



EMPIRICO-METAPHYSICAL MEDICINE AND MODERN MEDICINE IN AFRICA

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Abstract

From 1980's to present day, the World Health Organization, the African Union through its scientific and Technical Committee for Research, as well as the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation showed great concern about medicines in Africa because 80 percent of Africans live in rural regions and modern medicine encounters many problems. Whereas the analysis of medicines requires a return to the past in order to refute energetically a certain mechanistic vision of medicines and the practice modifying without indeed modifying the colonial perception of African societies. The goal to find all elements of the topic, recognizing that medicine advances in zigzags, characterized by success and by failures. It is still necessary not to ignore African medical practices before, during and after colonization, while it is also inadmissible to imprison them under the mantle of tradition through which one recognizes an over-rigid definition of African medicines, smothering all analysis and comparison of these medical practices. In effect, to understand the history of disease, it is necessary to delimit the elements which allow us to analyze the history including, all useful factors, notably to go beyond the methods of doctors that one can summarize by –to observe, to diagnose, and to heal – and to try to recover the pieces of the puzzle, the historical realities of the events. This approach allows us to underline the non-pertinence of the concept of “traditional medicine” and to propose a new concept, empirico-metaphysical medicine, to qualify the medical practices by African societies before, during and after colonization. Basically, what could this new concept bring to the knowledge of medical practices in the continent? How did this empirico-metaphysical medicine resist powerful modern medicine? In other words, what are the permanence and ruptures regarding medicines in Africa?