



## Presentation

# Issue 16 (Autumn 2019) : Modes and challenges of sociocultural community development in Africa

## Jean-Marie Lafortune

Editor, Journal Sociocultural community development and practices  
Professor, Department of social and public communication, University of Quebec in Montreal, Canada  
lafortune.jean-marie@uqam.ca

The recent history of sociocultural community development in African countries covers two distinct periods: 1) the post-World War II (1945-1960), during which the Welfare state, which had set itself up in the metropolises, had reached the colonies and encouraged the establishment of this function, sometimes as professionals, and of the first networks of equipment to accommodate activities; 2) the post-independence period ('1960), when political will and supply are lacking, while facing so many other challenges. Yet signs of the reactivation of sociocultural community development and its networks are observed since the beginning of the 21st century while various problems confront many African countries, of a health nature certainly, but also of access to public space, requires better structured sociocultural intervention.

## Analyses

For a long time used as a tool of political propaganda, radio stations have emancipated in recent years in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Administered by civil society, they play a leading role in defending public rights and freedoms. Their broadcasts disturb the established power but garner the consent of the people because they denounce abuses, better inform and give the community a voice to discuss issues of common interest. Valentin Migabo shows, however, in his article entitled « La radio communautaire et le défi d'accès à l'information publique en période de crises en Afrique : l'exemple de la RDC », that the conditions under which they operate are deplorable and that they face a great vulnerability.

The history of community action in Tanzania dates back to the end of the Second World War. Since then, many improvements have been made, even after independence (1961). The activities that are carried out come from the communities themselves. In this regard, development officers do their best to identify local resources available in collaboration with community members to ensure the sustainability of the projects across the country. In his text "Community development practices in Tanzania: issues and challenges", Bernard Ndiege calls for better training of affected workers, a national approach and more in-depth research.

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Music is a vehicle for promoting values useful for nation building in Côte d'Ivoire, like other African countries following their independence. If it evolves with the history of the country, the values it proposes today to the youth remove it from a civic edification, according to Emmanuel Gala Bi Tizié, Koffi Roland Bini and Alice Rachel Gala Tizié Lou Fewezan, who deplore in their article « Créativité musicale et culture citoyenne chez les jeunes en Côte d'Ivoire », that after the Zuglou and the Mapouka, more committed, the Coupé-décalé, which has been established for twenty years, abruptly breaks with this tradition. After investigation, they suggest that this artistic choice is due to fear of political retaliation and race for money.

Sociocultural community development is defined in Algeria in the context of the social evolution that followed the independence. The text by Aicha Boukhrissa, « L'animation socioculturelle et l'espace public algérien », aims to situate the meaning of the expression and the activities that this current of intervention has given form in the new sociocultural, economic and political environment. Three examples support the thesis of a greater use of artistic tools within social movements, particularly in Oran, a practice that seems to culminate in the demonstration against the political order since February 2019 and the organization of "Vendredire" to bring citizens' voices to the public space on the street and to the media.

Activities are more closely linked to sociocultural development when it unfolds far from the Algerian capital, as Redouane Touati and John Traxler report in their article « The Kabyle Community: Towards a People Centred Socio-cultural Development ». This region where the Amazigh (Berber) community lives has suffered greatly from its mountainous geography and marginalization by the authorities. These conditions have strengthened the spirit of belonging, solidarity and cooperation. To overcome their problems and develop their community, villagers are moving away from government initiatives and towards people-centred development by mobilizing artistic tools.

In their text entitled « Les influences du maraboutage sur la performance en football des équipes navétanes », Hameth Dieng, Assane Diakhate and Adiarra Ngom are trying to understand how this practice at the limits of witchcraft and religion determines the level of success of the players to the extent that the performances, the norms and values attributed to it seem to condition their attitudes and behavior. Their study conducted in Zone 5 of the municipality of Saint-Louis (Senegal) illustrates how the internalization of the dispositions induced by this spiritism constitutes a constraint that adjusts, on the one hand, their ways of doing, to be and to feel in football, and consecrates, on the other hand, the place and importance of « bewitchment » in amateur football.

### **Open section**

Based on a theoretical reflection on the main limits of intercultural, anti-racist or pro-convivial social awareness, as implemented in Spain, the paper of Daniel Buraschi and Maria-Jose Aguilar-Idañez, « Más allá de las campañas de sensibilización: el empoderamiento comunicacional como estrategia de intervención », proposes a way forward. Social intervention focused on communicative empowerment must generate a feeling of communicative self-efficacy, integrate technological appropriation and understanding through critical reading of the media, acquire dialogical and participatory skills, to develop the capacity to create and develop in collaborative communication actions having an impact on social imaginaries.

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The activities recounted by Noémie Maignien and William-Jacomo Beauchemin, in their text « Expérimenter les hybridations entre recherche-cr ation et m diation : pour une rencontre entre institutions culturelles et marges », aim in a critical social epistemology approach at reflecting both the different perspectives of marginalized groups and individuals involved in the project and facilitating the collective construction of knowledge about access to arts and culture. The Laboratoire Culture Inclusive, led by the organization Exeko (Qu bec), combines for this purpose research-creation, collaborative ethnography, cultural mediation, invisible theatre, literary creation and visual arts.

The next edition of the Review will have for theme « Research in sociocultural community development ». The deadline to submit an article or a report for this edition is March 28th, 2020 (see instructions: <https://edition.uqam.ca/atps>). We also accept any time texts to appear in the open section.

Enjoy the reading!