Diversity, Diffusion and Challenges in African Culture under Globalization

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Abstract

A society’s shared ways of being, encompassing the beliefs, values, norms, customs, practices, institutions and social behaviors evolved in a particular nation, population or group of people are part of its culture. Africa is known for the diverse culture in the world. The Unity in Diversity applies most aptly to the African culture and the transmission of it with the worldly societies, acknowledges today (through the globalization). The element of diffusion in African culture is seen long back in its history but the reflection of this diffused diversity is seen more vividly in the post 1990 globalization. The open market economy influences different cultural segments (elite to poor) of the society as per the demand and supply. It attracts people for education, tourism, work, health and other areas, touches the different culture and poses a cultural challenge before the society. The regional as well as international organizations place culture exchange programmes as part of the global economy. The issue of corruption, crime, call-girls trade, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, malpractice in the society, politicization of culture and other needs discussion under the impact of globalization on African culture. The role and participation of women in all the cultural activities under the global environment seems another challenge in African society. The current challenges to the African culture include the issue of female education; working in the bars and restaurants, genital mutilation, self-dependence, right to property and other rights need an understanding under the global cultural set up. All these issues need to be addressed constructively at the same time examining global challenges to the African culture on the one hand and setting up a road moving in the direction of the formation of civil society in Africa on the other hand.

Introduction

Culture evolves as a natural process of intake from parents, family, society and external environment since beginning (right from the birth). A Chinese child by birth may speak French under the influence of external environment along with the Chinese as mother tongue and that too in Africa. One may observe a number of Indian children speaking Tigrinya, Amharic, Arabic, Swahili and other languages while living in the African countries.a Language being repository of culture, and here it exhibits diffusion. The cultural diffusion among different societies is an example of practice under globalization. Human culture reciprocates according to its experiences that widen cultural impact on family and the society. Culture identifies with the living creatures and their cultural evolution consolidates an identity in the given society. Culture develops through beliefs, faith, practices, customs, way of living, art, intelligence, language, food habits, political governance (Monarchy, Tribalism and One Party Rule, etc) and
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“Cultural growth gives identity to the societies entitles them as Christian or Muslim or Hindu or Jewish or Buddhist etc; have different cultures. So when we come across art, customs etc; one may identify what is their culture or which religion they belong to. Cultural growth is community growth.”1 Ali Mazrui observed, “Culture is a system of inter-related values, active enough to influence and condition perception, judgment, communication and behavior in a given society; where as civilization embraces a culture which has endured, expanded, innovated and been elevated to new moral sensibilities.”2 The culture viewed as a different systems of values, can often clash with the other, particularly if those values are in competition for authority and control. Mazrui further asserts, “One culture will establish a ‘clear ascendancy’ which essentially forces the more vulnerable culture to surrender. Subsequently, cultural confusion emerges among the dominated culture leading to a process of first ‘cultural surrender’ followed by ‘cultural alienation’ and then ‘cultural revival’, meaning a return to traditionalism. In essence, Africa has a triple heritage of indigenous, Islamic and western forces-fusing and recoiling, at once competitive and complementary.” 3

Contemporary African culture is a vibrant combination of the old and the new - a synthesis of traditional beliefs with different phases of globalization. Three major phases of globalization can be observed as: 1870-1914, 1945-1980 and from 1980 till today while dealing with Africa and these are known as periods of Scramble of Africa, Colonialism, Cold War and Open market economy/Liberalization. Today, Africa’s linkage with other parts of the world has entered into new phase under the present era of globalization. Though the term globalization may seem to be new, the substance and ideas are not new to Africa and the world as a whole.

Globalization may be defined as a process of linking the regions and/or nations of the world, which is facilitated by information flow (communication) inducing changes in the pre-existing socio-cultural, political and economic structure and systems of nations and peoples. Globalization has its own set of cultural attendants, which exercise a profound influence on the life of people to be stressed everywhere including Africa. Globalization influences all cultures and larger proportion of people all over the world converting their local culture into global market. Jeremy observes that all other ways of life are diminished and marginalized at a stroke. Globalization is a declaration of war upon all socio-cultural systems.5 Further Akande observes that the rapid and aggressive spread of market economics and communication technologies under the influence of western multinationals brings new impediments to local cultures and values, particularly in Africa and non-western societies at large. Africans are imitating the materialistic and individualistic habits and values previously associated with western culture. This has come as a result of the structural change in the world economy: globalization and the alarming increase of goods dumped on African countries that are marketed by mass seductive advertisement which is blatantly superficial but nonetheless successful in creating desires in peoples of traditional societies.6

There is a debate on the nature of global culture whether it is commonly practiced for the poor and elite or it still maintains gap in the society. ‘The concept of high culture (during colonialism) refers to the artistic, expressive and aesthetic practices and performances of a society: its poetry, literature, painting, and sculpture. Low culture, by contrast, refers to the way in which people live their daily lives-their sports and pastime, their practices of social ability and friendship, their popular music, drugs for recreation and styles of dress.’7 The high and low cultures, one may assign under colonial and post colonial societies, which does not help us understand African societies in which oral traditions, dance, religious practice, music, and other
cultural artifacts are deeply woven into, and sustain ordinary social life. ‘Traditional influences came late and been less significant, as have the effects of other primarily American innovations such as rock ‘n’ roll and country music’.8

This article offers an analysis of post 1990s period of Africa connectivity to the world community under open market globalization. Nsibambi observes that globalization as ‘a process of advancement and increase in interaction among the world countries and people facilitated by progressive technological changes in locomotion, communication, political and military power, knowledge and skills, as well as interfacing of cultural values, systems and practices’. He noted that globalization is not a value-free, innocent, self-determining process. It is an international socio-politico-economic and cultural permeation process facilitated by policies of governments, private corporations, international agencies and civil society organizations. It essentially seeks to enhance and deploy economic, political, technological, ideological and military power and influence for competitive domination in the world.’ 9

UNDP report mentions that globalization is a concept that has taken root across much of the world. Although its tentacles reach far and wide, globalization has been more visible in terms of trade and information highway. ‘What has been left unexplored is globalization of culture, especially those aspects of culture that are generally acceptable and beneficial in a global village’.10 Along with it, ‘At the heart of EU-ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) relations is the notion of partnership that includes cultural exchange. Through the Lome Convention, EU-ACP cooperation was facilitated in economic development and cultural affairs. Two programmes, trade, and EU technical and financial assistance, were the major conduits for such cooperation.’11

The Post 1990s Globalization and African Culture

The global cultural impact is in serious debate amongst Animism, Christianity and Islam in Africa. Ambrose Moyo emphasized that the combined efforts of early missionary and colonial powers to destroy African cultures and religions have led to a crisis of identity that, ironically, has promoted the continued practice of African Traditional Religions as a major aspect of African culture.12 ‘Probably the cultural arena receiving the most attention at the beginning of the 21st century is the suddenly perceived confrontation between the western and Islamic worlds. Some have chosen to regard this confrontation as a new (or perhaps renewed) clash of civilizations, but others perceive the world not so neatly divided, choosing to see pluralities of identities rather than a homogenous Islam and an equally homogenous west. We have –all of us–many as citizens, family members, workers, men, and women. Appreciating the complex and interesting diversity is indeed a challenge for the twenty-first century.’13

This new world is characterized by a variety of cultural and ideological changes. A decline in support for Marxist ideologies (end of cold war) has accomplished the unprecedented emphasis in the North as neo-liberal orthodoxy sometimes called the Washington Consensus. This perspective casts development in terms of macroeconomic stability, liberalized trade, and getting the prices right. ‘States pursuing a Marxist ideology are few, and those whom Marxist may be official dogma, as in the case of China, behaving increasingly like enthusiastic capitalists. There are also changing conception of the Third World. Is it possible to lump all the countries perceived as improvised and subjected to colonialism in one box’.14 The variation among these countries from military and economic powerhouse (Post 1990 India) to tiny Burundi or the seven thousand islands of the Philippines to the ecologically devastated half of an island (Haiti) is enormous. So, recognizing this diversity is a principal philosophical change in
The post 1990 period came forward with the term more or maximum Africanness to be put back into Africa, with whatever consequences. The important issue here is to understand what is ‘Africanness’? ‘Is there an African identity that transcends the differences which distinguish one African culture from another? Or are there no commonalities over and above those that have been imposed by one form of domination or another? In short, is there more that divides Africa than unites it? These are difficult questions and the possible answers rest upon particular perspectives and time-frames. The diverse culture of Africa having a salient feature of intermixing opens a vista with the global economic paraphernalia.

Diversity in African Culture and Globalization

The diversity of African culture is seen right from North Africa, Sub Saharan Africa, Afro-Asiatic, Niger-Congo, Niger-Saharan, Eastern Africa to Southern Africa (Appendix-1). The broader unity of this diverse culture diffuses all that is known as continent of Africa. An African enjoys dress or jewelry as a personal accessory to give emphasis on individual appearance. For this reason the Africa continent has a rich tradition of arts and crafts. It is true that Africa represents thousands of combinations of different ethnic groups (based on colour, creed, Languages, tribal and religion) in the society. The African cuisine is a combination of traditional fruits and vegetables, milk and meat products. 'More than 3,000 unique ethnic groups are recognized in Africa' and such diversity is the identity of Africa. One may observe this diverse culture diffuses in the sense of unity through the Pan African movement. “Pan-Africanism is a sociopolitical world view, philosophy, and movement which seek to unify native Africans and members of the African Diaspora into a “global African Community.” Pan Africanism as an ethical system, traces its origins from ancient times, and promotes values that are the product of the African civilization and struggles against slavery, racism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. The Pan-African flag was designed by Marcus Garvey and is known as The Red, Black, and Green. This flag symbolizes the struggle for the unification and liberation of African people. The Red stands for the blood that unites all people of African ancestry, Black represents the color of the skin of the people of Africa, and Green stands for the rich land of Africa’. But one observed that Pan-Africanism is often criticized for overlooking the cultural and ethnic differences of African people as well as different socio-political circumstances among people of African descent worldwide. Pan-Africanism set aside cultural differences, asserting the principality of these shared experiences to foster solidarity and resistance to exploitation in the post 1990 period. Bob Marley was Pan-African cultural activist through vocal music and worked for African unity. 'The liberalization was expressed in the recognition of socio-cultural pluralism (as a part of diversity) and the re-composition and construction of a state of law. The commitment to pluralism in the legitimate socio-political space is considered advanced. Pluralism shapes the various levels of media, art & design, folk songs, dance, newspaper and print media as part of socio-cultural life. Media pluralism has contributed to the development if the public sphere and the destruction of the founding myths of the post-colonial state.' Africa Union (AU) recognizes this cultural unity while embracing Pan-Africa approach and
Libyan President Qaddafi has been speaking about in terms of African Parliament, United States of Africa and Common currency. African culture retains its diversity and working for unity within the paraphernalia of globalization. The globalization affects diversity, which has been discussed under the heading of global challenges to the African culture.

**Global Diffusion in African Culture**

The post 1990s new social structure touches the rural areas and collaborates with urban areas. Hegemonic control of traditional chiefs and the reconstruction of village and tribe in these areas is progressively happening due to rural migrations towards urban cities. The weakening of cultural taboo and of sticking only to hinterland is a part of cultural globalization. Modern elements are being infused into the traditional patterns. ‘The three dominant religions in Africa are Animism, Christianity and Islam. However, migration, urbanization and cultural globalization are quantitatively and qualitatively transforming these religions. The influence of globalization on cultural life becomes a part of migratory urban settlement.’ 22 The changed market economy influences Africa’s socio-economic life pattern. The women, youth and other segments of society are coming forward and participating in the economic merchandise actively as apart of global culture diffusion discussed below.

1. **Diffusion and African Women & Youth**

The cultural changes have been dramatic in the post 1990 globalization and one may observe the transformation of the role of women’s from largely domestic affairs and their confident entry into the market mechanism. But African women’s position in the traditional milieu still remains ambivalent, complex and controversial. The diffusion of global cultural in social practices and symbolic representations confer important social roles to women. “It is through social institutions and systems of representation that this contradiction is revealed, and it is inherent in the power dynamics of traditional societies.23 Tradition submits women to a double logic—that of submission and subordination in the domestic or private sphere. But cultural globalization develops strategies to circumvent the public sphere and consolidate their control of the domestic or private sphere. ‘This by-passing implies the construction of an exclusively feminine social universe, a women’s sphere that goes beyond the domestic space. 24

African women primarily involves in agricultural production, household affairs, managing their household economy by participating in the domestic rural markets (*Haats*). The global market economy motivates the traditional women to participate actively as industrial workforce and joining professional responsibility by respecting their indigenous culture. The cultural awareness persuades families to send girl for education, joining professional courses to build strong families, livelihoods and communities. ‘In the cultural and economic sphere, African women are more devoted to activities that positively affect their social status and reinforce their authority. This is the case, for example, with the mutual aid associations and the *tontines* (mutual savings funds). Some have succeeded in launching credit unions, popular banks and saving banks, which facilitate for example, Cameroonian women’s access to credit and loans. The blossoming of African women’s cultural and economic associations contributes to their political and social emancipation. African women’s large and increasing commitment in the formal and informal economy is a strategy for political and social positioning. Concomitantly, the economic weakening of their husband’s (due to unemployment, drug addiction, etc) imposes an inversion of roles in the home, leading to a further change in social status. African women
therefore are moving ahead, managing their households while working in catering, service sector, tour and traveling, ticketing, hotel industry and other in urban areas.25

The changing socio-cultural setup persuades women playing a major role in economic production, control the process of organizing and managing matrimonial ties. By doing so, they are responsible for movement of women from household to ensuring education to their spouses. They take care of their families materially and morally. This leads to cultural awareness, a part of the diffusion of global culture.

Artistic and aesthetic arenas have been a dramatic cultural evolution. African youth has been drawn to more intricate fusion between a range of domestic and international music traditions in the post 1990 globalization. The popular music production in Asia, Africa and others have been diversified and internationalized, and products such as techno-raves and house music have been introduced and reworked in urban culture. The youth joins as technocrat (in computer engineering, soft ware engineer, information technology and other) in Europe, USA, Canada, Australia and other. It leads to domestic emigration as well as international emigration to settle down in the new environment and uphold their cultural values that diffuses into global culture.

2. Diffusion and African Rural Emigration

The progressive urbanization and suburbanization of the African population has wrought massive changes in the nature of everybody’s community life. For most Africans, of course, migrant labour has been a familiar part of the life cycle for almost a century. In the early decades of the 20th century, legislative changes undermined African rural societies and destroyed Black farming economies and made it increasingly difficult for rural African to survive without remittances from the core urban economy. A pattern of migrant labour was enforced through which young men and women would pass much of their lives in and around major/big cities in Africa including capital cities. One may explore these facts further by visiting Johannesburg, Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Asmara, Tunis and Rabat.b The emigration has become a serious challenge for the government would discuss further under global challenges.

3. Diffusion of Global Tourism and African Culture

It is one of the important industries that cater to different parts of Africa. Almost all the African governments open an opportunity for multinational investors in construction of hotels, ticketing, sports adventure like racing bikes, motor cars, mountaineering and others. The tourism industry brings global culture along with it and attracts the youth of Africa. Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba mention that the Civic Culture and the open polity, then, represent the great and problematic gifts of the west. The technology and science of the West have now already passed out of her unique possession and everywhere are destroying and transforming societies and cultures. Can the open polity and the civic culture man’s discovery of a humane and conservative way to handle social change and participation spread as well? 26

Many indigenous associations operating in the world today have become a strong voice in defense of traditional cultures while accepting participation in modern empirical civil societies. The extent to which these cultures can retrain their particular identities while embracing a modern universalism is a question for empirical investigation and a challenge for those embedded in the attentive genealogy as well as those in the mainstream who could not consciously admit to facilitating cultural destruction.27
Challenges of Global Culture in Africa

1. Female genital mutilation has been long practiced in Africa and globalization impacts upon the societies to stop it. This is a major challenge. The States like Ethiopia, Eritrea, Tunisia, South Africa, Sudan and others has been adopted laws against it, motivating society not to indulge in this any more. The traditional aspects of African society have introduced into political debate about the rights of women. ‘Hierarchies of domination are construed and experienced simultaneously, their dynamics permeating one another.’28 These hierarchies of domination may be political, religious, customary, traditional, cultural or familial. Much of Africa’s cultural activity centers on the family and ethnic group, and families play an important role in Muslim as well as Christian society. ‘It is like a rose in which all the petals are healthy and united, extending their support to each other.29

2. The major challenge in the urban cities is the problem of emigration. These settlement intermix their traditional/customary culture with metropolitan life in which the impact of global culture is seen clearly. Migrant labour created both generational and gender divisions. Young men and women started to work away from their families. Backyard shacks or informal settlements and slum cluster are close to their places of work emerged as part of a cosmopolitan and sometimes vibrant urban and semi-urban culture, a part of global cultural cycle. For instance, the annual vacation, a part of migrant laborers traveled to their home town/villages to celebrate Christmas, Id and other festival shares urban global mix culture, which left elder people of those villages shocked.

3. The slum dwellers/informal settlements, however, are not merely places of hardship. The evening in daily lives is the opportunities for cultural interaction and hospitality, among the youngsters in Africa. The Tej, Areki and Suwa (most familiar alcoholic drink in the interior Ethiopia and Eritrea), shebeens (South Africa) or local beer/hard drinks, alcohol and drug intake are the additional ingredients, a part of global culture. The global /market culture dominates on these African communities despite their close systems of moral scrutiny is a major challenge for African society today. The high levels of child mortality, HIV/AIDS cases, poor health and sanitation are the other elements of global culture, which may club with political governance. ‘Further more, involving people who are openly HIV-positive is a tried and tested strategy for challenging social stigma, and may, among other benefits, help organizations to promote the idea of positive living to their staff.’30

4. Crime as part of global culture may be fixed in some African countries but cannot be generalized. For instance, Tunis, Asmara, Pretoria, Durban and Addis Ababa are having minimal crime rates and that’s why the one major attraction for global tourists. But the active crime is seen in Johannesburg, Lagos, late night Addis Ababa (some times), Nairobi and other are vagaries of global culture. But the globalization intervenes through satellites & dish connections, instant messaging facilities, internet pornography and messenger (Chatting) of different sites in the world including Africa. ‘One may feel the cultural homogenization through blue-jean or coke in Africa that did not spare the Muslim communities.’31 Jermy Brecher, describes globalization as a ‘race to the bottom promoting a destructive competition, not just between developing and industrialized countries but also among the countries of the Third World.’ 32

5. The impact of globalization on customary culture is seen clearly. It is spring time in Zimbabwe, when hearts turn to romance and pockets empty for roora, the word for bride price in the local Shona language. Some people are requesting mobile phones, second-hand cars or
other global material. Is it diffusion of global culture? The similar tradition in Eritrea is known as *gezmi* and the gifts are given to bride but here it is not solely part of Global culture and the society feels *gezmi* as Social Change. ‘The revolutionary front Eritrean People Liberation Front (EPLF) gives this credit to thirty years war liberation. The social change of post independent Eritrea (29 May 1991) brought equal rights and participation to women in domestic and public sphere, common acceptance to inter-religious marriages in society is one example of diffusion. The experience of armed struggle and post 1990 globalization reshaped the Eritrean society, which shows a rare glimpse of crime free and homogenous society.’c Similarly, the issue of Jacob Zuma polygamy (the third elected President of South Africa), and his attitude about HIV/AIDS and is open for discussion in the society that leads to pros & cons about it is a part of impact of globalization.

6. Today, a debate has developed regarding the possible cultural causes of corruption in Africa. That is, societies who see a cultural obligation to give gifts or who see a cultural obligation to give gifts or who place familial loyalty over the demands of office may not fully identify corrupt practices: ‘from an African perspective it is perfectly in order to exchange gifts.’33 The consultant agencies in India (for the recruitment of teaching, medical doctors, Engineers, computer professional, pharmaceutical, skilled labour, manual labour, etc) involve in the recruitment for African countries pay big boxes/underhandedly to the African delegates, who come to take interviews. It is defended as a part of Africa- Placement Agencies of India friendship/ culture. So *gift giving* may be carried from the private to the public sphere with no acknowledgement that the environment may be different. 34 The Afro-barometer study wished to establish if corruption really did have a cultural base and whether the concept was perceived differently in varied communities. Essentially, it asserted: is it accurate actions that merely reflect normal cultural practices of gift giving in Africa? 35

Table-1 outlines the questions that were posed in the context of defining corruption and charts the averaged percentages of all respondents. ‘It is clear that respondents recognized corruption, which led Afro-barometer to conclude: traditional cultural practices, whether of gift giving or other varieties, do not, in the eyes of the public, entitle government officials to take advantage of them. However, the aggregated responses do not always reflect the attitudes of individual countries, which deviate quite considerably from those figures.’ 36

**Table -1**

*Defining Corruption in Africa*
**Questiones Posed in survey to Africans**

**Selection of responses in categories**

**% of total respondents**

1. A public official decides to locate a development project in an area where his friends and supporters live

- Not wrong at all
- Wrong but understandable
- Wrong and punishable
- Don't know

13

24
2. A government official gives a job to someone from his family who does not have adequate qualifications.

- Not wrong at all
- Wrong but understandable
- Wrong and punishable
- Don’t know
A government official demands a favour or an additional payments for some service that is part of his job.

- Not wrong at all
- Wrong but understandable
- Wrong and punishable
- Don't know
Conclusion
While multinationals and rich nations race to control the world's resources on the basis of their dollar power (economic advancement and technological advancement), Africa can play a huge role in advocating for people-centered development sharing its community culture. Equally important is the use of culture and cultural institutions to address global problems facing societies. The knowledge sharing to use the traditional medicine fighting against HIV/AIDS would add global culture. Nutritionists have called for people to eat more of their traditional diets instead of expensive, genetically-modified foods that are imported. African food has been proved to be healthy, nutritious and accessible. An increase on consumption of Africa traditional foods will catalyze and increase international trade in such commodities, and thus helping to economically empower African people.

Similarly the western societies finding spiritual emptiness in materialism; African religion and culture stand a better chance to offer alternatives to address rising corruption, crime and violence. African culture is renowned for its moral awareness which is embedded in different indigenous languages, myths, folklore and heritage cultures. But this cultural war has also been described as a confrontation between global civilization and local cultures. There is no exemption for civilians; there are no innocent by-standers.

One has the greatest respect for African traditional institutions. African loves their culture and its various traditions and customs. But one humbly submits that some of the customs and traditions are outmoded and have no place in modern society. African traditional rulers must conform to the modern trend of society's development and do away with those customs and traditions that impede the process of development. They must embrace modernization and abolish all those outmoded customary practices that actually belong to the middle ages. If this is not done, many of African traditional areas will remain backward and under-developed for so many generations to come. At the same time they also become a hindrance to other people’s businesses that contribute to the general development of the continent. Despite the negative aspect of globalization on African culture, it does have some positive effects on African culture as well. Some inhuman cultural practices directed especially at women e.g. female genital mutilation (circumcision), widowhood rites, trokosi etc are being addressed and modified. This is a very significant positive impact of globalization on African culture.

Over all, both Islam and Christianity contributed to the cultural inheritance of Africa and have reflected modes and methods of political expression. The fast changing economy in the urban areas in Africa brought major changes. The corporate or institutional set up emphasizes organizational culture in Africa. Muchinsky advances a rather simplified definition of organizational culture, namely, ‘the way we do things around here.’ 37 It refers to a system of shared meaning held by members of any particular organization that distinguishes their organization for other organizations. Organizational culture therefore exists in the interaction among individuals in an organization, and not in the cognitive processes of individual members of an organization. 38 It is evident then, that organizational culture may best be understood by analyzing its tangible and visible rites.

Today, one must ask who is benefiting, who is loosing, and whether the pace is appropriate. The question of opting out the globalization is not feasible, but there is opportunity to unite...
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the diverse culture in Africa with a more human face

The civil society associations, NGO and other voluntarily organizations may approach to
globalize the theme of unity in diversity that respect a true colour of being African in Africa, and
in the world. The social movements in this direction may unite the cross-national,
cross-regional, cross cultural social action and will bring a congenial change in African society.
The global culture engaged the African women debating about women’s roles and rights.
Women see the marginality and oppression of women as grounded in a broader set of struggles
to survive against imperialism, racism, caste, and other forms of domination. “There are
women’s movements and organizations with a highly focused political mission or cultural
identity. The well known ‘Chipko movement in India’ and Wangari Muta Mathai in Kenya
(Plantation/ Green forests) primarily focuses an environment and to save their indigenous
inhabitant that includes cultural life as well. Human rights issues pertain not just to the forces of
economic globalization, but also to violations of human safety and security, as well as
economic, social and cultural rights. The cultural ramifications under human rights are not
well-taken. The anti-mine, de-mine activities, environment awareness and its protection rights in
Africa but the input of globalization on African culture did not find a proper place. ‘New
communication and transportation technologies along with the restructuring of production,
accelerating migration of peoples, and, indeed, high levels of agricultural exchange make it
quite clear that globalization is taking place. At stake, however, is how we are globalizing. The
world is shrinking whether we like it or not. The question we pose here is not whether we
globalize, but how we globalize.’39

To sum up, one opines that global entertainment companies shape the understanding and
dreams of ordinaries citizens wherever they live. The local culture is inevitably falling victim to
global consumer culture. Globalization places a substantial influence on African culture. It has
completely changed certain institutions, wiped off certain traditions, modified others, introduced
some new traditions and retaining some age old practices produces a great blend of Africa
culture. From the culture point of view, it states that globalization is the process of harmonizing
different culture and beliefs. Globalization is the process that eroding differences in culture and
producing a seamless global system of culture and economic values. The harmonization
achieved due to advancement in communication and countries are increasingly being forced to
participate. Therefore, globalization can be viewed as a process of shifting autonomous
economies into a global market. In other words, it is the systematic integration of autonomous
economies into a global system of production and distribution. Overall, it is uniting all diversity
under the umbrella of one single unified culture that may be distinctly identified as a single
African Culture.

Notes
a. The author has been widely traveled in Africa and has first hand experience of interaction
with Indian children born in Africa.
b. The author visited all these major cities.
c. Discussion with Eritrea Ambassador in Delhi, 2nd May 2009).

References
15. Ibid: 282-83: emphasis mine.
17. www.traveltoworld.co.uk
20. Ibid.
22. Ibid: emphasis mine.
29. Surty, Mohammed Ibrahim, 1995, Islam, the Quranic overview, Quranic Arabic Foundation, Birmingham: 20.

Appendix-1

Tribes & People Groups in Africa
There are many different people groups and tribes across the continent of Africa - with their culture varying from tribe to tribe. We have included only a few on this page and will be adding to the list regularly. Click the title for detailed sections...

Afar
The Afar people live primarily in Ethiopia and the areas of Eritrea, Djibouti, and Somalia in the Horn of Africa.

Anlo-Ewe
The Anlo-Ewe people are today in the southeastern corner of the Republic of Ghana. They settled here around 1474 after escaping from their past home of Notsie.

Amhara
The Amhara are the politically and culturally dominant ethnic group of Ethiopia. They are located primarily in the central highland plateau of Ethiopia and comprise the major population element in the provinces of Begemder and Goijam and in parts of Shoa and Wallo.

Ashanti
The Ashanti live in central Ghana in western Africa approximately 300km. away from the coast. The Ashanti are a major ethnic group of the Akans in Ghana, a fairly new nation, barely more than 50 years old.

Bakongo
The Bakongo people (aka. the Kongo) dwell along the Atlantic coast of Africa from Pointe-Noire, Congo (Brazzaville) to Luanda, Angola.
**Bambara**
The Bambara are a large Mande racial group located mostly in the country of Mali. They are the largest and most dominant group in that country.

**Bemba**
The Bemba are located in the northeastern part of Zambia and are the largest ethnic group in the Northern Province of Zambia.

**Berber**
Berbers have lived in Africa since the earliest recorded time. References date back to 3000 BC. There are many scattered tribes of Berber across Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt.

**Bobo**
The Bobo people have lived in western Burkina Faso and Mali for centuries. They are known for their masks which are worn with elaborate outfits for celebrations. Primarily agricultural people they also cultivate cotton which they use to trade with others.

**Bushmen/San**
The 'Bushmen' are the oldest inhabitants of southern Africa, where they have lived for at least 20,000 years. Their home is in the vast expanse of the Kalahari desert.

**Chewa**
The Chewa, also known as the Cewa or Chichewa is an African culture that has existed since the beginning of the first millennium, A.D. They are primarily located in Zambia, Zimbabwe, with the bulk of the population in Malawi.

**Dogon**
The Dogon are a cliff-dwelling people who live in Southeastern Mali and Burkina Faso. Among the people groups in Africa they are unique in that they have kept and continued to develop their own culture even in the midst of Islamic invasions which have conquered and adapted many of the current people groups.

**Fang**
The Fang are especially known for their guardian figures which they attached to wooden boxes containing bones of the ancestors. The bones, by tradition, are said to contain the power of the dead person, in fact, the same amount of power that the person had while still alive.

**Fon**
The Fon of Benin, originally called Dahomey until 1975, are from West Africa. The Fon are said to have originated in the area of Tado, a town in Tago, at approximately the same latitude as Abomey, Benin.

**Fulani**
The Fulani people of West Africa are the largest nomadic group in the world, primarily nomadic herders and traders. Through their nomadic lifestyle, they established numerous trade routes in West Africa.

**Ibos**
From Nigerian the Ibos live in villages that have anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand people comprised of numerous extended families.

**Kikuyu (Gikuyu)**
Having migrated to their current location about four centuries ago, the Kikuyu now make up Kenya’s largest ethnic group.

**Maasai**
The Maasai, famous as herders and warriors, once dominated the plains of East Africa. Now however they are confined to a fraction of their former range.
Mandinka
The Mandinka are an ethnic group that live in West Africa, primarily Senegal, Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau, but some also live in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Cote d'Ivoire.

Pygmies
There are many different 'Pygmy' peoples – for example, the Bambuti, the Batwa, the Bayaka and the Bagyeli ('Ba-' means 'people') – who live scattered over a huge area in central and western Africa, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Congo (Brazzaville), Cameroon, Gabon, Central African Republic, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda.

Samburu
The Samburu are related to the Masai although they live just above the equator where the foothills of Mount Kenya merge into the northern desert and slightly south of Lake Turkana in the Rift Valley Province of Kenya.

Senufo
The Senufo are a group of people living in northern Cote d'Ivoire and Mali. They are known as excellent farmers and are made up of a number of different groups who moved south to Mali and Cote d'Ivoire in the 15 and 16th centuries.

Tuareg
The Tuareg people are predominantly nomadic people of the sahara desert, mostly in the Northern reaches of Mali near Timbuktu and Kidal.

Wolof
The Wolof are one of the largest people groups that inhabit modern-day Senegal. They live anywhere from the desert area of the Sahara to the rain forests. Traditionally many Wolof lived in small villages governed by an extended family unit but now most Wolof move to cities where they are able to get jobs.

Yoruba
The Yoruba people live in Southwest Nigeria and Benin. They have developed a variety of different artistic forms including pottery, weaving, beadwork, metalwork, and mask making.

Zulu
The Zulu are the largest ethnic group in South Africa. They are well known for their beautiful brightly colored beads and baskets as well as other small carvings.

Source: (http://www.africaguide.com/culture/tribes/index.htm)