



The Problem of Integrating Traditional Rulers Into the Contemporary Local Government System in Nigeria: A Pathway to Resolving the Challenge

Daniel Adetoritse Tonwe* and Osa Osemwota**

**Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria*

Tel: 08028427001, email: datonwe@yahoo.com

***Institute of Public Administration & Extension Services, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria*

Tel: 08073701236, email: osaosemwota@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This paper attempts an examination of the problem of integrating traditional rulers into the contemporary local government system in Nigeria with a view of resolving the problems arising from the tradition/modernity nexus in the present scheme of things. Two basic questions guided this work. The first question relates to the relevance of indigenous traditional institutions to the challenges of contemporary democratic process. The second question relates to whether traditional modes of thought behaviour and institutions constitute resources or impediments to the projects of modernization and development. This paper concludes that the goal of modernization is to generate rapid increase in social wealth and its driving force is economic development; and where traditional institutions are able to contribute positively to this goal, it should not be jettisoned.

Key words: Traditional Authority Systems, Traditional Rulers (Emirs, Obas), Cultural Revivalism, Antimodern.

INTRODUCTION

For a number of centuries before the advent of the British, governance in different parts of what make up the present day Nigeria was synonymous with traditional institutions and their rulers. Except in a few cases (as in the case of the south-east, particularly the Ibo community), local administration

Integrating Traditional Rulers Into Local Governance in Nigeria

was centered on the traditional ruler who was considered the repository of religious, legislative, executive and judicial functions. In effect, the traditional ruler formed the nucleus of governance. One striking fact is that the geographical spheres of authority of these traditional rulers were essentially localized. This is evident from the fact that no traditional ruler ever had jurisdiction over the entire geographical areas which now make up Nigeria. Partly on account of this historical background, the tendency has been to view and analyse the developments taking place in traditional institutions in the country more in relation to local government as opposed to the country's governmental system at large. Traditional institutions and their rulers have been in existence for centuries before the advent of colonialism (Afigbo 1972). The role of traditional rulers in local government administration has been changing over the years. From a position where they were chief executives of their localities in the country, they now serve as advisers in the contemporary local government system. This has created the problem of harmonious relationship between traditional rulers and elected local government actors. The focus of this paper is to examine the problem of integrating traditional rulers into the contemporary local government system in Nigeria and discern a pathway to resolving the challenge.

Laying out the turf

The nexus between the traditional and modern has been a central theme of postcolonial African philosophy. No doubt African philosophers have examined this theme from many angles, yet two basic questions have become the focus of ongoing debate and discussion. The first question relates to the relevance of indigenous African traditional institutions to the challenges of contemporary democratic process. The second question relates to whether traditional modes of thought behaviour, and institutions constitute resources or impediments to the projects of development and modernization in Africa (Ciaffa 2008).

The discussion of such questions reveals a conflict between two broad perspectives. The first perspective relates to *cultural revivalism*. This perspective assumes a reverential attitude toward the African cultural heritage. In Gyekye's view, the key to effectively addressing contemporary problems lies in reclaiming and revitalizing indigenous traditions that have been degraded and suppressed in the wake of colonialism (Gyekye 1997:233). He argued that colonialism violently disrupted African cultural traditions and imposed, with varying degrees of success, European forms of thought and social organization upon the colonized peoples. Having achieved political independence, postcolonial Africans must now pursue a more decisive liberation, a *decolonization* of African minds and societies. While revivalists are often skeptical of calls for development and modernization, viewing them as thinly veiled calls for the continued imposition of European cultural norms, it is important to realize that they do not typically view their own project as *antimodern*. For revivalists, the key point is that genuine modernization in

Africa can only be realized through the revitalization of African cultural norms.

The second perspective is predicated on the assumption that the revivalist project is fundamentally misguided and ill-suited to the challenges of contemporary Africa. The proponents of this school of thought argue that cultural revivalism diverts attention from pressing political issues, such as authoritarian oppression, technological backwardness and class exploitation (Eze 1997). The most extreme form of this view, suggests that Africans must make a *clean break* with the pre-modern past in order to address the most urgent demands of the present (Hountondji, 1996:48). Modernization, for them, requires a mental orientation commensurate with the problems of the present, not an attempt to resurrect ideas from societies of the distant past. Basically, modernization is a sign of progress and an ideal to be pursued. In examining the debate between cultural revivalism and its critics, the key question is: do indigenous traditions and traditional institutions enhance or impede the processes of scientific and political modernization? It is from this context that this paper examines the role of traditional authorities in the contemporary local government system in Nigeria.

Traditional authority systems and traditional rulers in Nigeria

It is difficult to provide a universally accepted definition of a traditional system of authority in Nigeria because of the diversity in the political and administrative components of traditional systems in different parts of the country. This difficulty notwithstanding, traditional systems of authority may be defined as the indigenous polity which existed before the advent of the colonialists (Adewumi & Egwurube 1985:20).

The responsibility for giving appropriate definition as to who is a Traditional Ruler is primarily that of the State Governments in the country. There are no fundamental variations in the definitions contained in the Traditional Rulers and Chiefs Law of the various State Governments. A Traditional Ruler may be defined as: *the traditional head of an ethnic group or clan who is the holder of the highest primary executive authority in an indigenous polity or who has been appointed to the positioning accordance with the customs and tradition of the area concerned by instrument or order of the state government and whose title is recognised as a traditional ruler title by the Government of the State* (Ola & Tonwe 2009:174).

Traditional rulers and local government in Nigeria: The changing roles Traditional institutions and their rulers have been in existence for centuries before the advent of colonialism. The role of traditional rulers in relation to Local Government has been changing over the years. The major contours of their changing roles in relation to local government in the country reveal a downward trend from chief executives of their localities to advisers in the present dispensation.

Integrating Traditional Rulers Into Local Governance in Nigeria

In tracing the contours of the role of traditional rulers in local government in Nigeria, three distinct geographical regions are discernible. These are the north, the south-west and the south-east. A close examination of the established traditional institutions and their rulers during the pre-colonial era reveals that in the task of governance, the traditional rulers had to shape appropriate policies, order priorities and generate revenue to meet the needs of their communities in the exercise of these functions. Restraints on the executive powers of the Emir in the North were hardly discernable. The Emir in the North could therefore be referred to as a strong executive participator in local administration. In the South-West, beside the Oba, there were other power blocks or centers such as the body of king makers, the town council and powerful secret societies whose input in shaping the local administration can be undermined by the Oba. Thus, the Oba in the South-West can therefore be regarded as a weak executive participator in local administration. In the South-East, there was an absence of centralised executive authority. The indigenous political system reveals a great deal of popular participation and was highly decentralized and fragmented with authority being exercised at different levels; from the household level to the village level. In all, the traditional ruler was an embodiment of local administration.

With the advent of colonialism, the British colonial administrators were apt to recognise the strategic and influential position occupied by traditional rulers in the country. Beside this realisation, the colonial administrators had a number of problems to contend with. These included limited British personnel, limited finance to run the country as the British colonial policy was to generate cost of running colonies from the colonies themselves and the volatile law and order situation in some parts of the country. Largely for these reasons, the colonialists avoided attempting any drastic reforms of the indigenous local administration. Instead, the British colonial administration took steps to put in place a system of indirect rule. Indirect rule was a convenient strategy by the British to govern the people through their traditional institutions and rulers while ensuring close guidance by superior British Administrators. In this way, the allegiance of the people was secured by the British via their traditional rulers (Ola 1983:24). In effect, there was a clear attempt by the colonial government to consolidate the role of traditional rulers as chief executives of their localities and this was extended to areas where traditional rulers were hitherto not chief executives of their localities.

One of the features of indirect rule and native authority system was that nationalists were not encouraged to serve in the local councils. The traditional rulers were in firm control of their local councils and they tended to be despotic and authoritarian in the performance of their functions which were essentially regulatory and extractive in nature. By mid-1940s however, political parties in the country had begun to assert themselves. Nationalists were forceful in demanding adequate representation in governmental affairs, while at the same time pressing for self government. They contended that the existing Native Authority System was incompatible with modern secular and

democratic tenets of local government. About this time too, the British government was re-appraising its strategy of governance at the local level with the aim of evolving a system of democratic and efficient local government. An official report, presented to the British Parliament in July 1949, in this regard stated thus: the objective of the new system was the encouragement of local political interest and building of efficient and democratic local government as a cardinal feature of the British policy in Africa. It was recognised that the political progress of the territories was dependent on the development of responsibility of local government and that, without sound local government a democratic political system at the center was not possible, and that social if services were to be built up and expanded, there must be efficient organ of local government directly representative of the people to operate them (Orewa & Adewumi 1983:49).

The south-eastern part of the country presented the most fertile ground to bring to fruition the new policy of the British Government as the traditional societal setting was highly atomized coupled with the absence of despotic or authoritarian traditional rulers. The Eastern Region took the historic step of abolishing the Native Authority System and replacing same with the Local Government Ordinance, 1950. The Ordinance provided for largely elected councils and non-elected members in the local councils were expected not to exceed twenty-five percent. The Chairmen of the councils were also expected to be elected from amongst the elected councillors.

In the western region, the Western Region Local Government Law 1952 was promulgated to replace the old Native Authority System. The law provided for the local councils to consist of both elected and traditional members. The traditional membership of the councils was not to exceed a quarter of its total membership. The law further provides that, recognised chiefs, that is, Traditional Rulers, could be appointed President of the councils, but did not assign any specific role, and as such, they were ceremonial Presidents. To further ensure that traditional rulers were excluded from active participation in local government, the Local Government Law was amended according to which no traditional ruler appointed as President of the council could be appointed chairman of the council.

In the Northern region, the old Native Authority Ordinance was replaced by the Native Authority Law 1954. The law provided for a number of operational frameworks including Chief-in-Council, Chief-and-Council and Federated Native Authorities. In the case of the Chief –in-Council arrangement, the Emir had the power to veto the decision of the council, provided he informed the governor whenever he acted contrary to the decision of the council. In case of Chief–and-Council the law provided that the Emir could not act contrary to the decision of the Council. However, because in the Northern Region, Islam has been established so long and so firmly that its practice has become inter-twined with those of traditional political authority – a type of Theocracy, it was difficult to discern any difference in power of the Emirs in the Chief–in-Council and Chief–and-Council arrangement. Federated Native Authorities were also set-up to cater

Integrating Traditional Rulers Into Local Governance in Nigeria

for communities not directly under the Emirates. Because in most cases, a number of dissimilar communities in terms of history and tradition were grouped together under this arrangement, coupled with shaky headship arrangement, the internal harmony and effectiveness of most of the Federated Native Authorities left much to be desired (Ekong 1985).

What is evident from the above historical climb-down is that, the preference and emphasis of the 1950s was the democratization of the local government system in the country. The implication of the democratization effort for traditional authorities in the South-East and South-West of the country was loss of their executive role for a participatory role in the affairs of government at the local level. The extent to which traditional rulers were involved in the decision making process at the local level during this period depended on how much influence individual traditional rulers wielded in the eyes of the political actors at this level. In the North, the introduction of the Chief-in-Council and Chief-and-Council did not succeed in taking away the executive powers of the Emirs. They still performed executive functions at the local government level.

Before Nigeria gained independence in 1960, the contention by a cross-section of nationalists that the institution of traditional rulership was in direct conflict with democratic ideals as the system was personalized and ascriptive had gained considerable momentum. After independence, the political elites continued to make effort to further reduce the influence of traditional rulers in the decision-making process at the local level. At independence, and the period up to 1966 when the military seized power, the democratization effort had a great deal of adverse effect on the traditional rulers in the decision-making process at the local level in Eastern and Western Regions. In most parts of the Northern Region however, the Emirs were still in control of their Councils as the democratization effort appeared to be neutralized by the overwhelming influence the Emirs wielded. By January 15, 1966 when the military seized power, much of the power or influence wielded by traditional rulers throughout the country was greatly conditioned by which side of the political fence they sat or faced.

The take-over of political power by the military in 1966 had a great deal of implications for traditional rulers in relation to local government in the country. In the Northern States between 1966 and 1972 Customary/Native Courts were taken over by state governments, and Prisons and Police were taken over by the Federal Government. Further, the nomenclature of Native Authority was dropped and the existing Native Authorities balkanized into independent local government units. New provisions were introduced for election of two-thirds of the membership of the Local Government Councils. In the case of western states (including Mid-west), before the advent of the military in 1966, the role of traditional rulers in the operation of local governments had been essentially ceremonial. The situation was the same in parts of the Eastern States where there was the existence of the institution of traditional rulership. In the northern part of the country, the Emirs were still influential in the decision-making process at the local level.

At the terminal phase of the Mohammed/Obasanjo regime in 1979, the Federal Military Government in consultation with State Governments attempted to institute a uniform role for traditional rulers throughout the length and breadth of the country vide the 1976 Local Government Reform. Traditional Rulers were insulated from politics and formally assigned advisory roles in the decision-making process at the local level through Traditional/Emirate Councils. The advice of the traditional rulers is not binding on the democratically elected local government actors.

The effect of the uniform advisory role for the traditional rulers was obviously more felt in the North, because in this part of the country, traditional rulers still played a significant role in the decision making process at the local level. The strongest opposition to these reforms came from the traditional rulers in the Northern part of the country. For the traditional rulers in the South-West and South-East of the country, their being assigned advisory role by the 1976 Reform was only stating in black and white' what has been their role for well over a decade. Thus, it will not be out of place to concur with those who contend that the problem of Traditional Rulers is more of a *northern problem* as it is in this part of the country that the existence of dual authority structure, the traditional and the secular is very pronounced. In the country at large however, the crux of the problem has to do with the degree of decision-making prominence which government could give to ascriptive dynastic traditional rulers in the context of a gradually evolving local government system directed at popular representation, citizen participation and mobilization, and placing them as informed observers and ceremonial participants in matters of local government (Adewumi & Egwurube 1985:31).

After the inception of the 1979 Constitution, Traditional Rulers were very critical of the fact that the constitution was silent on the role of Traditional Rulers at the local government level. Traditional Rulers, particularly those in the North were far from being contented with the advisory/ceremonial role assigned to them. The degree of decision –making prominence Traditional Rulers could be given in the context of a system of local government by democratically elected local government councils guaranteed by the constitution was the subject of heated debates during the Second Republic. These debates did not quite concretize before the military seized power in December, 1983.

Perhaps in response to the call by Traditional Rulers for constitutional recognition of their role in local government, the 1989 Constitution spelt out the functions of a Traditional Council at the local government level. Critically speaking, this development cannot be regarded as an enhancement of their role in local government affairs. The 1999 Constitution does not contain the functions of traditional authorities.

Integrating Traditional Rulers Into Local Governance in Nigeria

The role of traditional rulers in the emergent local government system:

Having catalogued the historical antecedents that have led to the present status of traditional rulers in the country, the next important area of examination would be the extent to which traditional authorities and local governments have co-existed in achieving the objectives of the contemporary local government system in the country. What is obvious from the foregoing is that, it is the local governments that would have to play the leading role in the emergent order. It is also obvious that traditional rulers are still very vital to the attainment of economic progress and political stability at the local level. The continued relevance of traditional authorities to the local government system in contemporary Nigeria as Egwurube rightly noted may be attributed to the following reasons among others. Firstly, participant political culture among majority of the citizenry, especially in the rural areas is still very dormant. Secondly, traditional authorities are still very much legitimate in the eyes of majority of the citizenry. A third reason is the failure of attempts so far to institutionalize alternative local leadership structures in the form of modern, stable and elected local government institutions which would eventually receive the overall acceptance of the citizenry. It follows therefore that, both institutions which essentially have a local base, must complement the efforts of each other for effective governance at the local level.

To ensure that this is achieved, efforts have been made to clearly state the working relationship between the Traditional Authorities and Local Government in the country. In spite of this, there are frictions, and the existence of peaceful and fruitful co-existence between both institutions is very much in doubt. Two major reasons may be attributed to this state of affairs. On one hand, the Traditional Rulers themselves especially those who were very prominent and powerful in the past are disillusioned with the present political arrangement which assigns them only nominal and advisory roles in local government affairs. Their disillusionment is an open secret in the country. A number of traditional rulers have expressed their views in this regard in seminars and conferences on traditional authorities and local government relations. Prominent traditional rulers such as the Oba of Benin and the Alafin of Oyo have on various occasions vehemently expressed their dissatisfaction with how traditional institutions and their rulers have been relegated to the background over the years.

Not too surprisingly, concerted efforts by traditional rulers to enhance their role in the local government affairs and in the macro-political set-up have pre-occupied them more than anything else. This posture has greatly affected their interest in and contribution to the effectiveness of local government under the present dispensation. It is but natural that, unless one has a high degree of contentment with the role he is assigned in any set-up, the best from him cannot be expected. Unfortunately, this has been the position in the case of Traditional Rulers.

On the other hand, there is a great deal of insensitivity of modern elected local government actors to the ego of tradition rulers. Even though they are assigned advisory roles, relevant provisions are not respected to the letter. Section 47 of Part VIII of the defunct Bendel State Traditional Rulers and Chiefs Edict, 1979, for example lists out among other things the following functions for the Traditional Councils at the Local Government level.

- a) Formulation of general proposals by way of advice to the Local Government or to all local governments in the area.
- b) Harmonization and co-ordination of development plans of such local governments by joint discussions and advice.
- c) To assist in the maintenance of law and order.

Further, under the same Edict, the Secretary to the local government is required to furnish the President of the Traditional Council with copies of all minutes of meeting of the Local Government Council, copies of all agenda, memoranda and such other documents and information as would enable the President to be fully conversant with all proceedings of the Local Government Councils. The President is also conferred with the privileges of inspecting all books, including minute books of the Local Government Council or Councils where there are two or more local government councils under his jurisdiction to enable him obtain sufficient information for full and efficient discharge of the functions conferred on him under the Edict.

The Traditional Rulers have complained on many occasions that, because the role envisaged for them under the Edict is advisory, the Local Government actors see the implementation of these provisions as inconsequential in the actual functioning of the local government and as such, an unnecessary burden. This situation has further alienated traditional rulers from the activities of local governments. In effect, what has emerged in place of the envisaged co-existence between traditional rulers and Local Governments is a sad paradoxical situation. On one hand, the traditional rulers are dissatisfied with their present advisory role and this has obviously had a negative effect on their contribution under the present dispensation. On the other hand, the modern local government actors themselves seem to portray the fact that the role of traditional rulers in governance in whatever form is an unnecessary burden. This is all the more disturbing when one considers the fact that a huge amount of public money is spent by state and local governments on the traditional councils all over the country which are dissatisfied with their assigned role and which the Local Government actors attempt to exclude from participation in the affairs of local government (Akinwalere 2003:31).

Resolving the tradition/modernity nexus

In the pre-colonial era, as well as substantial part of the colonial era, traditional authorities played a significant and active role in the governance and development of local government and today the very essence of the institution is being questioned. The issue of relevance of traditional

Integrating Traditional Rulers Into Local Governance in Nigeria

authorities in the country's modernizing polity is a highly controversial one, as there are divergent opinions and interest. Egwurube identifies three schools of thought in this regard (Ekong, 1985:107).

There is a school of thought which contends that the institution of traditional rulership is an anachronism and as such should be abolished. The protagonists of this school of thought argue that a system of local government by democratically elected local government council guaranteed under Section 7(1) of the 1979, 1989 and 1999 Constitutions and the existence of the institution of the traditional rulership side by side is anomalous. While one envisages a competitive and participatory process, the other is a system based on authoritarian, personalized and ascriptive tradition. The supporters of this school of thought conclude that, if the country is serious about ensuring that the citizenry imbibes the democratic and participatory culture needed to quicken the pace of the modernization of the polity, then a decisive step needs to be taken to "jettison this archaic institution once and for all" to enable the people develop the required orientation in line with the reality of the present age and time (Ayeni 1985).

While the abolitionists have a point in their contention that the principle behind democratic local government and the institution of traditional rulership are opposed to each other, the solution advanced by them does not appear realistic. For one thing, the high degree of acceptance of majority of the citizenry particularly in the rural areas enjoyed by traditional authorities cannot be dismissed with a wave of the hand as inconsequential, nor will be abolition of the institution of traditional rulership obliterate their legitimacy and high degree of acceptance in the eyes of the people that easily. On the other hand, the abolitionist solution which is obviously confrontational is certain to lead to chaos in the operations of local governments in the country (Egwurube, 1985: 231-232).

It must be admitted that, perhaps sometimes in the distant future when the polity is fully modernized, there may be no need for the institution of Traditional Rulership. However, at this modernizing stage, it is desirable to handle the issues relating to traditional authorities with utmost caution and tact, if the objective of achieving a democratic, stable and durable local government system is to be achieved.

A second school of thought contends that traditional rulers should be allowed to participate in politics to enhance their political position in the present scheme of things. The protagonists of the school envisaged a situation where traditional rulers could engage in politics at the local level and thus effectively contribute their quota to the well-being of the citizenry.

The adoption of this strategy is bound to be clouded with a number of difficulties Section 7(1) of both the 1979, 1989 and 1999 Constitutions guaranteed a system of local government by democratically elected local government councils and as such does not envisage any active role for personalized and ascriptive institutions in the operation of government at the local level. Part II of the Fourth Schedule of the 1989 Constitution (the 1999 Constitution has no provisions in this regard) set out the functions of a

Traditional Council at the local government level. The second clause the Schedule clearly states that *nothing in the schedule shall be construed as conferring any executive, legislative and judicial powers on a Traditional Council*. The chances that the constitution will be amended to reflect the political enhancement solution are very slim. The high degree of legitimacy traditional rulers record in the eyes of the citizenry is based on the belief that the institution of traditional rulership is a sacred one. Subjecting traditional authorities to rigors of the electoral process and the pettiness which is associated with politics in our society would not only make them a target of public scrutiny, but also would destroy their sacredness thereby destroying their major source of strength. While the intention of this school of thought is to carve out a prominent role in governance at the Local Government level for traditional authorities, their strategy may in fact lead to the collapse of the institution of traditional rulership in the country.

The middle-path school of thought in the continuum of the abolitionists and the political enhancement school is the retentionist school of thought. The protagonists of this school of thought favour the retention of the traditional authorities as participatory local government actors in advisory and non-executive capacities. The adoption of the retentionist strategy as Egwurube rightly observed would not only ensure stability and continuity of the emergent local government system based on democratic and participatory principles, but would at the same time tap the strength of traditional authorities in the sphere of citizen mobilization and acceptance of local government policies. The involvement of traditional rulers in this way in local government affairs in addition to other ceremonial functions would mitigate to a great extent the possibility of acrimony and confrontation between local government actors and Traditional Authorities in the country. While the retentionist strategy may well serve the need of the present time, the future of Traditional Rulership would depend on its adaptability to its ecological setting and how ingenious it modernized to constantly maintain a balance between reconciliation with modernity and obliteration of tradition as (Ayeni 1985: xxxviii).

The retentionist postulation is in sharp contrast to the radical policy alternatives adopted in some other developing countries. In the African continent for example, there were cases of outright legal abolition of Traditional Authorities as was the case in Guinea in 1957, Burundi in 1960, Mali in 1961, Rwanda in 1962 and Zaire in 1973 (Bamidele 1985:32). India, after initially opting for the retentionist policy, switched over to the abolitionist strategy. By way of abolition of Zamindari (Feudal) institutions through the Land Reform Policy, and later, abolition of privy purses, India tried to strike at the roots of feudalism.

In all these countries, what is evident is that the system got smashed, but not wiped out. The splintered particles of the smashed system still float freely in the macro and micro political processes. The experience shows that even in a delegitimized state, they have proved to be a force to be reckoned with at different levels of the polity. Outwardly exhibiting democratic

Integrating Traditional Rulers Into Local Governance in Nigeria

pretensions, they continue to display feudal orientations and exploit traditional bases for leadership in various aspects of social life. They have had a continued sway at the grassroots level of body politic. Their activism has had adverse implications for the growth of genuine democracy as well as political modernization. Nigeria should adopt the mellowed retentionist policy in the face of the radical abolitionist measures taken in the countries listed above. Instead of allowing traditional functionaries to exercise corrosive influence clandestinely, it is better to clothe them formally with legitimacy. While disallowing their active involvement in party politics, they can be used as honorific agents of transition from traditionalism to modernism. Perhaps realizing the futility of the abolitionist strategy, countries like Senegal in 1960, Upper Volta in 1964, the Central African Republic in 1959, Cameroon in 1959 and 1966, and Congo-Brazzaville in 1967, attempted to adapt traditional institutions to their contemporary political and administrative framework.

CONCLUSION

There is no gain saying that change is a permanent feature of any political system and the manner change is managed determines the effectiveness of the system to subserve the citizenry. In Nigeria, traditional rulers still record a high degree of legitimacy in the eyes of the populace. There is the need to tap on this and integrate the institution into the contemporary local government system in the country. It is instructive to note that while China's economy is being modernized, some elements of traditional society—such as family and clan bonds, village life and culture, traditional indigenous interpersonal relationships and daily routines that were previously viewed as obstructive to modernization are now actually being strengthened. Through the combined efforts of both regional governments and local communities, these elements are propelling the modernization of rural societies as is the case with the development of tourism through the use of tribal activities and ancestral or local deity worship to attract investors and to increase the intensity of economic modernization (Yuanxing 2009). The goal of modernization is to generate a rapid increase in social wealth and its driving force is economic development. Traditional rulers in Nigeria are in vantage position to contribute to this goal, and as such should not be jettisoned. The recent effort of the Nigerian Senate to fashion out constitutional role for traditional rulers is timely and in the right direction (Vanguard 2012:6).

REFERENCES

- Adewumi, J.B. & Egwurube, J. (1985). *The Roles of Traditional Rulers in Local Government: Historical Perspective in Aborisode O.* (Ed.): *Local Government and Traditional Rulers in Nigeria.* Ile-Ife. Unife Press.
- Afigbo, A.E. (1972). *The Warrant Chiefs.* London. Longman.
- Akinwalere, D. (2003). *Why Local Governments Must Be Retained.* Lagos. Vanguard Newspapers.
- Bendel State of Nigeria (1979). *Traditional Rulers and Chiefs Edict.* Benin City. Government Printers.
- Ciaffa J.A. (2008). *Tradition and Modernity in Post-Colonial African Philosophy.* *Humanitas* 1(2): 22-29.
- Egwurube, J. (1985). *Traditional Rulers and Local Government under the 1979 Nigeria Constitution in Aborisode, O.* (Ed.) *Local Government and Traditional Rulers in Nigeria.* Ile-Ife. Unife Press.
- Ekong, E.E. (1985). *Traditional Rulership in Contemporary Nigeria in Aborisode, O.* (Ed.): *Local Government and Traditional Rulers in Nigeria.* Ile-Ife. Unife Press.
- Eze, E. (1997). *Response to Wiredu in Postcolonial African Philosophy.* Cambridge. Blackwell.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 Constitution, Lagos. Federal Government Printers.
- Gyekye, K. (1987). *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought.* Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Gyekye, K. (1997). *Tradition and Modernity.* New York. Oxford University Press.
- Hountondji, P. (1996). *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality.* 2nd ed. Bloomington. Indiana University Press.
- Mosley, A. (2000). *Science, Technology and Tradition in Contemporary African Philosophy.* *African Philosophy* 13(1): 25-32.
- Ola, R.F. and D.A. Tonwe (2009). *Local Administration and Local Government in Nigeria.* Lagos. Amfitop Books.
- Ola, R.F. (1983). *Local Administration in Nigeria.* London. Kegan Paul International.
- Owomoyela, O. (1991). *Africa and the Imperative of Philosophy: A Skeptical Consideration in African Philosophy: The Essential Readings,* edited by Tsenay Serequeberhan. New York. Paragon House.
- Tempels, P. (1995). *Bantu Philosophy in African Philosophy, Selected Readings,* edited by Albert Mosley (ed.), New York. Prentice Hall.
- Vanguard, May 22, 2012, *Senate Debates Constitutional Role for Traditional Rulers.*
- Whitaker C.S. (1990). *The Politics of Tradition, Continuity, and Change in Northern Nigeria,* New Jersey. Princeton University Press.

Integrating Traditional Rulers Into Local Governance in Nigeria

- Wiredu, K. ((1995). How Not to Compare African Thought with Western Thought in African Philosophy: Selected Readings, edited by Albert Mosley. New York. Prentice Hall.
- Wiredu, K. (1997). Democracy and Consensus in African Traditional Politics in Postcolonial African Philosophy in E. G. Eze (eds.). Gambridge. Blackwell.
- Wiredu, K. (2004). ed., A Companion to African Philosophy. Oxford. Blackwell.
- Wiredu, K. (1998). On Decolonising African Religion in The African Philosophy Reader, P. H. Goetzee and A. P. J. Roux (eds.), New York. Routledge.
- Yuanxing, L. (2009). Revival of Tradition or Modernism?: The Perspective of Subjectivity in the Study of Modernization Theory and Critique of the Fuctionalist Approach. Chinnese Study in History 3(1): 43-56.