practical way, their actions consist of responding to social needs and trying to solve a series of concrete difficulties mainly related to the integration of migrants into host societies, in a system commonly known as globalization (Chaubet, 2013). However, it is not always clear that these social actors mutually accept each other and many pitfalls will enamel their relationship in society. The basic reason is that men have always shown their ability to differentiate themselves, and to produce cultural variations that can be traced through their customs, their languages, their ways of apprehending reality, their ways of structuring institutions. In addition, in the confrontation with the multiplicity of cultures, men are regularly embarrassed by the existence of the difference with the other, considered foreign. So how can one treat the latter, moreover completely foreign to the new culture, when his own is totally or partially ignored by those who welcome him? Moreover, what definition can one give to one's status, since the problem of one's cultural identity and the information concerning it arises?

History has indeed shown that when they have been confronted with this problem, more often than not, men hastened to grant themselves a superior nature of nature, while relegating foreigners to a subordinate universe (Vinsonneau, 2000). In such circumstances, one refuses to admit the very fact of cultural diversity, one prefers to reject out of culture, in nature, all that does not conform to the norm under which he lives. On the contrary, the intercultural approach is not intended to identify others by enclosing them in a network of meanings, nor to establish a series of comparisons on the basis of an ethnocentric scale. The emphasis should be on relationships rather than on cultures or individuals taken as nomads (Abdallah-Preteuille, 2000). To maximize the chances of successful communication between individuals from different backgrounds it is imperative to ensure the respect of interaction rituals and the alignment of the exchanged content on what prescribe the series of standards involved. By rituals, in fact, human communities are created, passages within them and from one community to another get organized (Wulf 2009). It is also essential to avoid projecting on the signs emitted by foreigners' interpretations that are relevant only to the culture of belonging of the person who apprehends them. Such interpretations probably do not coincide with the meanings that the subjects originally had to convey. In the event that these rules have not been observed, individuals will seek to safeguard their own cultural identities. We can finally see in identity the set of mechanisms by which individuals or groups project meaning on their being, by linking their past, their present and their future, the images of their real actions, those of the actions that are therefore recommended and those by which they wish to be characterized. By realizing such an integration of differences and contradictions, the identity dynamic operates as a dialectical process allowing each person to make himself similar to others while simultaneously distinguishing himself from them. By integrating the other into the same environment as oneself and by making change in continuity, the identity dynamic functions as a constancy from

which the sense of identity results. By allowing social actors to build themselves in the light of the sense they give to themselves, identity realizes an ontological and instrumental function, connecting the individual or the group to its environment through Culture. However, we can say that it is through the mediation of culture that the subject is informed of stimuli from the surrounding world and himself. The culture thus indicates to each one how to signify the situations crossed and the modes of reactions relevant to this one. In this sense, it merges with a pool of shared meanings from which the collective identity emerges, a framework from which individual identities are built and diversified (Laulan, 2018). Ultimately, it is remembered that when individuals are confronted with cultural systems that contradict each other, simply because they are strangers to each other, it inevitably results in shock. From this shock produced, conflicts of interest arise whose effects and consequences are often unpredictable and uncontrollable. This usually happens when one of the two cultures seeks, by any means possible to control the other, in order to better to dominate and degrade it. The media appear, therefore, as one of the possible alternatives for successful communication between the various social actors, various universes.

***Media and struggles for identity emancipation in Africa: actors and practices:***

In sixty years of colonialism, African history, philosophy and tradition, generally transmitted from generation to generation orally, have been at best depreciated, at worst forgotten, or even lost, at least in the layers of society of population directly in contact with colonizers and missionaries (Servin, 2002). Thus, writing, presented as a source of knowledge and indispensable to any civilization that tends to evolve, causes the Africans to lose their "Africanity". Africanity being defined as "a reality essentially based on men from the same land, living on the same continent, inevitably doomed, by the necessary process of decolonization at all levels and of global liberation, to the same fate, despite national or regional particularities (Méda, 2006). Africanity presents itself as a concept used to designate the union of African peoples around their cultural identity, thus forming a cultural community (D'Almeida-Topor, 1999).

Thus, the anxiety of these nationalists is confirmed when, in contact with the West, most cultural and artistic practices were disrupted, causing suddenly, a problem of their conservation, their preservation, their promotion and their development. This is the example of the performing arts, namely: music, dance and the theater of cultural facts that have suffered some negative effects of colonization (Leymarie, 1993). This colonial domination went even further, influencing the entire cultural organization and the traditional values of the African peoples. But the school initiated by the settlers is an important element in the process of becoming aware of the need and opportunity for them to organize and defend their artistic and cultural practices (Stamm, 2003). Also, the proponents of African cultural nationalism, therefore, begin to fight against the danger represented by total subversion, by these forms of imported practices and, notwithstanding their inappropriate and inappropriate characteristics, which are imposed on them. Massive urbanization, involving the mixing of populations, contributes to the emergence of new behaviors and new cultural practices, preceding both traditional practices, modernism and popular input. The sources of this last element are multiple, both endogenous and external, because to the influences exerted by the former colonizers, are added those of

the American Blacks and the diaspora. Lost in this flowering of cultural practices, Africans, in order to safeguard their heritage and their cultural identity, react by creating protest and protest movements for the promotion and recognition of cultural identity. However, the communication problem is acute. Indeed, how do you manage to inform and sensitize a population as diverse as it is linguistically diverse and composed mostly of illiterates? This problem is therefore part of the vast field of social communication's contribution to the development process in Africa. As a result, the communication style is important here, because the way in which a population perceives political objectives, new ideas or modern techniques, largely determines its participation in the development project (Laurent, 1970). The African people are calling for genuine development, that is to say the research and application of socio-economic development models inspired by African cultural heritage (Balandier, 1970). Social communications are examined in a concrete society, with the aim of connecting them to networks of relations and respecting their "cultural" modalities, which are very varied. Therefore, to succeed in their mission, the initiators of emancipatory struggles in Africa rely on the use of the media as effective means of information. Indeed, born of the will of the many religious missions in Africa, modeled on the European model thereafter, the African press serves first the religious cause, before constituting really later, an essential means of information for the population African (Tudesq, 1995). Through the media, Africa will open up to the outside world to strengthen its identity and the spirit of solidarity among its various peoples. In addition to their political dimension, the information integrates a cultural dimension which is all the more important as it concerns the programs listened to. The radio, thanks to programs broadcast in most cases in local languages, makes it possible to communicate to populations furthest from cities, the expression of an African identity.

### Conclusion

In the face of the various social changes, particularly the intensified migratory movements, human beings have been forced to adapt and face these upheavals rapidly. To do this, to the test of transmutations of cultural identities, the African elites react in order to fight the systems of norms and contradictory values in presence. By relying on the media, these leaders succeed in emancipating their people, by raising awareness on the imperative need to safeguard and promote the continent's cultural identities and practices. The media place particular emphasis on information, language education and promotion, socio-economic development, and entertainment and culture. Ultimately, this strategy helps to foster the integration of peoples and bring them closer together, around the cardinal values that underlie humanity. A historical reminder has been important, in order to better understand the social dynamics that underlie the various migratory flows that are taking place today. At the contemporary level, it is necessary to better feed the reflection, to see how, by an effective media practice, one could manage to create a real framework of peaceful cohabitation between various social actors. Has the history of men not shown that they are condemned to live together?

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