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**Cosmopolitan Spaces in urban Africa. Newly-Created Sociability Places and  
Social Interactions between Locals and Foreigners.**

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## Abstract

As the famous Nigerian-American writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie mentions it in her interviews, “Africa” and “cosmopolitan” are too often considered as opposite. Far from being apart of the World as they are often considered in a patronising outlook, African Cities are fully actors of the changes and are also places of modernity. The paper will focus on the ways cities in Sub-Saharan Africa are dynamic, opened to worldwide influences and circulations such as people coming from all over the World, and especially from Southern countries, ideas or artefacts (for example in food practices, architecture or as graphic or visual arts). The new concept of an “African Cosmopolitan Archipelago” is proposed and discussed. In particular the intense development of the international migrations is a key theme: how do these foreigners settle in the cities, how do they live and which sociability places they create, hence contributing to everyday urban life and sociability (in particular many Chinese people are concerned). In such places we can observe cosmopolitan practices and representations. Newly-created sociability places are not only aimed at welcoming an ethnic community clientèle, but also are turned towards local city dwellers. Foreign restaurants, casinos, new old-styled colonial bars, etc. attract both foreigners and locals, who appreciate the exotic ambiance. These new sociability places are called “creolized” in the way that new forms of cultural exchange develop. Although the desire to modernity and openness to the world do not prevent from identity tensions in the same time. The two main cities studied are Antananarivo in Madagascar and Maputo in Mozambique.

Key words: Africa; cities; cultural globalization; sociability places; cosmopolitanism; everyday life; popular areas.

## Introduction.

### Context : Circulations in an « African Cosmopolitan Archipelago »

Too often, African cities are not considered fully part of the world, treated as “off the map” (Robinson, 2002) or as underdeveloped peripheries not contributing to cultural globalisation. The look on African cities’ population is nowadays still patronizing, from the media world as well as from the scientific one (Mbembe & Nuttall, 2004). Just to exemplify we can evoke the sole focus on urban chaos (aids, crime, gangs, natural disasters, lack of public services) or the cliché always mentioning African cities are big villages and not real cities. Moreover, seen from Europe, their populations are also thought to be uniformly “black,” obscuring an important ethnic diversity. But African cities host many foreigners from all over the world, especially since the 1990s, including Chinese, Indians, Arabs, Brazilians, Europeans, and of course, people from other African countries. The numerous migrants and sojourners coming from Southern countries are a new phenomenon and will be the focus of this chapter, approached from the perspective of the sociability places they create and attend. This is a major issue among the rapid changes experienced in urban African societies, but it has received little academic attention until now. As the famous Nigerian-American writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie often mentions in her interviews, “Africa” and “cosmopolitan” are too often considered as opposite.

Though there does exist what I proposed to call an “African Cosmopolitan Archipelago” (ACA) (Fournet-Guérin, 2017: 42). This notion designates at the same time places, often urban places, and networks based on the international circulation of people between these places. Within the ACA circulate people, such as traders,

business men, artists, missionaries or “travellers”, meaning people who see themselves as “aventuriers” (Bredeloup, 2014), etc. So their motivations are very diverse ones. At a local level, in fixed places of the ACA, these people circulating create transnational links that connect these different places between them and with the rest of the world. Throughout these local places circulate such things as goods and objects (Choplin & Pliez, 2018) as well as digital information via social networks. So the notion of the ACA helps thinking together many different urban places throughout Africa in between which people circulate. It also helps avoiding the scientific focus on some very few metropolises that often take the light in the scientific literature such as Johannesburg or Nairobi (see for example Mbembe & Nuttall, 2004). Hence in the ACA we find smaller cities, demographically speaking or concerning their worldwide influence which are unknown such as El Oued in Algeria or Agadez in Niger<sup>1</sup>. In this text I will focus on two cities that are both capitals and metropolises of their country: Maputo in Mozambique and Antananarivo in Madagascar<sup>2</sup>. These case studies of Antananarivo and Maputo refer to two capital cities of Southern Africa, big but nonetheless secondary in the urban hierarchy with each two to three millions inhabitants as a whole. At the same time none of them is well-known out of its country and none embodies neither modernity nor connection to globalization. In the scientific literature as well as in the media they are considered as provincial cities, holding a secondary part, no being important as parts of the globalization process, whereas they host many people coming from abroad for transitory stays as well as for years or decades (Fournet-Guérin, 2019).

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<sup>1</sup> I mention these cities because in the French literature in social sciences there has been major studies about the fact that they have been “cosmopolized” cities in the last decade (Brachet, 2009; Choplin & Pliez, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> This paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork in Antananarivo and Maputo conducted during short stays since the last years. This paper draws principally on observations and interviews with migrants living in the cities, mainly coming from other African countries, China and India. It also takes into account the point of view of locals interacting with them.

## Theoretical approach : everyday cosmopolitanism

Since the 2000' many researchers in social sciences have transposed the notion of cosmopolitanism out of the Western world and have applied it to Southern countries (Cohen & Vertovec, 2002). In these countries too it is now considered as legitimate to deal with transnational connections and encounters at the local level. The processes focus on taking into account how foreigners and locals interact at the very local level: these social interactions can take different forms such as conviviality, tolerance or xenophobia. In the two first cases we can talk about cosmopolitanism, as Hannerz mentions it: « *Cosmopolitanism [...] includes a stance toward diversity itself, toward the coexistence of cultures in the individual experience. A more genuine cosmopolitanism is first of all an orientation, a willingness to engage with the other. It entails an intellectual and aesthetic openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity* » (Hannerz, 1990: 239). Moreover, in a social perspective, the scientific focus about cosmopolitanism has been enlarged from elites to society as a whole. Many researchers deal with this new phenomenon, mentioning “*vernacular cosmopolitanism*” (Diouf, 2000) or “*working class cosmopolitanism*” (Werbner, 1999). Our purpose here is to adapt this notion in a spatial perspective conducted at the micro-local level (such as a street, a beach, a grocery...) to analyse whether or not cosmopolitan interactions develop in a daily context not exceeding the everyday area. I will follow Hiebert (2002) while proposing to focus on transnational neighbourhoods in working-class areas of Southern cities and I will specify the analysis by focusing on sociability places (their

architecture, their clientèle, their settings and their atmosphere) and the way people use them and develop images of them.

The main processes are relative to social and cultural geography. The point is to study how social and ethnic differences are visible in public spaces. The paper also deals with everyday sociology (Goffman, 1969). The main purpose of the paper is to tackle the following question: to what extent is it relevant to talk about cosmopolitan sociability venues in everyday places ?

### State of art

The first field in which this paper inserts is the cultural studies one applied to cities in the Southern countries. Since several years there has been a cultural turn in the way Southern cities are studied and they are nowadays considered with the same theoretical tools as the Western ones (see e.g. Edensor & Jayne, 2012 ; Myers, 2011 ; Robinson, 2006). This lead among others to taking into account everyday life while studying urban societies (Appadurai, 1996). The second field is about the way African cities are being “cosmopolized” since the 1990s. In French language several studies have been published, showing that more and more foreigners have been settling in almost every city of Africa as previously mentioned (Brachet, 2009 ; Boesen & Marfaing, 2007 ; Malaquais, 2006).

But too rarely these two fields have been crossed and very few scientific works are devoted to everyday cosmopolitanism at the micro level, based on city dwellers experience and on the way they frequent sociability places. Nevertheless some exist such as Amandine Spire’s study (2011) dedicated to the foreigners living in Lomé (Togo) and Accra (Ghana) or the works of Ola Söderström comparing such cosmopolitan interactions in sociability venues in Hanoi and in Ouagadougou (2013).

Since 2013 I have been dealing with this combined approach and I will follow it while deepening it in this paper (Fournet-Guérin, 2017).

## 1. Proposal of typology of the newly-created sociability places by foreigners in African cities

Since the beginning of the 2000s, many African cities have been modernised by the creation of many sociability places in relation to the presence of foreigners, mainly coming from Southern countries or by international influences captured by local investors in search of novelties. These new places are dedicated to leisure and / or to consumption and embody the settling of foreign groups in town or the local adaptation of foreign imaginaries and patterns.

### 1.1. Generic sociability places in African cities

Some of the newly-created places belong to international and standardized patterns : they can be considered as what the geographer Jacques Lévy calls « generic places » (Lévy, 1997). They are such places as: hotels belonging to chains, restaurants, spas, malls. Nowadays most major African cities have their Raddison Blu or their mall with brands. These places look alike everywhere and seem to be nowhere in particular, hence the word “generic”. In Southern cities several researchers have shown that they are used by the local population as sociability places and that they have become ordinary exactly as in the Western cities (Houssay-Holzschuch & Teppo, 2009). But in Africa, the models that inspire these places refer more to other places in the world than to the Western world: to South Africa, to the Gulf countries and to Asian emerging countries, especially China metropolises.



The difference comes from the way people living in African cities use these sociability places (see below, 2.).

## 1.2. Locally-created places but influenced by foreign cultural schemes

I have proposed to call “creolized places” foreign inspired sociability places but that are locally created and reshaped by foreigners living in African cities or by local city dwellers who catch international moods and adapt them in their home town (Fournet-Guérin, 2017 : 68). So these places refer to international models but are original because they are unique and only exist where they are created. They are such places as casinos, billiards rooms, local restaurants offering a cultural cuisine, mainly Chinese but also Indian or Arabic for example.

The example of the pizza chain *La Gastronomie Pizza* in Antananarivo is a good one. This chain has been created in the capital city of Madagascar in the 2000s by Malagasy investors who designed everything in reference to international pizza chains: there exists a drive-in service (as a matter of fact it means that customers order and then an employee walks out to the car and delivers), the decoration is modern with flashing elements (red paintings or curtains, neons, adds...), there is an active Facebook page, etc. In Antananarivo there are now more than ten restaurants located both in the very center of the city and in peripheral areas. There are though differences with Western chains alike: though high, the prices are adapted to local middle class; the parking places are not asphalted, customers can also come with public transportation, etc.

The same analysis can be made about so-called “boutique hotels” that develop in capital cities aiming to catch a clientèle eager to discover local cultures. In

Antananarivo there are several of them. Though seemingly local mainly because of their location and their décor, they follow international trends that are locally recomposed leading to new forms of conformism inside an appearance of singularity.

### 1.3. Neo-colonial inspired places

The third category of newly-created sociability places concerns neo-colonial inspired places, that is to say places that are recent and that refer to colonial patterns using nostalgic references. The references to the colonial period are in the names, the location in the city, mostly in the very centre, and in their décor. Among these places that proliferate in African cities we can mention cinemas, bars and restaurants, jazz cabarets. I will develop the example of the *Café de la Gare* in Antananarivo (Station's Café). Until the Sixties, there existed a *Buffet de la Gare* in the main railway station of the city, located in the very centre of the city, at the head of the main street too. It was frequented by the French colonial elites and by the local elites. Then the place closed and the venue was abandoned during decades. In 2009, Swiss investors restored the locales and opened the new *Café de la Gare*, referring to colonial codes: an old Peugeot car is parked at the entrance (a 203 from the Sixties); an old wagon is used for the bathroom on the platform; there are old-looking ventilators, wooden furniture, black and white pictures featuring the old colonial city, leather seats, a zinc counter, etc. It was a huge success among the well-off local population. Antananarivian people who come here mention the link with the former place and express explicitly nostalgia. The venue is very active: concerts, movie projections, special events, parties, etc... Politically speaking it is quite ironic to

think that one of the most popular place in Antananarivo today is a colonial inspired one.

Such places are created or re-created by foreign investors and attract both a local and a foreign clientèle in search of a nostalgic experience. To that extend, these places can be considered as a form an exoticism throughout time, in the past.

So we can identify three types of newly-created sociability places in African cities, by foreigners or by local people using international codes. Let's now deepen the analysis by examining who frequents these places and how they are used.

2. Who are the people visiting the newly-created sociability places ? Sociological approach

2.1. Of course an ethnic clientèle or a clientèle of foreigners passing-by...

Of course, obviously, there exists an ethnic clientèle for these places that were made for this purpose. The most obvious phenomenon is that of the Chinese restaurants opened by Chinese migrants for Chinese people that have settled in African cities since the late 1990s (Park, 2006; Ma Mung, 2008; Chichava & Duran, 2014). Such restaurants are both well-known by the members of the foreign community and by the local people who identify them. Nonetheless it is important to report that in the cities studied, there does not exist a "*Chinatown*", meaning that the Chinese people live all over the city without spatial concentration and it is the same about their sociability places.

In these ethnic places, as elsewhere throughout the world, people of the community gather, come to chat, organize family events (marriages, birthday parties...). These places are also important because of the lack of pleasant public places in African

cities. The hotels play a particular part in this phenomenon: many are specialized for a foreign community, attracting a passing-by clientèle or immigrants living in the city for years. Foreign people get the information on the web about these places. I met the manager of the Chinese Moderna Guest House located in down-town Maputo in 2015. During the interview, he mentioned that the main part of his clientèle was Chinese, that visitors were sure to find Chinese-speaking employees, Chinese food and to meet other Chinese travellers. But non-Chinese are also welcome. I can also mention Congolese sociability places (there is an important Congolese diaspora throughout Africa due to violent wars in Congo's Democratic Republic since the 1990s), or Indian ones.

## 2.2. ... but also an emerging local urban clientèle in foreign places: a new and original phenomenon

What makes the newly-created sociability places a particularly interesting phenomenon is the fact that, far from being only ethnic and communitarian places, they have been adopted by locals who frequent them, like them and though transform them by their presence. So we can say that these places become cosmopolitan ones because they host encounters and interactions between people coming from abroad and from the city. In Antananarivo the phenomenon is obvious. Since the 1990s (in relation to the development of flying lines to Asia and to several African countries, especially through the hubs of Addis Ababa and Nairobi) many foreign migrants have settled, especially Chinese. Many sociability places have been created for them: casinos, restaurants, bars, massage places, billiards rooms. But the Chinese living in

Antananarivo are not so numerous<sup>3</sup> (about several thousands) and they would not be enough to make a living for the managers. In fact many of the Chinese sociability places have mostly a local Malagasy clientèle. This fact has been confirmed by many observations in some sociability places. For example, a billiard room located in a down-town Chinese hotel, *The New Century*, is mainly visited by young Malagasy students, mostly men. In the Chinese peripheral restaurants, on the week-ends, parties are organised, mainly by Malagasy families attracted by the prices that are lower than in traditional Malagasy or French restaurants but also by the modernity of the places, the lights, the exotic food, etc. In other words, these places are new and fashionable. Everywhere in Africa the Chinese restaurants now display a menu at the same time in Chinese and in the main local vehicular language (e.g. French, English or Portuguese), and with pictures showing the cooked food in case the description is not clear. It is obvious that they do not only target an ethnic clientèle but also a local and international one (other African people, Europeans...). In more working-class areas, Chinese migrants have opened small groceries that are frequented by the whole neighbourhood, with people coming to have a drink, to chat, to play games such as draughts, to bet, or to watch a private TV channel the shop is broadcasting. So in peripheral areas in most African cities, nowadays, Chinese shops have become meeting places considered as ordinary by the city dwellers, whether they are Chinese or not: the frequenting is a mixed one.

What is interesting in observing this phenomenon is that, starting from the local experience people make in sociability places helps qualifying general analyses: we can not conclude that Chinese sociability places are only made for Chinese people, there does exist a mixed clientèle, mixed uses of the places and local transformations.

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<sup>3</sup> Except in Johannesburg where hundreds of thousands of Chinese have settled since the 1990s, the number is quite low in most other African countries, contrary to the common misconception of cities invaded by Chinese migrants.

African cities follow the trend of Western cities such as Toronto whose sociability places have been deeply transformed by Chinese places since the 1980s (Lo, 2006).

### 2.3. Social diversity in cosmopolitan sociability places

An important point is that cosmopolitan places are not only meant for rich people in central areas of African cities. Of course such places do exist: international hotels, smart restaurants or spas or sport clubs. But it is also important to take into account what has been called “everyday” or “working-class cosmopolitanism” (Hiebert, 2002 ; Werbner, 1999). It is important not to consider that cosmopolitanism is restricted to rich people travelling throughout the world but can also be practised by people who do not travel but who develop a local experience of cosmopolitanism.

First of all we can observe in African cities the development of a local bourgeoisie who is frequenting sociability places. Related to the international opening of many countries (former socialist ones, or isolated and now linked by flying lines to other continents) the latest years, more and more foreigners have also settled in African cities, coming from Southern countries and not only from Western ones as before. They too have enough money to attend smart and generic sociability places and to develop conspicuous forms of consumption. This phenomenon became obvious during the 2010s when terrorist attacks took place in these places because of what they convey, precisely cosmopolitanism, openness and cultural and social diversity (leisure places, mixed ones...). In 2013 in Nairobi (Kenya) there has been a terrorist attack in the Westgate Shopping Center: among the dozens of people killed, many were African citizens of diverse origins (a Ghanaian writer and diplomat, a South-African, Somalians); others were from elsewhere: 1 Peruvian, 2 Canadians, 6 British,

Indians, 1 Chinese, 1 South Korean, 2 French, 1 Dutch, 1 Trinidad & Tobago. Of course there were also many Kenyan victims. This illustrates the fact that cities such as Nairobi have become hubs for international circulations and for more permanent migrations. The same analysis can be conducted about the victims of similar attacks in Western Africa such as in Bamako (Mali, 2016) or Ouagadougou (2016, 2018). Each time, prominent sociability places were targeted, such as hotels, bars and restaurants attended by a cosmopolitan and local clientèle and embodying globalized individual and social behaviours<sup>4</sup>.

Moreover, sociologically speaking the phenomenon is also visible in more popular places as already mentioned. We must keep in mind that in African cities the average population is one of the poorest of the world and that social and spatial inequalities are huge between the capital and the rest of the country and also within the city itself. In this context there exists places that attract foreigners as well as locals even in working-class areas, peripheral as central ones. They are such places as cheap Chinese restaurants, bars, grocery shops, worship places such as evangelic churches located in poor areas and that are spreading throughout Africa (in urban as well as in rural areas), etc. A geography of these various places can be made, showing that foreign-created sociability places are located everywhere in the city and not only in prominent down-town areas. Lucia Lo mentions the same phenomenon in Toronto by showing that Chinese malls have spread all over the city, far from ethnic neighbourhoods and that there exist forms of suburbanization of the foreign population (Lo, 2006). The same is now occurring in African cities but has received little scientific attention so far (Fournet-Guérin, 2019).

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<sup>4</sup> The spread of this phenomenon is also mentioned in literature. One of the most prominent example is the way Lagos' sociability places are showed in the famous novel written by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 2013, *Americanah*, Alfred A. Knopf ed.

Supermarkets are also interesting places to mention and to observe. As a matter of fact most African city dwellers do not have enough purchasing power to do shopping in these places. But they like to visit them even if they do not buy anything, they hang around, watching at the products, appreciating the lights, the décor, the music, the atmosphere. I have made several observations in supermarkets that confirmed that. For the middle-class people who can afford to buy stuffs, supermarkets embody their success: it is a place to be, to be seen and to show you can afford to shop. In this context Chinese supermarkets, that are mainly full of imported goods, are not only frequented by Chinese people but also by locals who appreciate the place and the lower prices than in South-African supermarkets such as Shoprite or French ones such as Cora or Casino. Hence Chinese supermarkets can also be considered as cosmopolitan sociability places.

Foreign sociability places also reveal the social diversification of the African societies, ranging from poor people to emerging bourgeoisie and including a constant growing middle class attracted by novelties.

3. Cosmopolitan imaginaries. The reasons why foreign-created sociability places are popular in Africa

3.1. A way to participate to a strongly desired international modernity

In the French-speaking scientific literature, generic sociability places are considered as an oxymoron and are often criticized as being standardized, soul-less, without any local link and with no affect feelings emanating from the people attending them. My hypothesis is that behind this form of moral criticism of popular leisure places, maybe it is because scholars do not like such places that can be considered as places embodying the international capitalism. My position is that it is a wrong approach



that does not take into account what people do like and feel while being in such places.

As a matter of fact, what is particularly interesting in studying generic sociability places is the way they mix models coming from outside and local practises and representations. Even if they have been transplanted, once created in other places, local people develop new forms of sociability there. We can even say that local people precisely come to spend time in generic sociability places because they are international, standardized and modern. My hypothesis is that people from African cities enjoy to be there, that this experience gives them the impression to be part of a worldwide way of life which is fervently desired. Attending such places give people they are at the very heart of the world, whereas their socio-economic position maintains them at the very edge of it, and this something they much aware of. They know it is very difficult for them to travel abroad because of visa restrictions and because of the cost of journeys abroad. As every city dwellers elsewhere in the world, African ones highly desire to be close to modernity, to international consumption, to fashionable things. This phenomenon is well-known for consumer goods such as smartphones, it is also important to point it out about sociability places and everyday life.

I also think that maybe Western scholars are afraid of the openness of Africa to the world and that some of them would like to maintain African people in an “authentic” or “traditional” way of life that does not exist and to see them as forever subalterns of the world. So my position is that as everybody elsewhere, African city dwellers have the right to enjoy modernity, to practice mimicry and to get to know a global urban experience (see in other contexts: Roy & Ong, 2011; Söderström, 2013; Myers, 2011).

### 3.2. In search of a new exoticism which is not coming from the Western world

I will now deal with other places than standardized and generic ones, that is to say with places that are locally considered as exotic, meaning exogenous and appealing<sup>5</sup>. In such places, what creates an exotic atmosphere to the eyes of the local African city dwellers can be things such as : the décor, the cooking, the name of the place or the place itself, meaning its main activity if it is new (karaoke for example).

The example of the new Chinese restaurants now existing in African city is a very convincing one. People come to eat a food they do not know, in a smothered décor with many colours, much light, Chinese music, and elements such as pictures on the wall featuring stereotyped Chinese landscapes or Chinese women. These restaurants can not be more different from the local ones, that are often offer a gloomy atmosphere, dark, narrow and sometimes not that so clean. In such restaurants, city-dwellers of Antananarivo or Maputo come to make the experience of feeling of strangeness, together with novelty, escapism and consumption of something coming from far away. I argue that city dwellers develop cosmopolitan imaginaries of the newly-created sociability places in their city by foreigners. Consequently we can say that people do come to such places precisely because of their foreign origin, as elsewhere in the world. Nowadays, in cities such as Antananarivo and Maputo, there exist Chinese restaurants, Indian ones, Thai ones, Arabic ones, Vietnamese ones, etc. Whereas during the former decades, most part of the foreign restaurants were both expensive and moreover only European ones (except the old-Chinese ones, actually

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<sup>5</sup> In French, exoticism has originally been defined from an ethnocentric point of view as the following definition in one of the most famous French dictionary shows it: "exotic: which does not belong to Western civilizations, which is brought from remote countries." Another dictionary offers a more opened overlook: "related to a foreign country, mostly unknown or remote". Starting from this definition, exoticism can emanate from all over the world. This is the way I will deal with the notion.

Cantonese). In the restaurants offer in town, urban dwellers have the choice to discover other cookings, as everywhere in the world.

So African city dwellers do develop search of exoticism exactly in the way way Western city dwellers do. Attending places that artificially transplant and recreate an atmosphere of elsewhere in order to attract consumers is a common urban phenomenon. African city-dwellers enjoy kitsch places, meaning that they now have access to a globalized imaginary and that there is local adaptation of models circulating throughout the world and being locally reinvented. I will take the example of the « Shisha lounge bar restaurant » *La Casbah* in Antananarivo. It has been opened in the 2010s by an Indian from Madagascar in a pericentral area. By its name and by its décor, the place refers to an aesthetics that seem to refer to the cultural Arabic world (« shisha », « La Casbah » and the Arabic-Moorish décor) but that in fact does not really exist: it more refers to an imagined Arabic world, as Edward Saïd pointed it out (1978), which is particularly linked to the French colonial past. But on the same time, the word “lounge” refers to comfort and to a way of life that sounds English, Westernised, but in a very internationalized and deterritorialized way too. Nothing when reading the name of this sociability place helps understanding that it is located in Africa and it could be anywhere in any city of the world. *La Casbah* « Shisha lounge bar restaurant » embodies a « feature of modernity » based on a renewed orientalism, now globalized (Dittgen, 2017).

As the clients are concerned, they appreciate the exotic décor, the fact that they can see people from diverse ethnic origins and the cooking. The anthropologist J.-L. Amselle (2009) expresses criticism about these practises that take place in mixed places, assessing that people attending such places would have no real interest for real journeys and for real alterity : he denies them the right to be cosmopolitan at

home. He also expresses great criticism about the hybridism fashion in Western cities. I disagree with this, arguing that this attraction to hybridism fashion is developing everywhere in the world, including in cities that are dominated in the world's economic hierarchy (Ye, 2018). In Antananarivo as in Paris or Shanghai, some city dwellers like nothing so much as to go to sociability places that they consider as cosmopolitan to pique opening to the other and miscegenation. We can see and denounce a domination of capitalism in its cultural version, certainly, but we can also see the accession to a form of freedom of consumption and expression of desire of elsewhere in groups symbolically dominated by global scale (Appadurai, 1996).

Conclusion : Cosmopolitans too !

African city dwellers are now attending new sociability places, in direction of which they develop new imaginaries and a new form of exoticism, that are now turned through the whole world and not one to the sole Western cultural references. They are eager to participate to the world show and one of the way of doing this is to see cosmopolitanism or to be part of it, by consuming it. Far from being restricted to elites, this movement is quite socially widespread – not concerning the whole population nonetheless. Such cosmopolitan places embody the diffusion of globalization (of ideas, fashions, ways of doing things, etc) everywhere, but in many original features at the local level.

Now on the lookout for fashions from the Arab world or from different Asian countries considered at the forefront of modernity - some of them being borrowed

from the US model before being modified and rebroadcast - in this respect, urban Africans are also city dwellers like the others.

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