

## Democracy and Baka's Traditional Governance Model: Similarities and Differences.

**Emmanuel ITONG A GOUFAN**

*University of Ebolowa, Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences, Department of Psychology, Cameroon*

*Email: [itongemmanuel69@gmail.com](mailto:itongemmanuel69@gmail.com)*

**André TAKODJOU**

*University of Yaoundé 1, Faculty of Sciences of Education, Department of Management of Education,*

*Cameroon Email : [andretakodjou@gmail.com](mailto:andretakodjou@gmail.com)*

**Amandine BIOUELE NANGA**

*University of Yaoundé 1, Faculty of Faculty of Sciences of Education, Department of curriculum and Evaluation, Cameroon Email: [bioueleamandine@gmail.com](mailto:bioueleamandine@gmail.com)*

**NGO TONYE**

*University of Yaoundé 1, Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences, Department of Psychology, Cameroon*

*Email: [annickjacquelinengotonye@gmail.com](mailto:annickjacquelinengotonye@gmail.com)*

**NGO MPECK**

*University of Yaoundé 1, Faculty of Faculty of Sciences of Education, Department of management of education, Cameroon Email: [valecya@yahoo.fr](mailto:valecya@yahoo.fr)*

**ABSTRACT:** After three decades, the states/nations of central Africa are still struggling to fully implement the principles and practices of modern liberal democracy. Native peoples, particularly the Baka pygmies of the vast evergreen equatorial forest of southern Cameroon, are among those facing the greatest difficulties. The aim of this article is to propose a solution to these challenges. To achieve this, we first set out to analyze the context. In these analyses, two points of view arise. The first argues that modern liberal democracy is incompatible with African culture. The second asserts that African peoples confuse democracy with libertinism. We then compared democracy with the secular model of governance in Baka communities. This analysis revealed more similarities than contradictions, particularly regarding fundamental freedoms, human and individual rights. The main difference lies in social structuration and the selection of leaders. This finding led us to conclude not only that the two models of governance are more similar than is often thought, but also that their differences cannot be easily overcome by the Baka. We have therefore suggested as a solution an emphasis on citizenship education and the initiation to democratic culture

**Keywords:** Democracy, Politics, Power, Ideology

### I. INTRODUCTION

In authentic traditional societies of Central Africa, power and the exercise of sovereign authority were derived from the divine and/or heredity. There was a strong emphasis on prosperity, the preservation of social peace, and the well-being of individuals. Modern liberal democracy was imposed and institutionalized upon them in 1990. However, more than three decades later, they are struggling to navigate this political transformation smoothly. Native peoples, particularly the Baka pygmies, are facing the greatest challenges. The most commonly cited reason is that democracy is fundamentally incompatible with African political culture, which is characterized by absolutism, the divinization, and canonization of its key figures. However, this viewpoint is not universally accepted.

Indeed, critics remind us that there was a Europe of empires and kingdoms before the era of nations and republics, and today, European countries count among the largest liberal democracies in the world. The reality may be that impoverished, worn out, abused, and disillusioned African peoples are so eager for well-being and independence that they confuse democracy with libertinism. They believe that a democratic society is a community where individuals indulge in their rights and freedoms in a debauched manner; they do not cultivate a sense of "living together," nor do they accept or tolerate one another. They think that democracy is a magic

recipe for the happiness of peoples who choose it as their mode of political governance. Thus, democracy appears to be more of a permanent challenge, the practice of which must be learned gradually and patiently. Consequently, the discussion is lively, and the arguments on both sides are relevant and well-founded. This leads to the dilemma that makes all proposed solutions delicate, notably: i) Pan-Africanism, which supports rooting out and rejecting democracy; ii) Multiculturalism, which advocates for the "tropicalization" of democracy; iii) Modernism, which recommends learning democracy. This article aims to propose an efficient choice. At a time when the state of Cameroon advocates for unity and national integration, where Baka communities are now an integral part of traditional chiefdoms and administrative units, and where decentralization imposes local governance based on democratic principles, the third solution is the most appropriate.

However, a prerequisite must be established: a comparative study of democracy with the secular mode of organization within Baka communities. This is the task that this article undertakes. But first, it seems important to briefly present not only the concepts of power, politics, and ideology but also the pillars of democracy and the characteristics of the socio-political organization of authentic Baka communities.

### **Power, politics and ideology**

Power is a form of influence or authority established by social norms, beliefs, and socio-cultural values that grants a social agent or group the capacity to act despite possible resistance from one or more other agents or groups, thereby affecting them (Cloutier, 1983); it is a structuring social principle inherent to organizations, legalized and legitimized through repression and/or the internalization of common norms. In short, power is a function of coordination and command; the sovereign right to organize society, develop it, and protect it. From these definitions, we understand that power is immanent within the primary or natural group (family, clan, tribe, etc.) because it is the social body itself that holds power and exercises it as an indivisible entity. "This power, inseparable from society, operates in a single direction and animates a single project: to maintain the members of society in a state of co-ownership; to prevent social inequalities from hindering peace, cohesion, and harmony within society" (Clastres: 121).

In artificial or secondary groups (states, political parties, associations, clubs, etc.), power is embodied by designated individuals (chiefs, presidents, etc.) whose duty is to uphold the laws and rules of social conduct. In fact, torn between the fear of anarchy and the risks of dictatorship, groups strive to determine their needs and the means to satisfy them. They therefore assign roles and authority to certain individuals. These individuals are always the most influential, the most competent, the most loved, the most important; the leaders; etc. However, groups simultaneously develop mechanisms to control power that ultimately appear as the emanation of a consensus.

Politics is the organization and exercise of power within a state; it is the art and manner of governing, organizing power, and conducting public affairs, exercising authority, legislating, executing, and judging; it is the way of organizing the community by and around power, the conquest and exercise of which rhythm social life. Generally speaking, politics is a set of actions planned and implemented by a state or any other organization to achieve a predetermined objective. It is therefore an eminently social reality: power, power relations, and the structuring of power constitute its subject matter. Indeed, phenomena of power are essentially organizational phenomena, societal phenomena where actors negotiate their participation by making optimal use of the resources they control to achieve their objectives. So doing, these actors engage in contests that enliven the social scene. One of the most characteristic aspects of politics is the method of decision-making.

Decision-making is the final stage in resolving a problem. It is the culmination of a process triggered by real and latent conflicts (implicit and explicit) that naturally exist within social groups. It involves: i) preliminary exploration, which is a thorough inventory of needs, resources, and various possible actions available to resolve the problem. This condition is never entirely satisfied, but consensus will be deeper to the extent that the group has recognized the sacrifices and concessions to be made; that it has, considering their margin of freedom and degree of responsibility, the conviction that it has examined all possibilities; ii) consensus, which is the pursuit of unanimity, an agreement on a proposed solution. It is only valid when everyone has expressed their opinion on it and no one has remained silent. It is rare and will never be total because the positions of individuals will always be reinforced or mitigated; iii) formalism, which is the requirement that the proposed decision be clearly and explicitly formulated according to established practices. Once taken, it should be formally re-explained so that it can be integrated into the active memory of those who will implement it. Every political decision has implications, limitations, qualities, and experiences adherence. In relation to the final objective set by the community, three types of decisions can be distinguished: i) decisions requiring high quality and low adherence (these fall under the purview of executives or specialists in the matter); ii) decisions requiring low adherence and low quality (these fall under the purview of the majority); iii) decisions requiring both adherence and quality (these fall under the purview of those in governance). Decision making must be in accordance with the ideology of the group.

Ideology is the science of ideas; it is a set of ideas or representations that relate to the same object and determine the attitudes and behaviors of individuals or groups towards that object. It is therefore understood that the idea is a purely intellectual product (and thus individual), whereas ideology is the state of the idea after it has undergone the process of collective assimilation. It is then inseparable from the society in which it is constructed and propagated. It expresses the idea in its social depth and translates the links between social representations and social groups. It is a coherent system of variables that express, explain, or justify attitudes and behaviors, serving as an incentive to act in a particular direction according to a value judgment. Ideologies possess both social and cognitive properties that need to be accounted for in an integrated theory (Van Dijk, 1998). They are a particular type of system of social beliefs, stored in long-term memory.

Ideologies embody the general principles that control the overall coherence of a community's social representations. For these representations to be connected to social practices and concrete discourses regarding specific events, they must be contextualized and specified within mental models. Mental models are the mental constructs stored in collective episodic memory, which govern discourse, interaction, and other social practices. Conversely, it is through mental models that discourses can influence ideologies and reproduce them. Ideologies also represent one facet of the social identity and self-image of community members. In fact, the ideology of a social group is a set of ideas and thoughts unique to that group at a given time in its history. In this context, a political ideology is a system of beliefs, opinions, ideas, thoughts, and political certainties that underpin strategies or ways of behaving, governing, leading, conducting, or managing societal affairs (Eatwell, 1999). Ideologies are relatively stable. Both cognitively and socially, they develop particularly in the form of socially shared resources that maintain cohesion and cooperation within the group, as well as providing effective means for establishing relationships between different groups. Thus, many ideologies prove relevant as long as they are part of a social struggle. However, an individual may be a member of multiple groups and therefore may "participate" in several ideologies. Ideologies are acquired at the individual level and reproduced at the social level through the social practices of the group, especially through discourse. Not all members of a group possess (nor need to possess) the same knowledge or ideological expertise, nor do they need their ideological knowledge to always be very explicit. Nevertheless, many ideologies develop in favor of group relations characterized by conflict, dominance, and/or resistance, which consequently involve public ideological debates or discussions published in mass media; thus, most group members are familiar with at least the essential ideological principles of their own group and others.

An ideology is distinct from a dogma and a doctrine. A dogma is a set of certainties, convictions, credulities, beliefs, revelations, and evidences; essentially ideas that should not or can no longer be discussed, thought about, or questioned. A doctrine, on the other hand, is a collection of dogmas; it is a unique and coherent system for representing and explaining situations, facts, phenomena, and events that are accepted without critical reflection. However, ideology and doctrine are intertwined in the sense that both refer to a set of ideas, opinions, thoughts, and judgments shared by a certain number of people who propagate them to gain followers. Furthermore, it is an ideology that becomes a doctrine. The fundamental difference between these two concepts is that, unlike doctrine, ideology is always questioned, always thought about and rethought, critiqued and re-critiqued; it is never perfect. One therefore understands that an ideology is not eternal: it undergoes modifications according to the prevailing zeitgeist and the evolution of the society in which it was born.

For an ideology to be born, develop, and propagate, it requires: i) Individuals, events, and opportunities. It depends on the genius of individuals (thinkers) for it to express itself in narrow sects or broader groups, or to organise itself into new, coherent constructions rich in developments; it relies on heralds, messengers, couriers, envoys, and apostles to propagate and broaden its social base by simplifying its arguments. It takes on a particular aspect depending on whether it draws from a doctrine, a work, a political experience, a style of action, or a significant event. It expresses itself differently within the community when individuals not only identify with their leaders but also discover in that leader's political actions a reason for being, believing, and hoping for a better future. It varies when imported or locally developed because it is firmly linked to the specific aspects of the social reality in which it was born and developed; ii) Institutions, political parties, and means of expression to legitimise itself. Indeed, the press and the party are the social foundations of ideology. If the party is liberal, its ideology flourishes openly and enriches itself through confrontations. If it is totalitarian, its ideology retreats into orthodox factions, secrets, and the necessary narrowness at its summit reinforces its dogmatism and its uncompromising purity. Thus, depending on whether the party professes criticism or allows currents of thought to express themselves, its ideology will be prosperous or skeletal, open or closed. The same applies to the press: the ideology that develops from a newspaper is more intellectual and less doctrinal than one that does not. If there is a social domain that is ideological, it is indeed that of politics: it is the prime location where parties oppose each other, where power and interests are at stake.

There are many ideologies. In economic terms, we distinguish capitalism, liberalism, communism, and socialism. In terms of political power management, we distinguish totalitarianism (monolithism, absolutism,

conservatism), progressivism, egalitarianism, radicalism, and democracy (Jacobinism or centralism, decentralisation or federalism). In terms of temperaments, we distinguish left-wing, centrist, and right-wing ideologies. In terms of patriotism, we distinguish nationalism and internationalism.

### **Modern liberal democracy and its pillars**

Democracy is the government of the people, by the people and for the people. While it evokes a series of ideas and principles concerning freedom, it consists of a series of precise practices and procedures that institutionalise freedom (Chester, 1990). However, it largely depends on the implementation of a democratic culture. It is a set of rules that allow for the resolution of conflicts that must be managed within certain limits and concluded by compromise, consensus, or any other agreement deemed legitimate by the parties involved. Democracy requires that the power of governments be limited and not weak. To achieve this, it has developed a system of checks and balances that ensures the dispersion and decentralization of political power. This system is based on the belief that, in order to be better, a democratic government must not only be deprived of its ability to abuse its power but also be as close to the people as possible.

The pillars of democracy are: i) the sovereignty of the people; ii) government by the consent of the governed; iii) the rule of the majority; iv) recognition of the rights of minorities; v) guarantee of fundamental human and personal rights; vi) free, transparent, and fair elections; vii) equality in front of the law for all; viii) respect for the constitution; ix) social, economic, and political pluralism; x) adherence to the values of tolerance, pragmatism, cooperation and compromise. It is therefore understood that democracy cannot simply be decreed but must be learned. The aim of its teaching is to produce citizens capable of being independent, asking questions, and demonstrating their analytical skills while being familiar with the precepts and practices of democracy.

### **The Baka's traditional governance model**

The Baka are a minority social group in Cameroon. They are "short black people" (under 1.50 m) who occupy positions of inferiority (Grawitz, 1983). They live deep in the tropical rain forest, in camps situated in well-chosen clearings, in small groups (10 to 30 individuals), headless and non-hierarchical (Dikoumé, 1997). Power (moral) and decision-making are occasionally granted to four individuals: i) the patriarch of the camp who represents civic and moral authority; ii) the mystic-healer who knows all the secrets of medicinal plants and divination; iii) the master of the hunt who is the most skilled hunter responsible for providing meat for the camp; and iv) the oldest woman who leads the secret society of women (Abega, 1992, 1998; Abega and Bigombe Logo 2006; Boursier, 1996). Baka are nomads whose movements always take place within the same area of the forest. Three types of camps are distinguished: i) the hunters' camp, established deep in the forest and lasting only a few days, allowing hunters (on a hunt) to regain strength and sharpen their weapons; ii) the stopover camp, used during nomadic movements, allowing women and the elderly to eat and rest; iii) the semi-permanent camp.

The latter is the only one that is socially structured. It is built in a semi-circle in the chosen clearing. All huts face towards the centre of the clearing, except for those of sons-in-law which are built behind those of their parents-in-law. Within it, there exists: i) a hut reserved for single boys, located at the entrance of the semi-circle, almost opposite the patriarch's hut; ii) a hut for discussions, akin to a parliament, located opposite the main entrance and which, unlike the others, is covered with raffia mats. The composition and size of the camp are continually modified and determined not only by the ongoing mobility of individuals and families, but also by food resources and proximity to Bantu villages (Boursier, 1984). All members of the camp have kinship relations (which are clan-based and classificatory). The marriage system is exogamous; it cannot occur between individuals of the same clan. Descent is patrilineal. Membership in a social category evolves with age and the completion of certain rites.

Economically, the Baka rely on hunting, gathering, and foraging, with collective quests constituting their main activity (Bahuchet and De Foy, 1991). There is a strict division of labour among men, women, boys, and girls (Testard, 1986). Men specifically engage in hunting. Women are exclusively responsible for building huts, gathering food, preparing meals, sharing resources, and fishing. Boys begin their hunting apprenticeship with small rodents and birds. The girls are taken care of by their mothers and older sisters, who initiate them into their preferred activities. The Baka do not engage in trade, industrialisation, or a formal economy.

Culturally, Baka societies are characterised by: i) respect for the freedom and free will of each individual; ii) an atypical conception of personal and communal freedom, well-being, which is reduced to the satisfaction of basic needs, space which is limited to the forest, and time which is determined by the cycles of nature, as well as the reproduction of animals and plants; iii) an apparent absence of social organisation and explicit social rules.

### **Analogies and Contradictions of the two models of social governance**

From the previous comparative study, it is clear that in Baka tradition, as in any democracy, sovereignty belongs to the community and is exercised by it and for it. It is vested in the members and exercised directly by them or their representatives. Freedom and free will are inalienable. Each individual has a clear awareness of "the other," as well as recognition of their own specificity. Moreover, Baka means "free men." Decisions are made by a simple majority. Freedoms of speech and expression, religion, conscience, assembly, etc., as well as all rights, are guaranteed. Primacy is given to the law. All practices and norms are established to enable each individual to take responsibility for themselves. The social system encourages a culture marked by activity, enthusiasm, passion, strength, vigour, ingenuity, etc. It also promotes compromise and consensus in negotiating any conflict.

However, there are points of divergence, particularly regarding the choice of leaders, social structuring, and the economy. Indeed, Baka communities are acephalous. The power and exercise of sovereign power are derived from divine authority, heredity, and/or age. The four most important figures are natural leaders whose role is limited to significantly influencing the conduct of the community so that it progresses towards assigned goals or accomplishes required tasks. This influence is not imposed but willingly accepted by other members who mutually encourage one another: no one is obliged to comply. The supremacy of a leader's personality is justified by their age, skills, particular gifts, intelligence, empathy, charisma, etc. They are individuals who demonstrate ease in communication, self-confidence, initiative, etc. Their leadership style is democratic, liberal, charismatic, transformational, and transactional. Therefore, there is neither voting nor an appointed chief. All decisions are made by a simple majority. The minority must simply conform after preliminary exploration and consensus without formalism. These processes require both adherence and quality and have the immediate effect of actively seeking information likely to produce consonance with the undertaken action.

Culturally, the Baka take pride in their achievements, knowledge, and millennia-old sciences. However, in contact with Western culture, the state of deculturation and/or acculturation among the pygmies has progressed to such an extent that traditional community management structures have become "empty shells" in the face of the modern state's administrative machinery.

Economically, contrary to democracy which advocates capitalism and enrichment as the primary means of power and upward social mobility, the Baka communities are non-monetised, lacking patronage, social classes, private property, and professions in the conventional sense of the term. For the Baka, well-being is reduced to the satisfaction of basic needs (such as feeding, healthcare, and sleep), as well as the freedom to come and go as one pleases; to dance and sing. They are communists and/or socialists, as they reject the pursuit of surplus value through the exploitation of others. They advocate not only for the collectivization of resources but also, and above all, for the distribution of consumer goods according to each person's needs. Here, resources must be pooled and managed collectively, as all belong to the community. They also condemn private ownership of resources and trade. Indeed, the Baka do not process metal or clay. Their technology is rudimentary: few objects are made, but they serve a wide range of purposes. Collective catches are shared among hunters, and foraged products are distributed to all members of the community. Food is not preserved, although meat can be smoked, and caterpillars and oilseeds can be dried and kept for a few months. Generally, the harvest of the day is consumed within 48 hours of preparation. Dishes are shared and widely distributed within the camp.

The following table provides a synoptic view of our analysis:

Synoptic Table of Comparative Analysis between Democracy and the Baka's governance Model

Analogies or similarities	Contradictions or differences
Sovereignty to the people	Choice of leaders
Government by the consent of the people	Social forms and structuration
The rule of the majority	Rights of minorities
Guarantee of fundamental human rights	Social, cultural, economic and political pluralism
Equity in justice and legal procedures	Employment, profession and work
Equality in front of laws and social norms	Well-being and development
Respect for social norms	
Respect for values of tolerance, pragmatism, cooperation, compromise	
Obligations imposed on leaders	

**As Conclusion**

This work aimed to consider a solution to the challenges faced by the Baka in adapting to democracy. To this end, we began by defining the concepts of democracy, politics, power, and ideology. Next, we presented, albeit non-exhaustively, the characteristics of democracy and the secular socio-political organization model of residual Baka communities. From these analyses, it is clear that the two political governance models have more convergences than divergences, particularly concerning fundamental freedoms and human rights. The main difference lies in social structuring and the method of choosing leaders. This finding led us to propose

education for citizenship as a solution, along with the acquisition of a national and democratic culture. Democratic culture refers to the values (intellectual and moral) that determine individuals' ability to govern themselves and others while strictly respecting fundamental human rights and freedoms, as well as the laws and principles consensually adopted by the community. Its initiation will occur through pedagogies of concretization (O'Cadiz, Wong, and Torres, 1998; Freire, 1970, 1998), which are based on dialogue (De La Garanderie, 1984), realism, enculturation, critical thinking, and social action form social agents. These pertain to pedagogies of liberation, social critique (Shor, 1992; Giroux and Stanley, 1992), and non-violence (Young, 1991). These abilities would enable Baka individuals to: i) make informed judgments about their fellow citizens, their behaviors, and the situations they encounter; ii) establish a moral framework that is both individual and collective; iii) access concepts and practices of citizenship through which they will gradually perceive themselves as members of a national community organized according to specific rules that define everyone's rights and duties.

### BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES.

- [1]. Abega S. C. & Bigombe Logo P. (2006), *La marginalisation des Pygmées d'Afrique centrale*, Yaoundé : Edition Africaine.
- [2]. Abega S.C. (1992), *Le problème de la sous-scolarisation chez les Baka des arrondissements de Djoum et de Mintom II*, Yaoundé : MINASCOF,
- [3]. Abega, S. C. (1998). *Pygmées Baka. Le droit à la différence*, Yaoundé : INADES-Formation, U.A.C.
- [4]. Bahuchet, S.& De Foy, F-G. (1991). *Pygmées : peuple de la forêt*, Paris : Donoël.
- [5]. Boursier, D (1991). « Réflexion sur l'évangélisation des Baka », *Revue Vivant Univers*, 96, 7-18.
- [6]. Boursier, D(1996). *Pöli : Mémoire d'une femme pygmée*, Paris : L'Harmattan.
- [7]. Boursier, D. (1984). *Enquête sur l'anthropologie Baka*, Paris : L'Harmattan.
- [8]. Chester, J. (1990). *Qu'est-ce que la démocratie ?* Paris : PUF
- [9]. Clastre, C. (1990). *La société contre l'État*, Paris : Edition de minuit
- [10]. Cloutier, R. (2005). « Pratiques parentales et réussite scolaire en fonction de la structure familiale et du genre des adolescents ». *Revue française de pédagogie*, vol. 151, n° 1, p. 61–74.
- [11]. Dikoume, C. (1997). *Les Pygmées du Cameroun : défis et dilemmes*, Yaoundé : S.A.I.L.D/A.P.E.
- [12]. Eatwell, R. (1999). *Contemporary Political Ideologies*, New York: Pinter.
- [13]. Freire, P. & Macedo, D. (1998). *Ideology Matters*, New York: Rowman and Littlefield
- [14]. Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York: New Edition Continuum.
- [15]. Freire, P. (1998). *Education of Critical Consciousness*, New York: Seabury Press.
- [16]. Giroux, H.A. & Stanley, H. (1992). *Resisting Difference: Cultural Studies and the Discourse of Critical Pedagogy*, New York: Routledge
- [17]. Grawitz, M. (1993). *Méthodes des Sciences Sociales*, Paris : Dalloz
- [18]. La Garanderie (De), A. (1984). *Le dialogue pédagogique avec les apprenants*. Paris: Edition Centurion
- [19]. O'Cadiz, M., Wong, & P., Torres, C. (1998). *Education and Democracy: Paulo Freire, Social Movements and Educational Reform in Sao Paulo*, New York: Westview Press.
- [20]. Ravitch, J. (1990). *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*, New York: Macmillan
- [21]. Shor, I. & Freire, P. (1987). *A Pedagogy of Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education*, South Hadley: Bergin and Garvey
- [22]. Shor, I. (1992). *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*, Chicago: UCP
- [23]. Testard, A. (1986). *Essai sur les divisions sexuelles du travail chez les Pygmées*, Paris : L'Harmattan.
- [24]. Van Dijk, T.A. (1998). *Ideology: A multidisciplinary approach*, London: Sage.
- [25]. Young, M.F.D. (1991). « Programmes d'études et démocratie : Quelques leçons à tirer de l'expérience de la nouvelle sociologie de l'éducation », *Sociologie et sociétés*, vol. 23, n° 1 p.189-200

**RÉSUMÉ :** Après trois décennies, les États/nations d'Afrique centrale peinent encore à appliquer intégralement les principes et les pratiques de la démocratie libérale moderne. Les peuples autochtones, notamment les pygmées Baka de la grande forêt équatoriale sempervirente du Sud-Cameroun, comptent parmi les plus en difficulté. L'objectif de cet article est de proposer une solution à ces difficultés. Pour ce faire, nous nous sommes d'abord attelés à analyser le contexte. Dans cette analyse, deux points de vue émergent. Le premier soutient que la démocratie libérale moderne est incompatible avec la culture africaine. Le second affirme que les peuples africains confondent démocratie et libertinage. Nous avons ensuite comparé la démocratie avec le modèle séculaire de gouvernance des communautés Baka. Cette analyse a révélé plus d'analogies que de contradictions, notamment en ce qui concerne les libertés fondamentales, les droits de l'Homme et de la personne. La principale différence tient de la structuration sociale et du choix des dirigeants. Ce résultat nous a amené à conclure non seulement que les deux modèles de gouvernance sont plus similaires qu'on ne le pense, mais aussi que leurs différences sont difficilement surmontables par les Baka. Aussi avons-nous suggéré comme solution, l'accentuation de l'éducation à la citoyenneté et de l'initiation à la culture démocratique.

**Mots clés :** Démocratie, Politique, Pouvoir, Idéologie