

GLOBALIZATION AND URBANIZATION; THEIR EFFECT ON THE SOCIAL LIFE OF POSTCOLONIAL AFRICA SOCIETIES

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ABSTRACT

Globalization is defined by different scholars in a different way, but most of the definitions argue that the more different peoples interacted, globalization will spread. Moreover, it is possible to say that interaction in any aspect is the core idea of globalization. And this interaction had facilitated in Africa to the emergence of different urban centers before, during and after colonialism. The main purpose of the article will be what were the effects of globalization and urbanization on the post-colonial African societies. As my title indicated, first I will go to discuss globalization focusing on its social aspect, then I will go to discuss urbanization in post-colonial Africa, and finally, I will go to assess the social changes that came due to interaction in the urban centers. In addition, I used the method of comparing the situations of the societies in pre-colonial independent African societies with the post-colonial societies to grasp the real changes.

Keywords: Colonization, Culture, Decolonization, Mode of Production, Post-Colonial Society

GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is not a new event for the contemporary world,¹ and it is the result of human interactions. Over many episodes, human beings have traveled, migrated, and settled in new lands for searching for better living conditions.² Nevertheless, it does not mean that searching for better living conditions was the only polling factor for their journey and migration. As far as there was the movement of peoples, the shadow of their culture came up with them, so the cultural aspect of globalization had a long history.³ In view of that, closer contacts and

¹ Farhad Nezhad Haj Ali Irani, Mohammad Reza Noruzi, "Globalization and Challenges; what are the globalization's contemporary issues?." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 1, No. 6, 2011, P. 216

² David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldbltt, *etal*, "Globalization." *Global Governance*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1999, P. 484

³ David, P. 486

interaction of human beings across the globe marked the beginning of globalization.⁴ From the sixteenth century onward, Europeans traveled the world, conquering the ‘‘new lands’’ and made colonies.⁵ During the contacts with different societies, ideas and culture were flowed straightforwardly, not even the fact that they all spoke the different languages could stop the flow of ideas and culture.⁶

The term ‘‘globalization’’ has appeared globally about decades ago.⁷ However, here what we have to realize is that there is a difference in the time span between the term *globalization* and the *process of globalization*. The term globalization did not have one general definition due to its complexity, it defines and analyzes by different scholars in different ways.⁸ Let us see some of the definitions. ‘‘Globalization is the spread of worldwide practices, relations, consciousness, and organization of social life . . .’’⁹, ‘‘Globalization refers to the process of the intensification of economic, political, social, and cultural relationships across international boundaries.’’¹⁰ and ‘‘Globalization is the increasing global integration of economies, information technology, the spread of global popular culture, and other forms of human interaction.’’¹¹ Some scholars define it as the spread of values, norms, and culture tends to promote western ideals of capitalism.¹² From the above directly quoted definitions of globalization, it is possible to derive a lot about globalization. Even if, most of the time when peoples wright about the definition of globalization the first thing comes to their mind is economic aspects of the process, and mention repeatedly about Multi-National Corporation. Conversely, according to the above definitions, other aspects of globalization like social and political should give equal emphasis as the economic aspect of globalization get more emphasis in most of the studies concerning globalization.

Globalization took place when peoples from different backgrounds like religion, political ideology, personal interest, and other meets. In short, as far as people’s interaction exists, either directly or

⁴ David, P. 486; Farhad, P. 217

⁵ David, P. 485

⁶ David, P. 486

⁷ Pete N. Stearns, ‘‘Treating Globalization in History Surveys.’’ *The History Teacher*, Vol. 36, No. 2, 2003, P. 153. ; Douglas Kellner, ‘‘Theorizing Globalization.’’ *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 2002, P. 285. ; Farhad, P. 217

⁸ Alhaji Ahmadu Ibrahim, ‘‘The impact of globalization of Africa.’’ *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol.3 No. 15, 2013, P. 85. ; Majekodunmi Aderonke, Adejuwon Kehinde David, ‘‘Globalization and the political economy of Africa.’’ *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social sciences*, Vol.2, No. 8. 2012, P. 191

⁹ Alphonse Kasongo, ‘‘Impact of Globalization on traditional African religion and traditional conflicts in Africa.’’ *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences*, Vol.2 No. 1, 2010, P. 310

¹⁰ Alhaji, P. 85

¹¹ Robert J. Lieber, Ruth E. Weisberg, ‘‘Globalization, Culture, and Identities in Crisis.’’ *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 2002, P. 274

¹² Farhad, P. 217

indirectly, there will be globalization. The process has enhanced social, economic, political, and cultural disintegration.¹³ The great world religions showed how ideas and beliefs cross continents and transform societies.¹⁴ There are also several good reasons to stay away from globalization.¹⁵ Globalization usually refers to contemporary development,¹⁶ in this process the values of the past did not have any grantee to continue. Furthermore, globalization has created two types of classes or societies, a small category that has enjoyed the benefits of globalization and the second, a major category that is poor and devoid of facilities.¹⁷ Yet, this process is still far away from creating an equal ground for computation, alleviation of poverty, and human security.¹⁸ Drugs, violence, and artistes of Rock-en-role have become the ideals of youths and there is no place left for traditional, social and ethical values.¹⁹ Violence, intoxication, terrorism, civil war, has become globalized.²⁰ Commercialization of the organization has created seedless products, thus giving way to non-food culture. Peasants, instead of producers had been turned to consumers. This kind of development is creating the feeling of loneliness in which the individual being cut off from his society and non- material sources of his life.²¹

The impact of globalization on developing countries is being seen in terms of modernization of industries as well as urbanization.²² Modernization should not be treat as westernization. When language, religion, tradition, value, and customs of society are a mix-up with an outside culture then this culture can be called modernized and process modernization.²³ China can be a good example of modernization without westernization. It can be said that global society is a cultural melting-pot where a fusion of culture has become a fashion.²⁴

We saw the process of globalization had been with as for centuries. On the other hand, the process of globalization onwards after African countries got their independence to get titanicly different in both scale and nature.²⁵ Extraordinary changes in communications, transportation, and

¹³ Prakash Mali Tripathi, Santosh Kumar Tiwari, "Socio-Economic Challenges of Globalization." *The Indian Journal of Political Sciences*, Vol. 69, No. 4, 2008, P. 720

¹⁴ David, P. 486

¹⁵ Pete, P. 153

¹⁶ Pete, P. 153

¹⁷ Douglas, P. 286. ; Prakash, P. 72

¹⁸ Prakash, PP. 718-719, 720

¹⁹ Prakash, 721

²⁰ Prakash, 721

²¹ L.P. Mair, "Social Change in Africa." *International Affairs*, Vol. 36, No. 4, 1960, P. 451. ; Prakash, P. 721

²² Prakash, P. 719

²³ Prakash, P. 723

²⁴ Prakash, P. 724

²⁵ David, P. 484. ; Farhad, P. 217

computer technology accelerate the process and made the Africans interdependent than ever.²⁶ Technology has now brought the peoples of different nations together²⁷ and swept away cultural boundaries.²⁸ As a final point, this facilitated the development of urban centers in Africa. Moreover, am going to assess how the interaction of Africans with the rest of the world led to the emergence of urban centers and how they affected or changed the social life of the societies.

URBANIZATION IN AFRICA

Most Africans had lived in a small village with the life structure of personal relationships, their kin group controlled and dominated every single moment of their life and behavior, in addition, their lineage was everything for them.²⁹ However, after the industrial revolution of the west in the nineteenth century, the orders in Africa became changed, the industrial revolution came-up parallel with urbanization.³⁰ Urbanization refers to living in the town with working non-agricultural activities, as against living in rural areas.³¹ Even if urbanization was not new for Africa,³² the urbanization during and after colonialism was new, due to its came-up parallel with industrialization.³³ Probably these new towns had a great role in the development of Africa's economy by industrialization and politics by the introduction of modern democracy, but I only focus on social changes that came from the interactions in the urban centers.

Africa is the least urbanized content with more than half of its peoples lives in a rural village.³⁴ Onwards from the colonial era, the establishment and growth of African cities showed massive improvement, especially in the last decades before the year of African independence.³⁵ "They are towns built by whites and occupied by blacks"³⁶ this gave one additional character to the

²⁶ David, P. 484. ; Farhad, P. 217; Prakash, P. 718

²⁷ Prakash, P. 724

²⁸ Farhad, P. 217

²⁹ William B. Schwab, "Urbanization, Corporate Groups and Culture Change in Africa below the Sahara." *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 3, 1970, P. 190

³⁰ Hugh H. Smythe, "Social Change in Africa." *The American journal of Economics and Sociology*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 1960, P. 193. ; Kabiru Ibrahim Yankuzo, "Impact of Globalization on the Traditional African Cultures." *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, Vol. 18, 2014, P.3

³¹ A.L. Epstein, Edward M. Bruner, Peter C.W Gutkind, *etal*, "Urbanization and Social Change in Africa; comments and reply." *Current Antropology*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1967, P. 276

³² "African Culture." *The Black Scholar*, Vol. 20, No. 3/4, 1989, P. 1. ; E. Franklin Frazier, "Urbanization and its effects upon the Task of Nation-Building in Africa South of the Sahara." *The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 30, No. 3, 1961, P. 214

³³ A.L. Epstein, P. 276. ; E. Franklin, P. 214. ; Hugh, PP. 193-194, 198

³⁴ William, P. 187. ; L.P. Mair, P. 450

³⁵ A.L. Epstein, P. 276. ; E. Franklin, P. 215. ; William, P. 187

³⁶ A.L. Epstein, P. 276. ; E. Franklin, P. 215. ; William, P. 187

new towns of the colonial era which did not exist in both most traditional towns before the contacts of European and rural villages, that was racial and ethnic diversity in a single settlement. The growth of the population in cities created both ethnic heterogeneities in cities and changed the customs of the societies that lived under isolation.³⁷ It is there that members of the many traditional small-scale societies were brought into constant contact, and did organized themselves in wider associations, as we saw in the development of political parties, trade unions, new religions, and even pan- African movements.³⁸

Many of the towns developed due to they were the centers of raw material production which was exported to the rest of the world.³⁹ In addition, the fact that cities are the nuclei of a country's social, economic, and political activities, most peoples want to live there, besides rural-urban migration.⁴⁰ All the migrants had their own reasons for their migrations to the cities. Many were forced to migrate for advance educational, economic conditions, and some migrated because of political problems or to escape the snags of religion and tradition.⁴¹ Africans came to the cities from different social, economic, political religious and educational backgrounds,⁴² but they cannot throw their backgrounds, it came up with them,⁴³ which made the towns more diverse than ever. In some cases, the town includes a number of areas that belong to different ethnic or tribal communities.⁴⁴ Africans cities were not only populated by village migrants but were islands in a sea of reality and are surrounded by the conservative rural traditional which emanate to the cities.⁴⁵ It does appear that few migrants were able to release themselves from their village background and structures to be able fully to enjoyed and participated in urban life.⁴⁶

The new towns of Africa act as a catalyst in weakening traditional social ties and losing the hold of traditional beliefs and values.⁴⁷ The man who comes to town finds himself involved in different kinds of grouping from those which obtained in the village, he also earns his livelihood in a different way and comes under different authorities.⁴⁸ Every African is ‘’ detribalized’’ as

³⁷ E. Franklin, P. 217. ; William, P. 188

³⁸ L.P. Mair, P. 451

³⁹ A.L. Epstein, P. 449

⁴⁰ William, PP. 188-190

⁴¹ William, P. 188

⁴² William, P. 188

⁴³ David, P. 486

⁴⁴ A.L. Epstein, P. 277

⁴⁵ William, P. 190

⁴⁶ William, P. 190

⁴⁷ Hugh. P. 198

⁴⁸ A.L. Epstein, P. 276

soon as he leaves his tribal area to come to town.⁴⁹

SOCIAL CHANGE IN POSTCOLONIAL AFRICAN SOCIETIES

The societies of precolonial independent Africa was too diverse as well as difficult to write about all societies.⁵⁰ The san peoples of the southern African who lived in small individuals and the Emirate of Kano, which was one of the greatest populated areas of the continent, shows how the continent was too diverse.⁵¹ Except for traders who traveled a long distance, most peoples spent most of their lives within a few miles radius,⁵² which means they did not have any chance to meet individuals from another society with another culture, in short, there was no place for interaction. Those isolated societies preferred to live in a group rather than on the individual, this made everyone in the group important, this strong attachment to the group developed the mutual spirit and evade the feeling of loneliness.⁵³

However, this organization of social life undergoing significantly changed in the rising urban centers.⁵⁴ In the pre-colonial independent African societies, there was only a little place for the export production, but as the growth of both the demands of westerners for the raw materials of Africa and the supply of raw materials of Africa by the newly merged cities, the societies adapted the export-oriented economy.⁵⁵ Concerning the changes in religions and languages, it was far away before the postcolonial period that the societies were changed and influenced the westerners.

The rural-urban relations in Africa became deep rooted in recently, those migrated peoples from urban villages became the sources of new ideas and values to the rural villages through the developed transportation and communications.⁵⁶ This improved communication has also witnessed the development of health and medical practices, far different from the indigenous traditional procedures.⁵⁷ Railways, which was the result of industrialization in Europe, deeper than ever in dense jungles of Africa, this bring African societies closer to things and events

⁴⁹ A.L. Epstein, P. 276

⁵⁰ "African Culture.", P. 1. ; Melville J. Herskovits, "Peoples and Cultures of Sub-Sahara African." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 298, 1955, P. 11

⁵¹ Dare Arowolo, "The Effect of Western Civilization and Culture on Africa." *Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2010, PP. 5-6. ; Hugh, P. 193. ; Kabiru, P.3. ; L.P. Mair, P. 447-448.; Peter J. Schraeder, *African Politics and Society; a Mosaic in Transformation*, second edition, Australia, Canada, Mexico, 2004, P. 24

⁵² L.P. Mair, P. 448

⁵³ E. Franklin, P. 215

⁵⁴ A.L. Epstein, P. 275. ; E. Franklin, P. 215. ; Hugh. PP. 195, 197

⁵⁵ Hugh. P. 198. ; L.P. Mair, P. 448

⁵⁶ William, P. 190

⁵⁷ Hugh P. 203

which changes them.⁵⁸

One of the changes brought by the coming of Europeans to African and the development of cities was the establishment of modern education. In the precolonial African societies, where formal education was unknown, young people learned their lessons of life from the daily activities of the villagers, their traditional sophisticated knowledge was deep and vast before any contacts with Europeans.⁵⁹ But, due to western education have divergent approaches to the basic issues of the life and thought of Africans, that traditional knowledge perishes and replaced by western technologies.⁶⁰ The change from the rural farmer to industrial wage laborer created several changes in the society, from those, the rise of the new industrial class.⁶¹ And that industrial class later became the middle class including traders, contractors, businessmen, professionals, higher civil servants, administrative workers, transport owners, bankers, and large farm operators which was the direct result of urbanization.⁶²

The new order of politics in postcolonial African states, i.e. corporate nations into one state as the result of the colonial experience, has brought about different problems, from that nationalism take the prominent. Africans must now begin to think of themselves not as a tribal member, but as the citizen of a nation-state.⁶³ Nationalism came-up with different new procedures that are enormous and different from the culture of the tribal entity, this involves new responsibilities, obligations, and duties that national citizenship entails.⁶⁴ But, that strong tribal structure has not quite collapsed in rural villages, even if, in the cities, it lost its status.⁶⁵ The question of security of an individual became addressed by the national military, no more protected under a wall of the tribe, and the sacrifices to the tribe shifted to the nation.⁶⁶

One of the greatest changes, which bring by urbanization was the change in the attitude of Africans. Before cities became spread in most parts of Africa, those who gave services either to individuals or groups were rewarded not paid and there were no such things as a job with a fixed rate of

⁵⁸ Hugh P. 203

⁵⁹ Abanyam Noah Lumun, ‘‘ The Effect of western Technology on African Cultural Values.’’ *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 8, No.4, 2013, P. 27. ; Kabiru, PP.4-5

⁶⁰ Hugh. P. 202. ; S.C Ukapabi, ‘‘ Western Education and African Culture,’’ *Présence Africaine*, No. 75, 1970, PP. 167,168

⁶¹ E. Franklin, P. 215. ; Hugh. P. 200

⁶² E. Franklin, PP. 215, 217-218. ; Hugh. P. 200. ; L.P. Mair, P. 454

⁶³ E. Franklin, P. 218. ; Hugh. P. 197. ; L.P. Mair, PP. 450-451

⁶⁴ Hugh. P. 197

⁶⁵ Hugh. P. 197

⁶⁶ Hugh. PP. 196, 197

payment, all able-bodied men participated in every worker of the society.⁶⁷ Materialistic life became more common in urban societies. The emphasis on family loyalty, obedience to elders, love of the land, devotion to the village, clan, and tribe, respect for the customs of forefathers all give way to the thirst for a big car, a fine home, job with status, and most of all, the desire for money.⁶⁸ Radio, magazine, and most of all newspapers have become ever-widening organs of news. While they do help to foster the desire for the new gadgets and emphasize the new values, they are, nevertheless bringing the Africans into closer touch with his country, this continent, and the world as a whole.⁶⁹

To a superficial observer change in the mode of life are measured by what can immediately be seen-western dress, bicycles, lorries and jaguar cars, school books, newspapers, the queue at the polling station, the judge on the bench, the legislator making a speech in a European language and the clerk recording it.⁷⁰

Due to population growth and other reasons, the effective use of the land became common in the post-colonial African societies. The land became the source of revenue and once patrimony of a kin group, later it becomes negotiable good.⁷¹ Where there is no profitable cash crop in the rural village they export their labors, due to this the rural areas became populated by old men, women, and children are living on subsistence agriculture supplemented by the earnings of absentee laborers.⁷² The mode of production of goods becomes transformed by including industrial types of machinery of the west contradictorily traditional means of production without any western style machinery.⁷³

CONCLUSION

As we all know numerous changes are happening in postcolonial independent African societies due to the interaction with the rest of the world in the urban centers. In addition, colonialism was the main turning event for the interaction of the communities, even if, it became too difficult to discuss all changes that happened in postcolonial African societies due to the interactions in the urban centers I tried to discuss as much as possible. According to the sources that I have read cultural globalization took place when two and more than two cultures interacted, and that globalized culture will have the characters of both cultures. But, here in the case of Africa, it looks

⁶⁷ L.P. Mair, P. 448

⁶⁸ Hugh. P. 202

⁶⁹ Hugh. P. 203

⁷⁰ L.P. Mair, P. 447

⁷¹ E. Franklin, P. 215. Hugh. P. 204. ; L.P. Mair, PP.449-450

⁷² L.P. Mair, P. 450

⁷³ L.P. Mair, P. 447

that we did not interact, the current culture has more western values than African values. Therefore, according to my findings, globalization in African is diverting to westernization.

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