TOPIC: THE UNIQUENESS OF AFRICAN MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IN CONTEMPORARY WORLD

BY: SULAIMAN A. OSHO

          Doctoral Candidate,

          Media and Multiculturalism,

          Al-Maktoum College,

          University of Aberdeen,

          United Kingdom

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1.0   ABSTRACT

Africa as the cradle of civilization, intellectualism and humanity possess the most unique means of communication in the world despite the modern means of communication like the mass media and the new media of internet and social media of facebook, twitter and others.

This paper explores the uniqueness of the African means of communication and their relevance in the contemporary world. It identifies the African traditional media and their uniqueness in modern age. The paper further examines the challenges of oramedia in the new age and proffers possible solutions. And it concludes that the mass media and the new media find their root in the unique African indigenous media.

2.0   INTRODUCTION

Africa as the source of humanity and civilization is not only unique in customs, tradition, and culture, but in its means of communication. As Osho (2010:147) notes, that 'all the means of communication originated from the earliest Africans in the old Egypt. The civilization later spread to China, India, Greece and Rome'.

The uniqueness of the African means of communication is embedded in their originality, creativity, tradition and culture of the people. These essentially make them highly effective and enduring in the dissemination of information personally, inter-personally and through group communications.

However, the enduring nature of the African means of communication has actually made them to subsist and relevant in the contemporary world despite the emergence of organs of mass communication like books, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, telex, facsimile, internet and the social media.

One continues to marvel at the continued relevance of the African indigenous media otherwise known as African traditional media, folk media, or oramedia in the contemporary world despite the manifestation of Marshall McLuhan's theory of 'Global Village' in the contemporary world.

Indeed, the electronic media has retribalize (resocialize) the world into a single global village by reducing the transmission of information by time and space. Infact, McLuhan (1964:3-4) declares:

After three thousand years of explosion, by means of fragmentary

and mechanical technologies, the western world is imploding. During

the mechanical ages, we had extended our bodies in space. Today, after

more than a century of electric technology, we have extended our central nervous

system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our

planet is concerned. Rapidly we approach the final phase of the extensions

of man – the technological simulation of consciousness, when the creative

process of knowing will be collectively and corporately extended to the

whole of human society…

Western man acquired from the technology of literacy the power to act

without reacting… But our detachment was a posture of non-involvement.

In the electric age, when our whole nervous system is technologically extended

to involve us in the whole of mankind and to incorporate the whole of mankind

in us, we necessarily participate, in depth, in the consequences of our every action.

It is important to note that the manifestation of the 'Global Village' theory today is the inevitable indispensability of the oral culture of the oramedia which Africa continues to pride itself as the inventor.

Really, the African oramedia like the use of gongs, drum beats, town criers, puppet shows, dance, singing and masks actually influenced the Greek and the Roman civilizations (Scannell,2009:127) which Harold Adams Innis, a Canadian economic historian of the 1940s, who influenced the thoughts of McLuhan, describes as the best means of communication that will be enduring. According to Innis (1950:70),

The civilization of the Greeks is underpinned by the
'oral tradition', while Roman imperialism is underpinned
by writing. This distinction is strongly normative.
(It is called Bias of Communication). Oral cultures are
praised for their power and vitality, their freshness and elasticity, in
contrast with 'the dead of written tradition' that threatens to destroy
the spirit of Western man.

The enduring nature of the oramedia is best understood and appreciated when we realise that Africa remains an oppressed and suppressed continent in the shackes of imperialistic eras of:

@   Exploration

@   Slavery

@   Slave Trade

@   Scramble and Partition

@   Colonialism

@   Nationalism

@   Independence

@   Neo-Colonialism, and

@   Globalization. (Osho, 2010:35-65)

These have brought greater challenges to the peoples of Africa and their means of traditional communications to endure in the face of the Western organs of mass communication and their attendant technologies to further oppress the world politically, economically, and socio-culturally. This 'mass culture' through the mass media and the new media, (Louw,2008:106) is described by Herbert Schiller and indeed Hafez (2007:83) as 'cultural imperialism' where culturally dominant nations like United States and United Kingdom are seen to export their culture through the media, films, and entertainment rather than armed forces and dollar imperialism.

Despite the dominant nature of 'mass culture' and 'cultural imperialism', the oramedia has continued to endure. This might perhaps been further motivated by the nationalistic movements of negritude, pan-Africanism, and the African personality. (Mazrui and Mazrui, 1995:161). But quite humbly and honestly, oramedia has been sustained through its originality and resilience in the face of neo-colonialism and imperialism.

Though Soyinka (2011) criticises Leopold Senghor's Negritude (Markovitz,1969) as a nostalgic and indiscriminate glorification of the Black African past that ignores the potential benefits of modernisation, as the 1986 Nobel Laureate in Literature declares that, 'a tiger does not shout its tigritude, it acts'; Lassiter (2011) posits that the African mind, personality and cultural traits have come to subsist despite all odds.

Hence, the African traditional media have come to subsist for their uniqueness, originality, and freshness based on the tradition and culture of the people.

3.0   The Continent of Africa

The continent of Africa is one of the seven continents that make the earth, which is also one of the nine planets that makes the Solar System. By the account of Encarta Encyclopaedia (2011), 'the solar system is just a tiny part of the Milky Way Galaxy which contains about 400 Billion stars. It is surrounded by nine planets including the Earth or the World or the Globe where we live.

But Africa remains a continent that its history, heritage, culture, and customs have been distorted. The historical accounts about Africa are mostly incorrect, slanted, and dented to tilt the true account of history from Western perspective.

Infact, Hall and Kirk (2005:276) agrees that '…this is part of the European imperialist enterprise, an intellectual counterpart of military conquest which marginalises or disparages the cultural traditions and civilised achievements of the original inhabitants of Africa…'.

Actually, Anikulapo-Kuti (1981), the Great African political activist musician concurs with this position and declares during his historic and classical performance in Berlin, Germany that, '…99.9 per cent of what Europeans know and publishes about Africa is false, because they are being fed with the wrong information about the great continent that remains unique in its culture, tradition and customs'.

3.1   Africa And Its People

Africa is a continent of about One Billion people of diverse culture, tribe, ethnic, language, tradition and customs. The continent is the Second Largest after Asia. It consists of 54 countries, with the total land area of 1.3 million Square Miles or 30 Million Square Kilometres. Sudan has the largest land area of 967,000 Square Miles or 2.5 Million Square Kilometres with a population of 40 Million. But the country unfortunately was divided into North and South in June 2011, thereby increasing the number of countries to 54, and 193rd as new Member of United Nations. (CNN,2011)

But Nigeria has the largest population of over 200 Million in a land area of 357,000 Square Miles or 924,000 Square Kilometres. Hence, out of every four Africans, one is a Nigerian. (Encarta, 2011). Though United Nations put the projected figure of Nigeria's population at 160 Million. (UNPC,2008)

However, the thousands of ethnic groups in Africa speak moe than 2,000 languages that are distinct. It is in fact regarded as the most diverse in culture among the seven continents of the world.

By the account of Osho (2010:34),

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Most Africans live in the rural communities. Many

raise livestocks or engage in farming. Relatively, few

people live in the cities. But Africa has many big cities

that are growing rapidly. They include Lagos, Nigeria

(with population of 18 Million); Abuja, the new Federal

Capital Territory of Nigeria; Cairo, Egypt (with population

of 15 Million); Casablanca. Morroco; and Cape Town, South

Africa.

3.2   Africa's Phases of Development

Africa as a continent has undergone chequered phases of development. The people were quite civilized and developed from the ancient times before colonial influx into the continent. Apart from having organised societies into towns and cities, they had organised government, trade and commerce, social system, and good cultural values. (Hall and Kirk, 2005:279).

Meanwhile, the phases of development in Africa, can be classified into the following:

1.   Evolutionary Era: This is the period of human emergence in Africa some 1.8 million years ago. It also refers to the Stone Age, the Iron Age, and the era of fire control in Africa in 55,000 B.C. when people increase in number and occupy more territories in small communities.

2.   Subsistence Era: This is the post-55,000 B.C. Era when African people have specialised tools for digging, hunting, fishing, skinning animals, making clothing, and building shelters.

3.   Exploration Era: The first explorers of Africa were Africans some 4,000 years ago. They include Queen Hatshepsut in ancient Egypt who sent ships to the land of Punt, somewhere in eastern Africa. The ships, according to Encarta (2011) brought black gold, leopard skin,

ivory, and black Africans to be slaves. Also, Ibn Battuta from Morocco travelled through Africa from 1325 to 1354. Even long distance voyages across Africa were first explored from Arabia from the Arabian sea in 100 A.D. They set up trading bases that became rich cities such as Kilwa, now in Tanzania and Mogadishu in Somalia. It was much later that we had foreign explorers in Africa like the Phoenicians, the Chinese, Portuguese, Scottish, and British.

4. Slavery Era: Africans had themselves as slaves for domestic purposes. The categories of the slaves include:

@ Prisoners of War

@ Hardened criminals

@ Slave work in exchange for debt payment, and payment of dowry.

@ Buying of slaves

@ Slaves given out

@ Slaves engaged for labour work

5. Slave Trade Era: This is the dark age of Africans whereby the traditional rulers were coerced to sell Millions of their subjects to the Europeans as slaves in exchange for money, dry gin, beads, and glass for over 300 years. In fact, Rodney (1972) describes it as 'the rape of Africans from 1445 to 1870 as they were taken to unknown regions as slaves ' to work in the sugarcane plantation in the Carribbean countries to feed European industries. Actually, Abiola (1978:70) reveals that, 'the obnoxious trade in human beings all started in 1414 A.D. when Gonzalves, explorers to West Africa, returned to Lisbon with a party of twelve Africans whom he presented to Prince Henry, the Navigator...' This is the major reason why African leaders in consonance with the African-Americans are seeking for REPARATION from the West to pay a ransom to appease the people of Africa for improverishing the African countries and African-Americans through the obnoxious slave trade.

6. Scramble and Partition Era: This is the post-slave trade era when leaders fromBritain, France, Germany, and Portugal met in Berlin, Germany to partition African countries among themselves. The Conference took place in Berlin between November 15, 1884 and January 30, 1885 at the instance of Von Bismarck at the peak of the scramble to forstall conflict, bloodshed and disunity among the European countries. At the end of the partitioning of Africa without the participation of Africans, the European nations had the following: (a)

Britain: Nigeria, Gold Coast now Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Gambia. (b) France: Senegal, Goree, Dakar, St. Loius, Rufisque, Martinique, Guinea, Ivory Coast, and Dahomey now Benin Republic. (c) Germany: Togo, and the Cameroon. (d) Portugal: Portuguese Guinea and Cape Verde.

7. Colonial Era: The Brussel Conference of 1890 opened the gate for the chapter of colonialism in Africa. This was post-Berlin Conference when more European countries scrambled for more territories in Africa. Hence, colonial governments were established in the regions.

8. Nationalism Era: This was the period of agitation for self-governance among the African countries. It is the period of African pride for their culture, tradition, nation, and institutions.

9. Independence Era: This is the period of securing independence from the colonial power for self-political rule. It was Ghana that first secured political independence in 1957; Nigeria, in 1960; and it was not until 1996 that the apartheid regime were quashed in South Africa.

10. Neo-Colonialism Era: This is the post-independence era of Africa when its colonial masters continue to dictate the political, economic, and socio-cultural policies and actions of the African countries. This is done through the following:

 @   Installation of surrogate leaders;

@   Handing out Greek Gifts through aids, loans, grants, debt reliefs, interest loan waivers;

@   Ideological impositions e.g. imposition of Western model of democracy on all countries of the world. Whereas, this model is alien to the African people,who are traditionally governed by monarchical system of government with their own Council of Chiefs forming the parliament.

@   Social science scholarship which Ake (1982) describes as '...intellectual imperialism'.

@   Western and Eastern secret services like the M15 of Britain, CIA of America, KGB of Russia, and Zionism of Israel.

@   Multinational corporations suppressing the growth of indigenous companies. Coke continues to be the number one Brand in the world because it continues to buy up or suppress emerging indigenous soft drink companies in Africa and other developing world. Mahtma Ghandi refuses to allow Coke in India because the Atlanta, Georgia company refuses to release its brand formulae, despite the huge population of 1.5 Billion consumers in the country today.

@   The granting of Political Asylum to dissidents and political detractors in the African countries.

@   The proclamation of Human Right which Anikulapo-Kuti (2011) describes as the '...natural property...' of the people.

@   The granting of Visa Lottery to Africans to further drain the best brains in the continent to develop the Western nations. Now, Barak Obama, a citizen of Kenya in Africa is the President of United States of America dissipating his mental, physical, and natural endowments to develop the Uni-polar power of the world. Yet, he is still being queried whether he was truly born in the United States.

@   World Information Control: The World Wide Web is being controlled by the United States of America. All the countries of the world in this information and communication age subscribe to the internet facilities through America only.

11.   Globalization Era: We are now in the era of globalization when the whole world is caged, imprisoned, and trapped with the nuances of internet and computers in the 'Global Village'. The new communication age has changed our culture of relationships into the 'new culture' of 'electronics communication' where exists 'new ways of communicating, with new languages, new techniques and a new psychology'. (Arthur, 2007:3).

But nevertheless, the African means of communication continues to be relevant and unique in modern times.

4.0   African Traditional Media

The African traditional media are the indigenous means of communication in the various countries of the second largest continent in the world. They reflect in the various talking drums, the folk songs, drama, festivals, town criers, traditional wears, the artifacts, art works, paintings, stories, and among others cultural architecture that reflects in the palaces, shrines, and African cities, towns and villages. But by the thought of Wilson (1999), Oramedia or traditional media 'are the local means of communication that remain what essentially sustain the information needs of the population which represents over 70 per cent of the national population in the rural areas'.

This definition is quite apt to demonstrate oramedia as enduring, sustaining, and inevitable in the modern world as they represent the culture and tradition of the people. Even the UNESCO Commission on Communication recognises the age-long introduction of indigenous media and their

relevance in contemporary world. According to MacBride et al (1981:47), 'Traditional media or oramedia are body languages and other non-verbal languages being used in the traditional societies for millennia for a variety of purposes, their validity and importance today, despite obvious limitations. The messages and ideas are transmitted by means of itinerant dance and mime groups, puppet shows and other folk media which serve not only to entertain but to influence attitudes and behaviour'.

It is important to note that oramedia are highly effective than all other means of communication because they are interactive, inter-personal, combines verbal communications with non-verbal codifications, and they are simple, natural and less expensive. The high content of non-verbal in the oramedia actually makes them to be more effective because non-verbal communicates the mind more than verbal. When anybody wants to lie, it is non-verbal that readily contradicts the verbal lies. Really, Hall (1959) corroborates this position that 'non-verbal codes speak louder than words and shout the truth where words lie.'

However, on the efficacy of non-verbal , Mehrabian (1981) confirms in his research findings that, '93 per cent of meaning in a conversation is conveyed non-verbally; 38 per cent through the voice and 55 per cent through the face'.

One unique thing about oramedia is the immediate feedback, which makes communication to be effective. In fact, a research conducted by Birdwhistell (1974) attests to this that, 'research has shown that 65 per cent of all social meaning in face-to-face communication is conveyed through non-verbal stimuli, while verbal stimuli account for no more than 35 per cent'.

Indeed, oramedia are highly effective in the dissemination of information among the peoples of Africa. They are embedded in the cultural values and tradition of the people through body language, signs, and objects. According to MacBride et al (1981:3, 47), 'starting with the simplest vocal and gestural signals rooted in their physical structure, human beings developed a whole range of non-verbal means for conveying messages: music and dance; drum messages, signal fires, drawings and other forms of graphic symbols, including the pictogram, followed by the ideogram, important especially because it associated with the representation of an object with an abstract idea...facial

expression, gesture, mime, dance, images, music, songs, drawings, paintings, sculptures, sport...of special value are lip reading and sign languages used by millions of handicapped persons'.

Indeed, oramedia is culturally based as it is natural with the tradition and customs of the people. It involves their language, dialect, individual occupation or family occupation or communal occupation. So, people of another culture may not necessarily understand the message within a particular oramedia, because it is culturally situated and conditioned.

5.0   Uniqueness of Oramedia In Modern Age

It is important to explore the uniqueness of oramedia in the contemporary world. They include the following:

1.   Traditional: Oramedia are traditional means of communication in Africa as they are transmitted from one generation to the other. People grew up with them, and they get accustomed to them in their day-to-day interactions. So, they are bound to be with the people till eternity. When you seek to separate a people from the oramedia, you are attempting to exterminate them from the faces of the earth.

2.   Language: Oramedia are both verbal and non-verbal means of communication which make them more appealling , effective, and understandable.

3.   Alternative Media: The indigenous media in Africa serves as alternative media in the modern age because for messages to properly get to the grassroot, the people must be linked up through the oramedia. Hence, traditional rulers across Africa even in big cities like Lagos, Cairo, Cape Town, Nairobi, Abeokuta and others still use the Town Criers to announce festivals, restrictions, and traditional ceremonies. This is being done in the face of the mass media and the new media that are still elitist among the few. It is oramedia that reinforces the information they get from the mass media because the market women and others have the opportunity of asking questions directly from the representatives of the traditional ruler, the Town Crier who brought the message. Indeed, the 'medium is the message'. (McLuhan,1964).

4.   Culture: The oramedia are derived from the culture and way of life of the people. Hence, it is enduring and effective.

5.   Less Expensive: The traditional media is less expensive, as it costs less to send messages and to receive. It contradicts the new media and the mass media that takes toll on your lean

purse every second. The more you are on your laptop, handtop, or handset communicating online or talking, the more you are paying for the service. It is not so with oramedia.

6. Uses Indigenous technology: The folk media uses indigenous technology which can be improved upon by our Engineers and Traditional experts in the transmission and reception of information which are peculiar to the way of life of the people.

7. Communal: The oramedia are communal in nature because they are used within the confines and understanding of a particular people, tribe or ethnic.

8. Credible: The people believe in the messages of the traditional media more than the exogenous media or the new media.

9. Easy Understanding: The messages that are being transmitted through the traditional media are easy to understood, and does not require the interpretation of anybody. It is transmitted in the language and culture that are traditional to the people.

10. Simplicity: The oramedia are simple and less sophisticated to apply. A lot of elite still don't know how to manipulate many things in their handsets and laptops after many years.

11. Opinion Leadership: The people of Africa believe strongly in their Opinion Leaders and whatever information they get from them. They include the traditional rulers, traditional Chiefs, market leaders, Aides of traditional rulers, and heads of families, and religious leaders. The people believe that these leaders cannot mislead them because they are in position to serve them.

6.0   Challenges of African Communication

The African communication system is faced with some challenges in the contemporary world. These include:

1. Extinction of African Languages: A lot of African languages are going into extinction because of the adoption of the language of colonial masters as official language. Nigeria adopts English as the official language as part of the colonial heritage. This threatens the over 250 languages being spoken in the 200 million population country. Once the language of a people is taken, the whole of its culture is eroded.

2. The manifestation of the 'Global Village' theory of Marshall McLuhan is a challenge to oramedia. We now have the new communication culture of electronic age that perhaps enslaves man on the websites and internet.

3. The erosion of the cultural technology in preference for new technologies constitutes threats to oramedia.

4. The reliance of oramedia in the opinion leaders is a challenge as the new sets of opinion leaders in Africa are selfish, self-centred, and protégés of the West that continues to undermine African culture. The new opinion leaders are now partisan, and now colour and distort information to the people through the folk media.

5. The social system in the African family set up, community and institutions are greatly affected by the dominant Western culture which threatens oramedia. The African children now lack the home training, and the understanding of the African languages to the understanding of the oramedia messages.

6. The erosion of African value system in various homes in Africa also threatens the folk media.

7. The domineering nature and indeed the ubiquitous nature of the mass media and the new media threaten the indigenous communication system in Africa.

8. The lack of understanding of African body language, paralanguage and other non-verbal codes by the new generation of African children, constitute threat to oramedia.

9. Lack of pride in African tradition and values among the new generation of African children is a challenge the African communication system.

10. Urbanisation constitutes threat to oramedia through the expansion of African villages and towns into cities, as it destroys the communal way of living of the people that gives fillip to folk media.

11. The problems of illiteracy, poverty, ill-health, lack of social amenities, and population explosion constitute threat to oramedia in African countries. This is because, knowledge is power, and health is wealth.

7.0   2011 EGYPT REVOLUTION AS CASE STUDY

Perhaps with Egypt as the cradle of humanity and civilization in the world, it is good to also have the 2011 Egyptian Revolution as the case study for this paper. The revolution has succeeded so far for the removal of President Hosni Mubarak as the President after ruling for 31 years. Interestingly, the 18-day revolution between January 25, and February 11, 2011 succeeded because the people of Egypt resorted to the use of oral media. This is because as the great Egyptian writer Alaa Al-Aswany

(2011:ix) notes '...every night, I spoke in front of a million people, and I will never forget their eyes, full of anger and determination, and their united chant that roared like thunder: "Down with Hosni Mubarak!". Tahrir Square became like the Paris Commune. The authority of the regime collapsed and the authority of the people took its place...'

Though the Egyptian revolution was triggered by the Tunisian revolution that saw the overthrow of Tunisian President Ali last December, it was actually propelled by lack of freedom of speech. Hence, to dismantle the culture of silence, the Egyptians resorted to the usage of African traditional media to bring down the government of Hosni Mubarak which has now influenced protests in Yemen, Libya, Syria, Jordan, and Bahrain.

The oramedia used by Egyptians to mobilise 2 million people in Tahrir square in Cairo; 1 million people in Monsoura; 750,000 people in Alexandria; 250,000 people in Suez; over 400,000 people in Ismailia; over 200,000 people in Port-Said and other major cities in Egypt to demonstrate, protest, march, resort to acts of civil disobedience and labour strikes (Wikipedia,2011), include the following:

1. Philosophical thoughts and idiomatic expressions. Such include, 'My wife is pregnant, and my child doesn't want to see your face. So, step down, so he can come out.' These were expressed freely, and became the slogan among the youths, rural people and elites before the revolution to mobilise the people.
2. Graffitti: These are rude humorous, informative, educative drawings, paintings, writings on walls, streets, roads, rocks, vehicles, trains, and others to communicate and mobilise the people for the revolution.
3. Effiggy of Hosni Mubarak in different forms were used as Egyptians have high sense of humour to communicate.
4. Different drawings were made on the papyrus to bring down the government.
5. Cartoons were also used in different forms on walls, roads, streets, rocks and conspicuous places.
6. Music was effectively used as different artists and musicians, politicians, and religious people come up with different tunes and lyrics to stimulate the audiences at the demonstration spots across the country.
7. Town Criers: Youths in different parts of the cities moved out as town criers to mobilise the people from their homes for the great revolution that was non-violent. Though 846

people died and over 6,000 people were injured (Wikipedia,2011), Al-Aswany (2011:x) points out that 'Hosni Mubarak and his interior minister, Habib al-Adli, committed every possible crime in order to stop the revolution. The riot police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at the protesters, and then orders went out to kill them. I was in the midst of hundreds of thousands of demonstrators when the snipers started firing. The shots would hit the protesters right in middle of the head and kill them instantly. Two young men fell close to me within half an hour. The amazing thing is that the protesters did not retreat.'

8. Speeches were made by opinion leaders at the rallies to articulate the issues against the government which include police brutality, state of emergency laws, lack of freedom of speech, lack of free and fair elections, uncontrollable corruption, high unemployment, economic issues, food price inflation, and low minimum wage.

9. Flags as 'formal transference media' in African communications (Omu,1978:3) were used in different forms during the Egyptian revolution to display representations by various political, religious, human right groups, associations in support of the revolution.

10. Dances in different forms were displayed to entertain and to dramatise (dance drama) to communicate at the rallies.

11. Drama sketches were done by different drama groups to entertain, educate and inform at the rallies.

12. Slogans were coming in different forms to give solidarity to the campaign against the repressive government.

13. Calligraphy was used to make inscriptions on walls, rocks, clothes, papyrus, vests, face caps, and others to denounced President Hosni Mubarak from wanting his son, Gamal to desperately succeed him. Accdording to Al-Aswany (2011:vii), '...All the conditions in Egypt made the country ripe for revolution: Hosni Mubarak had mobilized power for thirty years through rigged elections and was working to install his son, Gamal as his successor.'

14. Chorus chants and songs were effectively used by the people during the solidarity rallies to bring the government down in Egypt.

15. Communal efforts of cleaning, care for the sick, injured, and sympathy for the families of the dead were organised in the course of the revolution as forms of oramedia.

16. Costumes of different appearances were used to communicate in the Egyptian oramedia.

17. Drums were used in different forms to communicate as indigenous media.

18. Flutes and trumpets were used during the revolution in Egypt to communicate.

19. Cultural symbol of all at the rallies raising their shoes to demonstrate their hatred for the regime of Hosni Mubarak, as we have in the Egyptian tradition.

20. Puppetry: The use of puppetry at the rallies to communicate and entertain.

21. Sports: The use of sports such as cultural boxing to entertain at the rallies during the revolution.

22. The use of folk songs, folk tales, oral poetry and other folklores at the rallies to communicate against the government to step down. And 'on the eighteenth day, I was standing near Tahrir Square having a discussion with some protesters when I heard a sharp cry, followed by more loud shouts of "He's stepped down!". Millions of Egyptians then launched into a riotous celebration throughout the night, overjoyed that Mubarak had resigned and the dictatorship had fallen', (Al-Aswany, 2011:x).

8.0   What Hope for Oramedia In the New Age?

There is hope for oramedia to subsist in the new age because it is part of the culture and tradition of the people. But it is very important for African countries to consider the following possible panacea very urgently:

1.   It is important for the African countries to make the learning of local languages compulsory at all levels of education from kindergarten to University level. This will bring back the lost glory of the local languages in shaping the tradition, customs, cultural heritage, African value system , and indeed oramedia.

2. The teaching of various subjects in primary and secondary schools in local languages will further bring alive oramedia in our social system. This will make the students understand the subjects better, and energise their creativity an inventive memories. Today, China and Japan are emerging as the new political and economic powers in the world because they teach students in their respective local languages from primary to tertiary institutions.

3. To inculcate the African culture and values in the children from infancy as the best culture in the world.

4. To instill in the new generation of Africans the pride of African traditional system from infancy through the home to the schools.

5. To give constitutional roles to the traditional rulers in Africa as the bestion and bedrock of leadership that people respect most. This will strengthen the traditional institutions and indeed the oramedia.

6. To develop the cultural technology for the emancipation of oramedia. This will create employment for the teeming unemployed youths in Africa, and create new generation of cultural technology for the oramedia.

7. It is important to make the teaching of oramedia compulsory in schools to engender better understanding and practice.

8. The African leaders should develop the rural areas so as to preserve the communal nature of the people for the preservation of the oramedia, and reduce the drift from the rural communities to the urban centres.

8.0 Conclusion

There is no doubt that Africa has what it takes to be great and to sustain its traditional means of communication. The continent has the huge wealth, the population, human resources and natural resources to be great. In fact, if the African leaders can decide to look inwards and break from the control and strangle hold of the West, their respective countries will emerge as top emerging economies and politically in the next few decades.

Africa had been weighed down by slave trade, colonialism, and neo-colonialism. And we are still being traumatised by globalization which is developing the computer industries in the West and the East, apart from threatening our culture of oramedia. It requires the political will and zeal of our leaders to look inwards and energise the traditional means of communication which has come to subsist with its unique values and effectiveness in face of overbearing nature of mass media, new media, and globalization.

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