

African Traditional Values and the Quest for Good Governance in Contemporary Africa: A Critical Investigation

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Abstract

What is known today as African states were created in 1885 during the Berlin Conference where the geographical location known today as Africa was demarcated and divided amongst the colonizing European countries. After independence, Africa maintained the states as bequeathed by the colonialists. Also, the African states maintained and preserved the inherited colonial structures of governance. Unfortunately, Africa's quest for good governance from independence till date has not been a successful one. This paper employed the method of critical analysis in interrogating governance in contemporary Africa. The paper finds out that the root cause of bad governance in Africa is crisis of values occasioned by the fact that the values inherent in the inherited colonial structures of governance are presented as different from and in opposition to the vestige of traditional African values in Contemporary Africa even though there is a place for customary court and laws in the constitution. The paper argues that the quest for good governance in Africa can be realized through the policy integration of African traditional values into the core structures of governance in Africa from two perspectives: Traditional Oath-taking for public office holders and the role of traditional institutions in checkmating corruption in the polity. The objective of this integration is to bring back those eroding values for which Africa was known. These values, such as religious values, moral values, political and economic values - aesthetic values and humanistic values - helped in bringing about good governance in traditional Africa and will also boost good governance in Contemporary Africa when they are integrated into the core structure of governance.

Keywords: Africa, Traditional, Values, Quest, Good, Governance, Investigation

Introduction

Good governance, without sounding exaggerating, appears to be the most important need today in African politics. Democracy, which is supposed to entrench this ideal, seems to be subversive so that there are multiple cases of *coup d'état* in several

African countries as a result of bad governance. In some quarters, colonialism has been blamed for the legacy of bad governance in Africa; while for others, Africans have abandoned their cultural way of life and have taken to other cultures that promote individualism rather than communalism. Maurice M. Makumba¹ opines that:

In a rapidly changing world, the African person needs to find and establish a foundation for what and who they are, what they believe in, and the values they hold and live for. This is necessary and they are to orientate themselves in a world becoming ever more global. This becomes more so due to the ever increasing movement both of peoples and ideas, as well as the availability of information, resulting in a multiplicity and plurality of values.

Africa as a continent and people are partly-majorly underdeveloped because of bad leadership leading to bad governance. Where leaders are not accountable to their subjects nor lead by the extant laws of the land, such situation becomes a recipe for bad governance. Consequent upon this, there have been several suggestions, theories and ideas that are deemed necessary to Africa's development through good governance. While some pundits are overly pessimistic about any hope and remedy, others are very positive and optimistic that Africa will rise to the fate of greatness.

Just as applied in a revolution, one needs more than economic problems and guns, one needs a philosophy to execute it.² In the same vein, for good governance to be entrenched in Africa, one will need a good philosophy that will bring about mental

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1. Maurice M. Makumba, *Introduction to African Philosophy*. (Narobi: Paulines Publication, 2007), 11
 2. Brooke Noel Moore and Kenneth Bruder, *Philosophy: The Power of Ideas*. (California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1991), 1

and psychological revolution engendering the spirit and letter of nationalism and patriotism. This is the anchor point of this paper, targeting the reintegration of African values and the quest for ensuring that the culture of bad governance in Africa is mitigated by Africa's traditional institutions. In order to achieve this objective, the paper will be looking at pre-colonial/traditional Africa in order to come up with principles, values and norms that can help reposition Africa with regards to governance. It is believed that, there are certain principles, morals and norms in traditional Africa that encourage honesty, truthfulness, promise keeping, contentment, altruism, accountability and the likes.

Whether these traditional African ways of life or cultural values can fit into today's contemporary narrative is a different ball game entirely, but the interesting motivation is that, these values helped African forebears to be able to have a corporate existence that is devoid of many of the ills seen in contemporary African political society. It will be a novel contribution of the paper to try to synthesize theory and praxis within the broad framework of mitigating the many ills in contemporary African governance. However, this cannot be achieved without clarifying certain important concepts necessary to the paper.

What is Good Governance?

The word good attached to governance qualifies or accentuates it as noble, worthy, desirable, acceptable and praise worthy. Good is attributive as seen in its attachment to governance. In Blackburn's definition, good or more objectively, the good, is used to denote the supposed final end at which action must aim: an intrinsically valuable state.³ From the definition therefore, governance has an end which is to the good. Governance in itself amounts to nothing until it strives towards the good from where it will bring about tangible dividends accruable to the people.

Governance can be seen from different perspectives though with one end view; the

3. Simon Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (London: University Press, 2005), 154-

genre, notwithstanding. It is a concept that is in high demand in the contemporary world, because it touches at the core of corporate existence and collective synergy. Governance is an enabler that makes purposive leadership possible so that development and progress can be achieved. How might governance be perpetuated then? James L. Christian notes:

He (Aristotle) rejects autocratic monarchs and oligarchies, communist utopias and popular democracies-they do not work. The first two invariably lose the individual in the services of a dictator or tyrannical minority, and democracy tends to degenerate into rule of the mob, which then imposes its mediocre ideas and values on the entire populace.⁴

Governance ought to have a *modus operandi*. It should have a principle by which its end can be achieved. It should ride upon certain established procedures that are deemed best for it. Governance, according to A. K Fosu, is “...the division of labour between markets and states. Since this concept involves the “rules” that define that division, it closely resembles the definition of institutions as “the rules of the game.” The latter, however, entails all aspects of societal activities; hence, it seems reasonable to conceive of governance as a proper subject of institutions.⁵

Governance can be focused on economics and politics. These two perspectives deal with the welfare needs of man. Every other consideration of governance implicitly borders on economic or political considerations. Economic development is mainstreamed by robust political governance. Political governance on the other

4. James L. Christian, *Philosophy: An Introduction to the Art of Wondering* (California: Wadsworth Cengage learning, 2009), 349

5. A. K. Fosu, *Governance and Development in Africa: A Review Essay Working Paper Series No 298* (Abidjan, Cote d' Ivoire: African Development Bank ,2018), 7.

hand thrives on a political theory which contains a form of government such as democracy, monarchy and so on. This is why it is asked about democracy in Africa: “what use is democratic transformation on the continent if it does not ameliorate the problem of economic underdevelopment? This is the puzzle that underpins the discourse on democracy and good governance.”⁶

Governance involves leadership, guidance, direction, foresightedness, intelligence, brilliance, reflection, being critical, knowledgeable, focused and the likes towards ensuring that those under such governance get benefits that will enhance their entire lives. Good governance, on the other hand, will involve the collective efforts of both the leader and the led in ensuring that the institutions of government function optimally with the citizens playing their own roles so that government will be able to bring about all the gains that make for a just and egalitarian society. This is where policies are brought to the fore and executed as a measure to bringing dividends to the citizens.

A philosopher's focus or interest when the issue of good governance is the object of discussion will be on the modalities that will bring about good governance as well as the areas that need urgent attention. Good governance will definitely have profound impact on qualitative education which will have a great multiplier effect on both the leader and the led; as education is the cornerstone of individual and national development. Hence, it has been argued that:

Leadership ought to be an art and skill that can be learned and transmitted. It should have neither coloration nor tilting towards any idiosyncrasy. Its target or focus should be fixated on providing worthwhile direction that can bring about a positive

6. Kwandiwe Kondis and Chinenyengozi Ejiogu (eds), *Governance in the 21st Century* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2011), xxii

outcome wherever it is directed at.⁷

Good governance, again, ought to be the emblem of government. Good governance is measurable either by economic or political parameters. Good governance is the proof of a purposeful and responsible government. A nation that has a robust economy and where the majority of citizens are economically prosperous and happy is most likely having good governance. Good performance has become the indices for measuring the failure or success of a government and it is important that a nation experiences it.

African Traditional Value System

Traditional Africa is the period before the Europeans made their way into Africa. It is also understood as pre-colonial Africa. This period is exclusively indigenous as everything the African forebear needed to survive was locally sourced for, including wisdom, knowledge, understanding, natural resources, innovation and the likes. The value system of this period is predicated on the beliefs of the Africans which cut across every strata of their being including morality and politics. Upon a closer examination of the belief system of traditional Africa, one will understand why Africans act in a certain way. For example, Marcel I. S. Onyibor avers that:

...the Igbo perceptions, attitudes and orientations towards life and even death are functions of cosmological perceptions of their world. Hence, their lifestyles and attitudinal orientations are explainable within their cosmology. It, therefore, forms the foundation on which certain theories or principles of understanding reality in Igbo world is anchored. It embraces both the visible and invisible,

7. Evaristus Emeka Isife, "Intercultural Philosophy and the Question of Leadership in Africa." *Amamihe Journal of Applied Philosophy* 21, no. 2, (2023): 102-115.

the living, the dead and the yet unborn.⁸

Traditional Africa (cutting across every tribe/ethnic group) has a well-developed indigenous system that touches on every aspects of the human life. It may be regarded as metaphysical, spiritual or religious, because it is anchored on the belief in the Supreme Being and the hierarchy of beings. It is from this belief that traditional African values are formed and transmitted to generations of Africans yet unborn. These values, whether as it has to do with an individual's actions as right or wrong or the appreciation of the good, are the foundation for a peaceful and prosperous society.

Traditional African value system is unique and robust in the sense that it has the supernatural as its backup. This is why its efficacy is almost spontaneous with evidence. This has served as checks and balances especially with regards to maintaining the sanity of the society where justice and fairness reign. Interestingly, this traditional African value system has existed for hundreds of years as it were before the coming of the Europeans into Africa. It cannot be said that pre-colonial Africa had a perfect system, for perfection may not be found in the abode of humans. But it cannot be denied that crime and injustice were matched with the consequences they deserved and this brought about a consciousness among all so that it becomes easier for the right thing to be done at every instance.

Traditional African value system may not have a general corpus, but it can be gleaned from the history of traditional Africa as well as the remains of the legends, myths, folklores, folktales and other medium such as oral tradition. Some aspects may be un-conceived in the light of new developments and realities. But there is no doubt that traditional African value system has helped greatly in African communalism and system of administering justice. As a take away, traditional African value system can be spoken of from religious, political, social aesthetic,

8. Marcel I. S. Onyibor, "The Role of CH1 in self-actualization in Traditional Igbo Cosmology." *Nnamdi Azikiwe Journal of Philosophy* 2, no. I, (2019): 84-100.

moral, cultural and even personal perspective.⁹ Again, the main reason for focusing on cultural values here is that some of these cultural values require appropriate and necessary amendment and refinement in order to be relevant to Contemporary Africa.¹⁰

Contemporary Africa and Governance Deficit

Whether one refers to modern or contemporary Africa, the understanding is that of Africa which has been infiltrated by other civilizations such as European or American. The incursion of the Europeans into Africa unsettled Africa's indigenous belief and culture introducing a new culture entirely. Of profound significance is the introduction of new ideals, values and system of governance. For example, democracy as a system of government practiced by almost all the African sovereign countries is alien to Africa. Despite its revision, democracy has not really solved the African governance problem neither has it engendered justice and fairness. Bassey Inyang iterates that:

Good leadership and good governance in Africa are two key elements that will ensure that Africa is a worthy, respectable and net-contributing player in the global arena. It goes without saying that we must avoid the devastating consequences of the nineteenth century scramble for Africa – its partition and balkanization. Leadership is essential to improved governance.¹¹

9. Gabriel E. Idang, "African Culture and Values." *Phronimon* 16, no. 2. (2015): 97-111.

10. Kwame Gyekye, *African Cultural Values: An Introduction* (Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company, 2002).

11. Bassey Inyang, "Good leadership and Governance in Africa: A Case Study of Nigeria." *International Journal of Latest Research in Humanities and Source Science (IJLRHSS)* 2, no. 66, (2019): 70-80

There is a very serious governance deficit in contemporary Africa. This is one justification by the actors of *coup d'etat* who cite a high level of corruption among public office holders. According to the claim, democracy is not working and its tenets are not respected. The public office holders who swore on oath to uphold the spirit and letter of the constitution are reneging on their oath. Because of this, there is poverty, insecurity, lack of social amenities, weak institutions and separatist's agitations. The governance deficit in Contemporary Africa is very well known. It is not the aim of the paper to begin to recount them or bemoan the fate of governance in contemporary Africa without any remedy. Hence, suffice it to say that:

It is necessary to reconcile the disjuncture between African peculiarities and the inherited institutions as well as socialization structures upon which African democratization experiments are anchored. As long as these structures remain the platform upon which Africa democratization drives and strategies are anchored, all developmental drives may appear like putting the cart before the horse and to that extent, turn out to be an exercise in futility.¹²

Since there has been a continuous show of concern on African contemporary predicament with regards to leadership and governance failure, it would be worth the while to theorize on two simple ways good governance can be entrenched, drawing from traditional African values. But before then, it is important to clearly state that the genre of democracy practiced in Africa is liberal democracy. Ontologically, democracy is not strictly conservative because it creates room for

12. J. Shola Omotola, "Democratization, Good Governance and Development in Africa: The Nigerian Experience." *Journal of Sustainable Development of Africa* 9, no. 4, (2007): 247-274.

majority to have their way while the minorities have their say. For Africa then to practice liberal democracy runs antithetical to the spirit of African culture which is very conservative in its outlook with strict boundaries and intersections. The solution then to this challenge will be to fashion out a way where there will be an integration of some moral placeholder extracted from African culture into liberal democracy that is being already practiced in Africa. That attempt can pass for what is called moral constructivism as argued below.

Integrating Traditional Values into Governance in Contemporary Africa

In integrating traditional values into governance in contemporary Africa, there will first be the task of excavating which traditional value fits into the narrative of the problem of governance in contemporary Africa. Moreover, theory here must match action because any prescription that does not come with consequences of one's action cannot bring about the desired good governance in Africa today. This paper focuses on two important critical areas of traditional African values which are oath taking and traditional institutions as represented by the people's assembly and the traditional rulers. Concerning oath-taking, it is believed that the gods or deities punish any act of wrong doing or injustice swiftly, unlike the “secularized God” by which many political office holders swear. Sunday Layi Oladipupo argues that:

One of the major obstacles to the attainment of right sense of democratic principles hinges on the fact that the political class who are supposed to utilize the democratic principles to better the lots of the nation are found wanting as they often contravene their oaths of office.¹³

Sadly, there are no known consequences that precede such brazen abuse of office.

13. Sunday Layi Oladipipo. “Traditional Oath-Taking as a Panacea to Democratic Corruption in Nigeria.” *Journal of Philosophy and Culture* 9, no.2 (2021): 11-19.

Many of these political office holders end up amassing ill-gotten wealth to the chagrin of the helpless and hapless masses and go away scot free to enjoy their loot. This cannot actually happen in traditional Africa because the gods are alive to their responsibilities and the ones taking the oath know this fully well. Several African tribes and ethnic groups have their own deities in charge of executing judgment. The Yoruba and Igbo, for example, have *Sango* and *Igwe*, the god of thunder and sky respectively. The value of oath-taking is in ensuring that promises are kept and the bond of brotherhood and unity is maintained. A lot of concerned Africans will readily accept any suggestion that will compel political office holders in Africa to swear or take an oath traditionally, using any of the known deities of justice. Contemporary African political system, as borrowed from the Europeans, has helped to fester a lot of political upheavals of corruption in the body polity of African nation states because it is not suited for Africa and its culture. The efficacy of the gods and their power is not in doubt but their importance have been downplayed or outrightly relegated.

Traditional oath-taking has to be integrated into the body polity of African nation states as a constitutional matter. Of course, the normal oath taking by political office holders as enshrined in the constitution where by one uses the Bible or Qur'an to swear, is so secular. Politicians see it as a normal political procedure and are not keen on keeping it. Such oath-taking has no spiritual foundation in the sense that it is neither administered by a priest of a particular religion nor is taken in a religious place like church or mosque. It has no immediate consequences and politicians do not regard it as what should be observed. In Europe and America where this system of oath-taking was borrowed from, the systems are so advanced such that there are immediate consequences for those who renege on their oath of office. But in Africa, the case is different. There are no strong institutions in Africa to make sure that people do not renege on their oath of office. Hence, traditional oath taking can come in to fill in the vacuum by making the politicians to be more responsible to the people

they swear to govern. Many people will oppose the idea of traditional oath taking on the ground that it is against their faith as Christians and Muslims. But the same people fear the traditional deities more than they fear their Christian or Muslims God.

As of today, there is no place for traditional oath taking in the constitutions of most African States. Even those who are neither Christians nor Muslims readily accept to swear with either the Bible or the Qur'an. The point is that since these politicians are not afraid to swear with the Bible or the Qur'an and go on to renege on their oath of office, efforts should be made to integrate the traditional oath taking, which the politicians fear more, into the political structure so that politicians will not renege on their oath of office again. The simple reason why the traditional oath taking should be integrated into the political structure of African states is because the Western oath-taking has not produced any positive outcome and the spate of development in Africa today is lackluster. Hence:

Oath taking was and has continued to be one of those potent and important means of curbing wrong doing and detecting crimes as well as punishing culprits in society whether in the areas of the underworld practice such as armed robbery, kidnapping, sorcery, witchcraft, cultic, murders, child thefts.... In African society, the mere mention of traditional oath sends shivers into the spines of these evil practitioners.¹⁴

Since there is already a place for oath-taking, albeit, English oath-taking in the constitutions of African countries, what is needed is to see how traditional method of oath-taking should be integrated into the constitutions or how the present method of oath-taking should be made to have a spiritual foundation like the traditional oath-

14. Aniekan Etim Nana, "African Traditional Religion Oath taking and Resource Management in Nigeria." *International Journal of Religion and Human Relations* 12, no.1 (2021): 201-215.

taking. Africa has to return to its traditional ways of solving problems and oath-taking is one of the very potent ways of checkmating the excesses of the political and ruling class and their corrupt ways. Japan and China are examples of advancing countries that were able to integrate their indigenous religions into their political systems. African countries can borrow a cue from them by integrating traditional oath taking into the African political system. It is beyond the scope of this work to delineate how traditional oath taking could be integrated into the current oath taking in African states. Suffice it to say that it is the responsibility of the people, their representatives and the government to have a round table discussion or town hall meeting on the modalities of doing such. It is from such intercourse that materials are gathered and taken to houses of assemblies for deliberation, review and eventual passage into a law.

The Persistence of Traditional Institutions of Governance in Africa

In the first place, scholars are almost unanimous in asserting that traditional African institutions of governance are diverse. But in spite of this diversity, “much of the post independence literature classifies African traditional institutions of governance into two types, based on their pre- colonial forms: the consensus- based systems of decentralized pre- colonial systems; and chieftaincy of centralized political systems.”¹⁵ Although many pre- colonial African societies practiced either consensus- based or the chieftaincy centralized systems, there were also some traditional Africa societies where both types were practiced in the same society. But the situation has changed with post- colonial Africa as regards the traditional institutions of governance. Hence, Kidane Mengisteab maintains that:

There is a little doubt that colonial occupation and the ensuing restructuring of African political entities and socioeconomic systems altered African

15. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, “Relevance of Traditional Institutions of Governance.” (Addis Ababa: UNECA, 2, 2007).

institutions of governance. The colonial state, for example, invented chiefs where there were no centralized authority systems and imposed them on the decentralized authority systems, as among the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria, the Tonga of Zambia, various communities in Kenya, and the communities in Somalia. In the centralized systems, also traditional leaders of various titles were reduced to 'chiefs' and the colonial state modified notably the relations between chiefs and their communities by making chiefs accountable to the colonial state rather than to their communities.¹⁶

The fact remains that traditional institutions are so called not because they have continued to exist in an unadulterated form as was the case during the pre-colonial era but because their essential elements are still persisting in the contemporary period and are adhered to mainly by the rural population. Hence, traditional institutions, although formal in pre-colonial period, may be considered as informal institutions in the sense that they are not sanctioned by the state. It has been noted that, “the relationship between traditional leadership and inherited western-style governance institutions often generate tensions.”¹⁷ So, the big task is how to integrate them into formal systems of governance. So, the problem of governance in Africa cannot be reversed under the existing duality of the traditional and formal institutions of the State.¹⁸ This is the reason behind the call for the integration of

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16. Kindane Mengisteab, “Traditional Institutions of Governance in Africa.” Oxford Research Encyclopedia, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/97801.90228637.013.1347>.
 17. Ernest Kofi Abotsi and Paolo Galizzi, “Traditional Institutions and Governance in Modern African Democracies: History, Challenges, and Opportunities in Ghana,” *The Future of African Customary Law*, eds. Jeanmarie Fenrich & Tracy E. Inggins, (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 266–279.
 18. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. “Relevance of Traditional Institutions of Governance.” (Addis Ababa: UNECA, 1, 2007). <https://repository.uneca.org/handle/10855/3086>.

these parallel institutions of governance in contemporary Africa so that they can support and complement each other.

In continuation, it has been stated that in many pre-colonial societies both the consensus-based pattern of authority, as represented by people's assembly, and the centralized pattern of authority, as represented by traditional rulers, existed in same society. The situation is still persisting in many African societies in contemporary period. There is need to harmonize these patterns of authority and bring them to bare towards playing key roles in good governance in contemporary Africa. The roles that traditional institutions can play in governance in contemporary Africa can be categorized into three:

First, their advisory role to governance, as well as their participatory role in the administration of regions and districts; second, their developmental role, complementing government's efforts in mobilizing the population for the implementation of development projects, sensitizing them on health issues such as HIV/AIDS, promoting education, electoral process; and third, their role in conflict resolution, an area where traditional leaders across Africa have already demonstrated success.¹⁹

Moreover, curators of traditional institutions who are the custodians of justice, equality and fairness have to rise up to their responsibility and be team players in the rescue project of contemporary African society in terms of engendering good governance. Its thrust on the socio-cultural, economic and political wellbeing of Africans is such that it should not be forgotten or downplayed. Traditional African institutions hold ample information concerning the culture, custom, religion and

19. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. "Relevance of Traditional Institutions of Governance." (Addis Ababa: UNECA, 2, 2007).

values of the people. In fact:

It has been observed that from time immemorial, most traditional African societies had been centers of political civilization as a result of the recognition, acceptance and belief of the African peoples in the roles and efficacy of traditional rulers as agents and promoters of value-based governance and politics in Africa. The level of political activities witnessed in pre-colonial Nigerian societies and elsewhere in Africa, before the advent of colonialism, was not unconnected to the invaluable roles played by the traditional rulers.²⁰

The degenerating situation of governance in contemporary Africa is because much attention is no longer paid to the various traditional institutions that ensured a just, egalitarian and peaceful society. Contemporary Africa now finds it very convenient to adopt a system of governance that is not fashioned to meet the challenges of Africans. Traditional African rulers know what to do to curb the problem of bad governance in the African political space. Though there have been widespread concerns that these traditional rulers wine and dine with these corrupt politicians, it does not erode the fact that the traditional institutions still command respect and have their secrets and power intact as of old.

One of the ways traditional Africa institutions can be integrated into politically established governance is for both the traditional rulers and people's assembly to be given constitutional roles in governance. As the custodians of the culture and traditions of the people, they must magnify and dignify their offices by invoking measures and counter measures with regards to what they think is right according to

20. Bolaji Omitola *et al.* "Traditional Institutional and Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria: A Critical Analysis." *Journal of Law and Legal Reform* 2, no. 4, (2021): 539-552.

the traditional stool, custom and tradition. To this end, traditional rulers and representatives of the people should understand the role of their offices and not allow corrupt politicians to buy them over with wealth and positions leading to a compromise in matters of accountability. Again:

Traditional rulers play an important role in the society by advising the elected leaders in different areas, these include: economic policy, security issues, equal sharing of goods and services, recommending aspirants for elections or appointment to serve the community demand for good governance and general wellbeing of the people, among others.²¹

Evaluation and Conclusion

There have been arguments in some quarters that the democratization of African member states should be along traditional lines. This is like a fusion of Western democracy and African traditional system. This hybrid has become very necessary for two reasons. The first is that, the world today has embraced democracy and Africa cannot be seen to be lagging behind with regards to world politics. Secondly, Western democracy has not brought ample gains to Africa because it is not suited for the African reality. Liberal democracy has created lacuna in governance in Africa as seen in the system of oath taking which politicians can renege and go scot free and leadership deficiency through its bureaucracy which the persisting traditional institutions can fill in. However, one fact that is undeniable is that good governance in Africa is a scarce commodity and the trend has to be upturned.

The parallel existence of both the traditional institutions and weak democratic institutions in Africa has created a crisis of values in the polity. Hence there is need

21. Mustapha Alhaji Ali and Fatima Ahmed "An Overview of the Role of Traditional Institutions in Nigeria" *Asia Proceedings of Social Science* 4, no.3 (2019): 55-58.

to integrate the two systems into one in order to create a stable and unified political system. The modalities for this integration have to be worked by the people and their representatives. A simple reminder is that traditional African values are bounded with the spirit of communalism and religion. Because of that deep sense of familyhood or brotherhood, Africans maintain a high level of moral conduct for the reason that death is not annihilation but a transition to the hereafter.²² Good governance therefore, is the responsibility of African sons and daughters. It is the least they could offer if they have not forgotten about their roots and history. This is where traditional rulers and people's assembly, who are the custodians of the values of the people, should be given constitutional power to wade in and ensure that good governance is entrenched.

In conclusion, the paper holds the view that modernization has not been able to make traditional African values and institutions moribund. These values are still been enforced at the community level through the same institutions. Traditional rulers and people's assembly should see themselves as agents of good governance and should play that role effectively. Giving a spiritual foundation to the present oath-taking by public office holders can reduce the high rate in which these office holders renege on their oath of office. Traditional rulers and the people's assembly, if they are given constitutional backing, can become catalysts through which good governance will be entrenched in Africa's contemporary political setting.

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