

Contemporary African Politics: A Synthesis of Tradition and Modernity

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Abstract

Politics, as defined by ancient philosophers, entails the art of managing the city in such a way that citizens enjoy peace, growth and prosperity in their activities. This goal was greatly pursued in traditional African societies and the attendant benefits were bare for all to note. When compared with the contemporary practice of politics in Africa, one observes that there are real differences that exist among indigenous socio-political system. However, despite these differences, there still exist common traits that give them the collective African identity. This paper attempts to undertake a cursory look at the traditional African political system and further make efforts at examining how it fared during the pre-colonial era and how this has impacted on the contemporary mode of African politics. The paper concludes that aspect of African political system remains an inspiration and guidance, which has strong impact on the African psyche. Hence, instead of being overwhelmingly subjugated under the dab of modernity, specific aspects of the traditional political system can be synthesized within the contemporary frame towards ensuring the continued promotion of equality, freedom and unity in the political space.

Keywords: *Africa, culture, modern, politics, tradition*

Introduction

There are varieties of African indigenous sociopolitical systems which have their origins in the enormous ethnic, cultural linguistic and historical diversity within Africa. For instance, there were societies in Africa that based the holding of political power on the mechanism of kinship. Some political systems incorporated the notion that positions of authority should be inherited. Others insisted that political power should be earned. Still, others felt that political power should be shared by various interest groups within the society. Some African political systems upheld the view that political power belongs to one group within a society - a class, or even a racial caste, some democratic and others despotic. Some place great reliance on religious authority to guide the destiny of the political ruler; others were more nearly secular.

The diversity of indigenous African political forms and the basic pluralism that characterized African political thought in its traditional setting is both manifest and considerable. Despite colonial patterns superimposed on

African societies and the artificial grid that resulted from the partitioning of the continent as observed by Otubanjo (1989), the African heritage remains a significant factor which influences the course of politics today. Without any doubt, the importance of traditional African political forms and traditional political thought are some of the most overlooked themes in African political discourse today. Both the inherent pluralism of African traditional forms and the community of other persistent issues like relevance of integrating the past (tradition) with the present (modernity) in African contemporary politics would suggest that there is a great deal more to be examined and analyzed before a coherent and perspicacious position can be arrived at. In a nutshell, this is the task that this article has set out to undertake.

African Traditional Politics

Ways of living in sub-Saharan Africa varied from region to region. Often even those living near each other have different ways of organizing their families. Their languages were different and the gods they worshipped had unique local identities. Each ethnic group had its own tradition about ancestors who had founded the families that make up the group. In the view of Perry (1974), structures of governments also differ from country to country and from one society to another. Some ethnic groups were not organized into states at all; for them the unifying ties were religion and kinship (family).

However, many, especially in West Africa, did have states with definite boundaries, a ruling class of secret societies, and military leaders. The rulers were responsible for stability and order within their lands, and for protection against invasion. They were the links to the ancestors who sought for the ethnic group. Many parts of eastern and southern Africa did not have large states. Each ethnic group had a major, indeed, a royal lineage. Headship always came from the royal lineage, and its close relations held other high offices or were members of his council. Generally, leadership in traditional Africa revolved around ancestral worship. The role of the leader was thus central to important religious beliefs. This formed the philosophy and ideology of African states.

Taking a cursory look at the origin of the Yoruba who inhabit most of the South-Western part of Nigeria as an example, Basil Davidson's account of the story is very explicit and compelling:

When God decided to make a homeland for mankind..., He sent down from Heaven a powerful spirit... to create the Earth. This archangel, *Orishanla*, managed to work in four days, appointing the fifth for worship and rest... Having created the earth, God began to people it with mankind beginning with Yorubaland... the first men and women....

were born at Ife. *Orishanla*... shared the work of ordering the earth with other spirits... prominent among these was Oduduwa (who) became the first King of Ife. From Ife his children went out to become kings and queens of other sections of the Yoruba (Davidson, 1962:116-117).

Similar myths of creation abound on the African continent. Schapera cited in Otubanjo (1989) reports that the Zulu believe that "Unkulunku (the high god) created man, food, fire and marriage and then said: Let there be blacks and chiefs, and the chief be known by his people". Among the Nyoro of the Bunyoro-Kitara Kingdom in western Uganda, it was Ruhanga, which according to Beattie cited in Otubanjo, (1989:7) is the word commonly used for God, who created the earth and the first family from which the Nyoro stock blossomed.

Ruhanga created the sun, night, and the moon, a fowl (to announce the day), grass and trees (to build houses with and to carve utensils), tools (knife, axe and hammer), sheep and cattle, guards and fire to cook with.

African political philosophy, particularly of the centralized states, was wrapped in the myths of origins of the people. Although it might be difficult to determine the accuracy of these myths, it becomes very clear that they located social groups and determined the content and form of government. The concern here is to demonstrate that they represented a significant social reality namely a mythical character for the Kingdom (or people) to which they referred and acted as a cohesive factor that bounded the people together.

Although he was absolute in theory, the chief only rarely acted as an autocrat. In many groups, "he not only was advised by a small council, but also submitted policies to general discussion among the men, who could even criticize the chief during debate. But there were no votes, and at the end they proclaimed the sense of the meeting" Hembe (1997). This practice gave him literally the last word though if disagreements were serious enough; any of the following could result: some chiefs could be assassinated, and sometimes civil wars could break out as exemplified in the work of Akinlade *Chaka the Zulu* first published in 1973. At other times, a part of the group could break away.

In all, Africa has been very important as a productive force which also shapes the political direction. In the traditions of each ethnic group, the early ancestors laid claim to the land with the approval of the gods of the earth, and thus gave their descendants inalienable rights over the land and its use. The head of a "family" was the guardian of that part of the tribal land assigned to it. Nkrumah rightly asserts that:

The political maturity of the African masses may to some extent be traced to economic and social patterns of traditional times. Under com-

munalism, for example, all land as means of production belonged to the community. There was people's ownership. Labour was the need and habit of all. When a certain piece of land was allocated to an individual for his personal use, he was not free to do as he liked with it since it still belonged to the community, chiefs were strictly controlled by counsellors and were removable (Nkrumah, 1970:13).

This land was not only for the use of the living generation but was held "in trust" for generation yet to come. The land was sacred because it connected the living to their ancestors, gave them food, and determined their way of life, including political direction.

Different institutions of government were in existence in traditional African societies. According to Coleman (1986:19), they can be identified and analyzed based on their modes of operation, and they include (i) large-scale state, (ii) centralized chiefdoms, (iii) dispersed tribal societies, and (iv) small autonomous local communities.

1. The first type is admirably exemplified by the Hausa-Fulani emirates of Northern Nigeria. Here one finds a political elite of alien origin exercising continuous administrative and judicial control on a territorial basis through explicit governmental institutions possessing a monopoly of military force, and supported by systematic taxation. The territorial and class structures of the society were developed to the point that kinship structure was completely disassociated from the political system. The elites were buttressed in its power by Islam. Although this, political pattern is found in its most developed form in Northern Nigeria, (for example, the Borno empire, the Sokoto caliphate) its general features were characteristics of the several historic kingdoms and emirates of the western Sudan, and with certain variations, it is found in other states elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa. (Oliver & Fage, 1975).

2. The second type, the centralized chiefdom was common throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Although societies of this type differed enormously in scale, political power and prerogatives tended to be concentrated in the hands of hereditary chiefly lineage or clan, usually that of the original leader of the nuclear community (i.e. ruling group which has conquered and finally amalgamated other people mostly of foreign stocks) or that of the chief of the first people to occupy what later became the tribal homeland. Thus, in origin centralized chiefdoms emerged from amalgamation of a number of different ethnic groups into one state through conquest by a ruling group or from the growth of a single tribe largely of one stock under a single chiefly family. In both instances, the ruling elite were recruited from the descendants of

the royal lineage or clan and all other clans within the group were ranked in order of precedence, depending upon their relationship to the royal lineage. In fact the group frequently depended on the continued predominance of the ruling elite. The centralized chiefdoms were not necessarily autocratic; rather there frequently existed a variety of countervailing forces which acted as checks on the arbitrary exercise of authority. Religious officials were among the several institutionalized restraints upon autocracy. Examples of centralized chiefdoms are the Yoruba states and the Benin kingdoms in Nigeria (Davidson, Buah, F.K., & Ajayi, J.F.A, 1965).

3. The political system of dispersed tribal societies is distinguished from the two preceding types, not by the size of the group concerned, like the Tiv of central Nigeria or the Nuer of Sudan, which may number in the hundreds of thousands, but had no central organs of government or any political individual or institution, such as a royal lineage which represented and reflected the unit of the society as a whole (Hembe, 1997). The largest political unit, in the sense of continuous submission of political leadership, may have been no larger than the compound or the village community. As the Bohannans, cited in Okere (2007:8), point out "the only Tiv group of which one could say 'there must be someone responsible' was the compound." Yet within societies of this type there was a variety of institutionalized forms of cooperation and linkages operating to maintain a sense of unity among the population as a whole. These included the assumption of common descent from the one original ancestor, the existence of recognized ad-hoc procedures for the arbitration of disputes between different sub-groups, tradition of kinship, pan-ethnic associations such as age-grade associations, related religious dogmas, and common ceremonial rites. Among the Ibo, Mudimbe (1988:52) has shown that "beneath the apparent fragmentation of authority lay deep fundamental units not only in the religious and cultural spheres, but also in matters of politics and economics". The integrative and stabilizing factors as these societies was not a super-ordinate administrative, judicial, or military structure, but simply the fact of, or assumption of common and the ensemble of intra-group relations. The different levels of the society rather than in hierarchical, continuously functioning structures and institutions.

4. The forth type, the autonomous local community was distinguished from the dispersed tribal society primarily by its small size and the fact that even though it had cultural relations with adjacent groups it remained a distinguishable cultural and political entity. Fortes and Evans-Pritchard cited in Perham (1962:16) described this type "as one in which even the largest political unit embraces a group of people all of whom are united to one another by ties of kinship relations and the political structure and kinship organiza-

tion are completely fused". It is a type which existed throughout sub-Saharan Africa, frequently found in the interstice between societies of the other three types. The scores of small ethnic groups found in the middle belt of Nigeria and the swamp areas of Zamia are representative of this type of system.

It is important to distinguish these four types of traditional political culture not only to emphasize Africa's diversity, but also because such cultural variants help to explain the differential response of traditional societies to the impact of modernity as well as recent and contemporary efforts to create large-scale territorial political system. The different patterns of response and adaptation have also been partly determined by policies of colonial authorities towards the traditional political systems.

There are many other classifications of the types of indigenous African political systems which, for the purpose of this work, need not be discussed here. Suffice it to point out that in all the classification, the major emphasis is on the centralized and non-centralized political systems as earlier highlighted in the introduction. The organization and operation of these indigenous systems were guided by certain themes of which some shall be briefly discussed largely because of their scale of importance in this article.

Communalism

Communalism is one of the ancient African modes of human society. Igwe (2002) maintained that it was the first stable experience of organized society; a post-wandering bands system. Communalism breaks the shackles of wandering band by a contradiction that was generated by the system itself ushering in the stable communal mode. It was a social system with its peculiar culture and tradition, and in modern times, also a pseudo-political ideology, usually masterminded by those affirming, the African and other traditional origins or foundations of forms of socialism, and who advocate a just and egalitarian society on the basis of a communalism translated in the needs of modernity. The communal ownership of property created a team spirit which gave society the abilities and capability in successes recorded in most of the African societies.

The basis of communalism was the common ownership of virtually all the means of production (including distribution and exchange). In ancient times, when nature still exercised a nearly total influence upon man, the means of production were crude and under-developed, and there was almost no concept of private property. Be that as it may, the ownership in common of the land, river, mines and so in, was consistent with social reality. Most of the family and the entire clan lived communally together, worked the farms in common, fished together and distributed to each according to need and

availability. With this sustained and corporate existence, societal harmony was considerably maintained. Igwe (2002:77) avers thus:

...it means that there was no exploitation of man by man under communalism. This absence of exploitation, despite that it was equality in adversity, constituted one of the primary reasons for the seeming nostalgia over communalism expressed by many African socialists such as Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere. The belief also arose by some Marxist theoreticians and communist that such a comprehensive common ownership was possible in an advanced industrial age, upon the assumption that the working class, peasants etc. would inevitably slide with the objective certainly; survivals of communalism still exist in the conduct of many African societies...

African societies associated with this communal theme during the ancient period and can also be identified in recent times among Ibo, Tiv in Nigeria and Nuer in Sudan. According to Pawa (2007), the communal modes in Nigeria shared almost common features. The Ibo in the east and Tiv in the north central Nigeria in various dimensions had cooperative ownership of land, appropriation of nature was by collective labour and there was no surplus because production was for subsistence. This corresponded with the flexible unstructured role of their village heads. There was no legitimate and tolerated dominance of both political and economic instances, the societies were egalitarian.

Essentially, the existence of gerontocratic cohesion with village democracy depended largely on this corporatization of the mode. The surviving Ama-ala, council of elder, oracles (e.g. the Arochukwu oracle) and age grades among the Ibo, the Orya, Ijir, Kwav, Akombo among Tiv all prevail at the co-operative instance. The seeming heads were non-authoritarian and could not impose order on any kinsmen (Bohannan and Bohannan 1968, Mair 1962) cited in (Pawa 2007).

Religion

If religion is defined as a set of beliefs and practices related to moral behaviour on earth and to life after death, then each African society developed its own distinctive version. Despite the diversity, several common themes are fairly widespread. One is the belief in a creator, who brings the universe into being and then departs, perhaps to the sky or to some distance place like a mountain top.

Another form of communalism involves the importance of ancestor. Death does not end one's existence; rather it moves one to a non-earthly realm to congregate with those who have gone before and those who will come af-

ter. Various rituals, including sacrifices, are conducted to honour and placate ancestors, to ensure that they help rather than cause trouble for the living. This is often referred to as “ancestors worship” which is a misnomer. It is not so much worship of ancestors as it is recognition of the importance of community past, present and future. A third communality is the presence of religious specialists, including rainmakers, healers, diviners, and priests, represented in various proportions depending on the African society in question.

Yet, another common element is the pervasiveness of religion in everyday life. Storytelling and ceremonies such as name giving, initiation and marriage. Indigenous religions remain widely practised throughout sub-Saharan Africa. In many countries, adherents to indigenous belief systems make up more than 20 percent of the population, and in some notably Liberia, Benin, Sierra Leone, Central African Republic and Mozambique.

Gerontocracy

One of the persistent themes in Africa political and social thought is the assumption that age and wisdom are correlated. Virtually every society in Africa, irrespective of the political system and location, maintained that age conferred wisdom and there was something special about the administrative acumen of an older person. Particularly in segmented systems and especially in peace-time setting, the role of the older was considerable. They were saddled with the responsibility of settling domestic quarrels to setting public policy, the older men within any society exercise political power all out of proportion to their members. Indeed, a large portion of the output, at least in terms of decision making, of any given system was attributed to the elders.

This can be explained from the way traditional African societies developed as communities of families. Even when they collectively expand, kinship images were of paramount importance in determining social ranks.

Africa in the Process of Change

In the view of the above analysis African society tends to raise scepticism in certain quarters, especially with regard to the concept of Africa in contemporary times. The issue here is whether we can justifiably talk about African society and, hence, African culture and African politics in the context of contemporary changes. The underlying idea is that as a result of the cultural change in Africa, especially during the last 100 years, ‘Africinity’ is undergoing a process of erosion. An extreme position is that we cannot have a viable existence of the African given the overwhelming impact of alien element leading to what is perceived as a collapse of traditional culture and of traditional ethics. The impact of globalization whose propelling cultural and eco-

conomic elements is predominantly alien (especially European) and tends to be hegemonic enhances this scepticism.

The viability of the African, however, can be justified in the sense that we can still talk of a continuity of the African cultural context despite the change, though the essence and intensity of this content cannot be established with certainty. In fact, African culture and ethics did not collapse. Instead they lost their intrinsic importance in people's thinking and assumed a peripheral role in the event of colonization and its attendant cultural impingement. Culture was viewed as the source which nourished all human activity in traditional society. At the same time all human activity in the social context was viewed as having an ethical end, namely, that it would not only be good in itself but beneficial to the community as a whole, in the sense of enhancing the community's wellbeing, such as cohesion and prosperity. Today, as we realize the gaps of modernization, especially its de-emphasis of the traditional (in fact, traditional and modernity are perceived as contradictory terms, and culture as to modernization), we revisit the past in order to develop the conceptual paradigms and find for modernization a strong ethical context, hence, the contemporary critical investigation of values and culture, a kind of culture renaissance, is a question for cultural and ethical renewal.

The contemporary debate recognizes not only the persistence and relevance of traditional thought and values to the contemporary milieu, but also the importance of a critical study and evaluation of the concepts and values. They are central to traditional thought as they underlie human culture and play a significant role in influencing change and thought in contemporary Africa society. The influence, nevertheless, often tends to be subtle and not easily noticeable. Indeed, such concepts and values constitute the background to the spectrum of human experience, not only the African. This renaissance, however, is not only an academic appreciation. One notices also a call for a cultural renewal in the general society, which reflects an apparent doubt regarding the capacity of modernization without a culture enhancing human well-being. It is indeed, this society's perception of the continuity and relevance of culture that nourishes the scholar's perception of the persistence and relevance of traditional thought in the contemporary milieu, placing interest on ethical concerns.

We may call this continuity of the traditional identity the empirical aspect of human society relations in the traditional African society. It is an abstract or conceptual framework that underlies its continued existence and has given meaning and sense to the relations. This mental or spiritual heritage in which the community is rooted, (Oruka and Masolo, 1983) refer to an implicit ethics. It is implicit because it is not expressed and formulated in defini-

tive form. But it has considerable influence on the people who belong to the culture, guiding and giving sense to the human society relations. As people undergo change in the different aspects of their life certain basic conceptions also persist and these constitute their heritage. It is in this sense that we can talk of an African ethical heritage in contemporary times. However, when we try to understand this ethical heritage, it is important to distinguish it from custom, especially given the tendency to view African ethics and Africa custom as synonymous. Whereas customs may be defined as the cultural norms of the society, ethic is the human social relations to which the cultural norms make contribution. The idea of ethics in integrating traditional African society may be obvious: the same clarity may not obtain with regards to ethnic in the contemporary African society.

Some however, would object to the idea of African ethics in a generalized sense, referring to Africa as a single entity encompassing the whole ethnic range of the traditional African society. Wiredu (1977) and Gyekye (1987) among others have written extensively about the reality of common features across the ethnic diversity and, in the perspective of ethic, stressed the sense of communalism and its pervasiveness in each of the ethnic entities and in the different aspects of the African society such as religion, art, and music. But Appiah, (1992) Hountondji, and Masolo (1997) would deny this unity and its implied conceptual communality. The denial of universals or communalities across the ethnic diversity is a relativistic view of human society.

Probably Hountondji (1983) and Masolo (1997) would deny the notion of African religion in the singular sense rather than African religions, African arts, etc, and by implication, the notion of (traditional) African society. In fact, Masolo (1997) suggests that this generalization of an African identity, like most universals, is not real because it does not reflect the social experience of single subject; presumably assume that by subject he refers to human beings.

The Christian Onslaught

Perhaps there has been no more effective agent in the destabilization of the past tradition of African culture than Christianity, itself whose frontal and total war on the traditional religion has led to the collapse of a well-wrought and integrated system of belief was alone true, as missionaries kept insisting (a claim which seemed to be supported by the impressive wizard of power, science, technology and material wealth associated with the new religion) the familiar gods of the traditional pantheon were forever discredited. They were even demoralized as evil agents of the devil, a monster, till then, yet unknown.

The undermining of belief in the traditional gods was a devastating

rout that shock more than confidence. It led to the collapse of whole philosophic, theological, moral and social systems. It would reduce to meaningless and absurdity the panoply of beings, agent and factors that gave sense and purpose to life, (Perham 1962). It would lead to the destruction of the prospective mantle of the gods over society and the individual, and to the loss of validity in their sacred sanction in the moral sphere. The other guardians of morality, the sacred ancestors, were unmasked as false imposters and their mystique and powers would come to be looked upon as myths woven out of ignorance, magic and fear.

Education as a Vehicle for Change from Past to Contemporary Society

Education which was the missionaries' second and most eagerly accepted gift was bound to sap the fundamental beliefs upon which all important native institutions rested. Since the new education seemed to hold the key to the knowledge that gave real power and competence, the children and young rather than their illiterate parents, had access to this. This, in itself helped to upset the traditional order in which old age was synonymous with wisdom and youth with ignorance, and in which the old were superior to the young by virtue of the wisdom and prestige which age and experience had conferred on them (i.e. gerontocracy). As Perham, (1962) observes, this role reversal and loss of authority and prestige by the older generation had destroyed and ended the very idea of tradition.

The underlying idea is that as a result of the cultural change in Africa, especially during the last 150 years so to say, Africanity has undergone a process of erosion. An extreme position which threatened the viable existence of the African given the overwhelming impact of alien elements: leading to what is perceived as a collapse of traditional culture and of traditional ethics. The impact of globalization, whose propelling cultural and economic, elements are predominantly alien (essentially European) and tend to be hegemonic, enhances this scepticism.

It is imperative to note that, the viability of the African, however, can be justified in the sense that, we can still talk of a continuity of the African cultural content despite the change, though the essence and intensity of this content cannot be established with certainty. In fact, African culture and ethics did not collapse. Instead they lost their intrinsic importance in the people's thinking and assumed a peripheral role in the events of colonization and its attendant cultural impingement, culture was viewed as the source which nourished all human activity in traditional society, at the same time all human activity in the social context was viewed as having an ethical end,

namely, that it would not only be good in itself but beneficial to the community's well-being, such as cohesion and prosperity. Today, as we realize the gaps of modernization, especially its de-emphasis of the traditional (in fact, traditional and modernity are perceived as contradictory terms, and culture as inimical to modernization), we revisit the past in order to develop new conceptual paradigms and find for modernization as strong ethical content. Hence, the contemporary critical investigation of values and culture, a kind of cultural renaissance, is a question for cultural and ethical renewal. (Bande, 1989; Chime & Gyekye 1996; Fage 1969).

Referring to the views of (Bande 1989) where he critically analysed Julius Nyerere's conception of the traditional African society maintained that for Nyerere, the crucial task of post-independence politics is that of constituting a legitimate, communitarian system of government that will involve everybody. This is the key to the continuity of Africa's ideals. How is this to be done? In eliciting the active participation of the citizens in the task of cultural, political and economic social and political spheres. Discussion, freedom, equality, and hard work. Those elements which defined the tradition African society are the same elements which are central to a correct conception of the contemporary liberal democratic virtues. The government, religious institutions, the schools, and the economy as the instruments and theatres of transformation.

For Nyerere, hardwork and new techniques of production and organization will eliminate Africa's ignorance and poverty, thereby enriching African society. Group ownership and opposition to injustice are common to both traditional African society and the present modernity.

During the days of anti-colonial campaign for Nigeria's independence, one of the most popular support movement heads by Mbonu Ojike rallied around the slogan "Boycott boycottable". It called on Nigerians to learn to live and do without the gadgets and goods imported into Nigeria which served only to increase the people's dependence on foreigners and undermined their reliance and pride in the traditional, homeland goods. Everything foreign and nonessential (boycottable) was fair target of the campaign eating and modes of dressing, the spoken language and titles and names. When Mbonu Ojike applied the same principle to the higher cultural areas of values and beliefs and religions, especially through the medium of his regular "week-end catechism", the Christian churches branded him as an enemy and fought back.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, therefore, we can see the concern for renewal focused on the African sense of community which is basic to the traditional ethic. This sense of community manifested itself in, and motivated, the different aspects of the traditional society such as economics and politics. At the same time, it was expressed in traditional religion, music, art, etc. and these are underlying elements of culture. A modern African culture, whatever else it might be, must be a continuation of old African culture. Whatever else it includes, it must include seminal and controlling elements from the African tradition, elements which determine its tone, hold it together, and give it a stamp of distinctiveness. In such a way, modernization or Africinity must really take into account also all that has happened to Africa and Africans from the very beginning through the contact with the outside world, especially the West, right up to the present. African art and philosophy, in being African, must take its bearing from somewhere, must have a central or initial base. But in being modern, it must also be the fruit of an all-inclusive contemporary consciousness.

The Way Forward

Though wounded, traditional African political culture is far from dead. It continues its existence in a transformed, yet still recognizable state and relevance, though indelibly marked and altered by its historical experiences. Or rather, it has taken on a new existence as a new political culture. It is of this altered past or mixed salad of old and new that we can legitimately speak of when we talk of African political culture as an amalgam of the sum total of all its parts: the ancient past; the experience of the slave trade, colonization and independence; the present multi-lingual, multi-ethnic form of political existence; the massive urbanization, industrialization; religious pluralism; exposure to modern education and growing capitalism; the growing mass poverty, consumerism and corruption; the mass urban unemployment and the deserted village syndrome. All the factors and elements labeled new, imported and foreign are part of the present culture in the contemporary African society. Deliberate efforts must be made of all spheres to integrate the traditional values into the present. The result would be a harmonious and peaceful African devoid of the chaotic state of affairs that we have today.

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