

**PARADIGM OF DERISION AND NEWS TREATMENT IN THE HUMOR  
MAGAZINE GBICH**

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**Abstract**

The study of the paradigm of derision in the treatment of the news makes it possible to understand that humor is a system of communication. Thus, the semiotic analysis of several issues of Gbich presents the media approaches of humor in this Ivorian newspaper of humor. This weekly magazine cultivates raillery based on the burlesque, extravagant and unusual specificity of certain aspects of current Ivorian and international news. Gbich aspires simultaneously to inform and entertain its target. It also includes functions of transgression, education and denunciation in certain situations. In fact, (creator, critic or protestor) humor conceptualizes a situational semiotics that can be interpreted differently according to culture, society and time. Situational semiotics is an epistemological concept to elucidate significant human appearances for the actor in a context of communication. Variously, it is important to construct the intellection of the model of the humor in the synthesis of the verbal and non-verbal codes present in the situation of communication.

**Keywords:** Media, humor, mockery, semiotics, organization, communication, Ivory Coast

## 1. Introduction

Derision is a means of communication that uses mockery or caricature, often accompanied by contempt (Feuerhahn, 1990). It is a grotesque representation, by drawing, and painting, etc., obtained by the exaggeration and deformation of the characteristic features of the face or the proportions of the body, with a satirical intention (Escarpit, 1981). Thus, the drawing or the image of the reality is distorted at will to obtain the sketch of a person, an idea or a current affair (Joly, 1994). In fact, the caricature presents an entertaining aspect (Morin, 1970). It is generally the image of a satire of mocking criticism of events ("Rainy Season, Rain of Problems" in Gbich n° 763, June 19-25, 2014). The intention to inform, denounce, support or prevent a change is connotative to the satirical press.

In Ivory Coast, the humorous aspect of the satirical or caricature press gives an air of little seriousness to this type of media. However, the facts are often of a typical veracity ("Inheritance, there are problems in!" In Gbich n° 715 from 11 to 17 July 2013). Lassane Zohoré, founder of Gbich assured: "Those who know the Ivorians recognize that they are people who love self-mockery, who love to make fun of their own problems. We have a culture of humor. "

Humor is a logic of skilful thoughts which emphasize the comic, ridiculous, absurd or unusual character of certain aspects of reality (Chabrol, 2006). For this purpose, humor tends to create good humor in targets. It is a social aim of expression ("Who is the fool who said that money can't buy happiness?" In Gbich n° 548 from 23 to 29 April 2010). In fact, given the implication of the humorous approach in society, there is an important literature on the question of humor, both in the rhetorical and literary and stylistic traditions, not including the writings in the philosophical and psychological fields.

What is the approach to information processing in the Gbich newspaper? This question is linked to the paradigm of humor, satire and derision in the Ivorian public space. It records the sights of the humorous press like Gbich in Ivory Coast. It is a question of apprehending the approach of humor and understanding the caricatural system of communication (Meunier, 2015; Veron, 1987), through a definition of the constituent elements of the situation (national and international news) for the actors (transmitter-journalist and receiver-population). There is matter to build understanding of the paradigm of humor in the synthesis of the code and / or

languages, verbal or non-verbal, present in the context of communication (moment and situation) of Gbich, Ivorian newspaper of humor and cartoon (Ziv, 1988).

## **2. Study of the signs in the model of treatment of the news by GBICH**

Communication makes it possible to determine and convey information in the social system. Every system of communication, to be understood, must be referred to the social symbolism in which it unfolds. It is in this vein that one must understand the analogical signs and the verbal signs of the treatment of the news by Gbich (Miège, 2005).

According to Harold Lasswell, a communication operation can be correctly portrayed by answering the following questions: Who says what? By what channel? To whom and with what effect? The interest of Lasswell's model is to go beyond the simple problem of transmitting a message and to envisage communication as a dynamic process (Balle, 1980; Maigret, 2003) with a series of stages each having their importance, their specificity and their problems.

Various, the study of media (Saillant, 1996) coverage highlights the target audience, content-containing and outcome-effects. In the approach of the paradigm of derision and information processing observed in the Gbich newspaper, semiotics (the study of the life of signs in social life) is convened. Semiology (Mounin, 1970 ; Martinet, 1973) or semiotics (Peirce, 1987) is defined as "the theory and the study of signs and meaning. For certain theories, everything is a sign: man himself and the world that encompasses him. In particular, the signs may be linguistic, pictorial, architectural, clothing, gestural, olfactory, musical, filmic, etc." (Belhassine, 2009) In this respect, semiology teaches culture as communication. It also concerns all messages subordinated to underlying codes (language or, more broadly, cultural convention).

Otherwise, semiotics is appropriate to analyze the mechanisms of humor observed in the humorous press of Ivory Coast (L'Anselme, 1990; Breton, 1966). According to Anne-Marie Houdebine-Gravaud and Mae Pozas (2006), identifying humor and its manifestation in press drawings - be it newspapers or weeklies - is a challenge. The present study focuses on the semiological and / or semiotic analysis of about sixty Gbich copies. A sample of six (6) copies presented here.



that allows elucidating the significant human phenomena for the actor in a communication situation. The situation is the founding element of the semiotics that links the meaning to the context of production. This method is particularly relevant for analyzing and understanding data derived from the observation of newspapers of derision, satire or humor like Gbich.

### **3. Gbich: media and humor in Ivory Coast**

The traditional functions of the media are to inform, advise and entertain (Schudson, 1995). Informing is undoubtedly the primary objective of the media (Falconi, 1992). In this regard, the Ivorian press informs its readers, listeners or viewers, dealing with national and international news. The same applies to the humor press which processes data or presents cartoons in the form of information on the public or private life of citizens (Charaudeau, 2006).

The satirical press is also an indicative source of clarification of the notions ("Ivory Coast, soon in the HIPC Club - Highly Indebted Poor Countries ... We are already in the CPI - Community of the Poor Individuals" in Gbich n° 649 April 12-18 2012), practices and habits of the society. For example, through the humor, the press announces to the readers the concepts in vogue ("Love makes blind ... spleen opens eyes" in Gbich n° 889 from 17 to 23 November 2016), public debates, different opinions on national or international news.

Thus in Ivory Coast, Gbich deals with and communicates on subjects of discipline, formation, religion ("God's affair, Holy Ghost or holy business" in Gbich n° 879 from September 8 to 14, 2016; "Pastor, the job that pays sooner or later!" In Gbich n° 802 from 19 to 25 March 2015), unemployment, poverty ("Poor / Rich, everyone his language" in Gbich n° 867 from 16 to 22 June 2016; "Life scale, they are richness, rich, poor, and paupers" in Gbich n° 694 from 21 to 27 February 2013), justice, love ("Infidelities, treachery, ting tang, damsels' seduction... Women, the friends of your husbands are their accomplices!" in Gbich n° 624 from 20 to 26 October 2011"; "Warning of women: the man who does not sweat for me should not perspire on me" in Gbich n° 893 from 15 to 21 December 2016), governance, health, development, politics ("The girls regret the refounders!" in Gbich n° 691 from 31 January to 06 February 2013; "after ADO's 10 commandments to ministers, here are 10 warnings by Gbich!" in Gbich No. 615 from 18 to 24 August 2011) ...



In fact, the entertainment feature is at the center of humor journals. This is the diligence of the press which consists in informing its target by entertaining it. The satirical press performs this function in two ways. Either it does it openly, devoting itself entirely to this objective by caricatures, games, "smiles of the day", crosswords and other scriptural humors (Groensteen, 1999). Either the press organs slyly mix the story with humor, romance, poetry or fiction. Many illustrated weeklies of humor like *Gbich* are part of the relaxation of the week in Ivory Coast. Thus, *Gbich* attracts the attention of the readers, thanks to the entertainment integrated in the satirical chronicles on the social life and the scandals of the stars or politicians.

Humor is a form of mind that emphasizes the comic, ridiculous, absurd or unusual character of certain aspects of reality; the mark of this spirit in a speech (Freud, 1988), a text, a drawing. It is a founder in caricature, grotesque representation, drawing, painting, etc., obtained by the exaggeration and deformation of the characteristic features of the face or the proportions of the body, with a satirical intention.

Variouly, the *Gbich* newspaper exploits the raillery based on the comic, burlesque, unreasonable or unusual specificity of certain appearances of the news. Indeed, the satirical press uses satire or humor as a system of information and communication. In this vein, the press design serves to illustrate current events, through caricatures and humorous images. The press drawing no longer has a simple creative or figurative role. It is transformed into an information channel on subjects of a social or political nature of a State or of an organization and makes it possible to contest, denounce or support a cause. For example, the politics of a government or its opposition, socio-economic activities and topical issues. The image is thus used, in the media, to convey an opinion (Tudesq, 1998).

In the Ivorian press, the information and entertainment functions take precedence over the intelligence function. This takes into account the propensity of readers to seek the sensational. Also, the Ivorian satirical press exploits this niche of fusion of humor and information in the treatment of national news ("Sergeant Deutogo: Racket made him mad!!!" in *Gbich* n° 541 from 5 to 11 March 2010). The press drawing is understood as information put in an illustrated code, serving as a belt for the satirical press. The message is not just the idea or the background (content), nor just the code or the form (containing). It is the information

embedded in its code, that is to say the synthesis of the background (thought) and the form (caricature). In Ivory Coast, the semiology of Gbich's publications and, in general, the humorous press makes it possible to detect local cartoons (distorted images), an ivoirism in language and the use of the Nouchi language, an Ivorian sociolect- ("Panic in the bush ... Ebola wa wieéé!" in Gbich n° 880 from the 15th to the 21st of September 2016; "Holding a lot of money at once, it makes crazy" in Gbich n° 546 from 09 to 15 April 2010).

Thus, the content of the messages often relates to the living conditions of citizens, the functioning of public organizations, the activities of political groups, sectarian opinions, value judgments, strengths or weaknesses (crises or difficulties) of the socio-economic system of Ivory Coast and gender issues. There is a distinctive style of the Ivorian satirical newspapers in connection with their symbolism and their objectives ("New techniques of seduction, young people, true V.I / fake!!!" in Gbich n° 508 from 17 to 23 July 2009).

#### **4. Informational and social issues of the treatment of the news by humor**

The extraction of the principles characteristic of a context of communication imposes an action of analysis of very meticulous content which comprises two movements: a movement of locating indicators, an induction movement made from these indicators (Amado & Guittet, 1975).

Gbich cumulatively targets the information, intelligence and entertainment of its target, on the one hand. It brings together functions of integration, education and denunciation, on the other. The media have this noble task of being often used to educate the masses. Thus, in another way, by giving the documentation or information more and more necessary, the humorous press is empowered also to give an explanation, a commentary on the national news. In fact, with the information that is generated every day in an exponential quantity, the satirical press Gbich first releases them by means of drawings or codes (Greimas, 1965). And in a second step, this humor magazine highlights the role of drawing as well as the specificity of drawing or image in relation to the text in a context of communication. To this end, representations allow the target to grasp the world in which man evolves.

This option is easy to understand, through the situation and the explanation of the events that take part in the formation of the mass ("Africa, Yako! Good manners bugger off!" in Gbich

n° 464 from 12 to 18 September 2008). The degrees of this education are varied, from the sensational newspaper that develops emotional reactions, to the weekly humorous Gbich. According to Jean Claude Moussoki (2003), "any system of communication, to be understood, must be referred to the social symbolism in which it unfolds. Thus, the current system of traditional means of communication requires, to be understood, that it be referred to the structures". Otherwise, communication tools are the foundation of group relationships: without a communication tool, it is impossible to inform or collaborate. All the mechanisms of collaborative work thus integrate functions of this type.

To better understand the informational and social stakes of the treatment of the news by humor in the Ivorian newspaper Gbich, Alex Mucchielli's method is convened. For him, there is a composition of the situation in seven (7) frameworks, in particular:

- ▶ the framework of standards or cultural framework: linked to collectively accepted rules that may be implicit or explicit;
- ▶ the framework of positioning: this approach is appropriate to the social conditions, the places, the statutes, the roles of actors among themselves (Quinton, 2006);
- ▶ the identity or the framework of the stakes: attached to the intentions, the projects or the stakes that will motivate the actors in the situation;
- ▶ the framework of the quality of relations or immediate social relational framework: it presents intersubjective rules that participate in the relationship between the actors, the atmosphere of exchanges in the situation;
- ▶ the temporal framework: this time corresponds to the communications prior to the situation, to the historical context, to the relationship between past, present and future;
- ▶ the spatial framework: we are interested in the place and its disposition, in space, in the geography of exchange;
- ▶ the physico-sensorial framework: this vector is relative to the perceptions of the five senses (hearing, sight, smell, touch, taste), to sensory elements such as emotions.

The frames are interwoven into one another and send back to each other. These vectors determine a situation for any actor, and are not independent of each other. Language (verbal or not) is associable with one or more meanings and usually a meaning is commonly a



message sent and received by a given social actor ("Lying nourishes woman, but it is money that Satisfy her!" in Gbich n° 696 from March 7 to 13, 2013).

*"Making the reader laugh by giving a deliberately distorted picture of reality is one of the aims of the satirical press, a common goal of caricature, originally used in the satirical press before it spreads to the general press. But if the "basis of its approach [the satirical press] is to lay bare, in a comical way, a defect, a vice, a lie observed in society", as Souleymane Bah defines it in a thesis defended in 2004, the satirical press is not for the sole purpose of entertaining: it is a matter of denouncing the faults and moral faults observed in society, especially among the powerful.*

Variously, Gbich uses humor and caricature to achieve certain goals, namely:

- ▶ to conceive of a news, an opinion, an emotion ("Is love, forced!?" In Gbich n ° 559 from 09 to 15 July 2010);
- ▶ to inspire deontology and a common ideology to understand each other ("Aaah, our dear neighbors!" In Gbich no. 876, 18-24 August 2016);
- ▶ to serve information to natural and / or legal persons in society ("Poverty is worse than disease!" In Gbich n° 550 from 07 to 13 May 2010);
- ▶ to create a mechanism of influence to exhort the citizens to act according to current events ("Backing to school always surprises our pockets!" In Gbich n ° 878 from 01 to 07 September 2016);
- ▶ to present its editorial line and its vision of local and international events, or natural or man-made phenomena ("Father Christmas distributes gifts to children and problems to parents!" In Gbich n ° 894 from 22 to 28 December 2016).

The methods and means of communication of Gbich enable the implementation of the dialogue between the actors, the sharing of information and experiences, the exchange of knowledge and techniques. Well designed and properly implemented, these vectors can be as effective as some of the most innovative products, according to the needs and habits of the target ("Ivorian! Last-minute champion!" in Gbich n° 835 from 5 to 11 March 2015).

Communication tools and networks are also very diverse: mass communication media, proximity communication means used in communication situations of organizations, tools and local networks, traditionally used by groups. These tools and networks must be mobilized according to the objectives pursued (Debray, 1994), taking into account their impact in the environment, the flexibility of their mobilization, their implementation costs, and the possibility for communities to take ownership of their use ("Facebook, is-it angel or demon?" in Gbich n° 874 from 04 to 10 August 2016).

## **5. Conclusion**

The media are undoubtedly one of the showcases of access to information and the formation of public opinion ("Funeral: Too much comedy!" in Gbich n° 714 from 11 to 17 July 2013). Thus, Gbich's media approach allows us to better understand and understand our environment, to better situate ourselves in the ambiguity of our near or distant world ("They are hosted, they take our houses hostage" in Gbich n° 888 from 10 to 16 November 2016). Therefore, in Côte d'Ivoire, humorous or satirical newspapers treat the information of national life differently through caricature in order to make societal problems more comprehensible and acceptable ("chop-house, hairdresser's, saloon ... rumored factories!" in Gbich n° 558 from 02 to 08 July 2010).

The movements of communication and situational semiotics consecrate phenomena of (re) conceptualization of a situation, consisting in using codes and languages (verbal and non-verbal) that are significant for the target in a communication context ("If we make a trap ... money will grab women, string will catch men!" in Gbich n° 682 from 29 November to 05 December 2012). In reference to ethnomethodology (flow of the situated action), the activity located in the humor is an indexical activity of contextuality which allows an actor to define the situation in which he is engaged ("Why men take a second Woman or mistress?" in Gbich n° 468 from 10 to 16 October 2008).

In fact, humor is creative ("December 24-31, here is the last of the styles of girls and guys" in Gbich n° 531 from 24 to December 30, 2009), critic and / or protestor. It standardizes a situational semiotics that can be interpreted differently according to the culture ("Do not play with Ivoirians weekend» in Gbich n° 502 from 05 to 11 June 2009), the society and the times.

Everything is not humor, anywhere and at any time. There is a risk in bringing humor to any subject or to any news ("It is not everywhere we have fun!" in Gbich n° 782 from 30 October to 05 November 2014). Examples are legion in the world: attack of the French satirical journal, imprisonment, threats, murder of journalists...

The communicative paradigm of humor in the caricature being apparent ("What is the choice of men between ... the woman who holds the bed well and the one who holds the kitchen well?" in Gbich n° 836 from 12 to 18 November 2015), those who share the opinions and values against which it is directed, strive to censor or limit its coarseness or influence. Various, authors and advocates of the humorous press call for freedom of expression ("Mouth of a child wearing no underpants" in Gbich n° 507 from 10 to 16 July 2009), for themselves, firstly, and secondly for the target. The humor is contextual ("Celebrations of the end of the year, the times are hard, but we will celebrate it pian!" in Gbich n° 14 December 2008).

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