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Intercultural Marriage, a Social Indicator of Adaptation in Sino-African Civil Union: Case of Guangzhou People's Republic of China

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is the union of two peoples and consequently of two families and two cultures. In traditional Chinese society, everybody gets married for the sake of family continuity. This is because bringing forth a child is seen as a contribution to perpetuate family name. It is meant for two as families to seal stronger bonds together. It's therefore observed that, marriage in Chinese Society is conceived for the families rather than for the sharing love. Consequently, the marriage becomes a social construction. The only credible unions with the eyes of the society were those which linked two individuals presenting some similarities from the social, ethnic, racial, cultural and/or religious. The concept of adaptation and the notion of entropy will be employed the theoretical level to show that mixed marriages are the result of complex processes tending to homogenize populations who are from different cultures but who live in permanent contact. To collect the qualitative, we have used the methods of data-gathering, such as documentary review, individual and institutional interview using the guides of interview.

Keywords: Intercultural Marriage, Social Indicator, Adaptation, Sino-African Civil Union, Guangzhou

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Introduction

The marriage is a social construction which associates different cultures which integrated mutually according to the sociocultural and political environment of the host country. *“But in the beginning of the world, God did them male and female; this is why the man will leave his father and his/her mother and will stick to his wife, and both will make only one flesh. Thus they will not be any more two, but only one flesh”*¹. It thus becomes a social change with time and space. The historical context in the majority of societies indicates that the mixed unions were generally proscribed in favor of the unions endogamy considered as more conventional (Barbara, 1993; Streiff-Fenart, 2000; Delième, 2006; Collet and Philippe, 2008; Therrien, 2009). The marriage is an important institution, because it ensures the perenniality of the groups, certain economic reports/ratios, very whole company. The blessed union of the couple is an absolute sacrament. Thus the marriage was created to fight the ultimate enemy of the human being, namely death. *“...The marriage was instituted so that the human race is not consumed nor not destroyed by death and that it is preserved by generating children”*². During the past thirty years of reform and opening of China to the world, the execution of policy, the structures and the foundations of the Sino-African relations changed considerably. The amplification of the economic scenes well as businesses and symbiosis of investments between Chinese and African actors mark a point of honor to these changes. Also, each social system has its one rules in the manner of contracting alliance. *“The marriage is a reality of the social life with what this comprises of collective size and various influences, economic, political and cultural, etc, but it is indeed an institution, it is undoubtedly also that or personal dimension and emotional cheek the most important role and or*

*psychology has to say as much that sociology or the right.”*³ One thus should not forget the reserves of the fish about the inter-religious marriage, where the man who is Muslim. However, today the two situations tend to multiply. The traditional division of the world in two shares, dâr Al-islâm (Muslim countries) and dâr Al-harb (non-Muslim countries) do not correspond any more to the reality which the fish managed. The Africans saw the “co-operation” between China and Africa, where you can see every year a considerable number of Chinese who emigrate towards Africa for trade in particular and handle conversely African to emigrate in China there to study and/or trade.

The massive, political or economic emigrations, as well as brain drain largely contributed to the reinforcement of cultural pluralism in some place in the Northern planet. Undoubtedly an inter religious marriages is standardized in the secularized context, where the civil wedding does not embarrass religious interdicts. But their validity is not always allowed in the country of origin of Muslim part. The mixed marriage is conceived like a general concept everywhere. A first bibliographical approach made it possible showing a whole social constraints intervening during the choice of the spouse. Those are considered later as variable of state and will be used to characterize the hypothetical model. Generally, the individuals belonging to a cultural system are linked between them by a whole of rites and interdicts. There exists always a system of alliance prescribing the exchange of the women to create perfectly definite social reports/ratios. So, some prohibited eliminate possibilities from marriage. The regulations oblige to marry preferentially such person rather than such other. In the companies of the Western type, the family is reduced to the household, i.e. with father, mother, and children. The spouse choice appears to with it completely free, and not

¹ Marc 10: 6-8

² Noted by the father P. Panagiotis VITTAS, available on the website <http://www.dioceseorthodoxe.org/fr/mariage.php>.

³ PH. ARIES. The marriage, engagement for the life? Number 74. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1971, P.8-9 (research and debates).

submitted to a board of guardians. In fact, this choice depends closely to the social, economic and geographical conditions. At the individual level, the marriage generally represents a single act. But with the social status, it constitutes a continuous phenomenon, being exerted if the group exists (A. Girard, 2017). Thus, by marrying the individual obeys to standards, so that the reciprocal choice of joint is always carried out inside some limits. The geographical location constitutes an important limit since the possibility of choice implies that of meeting. Thus, the choice is generally limited to the surface of the medium in which the individuals evolve/move. Under these conditions geographical mobility causes the bursting of the isolates, and thus supports new durable relations between people of various origins. Other constraints also intervene in this conditional choice. Thus, the marriage is described as mixed when it is socially perceived as tel. From a formal point of view the definition cannot rest on such a feeling, since of a medium to another same type of union will be judged differently.

With this relative aspect of the social resentment, the individual feeling of the husbands is inevitably added. If one of the couple saw his marriage like mixed, the other will live it differently, whereas the group of membership of the first does not adopt a discriminating attitude. Co-education is a phenomenon evolving/moving according to various methods according to the social space time considered. In this case research will not relate any more on the marriage rate itself, but to the co-education of this one. Co-education would be then the resultant of different process, such as the assimilation, the acculturation, of which some their effects would be concreted on the level of the marriage rate. Thus, conceived co-education would become a convenient indicator of the state in which would be a perfectly identifiable cultural system. The concept of co-education, as we saw, is touched by relativity since from one group to another,

generation to another, and even of a period to another such form of union will be or not perceived like mixed. So, it becomes necessary to pluralize the forms of the concept. The intercultural marriage of order cultural or religious or inter-ethnic is built with an integration between culture.

Methodology

The methodology that required installation, while following precise rules, of a family of case. The study of the object thus rests on an internal systematization. It does not remain us any more whereas to build what is not given, to supplement an unfinished experiment to some extent. Consequently the unknown is formulated starting from the constraints previously announced. Moreover, perceived like a continuous process, co-education becomes measurable at the same time from a qualitative point of view.

The adaptation is defined as the possibility for the system adapting the external conditions of the medium in which it evolves/moves, in order to react to those in an optimal way. It is to some extent a phenomenon which gives an account of a new balance. With this balance a change of state in the nature of the system in reaction will often correspond. Thus, there is change in the way of reacting to the stimulus in order to optimize behavior. Thus the system subjected to the request will react and behave in a certain way. Then with the time and the repetition of solicited, the manner of reacting will vary so that, subjected to the request, its behavior will be different and better within the meaning of an unspecified criterion. It will be said whereas the system adapted, i.e. there was a change in the manner of reacting or of being, thus improving the behavior of the function in question. The adaptation appears then as a modification of the structure of a system which tends to optimize a behavior.

Research Method

This research is a cross-sectional study that makes use of descriptive and analytic

techniques based on the dialectical approach. The present research has been conducted using semi-structural interview, focus groups, and archival by triangulation. Sampling and interview should be continued till the analysis process theoretical saturation (Brown, 1999; Denzin & Yvonna, 2000)

The characteristic of this method is that it makes it possible to collect qualitative data in accordance of acceptable standards in research. Within the framework of this study, information is collected through documentations, recordings of accounts and surveyed speeches. These data is transcribed and subject to content analysis of the speeches on intercultural marriages, of the accounts of life stories or experiments lived in the relationships. However, these methods are respectively supported by the techniques or tools of quite precise data acquisition or very specific data collection tools.

Data collection techniques

The three main techniques used in this study are documentary research (information retrieval), individual interviews (individual maintenance) and a focus group (the x-ray group). The technique of sampling to determine the sample is the census. Indeed, it acted by the religious structures and the friendly relations to return in contact with the couple and them, of the appointments were taken not only for their recording but also for the realization of the interview. Thus, for 35 recorded people, the availability of the ones and the unavailability of the others combined, an interview could be carried out with only 30 people who constitute the sample of this study. I have to discuss with thirty (30) "mixed" couples, with five (05) people of different nationalities by couple. There are administrative documents dealing with general questions on religion, marriage, and on the sites of the study. Then, there were the scientific documents (papers, memories, articles, dissertations, theses), also speaking of marriage, about mixed marriage, culture, and religious beliefs.

It is based on the dialectical step like mode of data analysis received from the populations.

To collect qualitative information, the methods of following data-gathering were used: The documentary review consisted with the meticulous exploitation of the management reports, the communications, the scientific publications, the registers. Also, let us be us addressed to the decentralized structures of the localities quoted above for the complements of relative information to aspects socio-demographic, geographical, economic, medical, educational, etc., I have used also directed discussion and direct observations/visits.

Research sites and populations

Guangzhou is certainly one of the Chinese cities where one records the presence of a strong African community. The essence of this diaspora is concentrated with the district Xiao Bei, in the middle of the city. And the night, the streets of this district resembles any street of Niamey, Ouaga, Conakry, Bamako, Abidjan or Dakar. In Xiao Bei, one really feels as in Africa. Cameronians, Guineans, Natives of Niger, Ghanaians, Senegalese, Nigerians, Malians, Congolese find themselves. In a city where the Cantonese, and in extreme cases the English, is the principal languages of communication, Xiao Bei is the place where the French-speaking Africans feel better. Based on official statistics, since 2003, the number of Africans in Guangzhou has been growing at 30-40% annually. Based on a report in the Guangzhou Daily, there might already be 100,000 in the community. They come from Nigeria, Guinea, Cameroon, Liberia, and Mali. Amongst these, Africa's most populous country Nigeria claims first place (Buxi, 2008).

In Guangzhou, there are about 200,000 Africans, increasing 30-40% every year. The locals believe their language skills are very poor, but they have very nimble business minds. Locals believe they are undisciplined and unorganized, but their religion and groups are extremely cohesive. They, in Guangzhou, have built the largest African community in Asia

(Siradji Sanda, 2011). As Chinese companies have entered Africa to find resources, African businessmen have also come to China, “the world’s factory”. Businessmen ship cheap goods to Africa, where 50 far-away African countries quickly consume these daily consumables that can’t be produced in their own countries. At the end of the 90s in the 20th century, the first batch of Africans came to Guangzhou, their first stop being Canaan clothing market [Clothes Trading Center]. Now, however, with Canaan clothing market as the center, many goods for export markets have sprung up in the surrounding one-kilometer area. The people of Guangzhou have gradually come to call this area “Chocolate City” (Siradji Sanda, 2011).

With these words, it is a relation on the interconnection of Chinese and African cultures through the religious beliefs (Islam, Christianity), the Buddhism and Taoism) and a speech delivers to us on the mixed marriage (African-Chinese). This work will thus allow a new approach of the reports/ratios of mixed marriage or mixed couple and in which the religious beliefs nowadays do not constitute any more one major hurdle within the Chinese society.

Finding & Discussion

Religious principles compared to the inter religious marriage in China

In China, Islam, Christianity and Buddhism are the principal religions which dominate people life life. This research work was to carry a glance on each one of these religions and its principles in relation to inter religious marriages in order to show opportunities which are offered to the individuals who are committed or eager to devote themselves to it.

Principles of Islam

With the argued reading of Quran, it appears clearly that one cannot, in the name of Quran, prohibit the marriage of a Muslim woman with a Jew or a Christian (Quran. S4.V82). concerning the three verses of reference which we retained,

the remarks are the following ones: In Quran and in Seurat 2, Verse 221, it is written: “Do not take for wives the polytheists unless they do not become believing. A believing slave is preferable with a polytheist, when well even it would fill with wonder you. They call you with Fire whereas God, by His permission, invites you to the Paradise and Forgiveness. For this purpose, It clearly exposes Its verses to people so that they remind them”.

“The Muslim can marry the Christian women, but the Christian cannot marry a Muslim woman”. The process is rather frequent: when one wants to obtain stiffening or a legal restriction, one call upon the guardian shade of large Umar ibn Al Khattâb.

In the same direction, Sourate 60 Verset10 stipulates that: “O believers, when believing having emigrated join you, examine their situation. Only God knows really their faith, but if you judge those believing do not return them towards the deniers (kuffâr). They are not licit any more for them and reciprocally. In this case return what they had spent (as a dowry). No objection so that you marry them after having again equipped them. Moreover, do not retain by the bonds of the marriage the people who do not believe God (to kawâfir).

Principles of Buddhism

In addition to Islam, the principles of Buddhism in the inter religious marriage are determining. Introduced indeed in the middle of Ier century, Buddhism in China started from the end of Iii e century, one of the three principal ideological and spiritual currents (“Three schools”, 三教, sānjiào) with the Confucianism and the Taoism, while continuing its evolution there. Except for certain influences vajrayana (Buddhism Tibetan) or hiragana, the principal current currents of Japanese, Quran and Vietnamese Buddhism come from schools in Mahayana which were born or took their rise in China.

The diplomatic mission carried out by Zhang Qian, by opening the silk route between -138 and -126, undoubtedly became the decisive

event which started the introduction of Buddhism in China by supporting the exchanges with Central Asia. It is indeed more often of these areas, and not directly from India, which led to the arrival of monks and sutras in China. A legend probably without base made of the Wu emperor of Han (Wudi) one of the first adore the Buddha. Each civilization grants a different value to silence it, with the passage of time, the festival, the elderly, the money, the way of doing its toilet, the way to eat (with the rods). The role of the man and the woman as well as that of the child changes from one society to another. This first stage entails the training of the other where each one wishes to overcome the fears and to take up the challenge.

Principles of Christianity

Beyond Buddhism, one could also practice Christianity, the appearance of new churches, new religious currents, no-Protestantism, and their capacity to be infiltrated a little everywhere in the world under the cover perhaps of installation of carminative international solidarities and missions. The religious fact is constant throughout history. Even among "primitive people", religion marked all the History of Humanity. The priests came and then made a trade of it. But practically, one cannot escape from it. The free thinkers or the agnostics are never heard, one does not give them the word. Even today, our companies are influenced by the religion.

Then, on definition of religion, as long as it will not have been understood that the religions lead to the transcendence, i.e. the individual refers to a divine transcendence of order and not of a human nature, it will not be able to be interested in the relation between civil society and religion. The problem of our society today, it is perhaps to put the following question: where did the transcendence's pass? And how can those who have a belief, or a divine transcendence be integrated into a laic society?

In the prospect for answers to these questions, here the remarks collected during maintenance:

"I would wish to express my opinion on the influence of religion on civil society. I dream of a world, all at least France, which would make it possible for each one to express its own values which they are catholic, Jewish, Protestant, Muslim, Buddhist; that one can express them in our personal life. I consider it regrettable that in the civil society one still has this kind of matter. It seems to me that the first of freedoms is to make a school which accepts everyone whatever his identity, his religion or his convictions. What seems more important to me, it is to adhere to humanistic values quite simply. It seems to me that one can live happy very well while following humanistic values and while abstaining from religious values". (Extracted from the discussion with a Christian religious guide).

Moreover, the arrival of child leads the members of the couple to remember their childhood, of the role of their mother and their father and to reflect on their parental roles. The influence of the religion in the couple thus intervenes per moment. The remarks collected during maintenance testify that well and are illustrated in these terms: *"I lived in a family or we were six children. In Africa in general, the families have many children. What I lived, it is a life between friends and brothers; I cannot educate it as I lived. It is the evolution. The way in which one lived! Rather I was sent in France for my studies higher in friends of my mother. I was educated by a Frenchwoman. We lived more in the street than at the house. Here they are much more with the parents. One occupies oneself some more. Over there one learned from good and the bad things in the street with the friends. Already small, we have responsibilities (races, care with the smaller children). Here I have contrast that it is not the case. I learned how to deal with a child and to manage in life. Me, I am Buddhist and him protesting Christian. Should be inculcated to him the religious values. The choice of my joint was not influence by a religion. But with time she requests with me. The role of the father, it*

is to indicate the good way to him and to give him councils. In a word, best education.” (Extracted from the discussion with a Congolese married to Chinese). The evolution of the parental couple has a great importance on desire of the religious and ethnic membership of the child. During its early childhood (0 to 6 years), the social relations organized by his/her parents forge at his place a first image of the world to which it belongs. To the inter religious or inter-ethnic families which were questioned, two scenarios arise:

- Firstly, the parents are afraid that the differences of culture, religions and sometimes of the values do not structure the child. They choose during its first years to make him attend only one homogeneous medium (identical entourage, language, lifestyle, social attitudes, religious culture...).
- Secondly, upon the departure, the parents organize for their child a mode of existence open on the world, concerned to transmit the two religions and cultures to him in a balanced way. When the parents succeed in exceeding the tests related to the shocks of their unconscious disagreements, the transmission of their two religions and cultures is extremely enriching for their children.

The following remarks testify that well: *“I was married with a Nigerian and we had to divorce after eight years happiness. My ex-husband was Muslim and me Buddhist, I said myself that all was going to be arranged, but I estimated that it was high time to decide, since all the religions have the same objectives “to adore and request God”. We had two children together. But the Nigerians do not have the same direction of the things as the Chinese. I feel deeply attached to Africa since each winter vacation we leave for Africa with our children. I want that my children keep the values of the African culture and the Islamic religion and I educate them with the African way. These parents often said to convince me to become*

Muslim like him. And I believe that the religion has even influence our couple. I sometimes only felt when they make the meetings of reading of Koran. Its behavior resulted from this from its religion. I think that my ex-husband always likes me and that he regrets our divorce, but I do not dare to start again with him, because I is certain that he would like to return to remain in China, for him it is a completely normal thing. It will not change”. (Extracted from the discussion with Chinese married with a Nigerian then divorced.).

In addition to the two noted scenarios, the other observation is that there exist realities related to the life of the couple with the children and their schooling. This configuration of the couple is characterized by the difficulty encountered by the couple in front of the choices regarding the education of their children and the impositions by the school, religion, language. Major divergences can thus appear in the orientations suggested by each one of them about respect of the authority, freedom, exercise of the responsibilities, exemptions of the calendars, etc. It arises that the representation of the child differs from one company to another.

For black African consequently, the child is the symbol of the success of the couple but especially of the community, a kind of widened family. Education in Africa is generally based on the training of solidarity and autonomy. For the Chinese also, the child is the showpiece able to fill the widened family. The small child (from 0 to 6 years) is very surrounded and cherished. One leaves him a rather great liberty of ac-tion. When the child reaches adolescence, he or she is taken again in hand and much more supervised.

In the same way, for white African, and the majority Muslim, the child, especially male, allows the group to remain. As of the beginning, the role of the boy and that of the girl are much different. The parents take care of the little boy and develop him while the little girl receives domestic responsibilities very early and leaves less than her brother. The educational model of

white African, founded on Islam, develops the respect for the parents which imposes silence on the children. The dialog is not a value in oneself. In addition, Community solidarity brings to the children a human heat and sense of security.

In addition, the Chinese by considering the child as well as the marriage consider that the problem of the child is a private affair. Individual freedom is very developed. There is on the one hand, the desired and cherished child, and on the other hand, the concern for its framework of life (to be owner), its lifestyle (holidays, activities, and clothing) and of its professional ambition. The principles of education, consequently, are: the frankness (all to say, all to explain) and to develop the dialog, the fold on the family life, to support the studies, the respect of individual freedom and the tolerance. For the parents, originating in two cultures, essence is to manage to simplify the situation and to choose together the guiding lines of the education of their children. Indeed, there will be more harmony and their sons and girls will be favored compared to the others.

Indeed, in the daily life, in spite of the interest or the information of a spouse on the culture of the other, there remain remote regions and misunderstandings related to the shock of the unconscious ones, which function differently from one country to the other. The need for adapting to other dietary habits, with different schedules, a different climate, a different religion, a different ethnicity is at the origin of the release of family crises. However, "it is a development process of crisis in crisis, with enrichment with each happy solution of the crisis [...]. Each stage meets a stake of auto realization [...] the realization achieves in the success of the relations to others, through the social roles, work, the intimacy and procreation⁴".

The shock of the generations is also a reality in the religious mixed couples as in the other none

inter religious families or not inter-ethnic. That is explained by conflicts centered on the choice of a nationality or a religion and values which are referred to it. There is no total identification for the life with the culture or the religion and the country of one or the other parents. Several variables intervene in the adhesion of the teenager to the country and the religion or the culture or the ethos group of his/her father or his mother at a given time of its life: the age, entourage, circumstances, the religion, ethos group, the color of the skin, good relationships with his/her father or his mother. However, the teenager can better get along with his father or his mother according to the evolution of his existence.

Among these variables there is, as said by Augustin Barbara⁵, the objective features (example: the color of the skin) which creates bonds between one adolescent and a group of membership; but also the teenager can live subjective bonds of membership and take part in several groups of references according to the moments. The influence of the religion intervenes in the communication of the culture as shown below in this testimony: "*My daughter suffers sometimes because she is regarded as foreign. She is referred to as a Madagascan sometimes by a Madagascan. I repeat to her that she is a mongrel, that her mom is Chinese, and her father African but she is seen differently from the others*". (Extracted from the discussion with Chinese married then divorced a Man from Mali).

Through these tests the power struggle of the couple evolves/moves, which is in fact that of two cultures. Another moment is the post-parental period and of retirement. Indeed, after having paid all its attention on the future of his/her children, the couple is found like the other couples confronted with itself. The husbands are brought to make new choices, to redefine a lifestyle. The end of the professional obligations gives the possibility of return to the

⁴ D. Bensimon & F. Lautman. (1977). A marriage, two traditions. Christians and Jews, Brussels, ED. university of Brussels.

⁵ A. Barbara. (1985). Marriages without borders, Paris, the Centurion.

country of origin of the non-Chinese spouse i.e. in Africa. This return is the subject often of compromise: two months in a country, the remainder of the year in the other. It is also the time of the assessments.

The couple which resisted time is in harmony, it symbolizes the opening and the creativity as one inquired during our maintenance mentioned: *"I do not feel my wife like Chinese. I am Christian, and she is Buddhist. It is merry, fast, small job, opened, sympathetic nerve... It adapts very well when we go in Ivory Coast. It makes the kitchen well, a little with Ivory Coast. She speaks the patois rather well about my area that is very important for me; I believe that almost all would become more complicated for her in Ivory Coast, without understanding the language. I say to her that she already ate much Attieke, local food that she already found in Ivory Coast... At the time of the meetings with friends of the Ivory Coast, it acts like of the Ivory Coast. It ended up converting with the Christian religion. She attends the places of worship with me. It is a very clean woman, very organized, it occupies much me, and it says that I am his child... I am a husband spoiled by his wife, what I can ask moreover?"* (Extracted from the discussion with of the Ivory Coast married with Chinese).

All in all, it arises from the principles that the marriage between various religions is possible even if among Muslims an ambiguity appears, similarly, a Christian cannot marry a Muslim woman. In any event, in spite of this principal attitude, one observes that nowadays, Muslim women and Christians marry more and more. However, that is the characteristics which the inter religious marriages in China and particularly in Guangzhou present.

Marriage intercultural style lives in Guangzhou

A district of Guangzhou, the megalopolis of the south of China, became the crucible of the mixture between the Chinese and African cultures. It is obviousness when one considers the growing number of marriages between

African migrants and local Chinese. We had met one of these couples, which enables us to learn some more on their happiness and their concern. Here K., a Cameroonian business man. In 2007 it started to work as tradesman with Guangzhou. And it is here that it was established. It met his future wife in the province of Shanxi, in the North-West, where they married. The beginnings were not always easy. *"The stopping of the language, being able to communicate in a friendly way with the family, that was a little difficult; and Chinese food, it was very difficult for me of me to make there."*

W., Wife of K. *"With the whole beginning, my family and my friends refused our marriage. The cultural differences and the distance between China and Africa were intimidating."* But their love filled the ditch. K. adapted to the Chinese culture and W. succeeded in convincing its family and her friends. They have now 2 children. W. is found sometimes obliged to explain to those why they are not like the other children around them.

W., Wife of K. *"Sometimes somebody asks my son why it is so black. I want that it is proud. I say to him that they are color of the chocolate while other children are color of milk."* In spite of the success of K., for the mixed families with Guangzhou, the visas, the access to the social security and the education of their children are great concern. The government of Guangzhou set up more than 70 centers of service in the districts at strong foreign population. And the welfare workers try to help with the resolution of the difficulties.

X. Director(2009), Center of service integrated for the family and community of Dengfeng, *"We think that there are approximately 200 children sino-African in this street. Our center provides services of information and consultation. We give also lessons of language, councils on the way of managing legal and medical problems and help with cultural integration."*

Many Africans with Guangzhou must renew their visa at the end of several months. K. makes now its request for its license of Chinese

residence. But it does not know if it will obtain it. And it is its wish expensive now.

P. Vice-director(2010), Administration of the entries and exits of Guangzhou, "Generally, China has an open policy of visa. Whoever meets the conditions can make a request for permanent residence. Our policy does not discriminate according to nationality but is based on economic criteria."

Approximately 20 thousand Africans live in Guangzhou. It forms one of the independent groups from abroad in the city. It is also estimated that there are 400 Sino-African families. The belief which the love arrives at end of all is quite alive here for many people. Welfare workers as X. hope that the authorities of Guangzhou and the local community will make some more to accommodate these people who wish to make of China their country.

The inter religious mixed marriage appears based on these facts as the privileged place where the cultures clash, dialog and are based. The influence of religion in the choice of the marital union can determine a considerable change all along their life. We were brought to regard the mixed inter-religion or inter-ethnic marriage as mixed union. However, this concept includes many other aspects: thus, the marriages between social classes, ethnics or groups religious or between groups of ages can be regarded as such. Other definitions limit the mixed marriage to the union's different nationalities whereas the mixed marriage term can have several directions: Transnational Marriage(alliance of two individuals of different nationalities); Inter ethnic Marriage (alliance of two individuals of different ethos groups); Inter religious Marriage (alliance of two individuals of different religions).

These examples show at which point it is about a concept "without border". In extreme cases, any couple is mixed since it is composed of a man and a woman. It was even truer when the statutes of the men and the women were radically different as purported by Elisabeth Badinter (1986) : "The woman is "the different

one" more than the complementary partner for the man; and this otherness is said, is reinforced by the recourse to systems of representation, projections imaginary, models of behaviors⁶".

The sociologists of the family studied various forms of mixed marriages. The definition most usually used, more than to the difference itself, refers to the reaction caused by this difference. Thus Françoise Lautman and Doris Bensimon(1978) see them like "any marital union concluded between people belonging to religions, ethos groups or different races, if these differences cause a reaction of social environment⁵". It is the last point which is essential. Thus, from the point of view where any couple (man and woman) is mixed, one could support that only the homosexual union is none-mixed... However, the often-hostile reactions of the entourage and the company make a "mixed" union of it. Moreover, the factors of co-education can be added (nationalities + religions, social classes...); some on the contrary can be reduced (religious conversion, change of nationality, social or cultural imitation...).

Conflicts inherent in the Inter religious marriages

As far as the reactions of the entourage cause a handing-over in question of the couple, throughout its trajectory, the stages of life of its members are undoubtedly, more than in a couple homo gametic of the same nationality, punctuated by a series of crises to the direction where described the model of Erikson. "The model of Erikson concentrates on a series of crises. The human growth is presented from the point of view of the conflicts as well internal as external to which the vital personality must face the reemergence of each crisis with a reinforced feeling of internal unit, an increase in capacity to judge and faculty "to make well", according to the cultural standards [...] Each component of the personality opens out, enters

⁶ E. Badinter. (1986).L'un est l'autre. Des relations entre hommes et femmes,Paris, O. Jacob.

in crisis and finds its solution in its meeting with the environment⁷”.

This model applies to the study of the inter religious or inter-ethnic marriages. Indeed, the inter-ethnic couple or inter religious present a specific vulnerability and crises. Those successes and victories make it possible for the couple to reinforce the capacity to be judged and the faculty to do well according to the sociocultural standards of the other.

The dynamics of the life of these couples punctuated by successive crises and stages are similar to those of any other couple; however, this has its own logic. The occasions of opposition, due to the differences of religion, culture, and ethos group are more numerous. Certainly, this type of union poses more problems than the marriage homo gametic. The conflict grounds exist, but the adventure is all the more exciting. It requires each spouse to be unceasingly renewed by the rationalization of the difficulties inherent in the life of each couple. And from this point of view, the inter religious or inter-ethnic mixed marriage, when it resists time, is a success higher than the average. In any case, it shows a particularly developed psychological maturity⁸.

Communication, imagination and tolerance are the obligatory ingredients of the daily newspaper of the couple's inter-monk or inter-ethnic. However, the XXI e century is characterized by the increasing importance taken by the need for communicating between people. The international exchanges are encouraged by the development of technologies in communication (media, satellites...). Strategies are set up to find a common language in fields as varied as the trade, data processing, the culture, the religion, the political systems and legal, etc the marriages inter-monk or inter-ethnic are, to some extent, two religions, two ethos groups,

two cultures and represent in that a universal phenomenon.

The results show that for the population originating in Guangzhou the choice of the spouse does not appear to be influenced by the family composition.

Muslim right in the texts

The marriage of the Muslim with a not-Muslim woman: risk to limit

It is in Quran itself, base first of the Muslim right, which one finds relating the principles to the marriage of the Muslim with a not-Muslim woman. He is question for the first time in the sourate 2, received by the Prophet of Islam at the beginning of the emigration with Medina: “Do not marry women polytheists before they believe...” (2,221). The circumstances of the revelation of this verse are connues³. Muslim Meck people emigrated with Muhammad is returned with Meck, responsible for a mission by the Prophet. However, it had in this city a beloved whom it wished to marry. He asks for to the Prophet the authorization of contract this marriage.

The marriage of a Muslim woman with a not-Muslim: absolute impossibility

The traditional statute of dimma (“protection” granted to the not-Muslim installed in Muslim country) prohibited to the not-Muslim, under penalty of death, to marry a Muslim. This prohibition is founded on the second part of the basic text (2,221). After having settled the question of the marriage of a believer with a mushrika, the verse continues same manner: “Do not marry your daughters with polytheists” (mushrikîn). With the difference in the marriage of the Muslim, that of the Muslim woman does not support exception. The interdiction which relates to it is even reinforced by a posterior verse (60,10) relating to the emigrated Muslim women of Meck with Medina: “Do not return them to the infidels (kuffâr).

Immigration with the cultural adaptation

Whereas at the beginning of their establishment, the majority of the individuals strongly

⁷ Attias-Donfut, C. (1988). *Sociology of the generations. The print of time*, Paris, university Presses of France.

⁸ D. Bensimon & F. Lautman, (1978). *A marriage, two traditions, Christians and Jews*, Brussels, ED. university of Brussel

revalorized their membership, it is noted that with the time of new forms appear inducing cases of marginality, of cultural ambivalence, as the feeling of authenticity grows blurred with the passing of an intense cultural activity. All this obliges us to take account of complex processes like the assimilation, acculturation, etc. But the sociological option obliges us to leave the study of lived individual to develop the social representation of the mixed marriage. The decision to generally link with a person considered as foreign meeting a serious obstacle within the families. Certain parents fear indeed that the multiplication of the mixed marriages does not cause, in the more or less long term, the disappearance of the community. With that let us add fear to see the grandchildren becoming foreigners. These concerns appear different manners according to social environment, the generation, and the state of adaptation.

From the religious point of view, it would seem that the hostility with the mixed marriages depends not only on the religion, but still of the numerical importance of the religious community. The mixed marriage very often results either from a desire of assimilation, or of an indifference to the past. In certain cases, the co-education of a union causes a feeling of guilt diffuse and an all the more large psychological tension as the individual kept a close link with the community. The influence of the group is not always foreign in this state. In this case the mixed marriage is lived like treason of the group. At the individual level the impact of this attitude can go until the negation of its own identity. The research of the ascribable directions at the end "mixed" leads us to Latin. Mixed comes from Latin *mixtus*, i.e. last participle of *mixer*, meaning to mix. The *mixer* term related to a thing induced that this one was made of elements of different nature.

Conclusion

The migration flows and the merging of populations from various origins within a given territory, pull intercultural encounters and

sometimes the emergence of mixed couples. The adaptation pattern of an individual moving from his home country to a host country is not without consequences on his life. To regain self-control every individual develops a process of acculturation translated into very precise identity strategies. To enter a union can bring the foreign one to a better self-assertion in the host country. From where the hypothesis according to which, the difference between the identities strategies of the members of mixed couples determines the foreign partner feeling of normality and the link he maintains with the host society.

The different populations (Chinese and African) became essential constituents of the social landscape in China. This condensation of differences made ethnicity appear as dominant principle of the social hierarchical order, where each group has a definite place. Therefore, the study's main question asks whether intercultural conjugal relationships are likely to challenge the dominant social order by establishing hyphens between groups. But tolerance level to intercultural unions is closely associated to positioning strategies of each other, which contributes as much, if not more, to strengthen the dominant social organization than to reorganize it.

Children of mixed couples and Sino-African couples, form henceforth a population visible within our societies common characteristics reassemble them, these are bound to the cultural choices possibility and to the context in which they move within the representations and the practices level. But the specificity of a place, of a Sino-African collective position doesn't appear in all subjects, on a familial practices level, on one hand (choice of the educative practices and familial relations) the cultural identity on the other (choice of their cultural belongings) or the individual workings (the types of mixity management, their consequences on a psychological level). In fact, some other studies showed that populations within intercultural situations (immigrant's

children. . .) are facing neighboring situations and seem to be sharing some of these characteristics, such as the mechanisms of the differences management or the effects of the stigmatization or the placing apart. All in all, the intercultural marriage between African and Chinese thus becomes as indicating social adaptation.

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