

IMAGINATION AND ANCIENT TECHNIQUES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Dr. KIENON-KABORE Timpoko Hélène
Associate Professor, University, Félix

Houphouët-Boigny de Cocody Abidjan, CÔTE D'IVOIRE. SHS. BP V 34

ABSTRACT

In Africa, technical practices and symbolisms often form an ensemble where rituals, magic, gestures, words and signs combine to ensure a smooth operation and / or a good preservation of the secrets of procedures. Imagination played an important role in all stages of technical practice. Thus, techniques and symbolisms are inseparable and form an often complementary or sometimes ambivalent set, thus conferring an enigmatic character to these technical practices jealously guarded within sub-Saharan African societies. Some aspects of these techniques are impenetrable by the laypersons because most often protected by prohibitions and secret practices. They may play a role in the development of certain techniques or, on the other hand, they may be a brake on important innovations where knowledge is kept by a minority of people or artisans. Indeed, innovation or change is sometimes perceived as an attack on the pre-established order by the gods and ancestors, guarantors of technical traditions. Metallurgy, ceramics, weaving etc. are ancient techniques penetrated by this imaginary. It should be noted that each society has set up an original system, the elements of which often come from a larger cultural ensemble that sometimes goes beyond the world of craftsmen. These technical thoughts and practices sometimes contain important information that can help the technical historian understand societies where writing has been absent to freeze certain facts. Indeed, words, gestures, silence and rituals are often "vehicles" of the history of techniques that help to trace political, cultural and social facts important for the writing and understanding of the human past as well as the evolution of African techniques.

Keywords: Techniques-symbolisms-rites-cultures-traditions.