

# An Approach to the Study on the Situation of Cultural Decline in the Fang Ethnic Group of Equatorial Guinea

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**Abstract:** Our article aims to analyze the different stages of the Fang culture, particularly the one of Equatorial Guinea in order to know the current situation of the aforementioned culture. It should be said that the Fang is a social group, an ethnic group that belongs to the Bantu trunk. These Fangs developed their culture from an original perspective; that is to say in a raw state before they made contact with Westerners. Culture is a concept that has gone through many studies, hence it has a variety of definitions. According to the dictionary of the Spanish language of the Royal Academy, culture is the set of ways of life and customs, knowledge and degree of artistic, scientific, industrial development, in a time, of a social group. It is estimated that the term culture carries with it what is identity, and precisely a culture's identity. Thus, no culture can develop outside a society. With respect to our reference, which is the Fang culture of Equatorial Guinea, it can be said that a cultural profile has been developed and it is measured through cultural elements and manifestations such as dances, beliefs, art, religion, language, myths, funeral rites, etc. they all constitute a rich knowledge from a raw state. Thanks to this research we are going to look chronologically at the stages of the said culture from its original stage reaching colonization to the end with decolonization. The impact that Western culture has had on Fang culture is analyzed from another angle. In accordance with the general objective that consists of studying the Fang culture. Well, it can be seen that the contact with Western culture has greatly adulterated the Fang culture, and today, with the processes of globalization, it is fading even more. As it is a research that addresses a sociocultural issue such as the current situation of the fang culture, we have found it necessary to adopt a qualitative methodology. Well, the reasons that have led us to take this methodology are due to the fact that said methodology consists of the study of social relations.

**Keywords:** Culture, Fang, Decadence, Globalization, Colonization, Cultural Values

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## 1. Introduction

The reason for this research work starts from a direct observation about the Fang culture. We want to work and analyze the different stages of the Fang culture of Equatorial Guinea in order to know the current situation of the aforementioned culture. It should be said that the Fangs are a social and ethnic group that belongs to the trunk of the Bantus. These people developed their culture from an original perspective; that is, in a raw state before they came into contact with Westerners.

The cultural profile of the fang is measured through its cultural elements such as dances, beliefs, art, religion, language, myths, funeral rites, etc. they have manifestations and practices that characterize each cultural element; and

constitute all knowledge developed from a raw state by the social group already mentioned. The term culture carries with it what is identity, precisely a cultural identity. Thus, no culture can develop outside society.

Now, if we look closely at the indigenous cultural environment of the Fang society of Equatorial Guinea, we realize that it is suffering a strong cultural decline with the passage of time. The decline is manifested in some aspects such as the loss of the native language, the distortion of the dowry, the loss of traditional and cultural values (dances, rites, celebrations, etc.) to name a few and has as consequences, the loss of cultural identity, the crisis of cultural values.

After what has been said above, we ask ourselves the following research questions: Is there a Fang culture? How

does Fang culture manifest itself? What are the stages of Fang culture? What is the current situation of the Fang culture of Equatorial Guinea: boom or decline?

It is for this reason that we want to carry out an investigation in order to know the situation or current state of the Fang culture of Equatorial Guinea today. Our state of the art has several bibliographic sources that address the subject matter of study that is culture. Well, it is necessary to point out that the proper thing of man is to make culture, that means to transform the inner and outer nature to man. The activity by which man transforms his nature constitutes culture. Culture then designates everything that is created by man, everything that is added to his nature through his action, by his biological constitution, man belongs to the animal kingdom but is discerned from other animals by his ability to produce culture. A Man has a double facet thus the natural being and the cultural being. Culture in that sense is understood as man's dominion over nature.

Taking into account that we have concretized our research taking as a paradigm the Fang-Bantu culture of Equatorial Guinea in particular. Thus, at the level of the country Equatorial Guinea, there are publications that address our object of study, namely cultural studies, and these will serve as bibliographic support to carry out such research. Thus, we have Justo Bolekia Boleká, Constantino Ochaá Nvé Bengobesama, María Rafael Nze Abuy, etc.

In the Fang culture, of course the development of knowledge, values, customs, norms, rules and lifestyles that has been preserved and transmitted from generation to generation has been evidenced. We can highlight three periods in the Fang-Bantu culture of Equatorial Guinea. Next, we have: the original stage also known as pre-colonial, the colonial stadium and the postcolonial stage.

As it is a research that addresses a sociocultural issue such as the current situation of the Fang culture, we have seen it necessary to adopt a qualitative methodology. Well, the reasons that have led us to take this methodology are because this methodology consists of the study of social relations.

As a research technique, the survey has been used and a questionnaire containing closed questions has been used as an instrument. With this questionnaire it has been useful for us to collect the data that has been analyzed in this research. The survey has been chosen because it is the best technique that fits this research and because thanks to it, information have been obtained from the selected sample on the subject under study. The selected sample will be approximately 300 subjects, which are distributed in the different districts such as Añisok, Bata, Ebibeyin, Niefang and Mongomo exclusively of Fang culture.

## 2. Culture in the Fang Context

### 2.1. Definitions and General Considerations of Culture

According to the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy, the term culture is defined as a "set of ways of life and customs, knowledge and degree of artistic, scientific, industrial

development, in a social group era" (RAE, 2022). We understand with this first definition that culture reflects knowledge of a certain social group. Thus, culture is a product of human creation.

If the man is the maker of culture, then, one comes to the conclusion that the man is a cultural being. The evolution of societies has clearly passed through the evolution of cultures. We reiterate that culture is the same as knowledge. Without culture, there is no Society.

From the position of Páez & Zubita, culture is a "set of knowledge shared by a group of individuals who have a common history and participate in a social structure [15]. The idea of these authors is to show that culture is related to the historical framework. That is, all peoples who share the same culture have the same history. It is evident that the people of history such as the Mayan, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Greek, Roman civilization, etc. have left traces in the sense that their culture has expanded.

Many of these peoples that we have mentioned above have been able to develop their culture, and have led it to hegemony. The concept of culture becomes a factor of development for all peoples. By this, we say that no people lacks culture. In the words of Guiddens (1991) quoted by Bituga-Nchama & Nvé-Ndumu, "Society refers to systems of interactions that connect individuals who share a common culture. No culture can exist without society. But, by the same token, there cannot be a society devoid of culture" [6]. We understand the magnitude of culture and its relationship with society.

According to Tylor quoted by Ron, he defined culture as "that complex whole comprising knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, and other faculties and habits acquired by man as a member of society" [16]. The proper thing of man is to produce culture, that means to transform the inner nature and outer to man. The activity by which man transforms his nature constitutes culture. Culture then designates everything that is created by man, everything that is added in nature through his action, by his biological constitution, man belongs to the animal kingdom but is discerned from other animals by his ability to produce culture. Man has a double facet is a natural being and a cultural being. Culture in that sense is understood as man's dominion over nature.

Likewise, Linton links the notion of culture with that of the personality; in fact he argues that there are no collectivities or people who lack a culture. Every society has a culture, however humble, and every human being from the perspective according to which he is the bearer of one culture or another. [11]

We want to summarize this speech on culture. We say that culture, a social fact, is the mode of organization between men before nature. It is acquired thanks to learning, education, initiation to the rules that govern the life of an entire community or social group. Therefore, societies are distinguished from each other by means of culture.

The culture... In its ethnographic sense, it is that complex whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs and any other capacities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. The condition of culture in the various

societies of mankind, insofar as it can be investigated according to general principles, constitutes a suitable subject for the study of the laws of human thought and action. [10]

Culture opens the way to studies. Therefore, there is a plethora of authors who are dedicated to cultural studies. We have for example cultural anthropology, ethnography.

## 2.2. *Nature of the Fang Culture*

Nature in a broad sense has to do with essence. Thus the nature of culture is about the essence of culture. We understand by essence "that which constitutes the nature of things, the permanent and invariable of them". Culture as we have already pointed out above is a way of living, a way of doing things that identifies a certain social group.

Precisely, each culture has an essence, a raw and original state that characterizes it. Well, the Fang culture is taken as a paradigm. To say that this culture evidently has a nature, something peculiar that identifies it as it is.

The quintessence of Fang culture lies in its pure state. That is, through the elements, values and cultural manifestations. The Fang culture is peculiar among all those existing in the Bantu common trunk. Well, it should be noted that the Fang social group made its culture taking into account its social, historical and cultural reality, worth the redundancy. All Fangs are identified through patterns, manifestations that make them unique and unrepeatable.

The author Constantino Ocha'a Mvé Bengobesama wrote a work on the traditions of the Fang people. Well, in it, it shows the different cultural manifestations of that people. Thus, it declares the following:

Culture, thus, comes to be understood as "forms of behavior, explicit or implicit, acquired and transmitted through symbols, and constitutes the unique heritage of human groups..." The writers speak, in addition to "cultural models", "cultural structure" and "cultural organization". [12]

What we highlight in that subheading is the nature of the Fang culture. All Fang are from Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Cameroon, Congo Brazzaville have the same cultural traits that allow their recognition and identification as Fang that they are. In the work for example of the author cited above, it can be seen in some passages such as the Fang culture that is, their knowledge, ways of life, customs, art, religion, etc. that can hardly be found in other ethnic groups. Well, this speech is due to the fact that each social group develops a certain culture according to its social and historical realities.

## 2.3. *Purposes of the Fang Culture*

Define abbreviations and acronyms the first time they are used in the text, even after they have been defined in the abstract. The Fang culture is a black African culture and is therefore characterized by transmission from generation to generation. The different traditions that we observe today in the cultural context of the Fang is a legacy of the ancestors. The Fang culture has as its purposes learning, materialization, protection, transmission, thus being a rotating circle according to our observation. Below, we explain what each

of these purposes consists of.

First of all, learning. It is the first step, it means that there must be a student and a teacher. For the learning of the Fang culture, you do not need a school but the parents themselves teach their children about the Fang culture. That step is very important for the continuity of the other steps.

Secondly, we can highlight the materialization. With this step, learners carry out what they have learned during the teaching phase. In a spontaneous way, what has been learned materializes. For example traditional marriages. It is a materialization of what you have learned from parents or ancestors. All the necessary processes that have to be carried out for a Fang marriage to emerge after effects. In the same way there are other cases that we can cite. In the following sections, you can see the Fang cultural manifestations.

We continue with the step of protection. A good Fang knows that he has to preserve and protect his culture so that it does not disappear with the passage of time. That phase is very important for the Fang man because culture is identity. We start from the thesis according to which if culture, it is very complicated for a black African to identify. The reason why culture has to be protected is due to many reasons among which we can cite acculturation. Acculturation is one of the problems affecting black African cultures. A situation that is fueled today with issues such as globalization and / or modernism.

Finally, we have transmission. It is another important phase of the Fang culture. If we currently talk about that culture it is because it is timeless. That is, it has survived for years and years until today. All this process has been possible thanks to the transmission from generation to generation. That process did not have to be diverted despite the interference of globalization in culture. Thanks to this step, the Fang man asserts himself before the other social groups since in history, there are many peoples whose culture is only a relic like the Mayan culture. It is necessary that the cultural aspects of this social group be transmitted from generation to generation in order to perpetuate it. The Fang is without a doubt, a pure traditionalist. That is, everything he does at the social level has an inclination to knowledge or behaviors that are transmitted from one generation to another and so on. "Equation (1) is..."

## 3. *The Fang: A Bantu Social Group*

### 3.1. *Historical Context and Geographical Location*

From the outset, to say that you can't talk about the Fang culture without mentioning the term Bantu.

Bantu (from ba-ntu = human beings) is a name conventionally used to designate a group of black ethnic groups that share the same linguistic root, which suggests a common ancestral origin. Their current sites are relatively new, they are considered to come from the Northeast, the Great Lakes region and in more remote times, originating in the heart of the Asian continent. [8]

And, it is a black African social group or people located

most often in the area of Central Africa; It has about 400 ethnic groups spread across different Central African countries; And it should also be noted that they form a trunk with the same historical and cultural reality, with the same beliefs (animism for example) and speak the Bantu languages of a common trunk (fang, bubu, balengue, kikuyu, etc.). Within the Bantu civilization, we are interested in studying the culture of the Fang ethnic group.

Written history reports that the Fang are originally from present-day South Sudan, from where they left to avoid the Muslim invasion; they migrated southwest to the Congo and Nigeria. Anthropologists agree that they belong to the Bantu ethnic group, and mixed very intensely with Sudanese, Ethiopians and Congolese. Known for being brave, strong and warlike, they managed to occupy and appropriate the areas to which they were forced to emigrate looking for a solution to their way of life. [3]

On its geographical location, the same authors already mentioned above continue with their speech declaring that:

In addition, its territorial distribution is so long that it exceeds the geographical area of Equatorial Guinea. Thus, they can be found in five countries among which Equatorial Guinea where they occupy 75% of the population, in Congo with 38%, in Gabon with 33%, in Cameroon with 23% and in Sao Tome with only 10%; a situation that makes us reflect how inappropriate it is to consider the ethnicity of a country as an exclusive entity. In this sense, we can accept that the Fang people have a cultural rather than a biological entity. [3]

The Fang are currently found with a dense frequency in the geographical area of Central Africa. That's where they carry out their cultural activities. The history of these people indicates that they come from South Sudan where they escaped the slave trade, and in their flight, they migrated to the southern part until they settled in Central Africa in Gabon, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea where they are found in masse. The Fang thus represent an ethnic group with a cultural greatness.

### **3.2. Traditional Fang Society**

Traditional Fang society has its own social organization. In the words of Ondo Emerua, "the core of the Fang social structure is the clan, called Ayong, which is patrilineal exogamous. Clan society is founded exclusively on the principle of kinship and not of political authority or more locally immediate to one"[14]. From that author's perspective, without the clan or tribe, there is no traditional Fang society because this is in the author's words "the core of the Fang social structure." It is notorious that Fang society has its own human patterns and behaviors. In fact, it is important that cultural values of the Fang tradition are preserved and protected.

We introduce the other idea according to which in traditional Fang society there is a higher authority considered as the tribal chief. This is called nkúkuma. For the tribal chief is the representative of the tribe in legal matters, in the same way he is the one who deals with disputes that have to do with social questions of family, marriage, or other nature as

long as it is related to members of his tribe. It should be noted that the Fang society, the authority of the nkúkuma is respected. In all Fang villages, there are tribal chiefs. There is a kind of democracy in terms of the election of nkúkuma, that means that it is not a hereditary power. Within the same society they proceed to the choice of what they consider to be the right person to be for a season their traditional guide. The age of the nkúkuma also influences his choice since he has to be an adult person knowledgeable about the Fang culture.

However, the tribal chief is in his jurisdiction. By that we mean that the tribal chief of a village does not exercise his authority over the same tribe that is from another people. According to what has already been pointed out above, that each Fang settlement or people has a certain tribe. We think that this social organization of the Fang is transmitted from generation to generation. Another relevant aspect that should not create confusion is that there is no Fang king, but rather tribal chiefs; and each tribal chief is a tribal chief in his jurisdiction. Today, it is noted that it is still the form of social organization of the Fang.

Another nuance about Fang society is that "it is of a patriarchal type"[3]. The patriarchal system consists of the domination of men over women. It is a circumstance that remains one of the main problems of Fang society. And it has been studied by authors such as Bituga-Nchama. For him, "patriarchy advocates the domination and systematic oppression of women" [5]. We do not want to comment on the systems of marginalization suffered by women, we only present how traditional Fang society is presented.

### **3.3. Fang Cultural Manifestations**

To speak of cultural manifestations is to allude to the different forms that the Fang man externalizes, or puts before the eyes of all how he develops his culture. Thus, it has diverse cultural elements.

The Fang represent a people, a social group so they have their own culture. A culture that has developed according to their knowledge, customs and ways of life. That is thus considered a symbol for that people.

According to Bituga-Nchama, he indicates that: "For several years, these people have been shaping their own worldview. In fact, one can speak of a culture that has been transmitted from one generation to another, preserving the cultural legacy inherited from its ancestors". [5]

Continuing with his argument, the author stipulates that [5] "the Fang constitute an ethnic group with its own idiosyncrasies. This means that they have their own myths, philosophy, anthropology, which constitutes the cultural heritage that distinguishes them". The Fang culture develops in different areas as mentioned by Bituga-Nchama.

The Fang culture manifests itself in several areas with peculiar features. Taking philosophy as a paradigm. Well, there is a fang philosophy. And that manifests itself through the moral lessons contemplated in myths and oral tales. In the same way the fang philosophy is developed in the sayings. Hence, it is observed that the Fang always speak using sayings as a sign of wisdom from the ancestors.

At the general level, the cultural manifestations of the Fang people constitute part of its essence. Since the essence is what defines the human being, the same we say with the fang culture, it is the one that defines that social group, in a particular way defines the personal being of each fang.

## 4. Stages of the Fang culture of Equatorial Guinea

### 4.1. *First Approximation of the Fang Culture: Original Stage*

This section consists of presenting the socio-cultural organization of the Fang ethnic group before the arrival of the Europeans, in other words before they had contact with the Europeans. As noted above, Equatorial Guinea was a Spanish colony. Therefore, the Spaniards were the ones who colonized Equatorial Guinea by acculturating them to a certain extent.

We say, then, that this stage of the Fang-Bantu culture refers to culture in its raw state, that is, the essence and purity of that culture before coming into contact with other peoples or civilizations.

These are fields of cultural tradition, understood as a whole of the shared heritage of the societarians, or the set of cultural goods that are transmitted from generation to generation within a given community. Tradition stored and guaranteed the existence of those values, customs, socio-cultural manifestations and levels of knowledge that were recreated by society, because they were considered valuable and should be inculcated and transmitted without further ado. [7]

The Fang ethnic group has developed its culture from an original perspective and according to its lifestyle, ways of thinking and customs. For this reason, it can be seen that traditional Fang society has its own social organization.

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With the original stage of the Fang culture we want to highlight the fact that the Fang had their own socio-cultural organization before the Westerners arrived.

It is also necessary to emphasize here the role played by the institution of the Abaha (the House of the word), which functioned as a court, when the case was necessary; and as a parliament, where people could express their opinions and reflections seeking only and solely the good of their society and of the people. The Spanish translation says it all: "House of the word" (Eyama Achama, 2014, p. 305).

In summary, we want to emphasize here that the Fang culture has its own ideosyncrasy. And, there are several sociocultural aspects that characterize this group as has been previously noted.

### 4.2. *Second Approximation of the Fang Culture: Colonial Stage*

The colonial period refers to the irruption of the settlers in Equatorial Guinea, in the words of Mba Nnegue it can be said that the FAÑ People were not alien to the pressure and colonial force to which European imperialism subjected the African continent.

At this stage, black African cultures are affected due to the colonization process. Through means of transmission such as school with the inculcation of new knowledge, the Church with the process of evangelization; Colonization has greatly affected black African cultures in general and Fang culture in particular.

Thus, it is estimated that in this colonial stadium many

cultural values and "knowledge of the previous stage [7]" have been diminished referring to the original stadium. The Fang-Bantu man as a victim of colonization is therefore recognized, "a profound deculturation, a conscious inculturation and the construction of new identities, new values and knowledge for Africans mentally trapped in the permanent process of colonization" [7]. The interpretation of the colonists was that the Africans were clinging to a culture of savagery so they intended to civilize them.

Colonization consists of domination and imposition. In line with Eyama Achama, it can be said that:

The European settlers destroyed and interpreted in their own way the African cultures in general, and the Fang culture in particular [...] in order to take control and impose their authority in the territories conquered by them, they tried to dismantle the system they had found in the African peoples under the pretext that the organization imposed by them was better. [9]

With this idea, it is understood that the Fang culture has been adulterated since the settlers intended to impose their ideology on the Fang because they considered them to be barbarians and indigenous. Thus, the colonial period marks the turning point of a possible inculturation or acculturation of the Fang culture. As previously noted. It is that during the colonization process a series of activities were carried out in order to change the lifestyle and customs of the colonized without taking into account the socio-cultural realities of that people. The idea here was for the Fang to assimilate Western culture forgetting their own because it was not a good culture from the settlers' perspective.

We know that during the colonization the missionaries came, and as Nguema Bilogo points out:

The missionaries carried out their mission of evangelization of the Fang people, without taking into account the existence of the Bantuh culture and radically disregarding the specific spiritual and cultural characteristics of this people. So much so, that they only managed to "smear" the mud with the gospel, like a varnish on the surface of a solid body. [13]

What is raised here as an idea is that evangelization was the technique to persuade the colonized to renounce certain cultural practices. "For the evangelizers accommodated themselves in their supine contempt and preferred to destroy indiscriminately the cultural values of the Fang people, even those that a priori could corroborate the efficacy of evangelization".

The construction of new identities was the objective or intention that the colonizers had after occupying the territory. To do this, it was necessary to destroy the original cultures of those. "It is an alienating stage that found in school, in the church and in the media its best and most efficient allies". [7]

That task was not easy because the Fang were and continue to be traditionalists, that is, they are guardians of their culture, in other words conservationists, for that reason the Fang culture is transmitted to posterity, that is, from generation to generation. In turn, the assimilation of a new cultural identity for the Fang man revealed an ideological

conflict between them and the settlers.

When we talk about the ways of life of the Fang man, we refer to sociocultural aspects such as beliefs, myths, rites, festivals, initiatory ceremonies, systems of government, etc. that are the set of elements that determine the cultural profile of said people. Now, "The culture shock among Africans [...] and Europeans [...] has created a special communication system that justifies cultural hybridity (autochthonous, foreign and other)". [7]

Over many centuries, black Africans have suffered phenomena such as slavery, colonization, neocolonization, the current globalization that is observed at the level of technology where it turns out that they are always the victims.

#### ***4.3. Third Approach to Fang Culture: Postcolonial Stage***

Postcolonial Equatorial Guinea for the Fang culture refers to that stage where the aforementioned culture went through a cultural mixture between its own or local culture with Western culture. Indeed, we can analyze or highlight the fact that the influence of Western culture on the Fang culture of Equatorial Guinea has of course affected the essence of the Fang culture.

Thus, this stage represents the most advanced where the same black African Fang-Bantu has to choose between an authentic culture (original culture) and an imported one (Western culture) so there is a cultural heterogeneity in that society. And, currently, there is a cultural hybridism, coexistence between the authentic culture of the Fang-Bantu and the Western culture that is clearly imported from our perspective.

It is a rather disturbing situation since it puts many individuals who lack the value of what is culture in the situation of opting for the culture that suits them according to the current reality. It should also be mentioned that this is a mistake, because of the impact of Western culture and / or globalization on black African cultures that constitute one of the greatest African anthropological problems.

In summary, when faced with the question of the stages or periods of the Fang-Bantu culture of Equatorial Guinea, it can be said that all the peoples or tribes that constitute this culture have been in contact with other peoples, civilizations or cultures that in a direct or indirect way have influenced their own culture. Perhaps it would be an exaggeration to speak of acculturation in the Fang culture, but what is highlighted here as a guiding idea is that, after contact with Westerners, the Fang culture has known certain essential changes that can be noticed today. We can cite for example the introduction of money in terms of the delivery of dowry within a customary marriage, among others.

We have already pointed it out ut supra with the colonial stadium. Well, when the colonization begins, the Fang culture has been affected in many aspects, we reiterate. For example, the importation of Christianity as a new religious doctrine to which the black African Fang-Bantu has had to submit to the detriment of their own religious beliefs such as

the practice of *melän*<sup>1</sup>. It is known that these people were animists, they believed in the force of nature but over time they have been given the idea of Jesus Christ. By that, we mean that the fang did not know the Messiah, they believed in the strength of their ancestors so cults were held in honor of them.

To substantiate our argument, we start from the writings of Bolekia Boleká, an Equatoguinean author, who states the following:

The post-colonial tertiary basically sought the consolidation culmination of the destruction of identity, or tried to rehabilitate the African collective imaginary that was constructed from the Western particularist vision. If in the primary stage we could speak of a common cultural background enriched with the apparently differentiating diversity, with the implantation of the post-colonial system Africans would experience a debilitating heterogeneity at the communicative level [...] political, religious, etc. White Western civilization dealt tremendous blows to the psyche of the African, forcing him to appropriate states in which the depersonalization and deterritorialization of the African was the norm.

We reiterate that Western civilization has brought an acculturation to the Fang culture. Well, it can be said that:

Acculturation consists of a process of adaptation or assimilation between cultures, apprehension of sign language and symbols, gradual loss of elements or traits, abandonment of rules of social behavior, absorption of new values and customs from interethnic and multicultural contacts, which lead to progressively assume external cultural behaviors as if they were their own. [2]

Today, the Fang culture is facing the new trends of today's world that are the causes of the situation of decline or decline that it realizes. With this research, we highlight the situation of the Fang culture after the abandonment of some cultural practices. Thus, the incorporation of new customs within this culture perhaps constitutes a cultural development. However, he realizes that the original culture is affected in this case.

The third approach to the Fang culture that we analyze in this research is that of the postcolonial stage as indicated in the title of the subsection. We understand that this period is characterized by being very delicate for the Fang culture. Well, it is observed that new trends are leaving traces in culture. It is worth mentioning globalization, characterized by technological advances that constitutes a species culture

that is influenced by black African cultures. And it has as consequences the renunciation of some cultural practices.

It is notorious to point out that contact with Western cultures has not only brought negative aspects, but we can also notice the evolution of customs since the Fang culture also has negative features. Thus, there are many controversies surrounding the theme between globalization, modernism and culture. Many believe that the Fang culture is in full ideological conflict with the phenomena we have cited a priori.

Roughly speaking, the Fang culture has some negative features that globalization is annihilating just as colonization did in the past. The cultural mix leaves a choice to the new generations, since they choose what favors them. In other words, young people are more inclined to Western cultures because of the context of updating. Well, it is about the management of new technologies as the new culture for them.

## 5. Study on the Current Situation of the Fang Culture

### 5.1. Methodology

As it is a research that addresses a sociocultural issue such as the current situation of the Fang culture, we have seen it necessary to adopt a qualitative methodology. Well, the reasons that have led us to take this methodology are because this methodology consists of the study of social relations. "The qualitative methodology has an exponential value in social studies, as it brings together a series of characteristics that make research go beyond the mere sum of techniques for data collection" [17].

The survey has been used as a research technique and the instrument will be a questionnaire containing closed questions. This questionnaire is useful for the collection of the data analyzed in this research. The survey has been chosen because it is the best technique that fits this research and because thanks to it, information will be obtained from the selected sample on the subject under study.

### 5.2. Techniques and Instruments for Data Collection

Techniques and instruments have been used for data collection in order to respond in some way to many of the questions that are part of this research. The "particular procedure or way of obtaining data or information". [3]

Research techniques and instruments are ways that the researcher follows to collect information during the fieldwork phase. Its application depends directly on the type of study that is developed. Thus, the most used are the survey, the interview and the questionnaire. Based on our research, we have obviously used the methods mentioned above.

In a more precise way, the author mentioned above states that [1] "the survey method is adequate to study any fact or characteristic that people are willing to report"[3]. As for the questionnaire, say that it is "a format solved in written forum"

1 The ceremony of the *melän* cult is described as follows: [...] The elders of the village prepare a site near the village, fence it with tree trunks, cover it with palm leaves, spread large banana or banana leaves on the ground, on top of which they put all the skulls in order, giving them before a bath of water mixed with red powders. All initiates or Bengos can witness these cults. Then, each proman presents to his particular skull the victims he offers, consisting of goats, sheep [...] and begins to speak with the spirit of his ancestor in the following terms: "O my father, you have not eaten for five months (since the last time the cult was held); Today I bring you a goat to eat and not be hungry [...] I ask you to give me a lot of wealth [...] I want to marry five women [...] and each one give me so many children [...] I want to get so much food from my fields and farms [...] Killing many animals in hunting and traps [...] Once he has finished with the row of his requests, he sacrifices the victim, spilling the blood on top of the skull [...]"

(p. 134) and we can highlight in the questionnaire open questions and closed questions. For this research, we have handled four closed-ended questions that we have considered crucial to that research. Therefore, closed questions offer the interviewee alternative answers, so that he can choose the one that most closely matches the answer" [3]. And we've used dichotomous questions for our research.

### 5.3. Population and Sample Characteristics

The population on which this research has been directed has been the districts of Niefang, Añisok, Ebibeyin, and Bata because they are cities with a large concentration of fang. Well, a group of individuals aged between 30 and 70 years has been selected to constitute our sample.

So the selected sample will be approximately 300 subjects, which are distributed in the different districts exclusively of Fang culture. Equatorial Guinea is a country with a Fang

majority, therefore, the research has common characteristics among those who make up the sample: the Fang.

### 5.4. Analysis and Discussion of Results

The survey carried out in the cities of Añisok, Bata, Niefang, Ebibeyin and Mongomo has aimed to know the degree of perception of the object of study. Well, it is necessary to carry out this phase of fieldwork for a better result. We know that we are in the area of social sciences, therefore, the direct participation of individuals is important.

We have started from the hypothesis according to which the Fang culture is in full decline today because it is influenced by Western culture and globalization processes above all. And, the thesis to defend is summarized in the fact that the Fang culture has to be protected and valued by them. Well, after the survey carried out, we present below the results collected.

**Table 1.** What do you think about the current situation of the Fang culture of Equatorial Guinea?

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage
Valid	It is in full decline	285	95%	95%
	Remains the same as before	5	1,7%	1,7%
	It is evolving	10	3,3%	3,3%
	Total	300	100%	100%

**Interpretation:** Many of the respondents, representing 95%, believe that the Fang culture is currently in full decline. 1.7% say that the culture remains the same as before. Finally, 3.3% of respondents say that Fang culture is evolving.

**Analysis:** That question is very central to our research. It should be said that the objective of this research is to know the current state of the Fang culture of Equatorial Guinea. The assertion that the Fang culture is in full decline is due to the fact that cultural practices are devalued to the detriment of Western cultures.

Indeed, many cultural practices such as aboc misem (the dance of sins that was celebrated when an evil was detected in society, and that was intended to purify said evil); The Messing (is a kind of Fang fight and one of the most popular shows of the Fang society). The name fang seen from the point of view of its application is also in full decline since many fang parents now prefer to give western or movie names to their children such as James, Sánchez, Franck, Williams to the detriment of names such as Abeso, Nguema, Ondo or Esono. The sociolinguistic situation, that is, the native language, also suffers the same declines since the new generations of Equatoguinean society do not speak Fang, 80% of these young people only speak Spanish with their parents. Well, that constitutes decadence because language is linked to culture.

The same respondents who recognize the decline of the Fang culture think that parents are the main cause of this. The same respondents who recognize the decline of the Fang culture think that parents are the main cause of this. That's because they don't teach their children fang culture values beforehand. They focus first on what respect is. Nowadays young women do not know how to respect the elderly, that is

a lack of cultural education. The Fang man is very respectful, he knows that he does not reply when an elder speaks, he knows that one does not look into one's eyes when he is talking. There are many deviations that can be noticed in the face of the situation under study.

However, others believe that the Fang culture is still earlier since dowry marriage is still practiced. That allegation is the one that has been maintained by the 5 individuals who have opined on the matter.

And finally, the others believe that the Fang culture is in full evolution. Well, they think that the culture fang has negative traits that have to be abolished. And with the passage of time it is being achieved such is the case of the levirate. This practice that diminishes the dignity of women is no longer practiced very densely today compared to previous times.

It should be added that the marginalization of women by the Fang patriarchy is also being broken. In other words, the empowerment of the Fang woman is being achieved despite the presence of culture as the first factor condemning the Fang woman.

**Table 2.** Do you really believe that the Fang culture is in full decline?

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage
Valid	Yes	295	95%	95%
	No	5	5%	5%
	Total	300	100%	100%

**Interpretation:** For the majority i.e. 95% say YES, the culture is in full decline while 5% say NO.

**Analysis:** The Fang culture is in full decline as cultural values are being lost. To exemplify what has been said, they have given the following aspects that already diminish the



Fang culture. We have the use of the vernacular Fang which is inferiorly spoken by this social group. Thus, in homes both parents and children only speak Spanish with their children. On the other hand, we have the ignorance of cultural elements such as the ayong (tribe).

Well, it can be said that ayong is not a mere cultural element but is part of the values of culture. Thus, no Fang can be identified apart from the ayong. Next, we have the conflict that currently exists between culture and modernism. One of the main causes of the decline of the Fang culture is the cohabitation with other cultures and the negative influence that modernism has on that culture. Many Fang are better abiding by the traditional values of the West to the detriment of their own. Which is a generational problem. In what sense? For, in the sense that they are cultural traits that fade little by little and in the long run, there would be no Fang cultural values left to inculcate in future generations. If we start from the fact that acculturation is one of the problems that are registered in cultural anthropology. We know that identity is linked to the question of culture. It turns out that without culture many peoples could not identify. And if that culture suffers decline, therefore, we would speak of an anthropological crisis precisely cultural.

For other respondents, there is no decline of the Fang culture because there are still cultural manifestations of that ethnic group today. They think that the Fang culture cannot fade away, because if it were the case, well, the same ethnic group would also disappear. There is no culture without society and no society without culture. On the basis of this axiom, the minority of respondents thought otherwise about the question asked.

**Table 3.** Can globalization help the decline of the Fang culture?

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage
Valid	Yes	300	100%	100%
	No	0	0%	0%
	Total	300	100%	100%

*Interpretation:* 100% of respondents say YES, globalization helps the decline of Fang culture.

*Analysis:* All our respondents have stated that globalization contributes to the decline of Fang culture. Although in the previous question we have seen large numbers of respondents say they don't know what. Well, we have taken the initiative to give the respondents an emphasis on what globalization is. Now let's see that for the respondents, that decadence can be noticed in the way of doing things currently of a Fang.

They believe that cultural practices of the past are not the same today. Previously, cultural practices were efficient and their purpose revolved around the welfare of the people, however, today it proclaims the materialism of families. The same respondents added that young people have become very skeptical, and believe more in new Western ideologies, especially those they see on television. The globalization analyzed here is the inclusion of new ideologies that threaten the integrity of Fang-Bantu culture in particular and black African cultures in general.

Many Fang cultural manifestations or practices over time are altered, in the sense that they are no longer in their raw or original state. And, it is reason to believe that all the sociocultural elements that coexist in a globalized society today can no longer be authentic and will eventually disappear. One can speak of a globalization of culture but that would obviously alter the roots of the Fang culture.

**Table 4.** Can the decline of the Fang culture be halted today?

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage
Valid	Yes	150	50%	50%
	No	150	50%	50%
	Total	300	100%	100%

*Interpretation:* By coincidence, we had a tie on the question. Thus, 50% of respondents have answered yes. And, others, namely 50% have answered No.

*Analysis:* It is indeed estimated that there are ways or probabilities to stop the decline or decay of the Fang culture that many have thought. For this, the involvement of parents in this process is notorious. Parents should reorient their children.

However, others estimate that it is already a lost cause because of the new ideologies that have invaded the thinking of the Fang youth. It would therefore be very difficult for them to return to cultural practices as they have been doing.

## 6. Conclusion

To conclude this research works on the study on the current situation of the Fang culture of Equatorial Guinea. With respect to the subject addressed, we have started from a general vision that consisted of studying the Fang culture of Equatorial Guinea from the pre-colonial period to the postcolonial period in order to know how it has manifested itself in its different stages. It has been observed through many textual evidences that the Fang-Bantu culture of Equatorial Guinea has a well-defined origin, that is, that the Fang group at the sociocultural level has developed its own idiosyncrasy that precisely allows its identification. The Fang represent a people, a social group so they have their own culture. A culture that has developed according to their knowledge, customs and ways of life. That is thus considered a symbol for that people.

Well, after colonization, there have been certain circumstances that have adulterated we would say the original Fang-Bantu culture to which we mention. We allude to inculturation. We know that colonization brought new doctrines to the colonized, so we can see for example the introduction of Christianity into the local religion. Western Christianity for the Fang Bantu is an assimilation why, because that group had its own religious doctrine consisting of Melän.

With that research, we do not want to claim that contact with Western culture did not bring or does not have a positive side. Otherwise, our analysis is circumscribed in the fact that the contact of the Fang culture with the Westerners has greatly devalued the roots of that culture. And, that process has been

fueled by globalization. Therefore, it is estimated that the decadence of the Fang culture has its roots since colonization.

Our research has focused on the Fang culture. Well, to understand its historical framework, we have started from the pre-colonial period, reaching the colonial to culminate in the postcolonial period. It should be noted that during all these periods, the Fang culture has had a certain characteristic. This has allowed us to analyze the current situation of this culture.

In general, we believe that the objectives set for this research work have been satisfactorily fulfilled since we have been able to analyze the different stages of the Fang-Bantu culture of Equatorial Guinea. Well, at each stage there are certain characteristic features. With that research, we can highlight the fact that cultural practices do not have to be abandoned today. So culture is clearly linked to human dignity; Where there are men, there is society Therefore, there is culture taking into account the fact that man is a maker of culture.

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