

**INFLUENCE OF MODERNITY ON CHIEFTAINCY SELECTION PROCESSES
AND CONFLICT IN ILAJE-UGBO KINGDOM, ONDO STATE, NIGERIA,
1952 – 2010**

BY

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research, Influence of Modernity on Chieftaincy Selection Processes and Conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom, Ondo State, Nigeria, 1952 – 2010 was carried out by Adebayo Olamoyewa **OLATUNJI**, under my supervision.

.....
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DEDICATION

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED TO THE GLORY OF GOD;

AND

TO MY LATE FATHER (Chief LAWSON OLATUNJI SHEGEDE AND MY
MOTHER (Mrs. ABIGEAL MODUPE SHEGEDE)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Modern values and structures imposed by colonial rule on chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom created a myriad of conflicts. The introduction of father-to-son inheritance principle created ruptures in the selection processes. Existing studies have focused on various forms of disputes in the chieftaincy institutions with little attention paid to modernity and the heightened spate of conflicts in chieftaincy selection processes in the Kingdom. This study was therefore, to examine the nature of chieftaincy selection processes, the influence of modernity on the selection, the mechanisms for conflict resolution and the nexus between modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and identity.

Giddens' Modernity and Gurr's Relative Deprivation Theories were adopted as the framework, while case study design was utilised. Primary and secondary data were used. Twelve communities from the six political wards of Ugbo Kingdom involved in the chieftaincy selection conflict were purposively sampled. Primary data were collected through five key selected informants of four traditional rulers and the deposed Olugbo. Twenty one in-depth interviews were conducted with twelve Baales and one each of Olori Ebi, Head of Oro Cult, Abojutoro, Osomolu, Secretary Ilaje Local Government, Chairman Ilaje Local Government, Commissioner for Chieftaincy, House Committee on Chieftaincy and the Head of Cherubim and Seraphim Church who served as source of spiritual guidance to contestants for Olugbo's throne. Seven Focus Group Discussions of eight participants each were conducted with the Olugbo-In-Council, elders of Erunna, Idiogba, Ebijimi, Ojumole, Ikorigho and Awoye communities. Secondary data were obtained from newspaper reports, court judgements and national archive in Ibadan. Data were content analysed.

The Oja system of selection was adopted in the pre-modern era, while the political governance structure was used in the modern era. The institution of father-son-principle of succession put in place during colonial era was the source of the chieftaincy selection conflict. Modernity heightened the conflicts with the creation of Colonial Native Authority, restriction of chieftaincy selection to the hands of few kingmakers, which in turn made the processes susceptible to manipulation. Modern approaches to conflict resolution which included the court system, commissions of enquiry, provided window for appeals whereas, ifa divination which was used to settle dispute in pre-modern era did not give room for appeals. The interface of oil economy and modern religion with the selection processes, and the inheritance principle of succession generated identity conflict.

The chieftaincy selection in Ugbo Kingdom has undergone changes and adaptations with the introduction of father-to-son inheritance principle as against the succession principle of rotation, as well as relegation of the Oja system and promotion of the kingmakers in the selection processes. Hybridisation of the Oja system with the modern government structures and adoption of succession principle of rotation were recommended to strengthen chieftaincy selection processes in the modern Ugbo Kingdom.

Keywords: Continuity and change, Oja system, Modernity and governance structures, Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom, Nigeria

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Modernity and Western values imposed by colonialism significantly interfaced with the chieftaincy institution in Yorubaland (Vaughan, 2003, 2006). One of the structures most affected was the chieftaincy institution's selection processes. This created a plethora of conflicts which culminated in successive crises of various dimensions in the selection processes (Vaughan, 2006). It is, however, not true to say that it was solely the modern structures that caused ruptures in the system. Chieftaincy crisis in Yorubaland had a long pedigree. In pre-colonial Africa, chieftaincy conflicts were striking features of Yoruba states and kingdoms. Just like in the pre-colonial period, chieftaincy conflicts manifested deeply during the colonial period. Several chieftaincy conflicts in colonial era have their roots to non-adherence to the institution's selection processes. This is because the colonialists invented chiefs which ran contrary to the traditional patterns of selection. The survival of chieftaincy institutions therefore rested in its selection principles which were clearly defined to include respect for certain ideals and values that include rotation, gerontocracy, election and primogeniture (Sunday, 2010). To this end, one of the dominant roles of the Native Authority system that was instituted in colonial Nigeria was to address conflicts of traditional political authority and other issues within that category (Crowder and Ikime, 1970). British colonial intervention in chieftaincy matters in Nigeria and Yorubaland in particular, deeply and in so many ways changed the course of events. In essence, modernity and modern structures imposed by colonialism interfaced significantly with the traditional chieftaincy institution especially in the chieftaincy selection processes.

The colonial creation of the title of "chief" rather than the pre-colonial concept of "king" associated with Kingdoms changed the course of chieftaincy selection processes as chiefs could be created without recourse to tradition and custom (Crowder and Ikime, 1970). To a large extent, the interaction of the chieftaincy institution with modernity has therefore continued to interfere with human and cultural relations in

Yorubaland. However, despite the increasing grip of modernity on the chieftaincy institution, it has remained resilient and continued to play important roles in exercising political authority. This is because the institution has gained power and influence in the modern state despite the changes. It is this power and influence that has continued to generate tension among the elite as they have used the powers of state to dictate the patterns, tempo and tunes of activities in the chieftaincy institution.

In human societies, power, status, influence, and change are in constant interaction and these tend to explain the dynamics of human relations. According to Falola (2006), power, status and influence are related to a society's political philosophy and economy (p.161). Falola further explains this relationship contending that where the power of a ruler may be affected by economic misfortunes, political changes such as the imposition of a new dynasty, the incorporation of one polity by another and the redefinition of the concept of power become prevalent. The forms of the interactions are as varied as the factors of change. That is, the feature of such change could have an orbital turn or exhibiting a totally new structure, with attendant consequences on power and social relations within a polity and replacing another one. He further averred that such change may involve only the leadership elite and not the structure of politics itself. Nevertheless, it could be tied to the evolution of a political system, such that each phase possesses its own distinctive character. What scholars of Yoruba history and chieftaincy institutions have attempted to exemplify by showing the interaction between power, influence and status is to indicate the genealogy of chieftaincy disputes in Yoruba Kingdoms. The implication of their argument is that even a well-established chieftaincy system could also decay leading to frictions among the cultural elite. This is particularly true with Sotunde's (2012) study of the Egba chieftaincy institution which showed how military titles were assimilated into the institution and how the commercialisation of such titles created rifts. Thus, changes in the interaction between power, influence and status affect the leadership elite and could generate supremacy tussle amongst them. What this implies is that while the changes could cause new set of elite to gain power, influence and status, existing ones could lose, thereby leading to friction.

In pre-colonial Yorubaland, there were patterns and processes of instituting a dynasty and also of crowning a king. Kingship and kinship evolved among the Yoruba several centuries ago. This depended heavily on the *Ebi* Commonwealth. The concept of the

Ebi system as argued by Akinjogbin (1979) can only be properly understood within the context of historical events that happened during and immediately after the Oduduwa take-over (p.13). Among the Yoruba, the king embodies the personality of the living and the dead. That is why such person is considered a custodian of culture and tradition, the link between the past and present, ancestors and the living. However, such cultural practices were altered by modernity which defined new front for the chieftaincy institution. There is a growing preoccupation in literature contending that the growing influence of the chieftaincy institution in Africa is as a result of the continent's many administrative and political problems. According to Nolte (2002), the traditional chieftaincy is constantly expanding its influence or maintaining its authority to the detriment of the modern state structure. In recent times, in South Western Nigeria, the chieftaincy institution has faltered from its traditional practices by seeking the intervention of the modern court and judicial processes in enthroning a king through the verdict of courts of law. This approach has introduced a perceived dichotomy between traditional and modernity among the palace chiefs who either embraced the judgment as good or jettisoned it as contrary to the tradition of the people. Mahmood Mamdani (2002) in his seminal work "Citizen and Subject" has connected this perceived dichotomy between the traditional and the modern in what he referred to as "the native question"- the problem of stabilising alien rule over the traditional structures which created conflict between traditional chiefs who were in office by right of descent and those administratively appointed warrant chiefs. This tension gave rise to differentiation within the chieftaincy institution between the hereditary traditional chiefs and state appointed administrative chiefs. Despite colonial incursion and the modern privileges enjoyed by the kings, the *Olugbo* of Ugbo Kingdom emerged through defined traditional processes (Ikuejube, 2005).

Essentially, the legacies of modernity have brought to the fore a new selection process in Ugbo Kingdom where modern structures could interfere with the emergence of a king via modern religions or the verdict of the Supreme Court which has left a section of the population in Ugbo kingdom questioning the legitimacy of the king. Apart from the elevation of erstwhile high chiefs of the *Olugbo- Olubo, Alagho* and *Odoka* to the status of kings in their various communities, the dethronement of Oba Adebajo Akingbade (Mafimisebi IV) through a Supreme Court judgement in 2007 and the installation of the current *Olugbo* of Ugbo-Oba Frederick Obateru Akinruntan

(Omoyele, 2011), the selection processes have induced elite frictions and significantly stimulated conflicts in the chieftaincy institution. Yet, there were feeble attempts at interrogating the relationship between modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. This was the thrust of this study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Chieftaincy is an important social institution which among the Yoruba depends on the concept of *Ebi*-commonwealth. In recent time, the institution has been faced with numerous crises resulting from misunderstanding among different segments of the ruling house on the enthronement or installation of an *Oba*. Emerging scholarship on chieftaincy institution has not adequately explored the connection between modernity, chieftaincy selection and conflict in many important Yoruba communities, most notably the Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom (Farawe, 2010; Omoyele, 2011; Akinruntan, 2015). Although Johnson (1921) contends that chieftaincy institutions were central to the strategies of governance in the colonial Yoruba Kingdoms, it is important to underscore how modern structures interfered with chieftaincy selection processes and initiated conflicts.

While Vaughan (2006), argues that modernity distorted chieftaincy structures and that Yoruba kings, chiefs and western-educated elites still managed to effectively deploy traditional forces to advance their cultural and political status in a rapidly changing environment, he neglected to address how modernity is implicated in the chieftaincy selection processes and the conflicts it produced. The chieftaincy selection processes that led to the installation of the present *Olugbo of Ugbo Kingdom, Oba Frederick Obateru Akinruntan* and elevation of erstwhile high chiefs of the *Olugbo* to the status of *Oba* in their various communities subject to modern structures - religion, state government and the judiciary, have raised the issues of the continued relevance of tradition and its legitimacy.

In 1954, the Okitipupa Federal Council approved the appointment of Napoleon *Mafimisebi III* as the *Olugbo of Ugbo* as a way of resolving an existing chieftaincy selection dispute in the Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. This created friction among the ruling elites. The selection process was faulted by other segments of the ruling house and this prolonged the conflict even after the death of Mafimisebi III. Similarly, in 2007, the

Supreme Court of Nigeria dethroned Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi IV and ordered for a fresh selection processes that would reflect the rotational arrangement among the four segments (*Agbedun, Ojogo, Oyetayo* and *Atarioye*) of the Ojadele ruling house. This was to reflect the traditional cultural values of Ugbo people, aimed at bringing peace, harmony and development to Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. To this end, there is no gainsaying the fact that there is a strong connection between modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.

Nonetheless, the forces of modernity have overtaken the traditional system as the dominant method and surest channel by claimants in ascending the throne whittling it down and promoting modern patterns. This interaction has pitched the traditionalists against the modernists which has further affected the identity of the self among the Ilaje-Ugbo people. Such dynamic relationship among the Ilaje-Ugbo people and their chieftaincy institution and the emergent indigenous Western-educated elite, modern state political and legal structures which are complicated by the new emphasis on modern governance and legal systems, a development that the Western-educated elite have insisted on, since the colonial period.

Other studies on the subject of chieftaincy have tended to focus on the power structures, status and the influence of kings in Yorubaland (Nolte, 2002; Falola, 2006; Vaughan, 2003, 2006). Some others have chronicled and highlighted forms of disputes in the chieftaincy institutions in Africa (Sutton, 1984; Harneit-Sievers, 1998; Adeniji, 2006). But unlike other Yoruba kingdoms that have attracted the attention of scholars, none of these studies have shown sufficient knowledge and interest in linking modernity to the spate of conflicts in the chieftaincy selection processes in an important community such as the Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom. This study sought to fill this gap.

1.3 Research Questions

Therefore, the study was guided by the following questions:

1. What was the nature of the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom?
2. How has modernity influenced conflict in the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom?

3. How have modern methods of resolving conflict in chieftaincy selection processes affected the interaction of the people with the traditional stool in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom?
4. To what extent have modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and conflict shaped and reshaped Ilaje-Ugbo identity of self and community in the modern age?

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to interrogate the influence of modernity on chieftaincy selection processes and conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom, 1952-2010.

In specific terms the study has four main objectives:

1. To examine the nature of the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.
2. To investigate how modernity has influenced conflict in the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.
3. To examine how modern methods of resolving conflict in chieftaincy selection processes have affected the interaction of the people with the tradition stool in Ilaje-Ugbo, and
4. To ascertain the extent to which modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and conflict have shaped and reshaped the Ilaje-Ugbo identity of self and community in the modern age.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The trajectory of traditional chieftaincy institution as part and parcel of the modern state political process has reinforced several forms of conflicts. The chieftaincy institution in Yorubaland and Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom in particular has spanned over several centuries during which its elites perpetuated good leadership despite the hurdles faced. However, since its inception from the *Ebi* system to the period of Obaship, the institution has undergone changes due to its interaction with modern political structures, religion and western education which created elites group that has been playing significant roles in chieftaincy selection processes. The institution, therefore, has a long history of adaptation, playing central roles in providing governance, exchange of redistributive economy, security and justice delivery. Despite its adaptability to changes, the chieftaincy institution is faced with several challenges

ranging from the interaction with modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and conflicts. These interactions have facilitated several forms of conflicts in the chieftaincy institution, given that elements of modern structures like the state and local governments and the law courts have dictated how occupants of the traditional stool emerged rather than through the traditional selection process. To this end, the 1954 intervention of colonial government which gave instrument of office to Napoleon *Mafimisebi III* as the *Olugbo* of Ugbo tampered with the selection processes, created frictions and initiated legitimacy crisis.

This study was significant in three ways. One, with the spate of chieftaincy conflicts in Yorubaland and in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom in particular leading to bloodletting, a study of this nature became necessary to contribute to peace building. Two, it contributed and initiated reforms in the chieftaincy selection processes in Yorubaland and Ugbo Kingdom in particular. Three, the study contributed to the body of growing literature on chieftaincy selection processes and conflicts in Yorubaland and Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study was to interrogate the influence of modernity on chieftaincy selection processes and conflict in Ilaje- Ugbo kingdom. The period covered was from 1952 to 2010. This period is important as it captured five decades of modern intervention in traditional chieftaincy selection processes and conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom, with the first in 1952 when Napoleon Mafimisebi III was selected by a segment of the ruling house as the *Olugbo- elect*” and the subsequent ratification of his appointment by Okitipupa Federal Council as the *Olugbo* of Ugbo kingdom in 1954 and the last was the Supreme Court verdict that dethroned Adebajo Mafimisebi IV in 2007. The current occupant of the throne therefore came after the pronouncement of a court judgement. This period helps to divide the objectives of this study into blocks of time to understand the nature and trend of conflict in the chieftaincy selection processes in contemporary Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom and how it has shaped the identity of the people. Thus, the choice of Ilaje-Ugbo is important given that the trend has affected the relationship between the people of Ugbo Kingdom and the Chieftaincy institution as the custodian of culture and Ilaje-Ugbo identity.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms.

To facilitate and enhance understanding of some key words in this study, the following terms were contextually defined.

Ugbo Kingdom: Part of the riverine communities in Ilaje Local Government area, the coastal area of Ondo State in South Western, Nigeria.

Olori Ebi: The head of the ruling house.

Abojutoro: The supervisor of Oro Cult.

Oro: Refers to a secret cult associated with the installation of Olugbo.

Olugbo: The chieftaincy title of Ugbo King.

Ode-Ugbo: Refers to the seat of Olugbo's throne and administrative head of Ugbo Kingdom.

Ojadele: The ruling house in Ugbo kingdom.

Oja/Ulu: It refers to town or Community.

Afobaje: Kingmaker.

Baba Lene: Refers to the head and founder of Cherubim and Seraphim Church at Ugbo-nla in Ilaje local government area of Ondo State, South Western Nigeria. *He was at a time the head of Ojadele ruling house.*

Olubo: Refers to chieftaincy title of a Kingmaker in Ugbo Kingdom, presently a title of the King of Obenla.

Alagho: Refers to chieftaincy title of a Kingmaker in Ugbo Kindgom, presently a title of the King of Odonla.

Odoka: Refers to chieftaincy title of a kingmaker in Ugbo Kingdom, presently a title of the King of Obe-Ogbaro.

Father-to-son inheritance principle: This refers to a succession principle in which any of the sons of the deceased king inherit the throne, not necessarily the eldest son, as the case of primogeniture.

Succession principle of rotation: A system of succession where inheritance to the throne is rotated among the male descendants of the ruling house.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Preamble

There is a growing literature on chieftaincy conflicts in Africa, Nigeria and Yorubaland in particular. However, there are only few attempts, if any, in examining how modernity has influenced the chieftaincy institution and created different forms of conflicts in Yorubaland. In this chapter, attempt is made at conceptualising certain terms to enhance greater understanding in the discourse. The chapter also focuses on theoretical framework and review of existing literature. As it is the norm in all academic studies, there is need for clarity as regards the meaning of the concepts and the context in which the concepts are employed. The key concepts in this study are modernity, chieftaincy and conflict. The need for providing the theoretical foundation of the study cannot be over-emphasised. Ragin (1994) has argued that the social scientific representation of social life involves more than addressing social theory, but includes a clear dialogue between social theory on the one hand and empirical data on the other as an essential part of the research process. It is for these reasons that this study attempted to review existing studies and explored conceptual and theoretical issues relating to chieftaincy conflict and modernity in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.

2.1 Conceptual Clarification

2.1.1 Modernity

Social discourses have viewed different ideas and periods to constitute modernity. Historians and social scientists have attempted to answer the question, when did the modern era begin? This question has been answered differently by different historians and sociologists. For some, it began with the Renaissance while others point to the rise of modern science. Additionally, others relate it to the high middle Ages in the thirteenth century. According to Johnson (2000), these divergences indicate that the concept of modernity itself is sufficiently amorphous and defies precise dating. However, in all accounts, two developments appear to have shaped civilisation in

Europe which has come to be associated with modernity- these are political and technological revolutions that occurred about the eighteenth century.

Accordingly, Giddens (1990) argues that modernity refers to “modes of social life or organisation which emerged in Europe from about the seventeenth century onwards and which subsequently became more or less worldwide in their influence” (p.1). Similarly, Parfitt (2002) contends that the emergence of modernity is often associated with the Enlightenment period in Europe, and particularly with the late eighteenth century. Their definitions associate modernity with a time period and with an initial geographical location. However, Giddens (1990) opines that the conception of modernity for the moment leaves its major characteristics safely stowed away in a black box. Parfitt (2002) avers that “the complex of ideas that we associate with modernity developed over a long period, arguably lasting at least two millennia” (p.13). To this fact, modernity developed out of several ideas and to trace its origin means there must be a brief attempt at surveying the pattern of ideas in the classical era. Nonetheless, the concern of this section is not to understand the origins of modernity but to ascertain its meaning and apply it to this study. Conversely, modernity is traceable to the periods of searching for the truth in knowledge through understanding nature itself. Therefore, modernity refers to the enlightenment era and meant establishing knowledge and its foundations.

Furthermore, Taiwo (2010) emphasises that modernity and colonialism have been used interchangeably. This is because the interaction between African institutions and modernity is simultaneous with the colonial invasion of the continent. However, Taiwo (2010) argues that if modernity is synonymous with colonialism as commonly advanced in popular discourse, then its institutions in Africa should be functional, rather the reverse has been the case. In all these, one marker of modernity has been the perception of superiority either in terms of intellect or human physiology. In this study, modernity refers to the rationalising of the superiority of modern social, economic and political structures over pristine chieftaincy institutions in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.

2.1.2 Chieftaincy

Chieftaincy is a widely studied topic in Africa (Crowder and Ikime, 1970; Crowder, 1978; Falola, 2006). One of the leading issues in the discourse is to conceptualise, define and understand the meaning of the title, ‘chief.’ Thus, Crowder and Ikime

(1970) contends that the title of chief is a colonial invention that either raised the status of those not of royal lineage or reduced that of kings mistakenly referred to as chiefs. According to Falola and Genova (2006), the title of a chief was applied to the *Alaafin* of Oyo, who, in reality, presided over the vast Oyo Empire. They added that “*more recently, the title of chief has been given to “commoners” deemed important to politics*” (p.13). For instance, a lawyer was titled a chief to include him in the Western House of Chiefs in the 1950s. Thus, the position of ruler is no longer based purely on kinship. Sotunde (2012) claims that a chief is the holder of a title which is properly and lawfully conferred by a recognised and appropriate authority. Therefore chieftaincy is symbolised by title taking. Nevertheless, today, chieftaincy title is opened to the intelligentsia and the politicians who could wish for a title and make serious efforts to have one conferred on them. Yet, it would remain a desire until the appropriate authority which has power to confer such title is disposed to it.

Apart from the understanding of a chief, traditional chieftaincy is further complicated by the use of a cultural suggestive term-traditional. The meaning and value of the use of the term tradition in understanding chieftaincy has come under serious scrutiny especially with the widening application of the term- chief. Falola, in his study of African cultures, has indicated the ambiguity of tradition given that it cannot be pinned to any specific time and period (2003). This is because the shift from tradition to modern is not one clear event. Rather it was a transition through the lenses of tradition to modern. Falola and Genova show a common view in the literature of chieftaincy institution among the Yoruba to represent what was pristine and perfect about the Yoruba society prior to the arrival of the Europeans (2006). As a matter of fact, this period has been described by Olaoba (2002) to experience absolute peace. According to Falola and Genova, ideas such as this could be misleading. However, what has interested historians of chieftaincy institution is the structure and function of the traditional governance system in Africa, particularly in Yorubaland prior to British occupation.

Traditional governance system in pre-colonial Africa has been categorised into two: - consensus based systems of decentralised political systems; and chieftaincy of the centralised political systems (Eldis, 2007:2). In the former category is the Igbo village assembly of South Eastern Nigeria while in the later is the Yoruba monarchical system in South Western Nigeria. The understanding of chieftaincy system applied in this

study is best illustrated by Olufemi Vaughan who shows in his book *Nigerian Chiefs*, that the chieftaincy structure is a communal and ethnic based institution (2000). Thus, in this study, the reference to chieftaincy implies the established rulership by lineage or kinship in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.

2.1.3 Conflict

According to Schmid (1998), the term “conflict” is etymologically derived from the Latin verb, “Confligere”. He asserts that conflict is a human phenomenon that occurs in every society and relationship. It refers to a confrontational situation between individuals or a group resulting from opposite or incompatible end or means. In the same line of argument, Best (2006) avers that conflict outcome can be functional or dysfunctional. He elucidates of an increasing urge by conflict workers and handlers to achieve better interpretation of conflict and the way it works with a view to responding to the specific problems identified in the relationship between parties. According to Otite (1999), conflicts arise from the pursuit of divergent interests, goals and aspirations by individuals and or groups in defined social and physical environments. Changes in the social environment, such as access to new political positions, or perceptions of new resources arising from developments in the physical environment are fertile grounds for conflicts involving individuals and groups who are interested in using these new resources to achieve their goals.

Furthermore, conflict whether viewed as functional or dysfunctional is a recurring fact. Otite (1999) argues that it “could be pathological, depending on the perspective of the analyst”. Conflict is inherent in all kinds of social, economic and political activities. It could also be seen from a psychological and political perspective. He argues that “from the psychological level, conflict refers to a situation in which a person is motivated to engage in two or more mutually exclusive activities”. Example of this kind of conflict is a soldier in battle, faced with the problems of either the desire of running away or the fear of losing face with his fellow combatants. This amounts to the fact that face saving is important in conflict as it could help in building trust among parties. At the political level, conflicts emerge whenever two or more persons (or groups) seek to possess the same objects, occupy the same space or the same exclusive position and pursue incompatible means for achieving their purposes.

Conflicts are the results of what are borne out of potentialities not of the actual (Oтите, 1999). This gives credence to the potentiality-actuality of conflict in our society. The fact remains that there might be no conflict if the parties do not possess the desire to carry out the means or achieve the ends that appear incompatible. Therefore, conflict suggests stake competition, and since there is no competition without some form of antagonism or desire of the conflicting opponent, conflict makes meaning when understood as the manifestation of incompatibility of interests. Thus, conflict in this study was interpreted as a clash of interest between individuals or groups arising from perceived incompatible means.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theories of modernity and relative deprivation were used in this study to explain the interaction between modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and conflicts in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom. This is particularly important to understand how modern state governance system has intervened in traditional processes and created forms of conflict among members of the society. Change is a constant phenomenon in any society. A fascinating theory, to some extent detailed in literature such as Dougherty and Pfalzgraff (1981) understand “conflict as a function not of poverty but of social development and change” (p.241). Rosenau (1964) contends that “the more rapid the rate of social change becomes, the greater the likelihood of intra-societal violence” (p. 5).

In addition, Feldman (1964) argues that change contributes to revolutionary potential rather than eradicating dissatisfactions. This explains the pattern of elite politics in all societies as there is a constant interaction between power, status, influence, and change. According to Falola (2006), power, status and influence “are related to a society’s political philosophy and economy” (p.161). He further explains this relationship, giving an instance where the power of a ruler may be affected by economic misfortunes, political changes such as the imposition of a new dynasty, the incorporation of one polity by another and the re-definition of the concept of power. The forms of the interactions are as varied as the factors of change. That is, the feature of such change could have an orbital turn or exhibiting a totally new structure, with attendant consequences on power and social relations within a polity and replacing another. At each point, there are efforts by the elite to replace dominant ideas by what

is considered a superior one. Chieftaincy institution in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom is central to the strategies of governance. However, this has been affected given the interaction of the institution with modern state structures. To understand how this interaction has reinforced chieftaincy conflicts in *Ugbo* Kingdom, two analytical frameworks were employed to anchor the discourse on modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and conflicts. These frameworks were the theory of Modernity and Relative Deprivation Theory.

2.2.1 Theory of Modernity

Modernity theorists assume that, the world as well as human social cultural ideals are constantly changing (Habermas, 1987; Giddens, 1990; Appadurai, 1996 and Taiwo, 2010). Modernity theorists argue that traditions are neither static nor are they to be observed without reflecting on them and taking them through the test of rationality. To this end, tradition and the rational ideal are constantly being impacted by change and change becomes the only constant but rather than a marked departure from the past, it bears with it elements of older traditions.

Giddens (1990) associates the writings of classical sociology theorists including Marx, Smith and Dovey with modernity. He uses terms such as radical, high and low modernity to draw distinctions at an advanced stage of modernity. The contention of modernity theorists indicate that it is a mode of social life or organisation that emerged in Europe since the seventeenth century and spread its influence throughout the world (Habermas, 1987; Giddens, 1990; Appadurai, 1996; Taiwo, 2010). Particularly, Giddens (1990) argues that the modes of life brought into being by modernity have swept us away from all traditional types of social order in quite an unprecedented fashion. He contends that in both “its extensionality and its intentionality the transformations involved in modernity are more profound than most sorts of change characteristic of prior periods” (p.4). On the extensional plane, he asserts that it has served to establish forms of social interconnection that span the globe. In his view, in intentional terms, it has come to alter some of the most intimate and personal features of our day-to-day existence.

Nevertheless, Giddens (1990) maintains that there are continuities between the traditional and the modern. Thus, he avers that the changes that have occurred over the past three or four centuries, representing a tiny period of human history have such a

comprehensive effect that only a limited knowledge of prior periods of transition is needed in trying to interpret them. He elucidated further that the long-standing influence of social evolutionism is one of the reasons necessitating the discontinuous character of modernity but this has not been appreciated as it is often neglected. In his view of evolutionism, history can be told in terms of a story line which imposes an orderly picture upon the disorderly nature of human happenings. Thus, history "begins" with small, isolated cultures, moves through the development of pastoral communities, the formation of agrarian states, culminating in the emergence of modern societies in the West. Thus, this guided the analysis of identity construction, identity of the self and the interaction between modern state structures with chieftaincy conflict.

Furthermore, Giddens (1990) identifies several factors that highlight discontinuities that separate modern social institutions from the traditional social orders. According to him, one of the distinguishing features is the sheer pace of change which the era of modernity sets into motion. Thus, traditional civilisations may have been considerably more dynamic than pre-modern systems, but the pace of change in conditions of modernity is extreme. Therefore, Giddens' (1990) modernity theory was used as a platform to understand how modernity, particularly the modern state structures have displaced traditional political structures in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom and complicated the struggles between the political elite. It was also explored in interpreting and understanding how modernity has set the traditional religions and modern imperial faith subsystems as rivals.

However, theorising modernity in Africa ought to check the application of misleading labels, and draw attention to the various pressures exerted on the traditional institutions. Modernity and its ideas of superiority and rationality have created increasing distrust; hence people have continued to explore other avenues of fulfilling their expectations. Thus, a clash of interests has been the result. Nyamnjoh (2014) contends that such clashes are resultant effects of the search for political empowerment championed by modernity. According to Nyamnjoh (2014), walking the corridors of power and resources, seeking political and economic empowerment and representation for their regions or peoples as cultural units, such ethnic associations or their representatives have often been more active and fruitful in the name of ordinary citizens and subjects than most formal voluntary associations in many African countries. This underlies the 'new' kings that are now embroiled in modern trends of throne ascendancy, managing

the disputes and they have continued to improvise and adapt with changing circumstances rather than the inherent fixation with the past. What this implies is that there are constant attempts to carry out activities of the throne or try to take hold of the throne through personal or individual philosophies.

Thus, modernity as a theory is applicable to the interaction between modernity and chieftaincy conflict. This forms in part, a vital analytical tool that was explored in interpreting how the chieftaincy institution has interfaced and/or accommodated its influences. According to Nyamnjoh (2014), the institution has been wrongly reduced (one of the influences of modernity) to the chief as an individual and credited with far more might than right. However, to explain the questions of identity and internal stimulation of conflicts the Relative Deprivation analytical framework becomes relevant.

2.2.2 Relative Deprivation Theory

In attempt to explain why people engage and participate in conflicts, several scholars including Blank, Gurr, Burton and Schmid et al (1998) suggest that a group's violent reaction is caused by perceived differences between what a group thinks they are entitled to as members of a given society and what they get in reality (see Gurr, 1970). Relative deprivation, a theory dominantly utilised in social sciences suggest that people who feel they are being deprived of something considered essential in their society may organise or join social movements dedicated to obtaining the things of which they feel deprived. Such deprivations are often measured along economic lines, rights, political voices and status. For instance, "when a particular group is systematically excluded from high income positions in the society or a situation where a group is denied access to elite the group" political positions, such perceived deprivation stimulates a feeling of collective frustration of the group" (Nnabuihe, 2016:22). As such, relative deprivation is a significant driver of social disorders and conflicts in society. In this connection, Gurr (1970) draws from the frustration-aggression hypothesis in the psychological literature to connect relative deprivation and collective action – in this case conflicts and/or violence. This analytical tool became relevant in this study to explain the implication of continuous hold to the *Olugbo* throne by a section of the *Ojadele* ruling house – *Agbedun* segment to the detriment of other segments- *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye*-who are also entitled to the throne which generated mobilisations and identity crisis, that

deepened the chieftaincy selection conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom. This hold on the throne which spanned several decades (1900 to 2007- by Ohun section of Agbedun segment of Ojadele ruling house), its implications on the selection processes could only be understood with the application of the relative deprivation theory.

2.3 Literature Review

2.3.1 Chieftaincy Institution in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom

The Ilaje-Ugbo people of Ondo State, South Western Nigeria have settled in present coastal region for centuries. It has been established that the historical roots of the Ilaje-Ugbo people began in Ile-Ife a long time ago. There is a school of thought as indicated by Akinjogbin, (2004) that the Ugbo people were the original settlers of Ile-Ife but they left due to chieftaincy squabbles that arose between them and the Oduduwa led Ife dynasty. This account foregrounds the argument that chieftaincy dispute is not totally new to the Ilaje-Ugbo people.

In Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom, the *Olugbo* is the symbol of traditional and political authority like any other king in Yorubaland. All the hierarchy of authority within the traditional institution emanates from the *Olugbo*. Like other divine kings, the *Olugbo* was rated close to God having received his mandate from Him. As such, the king is believed to have absolute powers. Thus, the focus on the *Olugbo* as the only institution of worship and reverence, as depicted in popular *Ilaje* phrase “*ofo eyi fo ye foma*” literally means - the great eliminator who could eliminate the mother and child (Ikuejube, 2005:25). This phrase adumbrates how the king is revered among the people. His actions as a king are termed legitimate given that legitimacy is inherent in him. Therefore, he personally appoints all important chiefs. At his will, chiefs are promoted, demoted, transferred, retired or removed from office. This is because his personality is conceived as sacred hence the expression “*kabiyesi*” (this is from the phrase: “*ki abi yin ko si*” which literally translates as there is no question or anyone querying your authority) from his subjects who are traditionally known to revere him like any other Yoruba King. As noted by Adesoji, 2010, the reverence for Yoruba *Oba* is demonstrated in the location of his palace, which is isolated from the rest of the people in the community.

This is also demonstrated in the location of *Olugbo*'s palace at *Ode-Ugbo* which is separated from the *Ugbo* communities.

The *Olugbo* has an advisory council known as "*Dosun*". The *Dosun* is the highest organ of chieftaincy next to *Olugbo* which comprises sixteen members each representing the Sixteen quarters of the *Ugbo* Kingdom. Unlike the *Oyo Mesi* and the *Uzama* in the old *Oyo* and *Benin* Kingdoms respectively, the *Ugbo* *Dosun*(s) are not kingmakers. The duty to appoint new *Olugbo* is entrenched in Royal Council *Afobaje*. The council of *Dosun*, apart from being advisory council to *Olugbo* also performed other functions such as; holding periodical meetings at compounds or quarters levels in the town and assist the *Olugbo* in the administration of *Ugbo* Kingdom. The next level of Authority in *Ugbo* chieftaincy institution is the "*Ojoye*" who served as Supervisors in demarcated land area within *Ugbo* kingdom. They also performed specific traditional rites in line with the culture and tradition of *Ugbo* Kingdom. The smallest unit is the "*Oja or Ilu*". The *Oja* is headed by *Oloja* or *Baale*. The outlying towns and villages within the kingdom are brought into the administrative and control system of *Olugbo* through the appointment of *Oloja* or *Baale* as a crown representative of *Olugbo*. Also heads were created for a number of compounds known as "*Agbo-Ile*" and each is headed by "*Olori-Ebi*" (Head of Family). The appointment of *Olori-ebi* is an informal one, usually the eldest person from the male lineage of the family (Ikuejube, 2005:29).

It has been established above that the pre-dynastic Yorubaland (*Ilaje-Ugbo* inclusive) was ruled by small families (the *Ebi* system). It was essentially lineage heads who exercised power over small hamlets inhabited by people related to one another by blood. The structures of power were later to become complex when *Yoruba* communities established dynasties and centralised city-states. Llyod's (1971) analysis of the development of *Yoruba* kingdoms show that most of what is known today in *Yoruba* history and chieftaincy institution is derived from the era when dynasties were established. That earliest establishment had two forms of power structure: the town government and the central administration which enabled the chiefs to exercise power and enjoy influence and status. These forms of power structures had both crowned kings (*Oba*) and uncrowned chiefs (*Baale*) to organise the communities, towns, or

metropolis through the council of chiefs (Falola, 2006:163). Kings in pre-colonial Yorubaland exercised both political and religious powers. In addition, they controlled economic resources.

As demonstrated by Llyod (1971) and later by Falola (2006), kings (*Oba*) derive wealth from the proceeds of their farms and given their access to a large pool of labor, their farms are usually the biggest in the community. Other sources of revenue available to them include gifts, fines, tributes, tolls, and profits from trade. In addition, all chiefs receive identical gifts, fines, and tributes but the *Oba* receives a higher percentage. The *Oba* receives death duties from the family of deceased chiefs and other prominent citizens. Such crowned kings also had the privileges of inheriting the property, wives, and slaves of their predecessors, thus allowing them to build on the wealth of others (Falola, 2006; Sotunde, 2012). However, a part of this wealth was spent on the community. The chiefs performed rituals to the gods for the welfare of their people and also feasted their subjects occasionally.

Moreover, changes occurred in the 19th century Yorubaland which had significant effects on the chieftaincy institution (Llyod, 1971). These changes majorly resulted from several military expeditions, including the fall of the Oyo Empire, wars that accompanied the fall and the emergence of new towns and power structures (Sotunde, 2012). This was further altered with British incursion in the 19th century which brought changes in administration, economy and society. Nevertheless, scholars of Yoruba history have contended that colonial conquest involved a loss of sovereignty to all the communities and the subordination of their chiefs to alien rule (Llyod, 1971; Vaughan, 2003, Falola, 2003, 2006; Sotunde, 2012). The establishment of indirect rule by the colonialists was the hallmark of colonial imperialism. The system as described by Lord Lugard was an administration through which the chiefs were part of the machinery of government. The method was to involve the indigenous rulers in the government to solve the problems of the scarcity of British officials, reduced administration costs, and made use of Africans in governing themselves to minimize tension. In this arrangement, the chiefs shot into the limelight and became officials in Native Administration. For instance, in the Native Courts where their powers were most visible, the courts of the paramount *Oba* were of both first instance and appeal, except in more serious cases, which had to be referred to the resident. They were also

involved in tax collection, a duty they had to do well because their salaries were related to tax volume. To this end Falola (2006), Ikuejube (2005) add that as the chiefs struggle to collect more taxes, so did they incur the anger of their own people.

It has been argued that chieftaincy conflicts became more prevalent in the colonial period, and were exacerbated by changing social and economic conditions. As noted by Ajetunmobi and Yonlonfoun (2012:154), “it was a period in which traditional, ethnic, political and state boundaries, as well as values were violated”. Thus, the increasing and rapid pace of modernity alongside the changing socio-economic conditions shaped and reshaped the chieftaincy institution and instituted a culture of stiff competition for the stool. Particularly, the advent of Native Courts and Native Treasuries likewise opened many new areas of contention. For example, with the commercialisation of land, stools’ dispute became sharper. The increased revenue and the opportunities available to traditional office holders led to greater competition for stools, and increased rivalry.

2.3.2 Chieftaincy Selection Processes, Group Identity Construction and Conflict

There is a plethora of literature illustrating the complex and contested forms of identity construction within and across social spaces (Alexander, 2007; Kanchan, 2012). However, the complex nature of identity construction is utilised under different pedestals. As contended by Economists, if you are born poor, you may die rich but your ethnic group is fixed and unchangeable. This view, demonstrates the primordialist concept of identity which contend that each of us belong to one and only one ethnic group, with its membership fixed for life, it is passed down intact across generations. It is the contention of the primordialist that wars begin and end, states grow and die, economies boom and crash, but through it all, ethnic groups stay the same. But, for the constructivist school, identities are constructed and can be deconstructed. In other words, group identity is fluid and not fixed. Therefore, identity can be renegotiated or reconstructed. Obviously, the point of convergence of different schools of identity formation is that none negates the position that identity is a constant factor that initiates conflicts. This is because, the perception of difference, distinguishes certain individuals and/or groups as distinct from others with ascribed privileges or designated exclusions. This in itself is a trigger for conflict. In same view, Trijono (2004) agrees that if the process of constructing identity has not taken place in any environment, harmony may

exist, but there is usually a sense of vulnerability that arises from the people's own uncertainty or external factors.

Several scholarly writings have attempted to understand identity construction. Benedict Anderson's (1991) seminal work "Imagined Communities" brings to mind the strangeness, but also the centrality, of human will to be connected with others of one's kind whom one will never meet and will never know. He attempts to understand nationalism and the desire for a sovereign identity. This in many ways is linked to memories of common political, social and cultural destiny. The people involved seek those that are connected with them in the present, by blood or language or difference from a common enemy (or a combination of all); and connected through time by a shared belonging to something that seems to emerge from a steadier, thicker, more grounded past and be on its way to an indestructible, perhaps redeeming future. Anderson (1991) situates identity construction within a nation and argued that the desire and construction of a single identity is often imagined given that even members of the smallest group "will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (p. 6). While the primordialist's view of ethnic identities cannot be easily jettisoned, it is clear from the imagined community theory that several identities are constructed or at best imagined. The extent to which they are imagined is determined by the impossibility of knowing or meeting all members of the group.

Before now, attention was given to individualism rather than groupings. Therefore, the study of identity forms a fulcrum of modern social thought. Since the emergence of identity studies it has evolved and become dominant in contemporary social discourse. According to Cerulo (1997), sociologists focus primarily on the formation of the "me", exploring the ways in which interpersonal interactions mold individual's sense of self. However, the emergence of studies on collective identity is an antithesis to the initial concerns. Thus, scholarship refocused attention from the "me" analysis to the collective analysis. However, scholars such as Schelling (1978) have prioritised the discourse over the systematic scrutiny of behaviour. This approach has been negated by Vermeersch (2011) which examines identity as a source of mobilisation rather than a product of it. According to Cerulo (1997), collective identity is a concept grounded in classic sociological constructs. These will include Durkheim's "collective conscience", Marx's "class consciousness", and Weber's "Verstehen". Collective identity literature

addresses the “we-ness” of groups and stresses the similarities or shared attributes around which group members bond together. Earlier studies viewed these attributes as natural or essential features. This school of thought contradicts the social constructionist view of identity.

The social constructionist approach to identity rejects any category that sets forward essential or core features as the unique property of collective members. From this perspective, every collective becomes a social artefact, an entity molded, refabricated, and mobilised in accordance with reigning cultural scripts and centres of power. This is why Anderson (1991) views such collective as imagined. According to Moodod (2005), this defines sexual identities that continued to expand globally. The voice of social constructionism that was rooted in sexual discourses was later adopted into the discourses on ethnicity and race especially in the United States of America.

Modood’s (2005) study of identity formation in the United Kingdom tilts towards the preoccupation to understand the character and processes of ethnic minority political mobilisation in Britain. This he examined with a view to addressing the effects of identity construction on social mobility in United Kingdom. Modood (2005) draws attention to the way the contexts of new identities is emerging. He contended that one important way the context of identity has changed over the last couple of decades is the idea of political identities and minority communities and these have influenced the ways in which minority identities have emerged, and the ways in which they have developed. He added that in the last couple of decades the bases of identity-formation have undergone important changes and there has come to be minority assertiveness. To him, identity has moved from that which might be unconscious and taken for granted because it is implicit in distinctive cultural practices to conscious and public projections of identity and the explicit creation and assertion of politicised ethnicities. This is part of a wider socio-political climate which is not confined to race and culture or non-white minorities. It is his contention that feminism and the revival of groupings are some prominent examples of these new identity movements which have come to be an important feature in many countries in which class-politics has declined. He argued that identities in this political climate are not implicit and private but are shaped through intellectual, cultural, and political debates and become a feature of public discourse and policies, especially at the level of domestic government. The identities formed in such processes are fluid and susceptible to change with the political climate,

but to think of them as weak is to overlook the pride with which they may be asserted, the intensity with which they may be debated, and their capacity to generate community activism and political campaigns. What is missing from Modood (2005), however, is how identities are constructed against the modern trends of political mobilisation and governance.

From Cerulo's (1997) position as indicated earlier, much emphasis on identity construction is placed on gender. Nevertheless, Howard (2005) has shown that most of the identities in different regions were practically constructed to suit the social operations of the region involved. Thus, he called attention to the multiplicity of identities people possess and situates identity formation processes in social interactions. This draws attention to Cinnamon (2005) who explores ways that clan genealogies and traditions indicate historical processes of identity construction, individual and group mobility, and spatial history in northern Gabon. He argues that the history of northern Gabon has long been portrayed as the ethnic history of Fang migrations and the encounter with Europeans. For Cinnamon, this approach distorts the dynamic processes of identity construction and shifting dimensions of social space that do not easily fall into ethnic categories. This engagement rose against recent scholarship in both history and anthropology which sought to problematise ethnic groups as units of analysis and instead to underline individual mobility and the fluidity of identities and social groups. More importantly, it is crucial to situate this individual mobility and fluidity of identities within a broader historical process especially within the indigenous political structures (chieftaincy institutions) to understand how these have engineered conflicts. Cinnamon (2005) provides an insight into how groups in north eastern Gabon constructed their identities through migrations and genealogies. As important as this study is to the discourse of identity construction, it failed to connect the individual mobility to issues of elite struggle for modern state structures for power. To this end, it is salient to highlight the relationship between group identity construction and the struggle for indigenous political structures.

To better understand the connections between the discourses of identity construction, fluidity of these identities and individual mobility, it is imperative to understand ethnic groupings, ethnicity and the traditional sources of enquiry in ethnicity which the constructivist school is part of. The literature on ethnicity is vast with highly divergent foci on its meaning, practically; it is multidisciplinary, with particularly significant

contributions drawn from history, sociology, and political science. Even the portion of it that focuses on the meaning of ethnicity is vast and continues to grow. There is, nonetheless, no consensus concerning both the general nature of an ethnic group and the ongoing political importance of ethnicity.

The clarification of the concept of ethnic group and ethnicity is necessary to remove ambiguities surrounding the meaning and usage of the concept. Ethnic group refers to any distinct group which possesses among others language, culture, myth of common origin and territory which differentiates it from other groups. Accordingly, by ethnicity, we mean the active sense of identification with some ethnic units or more appropriately, a strong feeling of allegiance to one ethnic group. It is perhaps very important to state that the presence of more than one ethnic group within a political unit does not necessarily engender or suggest the existence of ethnicity. It is appropriate to talk of ethnicity only when people within a multi-ethnic community start to stress their identity and exclusiveness. Nnoli (1978) defines ethnic groups as social formations distinguished by the communal character of their boundaries. He asserts that the crucial communal factors may be language, culture or both. Therefore, ethnic group can be conceptualised as a social collectivity whose members not only shares such objective characteristics as language, core-territory, ancestral myth, culture, religion, and/or political organisation, but also has some subjective consciousness or perception of common descent or identity. Thus, ethnic identity results from contact with other groups. It is germane to note that ethnic pluralism is necessary but an insufficient condition for ethnicity. Ethnicity, therefore, is a social phenomenon associated with interactions among members of different ethnic groups. According to Sklar (1967), ethnicity has to do with the employment or mobilisation of ethnic identity and difference to gain advantage in situations of competition or cooperation by men in power to further their own special interest. Ethnicity is entrenched within a 'we/them' state-of-affairs where membership of a group is the only determinant of whether someone may be a beneficiary from a particular ethnic social group or not.

On the individual level, ethnicity is a social-psychological process which gives an individual a sense of belonging and identity. It is, of course, one of a number of social phenomena which produce a sense of identity. Chandra (2012) asserts that ethnic identity can be defined as a manner in which persons, on account of their ethnic origin, locate themselves psychologically in relation to one or more social systems, and in

which they perceive others as locating them in relation to those systems. By ethnic origin, it is meant, either that a person has been socialised in an ethnic group or that his or her ancestors, real or symbolic, have been members of the group. The social systems may be one's ethnic community or society at large, or other ethnic communities and other societies or groups, or a combination of all these. Locating oneself in relation to a community and society is not only a psychological phenomenon, but also a social phenomenon in the sense that the internal psychological states express themselves objectively in external behavioural patterns that come to be shared by others. Thus, individuals locate themselves in one or another community internally by states of mind and feelings, such as self-definitions or feelings of closeness, and externally by behaviour appropriate to these states of mind and feelings. Behaviour according to cultural patterns is thus an expression of identity and can be studied as an indication of its character. This is important in understanding the intrigues that surround the chieftaincy selection processes as issues of identity and individualism are part of the defining issues in the conflict.

Chieftaincy selection process is one of the bases for contemporary conflicts in the in-group versus out-group relations. Internal solidarity of groups contributes to social order and its absence promotes discrimination and stereotype. This makes in-group bias a constant feature of inter-group discrimination. This is because race and ethnic relations have traditionally reflected different views. Sub ethnic identity is often weaved around social categorisation of individuals within in-group relations. This has been properly documented in psychology and sociology literature of race and ethnic relations. Accordingly, psychological and sociological approaches to race relations have traditionally reflected different perspectives (Lawler, 2010). Psychological theories have commonly emphasized the role of the individual, in terms of personality and attitude, in social biases and discrimination and considered the role of dysfunctional processes on the overt expression of social biases. In addition, contemporary approaches, such as aversive racism and symbolic racism perspectives have considered the contributions of normal processes (e.g., socialization and social cognition) in the expression of subtle, and often unconscious, biases. Sociological theories, in contrast, have frequently emphasized the role of large-scale social and structural dynamics in intergroup relations in general, and in race relations in particular

(Lawler, 2010). These theories have considered the dynamics of race relations largely in economic and class-based terms-and often to the exclusion of individual influences.

According to Lawler *et al* (2010), the operation of group-level processes is hypothesized to be dynamically distinct from the influence of individual-level processes. Different models of functioning are involved, and these models critically influence how people perceive others and experience their own sense of identity. In terms of perceptions of others, for example, Brewer (1988:6) has proposed a "dual process model of impression formation". The primary distinction in this model is between two types of processing: person based and category based. Person-based processing is bottom-up. It is data-driven, involving the piecemeal acquisition of information that begins "*at the most concrete level and stops at the lowest level abstraction required by the prevailing processing objectives*". The category-based processing, in contrast, proceeds from global to specific; it is top-down. In top-down processing, how the external reality is perceived and experienced is influenced by category-based, subjective impressions. According to Brewer, category-based processing is more likely to occur than person-based processing, because social information is typically organised around social categories.

In the Nigerian context and Yoruba in particular, categorisation have raised the issue of an Ibadan Yoruba individual constantly attempting to distinguish himself from the Ijesa. Same applies to several sub-groups among the Yoruba as well as other ethnic groupings in Nigeria. This form of relationship is implicated in the elevation of former chiefs of the *Olugbo* as the Obas of their communities. Such discrimination has the tendency to generate tension within the in-group. In this situation, some members of the in-group are treated as out-group. This corroborates Horowitz's (1985) argument that there are out-groups within in-groups. This has a connection with chieftaincy conflicts in the sense that most of the conflicts are generated by social categorisation.

2.3.3 Modernity and Identity of the Self in the Chieftaincy Selection Processes

Establishing the connections between modernity and self-identity, Giddens (1991) x-rays how modernity changes our social life and our in-world experiences. This has implication in the chieftaincy selection processes. Giddens contends that self and society as mechanisms of self-identity are shaped and re-shaped by the institutions of modernity. According to Giddens (1991), in conditions of late modernity, we live 'in

the world' in a different sense from previous eras of history. Though everyone still continues to live a local life, and the constraints of the body ensure that all individuals, at every moment, are contextually situated in time and space. However, the transformations of place, and the intrusion of distance into local activities, combined with the centrality of mediated experience, radically change what 'the world' actually is. This is so both on the level of the 'phenomenal world' of the individual and the general universe of social activity within which collective social life is enacted. Although everyone lives a local life, phenomenal worlds for the most part are truly global.

Giddens' (1991) contention indicates that characterising individuals' phenomenal worlds is difficult, certainly in the abstract. Every person reacts selectively to the diverse sources of direct and mediated experience which compose the world as it is experienced or what Giddens (1991) refers to as *Umwelt*. One thing we can say with some certainty is that, in very few instances the phenomenal world corresponds to the habitual settings through which an individual physically moves. Localities are thoroughly penetrated by distanced influences, whether this is regarded as a cause for concern or simply accepted as a routine part of social life. In this case, all individuals actively, although by no means always in a conscious way, selectively incorporate many elements of mediated experience into their day-to-day conduct. This is never a random or a passive process, contrary to what the image of the *collage* effect might suggest. A newspaper, for example, presents a collage of information, as does, on a wider scale, the whole multitude of newspapers which may be on sale in a particular area or country. Nevertheless, each reader imposes his own order on this diversity, by selecting which newspaper to read, if any, and by making an active selection of its contents.

In some part, the appropriation of mediated information follows pre-established habits and obeys the principle of the avoidance of cognitive dissonance. That is to say, the plethora of available information is reduced via routinised attitudes which exclude, or reinterpret, potentially disturbing knowledge. From a negative point of view, such closure might be regarded as prejudice, the refusal seriously to entertain views and ideas divergent from those an individual already holds; yet, from another angle, avoidance of dissonance forms part of the protective cocoon which helps maintain ontological security. For even the most prejudiced or narrow-minded person, the

regularised contact with mediated information inherent in day-to-day life today is a positive appropriation: a mode of interpreting information within the routines of daily life (Giddens, 1990; 1991). Obviously, there are wide variations in terms of how open a given individual is to new forms of knowledge, and how far that person is able to tolerate certain levels of dissonance. But all phenomenal worlds are active accomplishments, and all follow the same basic psycho-dynamics, from the most local of ways of life to the most cosmopolitan.

Therefore, Giddens' (1991) connection of modernity and self-identity is what he termed 'living in the world', where the world is that of late modernity, which involves various distinctive tensions and difficulties on the level of the self. In this view, we can analyse these most easily by understanding them as dilemmas which, on one level or another, have to be resolved in order to preserve a coherent narrative of self-identity.

Nevertheless, to understand these dilemmas, it is important to draw attention to the individual's adaptation to a multicultural world. Thus, studies on identity have moved beyond the narrative of identity status and have emphasised the dynamic process of identity development and its contextual embodiment. For Li *et al.* (2012), the study of individual's adaptation to the multicultural background is a good entry point to the discourse of the identity of the self. However, little attention is given in the literature for the exploration of the role of modernity in constructing self-identity. Thus, recent discussions have placed increased focus on the role of modernity in the construction of the identity of the self. While there appears to be increasing consensus in the literature that modernity plays a major role in this process, there has been little explicit discussions on how modernity is meant to be understood (Parfitt, 2002; Taiwo, 2010). Said (1977) argue that human history is made by human beings and since struggle for territory is part of that history, so is the struggle over historical and social meanings. In this sense, there are conflicting ideas on the construction of the self. According to Said (1977), the construction of identity for identity, whether of Orient or Occident, France or Britain, while obviously a repository of distinct collective experiences, is finally a construction which involves establishing opposites and others (p. 332).

Sequential to the above, the actuality of such construction is always subject to the continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their differences from "us". Nevertheless, Said's (1977) contention that each age and society re-creates its "Others" indicates that distinctions and constructions of identity of self and 'other' is not

peculiar to modernity or what has been referred to as Europeanism (Said, 1977; Taiwo, 2010). According to Said (1977), “far from a static thing then, identity of self or of “other” is a much worked-over historical, social, intellectual, and political process that takes place as a contest involving individuals and institutions in all societies” (p. 332). Debates about “*Yorubanness*” in Southwestern Nigeria, or about “*Frenchness*” and “*Englishness*” in France and Britain respectively, or about Islam in countries such as Egypt and Pakistan, are part of the interpretive process which involves the identities of different “others,” whether they be outsiders and refugees, or apostates and infidels. It should be obvious in all cases that these processes are not mental exercises but urgent social contests involving such concrete political issues as immigration laws, the legislation of personal conduct, the constitution of orthodoxy, the legitimisation of violence and/or insurrection, the character and content of education, and the direction of foreign policy, which very often has to do with the designation of official enemies. Scholar like Ekeh (1983) avers that being Yoruba is a new kind of conception that emerged as a result of modern political process. This corroborates the contention of Biobaku (1973) who maintains that; “what is known among those identified as Yoruba today was the Egba, Ijesa, Ilesa, Ife, Ekiti, as well as the Ilaje”. He argued that the Yoruba may not have considered themselves a “single political entity” before the nineteenth century. However, as a single entity, the Yoruba is considered as one of the largest homogenous groups among Africans (Akinjogbin and Ayandele, 1980:121).

The above implies that the emergence of modernity which coincided with colonialism brought about the formation of a single identity- called Yoruba. In this light, modern incursion into Yorubaland altered the political and demographic map from what it was in 1800 and which has not changed much (Ajayi and Akintoye, 1980:280). However, the inconsistency of modernity also emphasised differences by reinforcing individualism, implying that while modernity fragments, it also unites. This draws attention to what Giddens (1991) calls dilemma of unification versus fragmentation. According to Giddens (1991), modernity fragments and it also unites. On the level of the individual, right up to that of planetary systems as a whole, tendencies towards dispersal compete with those promoting integration. So far as the self is concerned, the problem of unification concerns protecting and reconstructing the narrative of self-identity in the face of the massive intentional and extensional changes which modernity sets into being. In most pre-modern contexts, the fragmentation of experience was not a

prime source of anxiety. Trust relations were localised and focused through personal ties, even if intimacy in the modern sense was generally lacking. In a post-traditional order, however, an indefinite range of possibilities present themselves, not just in respect of options for behaviour, but in respect also of the 'openness of the world' to the individual. 'The world', as indicated above, is not a seamless order of time and space stretching away from the individual; it intrudes into the present through an array of varying channels and sources.

However, in Giddens' (1991) analysis, it is wrong to see the world 'out there' as intrinsically alienating and oppressive to the degree to which social systems are either large in scale or spatially distant from the individual. Such phenomena may often be drawn on to supply unifying influences; they are not just fragmenting in their impact on the self. Distant events may become as familiar, or more so, than proximate influences, and integrated into the frameworks of personal experience. Situations 'at hand' may in fact be more opaque than large-scale happenings affecting many millions of people. Consider some examples. A person may be on the telephone to someone twelve thousand miles away and for the duration of the conversation be more closely bound up with the responses of that distant individual than with others sitting in the same room. The appearance, personality and policies of a world political leader may be better known to a given individual than those of his next-door neighbour. These instances give credence to Samuel Johnson's (1921) position in the preface to his pioneer work *The History of the Yoruba* that educated natives of Yoruba are well acquainted with the history of England and with that of Rome and Greece, but of the history of their own country they know nothing whatever. This reproach is one of the author's objects to remove. Johnson (1921) shows how distant the Yoruba are from their immediate environment by indicating how its scholars are mindful of events far away but are removed from the happenings of their own roots. Furthermore, in justifying the unification versus fragmentation dilemma, Giddens (1991) illustrates that a person may be more familiar with the debate over global warming than with why the tap in the kitchen leaks. Nor are remote or large-scale phenomena necessarily factors only vaguely 'in the background' of an individual's psychological make-up and identity. A concern with global warming, for example, might form part of a distinctive lifestyle adopted by a person, even if she is not an ecological activist. Thus, she might keep in

close contact with scientific debates and adjust various aspects of her lifestyle in relation to the practical measures they suggest.

Nevertheless, while the above instances of Giddens (1991) illustrate that the world is not intrinsically alienating, it is obvious that global influences are spatialised. In an earlier study, Giddens (1991) gives spatial relations a key role in the structuring of the world. Spatial structure is one form of structure, and design is one kind of agency. Power is spatialised in the sense that all agency is situated in time/space 'locales' - kitchens, board meetings, cities, neighbourhoods, lectures and clubs, 'Locales' are akin to 'places' in-as-much as they are meaningful centres of everyday life. Everyday life is described by Giddens (1991) as a serial time/space path, marked by opening and closing brackets in both space and time which define 'situations'. Thus, Dovey (1999) asserts that the 'board meeting' is framed temporally by its time-slot and spatially by its entry sequence, enclosure, art works and outlook. Situations are also framed by clusters of rules which help to constitute and regulate activities, defining them as actions of certain sort and subject to given sanctions. Accordingly, Giddens (1991) emphasises that "the predictable character of the social world is "made to happen" as a condition and result of the knowledgeable application of rules and resources by actors" (p. 64). He contends that issues of privacy, rules about who shares space or crosses paths with whom are germane in understanding the structures of domination in space. Drawing an analysis from Goffman (1959), he gives special significance to the spatio-temporal opposition of front and back regions. It is his contention that locales are places and settings which structure institutionally embedded practices, including practices of power.

Bourdieu (1977) can be seen as parallel to much of Giddens (1991). The intent of his study attempts an evaluation, among others, of the practical mastery that people have of their situations in everyday life, constrained as they are by structures which are not of their own choosing. From scholastic philosophy Bourdieu (1977) employs the term *habitus* to refer to the complex net of structured predispositions into which we are socialised at an early stage.

Goffman's (1959) famous distinction of 'frontstage' and 'backstage' presents the surface of interaction. This implies not only criteria and signals for identification but also a structuring of interaction which allows the persistence of differences. Thus,

fragmentation, as demonstrated by Giddens (1991) in the unification versus fragmentation dilemma clearly tends to be promoted by the influences emphasised by Goffman (1959) and others indicating the diversifying of contexts of interaction. In many modern settings, individuals are caught up in a variety of differing encounters and milieu, each of which may call for different forms of appropriate' behaviour. Goffman (1959) is normally taken to be the leading theorist of this phenomenon. As the individual leaves one encounter and enters another, he sensitively adjusts the 'presentation of self' in relation to whatever is demanded of a particular situation. Such a view is often thought to imply that an individual has as many selves as there are divergent contexts of interaction, an idea which somewhat resembles post-structuralist interpretations of the self, albeit from a differing theoretical perspective. However, it would not be correct to see contextual diversity as simply and inevitably promoting the fragmentation of the self, let alone its disintegration into multiple 'selves'. According to Giddens (1991), it can just as well, at least in many circumstances, promote an integration of self. The situation is rather like the contrast between rural and urban life. A person may make use of diversity in order to create a distinctive self-identity which positively incorporates elements from different settings into an integrated narrative. Thus a cosmopolitan person is one precisely who draws strength from being at home in a variety of contexts.

The dilemma of unification versus fragmentation, like the others mentioned by Giddens (1991), has its pathologies. On the one hand we find the type of person who constructs his identity around a set of fixed commitments, which act as a filter through which numerous different social environments are reacted to or interpreted. Such a person, according to Giddens (1991), is a rigid traditionalist, in a compulsive sense, and refuses any relativism of context. On the other hand, in the case of a self which evaporates into the variegated contexts of action, we find the adaptive response which Erich Fromm has characterised as 'authoritarian conformity'. Fromm expresses this in the following way:

The individual ceases to be himself; he adopts entirely the kind of personality offered to him by cultural patterns; and he therefore becomes exactly as all others are and as they expect him to be ... this mechanism can be compared with the protective colouring some animals assume. They

look so similar to their surroundings that they are hardly distinguishable from them (Cited in Giddens, 1991:28).

In such circumstances, it could be argued that the false self-overrides and blankets out the original acts of thinking, feeling and willing which represent the true motivations of the individual. What remains of the true self is experienced as empty and inauthentic; yet this vacuum cannot be filled by the 'pseudo-selves' brought into play by the individual in different contexts, because these are as much stimulated by the responses of others as drawn from the person's inner convictions. According to Giddens (1991), in this situation ontological security is as weakly founded as in the case of the rigid traditionalist. The individual only feels psychologically secure in his self-identity in-so-far as others recognise his behaviour as appropriate or reasonable.

In the context of the Yoruba, the self in relation to chieftaincy conflict and modernity is mostly centred on the 19th century Yoruba kingdoms. According to Falola and Genova (2006), this is because changes among the Yoruba during this era stemmed from power shifts between Yoruba kingdoms. Other historical events which defined that period include the fall of the Oyo Empire and the eruption of the Yoruba wars. With such wars the influences of modernity therefore defined the interaction of the political elite. For instance, in the nineteenth century Yorubaland, *Alaafin* Adelu emerged the king of Oyo after the demise of his father *Alaafin* Atiba in 1859. This was a sharp contrast of earlier Oyo tradition as Adelu was supposed to die with his father as tradition demanded. This was earlier altered by the position of *Alaafin* Atiba that the practice of the *Aremo* – first son – dying with the Oba was barbaric. Consequently, after Adelu's installation, it generated legitimacy crisis which produced and escalated conflicts among Yoruba states.

What is clear from the literature on Yoruba identity, identity of self, modernity and chieftaincy conflict is that they have viewed power as existing between groups. Little attention is given to how power is instilled in the individual or self-identity as a result of modernity. What is missing therefore is the interrogation of how modernity interferes with self-identity to facilitate chieftaincy conflict among the Yoruba.

2.3.4 Modernity and Conflicts in Chieftaincy Selection Processes

Contemporary Africa is in a dilemma on how to deal with the complex interaction between chieftaincy institution and modernity. This has left its people in the grips of modernity. According to Nolte (2002), some recent examples include the *Alaafin* versus *Ooni* supremacy battle, the *Alake* and *Osiri* supremacy tussle in Abeokuta, all in Yorubaland, Southwest Nigeria; the *Tuobodom* Chieftaincy crisis in Ghana and several others. Cheka (2008) contends that the issues of these conflicts have been treated as a clash between tradition and modernity. There is a plethora of literature therefore engaging this interaction between modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and conflict in Africa. A consensus exist among historians of Africa that chieftaincy institutions were central to the strategies of governance in the colonial period especially in Yoruba land (Falola and Genova 2006; Vaughan, 2006). Vaughan (2006) contends that although modernity distorted chieftaincy structures, Yoruba kings, chiefs and western-educated elites still managed to effectively deploy traditional forces to advance their cultural and political status in a rapidly changing environment. Nevertheless, the forces of modernity seem to have overtaken the traditional forces in many respects as pressure has mounted on the traditional pattern of ascending the throne whittling it down and promoting modern patterns. This interaction has pitched the proponents of the traditional pattern against the modernity advocates which has further affected the identity of self among the Ilaje-Ugbo people. Such dynamic relationship among the Ilaje and their chieftaincy institution, emergent indigenous Western-educated elite and modern state political and legal structures was complicated by the new emphasis on modern governance, modern legal structures, development that the western-educated elite have insisted on since the colonial period.

It has been constantly argued in scholarship that traditional chieftaincy institution has been at crossroads since the colonial time (Crowther and Ikime, 1970; Crowther, 1978; Cheka, 2008). According to Crowder (1978) colonial indirect rule policy ridicules the role of the chiefs in governing their territories. He contends that the fate of the chiefs, still a live issue in West African politics, raises wider questions concerning historical continuity in the political sphere. For Crowder (1978), the major change brought about by the European occupation of Africa, West Africa and Nigeria in particular was that a new set of chiefs ruled them. This has remained inimical to smooth and peaceful governance of different African territories. Mamdani (2002) raises this issue and

attempts to understand how power is organised and how it tends to fragment resistance in contemporary Africa. His major pre-occupation was not to understand the racial legacy of colonialism rather the emphasis was on how the political system was ruthlessly destroyed to perpetually produce and sustain what he called ‘citizens and subjects’. He discusses this as institutional segregation. These activities raised questions over the true meaning of ‘chief and traditional’. These have been conceptualised above but needs some emphasise here.

According to Falola and Genova (2006) in Yorubaland, the title of chief, is applied to the *Alaafin* of Oyo, who, in reality, presided over the vast Oyo Empire. However, more recently, the title of chief has been given to “commoners” deemed important to politics. They add that a lawyer was titled a chief to include him in the Western House of Chiefs in the 1950s (Falola and Genova, 2006). This has come to mean that the position of ruler is no longer based purely on kinship. As the case is today, the chieftaincy title is open to the intelligentsia and the politicians. Thus, with the widening definition of chief over time, there is a dilemma over the true meaning and value of using the term “tradition”. This dimension has been studied. Falola’s (2003) study of African culture has highlighted the ambiguity of tradition because it cannot always be consigned to a specific time and period. However, the transition from traditional to modern was not one clear event. The movement was more through shades of traditional and modern. It is therefore conflicting to say when the institution of chieftaincy is no longer considered traditional. This is because we are often confronted with a scenario where the term “traditional” suits intellectual agenda frequently pursued in scholarship. Among some scholars of Yoruba history, these traditional institutions, represent all that was pristine and perfect about Yoruba society prior to the destructive arrival of the Europeans. Describing this institution as representing all that was good, honourable, and memorable about Yoruba culture and tradition is not uncommon. Nonetheless, to say that the Yoruba at that period experienced absolute peace and a perfect and most transparent governance system can be misleading. Yet it is important to show that the governance system was not in dilemma.

According to Geschiere (1993), at independence, the Chieftaincy institution imaged itself as a ‘symbol of tradition’ while at the same time striving to serve as an agency for ‘modern projects’. The post-colonial difficulties and mutations of chieftaincy institutions have indeed constituted the subject of vast scholarly interest, and in the

process, the institution has served many purposes. Jua (1995) avers that the British, through its indirect rule sought to borrow legitimacy from the chieftaincy institution for the implementation of colonial policies. Similarly, Mamdani (2002) argues that the chiefs under British rule were reduced to and only empowered to collect taxes.

Modernity theorists in the decades following the Second World War predicted that traditional authority would soon become outmoded and be replaced by 'bureaucratic offices and institutions' (Magid, 1968; Balandier 1972; Harniet-Sievers 1998). Other social scientists such as Fisiy (1995), on the contrary, praise its remarkable powers of survival. Additionally, Nyamnjuh (2002) sees traditional institution as "a dynamic institution, constantly re-inventing itself to accommodate and be accommodated by new exigencies" (p. 8). Scholars such as Fisiy (1995) are of the view that in modern governance, "the level of power the chiefs can exercise will be determined by their level of collaboration with those who hold the reins of power – the state elite" (p. 59).

Given the above, the literature on the subject of modernity and chieftaincy conflict have tended to focus on the power structures, status and the influence of kings in Yorubaland (Nolte, 2002; Falola, 2006; Vaughan, 2003, 2006). There is a growing concern that the chieftaincy institution is dying giving the effects of modernity. However, despite the flaws the institution has been exposed to by modernity, it is evident that it has been integrated into modern governance structures rather than being left on the periphery. Nevertheless, this inclusion has its implications for the relevance and functions of the institution. In Yorubaland, Southwestern Nigeria, one of such implications is that traditional authority is relegated to the background and governed by laws of modern state government which organised the chiefs. This is a development in the history of the chieftaincy dating back to the 1950s. Centralised kingdoms in Yorubaland like the Oyo have survived several centuries (Vaughan, 2003, 2006; Falola, 2006). With the colonial indirect rule policy, several of these kingdoms were not dismantled. Rather, the system preserved and utilised the indigenous governance structures to meet the political and economic needs of the colonial government. Though such policy and the definition of a chief in colonial view redefined the status of the kings especially in some parts of Nigeria where 'warrant chiefs' were created and made effective. It remains salient that Chieftaincy in Yorubaland remained influential.

According to Falola and Genova (2006) Yoruba chieftaincy system was applied over a town and its greater expanses forming a kingdom. The structure of the system is best described by Vaughan (2000) who shows that it is a communal and ethnic-based institution. Topmost in the hierarchy is the *Oba* (chief/king), with a council of village heads called “Baale” and under this tier resides the heads of lineages. Like Vaughan (2000), Falola and Genova (2006) contend that the traditional institution of chieftaincy is based on the myth of the original founder of the state as a descendant of Oduduwa, the father of Yoruba kings. Kings were regarded as *Alase-ekeji Orisa*, meaning “sovereign who is next to God,” indicating their sacred position. In fact, Yoruba kings were regarded for a time as super humans and over time their position shifted to being humans blessed with divine authority. Vaughan (2000) describes the power relations as consisting of competition between the king and a council of chiefs, so the kings cannot be accurately described as absolute monarchs. Much of this system of checks and balances comes from the procedure of choosing a king from a selection of candidates presented by royal lineage heads to a king-making council. Aside from choosing a king, the council of chiefs aided the king in administering the kingdom. Today, in that selection process, coupled with effects of modernity lies the raging conflicts among the elite.

Changes that occurred in the chieftaincy institution mostly in the 19th century in Yoruba land were mostly internal factors. Particularly, the Yoruba wars had a way of initiating several conflicts that are experienced today. Falola (2006) has shown that modernity brought about changes in administration, economy and society which had grave effects on the chiefs. One of the changes that raised the interest of and attracted many to the institution was when offices within the institution became salaried. The salaries were related to the volume of tax collected by a chief. What is missing in Falola’s (2006) engagement is how modern changes in the chieftaincy institution have been responsible for the prevalent chieftaincy conflicts in contemporary Yoruba land. This shortcoming as addressed in Sutton (1984) who indicates that chieftaincy conflicts became more prevalent in the colonial period, and were exacerbated by changing social and economic conditions. He argues that many other issues were thrashed out in the guise of chieftaincy conflicts: land disputes, access to resources collection and allocation of revenue, attitudes to various ordinances. Thus, other problems were often personified by the occupant or challenger to a chieftaincy. Therefore, the objection to

chiefs ruling under one or another of the Native Jurisdiction Ordinances might take the form of an attempt to destool him, as would perhaps the questioning of the allocation of revenues from a concession. To that effect, in his view, many conflicts within society tended to be expressed in the form of stool disputes. And, as noted, in the colonial period, more issues of this sort seem to have arisen. Land in many areas became a commercial asset for growing of cash crops or for leasing to European concessionaires; questions of jurisdiction and rights to allocate land became thornier. The advent of Native Courts and Native Treasuries likewise opened many new areas of contention. What is not clear from Sutton's (1984) argument is how to determine the origin of chieftaincy conflicts in an established system like that of the Yoruba where throne ascendancy is established by kingship royal lineage.

The above gap created by Sutton's (1984) study is bridged by Vaughan (2003) who examines the dimensions of indigenous political structures that sustained local governance in colonial Yorubaland. Vaughan (2000) establishes that intra-elite interest built around community identity facilitated several conflicts in the Chieftaincy institution. He shows that the complex process inherent in the interaction between manifestations of tradition and social change was further complicated by the interest of local political actors, especially local traditional rulers and emerging educated elite who sought to co-opt indigenous political structures for legitimation and mobilisation purposes within rapidly shifting political dispensations. This implies that political elites (whether traditional or modern) are often defenders of 'tradition' when 'invented tradition' and historical interpretations resonate in the collective imagination of local communities.

The social boundaries of traditional political authorities as expressed through complex kingship networks, strong hometown loyalties (and subsequently ethno-linguistic affiliations during the colonisation process) rest on culturally specific practices and beliefs that mobilise pre-existing identities. Thus, it is Vaughan's (2003) contention that these multiple expressions of communal identities are constructed on real (not arbitrary) political, social and economic conditions. Hence, he concludes that in the ensuing struggle for power and status in colonial Oyo Province, these forces were reinforced by conflicting historical interpretations. This position draws attention to several issues of chieftaincy disputes that dot and litter contemporary Yorubaland. While he established the role of economic and political factors to be germane to the

increasing conflict, he also emphasised the role of modernity in facilitating inter-community competition. This leaves a gap in how such analysis apply to intra-community struggle that have manifested in recent time among the Ilaje-Ugbo of Yoruba land, Southwestern Nigeria.

Taking his discussions further in a later study, Vaughan (2006) highlights the relationships between tradition, modernity and decolonisation. He shows how Yoruba communities contest power during colonial rule. He traces such contest to the indirect rule system which drew heavily from conflicting interpretations of pre-colonial Yoruba political relations. This engagement showed that British administrators, *Oba*, *Baale*, chiefs, and educated elites deployed traditional accounts for their mobility in the social strata. For Vaughan (2006), the most enduring legacy of these colonial practices was apparent in contentious notions of chieftaincy rules and customary law. It is therefore evident in his pre-occupation with chieftaincy and modernity that the implementation of colonial policies and the processes of Nigerian state formation transformed collective political consciousness and action among a major Yoruba subgroup. This reference was made to the Ijsha, in the course of the twentieth century. In addition, he suggests that the major feature of Yoruba collective political action involves a consistent exploitation of Yoruba ancestral city state fissures. This argument returns to Vaughan (2003) earlier study where he stated that hometown fissures remain vital in modern Yoruba politics. He sums the argument by reiterating the factors reinforcing conflicts in the political structures. For him, it follows that, to define new strategies of collective political action whether drawn from hometown loyalties or other social boundaries-myths, traditions, rituals, and social memory assume considerable significance in the modern construction of communal identities, especially during the volatile period of decolonisation. What this suggests is that both the traditional chieftaincy institution and modern structures are changing to suit the interests of political elites.

Furthermore, Vaughan (2006) maintains that the driving engine of the interaction between both chieftaincy institution and modern structures and conflict is the modernising elites, especially politicians and state functionaries, who utilises communal structures and ideologies as mediums for political mobilization during the decolonisation process. The paradox of the Yoruba nationalists thus lies in their embrace of communal and traditional doctrines that extol the corporate character of

local groups, while simultaneously insisting that modern development and governance require the expertise of the intelligentsia. Thus, there are attempts by modern politicians to take charge or plant their allies as chiefs against the wish of the people for political and economic gains. As insightful as his arguments are, there is a missing link in understanding how modern economic patterns motivate interest for the stool and reinforce elite clash.

In his study, Adeniji (2006) traces the historical origins of chieftaincy dispute among the Odogbolu people. He links this with the history of migration and settlement in Odogbolu which he claims is in the history of the three major chieftaincy families in the town. This, for him, can be traced to the fact that since, there exists a tussle for the headship of the town. The various contenders for leadership became so versed in the knowledge of the town's political history (as perceived by each claimant) that an examination of the claims of each group reveals a comprehensive, albeit sectional, political history of the town. But Odogbolu is by no means made up of three homesteads. It comprises eight homesteads each of which migrated from an original settlement.

Adeniji (2006), shows that it is not difficult to infer that these various homesteads came together around 1850 for their collective benefit. However, it will assume a difficult task to trace how each of them got to its original settlement. He explains that many of the people migrated from Ilé-Ifè. Adeniji (2006), therefore, contends that some of them came with Obanta and others came after him. Using the legend history of Obanta which relates that he was the son of Oduduwa, the progenitor of the Yoruba race through a daughter of Olu Iwa, Adeniji (2006) shows how the migratory trends to Odogbolu happened. He recorded that after the dispersal of princes from Ile-Ife, Obanta travelled first east to Imesi and then south through Ondo before turning towards Ijebu. The history of the adventures as captured by Adeniji (2006) indicates that migratory trends have facilitated the claims of headships of various homesteads as the head of Odogbolu. His underlying argument is that the migratory histories of the various contenders to the Odogbolu chieftaincy makes it difficult to determine the original founder and head of all Odogbolu chiefs. While this study puts in perspective the controversy of tradition, it did not highlight the role of modernity in the chieftaincy dispute in Odogbolu manifesting itself in the modern period. This has left a yawning

gap in understanding how modernity interferes with elite interest in the chieftaincy institution and how such interests complicate chieftaincy disputes.

Blank *et al.*, (1993) argues that violence is embedded in African culture and history. Their claim show that warfare was endemic in all regions of sub-Saharan Africa and that it did not elicit moral qualms. In fact, resort to warfare was logical and necessary in terms of certain deeply held beliefs. Thus, war, and organisation for war, assured the continuous identity of the group as it had coalesced around its own ancestors, origin, myths, customs and rites. There is a tendency to view warfare as contributing to continual displacements and migrations, resulting in a lack of interest in strictly territorial jurisdiction and thus inhibiting the evolution of a reliable political structure. While their interest was to establish the roles assigned to war and peace in African cultures and histories, they tend to link such wars to chieftaincy conflicts.

For Blank *et al.*, (1993) war and martial activities in sub-Saharan Africa embodies the meaning of manhood in tribal life and symbolised the workings of the universe, which was envisioned throughout the continent as the abode of constantly contending, essentially malevolent forces. While they argued that death was not personalized in African societies, indicating that individualism was alien to Africa they contradicted that by noting that war glories were personalised.

The interest in Blank's *et al.*, (1993) is that they contend that all traditional structures of African political organisation, whether associated with empires, kingdoms, chiefdoms, "anarchies," villages, secret societies based on fetishism, have been grounded firmly in the view that death is an aspect of society rather than biography, and that conflict, properly staged and manipulated, helps maintain the mythic charter by which a community is ruled. For them, these motifs as well as their organic interaction have found different local expressions, but in certain areas of government-notably the succession to authority and the allocation of power. The implication of this is that succession to authority in Africa presents a record which converges on a common pattern of institutionalised hostilities, intrigues and internal wars. This raises the question of elite interest and chieftaincy conflicts. Therefore, Blank *et al.*, (1993) claims that it is rare in Africa to find rules that clearly indicate a single heir. Thus, succession usually raised rival claimants, resulting in wars for the kingship after an incumbent's death. They claim such cases are prevalent among the Yoruba of Nigeria.

They conclude that violent conflicts are expected to erupt during which the contest for power will be resolved.

The argument of having no single succession plan among the Yoruba may have been established in Adeniji's (2006) Odogbolu but contradicts Vaughan's (2003) study of Ibadan. Again, they tried to show the problem of chieftaincy conflict to be embedded in traditional Africa rather than been influenced by modernity. What is missing in their studies, however, is how individualism rather than community became the bases for initiating chieftaincy conflicts not just in Africa but among the Yoruba. This gap foregrounds the connection between chieftaincy conflict and societal security and insecurity.

Chiefs are meant to play crucial roles for peace building in Africa (Albert, 2008a, 2008b). However, the roles of the chiefs in conflict resolution and peace building are not infallible as the chiefs themselves have been the sources of violent conflicts where several lives and properties were lost. This is the focus of Albert (2008a) who establishes the security implication of chieftaincy conflicts in Nigeria and Ghana. Thus, he emphasises the dangers of politicising chieftaincy disputes in the two countries. Using the Owo and Dagbon chieftaincy disputes in Nigeria and Ghana respectively, Albert (2008a) draws attention to how the chieftaincy institution is dragged to mingle in modern political structures. However, what Albert (2008a) left unsaid is how to utilise the institution to the benefit of society under modern political structures. Nevertheless, it is conspicuously clear in Albert (2008a) that the interaction between chieftaincy institution and modernity has facilitated a number of security threatening situations. However, it is imperative to determine how the chiefs should function in maintaining security under modern state political structures.

Thus, chieftaincy conflicts have raised serious security concerns wherever they are experienced. As critical as this issue is, there are few studies interrogating the phenomena. An edited volume, Adamu (2007) has drawn attention to the relationship between chieftaincy and security, arguing that until the chieftaincy institution is harmonised to replicate their traditional duties in the modern state, the issues of security might be a mirage. For them, security is a natural choice of subject for chieftaincy institution as the traditional leadership institutions evolved out of people's own attempts to ensure peace and security in their communities. They showed that

these institutions have changed enormously in the past century or so in Nigeria, but equally the problems of security have also become more complex and more intractable. To this fact dynamism existing between chieftaincy and security calls for interrogation to establish how best they can function together in modern state structures. Presently, the connections between chieftaincy and the various security organisations are mostly informal, but they are very regular and important nonetheless. However, it is important to examine these relationships over time and shed light on the most important problems and devise the means to harness the relationships.

At another level, there has been engagement in scholarship to view chieftaincy and Christianity as contradicting values. Gilbert (1995) contends that there is a sharp dichotomy between Christianity and traditional religion on the one hand and chieftaincy on the other. However, it has become common among African traditional rulers in the modern period to be adherents of modern religions and still discharging their traditional duties. As important as Gilbert's study is to understanding the interactions between chieftaincy conflicts and modernity it left several issues regarding the implications of traditional religious practices for modern state security unaddressed. This gap in academic literature is sought to be filled.

2.3.5 Modern Structures and Chieftaincy Conflict Management

Modernist scholars have emphasised the need for Africans to embrace the democratisation discourse in its totality as alternative source of authority and power against the traditional chieftaincy model. Thus, Fisiy (1995) avers that the recent upsurge in popular protest in most part of Africa pursuant to the democratisation process has refocused scholarly interest in the mechanisms of good governance. In this direction, there are persistent calls for transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs. While the shift of emphasis from a development paradigm to one of democratisation has led to a growing quest for alternative sources of authority and power, holders of pre-colonial forms of authority, such as chiefs, claim to have new political roles within the context of the modern state. For all the various transformations of such institutions during the colonial and post-colonial periods, the present incumbents claim that they are the true representatives of their "people". However, Fisiy (1995) contends that the democratisation discourse, predicated on the principle of elective representation, strikes at the heart of these customary institutions which are structured on the hereditary devolution of power. Furthermore, attempts have

been made in part to even democratise and retain the traditional chieftaincy institution into what Nolte (2002) called neo traditional authority. These processes have seen the modern state apparatus of addressing disputes implemented in the traditional chieftaincy conflicts. However, little attention is given to this contending reality in the burgeoning literature exploring the interaction between modern state structures and chieftaincy conflict management.

However, Keese (2010) views chieftaincy in West Africa as an instrument of colonialism. He argues that in several parts of the region, chieftaincy emerged alongside modernity. While he claims that it is nonexistent in some parts, Keese (2010) maintains that in most parts, colonialism diluted the activities of the chiefs and reduced their roles to the colonialists as political intermediaries. Keese (2010) engagement shows that after World War II, the chiefs did not only lose their political prerogatives, as intermediaries in the political administration of the colonies, their existence was also disconnected from one of the principal functions they had had in the territories of all colonial empires in sub-Saharan Africa: the administration of forced labour.

Furthermore, Keese (2010) indicates that during the second half of the 1940s and much of the 1950s, opposition against 'traditional rulers' within the late colonial societies was a widespread phenomenon. According to him, everywhere in West Africa, chiefs came under attack. Until recently, scholars have principally interpreted those outbreaks of political and sometimes physical struggle as attempts of the oppressed, mostly rural populations, to finish with arbitrary conditions introduced by the colonialists and more or less opposed by the local people. While Keese (2010) shows that these processes normally are more complex, it is necessary to understand this particular modernist scholarly perspective which is already regarded as a 'classical' paradigm. The abolition of the whole institution of chieftaincy is, from that point of view, a necessary step to removing relics of the colonial state (Nugent, 2004:18). In this interpretation, chieftaincy is something that has either been invented or grossly distorted by the European colonial administrations. On the one hand, in zones of so-called acephalous societies, such as in Igboland in South Eastern Nigeria or among the Sereer of parts of Senegal, chieftaincy is regarded as having been something completely alien to the experiences of the local populations, and forced on them by the colonial power. In other contexts, more centralised rule had already existed, but, according to the

‘classical paradigm’, the Europeans changed the rules of the game, installing their own cronies as the repressive abusers of local structures and local wealth.

Thus, modernity and dependency theories both contributed to a theoretical approach that regarded the chiefs if not as abusive, then, at least, as completely outmoded. Historians and sociologists celebrated the attack against chieftaincy led by sub-Saharan Africa’s new, autonomous or already independent regimes. A striking West African case and an early test case was Ghana. Here, many chiefs were removed, although this mostly concerned the chiefs affiliated to the political opposition to Kwame Nkrumah’s Convention People’s Party (CPP). Many of the latter lost their posts (or were ‘destooled’, as was the case in the context of Ghana, alluding to the stools of chiefly rule). In earlier studies, the activities of the CPP are simply regarded as an expression of the ‘will of the people’ to get rid of their oppressive chiefs.

Ranger (1983) has claimed that most of what is considered traditional in Africa today is European invented. Although he argues that at the occupation of Africa by the Europeans, the continent possessed dozens of rudimentary kings which led to the British greater use of imperial monarchy, Ranger claimed that it could not justify the structures of colonial governance. Thus, he noted that since few connections could be made between British and African political, social and legal systems, British administrators set about inventing African traditions for Africans. Ranger (1983) further claimed that Africans were brought into the traditions of governance by the Europeans. While one can appreciate their efforts at writing African history in the West, it must be emphasised that European manipulation of the pre-colonial political governance structures- the chieftaincy, to suit their intentions is evidently new.

The implications of such arguments as that of Ranger (1983) and Keese (2010) are that Chieftaincy has no prestige in Africa and further lost what it had under colonialism. Only very recently, serious doubts have been formulated on the aspect of the complete arbitrariness of chieftaincy under colonial rule. Spear (2003) has pointed to ‘the limits of invention’, which means that a completely arbitrary rule was more than difficult to maintain for a chiefly ruler, who had at least to find some consent among the local populations. Scholars such as Richard Rathbone (2000) reversed their former positions admitting that chieftaincy had and has a prestige at least in some major cases.

To this effect, Paul Nugent (2004) in his broad outlook on post-colonial sub-Saharan Africa writes about a reappraisal of the role of chieftaincy in recent scholarship, but it is difficult to see that the changed perspective has already been profoundly introduced into historical analysis. Where chiefs are no longer represented as a fading force directly before and after decolonisation, there is a missing line in understanding the chieftaincy institution in relation to its interaction with modernity. Particularly, there is no in-depth analysis into the exact nature of tensions existing between the chieftaincy and modern state structures in Yorubaland, Southwestern Nigeria. However, the role of modern apparatus for conflict management in complicating or ameliorating chieftaincy conflicts is yet to be conspicuously highlighted. Thus, it is imperative to discuss the nature of tensions as well as conflict management strategies of the modern state structures.

Nevertheless, Knierzinger's (2011) study of Ghanaian societies shows that they are still embedded in 'neotraditional' structures, even in urban areas. This is in sharp contrast to many prophecies of doom that have littered the literature since independence. Chieftaincy has remained very popular in spite of such narratives. According to Knierzinger (2011), one of the reasons for the persistence of the chieftaincy is the remarkable malleability and fluidity of neo-traditional systems. He argues that at the local level, a considerable percentage of the population is permanently engaged in negotiations and disputes over neo-traditional offices and corresponding claims. This, for him, inadvertently leads to a high degree of political participation, but also to conflicts and to the abuse of chieftaincy as an instrument of elite formation. Membership in the neo-traditional system enhances social status, facilitates contacts with politicians and foreigners, increases the possibility of going abroad and goes with a kind of political immunity. The obtaining of a neo-traditional office is therefore a rational and frequently envisaged stage in economic as well as political careers. Knierzinger (2011) underscores the intersections between the neo-traditional systems and the development arena of Ghana. He shows how neo-traditional actors (e.g. chiefs, queen mothers, stool fathers, elders, 'linguists' and development chiefs) interact with (and act as) politicians, business men, NGOs and development agencies and how these intersections can be described on the national level.

The approach of highlighting the interface between neo-traditional systems and development revealed that since independence, the actors in the neo structures have

gone through a fundamental transformation from political intermediaries (between the colonial power and the African population) to more or less heterogeneous interest groups. The insight of Knierzinger (2011) indicates that the engagement in development business is one successful strategy for retaining power and earning a living during this ongoing transformation. Thus, neo-traditional actors try to compensate for their reduced political power with developmental activities. At the same time, however, the media, the state and the civil society also portray neo-traditional actors as development brokers and so push them into development aid. Nevertheless, the chiefs have come to be key players in the drive for development, peace building and healthcare.

Otite (1973) has examined the interplay between traditional chieftaincy and modern state in Nigeria. He showed that in Midwestern state of Nigeria, tenure of office of chiefs was determined by the legislature except for chiefs like the *Oba* of Benin Kingdom, the *Olu* of Warri and the special chiefs. Explaining the relationship between government and chiefs in modern Nigeria, Otite (1973) argues that the chieftaincy institution is no longer what it used to be as the status and dignity of chiefs are decided by the new actors of political affairs of independent Nigeria. According to Otite (1973), at independence in 1960, chiefs had expressed fears as to their security in a politically independent Nigeria at the Western parliament at Ibadan. The Governor of the new Midwestern State had allayed such fears on assumption of office by declaring that “in the field of chieftaincy matters, my Government is committed to a policy which ensures respect for the status and dignity of our traditional rulers and their participation in the working of the machinery of the Government in the Region (cited in Otite, 1973:2).

Otite’s (1973) study is relevant in two respects here. One, he has shown that in the modern state, chiefs’ assumption to a throne and retention of such throne is at the discretion of the Government. Using the case of Midwestern state, he demonstrated that the chiefs lacked legitimacy unless the Government sanctions it thus. According to Otite (1973), in a speech before the Midwestern Parliament, the Minister of Economic Development said that “destiny” had given his party the opportunity of deciding issues of succession to, and retention of, “kingships and chieftaincies in the state, and that while anyone could be traditionally recognised as a king or chief, for the purpose of the House of Chiefs, there are many chiefs” (p. 263). What this implies is that the chiefs

must not openly oppose the party in power as the commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs has power to retain or fire any chief. This power was exemplified when the Government in Midwestern state created a chieftaincy in Agbon Kingdom called the Omorovie of Agbon to compensate a political supporter of the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) at the expense of the King (the *Ovie*), who was accused of contributing to the success of a Midwestern Democratic Front (MDF) candidate in his kingdom. In the same manner, the NCNC sponsored the deposition and subsequent exile to Ogbesse of the *Olu* of Warri, Erejuwa II for his personal and institutional conflict with certain NCNC stalwarts within and outside the state.

Two, Otite (1973) shows that the chieftaincy institution being at the discretion of modern state powers is not peculiar to the Midwestern State; rather, it is national. He therefore traced similar trends in the parent state of the Midwestern Region. Thus, he argues that in the parent Western State, the salary of an *Oba* (king) was once reduced to a penny a year for 'insubordination', and it was reported that in the House of Chiefs, whose total membership was fifty- two, there was now only one member who was not a supporter of the Action Group. That non supporter referred to a great chief, the *Alaafin* of Oyo, who was deposed in 1956. For Otite (1973), the tendency for the Government to have its way had its roots in the British indirect rule system, under which a Native Authority, traditional king/chief or not, could be removed from office if he was found inefficient or uncompromising by the British administrators. A king or chief deposed ceased to be a king or chief. Under British rule, kings and chiefs had learned to serve the Government faithfully and unremittingly or face summary dismissal (Otite, 1973; Chinsinga, 2006). However, the role of the chieftaincy institution in Nigeria in eroding and tainting its own legitimacy was neglected by Otite's (1973) extensive study.

In the same vein, Chinsinga (2006) has attempted an understanding and exposition on how traditional leaders have exploited the decentralisation policy reforms to reassert themselves as a dominant force in grassroot politics in Malawi. This assessment is situated within the context of the debate about traditional leadership institutions or alternatively culture in the twin processes of democratisation and decentralisation. This has raised serious contention in the literature. While one side of the debate dismisses them as sheer obstacles (Trijona, 2004; Rathbone, 2000), the other side argues that they

are resources that can be tapped into in order to effectively domesticate the reforms, since traditional leaders embody values and virtues of political accountability, transparency and probity (Harniet-Sievers, 1998; Vaughan, 2003; Chinsinga, 2006). The underlying argument of Chinsinga (2006) is that while research findings demonstrate that traditional leaders have indeed the potential to play a midwife role in the efforts to domesticate and customize the reforms to the exigencies of local conditions as shown in Bayart (1993), Chinsinga contends that their ill material circumstances render them overwhelmingly easy targets for politicians bent on satisfying their own strategic political considerations.

In addition, several other studies have linked the growing attention on the chieftaincy institution in literature to governance failure in Africa and the need to trace the origins of the bad governance. For instance, Herbst (2000) contends that the traditional control over the allocation of land reflects the inability of African states to project power to rural areas. This was part of the narratives portraying chieftaincy institution as a barrier to African development. Earlier, van Rouverov (1999) had argued that the chieftaincy institution poses a grave challenge to the political and administrative process in Africa. This argument reinforced Trijono's (2004) position about the weakness of African states narrative. Trijono argues that the traditional authorities are responsible for the 'political tribalisation' of the social order in Africa. This implies that the chieftaincy institution is the chief instigator of the indigeneity conflicts in Africa. In a way, these narratives were constructed by Africans themselves who blamed the chiefs for their roles in colonial Africa and how they lost their legitimacy.

Chinsinga (2006) frames the struggle for political space between traditional actors and modern actors as a struggle existing between tradition and modernity. For him, these actors basically jostle and wrestle for power, influence and authority in an attempt to entrench and legitimate themselves as dominant forces in grassroots politics in the growing new social, political and economic order. Chinsinga observed that while the actors are embroiled in the contests over this emerging political space at the local level, intensity of this struggle has been strikingly pronounced between elected representatives (councilors) and customary authorities (chiefs) in most countries implementing decentralisation policy reforms of one form or another. In part, the chieftaincy is tied to the identity of the community; hence, for many Africans including the Yoruba, to destroy the chieftaincy or embroiled it in a tussle, question a

community's identity and history. This reinforces Chinsinga's (2006) position that in post-colonial Africa, traditional leaders were either banned or their powers substantially circumscribed. This is illustrated by exemplifying the slogan in Mozambique which was targeted against customary authorities- "kill the tribe and build the nation" (Gould, 2001; Chinsinga, 2006). As already observed, the general pattern of distaste of the chieftaincy institution in the post-colonial era is largely attributed to the intermediary and facilitatory roles chiefs played during the processes of colonisation. Through indirect rule schemes, chiefs had their legitimacy heavily eroded and tainted "by the excesses and contradictions that external backing and exigencies of colonial administration produced" (Chinsinga, p. 256).

The strength of Chinsinga's (2006) study is that traditional authority has found new expression in the current waves of democratisation and decentralisation sweeping across the continent and rapidly giving chieftaincy a new lease of life. Thus, he argues that "traditional leaders have apparently reasserted their authority in Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe" (p. 256). This corroborates Fisiy's (1995) claims that more roles have been given to the chieftaincy institution in the modern state. However, he interrogates the rationale of claiming that traditional chiefs are the 'true representatives of the people' in an elective democracy. This argument tends to emphasise that there is no conflict between the traditional patterns and processes of administration and that of the modern state structures. To this point, Bayart (1993) maintained that in many African nations, the state bureaucracies do not exist in opposition to the traditional authority but as avenues for the making, assimilation, mediation and collaboration of the elites. In other words, traditional and modern power structures in Africa are one and the same thing used by the elite to negotiate their status and mobility from one position to the other. Vaughan (2003) and Falola (2006) have jettisoned Bayart's claim showing that the interaction between traditional power structures and its modern counterpart is often conflictual. These studies have shown the relevance of engaging the interaction between modernity and chieftaincy institution especially in understanding the lingering chieftaincy conflict in Yoruba land and Ilaje Ugbo kingdom in particular.

Further, Harneit-Sievers (1998) extend the connection between chieftaincy conflict and modern state structures by examining the interaction between traditional institution and the state. Exploring the Southeastern Nigeria case, He shows that chieftaincy as

practiced in South Eastern Nigeria is a product of modernity. The author argues that the expansion of the chieftaincy institution, in terms of influence and quantity of office-holders, and its increasing visibility are irritating facts, compared to the prognosis of social theory. For her, classical modernisation theory of the 1950s and 1960s assume that the principles of 'modern' formalized bureaucratic office and of functional differentiation would become more important than 'traditional' leaders. Thus, in a parallel way, underdevelopment and dependency theory hardly foresaw a renewed boom for an institution which they thought to be rooted in a pre- or non-capitalist setting. The underlying argument is that the Southeastern experience provides numerous examples for the compatibility between chieftaincy institutions based on the principle of tradition on the one hand, and 'modernity' and capitalism (or rather Nigeria's peculiar version of it) on the other. In that analysis of the modern forms of traditional authority among the Igbo of Southeastern Nigeria, she showed that traditional represents not only an important political arena within state politics but also one which is characterised by local interests, historical reinterpretations and cultural creativity. While Harneit-Sievers gives close attention to the chieftaincy institution as an instrument of the state rather than representative of the people, she neglected the role of modern state structures of conflict resolution like the court in complicating and deepening the chieftaincy crisis in Nigeria.

According to Nolte (2002), the attention received by the chieftaincy institution since the 1970s has been interpreted to be as a result of reliance on it by the illegitimate military regimes to receive legitimacy. Nolte (2002) claims that many traditional rulers exercise great influence on local politics in their domains, but rely on the state for stipends and business opportunities. Meanwhile, successful administrators and politicians have sought traditional status, usually through obtaining chieftaincy titles themselves. Through this, they become associated with certain localities and are often expected to champion local interests. Therefore, the ties between traditional rulers, politicians and administrators reflect and create local political identities as well as constituting access to political and administrative sphere.

The point raised by Nolte (2002) is that traditional authority particularly in Southwestern Nigeria is one way of negotiating access to the modern state. This in turn reinforced stiff competition and facilitated several stool conflicts. Her

focus was to establish the role of traditional authority in the Yoruba city of Abeokuta, Southwestern Nigeria during the 1990s. She therefore argued that the conflicts between the traditional rulers of Abeokuta were closely linked with local interests and expressed within the wider discourse on traditional legitimacy in Yoruba culture. According to Nolte (2002), while the reinterpretation of mythical histories expressed local notions of legitimacy, the urgency of the conflict was to a great extent illustrative of a more general political trend in Nigeria. However, her argument of traditional legitimacy provides little explanation in the case of the Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. This owes to the fact that while Abeokuta throne like that of Ibadan may have emerged under the colonialists, as Nolte (2002) claimed, the throne in Ilaje Ugbo preceded colonialism (Ikuejube, 2005; Ogen, 2015; Ebisemiju, 2016).

As important as the above studies are to the study of chieftaincy conflict and modernity, what is missing is the role of modern structures in complicating or ameliorating chieftaincy conflicts. Therefore, in the literature on modern state structures and chieftaincy conflict management in Yoruba land, the exact nature of tensions existing between modernity and chieftaincy has not been explored. Thus, there is little attention given to how such tensions facilitated or ameliorated by the interactions could be managed.

2.3.6 Modernity, Chieftaincy Selection Processes and Conflict in Shaping Group Identity

Several factors have been examined to shape group identity. However, few attempts are made to understand how modernity and chieftaincy conflicts shape group identity. There is a connection between power struggle and group identity formation. In his study of Owo and Dagbon kingdoms in Nigeria and Ghana respectively, Albert (2008a) contends that traditional chiefs are part of the peace building framework of traditional Africa. In a later study Albert (2008b), shows that the chiefs have now been engrossed in violent struggles as they lead different groups to engage in violent conflicts. Most times, what appears as inter-ethnic or intra-ethnic violence is a continuation of political struggles between different chiefs. These activities have continued to shape the identities of different groups. For instance, Olufemi Vaughan's (2003) study of Western Nigeria indicates that colonial policies are implicated in the steady elevation of the *Alaafin* of Oyo in which the colonial officers worked ceaselessly to advance the

authority and prestige of the king over all others in Yorubaland. Thus, the *Alaafin* is considered the legitimate ruler of the Yoruba people. This undermined the activities of other Yoruba rulers especially, Ibadan's *Baale* who were not considered as *oba* and whose regional power had come under some threat. Colonial activities therefore contradicted the relationship between *Oba*, chiefs and powerful lineages. This thereafter defined how different Yoruba sub-groups began to shape their identities. Vaughan (2003) maintains that the contradictions created ensured that the *Alaafin* secured suzerainty over other major rulers in the area such as the *Ooni* of Ife, the *Owa* of Ilesha and the *Baale* of Ibadan, Ogbomosho, Oshogbo, Iwo, Iseyin, Ede, Ejigbo and Ikirun. The underlying argument of Vaughan (2003) is that chieftaincy politics facilitates communal identity. Suffice to say that most groups identify with political struggles of the political elite or that the different lineages seek to shape their identities by the disputes existing between the seekers of the throne. What is missing in Vaughan's (2003) profound study is that he restricts the insight into identifying chieftaincy structures as focal points of critical discourses of continuity and social change in colonial Oyo Province with little said about how such structures shape and reshape group identity.

The argument that chieftaincy conflicts shapes group identity and facilitates inter-group conflict is something that is spurred by the quest of political elites to control resources. This is demonstrated in Owusu-Mensah's (2013) study of Ghana in which he shows that one of the main features of the institution of chieftaincy in the post-colonial era is the manifestation of inter- and intra-ethnic conflicts fuelled and perpetuated by the institution itself. He notes that from 1980 to 2002, Northern Ghana recorded 22 inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts led by their chiefs. He shows that in 1980, Gonjas attacked Bator and Vagala. Gonjas engaged in ethnic war against the Nawuris and Nchumurus in 1991, 1992 and 1994. In 1992 and 1994, the Gonjas engaged in intra ethnic conflicts amongst themselves in Yapei, Daboya and Kusawgu. Nanumbas fought Komkombas in 1980, 1994 and 1995. During the period of 1988 to 1994, Mamprusi and Kusasis fought four times. The Bimobas went to war with Komba. In 2002, the Dagombas fought amongst themselves over chieftaincy succession. Owusu-Mensah highlighted that the primary source of these inter-ethnic conflicts has been the question of which chiefs control what land with what traditional rights. In Southern Ghana, chiefs and their elders avail themselves of the state judicial systems to settle the

chieftaincy related conflicts rather than initiating and stimulating conflicts. What Owusu-Mensah (2013) leaves out is how the interaction between chiefs in modern Ghana shapes group identity.

What is clear from the positions of the studies above is that Africans have the greatest attachment to the land, and that it is central to their definition of group identity as suggested by the “sons/daughters of the soil” syndrome. This defines why the quest by chiefs to control lands is consequently shaping group identity. Moreover, chieftaincy tussle and conflict like ethnicity is about mobilisation and politicisation of group identity drawing on those elements that mark out the group such as lineage, language, culture, territory, mode of dressing and sharing jokes. It takes on greater meaning in competitive situations, and where available resources are scarce in relation to the interests which grow around them. The task, therefore, becomes to ground the phenomena of modernity and chieftaincy conflicts, especially in the complex dynamics of daily human experiences and struggles for scarce resources. But more importantly, the way in which power struggle shapes and contributes to the construction of group identity needs to be related to the interaction between modernity and chieftaincy conflict.

Furthermore, as important as the above studies are the subject of chieftaincy conflict and modernity little is said about how the interaction between chieftaincy and modernity constructs a groups’ identity. It is indicated in Vaughan’s (2003, 2006) contention that traditional and modern political leaders deployed strong communal ideologies and traditional themes that defined competing Yoruba communities as natives and outsiders in Western Nigeria. This is significant as it foregrounds the relationship between migrations and construction of identities on the one hand and construction of identities and enthronement on the other. Nevertheless, there is a missing link on how the Ilaje construct their identity and its relationship with the chieftaincy institution and modernity. It is important to identify if the Ilaje shape their identity as Yoruba or Ijaw.

This is important to highlight the shifting identities exemplified by the various stool struggles not just in Ilaje-Ugbo but in Yoruba land. However, studies on Ilaje history have shown that Ugbo kingdom has an organised administrative system given the way and manner that the power structures are organised (Omotoye, 1977; Akinjogbin, 2004;

Ikuejube, 2005). These studies are crucial in understanding the Ilaje-Ugbo identity. However, there are few studies if any that have bothered to interrogate how modernity has affected or influenced the Ilaje-Ugbo identity of the self. It then becomes imperative to interrogate this in connection with the chieftaincy institution. This engagement will unveil how modernity has mitigated or reinforced chieftaincy conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo. In this sense, it becomes imperative to examine how modern methods of resolving chieftaincy conflict have affected the interaction of the people with the traditional stool in Ilaje-Ugbo. This study sought to fill these gaps.

2.4 Gap in Literature

Five gaps were identified in the course of this review. One, there is growing literature illustrating the complex and contested forms of identity construction within and across social spaces (Cinnamon, 2005; Modood, 2005; Kanchan, 2012). The complex nature of identity construction is utilised under different pedestals. These studies provide vital insights into how groups construct their identities through migrations and genealogies. However, as important as these studies are to the discourse of identity construction, little is said on how to connect the individual mobility to issues of elite struggle for modern state structures for power. To this end, it is salient to highlight the relationship between group identity construction and the struggle for indigenous political structures.

Two, the literature on Yoruba identity, identity of self, modernity and chieftaincy conflict has shown that power is viewed as existing between groups. Little attention is given to how power is instilled in the individual or self-identity as a result of modernity. What is missing therefore is the interrogation of how modernity interferes with self-identity to facilitate chieftaincy conflict among the Yoruba.

Three, literature on modernity and chieftaincy conflicts show that modernity brought about changes in administration, economy and society with grave effects on the chiefs (Sutton, 1984; Vaughan, 2000, 2003, 2006; Falola, 2006; Adeniji, 2006). These studies have shown that the complex process inherent in the interaction between manifestations of tradition and social change was further complicated by the interest of local political actors, especially local traditional rulers and emerging educated elite who sought to co-opt indigenous political structures for legitimation and mobilization purposes within rapidly shifting political dispensations. This implies that political elites

(whether traditional or modern) are often defenders of 'tradition' when 'invented tradition' and historical interpretations resonate in the collective imagination of local communities. This position draws attention to several issues of chieftaincy disputes that dot and litter contemporary Yorubaland. While they established the role of economic and political factors to be germane to the increasing conflict, they also emphasised the role of modernity in facilitating inter-community competition. This leaves a gap in how such analysis apply to intra-community struggle that have manifested in recent time among the Ilaje-Ugbo of South western Nigeria.

Four, existing literature on modern state structures and chieftaincy conflict management contend that the Chieftaincy institution had little prestige in Africa and further lost it they had under colonialism (Ranger, 1983; Rathbone, 2000; Spear, 2003; Keese, 2010). Some scholars such as Richard Rathbone (2000) reverse their former positions admitting that chieftaincy had and has a prestige at least in some major cases. Nevertheless, where chiefs are no longer represented as a fading force directly before and after decolonisation, there is a missing line in understanding the chieftaincy institution in relation to its interaction with modern state structures. Particularly, there is no in-depth analysis into the exact nature of tensions existing between the chieftaincy and modern state structures in Yorubaland, South western Nigeria. Thus, there is little attention given to how such tensions facilitated or ameliorated by the interactions could be managed. Yet still, the role of modern apparatus for conflict management in complicating or ameliorating chieftaincy conflicts are yet to be conspicuously highlighted. It is therefore, imperative to discuss the nature of tensions as well as conflict management strategies of the modern state structures.

Five, studies on modernity and chieftaincy conflict in shaping group identity have shown that Africans have the greatest attachment to the land, and that it is central to their definition of group identity as suggested by the "sons/daughters of the soil" syndrome (Vaughan, 2003; Albert, 2008a; Owusu-Mensah, 2013). This view defines why the quest by chiefs to control lands is consequently shaping group identity. Moreover, chieftaincy tussle and conflict like ethnicity is about mobilisation and politicisation of group identity drawing on those elements that mark out the group such as lineage, language, culture and territory. However, as important as the above studies

are on the subject of modernity and chieftaincy conflict in shaping group identity, little is said about how the interaction between chieftaincy and modernity constructs a groups' identity. Although it was indicated in Vaughan (2003, 2006) that traditional and modern political leaders deployed strong communal ideologies and traditional themes that defined competing Yoruba communities to structure natives and outsiders in Western Nigeria; it gave little attention to the relationship between migrations and construction of identities on the one hand and construction of identities and enthronement on the other. Thus, there is a missing link on how the Ilaje-Ugbo people construct their identity and its relationship with the chieftaincy institution and modernity. It is important to identify how the Ilaje-Ugbo people shape their identity. This study sought to fill these gaps.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted qualitative methodology given that the objectives of the study tend to understand the extents to which modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and conflict interact. This methodology provided the needed details given the available methods of data collection which helps to test reliability of data. These include ethnographic and historical methods which explain why and how the chieftaincy institution and modernity interact. In its nature, research describes a systematic, orderly, organised and consistent pattern of thinking that gives structures and directions to investigators' knowledge of facts and methods of data collection and verifying sources for an unbiased judgement (Owutu, 2012:1). On the other hand, methodology is the procedure to carry out the inquiries in a research.

On the subject of chieftaincy conflict and modernity methodology provides explanation on how both phenomena interact and shape human relations in Ugbo Kingdom. Furthermore, on the basis of methodology, research can be grouped into qualitative and quantitative. Fawole *et al.*, (2006) contend that quantitative and qualitative researches are often complementary and in a research design both may feature. They add that “qualitative research involves collection of narrative data in a natural setting in order to gain insights into phenomenon of interest” (p. 11). Qualitative research which is the method adopted by this study is usually interested in finding out the way things are and why they are that way. In other words, if one is interested in investigating reasons for human behaviour, such a study will be interested in “motivations” for human action and the method will be qualitative. The scholars argue that the most common methods of data collection in qualitative research are observations, interviews and focus group discussions. However, case studies and life histories are also classified as methods of collecting qualitative data (Jegede 2006; Shrank 2006).

3.1 Research Design

This work adopted the descriptive and case study research designs. Research design provides the framework for data collection and analysis. Descriptive research design according to Babbie (2007) helps to answer questions of what, where, when and how. It is concerned with the collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting a particular condition. Case studies provide detailed explanation and understanding of a phenomenon. It traces complexities, contexts and peculiarity of a phenomenon. In this study, two cases were deployed as paradigms of analysis. First, was the 1954 case – when Okitipupa Federal Native Council upheld the appointment of Oba Napoleon Orioye, Mafimisebi III as the *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* kingdom. This reinforced and prolonged the father-to-son inheritance principle of succession instituted by Mafimisebi section of the ruling House. Second, was the 2007 case – when the Supreme Court verdict dethroned Oba Adebajo Akingbade, Mafimisebi IV. The judgement ended the selection principle of father-to-son and re-introduced the selection principle of rotation among the four segments of Ojadele ruling house. This consequently led to the enthronement of Oba Frederick Obateru Akinruntan, the Okoro Ajiga I in 2010. These cases helped to interrogate the interaction between modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and the lingering selection conflict in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom. The descriptive design helped to show the evolution of the chieftaincy institution, the incursion of modernity, the conflict and its implications.

3.2 Area of Study

This study was carried out in Ugbo Kingdom in Ilaje Local Government Area (L.G.A.) of Ondo State, South Western Nigeria. Ilaje-Ugbo social formation is considered as part of the Yoruba ethnic group. Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom lies between latitude 6⁰N and 6.30⁰N and longitude 4.35⁰E and 5.45⁰E. It is bounded to the North by the *Ikale* and to the South by the Atlantic Ocean, to the West by the *Ijebu* and to the East by the *Itsekiri* and the *Ijaw*. According to Ikuejube (2005), the area is deeply dissected by a number of water ways and creeks with most parts especially the coastal area made of clay soil. *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom is a state constituency in Ilaje Local Government Area. It has six political wards with an estimated number of 101 communities almost evenly distributed in the wards. A total of 12 communities were studied; two communities were purposively selected from each political ward.

The communities selected included *Eruna-Ikorigho* and *Idogun-nla* in *Ugbo* (Ward I). In *Ugbo* (Ward II), the communities included *Ode-Ugbo* and *Idiogba*. In *Ugbo* (Ward III), *Ebijimi* and *Ilowo* were selected. In (Ward IV), communities selected were *Obenla* and *Ojumole*. In *Ugbo* (Ward V) *Ikorigho* and *Jinrigho* were selected and finally in (Ward VI), *Molutehin* and *Awoye* were selected. (See figure I below). The Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom had been engulfed in a lingering chieftaincy selection conflict since the 1952. The recent is the Supreme Court judgement that ruled in favour of a candidate to ascend the throne. This has eventually put to an end the lingering crisis among the four segments of *Ojadele* ruling house. The choice of these areas was informed by their involvement in the age long chieftaincy conflict in *Ugbo* Kingdom which resulted from the selection processes. Actors in the prolonged conflict were mostly from *Ugbo* ward I to VI of *Ugbo* Kingdom. Thus, it became imperative to interrogate the interaction between chieftaincy selection processes and modernity in these areas and their implications for peace and conflicts in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.

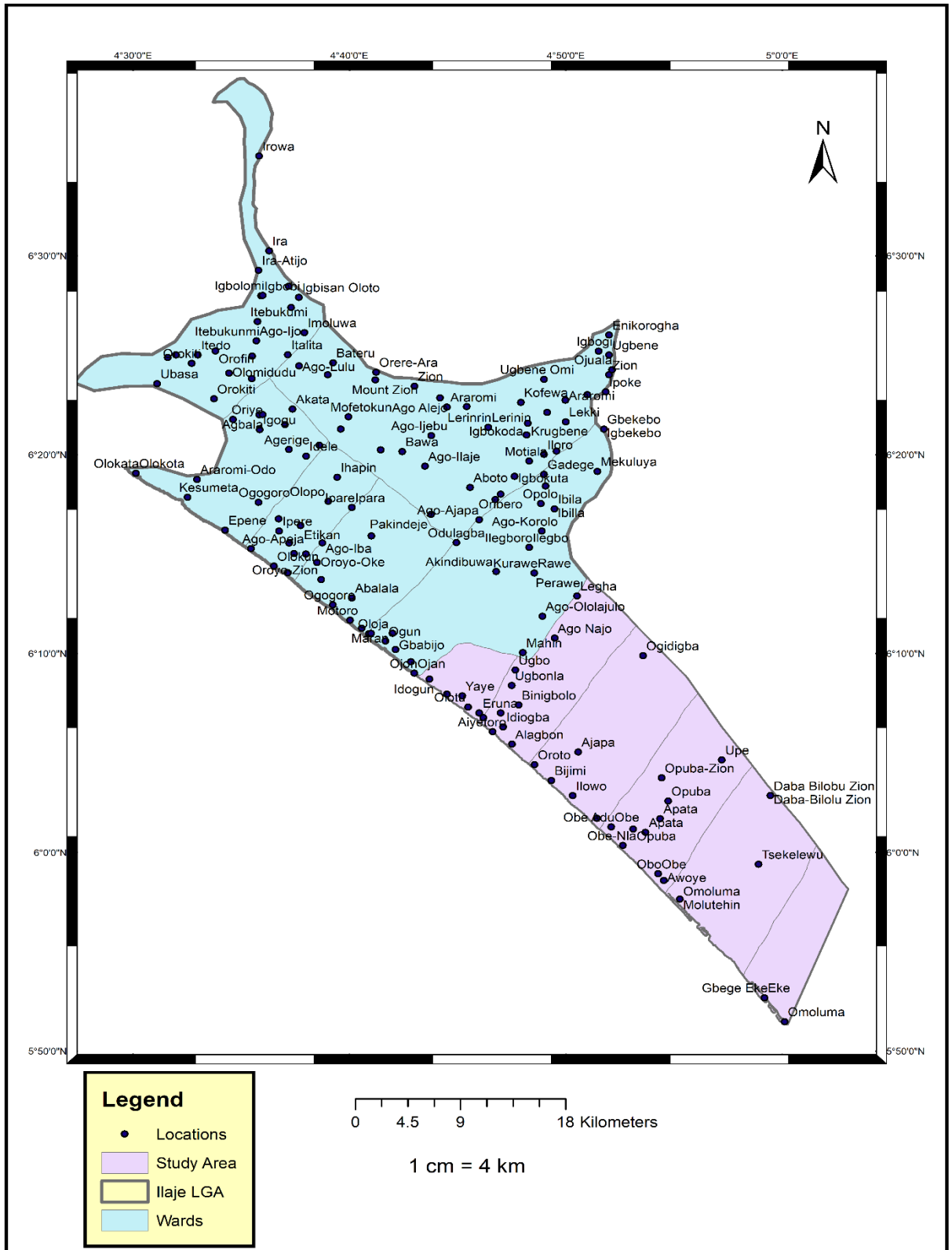


Figure 3.2: Map of Ilaje Local Government Area

Source: Department of Geography, University of Ibadan

3.3 Population of the Study

The population for this study comprised the entire population of six political wards in *Ilaje- Ugbo* Kingdom. According to the 2006 census, the total population of *Ugbo* Kingdom is 145,308. The target population was drawn from actors in the chieftaincy institutions in *Ilaje- Ugbo* kingdom in *Ilaje* local Government Area. This is inclusive of the *Obaship* institution- *Olugbo* and *Olugbo-in-Council*, *Olubo*, *Alagho*, *Odoka*, the *Baales* and Council of Elders, *Oro* Cult, *Abojutoro* cult, *Aghoro* cult and the *Gboguro* cult in an estimated 101 communities. These were institutions whose activities have been interfaced by modernity and have directly or indirectly played a role in the *Ugbo* Kingdom chieftaincy selection processes.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Method

The sample size was made up of six political wards with 101 communities of similar sizes in population. Two communities were selected from each of the political ward. The communities were almost evenly distributed in the political wards. A total of 12 communities were selected for the study. The sample size comprised five members of the *Obaship* institution in *Ugbo* Kingdom. This included the *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* who is the paramount ruler and prescribed authority of *Ugbo* Kingdom, the *Olubo* of *Obenla*, the *Odoka* of *Obe-Ogbaro*, and the *Alagho* of *Odonla*, eight members of the *Olugbo-in-Council*, 12 *Baales* of the twelve selected communities and six groups of the Council of Elders in six communities comprising eight persons each, the head of *Oro* Cult, the head of *Abojutoro* cult, the head of *Aghoro* cult and the head of *Gboguro* cult. Others are the *Olori-Ebi*, the Chairman of *Ilaje* Local Government Area, the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, the Chairman House Committee on Chieftaincy Affairs and the Head of *Cherubim and Seraphim* Church in *Ilaje*. A palace historian was selected through a snowball method. A total of 82 respondents were sampled for the study.

The sample for this study was drawn using the purposive and snowball sampling methods. Purposive sampling involves a process where the researcher deliberately chooses respondents whom he considers knowledgeable on the phenomenon studied. Snowball method on the other hand helps to link and locate other members of the population with vital information on the subject of research. These methods were vital

given their usefulness in identifying and tracking the needed respondents to address the research questions. In such way, the researcher identified those with needed information on the chieftaincy selection processes and interaction between modernity and chieftaincy conflict.

3.5 Sources of Data Collection

Data for this study were collected through both primary and secondary sources

3.5.1 Primary Data

Primary data were gathered through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), In-depth Interviews (IDI), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and documents from the palaces of traditional institutions, Government documents and archival materials from the National Archives, Ibadan.

3.5.2 Secondary Data

Secondary sources of data were derived from relevant books, newspaper articles, journal articles and unpublished thesis focusing on the interaction between modernity and chieftaincy conflict.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

3.6.1 Archival Document from National Archives, Ibadan

Archival documents such as intelligence reports, government investigation reports and government gazettes were sourced from National Archives, Ibadan. These helped the researcher to trace the history of Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom and in identifying how modernity has reinforced or mitigated chieftaincy conflict in *Ugbo* Kingdom. Particularly, archival documents provided graphics and maps of *Ugbo* in its historical development. The documents helped to show chieftaincy selection processes, how the people of *Ugbo* construct their identity and the extent to which modernity has influenced the *Ugbo* identity of the self. These documents help in understanding how modernity has reinforced or mitigated chieftaincy conflict in *Ugbo* Kingdom.

3.6.2 Key Informant Interview (KII)

Five sessions of Key Informant Interviews were conducted in this work. Key informant interviews were carried out with the *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* who is the paramount ruler and prescribed authority of *Ugbo* Kingdom, the *Olubo* of *Obenla*, the *Odoka* of *Obe-*

Ogbaro, and the *Alagho* of *Odonla* and Prince *Adebanjo Akingbade Mafimisebi*. The KIIs were used to understand the nature of chieftaincy selection processes and how modernity has reinforced or mitigated conflict in the chieftaincy selection processes in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom. Information gathered from KIIs was used to verify information gathered from the Archives, IDI and FGD.

3.6.3 In-depth Interviews (ID)

In the course of this research, twenty-one (21) IDIs were conducted with critical stakeholders in the chieftaincy selection processes in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom. These included the twelve (12) *Baale* in the twelve selected communities, the *Olori Ebi*, the head of *Oro* cult, the head of *Abojutoro* cult, the *Osomolu* of *Ugbo* Kingdom and the Secretary to *Ilaje* Local Government. Others were the commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, the Chairman House Committee on Chieftaincy Affairs, Chairman *Ilaje* Local Government and the head of *Cherubim and Seraphim* Church in *Ilaje*. In-depth interviews were utilised to understand the nature of the chieftaincy selection processes, how modernity has reinforced or mitigated conflicts in the chieftaincy selection processes and how modern methods of resolving chieftaincy conflict has affected the interaction of the people with the traditional stool in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom. It helped to understand the extent to which modernity and chieftaincy conflict has shaped and reshaped *Ugbo* community. Information gathered from in-depth interviews was used to verify information from the Archive, KII and FGD.

3.6.4 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

In this study, seven (7) FGDs were conducted. This brought together six (6) councils of Elders comprising eight (8) members in a group with one each from the six political wards in *Ilaje* constituency 1 of *Ugbo* kingdom, as well as, one (1) with the *Olugbo-in-Council*. Discussions were focused on understanding the nature of chieftaincy selection processes, how modernity has reinforced or mitigated conflicts in the chieftaincy selection process and how modern method of resolving chieftaincy conflict has affected the interaction of the people with the traditional stool in *Ugbo* Kingdom. To support the data from the KIIs, IDIs and Archives, the FGDs also helped to understand the extent to which modernity and chieftaincy conflict has shaped and reshaped the *Ilaje-Ugbo* Community. In all, six (6) FGDs were conducted with the councils of elder in *Ugbo* Kingdom and one (1) with the *Olugbo-in-Council*.

3.7 Instrument of Data Collection.

3.7.1 Interview Guide

Due to the nature of the topic of this research, interview method was adopted as a primary means of data collection. The interviews were carried out with the use of In-depth interview, Key Informant Interview and Focus Group Discussion guide to enable comprehensive analysis. The interview guide was designed with open ended questions to allow respondents discuss freely on the issues of the research objectives. The data collection guide was designed in such a way that fit into the IDIs, FGDs and KIIs. These questions were centred on the relationship between modernity, chieftaincy selection processes, and conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. In this way, respondents knowledgeable in these areas were made to focus on the objectives of the study.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected from the FGDs, interviews and Archives were transcribed, processed and categorised into themes based on the research objectives. The data were content and thematically analysed using descriptive and narrative styles.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS ON INFLUENCE
OF MODERNITY ON CHIEFTAINCY SELECTION PROCESSES AND
CONFLICT IN ILAJE–UGBO KINGDOM

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, findings were presented through thematic and historical analysis using descriptive and narrative styles.

4.1 The Nature of Chieftaincy Selection Processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom

In examining the nature of chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom, it is important to take a critical look at the origin of chieftaincy institution in the kingdom.

4.1.1 The Historical Origin

In the history of every kingdom, it is common to hear of a prominent figure or an eponymous leader that occupies a special place in the evolution of that kingdom. Most often, that person could either be the King or someone who defended the course of that Kingdom or its people. The history of the chieftaincy institution in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom cannot be discussed without thoroughly interrogating the route of the Ugbo people and the battle of supremacy that occurred in ancient Ile-Ife where they migrated from. It is a common traditional belief that Ilaje-Ugbo people migrated from Ile Ife and settled in the riverine area of present day Ondo State. The area is vividly described by Akintoye (1971) as a settlement that lies along the coast and deeply dissected by a large number of lagoons and creeks. According to a respondent in a focus group discussion, “the origin of Ugbo people could be traced to Ile-Ife. Oduduwa met us the (Ugbo people) in Ile-Ife. We fought him over the leadership of Ife before we left for our present place in Ilaje-Ugbo” (FGD, Awoye, 07/11/17). Ikuejube’s (2015) view is equally in alignment with the foregoing. According to him, oral tradition indicates that the Ilaje-Ugbo people were the autochthones of Ile-Ife who had to migrate out of Ile-Ife as a result of chieftaincy squabbles that erupted. Similarly, Akinjogbin and Ayandele (1980) also corroborate this line of thought and assert that “the Igbo formed the last resistant group

against the Oduduwa take-over of Ile-ife.’’ What this says most clearly is that there was a dynastic struggle between Oduduwa and the aboriginal groups where new norms and ideas infiltrated into the existing ones by the dynastic change. Adediran (1998) alludes to this when he contends that Oduduwa’s period was the beginning of an epoch under new leadership. Of course, leadership change entails the generation of new ideas which ultimately affect pre-existing realities.

It is important to note that the *Igbo* in this context as mentioned by Akinjogbin and Ayandele (1980) is not the same as the *Igbo* in the Eastern part of Nigeria, but the *Ilaje-Ugbo* people who are found in the coastal area of present Ondo State. Archival source indicates that, *Igbo* and *Ugbo* were used interchangeably in colonial memoranda to mean the *Ugbo* people of the South Western Nigeria. This was reflected in a letter dated 19th September, 1927 by the Secretary of Southern Provinces to the Honourable Chief Secretary, Lagos, in respect of the deposed Olugbo Mafimisebi 1. In the said letter, reference was made to the deposed *Olugbo* as *Olugbo* of *Igbo*, Ondo division (NAI/CSO/26/06452). Due to variants in phonology, many colonial correspondences reflected *Ugbo* people as *Ibo* people, or *Olubo* of *Ibo* instead of *Olugbo* of *Ugbo*. That is why Curwel 1937, intelligence report avers that, “the Ugbo have been variously referred to as Ogbo, Ubo, Igbo and Ibo but they have no connection with the Ibo speaking people of Eastern Nigeria”. Similarly, in a report dated 22nd November 1922, on the identity of certain villages in Mahin District, addressed to the Southern Secretariat, Lagos by the Administrative officer Southern Provinces, it was recorded that the “Igbo, Ibo, Ubo and Ogbo all referred to a village about half an hour South of Mahin, West of the Eruna creek, the home of the Olugbo of Ugbo” (NAI/CSO/26/06452).

Also shedding light on the frequently held misconception about the *Ugbo/Igbo* mix up, Asiwaju (2016) cited in the Guardian, December 11, 2016, p. 35, posits that “the claim of Ugbo being the indigenous inhabitants of Ile-Ife in the pre-Oduduwa era narration is derived from Moremi legend, the reference is to Ugbo but it does not mean the Igbo of the Eastern Nigeria” Similarly, Olomola (2016) cited in the Guardian, December 11, 2016, p. 35, also avers that “there are no documented writings that trace the history of the Ibo to Ile-Ife, rather, the claim by Ibo scholars suggest that they are of the Jewish race that did not follow the Israelites to the promise land”. Elsewhere, Agoro (2016), cited in the Guardian 25th December, 2016, p.39, clarifies this misconception when he

argues that, there is this misinterpretation by many concerning the Igbo/Ugbo. What most people interpret as Igbo is known as Ugbo. The then Olugbo happens to be a son from Ile-Ife that went to establish a kingdom somewhere else. From the foregoing, it can be seen that the concept or notion of *Ugbo* in Western Nigeria, sometimes mistaken for the *Igbo* of Eastern Nigeria is not the same. The *Ugbo* referred to in this study are different from the *Igbo* of Eastern Nigeria culturally, linguistically, traditionally and ancestrally. They are the Ugbo people of pre-Oduduwa era in Ile-Ife who presently occupy the coastal area of Ondo State, Southwest, Nigeria.

Furthermore, affirming the *Ugbo* as the aboriginal people in Ile-Ife, Olusegun Ogundipe (2016) cited in the Weekend Hope, 26th July, 2004, unequivocally states thus;

The pre-Oduduwa groups left Ile-Ife in annoyance through the present day Oke-Igbo axis to settle at their present abode. They were the famous Ugbo warriors, mentioned in the ancient Ife folklores, who severally attacked Ile Ife in the night wrapped in palm fronds as contained in the oral story (sic) of legendry Moremi. The Ugbo mentioned in that folklore is not the present Ndigbo people rather they were the warriors from Ode Ugbo (p: 14)

In consonance with the above assertion, a respondent asserted that:

The Ugbo warriors that captured Ife people are still with us here in Ode-Ugbo. They are no more warriors, but are part of our cultural heritage. They are now referred to as Ogele cultural group with dressing code reflecting that of old Ugbo warriors who were wrapped in raffia palms. They perform in such an important events like the Oba's festival and other traditional festivals (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/17). (See figure 4.1.1)



Figure 4.1.1a: Ogele Cultural group during traditional festival at Ode-Ugbo
Source: Author's compilation, field work 2017



Figure 4.1.1b: An Ogele dressing code, a replica of Ugbo warrior

Source: Author's compilation, field work 2017

Since the *Ilaje-Ugbo* people traced their origin to *Ile-Ife*, the *Olugbo* stool was also claimed to have been instituted in *Ile-Ife*. This was exactly what a participant in a focus group discussion meant when he remarked as follows:

The origin of the *Olugbo* is in *Ile-Ife*. In other words, the chieftaincy institution in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom (*Olugbo* chieftaincy) was instituted long before the *Ugbo* people migrated from *Ile-Ife* to *Ode-Ugbo*. The *Ugbo* are the *Oronmakin* also known as *Obamakin Osangangan* from *Ile-Ife*. (FGD, *Olugbo*'s palace, 21/10/17).

The *Obamakin* narrative is a dominant one among the *Ugbo* people considering the special role he played in the evolution of *Ugbo* kingdom. The widely held belief in *Ugbo* Kingdom is that *Obamakin Osangangan* ruled over the 13 communities that existed in ancient *Ile-Ife* as the paramount ruler, which he named *Ugbomokun*, long before the arrival of *Oduduwa*. A respondent in a focus group discussion averred thus:

It was recorded that there were 13 communities in *Ile-Ife* before the arrival of *Oduduwa*” which were: *Iwinrin*, *Ido*, *Iloran*, *Iloromun*, *Imojubi*, *Iraye*, *Iragbe*, *Odin*, *Oke-Oja*, *Oke-awo*, *Omologun*, *Parakin* and *Ideta*” and the “*Olugbo* was the one ruling over these communities. The king was not known as *Olugbo* then, he was known as *Obamakin Osangangan* the son of *Oranfe* (FGD, *Olugbo*'s palace, 21/10/17).

A careful study of the researches of *Akinruntan* (2016), *Omoyele* (2011), *Olomola* (1992), *Adediran* (1998), *Ajetunmobi* (2003) and *Ikuejube* (2012) show similar line of thought. They posit that; the *Ugbo* people who are the autochthones of *Ile-Ife* are direct descendants of *Obamakin Osangangan* whose kingdom was established in *Ugbomokun*, but had to migrate to where they are today as a result of supremacy battle with *Oduduwa*”. Drawing from field data, *Olori-Ebi* during an interview remarked that “*Ugbo* crown was from *Ife*, the *Ugbo* throne in *Ife* was *Atorunbo*, that is, the throne was from heaven. *Ile-Ife* was the source. We refer to the *Olugbo* as *Oba-torunbo* that is why his throne predated *Oduduwa*.”(IDI, *Igbokoda*, 11/10/17).

While the *Ugbo* narrative which traced the institution of the *Olugbo* to *Ile-Ife* and the *Obamakin Osangangan* narrative are dominant among the *Ugbos*, it appears to contest

the place of Oduduwa in Yoruba history which is the widely held belief. As indicated in Samuel Johnson's (1921) work, Oduduwa is believed to be the progenitor of the Yoruba race who was sent by *Olodunmare* to create the earth. This is at variance with the views expressed by Akinjogbin and Ayandele (1980:123) who aver that "fragments of Ikedu, now an almost the source of Yoruba history, have been collected and preserved and they tend to show that the antecedents of the Yoruba are older than the Oduduwa period."

Elsewhere, Olomola (1992) opines that oral tradition shows that between 93 and 97 aboriginal kings reigned in Ife before the advent of Oduduwa. Moreover, Oduduwa only emerged in the history of Ife at a point when a new dynasty was established. Fabunmi (1985) also documents that "the victory of Oduduwa over the aborigines did not signify peace in the ancient-Ife. A section of aborigines who was defeated deserted the ancient city, the section is known as the Ugbo people". These expressions align with the Ugbo-Ife narratives which also maintained that the Yoruba people(s) predated Oduduwa, and that Ile-Ife had kings long before the advent of Oduduwa, one of which was *Osangangan Obamakin*. Akinjogbin and Ayandele (1980) corroborate the *Osangangan Obamakin's* paramount rulership of Ile-Ife when they posit that, "*oral tradition of ancient Ife remembers names of kings like Kutukutu Oba Igbo and Osangangan Obamakin who were much older than Oduduwa*"

Similarly, Adediran (1990) lists names like Oranfe, Obatala, *Osangangan Obamakin*, Obalufon Alaiyemore who had administered ancient Ile-Ife. Furthermore, the prominence of *Obamakin Osangangan* in Ugbo-Ife history ahead of Oduduwa also reflects in the *oriki* (oration/praise song) of *Olugbo*:

Olugbo Leghe Oghonne

Atata Bi Okun Liri

Kutukutu Oba Ugbo

Osangangan Obamakin

Oba Afi Aara Fohun

Oba Onile Ina Olona Ola...

.....Olowo yi tu fe wa.... (Akinruntan, 2016:4-5).

According to Akomolaran and Mustapha (1976), there is a strong relationship between *Oriki* and someone's origin or place of birth. In Yoruba tradition and customs, there are different kinds of *Oriki*, each with different meanings, depending on origin, birth, occupation, status and influence which reflect ancestral link. As stated by Akinjogbin and Ayandele, *Osangangan Obamakin* and *Kutukutu Oba Ugbo* ruled Ile-Ife before the advent of Oduduwa, and for the names of such kings to have appeared in the *Oriki* of *Olugbo*, show a kind of ancestral link between the *Ugbo* and *Ife*. More importantly, is the phrase in the *Oriki* that says “**Olowo yi tu fe wa**” which can be translated in modern Yoruba usage as “**Olowo yi ti Ife wa**”- literally means, “*the rich man that came from Ife*”. With respect to the aboriginal argument advanced by Olomola and other scholars, the *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* also corroborates the argument when he remarks that “the *Ugbo* people are the original Yoruba Oduduwa met in Ile-Ife” (KII, *Olugbo's* palace, 23/02/18). Akinruntan (2016) further states, “We are the aboriginal inhabitants of Ile-Ife, and it is Obamakin Osangangan, son of Oranfe, who founded Ile-Ife. If you are familiar with Ifa divinity, *Ugbo* is mentioned in a verse where it says *Kutukutu Oba Ugbo*”. This view is captured in the oration as cited above. Apparently, *Olugbo* is not alone in this thinking as indicated above. Elsewhere, Ogen (2014) also expresses similar line of thought. According to him, “the Ilaje-*Ugbo* people are the aborigines of Ile-Ife who left as a result of dynastic struggle with Oduduwa's group, hence their displacement and subsequent migration”. This is consistent with a respondent's remark who stated that, “We (*Ugbo*) migrated from Ile-Ife to Oke Mafunrangan- present day Oke-Igbo first, before we finally settled in Ode-*Ugbo*” (FGD at *Olugbo's* palace 21/10/2017). Furthermore, Adesoji's 2019 inaugural lecture affirms the aboriginal status of the *Ugbo* in Ile-Ife, though, differs on the supremacy of Obamakin Osangangan over his rulership of the aboriginal communities. Thus, he avers;

Extant traditions in Ile-Ife relate the existence of autochthonous communities in Ile-Ife before the advent of Oduduwa.....these communities under their respective heads who were priest-kings in their own communities, submitted to the authority of Oduduwa apparently through a combination of force and diplomacy with the *Ugbo* group being the exception (p:20).

What can be derived from the above submission is that, there had been in existence an established traditional institution in Ile-Ife before the arrival of *Oduduwa*. And the

Ugbo had long occupied *Ile-Ife* before the incursion of *Oduduwa* group. In the supremacy battle that ensued thereafter, the *Ugbo* was the only group not conquered by *Oduduwa* military prowess before they moved out of *Ile-Ife*. The point to underscore here is that there is a nexus between *Olugbo* chieftaincy and pre-*Oduduwa* chieftaincy in *Ile-Ife*. This view is alluded to by many of the respondents during the field work. Aside reinforcing the aboriginal narrative, Ogen draws attention to another fundamental issue – the displacement of the *Ugbo* people, which subsequently resulted in their migration from *Ile-Ife* to *Ode Ugbo*, where they currently reside. As indicated in the views of our respondents, the displacement and subsequent migration of the *Ugbo* people from *Ugbomokun* could not be discussed without referring to *Oduduwa*, who, as indicated in the literature engaged in a supremacy battle with *Obatala* at *Ugbomokun*. The account of Adediran's (1990) study which notes that *Oduduwa* appeared in the history of *Ile-Ife* at a point the kingdom was undergoing transformation with the establishment of a new dynasty reinforced the fact that *Oduduwa* came to impose some new set of values and ideas on certain aboriginal people.

Drawing from oral tradition, Omoleye (2011) and Akinruntan (2016) have given detailed account of the supremacy battle episode. Their emphatic argument which is not entirely different from the ones advanced by Akinjogbin and Ayandele is that, *Oduduwa* was an outsider who after understudying *Ile-Ife* and observing its weakness, sought to rule the kingdom, hence the war between his camp and that of *Obatala* which terribly affected *Ile-Ife*. Even when the *Obatala* group was defeated by the *Oduduwa* group at *Ideta* and *Ugbomokun*'s seat of authority was captured, the *Obatala* group fought relentlessly to regain the kingdom without success. This resulted in the famous migration of the *Ugbo* people from *Ugbomokun* to *Oke Mafunrangan*-present day *Oke-Igbo*, in *Ondo State*, from where *Obamakin*'s group the- *Ugbo* staged series of attacks on *Ile-Ife*; which was eventually brought to an end through the machination of *Moremi* who revealed the secret behind the *Ugbo* attacks (Omoleye, 2011).

The movement of the *Ugbo* people from *Oke Mafunrangan* to *Ode-Ugbo*, in the present day *Ilaje Local Government Area* of *Ondo State*, was guided by *ifa* and *Ohanyin*, (Akinruntan, 2016). It is germane to state that *Olugbo* was not alone in his journey from *Ile-Ife*. Archival documents indicate that he left with contingent of chiefs, his two brothers, *Aheri* and *Etikan* and valuable possessions such as the sacred *Oro*

Staff known as *Opa Ilaje*, drums, bells and crowns. His two brothers later left *Ugbo* (journey ends) and founded Aheri and Etikan Kingdoms, both in the present day Ilaje Local Government. The name *Ilaje* is closely connected with the *Ugbo* Cult of Oro staff (NAI/OKTIDIV/I/IOK535/VOL I). Commenting on the importance of *Opa Ilaje*, the *Abojutoro* of Ugbo Kingdom averred that “many towns in the present Ikale, Irele and Ese-Odo local Government areas were given *Opa- Ilaje* by the *Olugbo* to perform *Oro* Cult. This was the case of one *Olugbo*’s chief *Jowiri*, with the title *Ahaba*, whom *Olugbo* gave a crown and *Opa Ilaje* and later founded *Ajagba*, a town in the present Ese-Odo local Government. Curwen (1937) is in line with *Abojutoro*’s position when he indicates that “many Ikale senior chiefs received *Opa Ilaje* either directly or indirectly from *Olugbo* and practice the same variety of *Ugbo* Cult of Oro”.

4.1.2 The Nature of Chieftaincy Selection Processes.

Basically, two era have been identified in Ugbo Kingdom as far as chieftaincy selection processes are concerned. There is the pre-modern *Oja* system of selection process which was in place before the Kingdom’s contact with the Europeans, and the modern era initiated by colonial rule.

4.1.3 Pre-Modern *Oja* System of Selection.

The pre-modern *Oja* system, according to *Abojutoro*, was a community based chieftaincy selection process involving the sixteen quarters in Ugbo kingdom. These quarters were known as the *Oja*. In this period, the kingdom had no contact with the Europeans. He gave the details of the selection process at that time as follows:

At the demise of an *Oba*, the royal house of *Ojadele*, with due consultation with *Ifa*, selected and nominated candidate(s) for *Oja* to be appointed the *Olugbo*. The *Oja* would also consult *Ifa* before the final ratification. The selection must conform to a set of laid down rules embedded in the customs and tradition of Ugbo kingdom (IDI, Ode-Ugbo, 17/12/17).

As stated by a respondent in an in-depth interview, the candidate to be selected the *Olugbo* must not be left handed, bald or blind and must be a male descendant of the ruling house. This is what Akinruntan (2016) refers to as the physical appearance screening which a candidate must fulfill before being appointed the *Olugbo*. According to him, these conditions include;

1. The person must not be a twin
2. Must not be a dwarf
3. A stammerer
4. Must not have less than ten fingers or eleven
5. Must not have a history of mental instability and
6. Not an ex-convict

Although, it can be argued that the number six of above listed requirements portrayed modern attempt to extricate the portential contenstants for the *Olugbo*'s stool from breaches of colonial interest. However crime was not alien to pre-colonial African societies.

In the selection process, the *Oja* considered these conditions as prerequisite for any candidate to emerge as *Olugbo*. According to tradition, pre-modern Ugbo Kingdom was divided into sixteen quarters. This was affirmed by *Oba Odoka* who proclaimed that there were sixteen quarters before the advent of Morgan's Report of 1977 (KII, Odoka's palace,19/01/18). This report which spelt out new processes of chieftaincy selection in Ugbo Kingdom was at the instance of the Ondo State Government, to review chieftaincy matters, subsequently known as the Morgan Commission of Enquiry. *Oba Odoka*'s view as stated above is consistent with Omoleye's view (2011). According to him, there were sixteen kingmakers who were also high chiefs in pre-modern Ugbo, who represented the sixteen quarters into which Ugbo kingdom was organisationally divided.

His view of kingmakers was at variance with *Olori-Ebi Ojadele* who remarked in an In-depth interview that "the system of kingmakers (Afobaje), you can cross check with other people, but I am not aware we had it in Ugbo". *Oba Olubo* lent credence to this narrative when he asserted that "none of the *Oja* (the community) was specially regarded as kingmaker". While examining the modern era of chieftaincy selection processes, it was clear that the idea of kingmakers was introduced in *Ugbo* during the period of the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission.

Furthermore, crucial in chieftaincy selection in pre-modern Ugbo was the recognition of the role of the "*Oja*" (the community). *Oba Olubo* captured this more accurately when he remarked that, in pre-modern *Ugbo*, it was the *Oja* (the community), that elected and appointed the next king/*Olugbo* for them. The people referred to as *Oja*, are

the community people who were not from Ojadele lineage.” This is consistent with what *Olugbo - Mafimisebi III* said about the *Oja* chieftaincy selection process in Ugbo Kingdom. In his words, the Ugbo town or community which is known as “*Ulu* or *Oja*” in Ilaje dialect has every right to install an *Oba* throughout this Division and Province (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.I).

From *Oba Olubo*’s remark, it can be argued that members of the *Oja* were like subjects who were not inhabitants of Ode Ugbo, where the *Olugbo* resided, but were very influential in the chieftaincy selection processes. This was corroborated by the *Abojutoro* of Ugbo Kingdom who remarked that “the community in this context does not mean the people in *Ode-Ugbo* alone but the entire kingdom” (IDI in Ode Ugbo, 10/10/17). This implies that in pre-modern chieftaincy selection process, the entire *Ugbo* kingdom was involved in the selection of the new *Olugbo* whenever the need arises. The *Ojadele* lineage referred to by *Oba Olubo* became officially recognised as the *Ojadele* Ruling House by the Morgan Commission Report with the sole right to produce an *Olugbo*.

In a manner that suggests affirming the *Oja* system of chieftaincy selection, *Oba Odoka* further explained how the system operated:

...anytime there was a vacancy to the stool, the *Oja* would invite the Oronmakin to present their candidates that are interested in the stool and the *Oja* would meet and resolve on a candidate that would be installed as the new *Olugbo*. That was before the adoption of the Morgan Report (KII, Odoka’s Palace, 19/01/2018).

This assertion is in line with the processes of selecting an *Olugbo* as detailed in Omoleye’s work. According to him,

When the *Olugbo* stool is vacant, the “*Oja*” (Assembly of the people) which is composed of prominent indigenes of the kingdom will arrange a meeting with princes and request them to select a candidate for their consideration and approval to fill the vacancy. A time frame is normally given to them to do this. On the appointed day the *Oja* will meet at the Ode Ugbo for the exercise. When the candidate is brought before the *Oja*, the

chairman who is normally a widely respected elder of the kingdom will, after due consultations with other members, accept him on behalf of the *Oja* as the new Olugbo-elect (Omoyele, 2011:25).

In same vein, a respondent in an FGD session sheds more light on how the *Oja* process of chieftaincy selection operated in pre-modern Ugbo Kingdom. According to him,

...in the early life of Ugbo, It was the *Oja*, (Ugbo community) led by the elders who were in charge of the selection of the new Oba...The *Oja* was made up of sixteen quarters, and the elders in the sixteen quarters were to moderate the process of the selection of an Oba in Ugbo (FGD, Olugbo-in-Council, 21/10/17).

Here, the above assertion provides more clarification on the role of the elders in the sixteen quarters which Omoleye referred to as kingmakers. As he noted, their role was consigned to moderating the chieftaincy selection processes and not to serve as representatives of the *Oja* in selection of the new *Olugbo* as Omoyele posited.

Extrapolating from the above analyses, two important things can be noted about the *Oja* system of chieftaincy selection. Firstly, the chieftaincy selection process in pre-modern *Ugbo* had a semblance of the Athenian version of direct democracy where the people make decision on issues affecting them directly, instead of electing some representatives to do that on their behalf, as is the case in modern liberal democracy. Although this is not explicitly stated, however, it is evident in the *Oja's* participation in the selection process. The *Oja* system was inclusive in nature.

Secondly, the chieftaincy selection process has the idea of checks and balances ingrained in it. This was evident in the role of the royal family and the *Oja*. The former which presented the candidate(s) for vetting wielded parliamentary powers to nominate and also recommend, while the latter which vetted and appointed candidates performed executive function. The *Abojutoro* of Ugbo Kingdom explained how this played out in selection process while he referred to the case of *Opa* and *Ajana*. According to him,

Should the family nominate someone that *Oja* did not like, they will reject that person (nominated prince). It happened between *Opa* and *Ajana*. The family nominated *Ajana* but the *Oja* chose *Opa* to

become the Olugbo. The community did not like Ajana, it was Opa they liked (IDI, Ode-Ugbo, 17/12/17).

The foregoing lends credence to what *Oba* Napoleon Orioye Mafimisebi III said about the *Oja* chieftaincy selection process when he was nominated the Olugbo-elect in 1952. He remarked that “when the Royal family produced a candidate to be installed as an *Oba*, it was the right of the “*Ulu* or *Oja*” to accept or reject him and the latter which they rarely did and with reasonable points of course” (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.I).

This further reiterates the vetting power of the *Oja* over the royal family which performed the executive function in administering Ugbo Kingdom. Again, Napoleon Orioye’s assertion as stated above is instructive. Instructive in the sense that it brings to our notice the fact that the *Oja* system transcends the pre-modern era. It was also applied in selecting the *Olugbo* during the modern era as he claimed it was applied to his selection. In his words:

It was after the “*Ulu* or *Oja* had commanded by virtue of their power- the Ugbo royal family to produce them a candidate that I was unanimously produced by the above mentioned houses to be installed Olugbo and I was eventually installed Olugbo.(NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.I).

This was the heavily disputed chieftaincy selection processes of 1952 to 1954. This would be examined in detail while looking at the conflict in chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo Kingdom.

There is a sense in which the *Oja* chieftaincy selection process shares some similarity with Akinjogbin’s (1979) *Ebi* concept. According to Akinjogbin, the *Ebi* concept in Yoruba culture is what constitutes “legitimacy in social organization.” Such legitimacy as we have seen take into consideration the role of the *Oja* for a King to emerge whenever there is a vacancy. In modern times, this is referred to as participatory democracy in leadership selection. This affirms our earlier argument that the democratic method of leadership selection is not new to African societies as often put forward by Eurocentric line of argument. In his works on Africa, George Ayittey

(2011; 2006) avers that governance in traditional African society was conducted by consensus which affords everyone the right to air their view as it was done in the *Oja* chieftaincy selection process. Beyond the presentation and acceptance of the candidate presented to the *Oja* by the royal family, there were other traditional rites that must be performed to complete the chieftaincy selection processes. In concordance with the aforementioned, Omoleye (2011) posits that *Alaghor* takes over and performs the rites after *Oja* approves of the candidate presented to it by the royal family. In his remark, *Abojutoro* elucidated on the rites as follows:

Once the family nominee is accepted by the *Oja* he will be taken to Alagbagba house. The building is around the beach in Ugbo. The building was where the would-be Olugbo does undergo tradition training and some rights would be performed on him. He will be there and will be trained on how to govern the kingdom. The training will last for three months. At the completion of the three months training in Alagbagba house, the King will dance round the town and the traditional regalia will be on him. (IDI, Ode-Ugbo, 17/12/17).

Furthermore, *Abojutoro* stated that:

The new king with his traditional regalia has to visit two important shrines within the palace as part of his traditional rites. The first is *Ogwa nla (the Big Shrine)*, where the spirit of his ancestors would be invoked to offer prayers for the peace and progress of the land. The second is *Ogwa kekere (the Small Shrine)* which serves as traditional court yard where difficult matters were discussed and resolved. Traditional festivals were also performed in front of the shrine (IDI, Ode-Ugbo, 17/12/17). (See figure 4.1.3).



Figure 4.1.3a: Back view of Ogwa Nla (Big Shrine) at Olugbo's Palace, Ode-Ugbo
Source: field work, 2017



Figure 4.1.3b: The Abojutoro at the entrance of Ogwa Nla (Big Shrine), Ode-Ugbo

Source: field work, 2017



Figure 4.1.3c: Traditional festival at Ogwa Kekere (Small Shrine), Ode-Ugbo
Source: field work, 2017

The latter rites as detailed by *Abojutoro* clearly shows how the traditional institution in Africa is the custodian of African cultural value which is now increasingly eroding in the face of modernity. This is not to suggest that the modern era of chieftaincy selection is entirely bad. In spite of the interaction of the chieftaincy institutions with modernity which affected Africa's traditional value system, the era of modernity has also impacted positively on Africa as it would be seen in the discussion on the resolution of chieftaincy conflict in Ugbò Kingdom.

It is important to note that, the *Oja* system operated not without conflict but the intensity and scope of such conflict was minimal, as parties sought alternative means once the *Oja* approved of nomination from the royal house. This was the exact case of *Opa* and *Ajana* as noted by Curwel, (1937). "It was on the death of the eight *Olugbo*, his two sons *Opa* and *Ajana* both claimed the succession to the throne. *Opa* was installed by *Oja* as *Olugbo* and his brother left in disgust to found his own kingdom at *Ode-Irele*".

The implication of this is that, the decision of *Oja* in the appointment of an *Olugbo* is final and cannot be appealed against. That is why the colonial government took cognisance of the process before the final ratification of Napoleon's appointment as the *Olugbo* in 1954. This is detailed in subsequent discussions. Also germane to the selection process in pre-modern era, was the reliance on *Ifa* as earlier noted by *Abojutoro*. The process was eventually altered with the incursion of modernity, as it will be elaborately discussed when looking at the selection process in the modern era.

4.1.4 The Modern Era.

The modern era in Western political thought is traced to the Enlightenment period. Accordingly, Henry (2004) avers that "the enlightenment has been seen as the beginning of modernity" (p.10). This era succeeded in putting aside tradition as the main source of truth and wisdom and enthroned reason and individualism which gave rise to industrial revolution, and consequently opened another chapter in European civilization which is now referred to as the modern era.

The search for market and raw materials by European merchants in the era of the "new imperialism" led to Africa's contact with the outside world, hence the advent of modernity in Africa. The Europeans came with a single mission in commerce but with

combined multiple interests resulted in culture exchange, modernisation of traditional institution and accommodation of foreign values (Ovuede, 2016). With respect to Ugbo Kingdom, modernity started with the famous 1884 Treaty that was signed by the *Ugbo* Chiefs on behalf of *Olugbo* with the British, which preceded the epochal event in African history, referred to as the Scramble for and partition of Africa in 1885. Though, extant traditions in Ugbo Kingdom inferred that the kingdom's contact with European predated the Treaty of 1884. This was alluded to by Williams Alexander George Young, the then Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Gold Coast Colony. He asserted that a relationship of peace and friendship long existed between Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ugbo people (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1OK535/VOL 11).

The chieftaincy selection process in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom in the modern era was characterised by the intervention of various structures of the modern government. This was the period a respondent referred to as the incursion of "*Governance Structure*" into the chieftaincy selection processes (IDI, Igbokoda, 21/10/17)01. Modernity started to encroach on the selection processes when Ilaje Native Authority was introduced in 1914 (Curwel, 1937:32). Subsequently, the post colonial modern governance structures, especially the state and local governments became actively involved in the selection processes, unlike the pre-modern era, where the *Oja* (community) took ownership of the process. In the modern process, ascendancy to throne was subjected to certain enabling laws promulgated by the state government. As noted by Akinbosade (2003), despite the fact that, the appointment of an Oba is based on customs and tradition of the community, the court of law must have taken a judicial notice of the customs, which must not be repugnant to the principle of equity, justice and good conscience. Consequently, the chieftaincy selection processes in the kingdom are guided by the Ondo State Edict No 11 of 1984 entitled, "*The Chiefs Edict*", which provides for the procedure to be followed in the selection of an *Oba*. This is detailed in Akinbosade (2003), as follows;

- (a) That a vacancy must occur by reason of death, deposition or abdication of throne.
- (b) Within the span of three months of existing vacancy, the secretary of the local government shall notify and demand from the ruling house whose turn it is to present candidate(s) to do so, within fourteen days.

- (c) The head of the ruling house is expected to summon a meeting of members of the house of the candidates to be presented. The head of the ruling house will be the chairman at the meeting. Interested candidates from the male line only are expected to indicate interest and their names are subsequently shortlisted for presentation to the kingmakers for consideration.
- (d) The head of the ruling house shall within three days of nomination, present the shortlisted candidates to kingmakers through a letter, copy of same should be sent to the secretary of the local government.
- (e) The kingmakers shall meet within fourteen days of receiving the list of candidates and consider their suitability according to custom. Unless a candidate suffers a disqualification in accordance with the relevant section of the chief edit/law, his name shall be submitted by the kingmakers for consultation with *ifa* oracle.
- (f) Where there is no unanimity by the kingmakers, the kingmakers shall decide by a simple majority of votes. The election is to be held in the presence of Secretary to local government.
- (g) A notification of appointment will be made to the successful candidate who will in turn write an acceptance letter to the offer.
- (h) All the relevant documents like the minutes of the various meetings, letter of notification and acceptance will be forwarded by the Secretary to local government to the Chieftaincy Affairs Department, or Office of the Governor or the Ministry of Local Government for further action. The aggrieved party will be expected to submit objection petition to the State Government within twenty days of the appointment.
- (i) If there is no objection, the office of the Governor is expected to process the nomination papers for the approval of the State Executive Council. Once the appointment is approved, the Oba elect has to be informed in writing through the Local Government Chairman.
- (j) Thereafter, traditional rites are to commence on the installation of the Oba-elect in accordance with the custom of the town.
- (k) The presentation of the instrument of appointment and Staff of Office by the State Government climax the selection process.

The above procedure indicates that, the local and state governments provide framework in which chieftaincy selection processes are conducted in compliance with extant laws. In addition, the requirements established a process that in consonance with the tradition and custom of Ugbo people. This is manifested in “e” of the procedure for selection, where the kingmakers had to submit name of candidates for *ifa* consultation before forwarding same to appropriate authority. This shows the interface between the pre-modern and modern processes of selection. In the pre-modern era, *ifa* consultation was a critical aspect of the selection process. This was also retained in the modern era in line with the custom and tradition of *Ugbo* people. However, the outlined requirements do not give automatic tickets to all aspirants contesting for the throne of *Olugbo* as certain categories of people are exempted from the contest. According to section 7 (2) of the Chief Edict, the following categories of people are not eligible to be considered for the appointment of an *Olugbo*;

- (a) A person who is not a member of the ruling house. That is, Ojadele Ruling House.
- (b) A person that suffers from serious physical infirmity.
- (c) A person that has under any law in force in Nigeria, been found or declared to be unsound mind.
- (d) A person that has been sentenced to death or imprisonment in Nigeria, or any other country for term exceeding two years or been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty and sentenced to imprisonment therefrom, and has not been granted a state pardon, or been adjudged bankrupt and has not been discharged from same.

One important aspect of the modern process enunciated in “h” of the selection procedure, is the opportunity for aggrieved party to appeal against the selection processes by submitting a petition to the state government. This is at variance with the procedure in pre-modern *Oja* system where room for appeal was not granted. Looking at the modernised process of chieftaincy selection as outlined above, it is observed that the process is in line with the theoretical underpinning of modernity as the interaction between modernity and tradition succeeded in altering the processes of chieftaincy selection by abolishing the *Oja* process; though it retained aspects of pre-modern selection process such as *Ifa* consultation and performance of traditional rites. By making the governor the one to present the staff of office which is the highpoint of the

chieftaincy selection process in modern time, the modern selection process places the traditional institution, which predates modernity, under the control of the state which engenders conflict, perhaps not intended.

Moreover, the modern process of chieftaincy selection engendered an exclusionary selection process as against the inclusive one that was practiced in pre-modern era – the *Oja* system. The introduction of Kingmakers in the selection process, restricting the selection process to the Ruling House and the Local Government, and the presentation of staff of office by the Governor which climaxes the chieftaincy selection processes makes it elitist in nature.

4.2. Influence of Modernity on Chieftaincy Selection Processes and Conflict

4.2.1. Elements of Modernity in the Chieftaincy Selection Processes

Africa's contact with the outside world is considered to be the era of modernity. This encounter succeeded in altering the course of Africa's destiny and history with the imposition of new values and structures (Ajayi and Webster, 1966). When a society modernises, it comes with a lot of impacts. In Western Europe for instance, it brought about economic development, hence the emergence of a market driven economy which gave rise to a strong middle class (Lipset 1959; Fukuyama 1992) in contrast with the feudal era. Consequently, this led to demands for political liberalisation. Modernity came up with such changes in Ugbo kingdom, especially in the area of education which threw up an elite class, religion, politics and modern governance structures (the state and local governments and the judiciary) all of which became powerful forces in the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.

For Ugbo people, therefore, modernity is conceived in the light of western education and the elite it threw up. It also associates with the emergence and constitution of kingmakers (*Afobajes*) in chieftaincy selection processes. Findings from the field also indicated that monetary influence on the obaship institution could be conceived as one of the implications of modernity. In this connection, *Olori Ebi* noted that:

So, at the time of Adebajo, there was this constitution of Afobaje(s), which was modernity.... The educated people from 1952 to 1956 supported Napoleon Mafimisebi III because he was in their class. They wanted someone from

their own class (Elites) to become the Oba. Another issue of modernity is education, hitherto nobody was considered qualified to be an Oba by virtue of being educated or not. Today, when you have money, you can be considered qualified to be an Oba. That is modernity too. This happens everywhere now, before you can become an Oba, you must be rich or have someone that is rich, who can sponsor you (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/17).

Whereas the above conception of modernity is silent on religion (Christianity) and modern state structure, they form vital parts of the people's everyday understanding of the concept. As such, modernity continues to shape the conflict issues in the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. Modernity therefore, manifested with the advent of colonialism in the various institutions of modern government, such as, the Colonial Native Authority, State and Local Governments, Modern Court System, Judicial Board of Enquiries, and the Modern Value System with an epochal dimensions. These structures interfaced significantly with the chieftaincy selection processes as discussed below.

4.2.1.1 The Colonial Native Authority of 1914

The Native Authority Ordinance of 1910 allowed for the creation of native authorities under the Resident. The Resident Officer was assisted by District Officers with Civil Servants, Emirs, *Oba*, and Warrant Chiefs. The *Oba* or the Emirs governed directly with the British officials (Akinbosade 2003). In respect to Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom, in 1914 a Native Court was opened at *Mahin* and the *Amapetu* was recognised as the Native Authority for what was later called the Mahin District, which included *Ugbo*. In 1917 the *Amapetu* was formally gazetted as the sole Native Authority by the British over the entire Ilaje territory comprising *Ugbo*, *Aheri* and *Etikan* (NAI/OKITIDIVI/1/OK535/VOL,I). The recognition of *Amapetu* over the *Olugbo* was not without protest from the latter as *Olugbo* refused to recognise *Amapetu* as the Native Authority. *Olugbo Mafimisebi I* had claimed that he was the first to occupy that part of the coastal area placed under *Amapetu's Mahin* District by the colonial authority and his kingdom predated *Mahin* Kingdom. This claim was refuted by *Mahin* as they also asserted earlier arrival to the coastal area. In what was similar to

Olugbo's position, Curwen's study of 1937 detailed in "Ilaje Intelligence Report" posits that:

The Ugbo version of Ilaje origins is supported by the Ikale people and also, in unguarded moments, by members of the Yashere quarter of Mahin who are loyal to the present Amapetu. Members of the Ashogbon quarter gave a similar story to Mr Matthew in 1931. The matter today is of academic interest only, but I have formed the Opinion that the Ugbo version is true in the main and that their forefathers did in fact precede the Mahin in the coastal area. Although, the Mahin claimed original ownership of the entire sea-shore between the Ijebu and Ishekiri boundaries but cannot explain why the Ugbo gained possession of two third of the beach (NAI/OKITIDIV/I/I/OK535/ VOL I).

Additionally, Curwen noted that the Mahin arrived in the coastal area during the reign of the tenth *Olugbo-Akeriti*. Whatever the position of *Olugbo* on the supremacy battle was, the British, having met a literate *Amapetu* before *Olugbo* continued to recognise him as Sole Native Authority in the entire *Ilaje* area without cognisance of first settlement (Ikuejube, 2012:55). The vehement opposition of *Olugbo* to *Amapetu's* Native Authority eventually led to his deportation to Calabar in 1921 and created interregnum in *Olugbo* chieftaincy selection for seven years.

The position of *Amapetu* as the Native Authority was a vantage point of interference in the chieftaincy selection process in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom. The interference became fierce due to the fact that the two kingdoms were contiguous to each other (Ikuejube, 2012:44) and *Amapetu* became interested in whom was to be installed as the *Olugbo*. This move by the *Amapetu* was alluded to by respondents during the field work when they accused a traditional ruler (*Amapetu*) of sponsoring a candidate against Napoleon who had been appointed by the *Oja*. In this connection a respondent also noted that *Amapetu* kept interfering with the selection process in *Ugbo* and attempted to install an *Olugbo* of his choice - a stooge - to do his bidding in the Kingdom" (IDI ,Igbokoda, 11/10/2017). While the attempt to install an *Olugbo* was not successful, the incident suggests the Native Authority – the *Amapetu* – wielded much power especially on chieftaincy matters to the extent of manipulating the selection processes to his favour. This was the exact incident of 1952 when Prince Napoleon Orioye, was selected by

Oja as the *Olugbo* and *Amapetu*'s clandestine support for Josiah Nana against *Oja*'s nomination. The selection was rocked with crises that lasted for almost two (2) years until his appointment was ratified by the Colonial Authority (Omoyele, 2011).

What appears to have worked against the *Amapetu*'s choice in favour of Napoleon was the *Oja* system practiced by the *Ugbo* people. While commenting on this, a respondent stated that, "when an *Oba* has been picked by the *Oja*, the District Officer will confirm his appointment before such an *Oba* can be recognised by the Government" (IDI, Okitipupa, 21/10/17). Thus, the people were united in their choice and ensured it prevailed. It is important to state here that, two elements of modernity came into play at the wake of Napoleon's chieftaincy selection conflict. First, was the involvement of the Board of Enquiry and second, the involvement of Okitipupa Federal Native Council that approved the nomination of Napoleon as the *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* in 1954. Let's now turn to these important elements of modernity in details.

4.2.1.2 The Board of Enquiry of 1953

At the demise of *Oba* Samuel Ejagbomo Mafimisebi II (of the Agbedun segment of the ruling house) in 1952, his son, Prince Napoleon Orioye Mafimisebi was selected and nominated as the *Olugbo*-elect same year, by a segment of the ruling house which was approved of by the *Oja* (NAI/OKITIDIV/OK535/VOL/I). His nomination was greeted with series of protests by the aggrieved members (other segments - *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye*) of the ruling house and other stakeholders in the chieftaincy selection processes in *Ugbo* Kingdom. Series of letters were written in support and against the nomination of Napoleon Orioye as the *Olugbo*-elect. In a letter dated 21st November, 1952, written to the District Officer Okitipupa Division, by the Ilaje at Omuropo, the group contested Napoleon's nomination on the ground that *Olugbo*'s throne was not hereditary and therefore, recommended Mr J.O Majeyinbaje from another segment of the ruling house (*Ojogo*) as the new *Olugbo* (NAI/OKITI/DIV/I/OK535/VOL/1). In a counter letter, dated 24th January 1953, addressed to the President, Okitipupa Federal Native Council, by the *Ugbo* Sectional Council in support of Napoleon's nomination, the group contended that:

Since the funeral ceremony of the late *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* is over, a decision is arrived at by the *Ugbo* Sectional Council that since the four

representatives of the ruling houses have presented Prince Napoleon Orioye Mafimisebi as the new Olugbo of Ugbo, we hereby reveal it to you that he has been taken as our Oba, and all necessary native law and custom performances have been done accordingly (NAI/OKITIDIV/OK535/VOL/1).

On the strength of allegations and counter allegations surrounding Napoleon's nomination, the colonial government through Ilaje District Council set up a board of enquiry in 1953 to look into the chieftaincy selection dispute and recommend appropriately. The board, which was headed by A.A Tawoshe Esq comprised eight other *Ugbo* chiefs, submitted its recommendations on 17th July 1953. It unanimously rejected Napoleon's nomination on the account of the father-to-son inheritance principle of succession advanced by Napoleon, the Olugbo-elect. The board held that, since *Ojadele* has four sons – *Agbedun*, *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye* – succession to the throne must be rotated among the four male children in line with *Ugbo* custom and tradition. This was in contrast with the position of Prince Napoleon Mafimisebi, whose father and grandfather reigned consecutively from *Agbedun* lineage. The board therefore, recommended Chief Josiah Nana from *Ojogo* lineage as the *Olugbo* of Olugbo (NAI/OKITIDIV/OK535/VOL II). This decision seems to signal an end to the father-to-son succession principle. But subsequent events proved contrary.

In a protest letter dated 19th December, 1953 written by Prince Napoleon to the Leutenant-Governor, western region, he accused the board of manipulation and misinterpretion of facts in favour of Chief Josiah Nana, whom he claimed was sponsored by Amapetu of Mahin. In the said letter, Napoleon laid more emphasis on the role of *Oja* in the selection process. He claimed, it was the *Oja* that appointed him, and its decision was final on the selection, according to *Ugbo* tradition and custom. Based on this, and other protest letters from Ugbo Sectional Council, a committee was set-up by Okitipupa Federal Council to review the recommendation of the Board of enquiry and submit same to the council for deliberations and subsequent ratification or rejection (NAI/OKITIDIV/OK535/VOL/I). This draws attention to another crucial element of modernity that played critical role in the selection processes in Napoleon's era of the conflict which was – the Federal Native Council (FNC).

4.2.1.3 The Federal Native Council of 1954

The Federal Native Council Okitipupa was part of the colonial arrangement for the effective administration of the Division. No doubt, the administration of the entire Western Province under colonial rule witnessed the balkanisation of the region into Districts and Divisions for administrative convenience (Asiwaju, 1980). As noted earlier, Ilaje District was placed under Okitipupa division. All matters relating to chieftaincy dispute, if not adequately handled by the district were referred to the division for further adjudication. This explains the decision to appeal against the board of enquiry's resolution by groups loyal to Napoleon Mafimisebi. In a memo, dated 25th of March 1953 addressed to the Federal President, Okitipupa Federal Native Council by members of Ugbo Sectional Council, the group stated that:

As there is no any other means in our wit to effect settlement in this connection among the contestants, we humbly appeal to you for the transfer of that matter into the federal Council where we have confidence of final settlement in accordance with the machinery for settlement of chieftaincy disputes paragraph 4 (a) referred (NAI/OKTIDIV/I OK535 VOL 1).

What this implies is that there were different levels of conflict management mechanisms during the colonial period – bringing to light a crucial aspect of modernity which gave impetus to appeal decisions to the highest levels of colonial adjudication. As such, a respondent averred that, the colonial administrators were armed with various techniques for resolving conflicts that gave room for appeal. Moreover, the Federal Council after due consultations, set up a committee to review the decision of the Board of Enquiry. The decision of the committee was contained in a letter dated 12th of April, 1954 written by the President Federal Native Authority to the District Officer Okitipupa Division which read in part:

I have to inform you that at the January meeting of the Federal Council the question of the appointment of an Olugbo of Ugbo was discussed. In accordance with their terms of reference, the committee submitted their findings and recommendations to this council in session. These were carefully gone into by the council and adopted with no dissenting voice from Ikale, Ijaw Apoi, Bini Confederation and Arogbo

Councillors. Finally, Mr. Napoleon Mafimisebi is the unanimous choice of the Council as the Olugbo of Ugbo, early government recognition is highly craved for (NAI OKITI/DIV/1/1/OK/535/VOL II).

The above position demonstrates that the colonial government took cognisance of the role of the *Oja* in the selection processes, as embedded in the tradition and customs of Ugbo people. The implication of this is that, once the community has approved of nomination of a person as the Olugbo, hardly could such decision be upturned. In this case, the colonial government through the District or Federal council ratified the appointment before it became valid. Commenting on this, a respondent stated that, “the Europeans sometimes helped us if we cannot resolve our issues, but we appoint our kings ourselves” (IDI, Olugbo’s Palace, 21/10/17).

Nevertheless, it must be stated, despite the decision of the federal council to uphold the appointment of Napoleon Mafimisebi as the Olugbo of Ugbo in 1954, other segments of the ruling house continued to press for justice and equity in the enthronement of Olugbo. That was why after the death of Napoleon Mafimisebi III in 1978 and the enthronement of his son, Adebanjo Mafimisebi IV in 1982, the chieftaincy selection conflict continued unabated until the Supreme Court judgement of 2007 that put an end to the father-to-son chieftaincy selection principle in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. In this connection, it is clear that elements of modernity in the chieftaincy selection processes recognised the efficacy of the traditional participatory approach in the process of selection which had the tendency to reduce conflicts. Hence, a hybrid of the traditional structure – the *Oja* system – and the modern governance structure – the court system, board of enquiries is crucial for addressing chieftaincy selection conflicts. In the modern process, certain values have been implicated as playing key roles in the selection process. These include colonial legacies of western education and modern religion which have significantly interfered with the chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo Kingdom.

4.2.1.4 Western Education: Forum of Ilaje Educated Men.

One of the legacies of colonialism is the development of the western-type literary education. Although, the missionary programmes for western education was to teach the 3rs - reading, writing and arithmetic, it allowed the “converts” to operate under the

missionary banner and helped to advance trade relationship between the colonialist and the coloniser (Post, 1966). But with the passage of time, western education became the tool for nationalism and self determination. As noted by Osoba and Fajana:

The fortunes and significance of western education were noticed in the social, cultural, economic and political factors operating in the various Nigerian society, just as the entire Nigerian society was itself significantly influenced and altered by the impact of this imported brand of education (Osoba and Fajana, 1980:570).

The above, suggests that western education has introduced new values and new social status. This buttresses the position of Ajayi and Webster who opines that “the class of people who were attracted to the new values and ideas of the western education became the elites that have been so crucial in the development and modernisation process of African society” (Ajayi and Webster, 1966:149).

In respect to the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom, the colonial government was desirous in scouting for literate kings who could assist in tax collection and administration of the protectorate. This was the case with the elevation of “a literate Amapetu” over “non-literate Olugbo” as noted earlier. This consideration equally manifested in the decision of the Federal Council in the ratification of Napoleon Mafimisebi’s appointment as the Olugbo in 1954. As averred by a respondent, the impact of western education in the selection processes was significantly noticed during the Napoleon time. Many of his classmates in school supported him to become Olugbo. They see themselves as superiors to us here (IDI, Baale’s house Erunna, 06/11/17).

What this affirms is that, western education has created a class of people with common orientation and solidarity within Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. Archival documents indicated that the ratification of Napoleon’s appointment by Federal council might have resulted from the pressure mounted by the Ilaje educated men. This is evident in a letter dated 9th of November 1952, written by Ilaje Educated men to the district officer, Okitipupa division in respect of the chieftaincy selection conflict during Napoleon’s era (NAI/OKIDIV/I/OK535VOL). Similarly, The *Asogbon* of Ugbo kingdom stated during a focus group discussion that the ratification of Napoleon Mafimisebi by the colonial government coincided with the time western education was needed for participation in

the colonial government. Napoleon, being one of the educated persons then, was favoured. As noted by Omoyele, (2011) the intervention of western education in Olugbo's chieftaincy was noticed in 1948 during the reign of Napoleon's father, *Oba Samuel Ejagbomo Mafimisebi II*. The decision of the *Oba* to introduce a new tax regime to favour the colonial administration led to upheaval in Ugbo kingdom. Napoleon in conjunction with his fellow elites used their knowledge of education to resolve the taxation crisis. No wonder, a respondent alluded to the fact that, the decision of the federal council to uphold Napoleon's appointment as *Olugbo* was not unconnected with the role he played during the tax regime crisis. Thus, the colonialist saw in Napoleon a useful tool for tax collection.

As earlier noted, education is not a prerequisite to become the *Olugbo*. Yet, in the contemporary Yoruba society, it has become the norm to select educated persons as *Oba*, considering the role of traditional rulers in contemporary time in interfacing with government on issues affecting their domains, especially in the area of security which has become prominent. To this extent, the role of education in the chieftaincy selection processes is now pronounced. Apart from being evident in the selection processes, therefore, western education has interfered with the processes itself as observed in the foregoing.

4.2.1.5 Modern Religion – Cherubim and Seraphim Church

In Ugbo Kingdom, African traditional religion had been in force since the pre-colonial era. *Malokun* – the god of the sea happened to be the religion of the people. According to a respondent, the *Olugbo* usually goes to the seashore to worship *Malokun* for the peace and progress of the land. Chieftaincy selection, at that time, was conducted under the purview of traditional religion. The *Ifa*, *Alaghoró* and *Malokun* played prominent roles as observed in respondents' views in the course of field study. This is also observed in Omoyele's study, which alludes to the role of traditional religion, when he posits that, "the three traditional rites to be performed during the installation of the new *Olugbo* include the *Malokun*, the *Alaghoró* and the *Oro* rites" (Omoyele, 2011:26).

However, modern religion – Western influenced Christianity with its creed and tenets – introduced new belief system apparently at variance with tradition and in conflict with indigenous religious practices. This conflict manifested in no small way in the

chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. The advent of Cherubim and Seraphim Church (C&S) in Ilaje in 1927 with a branch established by Elisha Lene at Erunna in Ugbo Kingdom created new belief system among Ilaje people. As noted by Omogbemi (2008), “the new religion is seen as an efficacious means of offering solutions to the social, economic and spiritual problems of the people”. With this new faith and belief system, the church continued to grow in a geometric progression, and in 1948, Elisha Lene (*Baba Lene*) founded Ugbonla as the headquarters of C&S Church in Ilaje. The effects of Church proselytism and its claims of power of miracle and prophesy aimed at obtaining converts adversely altered the Chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo as emphasised by a respondent:

The Church Baba Lene brought to Ugbo Kingdom made people to believe in power of miracles. Baba Lene being a prince of Ojadele royal house and spiritual head of the church offered prayers and performed miracles to assist interested candidates to become the *Olugbo* (IDI, Ode-Ugbo, 10/10/2017).

The above draws attention to the interference of C&S church in the selection processes where Baba Lene’s multiple roles – the head of C&S Church; a prince of Ojadele ruling house who is entitled to the throne; and the head of the family of the Ojadele ruling house charged with the responsibility of the selection of the *Olugbo* – impacted significantly on the traditional belief system both negatively and positively. This was the exact case of Samuel Ejagbomo who found solace in the spiritual guidance of *Baba Lene*, instead of *Ifa* divinations when he aspired to become the *Olugbo*. This will be detailed in the next section when examining the influence of religion on the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje- Ugbo Kingdom. Apart from the colonial structures and values discussed above, which had at different times interfered with chieftaincy selection processes, several other modern governance structures have impacted on the processes in the post-colonial period as discussed below.

4.2.1.6 The Local Government

The institution of Local Government Administration (L.G.A.) is one of the colonial legacies that influenced the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. Its history can be traced to the colonial era, where traditional institutions were involved in administering the locals through the instrumentality of the Native Authority apparatus

(Aliyu, 2007). In respect to Ilaje-Ugbo Kindgom, the *Olugbo* had at one time participated in governance during the colonial and post colonial period. In 1951, due to the constitutional development that brought about a bicameral legislature in the Western region, *Olugbo* Samuel Ejagbomo, Mafimisebi II was elected by Okitipupa divisional Council of *Oba* and Chiefs to represent the Council at the Western House of Chiefs in Ibadan. In the same vein, his son, *Oba* Napoleon Orioye *Mafimisebi III* was also elected into the same Western House of Chiefs in 1960 (Omoyele, 2011). The involvement of traditional rulers was critical to governance and political stability during those periods.

However, the Local Government reforms of 1976 created the office of the Secretary to the Local Government as the administrative head of the council, brought chieftaincy matters under direct control of the local Government and insulated the *Oba* from local government administration and engagement in politics (Akinbosade, 2003:25). According to Akinbosade (2003), the involvement of the local Government in the chieftaincy selection processes is contained in the ‘Chief Edict No II of 1984 as follows;

1. That upon the existence of a vacant stool by reason of death, deposition or abdication of the throne, the Secretary to the local Government must be notified within the span of three months and demanded from the ruling house whose turn it is to produce candidate(s) to do so, within fourteen days.
2. That within three days of the nomination, the head of the ruling house shall, through a letter present the shortlisted candidates to the kingmakers, and a copy of the letter should be sent to the Secretary of the Local Government.
3. And where there is no agreement on the choice of candidate, the kingmakers shall conduct election by simple majority in the presence of the Secretary to the local Government to decide the candidate.
4. All documents relevant to the selection processes reflecting minutes of meetings, letter of notification and acceptance letter by the candidate will be forwarded by the Secretary of the Local Government to the Chieftaincy Affairs Department or Office of the Governor for further actions.

In essence, the local government is an important player in the chieftaincy selection processes. While the final decision rests with the state government as the power of the local government is still regulated by act of parliament (Mukoro, 2000), the local government is responsible for outlining the procedure to be followed in the selection processes. One of such procedures indicates that the LG Secretary ought to be present in the midst of kingmakers should the kingmakers not agree and election is to be conducted. This suggests two important points in the involvement of the local government in the selection processes. One, it demonstrates that the modern structure under which the local government operates appears to create an inclusive process that is democratic in nature. However, beneath this guised democratisation processes are muted manipulations of the system most often to favour particular interest of the local government. Two, the local government is the link between the selected candidate and the staff of office to be presented by the state government. This is crucial as a selected candidate by the kingmakers will not be recognised and handed the staff of office by the state government without correspondence from the local government. As such, the local government plays salient roles in the chieftaincy selection processes.

4.2.1.7 The State Government

In pre-colonial Yorubaland, chieftaincy selection processes relied solely on *Ifa* divination, tradition and customs of the people. However, with the incursion of colonialism and its attendant modernisation, the government structures, pre-colonial arrangement experienced alterations and maladjustments. The modern State now supervises the appointment of an *Oba* and sometimes favoured candidates susceptible to its whims and caprices. In some cases, the State deposes or banishes an *Oba* considered recalcitrant to government policies. As noted by Akinbosade (2003), chieftaincy matters is under the exclusive list of the state government, hence, it is expected to make enabling edicts for the appointment and deposition of the recognised *Oba*. The law that guides the chieftaincy matters in Ondo state is titled “The Chief Edicts of 1984”. It is important to note that, under the tradition and customs of Ugbo people, the enthronment of an *Olugbo* is for life except being terminated by death. However, the modern state through the instrumentality of the law as enshrined in section 18(1) of the chief edicts of 1984 can depose a king on the following grounds.

1. If an *Oba* committes a serious crime as provided for in the criminal code.

2. Disloyalty to the government of the day.
3. Gross misconduct to his subjects or the government
4. Court nullification of appointment arising from irregularity in appointment or procedural default.
5. High handedness by the *Oba* leading to his being made to commit suicide.

Viewed from the above, it is important to note that section 18(1) of the chief edicts is laced with some ambiguous clauses that empowered the state to manipulate and interfere in the selection processes. For instance, what constitutes an offence of disloyalty to the State Government is not clearly stated. In this connection, a respondent contended that:

The State Government appoints a person an *Oba* based on political participation, and can dethrone those *Oba* they considered not favourable to their party politics. An *Oba* can be deposed if he is not in support of the party in government nor in the good book of the Governor of the state (IDI, Ajegunle, 20/10/2017).

His contention, however, does not suggest that the State can dethrone an *Oba* at will. There must be reasonable justifications for the action. The dethronement must be in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality and public health (Akinbosade, 2003). What is clear from these discussions is that the State Government can appoint and dethrone an *Oba* depending on what is given as reason for embarking on such action. As earlier stated, while the local government files all the necessary papers, the final decision to appoint an *Oba* – a crucial part of the selection processes – rests with the state government with issuance of Staff of Office to the candidate. In this way, the selected candidate has been ratified as the *Oba*. As transparent as this final process appears, there are tendencies for the state governments to influence the selection processes based on several reasons – party affiliations – and/or favouring loyalists and compensation for financial support. This scenario presents a picture where modernity provides the window for redress and suggests that, parties or candidates who observed forms of manipulation in the selection processes can seek redress in the court of law. This brings to the fore the crucial role of the Judiciary in the selection processes.

4.2.1.8 The Judiciary

The judiciary is an important arm of the modern state that deals with the interpretation of the law, adjudicate on conflicts among parties and punish lawbreakers accordingly. The judiciary is made of different category of Courts, ranging from Customary to the Supreme Court of Nigeria (Adefolarin, 2006). However, it is not true to say that African societies had no means of adjudication of disputes before the advent of the modern court (Oyewo, 2003). Africans had long developed means of conflict resolution mechanism through the institution of monarchical system of government. Though, the indigenous judiciary system is largely unwritten, but was ingrained in the customs and tradition of the people. As noted by (Olaoba, 2010), the indigenous judiciary system was driven by the people, based on the authority of the monarch. This of course, enhanced peaceful co-existence and development among the communities.

However, Colonialism with its legacy of modernity gradually transformed the indigenous judicial system into a modern court system. The British colonialists did not wipe out totally the indigenous system but instituted a native court authority that was designed along the modern judicial system. That is why Sofola, contends that “rather than having an outright, wholesale modification of the indigenous cultures, what we have is a simple modification of what existed and an intensification of the conscious appreciation of the traditional culture” (Sofola, 1973:11). Therefore, there is no doubt that, traditional and cultural norms formed the basis of the indigenous judicial system. These norms include folktales, traditional judicial precedents, proverbs, maxims, and taboos, (Olaoba, 2010).

With respect to chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom, the intervention of the Judiciary and modern legal system was first witnessed in 1921 during the deportation of *Olugbo*, Mafimisebi I to Calabar, when he resisted the subjugation of his kingdom under *Mahin* territory by the British. In a letter written by his lawyer, James Alexander Taylor, dated August 18, 1922 addressed to The Right Honourable, His Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, London, England he affirmed that:

From time immemorial and during the time it was placed under British protectorate and influence namely about 37 years ago and ever since the territory of Igbo aforesaid had been independent,

it had never been held to be under or subordinate to the Amapetu of Mahin or to the country of Mahin itself or to any other ruler or country in Nigeria aforesaid, that all the former Olugbo of Igbo including the present Olugbo and his people have ever been enjoying freely all rights and privileges as an independent state and without any interruption, disturbance or interference whatever from any other state or person whomsoever until sometimes about the beginning of this year when the Amapetu of Mahin began to lay claims to and to assert some authority over the said territory of Igbo (NAI/CSO 26/06452).

The legal tussle between *Olugbo* and the colonial government was aimed at restoring sanctity to the *Ilaje-Ugbo* chieftaincy selection process and restore the independence of *Ugbo* Kingdom. The *Amapetu* of *Mahin* had begun a process of installing an *Olugbo* during the period of interregnum which was contrary to the tradition and custom of *Ugbo* people. This is evident in a petition written by *Ugbo* Chiefs, dated 3rd January, 1926 to the Chief Secretary to the Government through the Resident in Akure, where they stated that “*Ugbo* is their natural inheritance and if the post of *Olugbo* is vacant, they cannot transfer their father’s right of succession to those who are not entitled to same (NAI/CSO26/06452). The intrigues and politics of succession to *Olugbo*’s stool between the *Amapetu* of *Mahin* and *Ugbo* Chiefs was laid to rest when *Olugbo*’s lawyer James Alexander Taylor, secured an order of cancellation of the deportation of *Olugbo* Mafimisebi I, on 13th June, 1927 (NAI/CSO/26/06452). The deposed *Olugbo* was finally brought back from Calabar and returned to his home town *Idogun* in *Ugbo* Kingdom.

Also of note, is the chieftaincy selection dispute that started with the installation of *Oba* Adebajo Mafimisebi IV, as the *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* Kingdom in 1983, and his dethronement by the Supreme Court of Nigeria in 2007. The chieftaincy selection conflict that ensued in 1952 with the enthronement of *Oba* Napoleon Orioye Mafimisebi III was resolved and laid to rest with the judgement of the Supreme Court in 2007. The court declared the reigns of *Oba* Napoleon Mafimisebi III (1954-1978) and *Oba* Adebajo Mafimisebi IV (1982-2007) as illegal on the basis of father-to-Son inheritance principle adopted for their selections (Supreme Court Judgement 2007, No SC.160/1995). The Court held that, since it has been established that the mode of succession to *Olugbo*’s throne is not father-to-son, it is therefore contrary to *Ugbo*

custom and tradition for Oba Adebajo and his father Oba Napoleon to rule consecutively. Consequently, the state intervention and various judicial commissions of enquiry on chieftaincy matters changed the course of chieftaincy selection processes significantly. A case in reference to the selection processes of *Olugbo* is the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission of 1977.

4.2.1.9 The Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission of 1977

In 1977, the Government of Ondo State under Group Captain Ita David Ekpeme commissioned a board of enquiry headed by Honourable Justice Adeyinka Morgan to look into chieftaincy matters which became known as the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission. It is important to note that the Chiefs Law of 1957 which stipulated government regulation of traditional chieftaincy in Yorubaland, (Oyemakinde, 1977) formed the basis of which the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission of 1977 in Ondo State was based. Specifically, the terms of reference of the commission included the status of traditional rulers, claims to paraphernalia of office, kingmakers, the role of *Ifa* Oracle in the appointment of an *Oba*, procedure to be followed for the election of an *Oba*, the concept of “*Omo Orite*”, “*Aremo*” and “*Abidagba*” abdication of an *Oba*, Regency, Prescribed Authority and Consenting Authority. In July 1981, the government published a white paper on the commission’s report which was adopted as a guide to the institution of chieftaincy in Ondo State. The general recommendations of the report included the procedure to be followed in nominating candidates for selection as an *Oba* – some of which had been discussed under the local government.

The general procedure to be adopted in respect of each recognised chieftaincy includes the following terms;

- i. Within three months after the death of an *oba*, the Secretary of the competent Local Government shall ask the ruling house whose turn it is to present a candidate or candidates to do so within fourteen days from the date of such notification.
- ii. The Head of the ruling house involved shall summon a meeting of the ruling house, composed according to the local tradition, to select a candidate or candidates who will be presented to the kingmakers.
- iii. The head of the ruling house shall be Chairman at the meeting and shall call for nomination.

- iv. Either the Head of the ruling house or the person nominated by the ruling house shall, within three days of nomination, present the nominated candidate or candidates to the kingmakers for their acceptance or rejection.
- v. Simultaneously, the Head of the ruling house shall also communicate the name or names of the nominated candidate or candidates to the kingmakers within three days. A copy of the letter shall be sent to the Secretary of the competent Local Government.
- vi. The kingmakers shall meet within fourteen days of receiving the name or names of the candidate or candidates nominated and consider his or their suitability according to custom. Unless a candidate suffers a disqualification in accordance with Chiefs Law, his name shall be submitted by the kingmakers for consultation with *Ifa* by a person appointed by them for the purpose. Where however there is no unanimity by the kingmakers, the kingmakers shall decide the candidate by simple majority of votes.
- vii. The election shall take place in the presence of the Secretary of the competent Local Government and Head of the ruling house as observers.

This change brought about a lot of modifications in the chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo Kingdom including the introduction of kingmakers and a host of other criteria. It is for this reason that *Oba Olubo* averred that the “Morgan Report also appointed Kingmakers for us in Ugbo, otherwise, the Oja could have remained the only means for any Olugbo to emerge in Ugbo kingdom” (KII, Olubo’s Palace 21/10/17). Also, commenting on the influence of modernity on the selection processes, the dethroned *Olugbo* in an interview posited that, “the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission did not take into consideration the tradition and customs of Ugbo people in respect to selection processes otherwise it could not have limited its scope to Ojadele, who was just the 16th Olugbo”. Going by this line of argument, it could be inferred from the contents and details of Morgan’s report that the document did not capture the mode of selection in operation before Ojadele ruling house was introduced. According to field reports, several kings had reigned in Ugbo kingdom, whose succession processes were not reflected in Morgan Chieftaincy Report. Most worrisome was the lacuna created in the mode of succession which Morgan report failed to address. This is what a respondent identified as one of the sources of the chieftaincy selection conflict in Ilaje-

Ugbo kingdom. However, since the modern governance structures have come to stay, it becomes necessary to align with the rules of engagement in all affairs.

What then is the procedure for selecting a new *Olugbo* according to the Morgan chieftaincy review commission of 1977? The chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo Kingdom is to be conducted as follows:

- A. There is only one Ruling House which is the *Ojadele* Ruling House.
- B. Order of rotation in filling the vacancies was stated as none.
- C. Qualified candidate(s) to the vacant stool must be a member of the Ruling House and of the male line.
- D. The Kingmakers include the following:
 1. Chief Olubo
 2. Chief Gbogunro
 3. Chief Yasere
 4. Chief Alagho
 5. Chief Asogbon
 6. Chief Odoka
- E. In filling vacancy to the *Olugbo* stool the following procedure is to be followed:
 1. Three months after the death of the *Olugbo*, the Secretary of the Local Government will call on the Ruling House to present a candidate(s) within fourteen days from the date of such notice;
 2. The head of the Ruling House shall call a meeting of the House in line with Ugbo native law and custom to select candidate(s) to be presented to the Kingmakers;
 3. The Chairman of the meeting shall be the head of the Ruling House who will call for the nomination;
 4. Either the head of the Ruling House or someone nominated in his stead is expected to present the nominated candidate(s) to the Kingmakers for their acceptance or rejection;
 5. The head of the Ruling House or the person standing in his stead is expected to present the name(s) of the nominated candidate(s) to the Kingmakers in writing within three days. This shall be sent to the Secretary of the Local Government;

6. The Kingmakers are expected to convene a meeting after receiving the name(s) of the candidate(s) within fourteen days and consider his/their fitness in line with the tradition of the land. Except a candidate suffers a disqualification which is not consistent with the Chiefs Law, that candidate's name shall be submitted by the Kingmakers for consultation with Ifa by someone they appointed to perform that function.
7. However, in the event there is no agreement by the candidate by a simple majority votes, an election shall be conducted before the Secretary of the Local Government and the head of the Ruling House will be present as an observer.

The idea of the “Head” of the Ruling House, now referred to as “*Olori-Ebi*” was muted by the Morgan’s Commission. According to *Baale Idogun*, it was the era of Adebajo Mafimisebi we started having *Olori-Ebi* in its official sense. While Baba Lene had been coordinating and playing the role of the *Olori-Ebi* unofficially, he officially became the first *Olori-Ebi* which began under Adebajo Mafimisebi (IDI, Idogun, 31/10/17). Whatever informed the idea of the *Olori-Ebi* by the Commission has not been clearly explained since it was introduced. However, findings from the field suggest that the role of the *Olori-Ebi* in the chieftaincy selection processes has the tendency of generating conflict. This was the view expressed by former Secretary Ilaje Local Government when he remarked that “*Olori-Ebi* has gotten a vital role to play in the selection processes of the prince to man the throne. It was like any camp that produced the *Olori-Ebi* has the assurance of zoning the Obaship to his own camp” (IDI, Igbokoda, 21/10/17).

While Morgan’s Report spelt out the role of the Secretary to the Local Government, it was silent on some major roles of the Secretary to the local government in the selection processes. During an interview with *Oba Olubo*, the traditional ruler affirmed that “during the selection processes of the Olugbo, if the votes tie, the Secretary to the Local Government would be allowed to vote”. This therefore means that beyond the role spelt out in E (5) and (7), the Secretary to the Local Government can also cast his/her ballot in the event of a tie. The implication of this is that the rod of the government can be duly used at this point against a candidate who appears not to have the favour of the government in power. Morgan report, therefore, appears to have been carefully crafted to achieve a political goal and address a policy gap in the chieftaincy

selection processes. It is clear that while the report aimed at addressing conflicts emanating from the selection processes, it also served to safeguard government's interest.

Again, in addition to the requirements outlined above, there is more to the disqualification as stated in E (6). This is referred to as the physical appearance screening. Akinruntan (2016:29) outlines the physical appearance exercise to include the following which could disqualify a candidate from being appointed as the Olugbo.

1. A Left handed
2. A Bald
3. A blind or one eyed
4. A twin
5. A dwarf
6. A stammerer
7. Has less more than ten fingers or has eleven
8. Has less than ten toes or eleven
9. Has a history of mental instability
10. Was an ex-convict

What this says therefore is that, there is more to becoming an *Olugbo* than being a male prince of the *Ojadele* ruling house as stated in "C" above.

It is interesting to note that these latter criteria which is used as the basis for disqualifying an aspiring contestant to the *Olugbo's* stool is rooted in the tradition of Ugbo Kingdom which had been in practice in time past. According to the *Ojomo* of Ugbo Kingdom; "the physical appearance screenings were applicable during the era of Oja selection of Olugbo." This has been affirmed by Omoyele (2011), who notes that; "Kudehinbu was disqualified to succeed Onajarogbe because he had a bald. Instead, his younger brother *Ojadele* who became the sixteenth Olugbo was chosen".

While this is the custom, it has not been explicitly stated why a bald person cannot become the *Olugbo*. This also applies to the case of a dwarf, left handed person, and the person with fingers and toes that are less or more than normal. These are not really serious grounds for disqualification. Disqualification on the basis of having a history of mental instability, being an ex-convict, and to some extent a stammerer are quite

understood because allowing someone with any of these burdens to the stool will certainly bring dishonour to its reverence and the onerous task that comes with it.

Aside from the above cited basis for disqualifying a candidate aspiring to become an *Olugbo*, Akinbosade (2003) has more conditions. According to him, the office of the Governor is expected to prepare nomination papers for approval by the State Executive Council in the event that there is no objection to the nominee by the kingmakers. Performance of traditional rites on the elected *Oba* ahead of installation in line with the custom is another essential requirement. This shows the enduring nature of the custom and tradition of the Ugbo people as performance of traditional rites on selected/elected *Olugbo* pre-dates the modern era. Lastly, Akinbosade also lists the presentation of staff of office, although not necessarily part of the law, but could indicate rejection of the elected *Oba* when it is not done. This was the case with *Oba Obateru* Akinruntan who was denied staff of office by the then Governor of Ondo State, Olusegun Agagu when the Supreme Court deposed the unlawfully installed *Oba* Adebajo Akingbade, Mafimisebi IV.

Again, the modern era of chieftaincy selection process also reduced the number of quarters from sixteen to six, and also turned the representatives of the six quarters to kingmakers. From a Pan Africanist perspective, it is convenient to argue that the changes introduced by The Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission affected the *Oja* system of selection which was more inclusive. However, it is also important to examine the reason behind substituting the *Oja* system. *Oba Odoka's* comment while responding on the issue of the Morgan Commission is worth citing here. According to him:

The Morgan chieftaincy was designed to reduce the workload in the selection process of the *Oba*. If the entire *Oja* were to be allowed to partake in the process of selection of the new *Oba*, the process would be complex and could result into crisis (KII, Odoka's Palace, 19/10/18).

This reason may be considered valid and can also fly in the face of rational thinking. It is also in line with the reason why the Athenian version of democracy could not be practiced when America fashioned out its brand of democracy by adding the Roman version of republicanism which gave birth to what is referred to as liberal democracy in

today's world. With population explosion, decision making on important issues as it was done by the *Oja* and Athenians became impossible, hence the need for the Kingmakers selection process as practiced today. Again, as *Oba Odoka* said:

the formation of six quarters in Ugbo from the existing sixteen quarters did not generate crisis because quarters with the same relation and identity were grouped together, while those with different identity stand alone.... The era before the idea of Morgan report, when the *Oja* selects and appoints the *Oba*, there was no conflict. And even after the *Oja*, there was no conflict (KII, *Odoka's Palace*, 19/10/18).

Clearly from the above, it can be inferred that both the pre-modern and the post-modern era of chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo Kingdom set rules of engagement on chieftaincy matters. Although *Odoka* claimed that there were no crises in the era of the *Oja* system as well as the kingmaker's principle, further examination proves that they were not conflict-free. As in both systems there were conflicts but the intensity with which conflicts characterised the kingmakers approach in the selection processes call attention for further evaluation of the modern system. While the modern system provides room for appeal, its undoing is in total relegation and discountenance of the *Oja* system. In this connection, modernity compels relegation or an inability to accommodate the traditional system, particularly the *Oja* system of selection stimulated; this has occasioned different forms of selection crisis.

4.2.2 Influence of Politics, Economy and Religion on Chieftaincy selection processes

Officially, colonialism ended in Nigeria in 1960. In African history, this year is referred to as the "Year of Africa" since a sizeable number of territories occupied by the Europeans on the African continent were also liberated. Despite this liberation, as Ekeh (1980) observed, the impact of colonialism on Africa was of "epochal dimension", because it transcends the life span of colonialism. In this section, cases of the influence of modernity on chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom would be examined looking at politics, economy, and religion. To this extent, a vivid understanding of how the above named domains of modern designs interfered with the chieftaincy selection processes is discussed.

4.2.2.1 The Influence of Politics

The Chieftaincy Institution in Ilaje Ugbo Kingdom like several other Kingdoms in modern Nigeria has come a long way. The institution pre-dates the era of modernity in the Western sense, which explains why it still endures even though it has been modernised in so many ways. Having studied historical accounts carefully, politics was not so much at the centre of chieftaincy selection in Ugbo Kingdom. It is perhaps for this reason that High Chief Nana remarked that; hitherto, I do not know of any role played by politics in the selection processes and if there was any, I suspect it would be during the reign of Napoleon Mafimisebi III” (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/17). As seen in the *Oja* system of chieftaincy selection detailed previously, the process was inclusive, which no doubt explains why it was less conflict ridden.

Politics in the selection of the *Olugbo* became a defining feature after the death of *Olugbo Mafimisebi I*. This grew in intensity after the death of *Olugbo Mafimisebi II*, and persisted all through the selection of *Olugbo Mafimisebi IV* which was resolved at the Supreme Court, 2007. Even though it was said that the *Oja* system was adopted in selecting *Olugbo Mafimisebi II*, and consensus was also reached by the elders for him to succeed his father, there was some elements of elite politics which eventually earned him the throne. Literacy in the Western sense was deployed as a tool of politicking in the process of selecting the *Olugbo*. Mr M J. A. Majeyinbaje captures this in his November 3rd, 1952 protest letter against the emergence of Napoleon as the *Olugbo* elect, and made a case for the *Molutehin* segment. According to him,

When Mafimisebi I died, my father, Majeyinbaje was selected by the elders of Ugbo as successor, but the Ugbo people again thought it was wise to have a literate Oba, and then asked my father to take the position of an Adviser to the Oba which he obliged. This brought about Samuel Ejagbomo Mafimisebi to be installed as the *Olugbo* of Ugbo because he is a semi-literate person that was then available (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

Majeyinbaje reiterated similar view in another letter 20th January, 1954. The first one was at a time when Josiah Nana was Samuel Ejagbomo, *Olugbo Mafimisebi II*'s leading opponent after *Olugbo Mafimisebi I*'s demise, and the second was after Samuel Ejagbomo's death. As it turned out, Samuel Ejagbomo eventually succeeded his father

based on sympathy as indicated in the views expressed by respondents. In all of this, it is important to note that the role of chieftaincy institution as the custodian of traditional norms has not been eroded in colonial African societies. But in contemporary times, new ways of administering political societies down to the communities have been effected by modernity. Resultantly, it has become a common practice to see that most of the Obas, Emirs and High chiefs are people who have acquired Western education. The implication of this is the erosion of African traditional values by modernity. In the case of Ilaje-Ugbo, both the literacy card which implicitly became a requisite criterion and the sympathy card that was considered in selecting Ejagbomo, *Mafimisebi II* were not consistent with the native custom and tradition of selecting an Olugbo in Ugbo Kingdom. This goes to show how laid down rules are bent to accommodate some narrow ends which could lead to crisis.

There was also the politics of the educated people in the selection of the *Olugbo*. This was prominent during Napoleon's era. This was the view expressed by High Chief Nana while speaking on the impact of modernity on the chieftaincy selection processes. In his words,

The educated people in 1952-1956 supported Napoleon Mafimisebi III, because he was in their class. So they wanted someone from their own (elite) to become an Oba. Another issue of modernity is education. Hitherto, nobody cares whether you were educated or not (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/17).

Nana's view corroborates the position of Majeyinbaje expressed earlier on. Furthermore, a letter written to the District Officer, by Z. A. Aiyenuwa on 20th September 1954, revealed the role played by educated elite during Napoleon's chieftaincy selection conflict. He stated;

the boy (referring to Napoleon) has got some experience in secondary school, bold, tough, young, and can speak more fluently and more correctly than Ojomo. I therefore suggest that Napoleon Mafimisebi son of the late Olugbo should succeed the throne (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

The forgoing is also in alignment with a respondent's view who averred that;

the elites came around to support Napoleon because he had attended school with them. This group of elites and those who left the secondary school for teachers training like Ajimuda felt that they should have elite as an Oba. They wrote series of letters to colonial government in support of Napoleon (FGD, Olugbo's Palace, 21/10/17).

This goes to confirm the argument advanced by liberal scholars like Martin Lipset and Francis Fukuyama about the impact of modernity. They opine that modernity throws up a middle class which uses its influence to press for demands on the government to attend to their needs. This is the exact case of Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. The activities of this middle class (elites) became a force to reckon with in the chieftaincy selection processes. It is possible that if Josiah Nana, Ayida, and Majeyinbaje had the support of the elites as Ejagbomo and Napoleon did, it would not have been easy for the Mafimisebi to push them aside as they did.

Politics in chieftaincy selection also reflects in the use of the structure of modern state to either deny an elected *Oba* official recognition or accord him recognition by handing him the **Staff of Office**. A careful reading of literature on traditional institution in pre-modern times did not indicate presentation of Staff of Office was a pre-requisite for an elected *Oba* in Yoruba land or any other traditional society in Africa. In fact, the King was the final authority and no more. That is why Baale Obe-Lomore said, "in the past there was nothing like Staff of Office because once an Oba emerged and the installation ceremony had been done by the relevant people that was final" (IDI, Obe-Lomore, 10/10/17). *Oba Obateru* also affirmed this in the course of interview. But with the advent of "new imperialism" which opened the floodgate of colonial intrusion into traditional African societies and administered the conquered colonies, the presentation of Staff of Office to an elected King became the climax of chieftaincy selection in many Yoruba kingdoms of which Ugbo is not an exception.

The Commissioner for Chieftaincy and Local Government Affairs in Ondo State corroborated this line of argument when he opined that;

In this modern era, an Oba without the staff of office is just like a farmer without farm tools. The

Staff of Office makes an Oba to be accorded all rights and privileges due to him as an Oba by the Government (IDI, Akure, 07/12/2017).

Politics of presentation of staff of office is also a critical phase in the selection processes. As noted by a respondent, “the presentation of Staff of Office by the Governor to an Oba has become an instrument of coercion in dealing with selected Oba the Governor perceived did not support his political ambition”. That is why *Oba Alagho* posited that;

Government influences the installation of an Oba secretly. If an Oba should emerge in a given Kingdom and Government is yet to present to such an Oba the Staff of Office, that man (the Oba) will not be recognized by the Government (KII, Alagho’s Palace, 22/10/2017).

This was exactly what played out when Oba Obateru Akinruntan was selected the Olugbo after the Supreme Court verdict that deposed Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi in 2007. The view of Ikorigho Elder is worth citing here. According to him,

Agagu, the Ondo State Governor then did not want Adebajo Mafimisebi IV to be dethroned. He tried all his best to ensure that Adebajo remained on the throne. He (Mr Governor) said he wanted to study the document of the Supreme Court Judgment before he would know what to do (FGD, Baale’s house, 24/09/2017).

Also, a respondent during the field work commented on politics of Staff of office during Governor Agagu’s tenure. He stated that; “when some Oba visited Governor Olusegun Agagu to discuss the presentation of Staff of Office to Obateru, it was noticed the Governor was obviously not ready to hand it to him for reason that was political”. According to him,

Agagu was aware of the judgment because the Commissioner said it when we met with him. Agagu was only interested in Adebajo Mafimisebi. They were friends. Then I told him (Mr Governor) you must give Obateru the Staff of Office and if you refuse to give him another

Governor will do that (FGD,Olugbo's Palace,
21/10/2017).

As it turned out, Governor Agagu refused to give Obateru the Staff of Office, thereby denying him official recognition in line with Western prescription, even though this was not the practice in pre-modern times. But, when the tribunal removed Agagu from office and Olusegun Mimiko was later sworn in as Governor in 2009, he carefully looked into the matter and on establishing its veracity, he handed the Staff of Office to Obateru. This implies that there is always politics surrounding the presentation of staff of office to an elected *Oba*. The Governor would want traditional rulers they can trust to occupy the stool hence their support for “anointed” candidates.

The above view shows how modernity has empowered the Governor to manipulate the chieftaincy selection processes to his favour for political gain. That is why most traditional rulers in Nigeria have become politicians to the extent of belonging to a political party by their action(s). While most traditional rulers tend to hide their involvement in politics, *Baale Ajekunle* captured this accurately when he averred that;

without politics there are no chieftaincies. And as a King, you must belong to a political party that is in power. Most especially, if it happens that it is the party that presented the Staff of Office to the King....That would force the Oba to be loyal to that Government as not to be deposed (IDI, Ajekunle,20/10/2017).

The forgoing was the case with Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi IV, who enjoyed Governor Olusegun Agagu's support even when it was clear he was deposed by the Supreme Court in 2007. In his work, “*Walking a Slippery Terrain*”, Ajose Kudehinbu revealed how *Oba Adebajo's* failure to deliver a House of Representative seat to Adefarati's Alliance for Democracy party got him into trouble with the Governor. He quoted former Governor Adebayo Adefarati as saying:

The Olugbo promised to assist our party candidate in the election to the House of Representatives. He also promised the People's Democratic Party's candidate in the same election. In the election, our candidate lost while the PDP candidate won right in the Ugbo Wards (Kudehinbu, 2013:39).

From the Governor's version, Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi gave his word to both parties, but it was obvious he was more committed to supporting the PDP candidate. Hearing Oba Adebajo's version one would easily conclude that it was all about the political economy of election where money exchange hands and the highest bidder wins the election. This was what Oba Adebajo said; "the Governor has not forgiven me for the defeat of the AD Candidate in the House of Representatives election where Professor R.A. Omojuwa lost to Prince Mafo of the PDP". He went on to say; "the election went to the highest bidder! It was not my fault. My own Oba is a politician" (Kudehinbu, 2013:38). There are two things involved here: first is, Oba Adebajo has confirmed how partisan traditional rulers have become and that is why their loyalty tends to tie to a particular government and party. Secondly, the question a discerning mind would ask given Oba Adebajo's remark is that, since the election went to the highest bidder, who was paid to deliver?. Since Oba Adebajo was the man at the centre of the whole issue, it is obvious that he was paid to do the job of delivering. Let us elaborate on this drawing from Kudehinbu's account.

Kudehinbu went on to explain *Oba* Adebajo's role in all of this. Initially, *Oba* Adebajo approached him and pleaded with him to mediate in the strained relationship between him and Governor Adefarati, having explained the election episode. When the Governor indicated his readiness to meet with the *Oba* and Kudehinbu relayed the message to him, the *Oba* failed to turn up. As Kudehinbu rightly stated, the gubernatorial election was just by the corner, the *Olugbo* was waiting for the outcome which would determine whether he should see the Governor or not. When the PDP candidate won, Adebajo felt no need to see the defeated Governor again. This meant that his seat would not be threatened anymore because Olusegun Agagu who won the election as the PDP candidate was his kinsman and friend as well. It can be inferred on the basis of this that *Oba* Adebajo must have collected money from the PDP and worked against the AD.

Unfortunately for him (Oba Adebajo), Governor Adefarati's defeat did not end his worries because Adefarati also envisaged what he was thinking as implied, and he had plans for him. According to Kudehinbu, the Governor kept asking when Oba Adebajo would show up for the mediation meeting which he (Adebajo) requested. When it became clear Oba Adebajo was not going to come, the Governor said, "let him not come, I'm going to deal with him: I will break his kingdom" (Kudehinbu, 2013:51). It

was possible Adebajo knew this was going to be Adefarati's move to what he (Adefarati) considered as insolence. At any rate, he felt such action is likely to be reversed by the next Governor who is his (Adebajo's) man. As it turned out, Adefarati eventually broke the Olugbo's kingdom as he threatened when he announced the creation of *Obe-Nla* under the *Olubo*; *Obe-Ogbaro* under the *Odoka* and *Odo-Nla* under the *Alagho* (Kudehinbu, 2013). This and the legal battle *Oba* Adebajo later faced were the problems that eventually led to his waterloo after the Supreme Court judgment.

The conflict between Adefarati and *Oba* Adebajo as detailed by Kudehinbu has fully revealed why the Governors are bent on having the Obas under their control. In line with Kudehinbu's account, the *Obamoyegun* of Ugbo Kingdom avers that:

the Government believes that when someone is installed as an *Oba*, the *Oba* will have influence on his subjects during election period. Through the *Oba*, Government will get votes and support of the people in that domain (FGD, Olugbo's Palace, 21/10/2017).

That is why handing the Staff of Office has been reduced to an issue of serious politicking, because no Governor would want to hand the staff of Office to an *Oba* who would not influence his subjects in his support. It should be noted that the involvement of the state government in the chieftaincy selection processes is not limited to Ugbo Kingdom but to other chieftaincies where modernisation has taken place. For instance, a respondent cited a similar case in Northern Nigeria. In his narrative he stated; after the death of Alhaji Ado Bayero, the Emir of Kano, expectation from many was that his eldest son Lamido Abdullahi who was the Ciroman of Kano would succeed him. But the former Central Bank Governor, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi whose grandfather – Alhaji Muhammed Sanusi – was deposed by the late Sardauna of Sokoto – Sir Ahmadu Bello – had waited all the while to claim what he felt was rightfully his. The politics of the 2015 Presidential election played to his (Lamido Sanusi) advantage when the Goodluck Jonathan-led presidency indicated interest in Lamido Abdullahi against Rabiul Kwankwanso's, who was the Governor of Kano State. The interest of the politicians in Kano was because of its electoral strength which was sufficient to swing the electoral pendulum in the direction of their choice. Prior to this incident, Sanusi was disgraced out of the apex bank by Jonathan. Since Kwankwanso and Sanusi had a common

enemy in Jonathan and Kwankwanso was the one to decide who would be the next Emir, he settled for Sanusi who pulled his weight behind candidate Buhari.

What is clear from the above discussion is that the chieftaincy institution is not insulated from politics. Given the closeness of traditional rulers to the grassroots, they are often times seen at the crossfire of politics which tends to threaten their throne depending on which side they decide to pitch their loyalty. Even if they choose not to identify with any candidate or political party, the parties or candidates will certainly come to them. Former Secretary, Ilaje Local Government captured this more accurately, while explaining the role of political parties in chieftaincy selection, he stated as follows:

The primary aim of political parties is to capture power. They know the roles, the power of a King in any given Kingdom. If you have the favour of the King in a Kingdom, surely the party will enjoy the support of that Kingdom. We have seen instances where the parties will be desperate to get the support of the Oba. The King in turn can use the Baales (Heads of various communities) in his Kingdom to get the support of the electorates (IDI, Igbokoda, 21/10/2017).

Aware of their strategic location in the scheme of politics, most traditional rulers choose to support the party that presented them their staff of offices rather than support the growth of democracy and development. While it is convenient to pass the blame on the politicians for luring traditional rulers with money and material offers, traditional rulers are not free of blame as they also indulge the politicians.

4.2.2.2 The influence of Economy

The Marxian theory of economic determinism posits that the economy is the superstructure upon which the society rests. This suggests that the economy shapes every other aspect of human society such as politics, intellectual and culture. With respect to culture as it concerns the study, findings revealed that the interface between the economy and the chieftaincy institution in Ugbo Kingdom tend to have consequences in the process of chieftaincy selection.

There was hardly any documented evidence which suggested that pecuniary consideration interfered in the processes of chieftaincy selection in Ugbo Kingdom in pre-modern times. However, in colonial Nigeria, there were instances where such was alleged as shown in the archival documents, in the case of Napoleon *Mafimisebi III* who was accused of bribing his way to secure the *Olugbo* throne. But with the discovery of hydrocarbon, which is now the source of enormous wealth in the hands of an *Olugbo*, the role of money in chieftaincy selection processes and securing the stool in Ugbo Kingdom has grown in intensity, hence the conflicting nature of the selection processes. This is so because, becoming an *Olugbo* comes with some monetary benefits. For an Oil producing community like Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom which play host to multinational company like Chevron Nigeria Limited and several other indigenous Oil companies (Ebisemiju,2016), the pecuniary benefit is quite much. A respondent in an in-depth interview puts it more accurately when he made the following submission:

The king is the Governor of the Kingdom. Oil is the black gold and any oil company that is coming to prospect will definitely visit the King. We know that the Government owns the lands but in terms of meeting the communities the King is the head of the communities (IDI, Igbokoda, 21/10/17).

The foregoing foregrounds the fact that even if the government gives the Oil Exploration License to the Oil prospecting companies, visiting the King is very important if exploration is to be done without conflict with host communities. This is because the King has control over his subjects, an influence he can use to avert crisis situation that could encumber the prospecting company's business. Even though what transpired in such visits is not stated, it can be adduced that such visit cannot end without the company's responsibility in terms of royalty to the king. To further buttress the point on the influential position of the King and the role of traditional rulers in the Niger Delta in respect to negotiation of peace between the militants and the Oil companies or the government and the militants; Former Secretary, Ilaje Local Government stated that, "the Oil companies hold the King in high esteem. The oil companies pay royalties to the King. The King can recommend people for job and contract opportunities".

Also, while responding to question on the role played by the discovery of oil in chieftaincy selection, *Oba Obateru* expressed similar view posited by former Secretary when he averred that, “the proceeds from the royalties made Adebajo Mafimisebi IV influential and powerful during the litigation and delayed the ruling of the Court on him”. These are the privileges that come with becoming an *Olugbo*. In a way, it can be argued that the monetary benefit attached to the throne of *Olugbo* accounts for the conflict in chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbò Kingdom. Since becoming an *Olugbo* implies that the occupant will become rich because the throne serves as the gate-way to financial security. Before now, occupying the *Olugbo* stool was not driven by the quest for wealth as it appears in contemporary times, because an *Olugbo*’s primary duties revolved around adjudication of disputes in his kingdom in addition to other royal and priestly duties. But with the advent of modernity the role of the *Oba* like that of other traditional rulers began to change. Aside payment of royalties, the *Oba* has been seen to be involved in politics implicitly though. A good example was the endorsement of the candidacy of former president Goodluck Jonathan by the Kings. All of these point to the influence of modernity on the traditional institution with more attention to the pecuniary benefits.

Apart from facilitating employment and contract opportunities for people with Oil companies and government agencies, traditional rulers themselves have become business tycoons. Kudehinbu (2013) narrates *Oba Adebajo*’s business interest at the Ondo State Oil Producing Area Development Commission (OSOPADEC). According to him, “*Oba Adebajo* got a contract with the single highest sum from the agency. When another circle of contracts opened, the *Oba* indicated interest again, unfortunately he was denied”. That *Oba Adebajo* is rich cannot be dissociated from the money he made in Oil deals. This was the position of a respondent during a Focus Group Discussion. According to him, “*Adebajo* was influential and he became rich and powerful because of Oil money, somehow, this explains why he was able to sustain the legal battle for 23 years” (FGD, Erunna, 06/11/17).

In buttressing this line of argument, a respondent in a Focus Group Discussion posited as follows; “the Oil Company gave financial support to *Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi IV* and he used that to influence the court cases for years before the apex Court decided on that”. Elsewhere, Kudehinbu captures how the wealth acquired by *Oba Adebajo* was expended in the following submission;

The Olugbo was not a poor man by any standard, as a businessman. However, he also appears to have difficulties with his finances because all the money he made was going into court cases. For personal reasons, he had preferred the services of Senior Advocates even when it had appeared that he was getting little value for money (Kudehinbu, 2013:36).

Not every indigene of Ugbo kingdom is as privileged as the *Olugbo* to make this kind of wealth. That he is this rich is as result of his position as the *Oba*. But with such wealth at the Olugbo's disposal, it was expected that he should have used it to better the lot of his subjects considering that he was closer to them than the government. Obviously, he was insensitive to the plights of his subjects. A respondent in FGD, at Erunna narrated in his response with respect to an Oil spillage that occurred in their community. According to him,

At a time, oil spillage occurred in one community close to us here Yaye community. Every community in Ugbo was asked to converge at Okpakaba for a protest. We were chased and returned to Ugbo. On getting to Ugbo, we did not meet Adebajo Mafimisebi there and he instructed us to go there (FGD, Erunna, 06/11/17).

Such insensitivity displayed by *Oba* Adebajo to the plights of his subjects is reminiscent of his father, Napoleon, whose reign was said to be unfriendly. If an *Oba* cannot protect the interest of his subjects in crisis situation like the one captured above, his right to occupy the stool should be questioned. When the Oil Company eventually brought the money for compensation, here is what *Oba* Adebajo did;

Thereafter, Chevron Nigeria Limited brought the money to him but he did not give anybody. He used the money to finance his court case and also became powerful because of the oil money (FGD, Erunna, 06/11/2017).

This is similar to a view expressed by a respondent during the field work. When government fails to reach out to the people in time of disaster like oil spillage as is often the case in Nigeria, the least that is expected of the King who lives with the

people and sees their plight is to personalize whatever succour that comes to them from the oil company as Oba Adebajo did. With this kind of treachery, it can be understood why *Oba Adebajo's* deposition by the apex Court was celebrated by many in Ugbo Kingdom, thereby affirming that his popularity among his subjects had diminished on account of boundless greed and insensitivity.

There is also another dimension to the political economy of chieftaincy selection, which is, the rich are the ones who aspire to become Kings. This can hardly be controverted given the realities of contemporary times. Few examples suffice. The current Emir of Kano, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, the Tor Tiv V James Ayatse (Benue State), the Sultan of Sokoto Sa'ad Abubakar, to mention a few, ascended the throne not as commoners but as members of the elite who were privileged people before becoming Kings. Even though they were not extremely rich before their installation, they constitute the elite class. The current Olugbo of Ugbo Kingdom Oba Obateru Akinruntan falls under this category. In fact, his case is even different from that of the aforementioned persons, because he was richer than them before he became the Olugbo. Based on this, it was believed that Obateru used his wealth to buy the Olugbo's stool. Nothing captures this allegation more accurately than *Oba Olubo's* remark: "they told him (Obateru) that he would spend money and they would support him to become the Olugbo. I was in the said meeting. It was in Okiki's house" (KII, Olubo's Palace, 21/10/17). No doubt, this was a luring offer. However, looking at what led to this would not be out of place.

Going by the discovery on the field, there is strong evidence that suggested Obateru did spend money as *Oba Olubo* stated, but it seems he had reason to do so. As indicated above, Baba Lene as the *Olori-Ebi* did not support the Olugboship of Oba Adebajo. For this reason, he is said to be "the sole sponsor of the case" as *Oba Olubo* puts it. His support was in favour of Prince Ehuwa. After *Olori-Ebi's* death, and since they had an influential Senior Advocate – Afe Babalola as their counsel, funding the case against Oba Adebajo who obviously had made a lot of money from oil contracts as an *Olugbo* was not easy for other princes. According to *Oba Olubo*, when some of the kingmakers visited Afe Babalola, he challenged Obateru Akinruntan (Okoro-Ajiga) to continue with the case.

What could be inferred from the above is that, Afe Babalola felt getting Obateru Akinruntan to fund the legal battle would not be a bad idea since he has the capacity to do so considering his wealth. This is consistent with a respondent's thought who averred that, "they (the princes) met Afe Babalola but he advised them to see Obateru Akinruntan, that he was the only one that could sponsor the case" (FGD, Olugbo's Palace, 21/10/2017). Although, they (the princes) had tried a couple of times to get Obateru on the matter, but he never indicated interest, because he felt the crisis would be too difficult for him since he was pursuing another case in Court that had to do with his title *Adetolugbo*. But as it turned out, it got to a stage where Obateru could no longer watch Oba Adebajo's reign as the *Olugbo* at the expense of other members of the ruling house. This is in line with the theory of relative deprivation, hence his financial support in the legal battle against Adebajo.

At this point, it will be expedient to take a cursory examination at the issue of *Adetolugbo* honorary title as it affects the chieftaincy selection processes. According to respondents, the history of the title is traceable to *Baba Lene* who conferred it on Obateru Akinruntan during a church service. Obateru was so popular with the title of *Adetolugbo* that he was hardly known by his real name. Incidentally, this gave him some feelings that he owned the title and no one could go by it, at least not when he is still alive. But it seemed there was a misunderstanding between Obateru Akinruntan and Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi at some point which led to the latter giving the title to another prince in the same family. This eventually signalled the involvement of Obateru in the legal battle that ousted Oba Adebajo as the *Olugbo*. *Abojutoro* provided an insight into this episode during an in depth Interview when he stated;

I did not know what exactly happened between Obateru and Oba Adebajo at Okitipupa. When Adebajo got home, he made a move to honour Omojuwa Adewale with a chieftaincy title, *Adetolugbo*. Obateru had been answering that name (*Adetolugbo*) for long.... Obateru Akinruntan and Omojuwa Adewale are from the same Agbedun segment of Ojadele ruling house. Therefore, it will be wrong to give Obateru's title to Adewale. Adebajo went ahead to install Omojuwa as *Adetolugbo*. This was the beginning

of the crisis between Obateru and Adebajo. (IDI, Ode-Ugbo, 10/10/2017)

On account of the forgoing, it may be plausible to assert that Oba Adebajo gave Obateru reason to join the suit against him by providing sufficient financial support which eventually saw him (Oba Adebajo) deposed as the *Olugbo* by the Supreme Court. Findings from the filed, indicated that Obateru was the sole sponsor of the second phase of the case as *Baba Lene* was in the first phase. This suggests that Obateru was the game changer as far as the legal battle to depose Oba Adebajo was concern. As noted by a respondent;

if not for that singular move Oba Adebajo made by giving Omojuwa Adewale the *Adetolugbo* title, it was likely that he would not have been removed as the *Olugbo*, because those against him were already in deficit financially to fund the litigation. As it turned out, the provocative move infuriated a once reluctant Obateru who suddenly became interested in not only reversing the action of Oba Adebajo which stripped him off the honorary title of *Adetolugbo*, but also to ensure that he was dethroned (IDI,Ugbonla,10/11/17).

The foregoing narration sheds light on *Oba Olubo*'s submission that Obateru was told to spend money and he would be supported to become the *Olugbo* which gave the impression that he literally bought the throne. A critical examination of *Oba Olubo*'s submission would indicate that, though Obateru financial influence was critical to the litigation, but he was lured into doing it, considering the fact that he never indicated interest in the legal battle, neither was he interested in becoming an *Olugbo* as *Abojutoro* stated earlier.

Looking at the role money played in chieftaincy selection processes as expansively captured in the above scenario, it shows the appropriateness of the application of the theory of modernity adopted for this study. This is so on quite a number of fronts. First, the transformation of the traditional economy to modern economy which brought about Oil wealth suddenly reawakened the interest of becoming the *Olugbo* in the princes who ordinarily would not have considered the thought of occupying the stool. Secondly, relying on modern institution of justice system – the Courts, and the services of lawyer (SANs) in prosecuting litigation which comes with a lot of cost, succeeded in the modernising the chieftaincy selection processes. The implication of this is that

whoever has a big financial chest to successfully prosecute a chieftaincy selection case in court can sustain the throne, whether occupied illegally or not. Oba Adebajo's case is a good example. With his money, he would have remained the *Olugbo*. But somehow, Obateru's wealth ended his reign. These two instances of the influence of modernity on chieftaincy selection processes as it concerns Oil economy is in addition to the role of the political institution which has been discussed earlier.

4.2.2.3 The influence of Modern Religion

In the sphere of Religion, traditional African societies had all kinds of belief system before the coming of the Europeans. That is why in a way, that era in Africa could be described as an era when polytheistic religion abound. The introduction of theistic religion during Europe's supposed civilizing mission came with a lot of consequences to African traditional religion. There is a plethora of literature on this subject by Africanists scholars. With Christianity and Islam gaining firm grip on colonized regions of Africa, their interference with the official realm has impacted negatively on the affairs of formal institutions of governance. In Nigeria, this has been seen in the manner religious leaders make unsolicited prophesies which appeal to the politicians that eventually earn them some kind of favour in return. While there is nothing wrong with religious leaders commenting on political issues that affect the society they live in, especially in time of injustice or repression as it were in the Latin America which gave rise to liberation theology, their meddling in politics like is the case in Nigeria is a source of worry. Incidentally, their interference is not limited to the official realm, also extends to the traditional institution. This is amply illustrated in the case of the *Olugbo* stool in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.

In Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom, which is predominantly Christian, the Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) order enjoys a wide followership. The Church was established as far back as 1925 by Moses Orimolade, four years after *Mafimisebi I* was deported to Calabar. As it turned out, some princes of the *Ojadele* Ruling House like Baba Lene, Samuel Ejagbomo, and Napoleon Orioye became active members of the Church. According to a respondent during the field interview, "Lene was like a convert to Christianity from traditional religion because his father was an Ifa priest at Ugbo, but God told Lene to follow this path just like when God called Abraham from his father's house" (IDI,Ugbonla 10/11/17). This explains how *Lene* became deeply involved with

the C&S Church. The princes' involvement with the Church became the basis for religious institution's meddling in chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo Kingdom. The King of Zion puts it more clearly when he posits that "we play a very important role in the chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo as members of that royal family, and secondly, as Zionist who are been consulted for spiritual guidance in the selection processes" (IDI, Ugbonla, 10/11/17).

The consultation for spiritual guidance which the Zionist provides in the chieftaincy selection processes is neither a requirement in the pre-modern era nor of the modern era as provided in the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration. It is a development that was accompanied by the forces of modernity, which therefore affirms the application of the theory of modernity in this study. *Oba Obateru Akinruntan* also expressed similar view with King of Zion on the influence of Christian religion on chieftaincy selection processes. During a key informant interview, he averred that;

The role Christian religion plays in the chieftaincy selection processes is that, we may go and pray for the prince be crowned as Oba. In my own case, it was prayers we did, although the kingmakers might have consulted Ifa before my selection but I believe in the power of prayers (KII, Olugbo's Palace, 23/02/18).

The above clearly shows the relationship between Christian religion and chieftaincy selection in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. Interestingly, the Church's meddling in chieftaincy selection process in Ugbo has a long historical origin dating back to when *Mafimisebi I's* successor was to be selected. Baba Alakoso's (2008) work *Leneism: Key to Zionism Renaissance* captures this episode in detail. According to him, both "Saint" *Lene* and Pa prophet Samuel Ejagbomo who were cousins joined the Church at its early stage, and the latter was made leader of the Church on account of his activeness. In spite of the age difference between the two, with Ejagbomo being the eldest, he held *Lene* in high esteem. When Ejagbomo indicated interest in the Olugbo's stool, *Lene* gave him full support above other contestants, obviously because of the Church fraternity they shared.

The role of prophesy in chieftaincy selection was expansively narrated by Alakoso focusing on the role of prophetess Olatunrinle. According to him;

she was formerly of the dominion of darkness before she was converted to Christianity; and dedicated her life to spreading the gospel and expanding the C&S order. In the course of her spiritual task of spreading the gospel and the C&S beliefs system, she came to Erunna, in Ugbo Kingdom where she received a revelation about the ambition of Samuel Ejagbomo who was in the race to become Olugbo. After a meeting was held with the prophetess and Lene, and the necessary spiritual rite prescribed by the prophetess concerning Ejagbomo's Olugbo ambition were performed, prophetess Olatunrinle and Baba Lene prayed for Ejagbomo and "prophesied that the prince would get to the position he was aspiring for. "In addition, a priest was said to have told Ejagbomo that "after the convention that was about to be held then, Pa Samuel Ejagbomo would receive letter of approval to the throne" (Alasoko, 2008:42).

One thing that can be gleaned from the lines above is the reliance on prophesy by the princes who have now become members of the modern religion, knowing full well that there is the traditional method of chieftaincy selection which is sacrosanct. Their belief in prophesy over and above the traditional process of chieftaincy selection gradually succeeded in eroding the latter because of the elevation it was accorded. The extent to which the role of the Church in the chieftaincy selection processes was elevated was aptly captured by King of Zion during field interview when he posited that: "...people should believe that there are two Kingdoms in Ugbo that is why before any Oba would emerge, the prince would first come to Ugbonla for baptism" (IDI, Ugbonla, 10/11/17). In other words, what this means is that the spiritual anointing of the Church is very important for an aspiring *Olugbo* to emerge victorious.

Implicitly, looking at the way events have unfolded, it would be difficult to state contrary to King of Zion's view as expressed above. Napoleon's emergence followed the same sequence of prophesy because *Lene* was said to have given him all the necessary support as a prince of the *Ojadele* Ruling House and spiritual support as the leader of the C&S Church (Alasoko, 2008) . *Oba* Adebajo's case was slightly different though. But *Oba* Obateru's case also had the prophesy dimension, which he alluded to when he said "*in my own case, it was prayers we did for my selection*". In addition to this, King of Zion noted that *Baba lene* saw series of vision concerning the litigation that eventually deposed *Oba* Adebajo and enthroned *Oba* Obateru Akinruntan before he died. According to him, *Baba Lene* said that "the matter would

proceed in different stages before the final verdict would be delivered which of course was the case” (IDI, Ugbonla, 10/11/17). In view of the fact that these prophecies turned out to be true, made reliance on prophecy over the accepted method of chieftaincy selection as spelt out in the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration stronger.

While religious prophesy in chieftaincy selection in Ugbo kingdom has been documented in the field research, there are those who hold contrary view on this. For instance, the *Osomolu* opined that, “In the case of Ejagbomo, it was because he suffered with his father that made the family agreed on him as *Olugbo* not through propheies, though he was a member of C&S Church”(IDI,Okitipupa, 21/10/17). Based on the examination of the chieftaincy selection in the previous chapter with respect to *Mafimisebi I*'s travails, the fact cannot be easily dismissed that Ejagbomo's role in sharing his father's pain was not a factor in considering his candidacy for the *Olugbo*'s stool. Obviously, this is sufficient to counter the prophesy narrative. However, it does not take away the fact that religious prophecies were an integral part of the chieftaincy selection processes for the princes who believed in it and counted on the blessings of the Church leader as they contested for *Olugbo*'s throne.

At this point, it is important to also note that even with the seeming powerful role the religious institution appears to have played in the chieftaincy selection processes, this was not without challenge. As we have noted earlier on, the people of Ugbo were not worshippers of a theistic religion. If anything, their belief system was centred on polytheism. With the dominance of C&S Church in Ugboland and Ejagbomo's emergence as the *Olugbo* through its support, it was said that the people complained about the role of the new religion. This view was expressed by *Osomolu* when he made the following submission:

When Samuel Ejagbomo became the King, the people complained about the new religion at Ugbonla which led to disagreement between him and the Ugbo community. He agreed with the Ugbo community that he would not go to Ugbonla to worship at the C&S church again but remained in Ugbo (IDI, Okitipupa, 21/10/17).

But in spite of this challenge, as events turned out, the new religion continued to have its way in the chieftaincy selection processes. Again, the submission by *Osomolu*

brings us to what the people of Ugbo felt about the impact of modern religion in the chieftaincy selection processes. In their view, most respondents felt it impacted negatively on the chieftaincy selection processes. A respondent during the field interview opined that;

Modern religion has affected the selection processes. We have seen where some Kings are also Christians. So, how do you marry the two religions? From history, the Ugbo people used to worship the 'Malokun' (the sea god), but that is no longer in existence again because it is seen as an ungodly act (IDI, Igbokoda, 21/10/17).

The expression affirms the theory of modernity adopted in this study, where forces of modernity affect the traditional method of selecting an *Oba*. In contemporary term, the *Oba* now merges the responsibility of a traditional ruler and that of pastoring. Secondly, since modern religion views traditional religion as the realm of darkness which needs to be evangelised because worships are channeled to deities or some other gods distinct from the one true God, it is difficult to reconcile how an *Oba* who is the custodian of traditional values system would dispassionately discharge his duty while serving as a pastor. Clash of interest is bound to occur. This was exactly what a respondent, meant when he said when a king is asked to perform ritual and he declined on the ground of being a christain, it brings about conflict and crisis. For instance, the present Olugbo of Ugbo, Oba Obateru Akinruntan is a minister in-charge of a branch of the C&S Church of Zion, but can you take him to *Igbo-Oro*?, he queried (IDI, Igbokoda, 21/10/17).

This brings to light how modernisation has eroded the traditional way in which an *Oba* is expected to administer his Kingdom. In what appeared to be a defence of his action, Oba Obateru Akinruntan had this to say when asked how he managed both roles as an *Oba* and minister in a Church;

The leader of the Church that I am today does not affect nor has something to do with traditional practices. There are chiefs who are in charge of traditional practices. If I am in the Church and I am about to do something that is not in line with Christianity, I quickly stop (KII, Olugbo's Palace, 23/02/18).

While it is convenient for *Olugbo* to say this, in actual fact, combining these functions of an *Oba* and Pastor is what cannot be easily reconciled. This brings to mind what the gospel of Saint Matthew said about how difficult it is for one to serve both God and Mammon at the same time. However, in order to justify the hybridisation of modernity with traditional practices, *Oba Obateru* posited that, “the Church activities and that of traditional practices are done for peace and the betterment of the Kingdom and nothing more” (KII, Olugbo’s Palace, 23/02/18). Certainly, this explanation will not fly among the traditionalists who see modern religion’s role in chieftaincy selection processes as a development that is destroying whatever that is left of African traditional religion.

However, viewing *Oba Obateru*’s defence with an objective mindset, it can be argued to some extent that, there is some element of truth in his defence. This is viewed from the point of what a respondent narrated about certain spiritual activities carried out by a catholic priest of the Makurdi diocese in Nigeria. According to him, during a healing Mass, fetish items belonging to men of the dark world were brought to the priest for destruction. While destroying them, there were those items of traditional religion which were used for just courses and the advancement of communal peace. The priest preserved those items meant for the betterment of the community and destroyed the evil ones. This action represents the very essence of traditional life in Africa before its contact with the modern world. The Priest’s submission is instructive, in the sense that it recognises that both theistic and traditional religions can co-exist side by side for communal advancement and peace, provided the latter does not seek to promote evil as widely believed.

Another point that is worth stressing in a respondent’s submission as noted above is the worship of *Malokun*. Ugbo kingdom, like several African traditional societies had its belief system which was traditional religion. As Omoyele’s (2011) research indicated, the worship in pre-modern Ugbo was to *Malokun*, the god of the sea. To them, *Malokun* was the source of everything good that comes to them. For instance, during the reign of *Oba Akinribido*, Ugbo flourished, and this was attributed to *Malokun*, hence the saying that “*the children of god of the sea are never poor*” (Omoyele, 2011:38), simply because they believed whatever prosperity they received comes from *Malokun*. This was the practice in pre-modern time which was altered with the advent of modernity.

More specifically, modern religion also affects the chieftaincy selection processes. In a respondent's submission, he argued that in those days, when conflict occurred, the people consulted some of the gods. But now people do not have belief in them. The reason for this could also be that these gods are now manipulated to make divination(s) that suit a particular interest as against what used to be the norm (IDI, Igbokoda, 21/10/17). Furthermore, in a Focus Group Discussion, an Idiogba Elder explained why modern religion is now part of the selection processes. According to him;

We did make Ifa consultations during the selection processes but now that people have embraced the new religion, the Church is now part of the selection processes. Prophets are consulted to give direction on who to be picked among the princes to be installed the Olugbo (FGD, Baale's House, 13/11/17).

While this may be true considering that spiritual anointing has become the sure-fire way to emerging victorious in the *Olugbo's* race, as seen in the case of Ejagbomo, Napoleon, and Obateru, this is not consistent with the requirements as stipulated in the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration. But as it stands, it appears the people of Ugbo have come to accept the role of the Church in the selection processes given the little or no resistance against it. Even though consultation with *Ifa* during the selection processes is provided for in the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration, there is no denying the fact that the role of *Ifa* in this regard has diminished for inexplicable reason. Therefore, as it diminishes, the Church is now becoming the alternative. This perhaps explains why the respondent arrived at the conclusion that the Church is now part of the selection processes. However, it can be argued that the use of *Ifa* and resort to prophesy during the selection processes could generate conflictual results since both represent two extreme ends. But this controversy was cleared by *Olori-ebi* when he averred that;

The Ifa consultation and the prayers in the Church for selection processes rarely contradict each other. Ifa was the only source of our consultation in those days. Now that people rely on prophesies, it becomes difficult to rely on Ifa alone because in some cases people still contest the outcome of Ifa. The two sources now

complement each other (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/17).

Implicitly, what the foregoing suggests is that the influence of modern religion on the chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo Kingdom has come to stay. While some would contest this, it seems to be the reality. This is because the elders who are supposed to press for strict observance of traditional ways of selecting an *Olugbo* seem to be comfortable with it existing side by side with the interference of the Church. Since the world has increasingly modernised, the possibility of the chieftaincy selection processes being conducted in modern ways than traditional cannot be dismissed.

While the traditional and modern religion is seen by some to be part of the selection processes, others think none of it matters. To some respondents, what matters for one to become an *Olugbo* is how wealthy that person is. *Baale Ajegunle* is one among those who expressed this view. According to him, “both the traditional and modern religions have no role to play as regards chieftaincy selection because people are now forcing themselves on the throne because of money and influence” (IDI, Ajegunle, 20/10/17). Unarguably, this stems from what transpired between the deposed Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi and Oba Obateru Akinruntan who succeeded him.

Baale Ajegunle's line of argument has been captured in Kudihinbu's (2013) work who narrated the source of *Oba Adebajo*'s wealth and how he deployed same into hiring Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) to represent him in Court, which did not yield the desired result as he expected. On the other hand, *Oba Obateru* was able to successfully prosecute the matter against *Oba Adebajo* because he had the resource to match the latter's wealth. Again, with respect to wealth, *Oba Alagho*, clearly stated in an interview that the people wanted somebody that would succeed Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi after the Supreme Court Judgement that deposed him, and when Obateru came, they discovered he was wealthy and his emergence would not be for the purpose of the oil money hence, the support for him (KII, Alagho's Palace, 22/10/17). This affirmed what *Olori-ebi* said about becoming an *Oba* in modern time, “you must be rich or have someone that is rich who can sponsor you” (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/17).

For the most part, respondents expressed their reservation about the influence of modern religion on the processes of chieftaincy selection in the way they narrated their displeasure with the role of the C&S Church. It appeared that modern religion

impacted positively in ending certain obnoxious practices in Ugbo Kingdom. Findings from the field indicated that, in ancient *Ugbo*, it was a practice not to allow twin to see the next day after birth. This might be the reason why any prince that emerged as an *Olugbo* must not be a twin. The loathsome practice of killing twins persisted up to the first half of the 20th century (Omoyele, 2011). As Omoyele's study revealed, this obnoxious practice ended after a protracted battle between the *Oro* Cult which prohibited twins' survival and the Apostles of the C&S order who viewed the practice as an abormal act that offends God. In trying to defend the lives of the twins, the Apostles sometimes went to the extreme by taking the law into their hands when members of the *Oro* Cult indicated determination to terminate the life of the twins. This became a civil matter where the counsel representing the *Oro* Cult group, Chief Obafemi Awolowo argued that the Apostles were "destroying tradition".

On the side of the Apostles, their counsel maintained that such act of terminating the life of twins by the *Oro* group amounts to murder. The resolute effort of the Apostles in making sure that this inhuman act ended in Ugbo Kingdom paid off when eventually the killing of twins ended, and the Olugbo palace had its first twins in 1952 (Omoyele, 2011). Unfortunately, this did not end the requirement that an *Olugbo* must not be a twin. What this then means is that if a prince is a twin, he cannot become an *Olugbo* no matter how highly placed because that is still indicated in the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration. Whatever the influence of the church on the selection processes, the procedure for selection remains sacrosanct. This is exactly what a respondent meant when he averred that, "inspite *Oba Obateru*'s faith in the C&S church, he still has to participate in certain traditional rites for his selection to be accepted as being legitimate by the community (see figure: **4.2.2.3a**, and **4.2.2.3b** below).



Figure 4.2.2.3a: Oba Obateru Akinruntan performing traditional rites
Source: Author's compilation, field work 2017



Figure 4.2.2.3b: Oba Obateru Akinruntan conducting naming ceremony during a church service

Source: Author's compilation, field work 2017

What can be easily gleaned from the forgoing is that, chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo kingdom is not a one man affairs as relevant stakeholders are involved in the selection and installation of an *Olugbo*. Once an *Oba* is installed he must abide by the dictates of the throne otherwise he suffers legitimate crisis. This is not limited to Ugbo kingdom as other Yoruba Kingdoms have similar traditional norms embedded in their chieftaincy selection processes which modernity could not annihilate. That is why Oba Adegboyega Dosunmu, the Olowu of Owu Kingdom in Abeokuta, Ogun State commented that, being a pastor did not disturb him from performing the ritual of staying in the palace for ninety days in seclusion. “That, christainity has its own rituals rituals too. Waking up between the hours of 1am and 3a.m to pray every night is a form of ritual” (The Punch, 2016). The point to underscore here is that, where an *Oba* derails from observing the traditional procedure in the selection processes, such act could result to conflict. This was the case of Oba Gabriel Olajide, Obasaoye of Isaoye Ekiti, in Ekiti State, whose community was bent on removing him from the throne because of his refusal to participate in installation rituals as a result of his Christain faith (The Punch, 2019). Similarly, Oba Aderemi Adefehinti, the traditional ruler of Ilara Mokin Community in Ondo State was chased out of his palace by the community due to his refusal to perform royal function as a result of being “*a born again Christian*” (The Punch, 2019). The point worth noting here is that, although, religion might have impacted positively on the chieftaincy selection processes by removing practices considered repugnant to natural justice, but it does not eradicate the required traditional procedure for the selection and installation of an *Olugbo*.

4.2.3 Conflict in the Chieftaincy Selection Processes

Chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom are not immuned to conflict as indicated by findings from the field. Conflict has been part of the selection processes during the pre-modern era. However, modernity has changed the scope and intensity of the conflict, though, provided mechanisms for conflict resolution. A cursory look at the background to conflict in the selection processes, within the scope of this study would give a better understanding on how modernity has influenced the chieftaincy selection conflict.

4.2.3.1 Background to the Selection Conflict

One of the important features of the pre-modern *Oja* system of selection was the rotation of the throne among the male descendants of *Ojadele* ruling house. According to a respondent, from time immemorial, succession principle in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom was based on principle of rotation among the male descendants of the ruling house (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/2017). Though, Omoyele (2011) argues that, based on the sequence of succession that took place from *Ojadele*, it could be deduced that succession to *Olugbo*'s throne was from father- to son, since Ugbo tradition recognised only one ruling house (*Ojadele*), and that, only the male descendants could ascend the throne. Also the dethroned *Olugbo* aligned his thought with Omoyele's view when he averred that, "right from the time immemorial, succession to *Olugbo*'s throne has not been opened to contest, that is why it has been from father to son". However, a critical examination of Omoyele's assertion shows that, it has been one lineage of the ruling house that had held on to the throne at the detriment of other male descendants. According to findings from the field, *Ojadele* had four male children, *Agbedun*, *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye*, which formed the four segments of the ruling house. Out of the four, only one segment (*Agbedun*) had held on to the throne of *Olugbo*, while others, *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye* were denied access to the throne. This denial was identified as the source of the chieftaincy selection conflict that had engulfed Ugbo kingdom since 1934, when Samuel Ejagbomo, *Mafimisebi II* was installed the *Olugbo* after the death of his father *Olugbo Mafimisebi I*, who reigned from 1915 to 1933 (NAI/OKITIDIV/I/1OK535/VOL).

However, with the selection of Napoleon Mafimisebi in 1952 to succeed his father *Oba Samuel Ejagbomo*, in line with the principle of father-to-son inheritance principle, the selection conflict grew in scope and intensity due to the incursion of modernity. The introduction of Colonial Native Authority system and the decision of Okitipupa Federal Council, that upheld the appointment of Napoleon as the *Olugbo Mafimisebi III* in 1954, prolonged the father-to-son inheritance principle of succession. This generated protracted chieftaincy selection conflict as other segments of the ruling house continued agitations for equal access to the throne on the basis of rotational principle. This is in line with the relative deprivation theory adopted for this study. As noted, relative deprivation is a significant driver of social disorders and conflicts in society. When people or group are deprived of something considered their rights or essential to

them, they resort to any available means to achieve it. This was the case with other segments of the ruling house that resorted to modern court system to redress the injustice meted on them by Mafimisebi section of Agbedun segment. Corroborating the above, a respondent posited that,

one major area in which modernity has helped Ugbo kingdom, was the judgement of the Supreme Court in 2007 that put an end to the father-to-son succession, otherwise, the selection conflict might have continued unabated and Ugbo kingdom would have remained underdeveloped (FGD, Olugbo's palace, 21/10/17).

According to the respondent, the genesis of the chieftaincy selection conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom is graphically presented in Ojadele family tree presented below (see figure **4.2.3.1a**).

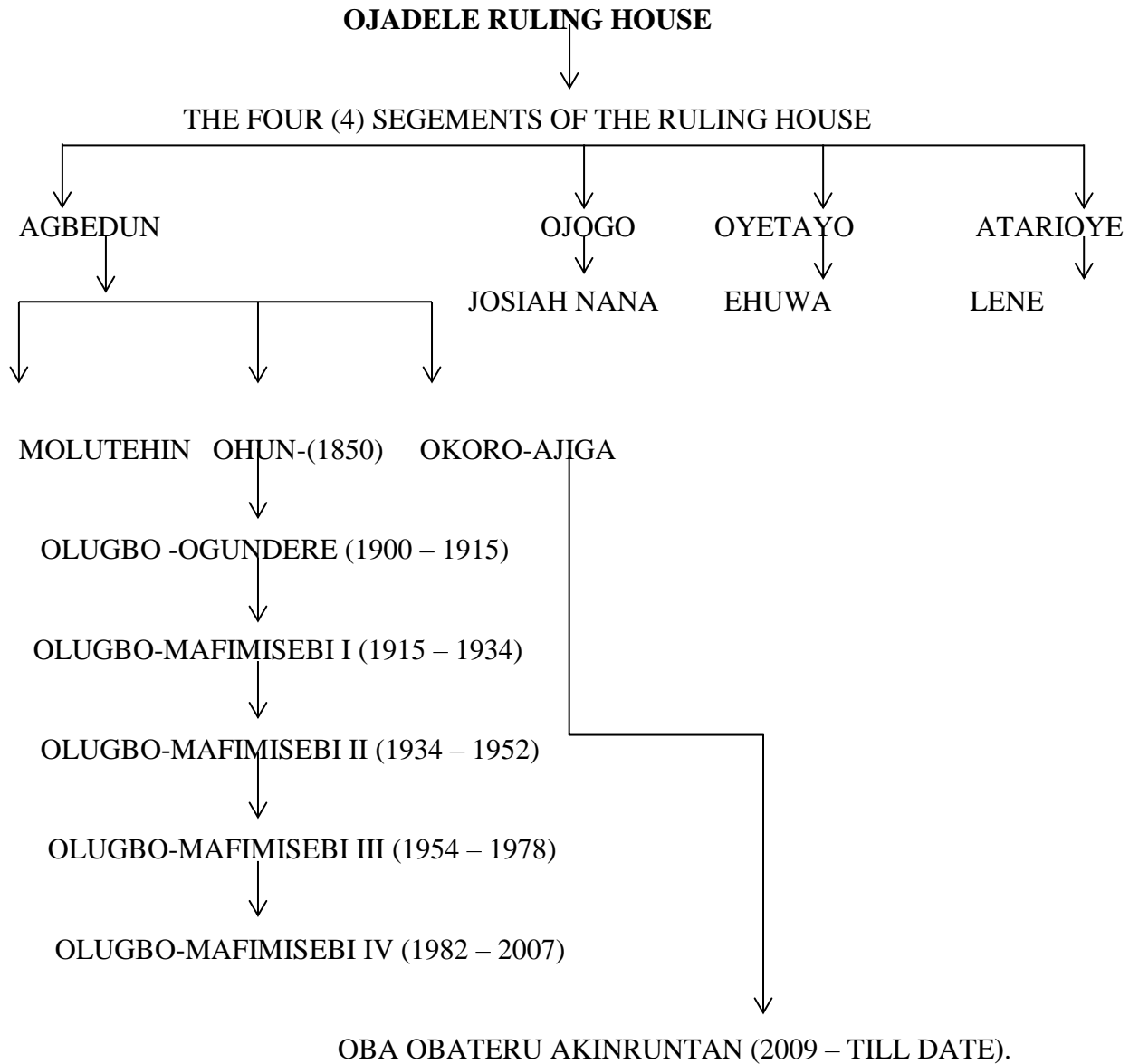


Figure 4.2.3.1a: Ojadele Chieftaincy Family Tree

Source: Author, field work, 2017

From the family chieftaincy tree demonstrated in figure (4.2.3.1a), the selection conflict resulted from the father-to-son inheritance principle of succession instituted by *Agbedun* segment of the ruling house. This started with the installation of *Olugbo Ohun* in 1850 to *Olugbo Ogundere* in 1900, *Olugbo Mafimisebi I* in 1915, *Olugbo Mafimisebi II* in 1934, *Olugbo Mafimisebi III* in 1952 and *Olugbo Mafimisebi IV* who reigned from 1982 to 2007, when he was dethroned by the judgement of the Supreme Court of Nigeria. The implication of this, is that the Mafimisebi lineage of the *Agbedun* segment of the ruling house had held on to the throne of *Olugbo* for One Hundred and Fifty-Seven (157) years to the detriment of other segments – *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye* –who are also entitled to the throne (Omoyele, 2011). The most intriguing aspect of the selection conflict is that, *Mafimisebi*'s brothers, *Molutehin* and *Okoro-Ajiga* from same *Agbedun* segment were also denied access to the throne. The denial generated identity conflict which made the *Okoro-Ajiga* section to form alliance with other segments of the ruling house to terminate *Mafimisebi*'s monopoly of the throne through judicial process. This resulted into the dethronement of *Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi IV* and enthronement of *Oba Obateru Akinruntan, Okoro Ajiga I*, as the *Olugbo* of Ugbo by judgement of the Supreme Court of Nigeria in 2007. This explains the theory of relative deprivation adopted for this study. When people are systematically excluded from positions in the society or a situation where people are denied access to their rights, positions and inheritance, such perceived deprivation stimulates a feeling of collective frustration which is a significant driver of social disorder and conflicts in society. This was the exact situation that snowballed into the chieftaincy selection conflict that engulfed Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom as contended by a respondent in an in-depth interview.

Contrary to the above submission, the dethroned *Olugbo*, during a key informant interview argued that, the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom predated *Ojadele* as the ruling house. According to him, for Morgan Chieftaincy review commission of 1977 to have started *Olugbo*'s ruling house from *Ojadele* amounted to historical fallacy since *Ojadele* was just the 16th *Olugbo*. He wondered why the commission did not capture *Onajarogbe*, the 15th *Olugbo*, *Akiribido*, the 14th *Olugbo* or *Ameto*, the 8th *Olugbo* that ascended the throne on the basis of father-to-son inheritance principle. He listed the names of *Olugbos* who have reigned in Ugbo kingdom since it was founded in 1030AD as detailed in (Omoyele, 2011) as follows:

1. Olugbo Orunmakin- known as Obamakin (Alias, Olowo yi tu fe wa)
2. Olugbo Oyeroye
3. Olugbo Olumami Oghone
4. Olugbo Omoboma
5. Olugbo Onajabiro
6. Olugbo Oluyegbo
7. Olugbo Oyetuwa
8. Olugbo Ameto
9. Olugbo Opa
10. Olugbo Akereti
11. Olugbo Erinrinoye
12. Olugbo Kongbe Oluwen
13. Olugbo Akinmuloro
14. Olugbo Akinribido (Alias, Olugbo Duromokun)
15. Olugbo Onajarogbe
16. Olugbo Ojadele
17. Olugbo Agbedun - 1850
18. Olugbo Ohun - 1900-1915
19. Olugbo Ogundere - 1900-1934
20. Olugbo Mafimisebi I - 1915-1934 (Deported to Calabar by the Colonial Government between 1921-1927 and restricted to his village, Idogun between 1927- 1933 and died therein in 1934)
21. Olugbo Samuel Ejagbomo, Mafimisebi II... 1934-1952
22. Olugbo Napoleon Orioye, Mafimisebi III....1952-1978
23. Olugbo Adebajo Akingbade, Mafimisebi IV...1982-2007 (His appointment was terminated by the Supreme Court Judgement in 2007).

He further averred that, selection processes in Ugbo Kingdom had not been made opened for contest from time immemorial. He added, when *Opa* and *Ajana* (two sons of the deceased *Olugbo Ameto*) were brought before the *Oja* for selection, the *Oja* unanimously picked *Opa* who was younger while *Ajana* left in disgust to found his own kingdom in *Irele*. To this end, once *Oja* decided on whom to become the *Olugbo* nobody was allowed to contest the throne. He blamed the incursion of modern structures into the chieftaincy selection processes as the bane of chieftaincy selection

conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. He queried the judgement of the Supreme Court that deposed him as having not reflecting the custom and tradition of Ugbo people. This is because selection in Ugbo did not start with *Ojadele* on which the judgement was based. In his analysis of the conflict, he made reference to a graphic document submitted by his father Oba Napoleon *Mafimisebi III* in 1953 to the Colonial Government to advance his argument of father-to-son inheritance principle as the mode of succession in Ugbo Kingdom, which he argued was in line with the tradition of Ugbo people. (See figure: 4.2.3.2b)

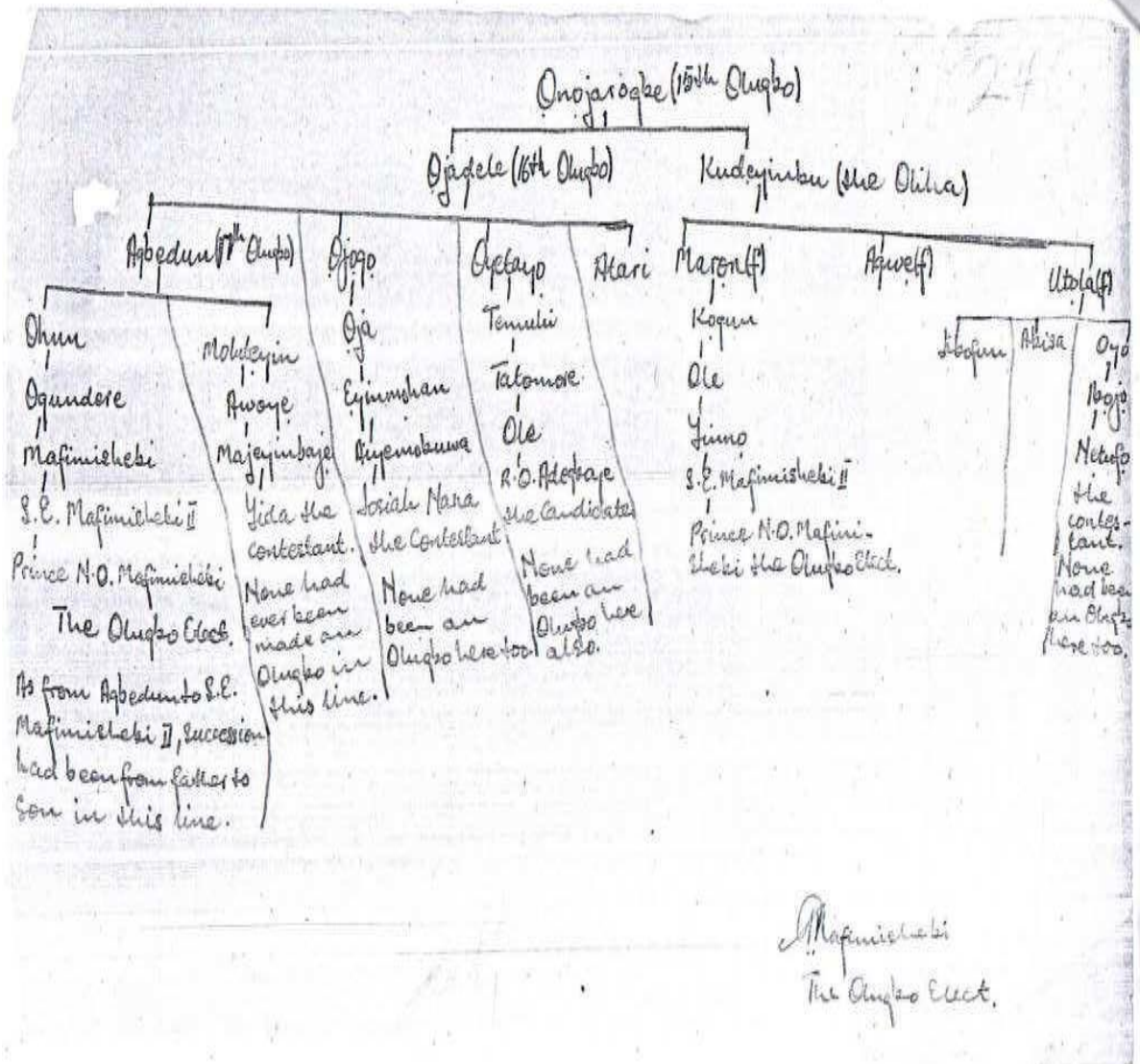


Figure 4.2.3.2b: Ojadele Chieftaincy Family Tree

Source: NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II

Going by the submission of the dethroned *Olugbo*, it could be argued that succession to *Olugbo*'s throne was conducted on the basis of father-to-son. However, a critical examination of the contents of the graphic document submitted to the colonial government in 1953 by Napoleon *Mafimisebi III* showed that, *Onajarogbe*, the fifteen *Olugbo* had two sons, *Ojadele* and *Kudeyinbu*. *Ojadele* was made the sixteen *Olugbo* and the succession to the throne continued from *Ojadele* down the ladder, while *Kudejinbu* lineage disappeared from the ruling house. The reason for *Kudejinbu*'s disappearance is not far fetched. According to Omoyele (2003), "Kudejinbu was disqualified to succeed his father *Onajarogbe* because he had a bald. Instead, his younger brother *Ojadele* became the sixteenth *Olugbo*". This assertion is in line with the custom and tradition of *Ugbo* people that forbids a bald person to become the *Olugbo* as earlier noted from the field report. This tradition, according to a respondent, persists till today in *Ugbo* Kingdom inspite of modernity incursion into the chieftaincy selection processes. The implication of *Kudejinbu*'s disappearance from the ruling house is that, it makes the selection processes appear as if *Ojadele* is the only male descendant of *Onajarogbe*, the fifteen *Olugbo* which was not. This queries the father-to-son inheritance principle advanced by *Mafimisebi* lineage. Also worthy of note is that, the document submitted by Napoleon specified the male descendants of *Ojadele* to include *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye* who are also qualified to be selected the *Olugbo*. Findings from the field also indicated that, the list of names of *Olugbos* as indicated earlier did not suggest father-to-son succession before the reign of *Ojadele* the 16th *Olugbo*. The denial of other segments of the ruling house to be enthroned the *Olugbo* accounted for the internal chieftaincy selection conflict that has engulfed *Ugbo* kingdom since 1934.

While the scope of this study spans the period of 1952 to 2010 which covers the period during which the protracted chieftaincy selection conflict grew in intensity and modernised, however, it is important to note that the chieftaincy selection processes in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom witnessed two forms of conflicts. First, conflict resulting from external influence with the introduction of *Ilaje* Native Authority, when *Amapetu* of *Mahin* was formally gazetted as the sole Native Authority by the British over the entire *Ilaje* territory in 1917. Second, is the internally induced conflict which resulted from the emergence of the father-to-son system of succession which the *Mafimisebis* claimed to be the only method for the selection of *Olugbo*. On this note, it is imperative

to historicise the chieftaincy selection conflict which was influenced by external and internal factors.

4.2.3.2. Externally Induced Chieftaincy Selection Conflict

With respect to externally induced chieftaincy conflict, the role of the *Amapetu* of Mahin, *Oba* Omowole I, deserves considerable attention. The attention stems from the fact that *Amapetu* had been having a running battle with the *Olugbo* Mafimisebi I which persisted to Mafimisebi II and III and saw Mahin's interference in Ugbo chieftaincy selection for *Amapetu*'s personal benefit and created serious conflict in Ugbo kingdom.

Back then, there was no love lost between the *Mahin* and the Ugbo people-both were neighbours, considering that *Mahin* lies just some few miles away from *Ugbo*. As indicated in the Ilaje Intelligence Report of 1937, both the Mahin and the Ugbo people who speak the Ilaje dialect claimed ownership of the territory, with each of them claiming first arrival and allotting land to the other. While responding to this claim by the Mahin, *Olori Ebi* Ojadele remarked as follows:

In Ugbo, it was the 10th Oba that was on the throne when the *Amapetu* came. So, *Olugbo* was the first to settle in Ilaje land. We the Ugbos believe that we are above the Mahins because we gave them the land to settle, as we were told. We believe they should be our tenants and they cannot be our lords. (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/17).

Conversely, this appears to be at variance with the Mahin's claim in paragraph 24 of the Ilaje Intelligence Report of 1937. According to that paragraph, Mahin people argued that *Olowopeti* was the one who allowed the Ugbo people to settle on Mahin land on their arrival to Mahin from Ife. This therefore makes them subject to the *Amapetu*. Refuting this claim, respondents from Ikorigho Community during a focus group discussion (FGD) aligned their thoughts with *Olori Ebi*'s view in the following submission: "when Oronmakin, the first *Olugbo* of Ugbo arrived from Ile-Ife, there was nobody in that place as at that time. The place was referred to as Ugbo Omehen before they changed it to Mahin". In a way, this is in line with oral tradition which holds that the Ugbo people migrated from Ile-Ife to Oke Mafurangan even though the Mahin claimed that Ugbo and the *Olugbo* were subject to the *Amapetu*. However,

Curwen (1937) indicates in paragraph 35 of the Ilaje Intelligence Report that based on the Ugbo version of Ilaje origin which was supported by Ikale and members of Yashere quarter of Mahin, that Olugbo's forefathers did in fact precede the Mahin in the coastal area. Iroju, (2012) is in agreement with this view and opines that, Ugbo tradition supports the view that Ugbo people migrated from Ile-Ife and not hosted by the Mahin group, rather, they are autochthonous to the place they occupy today (Iroju, 2012:340).

Again, the submission of Iroju, (2012) agrees with the content of the District Commissioner's letter in paragraph 45 (8) of the Ilaje Intelligence Report. According to that paragraph, Captain Wyndham stated that,

The Olugbo is recognized as an independent chief with several villages under him eastward along the coast. He claimed his people came direct from Ife, had settled at Ubo many generations before the Mahin people from Benin.

Before this, it is worth stating here that the Commissioner at Ijebu Ode, H. D. Duncombe had also expressed similar thoughts in his letter to the Amapetu in a manner that suggests stay of execution until further notice. In that letter, dated 1st March 1915, the Commissioner told the Amapetu that Olugbo had informed him that he is an independent king and he asked the Amapetu not to interfere with the Olugbo or any of his people until he (the Commissioner) conducts his inquiry on the matter and ascertains the truth (NAI/CS026/06452). What is not clear is whether the inquiry was conducted by the Commissioner because there is no documented evidence to prove this.

Elsewhere, Alex Taylor, counsel to *Olugbo Mafimisebi I*, who was deported to Calabar in 1921 by the colonial government, in his letter to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies dated 19th July, 1922, reiterated Mafimisebi's claim as put forward by Wyndham above. In the said letter, Taylor stated in clear terms that; "the territory of Ugbo had been independent and had never been subordinate to the Amapetu of Mahin or any other ruler or country in Nigeria" (NAI/CS026/06452). Again, at the heat of Mafimisebi's superiority battle with the Amapetu of Mahin which led to the former's deportation, some chiefs in Ugbo Kingdom wrote a petition through the Resident to the Chief Secretary to the Government dated 3rd January, 1926, wherein

they noted in emphatic terms; “in the history of Mahin and Ugbo, it is unlawful to place Ugbo under the control of Bale of Mahin” (NAI/CS026/06452). All of these corroborate *Olori Ebi*’s remark that the Mahin cannot be lord over them instead, they should be their tenants.

In the midst of the territorial contest between the *Amapetu* of Mahin and *Olugbo* of Ugbo, Western intrusion exacerbated the conflict rather than ameliorating it (Ikuejube, 2012:55). This is evident in whom the Europeans chose to confer superiority status on. *Olori Ebi* is worth citing here. According to him;

...but when the Europeans came with their indirect rule, they met one man at Aboto community called Idi-Ogbe. The man told them that he was not the Oba and he took them to *Amapetu* and the Europeans supported *Amapetu*, which created a great problem in Ugbo land because of the attempt by *Amapetu* to suppress the *Olugbo*, he was resisted by all means (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/17).

This suggests that the British colonialists related with the *Amapetu* based on the fact that they first met him before the *Olugbo*. Therefore, it also suggests that had they met an *Idi-ogbe* who was an Ugbo man and he took them to the *Olugbo*, they would have recognised the *Olugbo* over the *Amapetu*. But since it did not play out this way, one cannot say with certainty if such would have brewed the superiority contest which later ensued or not. But at any rate, the outcome which engendered the supremacy contest is in line with this study’s theory of modernity which posits that the interaction between tradition and modernity tends to engender conflict in the chieftaincy selection processes. This is also evident in *Olori-ebi*’s submission when he averred that “indirect rule created crisis which affected Ugbo kingdom, the people were suppressed, sent to jail/prison, molested and a lot of things happened”. *Yara*’s arrest (one of the chiefs in Ugbo) by *Amapetu* and his relentless efforts to ensure that Ugbo Kingdom was brought under his dominion were clear instances of *Amapetu*’s suppression of the Ugbo people (ONDOPROFI/4/OC62).

Having given the *Amapetu* recognition over the *Olugbo*, the Europeans made another move which emboldened him to exercise discretionary powers over the *Olugbo* and his people. In 1917, Her Majesty’s imperial government established a District in Ilaje and

gazetted the *Amapetu* as the Native Authority (NAI/OKITDIV/I/OK535/VOL.1). This is in agreement with *Oba Olubo*'s submission when he said, "Ogundere became the *Olugbo* at that period the colonial people were around and *Amapetu* of Mahin was made to control the entire Ilaje then". With this move, the Europeans succeeded in placing him (the *Amapetu*) over and above the *Ugbo* people who before then saw the Mahins as their tenants (KII, *Olubo*'s palace, 21/10/17). What this means therefore is that, with the *Amapetu* in charge of the District, backed with colonial support, he could exercise discretionary powers as he deemed fit in a manner that would hurt the *Ugbo*. This was exactly what played out during the dispute of beaded crown. *Amapetu* had used his vantage position as the Native Authority to challenge the right of *Olugbo* to wear beaded crown (Albert, 2012:140). Although, the matter was resolved in favour of *Olugbo* by the colonial administrators, but this did not stop the resistance of *Olugbo* to *Amapetu*'s suzerainty over his kingdom.

This development was aptly captured by *Olori-Ebi* when expressing his frustration about the relegation of *Olugbo*'s stool by the British. In his words, "we resisted vehemently every attempt by the British to suppress *Olugbo* to be subordinate to *Amapetu*. The *Ugbo* refused even when they had deported *Olugbo* (*Mafimisebi I*) to Calabar". This action by the *Ugbo* people was seen as insubordination to the colonial government whose authority was represented by the *Amapetu*, hence the deportation of *Mafimisebi I* to Calabar as recommended by the District Officer in 1921 (Curwen, 1937). This affirmed *Oba Olubo*'s remark that "*Mafimisebi was taken to Calabar because of the supremacy tussle*". Incidentally, *Mafimisebi*'s deportation in 1921 was not the first in *Ugbo* history. This was one among the many discoveries that was made in the course of the interview with *Oba Olubo*. According to him, "the Mahin fought with Ogundere, he was later exiled and imprisoned in Epe (Lagos)". These were two instances within the same territory where the influence of the *Amapetu* over the *Olugbo* gained the support of the Europeans.

What can be gleaned from the *Amapetu – Olugbo* supremacy contest is the willingness of the colonial government to take sides with the *Amapetu* at every point of disagreement with the *Olugbo* or any other. The case of *Ashogbon* is another instance. When the *Ashogbon* contested *Amapetu*'s right to succeed his father, *Ogbunshemoyin* as the *Amapetu*, he was deported by the colonial government to Benin in 1918, from

where he was taken to Calabar in 1924, stating that he was disloyal to the Amapetu (Curwen, 1937).

It could be argued that by his nature as exhibited in the conflict episodes, which he was at the centre of, the *Amapetu* became known as someone who loved power and authority which he got with the support of the colonial government, and did not want his authority questioned. Having come to terms with the fact that the Amapetu was their common enemy, the *Ashogbon* and the *Olugbo* became close allies in opposing him (NAI/CS026/06452) in spite of the support from the colonial government; an action which eventually cost them their lives. This therefore begs the question why the colonial government took sides with the *Amapetu* against other kingdoms that were independent of Mahin. Nothing explains this better than the agreement Amapetu signed with the Europeans in 1885.

It was a common practice for the colonialists to reach some form of agreements with traditional rulers upon conquering a territory, even though those agreements were often lopsided to the advantage of the Europeans. This was the case with Mahin under the *Amapetu*. Having reached an agreement, the *Amapetu* made a declaration on 23rd August, 1885, “wherein he relinquished all and any rights which concerns him under article III of the Treaty of 1885 in favour of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland” (NAI/CS026/06452). Expectedly, such total submission by the Amapetu to Her Majesty’s government which enhanced the colonial enterprise of wealth expropriation would necessarily attract some kind of reward in favour of the *Amapetu*, which was evident in the support he got from the colonial government in oppressing the *Ugbo* and the *Ashogbon*.

A careful observation of the deportation of the *Olugbo* suggested that it was intended to neutralise the Ugbo people and coerce them into submitting to the Amapetu of Mahin. Incidentally, that did not happen. According to (Curwen,1937), in paragraph 50 of his Ilaje Intelligence Report, “the Ugbo people did not only dislike Amapetu’s control over them, they filed a suit against him at the Provincial Court, but as it turned out, the matter was not heard for inexplicable reasons”. Such was to be expected considering the influence the *Amapetu* had. In the same paragraph, Captain Richards stated in his letter to the Resident, Ondo Province that: “While perfectly loyal to the Government, the Ugbo persisted in their refusal to acknowledge the Amapetu as their

overlord and will, I fear, continue to do so in perpetuity”. Although the perception of Ugbo people by the Europeans and Amapetu was not an impressive one, Captain Richards was able to at least present the people of Ugbo in positive light by stressing their loyalty to Her Majesty’s government, and also noting that they were not ready to rescind their decision not to recognize Amapetu’s control over them. This decision was also affirmed by *Olori Ebi* Ojadele who remarked in the following way: “after his (Mafimisebi) deportation, his followers, the Ugbo people still resisted any attempt to subordinate them under Amapetu” (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/2017).

While the people were resolute in their resolve, the colonial government seemed to have decided not to reverse its action on most of the contentious issues raised by the *Ugbo*. This was revealed in a response to the petition the Ugbo Chiefs wrote to the Acting Resident, Ondo Province, by the Secretary, Southern Province in 1927. In his reply, the Secretary made the following submission:

...but the answer would appear to be that the question of Igbo being under the Amapetu of Mahin has been definitely settled once and for all by His Excellency’s confidential dispatch of the 12th February, 1923...and that when the chiefs and people of Igbo recognise this fact the question of the election of a successor to the Olugbo may be considered and any future Olugbo however would still have to undertake to abide by the Governor’s decision (NAI/CSO26/06452).

This says a whole lot as far as the position of the colonial government is concerned with regards to Ugbo’s quest for liberation from the *Amapetu* while the deposed *Olugbo* was still in Calabar, with the new status of a “political prisoner” given to him by the Acting Resident of Calabar Province (NAI/CSO26/06452). This further affirms the influence of modernity, bringing to light how colonial intervention in the conflict between the *Amapetu* and the *Olugbo* succeeded in creating an interregnum in Ugbo Kingdom. All attempts by the *Amapetu* to install an *Olugbo* were resisted by the people and chiefs of Ugbo even when *Mafimisebi I* was in exile.

As Captain Richards noted, and corroborated by *Olori- Ebi*, the position of the colonial government not to rescind its decision did not deter the Ugbo people from not allowing the colonial government and the *Amapetu* to have their way. As indicated in the Acting Resident's memorandum to the Secretary of the Southern Province dated 17th March, 1926, "the Chiefs, referred to as "political officers" refused to grant permission for another *Olugbo* to be elected" (NAI/CS026/06452). Their resolute position on the matter is quite understandable. Since the *Olugbo* was deported on a course that was of Ugbo's interest, which was also confirmed by a respondent in the field who said, "Mafimisebi fought for the interest of Ugbo, electing a new *Olugbo* as desired by *Amapetu* would amount to betraying the deposed *Olugbo* who was suffering in Calabar on their behalf" (FGD, *Olugbo's* Palace, 21/10/17). Besides, the *Amapetu's* manoeuvring had at a point given the *Ugbo* reason to believe that he wanted an *Olugbo* that would be a stooge in his hands. This manifested after the death of Mafimisebi I. For this reason, the Ugbo people saw no reason why the deposed *Olugbo* who was still alive should be replaced. This is in conformity with the custom and tradition of the Ugbo people as indicated in archival document;

It is important to note that while resistance was heavily deployed by the Ugbo people to liberate them from *Amapetu's* oppression at a time their paramount ruler was deposed and deported to Calabar, the resistance was not entirely one of disrespecting the authority of the *Amapetu* as the colonial government painted it. The people also resorted to using civil method in engaging the government and tried to make it see reason why its decision to subject Ugbo under *Amapetu's* authority was wrong. In a petition written by Ugbo chiefs to the Chief Secretary to the Government on the 3rd January, 1926, the chiefs civilly made their grievance known to the colonial government in paragraph 4, 5, and 6. In the said paragraphs, the chiefs brought to the notice of the government the vacuum that it created since it deposed and deported the *Olugbo* to Calabar even though there are people who are fit and have undeniable claim to the stool. Secondly, the chiefs pledged to oppose the government's idea of bringing Ugbo Kingdom under the *Amapetu's* jurisdiction, whose grandfather was a vassal to their grandfather, the *Olugbo* of Ugbo. By this, they felt the *Amapetu* of Mahin was indirectly made the successor of the deposed *Olugbo*. Lastly, they made it clear that according to their history and that of Mahin, it is unconstitutional to bring the Ugbo under the jurisdiction of the Bale of Mahin (NAI/CS026/06452).

Incidentally, in spite of the civil entreaties by the Ugbo chiefs to the government which was aimed at restoring sanity in their kingdom, the response from the government as indicated in its memorandum of 17th March, 1929 (cited above) was to foreclose any possibility of rescinding its decision of Ugbo being under the *Amapetu*. This decision kept the *Ugbo* in crisis as the deposed *Olugbo* remained in Calabar. Having realised that the government and the *Amapetu* were not ready to yield to their demands, the Ugbo people were left with no choice but to take an option that would appease both the *Amapetu* and the colonial government in order to secure the freedom of the deposed *Olugbo*.

Having being deposed from his kingdom for six years, obviously, the *Olugbo* was compelled to reach an agreement with his tormentors to secure his return to his country home. Accordingly, he approached the Resident of Calabar Province to indicate his interest in returning to his kingdom, having failed in previous attempts to gain freedom. As indicated by the Southern Secretary's memorandum 19th September, 1927 *Mafimisebi I* reached and signed an undertaking on the 13th June, 1927 containing the following terms:

....that he will proceed to Ondo Division and commit himself in the hands of the Resident or the District Officer; that he will accompany any of them to Mahin and accord the *Amapetu* due respect as his District Head; that he accepted to support Mahin Native Court and recognise it as the competent Court to settle disputes between the Mahin and the Ugbo people; and also, that he promised to obey the instructions of the Resident Ondo Province (NAI/CS026/06452).

Having found the terms satisfactory, the colonial government cancelled the deportation order on the 27th September, 1927.

At this point, it is of necessity to note something very important not mentioned in the course of *Mafimisebi*'s deportation. While *Mafimisebi* was deposed and deported to Calabar in 1921, his "literate" son, Samuel Ejagbomo accompanied his father and shared his agony. According to one of the respondents, the *Osomolu*;

He (Samuel) was taken to Calabar along with his father. When his father was deported to Calabar, he went to school at Calabar. As contained in the undertaking *Mafimisebi* signed to secure the reversal of his deportation, it was Samuel Ejagbomo who interpreted the terms of the above agreement his father reached with the colonial government before the deportation order was cancelled (NAI/CS026/06452).

As seen in the chieftaincy selection processes which were fraught with conflicts after the death of *Mafimisebi I*, the agonies Samuel Ejagbomo went through with his father became the basis for considering him deserving of the stool upon his father's death; thereby, establishing the claim for the system of father-to-son inheritance principle as the method of succession in Ugbo kingdom.

A critical examination of the agreement *Mafimisebi I* reached with the government suggests that it was most likely the *Olugbo* signed it under duress. The reason is, prior to the coming of the Europeans, the Ugbo people vehemently resisted being under the *Amapetu*, a decision they maintained after they were forcefully brought under *Amapetu*'s authority in Mahin. Bearing this in mind, it is difficult to accept that having resisted such a move for a very long time and gone through much agony the *Olugbo* would suddenly make a *volte-face* and recognise the authority of the *Amapetu* as his District Head. It is important to note that, the misuse of colonial power by reason of Native Authority is not limited to *Amapetu*'s Ilaje District. Similar cases abound in other Yoruba kingdoms. For instance, the *Alaafin* of Oyo, who was the Native Authority was empowered and elevated above his Council-of-Chiefs. He exercised his power without recourse to the *Oyomesi* who acted traditionally as checks on his power. This was a clear distortion of traditional values and custom (Atanda, 1973:193). In a similar vein, *Ooni* of Ife, who was made the Native Authority in 1916, was conferred with such powers of dismissal and suspension of chiefs, power of arrest, trial and imprisonment. A case in point was when *Ooni Adesoji Aderemi* sentenced eight leaders of *Egbe Omo Ibile Ife* to a long term imprisonment without option of fine by the Native Authority's Court he presided over (Akinrinade and Akinjogbin, 1992:192-216).

The point to underscore here is that, the native authority system changed the course and nature of traditional chieftaincy institution by placing traditional rulers on a negative or positive side of history. Some kings witnessed elevation in status as the case of Amapetu of Mahin suggested, while others experienced a diminished status as the case was with the Olugbo of Ugbo.

The question now is how did the Amapetu's episode as expansively elaborated above induced internal chieftaincy selection conflict in Ugbo Kingdom? Responses to this question would be the main task of the next section on chieftaincy conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom that was internally induced. It would show how the return of *Mafimisebi I* and his subsequent demise facilitated the establishment of father-to-son inheritance principle to Olugbo's stool. This became the main source of conflict in the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.

4.2.3.3. Internally Induced Chieftaincy Selection Conflict

As it has been discussed earlier, the Amapetu/Olugbo supremacy tussle gave us a vivid understanding of how external forces through the support of colonial power affected the Olugbo's stool. This is in line with the theory of modernity where modern structures imposed by colonialism significantly affected the traditional structures. It should be noted that, upon Mafimisebi I's return to Ugbo kingdom in 1927, there was not much to celebrate because he did not administer Ugbo Kingdom again before he died in the early 1930s. In fact, he was not allowed by the colonial Government to return to Ode-Ugbo, the traditional headquarters of Ugbo Kingdom. Instead, he returned to his hometown, Idogun, where he finally died in the early 1930s.

Now, examining the chieftaincy selection conflict within Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom, it is important to note that the royal family (*Ojadele*) is divided into four segments namely: *Agbedun*, *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo*, and *Atarioye*. Whoever should emerge as the *Olugbo* having passed the physical appearance screening must come from one of these segments. This clarification is vital to better understand the protracted chieftaincy conflict that ensued, beginning from the reign of *Mafimisebi II* in 1934 to the installation of *Oba Obateru Akinruntan Okoro Ajiga I* in 2009.

In the search for *Mafimisebi I*'s successor, it was gathered that the *Oja* favoured Samuel Ejagbomo for two reasons: firstly, it was to compensate his father who died

defending the course of *Ugbo*, and secondly, to compensate the son for standing by his father while in exile at Calabar. According to *Oba Olubo*, “*the Oja met and agreed that his son, Samuel Ejagbomo be compensated*”. Similarly, *Oba Odoka* also remarked that, “*Mafimisebi I was deported to Calabar, Oja and the people had to consider his son Samuel Ejagbomo as the Olugbo for the struggle he went through that nearly consumed his life*”. According to respondents, “*Ugbo (Oja) favoured Ejagbomo because Mafimisebi I fought for the interest of Ugbo, he was taken to Calabar*”. Furthermore, the punishment and experience *Mafimisebi I* had in Calabar which shortened his years on the throne was put into consideration for the support of Ejagbomo, to the throne. While refuting the claim that religion played a role in Samuel Ejagbomo’s emergence as the *Olugbo* at the demise of his father, a respondent in a focus group discussion with Ikorigho Elders aligned his view with the foregoing as follows:

The case of Ejagbomo, it was because he suffered with his father (the *Olugbo* that was deported to Calabar) that the family agreed that he should be taken and not that it was through prophesy but he was a member of C&S Church. Ilaje saw it that his father did not rule long on the throne (FGD, Ikorigho, 24/09/2017).

The aspect of prophesy as mentioned was elaborated upon in earlier sections in the discussion of influence of modern religion - C&S Church on chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.

The support that Samuel Ejagbomo got which aided his ascendance to the stool did not eliminate conflict in the selection processes. His emergence was vehemently opposed within the royal house. As Curwen (1937) mentioned in paragraph 51 of his Ilaje Intelligence Report, there were “barrages of petition” over the emergence of Ejagbomo between 1934, 1935, and 1936, one of which came from his cousin Josiah Nana, who was backed by the *Amapetu* of Mahin. This is in line with *Oba Olubo* submission that;

The *Oja* made Samuel Ejagbomo King but the Mahin conspired with Josiah Nana (Ojomo) and another prince from Ojogo segment of Ojadele not to accept the decision of the *Oja* on the

selection of Ejagbomo so as not to allow Oba to be installed (KII, Olubo`s palace, 21/10/2017).

This shows that even after Mafimisebi`s demise, the *Amapetu* did not give up in making sure he installed an *Olugbo* of his choice, hence his move to side with Josiah Nana from *Ojogo* segment of the *Ojadele* Ruling House who was labelled a “fifth columnists” in Ugbo kingdom as contained in the submission of *Oba Olubo*. However, it is needful to interrogate the claim of Josiah Nana and the *Ojogo* segment to the throne. The question would be: Are they from the royal family? And after this, the issue of passing physical screening and others would be considered. Nonetheless, the vociferous opposition to Ejagbomo`s emergence which was championed by Josiah Nana was based on being a descendant of *Ojogo*, one of the sons of *Ojadele*. His claim to the throne was on this basis, hence his protest.

Findings from the field supported the above position as some respondents avowed that, “*Olugbo`s succession was not from father-to-son*”. Apart from installing Ejagbomo on compassionate ground, it was obvious Nana felt it should not have been the case since there were other princes in the royal family who also had rightful claim to the throne. Again, while it is convenient to see *Nana`s* alliance with *Amapetu* as treacherous, it is clear, that this alignment was borne out of his belief that it was the only way he could gain access to the throne given the support Ejagbomo got from the *Oja*. As respondents further state: “even with the intervention of the District Officer, Nana did not have his way. Perhaps, this was because of the huge support Ejagbomo got from the *Oja*”.

Inspite of Nana`s stiff opposition, a compromise was reached that guaranteed his conferment with the title of *Ojomo* (Second-in-Command to the *Olugbo*) which he grudgingly accepted. While referring to the *Ilaje* Intelligence Report of 1937, *Olori-Ebi*, (the son of the opposing prince) said, “*it was stated there that Josiah Nana without withdrawing his claim was said to have taken the title of Ojomo, which was the second in rank to the Olugbo*”. This can be found in paragraph 51 of the *Ilaje* Intelligence Report. Even though Nana was not comfortable with the *Ojomo* title as indicated above, accepting it helped in ameliorating the conflict situation. This was the exact *Baale Idogun`s* line of thought while responding to questions on how chieftaincy conflict was being resolved in those days. In his words; “there was a time when there was serious crisis after the installation of the king, the other prince who contested with the king was given the title of ‘*Ojomo*’ just to make peace”. That this conflict was

settled did not bring an end to the chieftaincy dispute in Ugbo Kingdom. As the Mafimisebis tried to consolidate their grip on the stool using the principle of father-to-son inheritance, thereby shutting other segments out, the chieftaincy selection conflict grew in intensity. It started from the era of Oba Napoleon Orioye, *Mafimisebi III* (1952-1978) to Oba Adebajo Akingbade *Mafimisebi IV* (1982-2007).

4.2.3.3.1 The Era of Mafimisebi III – Oba Napoleon Orioye 1952-1978

Like his father, Samuel Ejagbomo *Mafimisebi II*, had a short reign on the throne, he died in 1952 and the need for selecting another *Olugbo* arose. Again, his son Napoleon Orioye indicated interest with the claim that succession to the throne was based on father-to-son inheritance principle. Eventually, he was picked ahead of other contestants, hence the emergence of *Mafimisebi III*. At this point, it became obvious as *Olori-Ebi* said, “they (the Mafimisebi) wanted to institute the system of father-to-son, and that was why in 1934-1936 we opposed it, as we do not have that system”. This was the period when Josiah Nana contested the *Olugbo* stool against Samuel Ejagbomo who later emerged as the *Olugbo* on compassionate ground. When Ejagbomo’s son (Napoleon) succeeded his father on the basis of father-to-son, it validated the fears exercised by opponents that the Mafimisebi tried to institute the system of father-to-son as the method of succession, hence the opposition generated intense conflict.

Napoleon’s leading opponents who vehemently opposed his emergence as the *Olugbo* were Josiah Nana, descendant of *Ojogo*, who was also Napoleon’s father’s opponent, and John Ayida, descendant of *Agbedun*. On the basis of their lineage, it is clear that they had rightful claim to the throne since they were all from the royal family. Aside these two, there were others who protested Napoleon’s emergence outside the royal family.

After the death of *Mafimisebi II*, the District Officer received barrages of protest letters against the installation of Napoleon Orioye as *Mafimisebi III*. On the 9th June, 1952, a group known as the “Educated Men of Ilaje” from Lagos wrote a letter against the implementation of the system of father-to-son as instituted by the Mafimisebi lineage. The letter in question revealed another dimension of the chieftaincy conflict between Josiah Nana and Samuel Ejagbomo which was not known to the public. According to them, while the conflict was ongoing, Nana was prevailed upon at a general meeting in *Ilaje* to allow Ejagbomo ascend the throne and that when Ejagbomo dies, the throne

should be opened for contest to the other three segments of the royal family (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). They questioned the scheming that was ongoing to produce Napoleon, Ejagbomo's son, arguing that their father *Ojadele* cannot have four children and decide to will his entire property to a particular child.

However strong the claim of the Mafimisebi to the throne of *Olugbo* is, the latter line of argument advanced by the "Educated Men of Ilaje" will appeal to any discerning mind. It raised the question of injustice to the other segments of the *Ojadele* ruling house that have not benefitted from the stool. Had *Ojadele* made it known before his death that upon his demise only one of his children and his descendants should reign as *Oba*, this would have generated chaos even under his watch. It is for the reason of avoiding such chaos that those opposing the Mafimisebi have clamoured for rotation as the recognised method of succession to the stool.

Still on the barrage of protest letters against the emergence of Napoleon as the *Olugbo*, the Igbekun-Ugbo (the coastal people) also wrote the District Officer strongly worded letters on the 19th October, 1952, and December 8th of the same year, wherein they raised a couple of issues. The issues raised include, a claim that the emergence of Napoleon as the new *Olugbo* was an arrangement, and a bad one, because the four Ruling Houses were not present when the arrangement was made, and even Josiah Nana, the *Ojomo* was not invited. Secondly, they accused Napoleon of giving monetary gratifications to a group of people to secure his ascendancy to the *Olugbo*'s throne. Thirdly, they said the Mafimisebi were told in a meeting not to expect the *Olugbo* title after Ejagbomo was selected because there were other segments of the Ruling House who were yet to have their shot at the throne, and that the stool was not from father-to-son. Lastly, they called Napoleon "a bad citizen and a wicked man" (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

These were indeed grievous issues in the chieftaincy conflict that deserve full attention given the fact that it was coming from a neutral segment of *Ilaje* community in Ugbo Kingdom, which was not part of the ruling house. Again, a careful examination of the issues raised by the *Igbekun-Ugbo* showed that some were in alignment with the ones advanced in other petitions. For instance, the issue of the *Olugbo* stool not being from father-to-son which was raised by the Educated Men of Ilaje and the view that Josiah Nana was prevailed upon to allow Ejagbomo ascend the throne which should be rotated

at his demise. The fact that outsiders raised the same complaint from different parts of Ugbo says a lot. Furthermore, the derogatory words – “bad citizen” and “wicked man” the *Igbekun-Ugbo* used against Napoleon turned out to be a true reflection of his personality as *Olugbo*.

Aside the above protests, the one that came from the *Oyo* was worisome because of the basis of their claim which was not in tune with the laid down procedure of chieftaincy selection in Ugbo Kingdom. On the 11th August, 1925, the *Oyo* family wrote a letter to the District Officer claiming that the vacant *Olugbo* stool should be occupied by one of the grandsons of *Oyo*. Their claim to the throne was based on what transpired between their grandfather, *Oyo* and the Europeans. According to them, *Oyo* was the one who handed over the territory under his jurisdiction to the British government. Based on this, *Oyo*, at that time was the *Olugbo* of Ugbo Kingdom (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). This claim by the *Oyo* raised an issue that can only be addressed with the hindsight of Ugbo history.

In an attempt to put the record straight, Jonathan Mekuleyi provided clarification on this. In his letter to the Chairman, Committee of Enquiry into the *Olugbo* Chieftaincy Dispute dated 20th January, 1954, Mr Mekuleyi, a descendant of Chief Mesehe of Erunna said the claim by Jonathan Ibojo that his grandfather *Oyo* was the *Olugbo* by virtue of the Treaty of 1884 he signed with the British was nothing but “bogus.” He said his grandfather *Mesehe* and *Oyo* were fishing close to the sea side when the British came and an agreement was reached which led to the signing of the Treaty since their (the British) ship could not proceed to Ugbo because of the difficult terrain.. And that the signing of the Treaty was done on the 24th of December, 1884 because his grandfather and Jonathan Ibojo’s told the British that they were representatives of the *Olugbo*. He noted that his father faulted the content of the Treaty which later became the subject of disagreement between his grandfather and Ibojo, and concluded that Jonathan Ibojo had no link with Ugbo (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

While examining the chieftaincy dispute at the Ondo state High Court in 1984, the *Oyo* issue resurfaced. In a document tendered in Court and marked Exhibit “B”, it was indicated that when this very claim was brought before the Committee of Enquiry in 1956, Prince Isaiah Ibojo filed a memorandum in which he claimed that there were two Ruling Houses: Kudejinbu-Oliha, and also countered Napoleon’s claim that succession

to the *Olugbo* throne was from father-to-son, maintaining that *Abisa* and *Oyo* his grandfather who ruled 100 years and 90 years ago came from Kudejinbu-Oliha Ruling House. In his response, Napoleon said *Oyo* was not an *Olugbo* because he was a descendant of a woman called *Iretiola*. Furthermore, Napoleon reiterated that *Oyo* was referred to as “*head chief of Ugbo, first son of the late Olugbo, king of Ugbo*” (High Court Judgment, Okitipupa, 1984:434). In response to this, Isaiah Ibojo objected and argued that females, including their offspring had reigned and could still reign in Ugbo. But this view according to field interviews has no place in the history of Ugbo Kingdom as far as the custom and tradition of Ugbo people are concerned.

While refuting the claim by the *Oyo*'s grandson which he said was bogus, Mr Jonathan Mekuleyi used the name Mr Jonathan Ibojo. In Exhibit “B”, what can be seen is Isaiah Ibojo. It cannot be ascertained if both names referred to one and same person. The last name “*Ibojo*” suggests it is a claim coming from the *Oyo* family against the Mafimisebi. However, Napoleon's explanation indicated that they were descendants of *Iretiola* which automatically disqualified Prince Ibojo from claims to the throne because it was at variance with Ugbo's customary practices. Perhaps this was the reason the Commission did not take Ibojo's claim seriously, hence its fizzling out without noticing its impact on the chieftaincy selection conflict like that of Ayida and Nana.

Again, it was said that the Exhibit tendered by Ibojo himself describes *Oyo* as a “chief” not an *Olugbo*, this is aside the contradictory claims he made as contained in pages 13-19 of the daily proceedings on the enquiry into the chieftaincy selection conflict in the 1950 (NAI/CSO26/06452). For instance, Exhibit “B” says Ibojo “said *Oyo* was the son of *Abisa*, but on page 19 he stated that *Oyo* reigned before *Abisa* (High Court Judgement, Okitipupa, 1984:435). That there were contradictory claims and inconsistencies in Ibojo's submissions suggest that his claim to the *Olugbo* throne was bogus as Jonathan Mekuleyi said.

The Ilaje at Omuropo also wrote a protest letter, dated 21st November, 1952, against Napoleon and Josiah Nana and favoured Mr J. A. Majeyinbaje. They told the District Officer that they do not want Napoleon to be the *Olugbo*, and that the person best suited for the throne was Molutehin's son, J. A. Majeyinbaje. Their case against Nana's candidacy was that he was the *Ojomo* – the second in command to the *Olugbo*, and was

expected to know who was to become the *Olugbo* in the event of a vacancy (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

At this juncture, a careful examination of the above cases in sequential order is needed. On Napoleon, though they did not provide any reason why they objected to his emergence as the *Olugbo*, one could infer that such objection stemmed from the Mafimisebi's claim that succession to the throne was through the father-to-son inheritance principle. On Mr. Majeyinbaje candidacy, the question to ask is, was he qualified to aspire to occupy the *Olugbo* stool? Since he was the descendant of *Ohun* like the Mafimisebi, he had every right to lay claim to the throne, and also become the *Olugbo* provided he passes the physical screening exercise. In fact, before the Ilaje at Omuropo sent their protest to the District Officer, Mr J. A. Majeyinbaje had sent his protest on the 3rd of November, 1952. In that letter, he called the attention of the District Officer to the following; first, how his father was bye-passed as the next *Olugbo* to succeed Mafimisebi I because the Ugbo people wanted a literate *Olugbo*, but his father was an illiterate while Ejagbomo was semi-literate; hence the preference for Ejagbomo over his father.

Secondly, Majeyinbaje faulted the hereditary claim by the Mafimisebi in its entirety, noting that succession to the *Olugbo*'s throne was by rotation within the four segments of the ruling house. He ended by informing the District Officer that it was the turn of the descendant of Moluteyin to become the next *Olugbo* and that he was selected by his house for the stool (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). Nothing affirms Mr. Majeyinbaje's rightful claim to the stool more than this. Aside this, his protest letter sheds more light on why succession to the *Olugbo*'s stool was not based on father-to-son as Mafimisebi claimed but by rotation among the different segments of the Ojadele Ruling House.

Lastly, that Josiah Nana was the *Ojomo* was not a sufficient reason to deny him the right to the throne as a member of the royal family. If a candidate aspires to become an *Olugbo* and he is from the royal family, there is nothing that prevents him from becoming an *Olugbo* in a proper selection process provided he does not fail the physical screening exercise. This knocks off the objection to Nana's candidacy. However, John Ayida did not share this view. In his protest letter to the District Officer in 13th April, 1954 he stated that Nana's candidacy to the stool was stepped down by the Ilaje District Council because the Council discovered that there was no historical

evidence by the youth and old in Ugbo which says that a man could pass from *Ojomo* stool to become the *Olugbo*. According to Ayida, the Council warned Nana to stay clear of the contest and hold onto the *Ojomo* title (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). Viewed from the standpoint of equity, justice, and inclusion, one can say there is sense in this. The contention is, that someone has never moved from *Ojomo* to *Olugbo* in history does not deny Nana the right to become the *Olugbo*. As far as the custom and tradition of Ugbo is concerned, the basis for disqualification have been clearly spelt out and aspiring to become an *Olugbo* as an *Ojomo* was not and is not one of it.

4.2.3.3.2 Napoleon's Response to the Protests

Having looked at the various protest letters that greeted Napoleon's emergence, it is important to examine his response to these barrages of protests. In his letter to the District Officer dated 21st October, 1952 Napoleon called the District Officer's attention to a number of issues as follows; that members of the other segments of *Oyetayo*, *Ojogo*, *Atarioye* and *Agbedun* were present when he was appointed as *Olugbo*. That none of the contestants from the other segments had ever ruled Ugbo except his, and that it was incorrect to call them ruling houses but royal families. That the *Olugbo*ship is not conducted in rotation between the houses, and that as long as *Agbedun* – his house – was *Ojadele*'s first born and should reign forever as his ancestors, five of them have reigned in succession from father-to-son since the death of *Ojadele* (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

These were certainly claims other segments of the ruling house had long opposed to especially that which sued for succession on the basis of father-to-son. This claim of succession from father-to-son which the other claimants to the throne find offensive was said to have operated in Ugbo Kingdom at some point. According to *Osomolu*, "formerly the (*Ugbo*) operated the law of primogeniture that is father-to-son, not necessarily first child. When they started, it was the first child that was targeted". This corroborates Napoleon's claim that succession to the stool is by primogeniture. Again, that his ancestors had reigned in that manner consecutively – five times – suggests that there was an element of concurrence with his claim.

However, *Olori-Ebi* did not share this view advanced by Napoleon and *Osomolu*. According to him,

the person aspiring must come from the Ojadele Ruling House, like I told you earlier we do not have primogeniture, that is, from father-to-son succession in Ugbo, unlike in Benin where this is in practice ...we do not have the primogeniture system but the Mafimisebi wanted to institute it (IDI,Igbokoda, 11/10/2017).

This reiterates John Ayida's line of argument in his 1954 letter to the District Officer. In that letter, Ayida clearly noted that Napoleon was told by the Ilaje District Council not to attempt a shot at the throne as the title was not hereditary and that the election must and shall be made from the other segments of the Ojadele Ruling House (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). But if this was the case in Ugbo Kingdom, it begs the question why the Mafimisebi lineage reigned consecutively without interruption? Other respondents were able to provide answers to this. During the field interview, Elders in Erunna Community said:

In the past, succession to the stool of Olugbo was not from father-to-son but members of the family were scared. They never want to become King. Oyetayo was called to be king, he said no, even Atarioye. So many princes were asked to be king but they refused. They said it was too stressful...that was why the Mafimisebi enjoyed that privilege to have ruled up to that extent (FGD, Baale's house, 6/11/2017).

This is similar to the views expressed by a group of people in Ugbo who referred to themselves as "illiterate voice." When they wrote in protest to the District Officer on 10th April, 1954 and noted that, the Olugbo stool has been taken in rotation right from its inception. Furthermore, they pointed out that there was a man by name Abisa who was made the *Olugbo* of Ugbo and was there until he died and was succeeded by Ogundere, the father of *Mafimisebi I*, from whom his sons have "fraudulently and trickishly" monopolised the throne (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

There appears to be factual error here which needs to be pointed out. While their protest against the father-to-son succession method is consistent with the ones widely expressed from different quarters, there is something about the name Abisa. As indicated in Exhibit "B" above, Abisa was not an *Olugbo* at any point in Ugbo history.

Therefore, stating his name here as an *Olugbo* at some point in order to make a case for rotation of the *Olugbo* stool is inconsequential. Again, as outlined in Omoyele's (2011) research, the name Abisa was not captured in the list of *Olugbo* that reigned in Ugbo kingdom – 23 of them. What makes this Abisa case more suspicious is the fact that the Ogundere whom they claimed succeeded Abisa is a recent incident that could not have been forgotten if he truly reigned as the *Olugbo*. This is so because *Mafimisebi I* succeeded *Olugbo Ogundere* in 1915 (Omoyele, 2011), in that case, it is also easy for us to trace who Ogundere succeeded. In this regard, what field reports say which is in agreement with the literature earlier exposed is that, *Olugbo Ogundere* succeeded his father *Olugbo Ohun*, which is at variance with the claim advanced by this group in their letter.

Similarly, *Oba Olubo* also expressed the same view advanced by one of the elders in Erunna Community. According to him, “at that time, people ran away from becoming King. It was during *Mafimisebi II* that crisis of Oba started in Ugbo”. Obviously, at that time people had started seeing the benefit associated with the *Olugbo's* stool. This was exactly the thoughts the former Secretary Ilaje Local government expressed when he said “people have been aware of the fact that an Oba in any given society exercise a lot of power and influence. The stool that people were running away from is now what everyone wants” (IDI, Igbokoda, 21/10/17).

To buttress the view that Obaship was something people feared in those days which allowed the consecutive reign of Napoleon's ancestors as he pointed out in his letter to the District Officer, *Baale Idogun*, referred to the case of *Molutehin*. According to him;

Molutehin was informed that the installation ceremony they were planning for him was meant to kill him and *Molutehin* was already decorated in traditional regalia. That was how *Molutehin* escaped....His brother, from another wife, *Ohun* was crowned as King. When *Ohun* emerged as King, there was no other family that came around or thought of the throne anymore (IDI, Idogun-*la* 13/10/2017).

What this says is that, had *Molutehin* not absconded, *Ohun*, who was succeeded by *Ogundere*, and *Mafimisebi I* would not have been the *Olugbo*. The mere fact that *Molutehin* was chosen and was already prepared for installation before he absconded

suggests that succession to the *Olugbo* stool was not designed to be from father-to-son as Napoleon and his forbearers claimed.

After that letter of 1952, Napoleon wrote other letters to the District Officer stating his legitimate claim to the throne. In those letters dated 27th November, 1953 and December 5th, and 19th 1953, Napoleon raised other issues including the ones mentioned in his 1952 letter. He accused the Amapetu of Mahin of instigating contestants to the stool because he did not want an *Olugbo* to be installed in Ugbo kingdom except one that he the Amapetu could control. He called the attention of the District Officer to the Amapetu's schemings, stating that he once instigated Josiah Nana to contest against his father Ejagbomo and was instigating Nana against him. He also expressed reservation in the credibility of the District Council at Mahin where the Amapetu sat as the president and Nana the Vice. He observed that the Amapetu had boasted publicly in an *Ilaje* council session that Josiah Nana should not worry as he is supporting his (Nana) interest and will certainly win the *Olugbo* stool for him with the help of his mates, friends, money, and by any other means possible. Lastly, he reiterated for the umpteenth time that succession to the *Olugbo* stool was not conducted by rotation but through father-to-son, citing paragraph 54 of the *Ilaje* Intelligence Report of 1937 (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

A close analysis of Napoleon's letters indicated that two vital points were raised that ought to be expatiated. First is the issue of *Amapetu*. These allegations against him evoked elements of the supremacy tussle between *Amapetu* and *Mafimisebi I*, which led to the latter's deportation to Calabar, as expansively elaborated in the discussion of external influence on chieftaincy selection conflict. That *Amapetu*'s name still surfaced in the internally induced chieftaincy conflict showed how determined he was in making sure he installed an *Olugbo* of his choice in Ugbo Kingdom. This accounted for the intensity of the chieftaincy conflict as forces within the ruling house were at war with each other with the interference of external force which happened to be the *Amapetu*. Secondly, the issue of paragraph 54 of the *Ilaje* Intelligence Report needs to be thoroughly examined. What exactly is the content of that paragraph 54?

Since the *Mahin* and the *Ugbo* are not too far from each other, the paragraph talks about the method of succession to the *Amapetu* and the *Olugbo* stools. With respect to the *Olugbo* stool which is our concern, paragraph 54 says that "the Ugbo say that the

late Olugbo's best son is chosen to succeed; however, failing to meet with prescribed traditional requirement an adult son or a brother may succeed". It is instructive to note that while examining the basis on which the Supreme Court deposed Mafimisebi IV and called for another selection processes which produced *Oba Obateru Akinruntan*, the current *Olugbo*, the content of paragraph 54 was said to be false. Nonetheless, further examination of the paragraph shows that the Mafimisebi did not strictly adhere to it. The conditions for succession as provided are "best son" of the late *Olugbo*, "adult son", or "a brother". In their interpretation, they restricted it to the first son shutting the door at other members of the family. While expressing similar reservation on the attitude of the Mafimisebi *Baale Ajegunle* said,

The other families from the remaining three segments protested against the continued rule of the Mafimisebi family alone. Mafimisebi brothers too were not given a chance since he took over from his father Ogundere. For example if Adebanjo Mafimisebi IV was allowed to stay, after him, his son would have taken over and not even any other member of their lineage would be allowed to the throne again (IDI, Ajegunle, 20/10/2017).

The above clearly shows that the respondent aligned his stance with those who kicked against the father-to-son method of chieftaincy selection as advanced by the Mafimisebi. He then faulted the monopolisation of inheritance to the stool by the Mafimisebi and his descendants, shutting out other members of the same family. This was a gross violation of the paragraph 54 they held onto to perpetuate their reign.

4.2.3.3.3 Examining the Selection processes that Produced Napoleon

In the face of these protests and counter protests, and the response from the man at the centre of the conflict – Napoleon Orioye –the question to ask is: did the chieftaincy selection processes that produced Napoleon duly followed the laid down selection processes as spelt out by Ugbo custom and tradition? This question can only be answered convincingly if, there is a careful interrogation of what transpired, while also looking at the claims made against Napoleon's emergence as the *Olugbo*.

From further interrogation into the entire process that saw the emergence of Napoleon as *Olugbo*, it is clear that his emergence was due principally to two reasons: First,

because he was favoured by *Ifa*, and second, by compassion. The latter position was pointed out by *Ojomo* of Ugbo. According to him,

The selection favoured Orioye Napoleon Mafimisebi III because Ejagbomo the father of Napoleon went to council of Obas and did not last long before he died, so people were saying his son should succeed him (FGD, Olugbo's Palace, 21/10/2017).

To consider this as injustice to other descendants of Ojadele Ruling House would not be wrong. It is not consistent with native customary practices of Ugbo Kingdom. That such narrative was sold and subscribed to during the reign of *Mafimisebi I* and it succeeded in attracting more sympathy for Samuel Ejagbomo does not mean it should be maintained as the basis for selecting an *Olugbo*. If compassion influenced Napoleon's emergence, then there was sufficient reason for conflict, because others in the contest were not less the children of Ojadele in the contest for the *Olugbo*. If Napoleon deserved any show of compassion, they also deserved compassion on the ground that they were descendants of Ohun who also had right to the throne just like the Mafimisebi but were shut out.

Secondly, if *Ifa* Oracle truly determined Napoleon's emergence as claimed, without secular intervention, then there was no point for conflict in the first place. A critical examination reveals the contrary. As noted in the section that detailed chieftaincy selection in the pre-modern era, the *Oja* system and consultation of *Ifa* Oracle were used. Up until 1950 and even before then, elements of modernity began to encroach and adulterate the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. Some have argued that when Napoleon was selected as the *Olugbo*, *Ifa* Oracle was consulted. This argument was advanced by *Oba Olubo* when he remarked that, "it was *Ifa* that was used for the nomination and appointment of Oba Napoleon. The *Oja* then forwarded his name to the District Officer at Okitipupa" (KII, Olubo's Palace, 21/10/17).

The foregoing is in alignment with the decision of the *Ojoyes* (Chiefs). In the course of the chieftaincy conflict (1952 – 1956) after Napoleon emerged as the *Olugbo*, the *Ojoyes* to whom the matter was referred to *Ifa* validation and subsequently reverted to the Ilaje District Council as noted in their August 27th, 1953 letter that, "Ifa Oracle declared Napoleon Orioye Mafimisebi as the best person to be made the *Olugbo*, hence

their support for his candidature” (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). The condition under which *Ifa* selected Napoleon as related in the letter of the *Ojoyes* was further elaborated by *Oba Olubo*. According to him,

Ifa said the first person was not the King, the second could be the king but would die soon and the third person was king from heaven but if he emerged as king he would bring hardship to the people and his reign would not be friendly. The first, second and third persons are, Nana, Ayida, and Napoleon respectively (KII, Olubo’s Palace, 21/10/2017).

This clearly explained why Napoleon was favoured as the *Ojoye* indicated in their letter to the Ilaje District Council. Given the intensity of the conflict at that time and the likelihood that the *Ojoye* could have been bought over by the Mafimisebi, it is doubtful if the *Ifa*’s pronouncement as claimed by the *Ojoye* could be trusted. Could it be that *Ifa* Oracle was manipulated to reveal an outcome that will favour the Mafimisebi? This brings us to the allegation of bribery levelled against Napoleon among several other complaints the *Igbekun-Ugbo* raised in their letter to the District Officer in 1952. Whether the D.O. investigated the veracity of that allegation has not been ascertained.

While relying on *Ifa* Oracle to ascertain who became the next *Olugbo* was a surer way of selecting new *Oba* and if that process was not managed properly especially when the selection process was conflict ridden like the one that produced Napoleon, it is likely to trigger doubt which can degenerate into conflict. *Oba Olubo* aptly captured this in Napoleon’s case stating that at the demise of John Ayida, “the Ayida children later claimed that the Ugbo people used *Ifa* to kill their father, because two years after Napoleon emerged, Ayida died”. Although such conspiracy theory advanced by the children of the deceased could be dismissed. However, an assessment of their claims compels a reason to believe that their father had few well wishers. For instance, *Oba Olubo* asked this salient question: “*Truly, how did they know if the person they said would die soon emerge as a King*”?. Supposing this question was put before the *Ojoye* who consulted *Ifa* Oracle and they fail to respond to it convincingly, it would leave room for doubt in the supposed decision of *Ifa* Oracle. In fact, even among titled men, there is this reservation being expressed concerning the authenticity of the outcome of

Ifa Oracle. This was exactly *Olori-Ebi*'s position when he made the following submission;

In those days like I told you, people consult *Ifa* in the selection process but the system of *Ifa*, I do not know, to me it has been manipulated and I do not think people respect *Ifa* (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/2017).

Again, there is a sense in which the *Ojoye* can be absolved of any conspiracy if the events as unfolded are carefully interrogated. This is with respect to the “unfriendly” reign of Napoleon, which *Ifa* Oracle said, “the third person was king from heaven but if he emerged as king he will bring hardship...” as cited above. *Oba Olubo* went on to say that “sincerely when Napoleon emerged, he was tough and people really suffered during his reign”. This lends credence to what the *Igbekun-Ugbo* people said about Napoleon being a “bad citizen” and a “wicked man.”

Again, another evidence that suggest Napoleon emerged in line with the prescribed chieftaincy selection processes were the letters written by the Ugbo Sectional Council addressed to the President and members of the Ilaje District Council at Mahin. In the two letters dated 24th January, 1953 and 19th April of the same year, a decision was said to have been arrived at by the representatives of the Ruling Houses who all presented Napoleon as the new *Olugbo* (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). What this says therefore is that, all four Ruling Houses were unanimous in the choice of Napoleon.

But if all the segments of the Ruling House unanimously agreed with Napoleon's candidacy as presented by the Ugbo Sectional Council which Napoleon also kept emphasising as evident in his letters to the District Officer, why then was the series of protests against his emergence as the *Olugbo*? If the protest was just coming from one person it would have been understood. But it was one protest too many that could not just be ignored. Undoubtedly, there is reason to believe that the claim that all segments of the Ruling House accepted Napoleon was false. This is contained in a letter written on 22nd January, 1954 by other segments of the Ruling House who felt cheated in the chieftaincy selection processes to The Board of Enquiry into the *Olugbo* Chieftaincy Dispute. In that letter, they indicated their support for John Ayida to occupy the vacant *Olugbo* stool and emphatically noted that succession to the *Olugbo* stool was not

hereditary “on any side” (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). This view as asserted by segments of the Ruling House, questions the purported claim of acceptance.

Those behind the letter were Jonathan Ibojo for Oliha Ruling House, Jonah Yinbo for Molutehin Ruling House, and William Itatomore for Oyetayo Ruling House. While the letter created room for doubting the claim that all segments of the Ruling House unanimously endorsed Napoleon’s candidacy, the name “Jonathan Ibojo” should be questioned. This was the same man Jonathan Mekuleyi once said had no link with Ugbo when he claimed right to the Olugbo throne by virtue of his grandfather, *Oyo*, signing the 1884 Treaty with the British; and so, he could as well lay claim to the throne.

While Ibojo’s claim was addressed by Napoleon’s response as stated above, his name reappearing here in support of John Ayida says a lot. It suggests that since his claim to the throne against the Mafimisebi was dismissed, teaming up with others to support Ayida who has a more legitimate claim –to the throne especially with the argument that Nana’s candidacy was not feasible because of the *Ojomo* title –appeared to be more realistic to him. Moreso, the protesters had identified the Mafimisebi as common enemy. Yet, to show that Napoleon’s claim of being unanimously accepted by other segments of the Ruling House was false, the list of those connected to the chieftaincy dispute kept increasing as the dispute lingered on. The letter written on the 25th March, 1953 by the same Ugbo Sectional Council which later claimed that Napoleon was produced by the four segments of the Ruling House in another letter to the President and Members of Ilaje District Council, Mahin, in April, 1953 contained the following names connected to the chieftaincy dispute: Ikorigho descendant of Eyinmoghan, William Itatomore who later pulled his support behind John Ayida, and Ebiesuwa Awoye descendant of Molutehin (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). This was aside Josiah Nana. What this says most clearly is that, everything was right with Napoleon’s claim to the throne but the issue of father-to-son succession, which was the bone of contention.

While at the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission, Napoleon made a move which could be construed as conciliatory even though it did not materialise. As indicated in Exhibit “B”- proceeding of Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission, Napoleon expressed his willingness to resolve the hereditary method of selecting an *Olugbo* by

advancing the idea of doing away with the much contested father-to-son system of selection in the interest of peace among members of the Ruling House. He therefore came up with the idea of creating two Ruling Houses which must come from descendants of *Agbedun/Ojogo* and *Oyetayo/Atarioye* ruling houses. As it turned out, the Board of Enquiry felt this idea was not tenable. It argued that it was not affected by the pressure and threats Napoleon was subjected to, which explained why he yielded by advancing this request. It therefore maintained that the Ojadele Ruling House still remains the one and only Ruling House, hence, rejecting Napoleon's proposal. The proceeding(s) of the Board of Enquiry is germane to the decision of the appellate Courts when the matter was appealed by both the Ehuwa and Adebanjo.

It is also important to mention that at the height of the protests, the chieftaincy conflict degenerated to an extent where Napoleon alleged threat to his life. This was stated in his letter to the District Officer of October 9th, 1953, wherein he noted that there was a conspiracy against his installation as the next *Olugbo*, a plot to incriminate him in the palace, another rape plot by his detractors who intended to use one of their daughters to implicate him, and another plot to set a house in the palace ablaze where he lives or someone to shoot him; hence the need for the District Officer to provide him with maximum protection (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). That these allegations were not substantiated as alleged and there was no shred of evidence suggesting the protection requested by Napoleon was provided clearly shows that he was only crying wolf where there was none in order to gain sympathy and be installed as the next *Olugbo*.

4.2.4 Interfacing Modernity with Chieftaincy Selection Processes

In African historiography, it is a known fact that the coming together of Western and African Civilisations saw the former impacting negatively on the latter. This view finds full expression in Peter Ekeh's 1980 seminal work entitled *Colonialism and Social Structure*. Ekeh argues that colonialism brought about three social formations namely, the transformation of indigenous institutions, migration of social structures from the metropole, and emergent social structures. These social formations were processes of modernisation which interfaced and altered Africa's tradition thereby generated conflict in the chieftaincy institution. He further contended that, the transformation of indigenous institutions reduced the status of the Kings from "Majesty" to "Highness" and upgraded minor chiefs to the same status. This ridiculed the kings before the

chiefs. In same vein, Albert (2008) identifies how colonialism escalates chieftaincy conflict through politicisation and manipulation of the traditional process.

The forgoing broadened the understanding on how the modernisation of chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom generated conflict. This began with external intrusion into the selection processes, as accurately captured by *Olori-Ebi*. According to him, “colonialism affected us in so many ways, especially when Amapetu was imposed on us by the colonial government. He (Amapetu) subjected everyone to himself using colonial power”. The reference point was during the chieftaincy conflict where the creation of the Ilaje District and the making of the Amapetu the Native Authority by the colonial Government brought the *Olugbo* and his Kingdom under the suzerainty of Amapetu of Mahin. The ratification of this move by the colonial Government expansively elaborated upon, which impacted negatively on the independence of the Ugbo Kingdom. The *Amapetu* kept interfering in *Ugbo’s* affairs and wanted to install an *Olugbo* of his choice that would be more like a stooge to him. As it later turned out, this constituted Napoleon’s series of complaints against the Amapetu in his letters to the District Officer.

On the political plane, such coercive merging of independent people under different Kingdoms by the British as it was the case with *Mahin* and *Ugbo* Kingdoms under a single authority of *Amapetu* was also evident in state formation exercise by the Europeans in Africa, which started after the Berlin Conference of 1885. Boahen’s study argued that the states that were created by the Europeans in Africa were artificial because their “*boundaries cut-across pre-existing ethnic groups, states and kingdoms and this has caused widespread social disruption and displacement*” (Boahen, 2000:786). This is all too real in contemporary Africa and Nigeria in particular where politics of identity has thrived and denied the attainment of any meaningful development. This line of argument is in consonance with the theories of modernity and relative deprivation adopted in this study. It captured the alteration of pre-colonial structures and deprivation of people’s right of choice. This apparently demonstrated the ills of western intrusion on the affairs of the colonised territories.

With respect to the modernisation of the chieftaincy selection processes, it has also been noted how modernity brought about a shift from the traditional method of selecting an *Olugbo* using the *Oja* system and consultation with *Ifa* Oracle to another

method that involved the modern state structures. This started with the involvement of the District Officer in the chieftaincy selection processes in the colonial Nigeria who authenticated the processes of the newly selected *Olugbo* and the use of modern institutions such as the Ilaje District Council, Board of Enquiry and the Federal Council, to the Report of the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission which became the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration.

The latter entirely altered the chieftaincy selection processes as it merged the sixteen existing quarters and reduced it to six, who are now the kingmakers. As earlier argued, what this has done was to make the chieftaincy selection processes exclusive as against the inclusive one– the *Oja* system that was in practice before the advent of modernity. Moreover, it is important to note that bringing the modern state into the chieftaincy selection processes has provided basis for serious politicking as the Governor tends to be interested in who becomes an *Oba* in order to serve political interest (Kudehinbu, 2013).

While some have reviled the role of modern structures in chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom, others have expressed optimism. In this connection, the Asogbon of Ugbo kingdom optimistically opined that;

...modernity plays significant role in chieftaincy matters. In the selection processes, modern structures of conflict management such as the Court and judicial enquiry have resolved conflicts considerably to the benefit of everybody....In those days, if manipulation occurred, you hardly do anything, but now since modernity has come, the government is involved and aggrieved party can go to court (FGD, Olugbo's palace, 21/10/2017).

To some extent, the above respondent's line of argument can be contested. While it is true that the Court has helped in bringing order in the chieftaincy selection processes, having upheld the rotation method which corresponds with the customary law and tradition of Ugbo people as against the father to son method of succession, the same cannot be said of the intervention of the Local Government Secretary (an executive arm of government) as he averred. If anything, the Local Government was at the centre of fanning the ember of the conflict drawing from Baba Lene's correspondence with

the Secretary. The Secretary was accused of being involved in the manipulation of the chieftaincy selection which produced *Oba* Adebanjo Mafimisebi who was later deposed by the judgement of Supreme Court in 2007. Besides, in the process of trial, the Secretary was not absolved of any blame. On the basis of this, the role of the Local Government in resolving chieftaincy conflict cannot be applauded the same way with that of the Court.

In addition, there is a sense in which we can align the Asogbon's view of the beneficial role of modernity in the chieftaincy selection processes with the views of those who argued that colonialism is beneficial to Africa. Among those who advanced this Eurocentric narrative are scholars like Gann, Perham, P. C. Lloyd and Duignan. As Boahen (2000) puts it, these scholars averred that the impact of colonialism was on balance either a blessing or at worst not harmful for Africa.

Obviously, such narrative stems from the view that colonialism brought about civilization to a region of the world that was hitherto "uncivilized." This is the kind of argument that readily offends Afrocentric scholars like Samir Amin, Amilcar Cabral, Claude Ake to mention a few, whose view of colonialism was everything not beneficial to Africa. In Ugbu Kingdom, as earlier noted, colonialism created chaos by tampering with the independence of Ugbu people which brought them under the *Amapetu* of Mahin. The Europeans caused the *Amapetu* to relinquish all the rights which concerned him under Article III of the 1885 Treaty in favour of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain. Viewing this from the standpoint of the economy, it could be easily gleaned that the Europeans reached this agreement in order to have unfettered access to the territory including her resources which were the main focus of Europe's colonisation of Africa. In the pursuit of this economic interest, interfering with the existing traditional and political order became inevitable. In Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom, modernity deeply interfered in chieftaincy selection processes in both negative and positive ways. As noted earlier, the appointment of *Amapetu* of Mahin as the head of Ilaje Native Authority put him in vantage position to intervene in Olugbo chieftaincy selection processes, which generated lot of crises. This does not suggest that modernity does not have its own gains. It has an inbuilt mechanism of resolving the conflict it generates. That is what a respondent meant when he averred that;

Though, modernity created a lot of problems for us in Ugbo, when the European elevated Amapetu over Olugbo. The same modernity helped us to resolve our chieftaincy selection crisis which has lingered on since 1952. This started with the installation of Oba Napoleon Orioye Mafimisebi in 1952 to the dethronement of Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi in 2007, when the Supreme Court ruled against the progenitor system and ordered for a new chieftaincy selection process” (IDI, Idiogba, 25/10/17).

The above, brings to bear the theory of modernity which refers to the rationalising of the superiority of modern structures over pristine chieftaincy institution in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom.

4.3 Methods of Revolving Conflict in the Chieftaincy Selection Processes

This section draws attention to various resolution approaches deployed at different times by appropriate authorities to address the several conflicts that characterised the Ugbo chieftaincy selection processes. These approaches are discussed under various themes below.

4.3.1 Mechanism Adopted in Settling Selection Conflict during Napoleon Mafimisebi

As the chieftaincy conflict ensued, the parties involved resorted to using modern system of adjudication to settle their differences. This is in alignment with the theory of modernity. This is not to suggest that the traditional aspect was entirely jettisoned, especially the *Ifa* Oracle. From documented evidence, it has been shown that when the chieftaincy conflict started after Napoleon Mafimisebi indicated interest and it became clear that he would be selected, the colonial authority did not envisage it would escalate to the extent it did. This is evident in the Acting Resident’s letter of 13th September, 1952 to a section of the contenders who wanted the chieftaincy dispute to be referred to the Native Authority. In the said letter, the Acting Resident said the matter concerning succession to the title of the *Olugbo* should only be referred to the Native Authority as last resort. He added that the people themselves must learn to settle their chieftaincy disputes themselves (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

The content of the letter indicated that in spite of its interference in customary matters such as local administration which concerns the chieftaincy institution, the colonial government saw the necessity in adopting local mechanism of adjudication in resolving

chieftaincy conflicts in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. The Acting Resident's view as expressed above is in tandem with that of the District officer; who indicated in his letter to the Resident of Ondo Province on 26th August, 1952 that the petitioners should be counselled to settle their dispute themselves and not to think that there would be any advantage in placing the matter before the Ilaje Council or the Federal Council (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). This was after he received petitions addressed to him by five Ugbo Chiefs, all of which indicated the petitioners favoured Napoleon to succeed his father as the next Olugbo,

Given the extent of meddling in chieftaincy affairs by the colonial government which forcefully brought two independent kingdoms together and made one an overlord over the other as seen in the case of *Amapetu* and *Olugbo* Mafimisebi I, it is safe to say that had the imperial government adopted this method in resolving chieftaincy disputes the sad incident which led to Mafimisebi's death would not have occurred. It is true that when faced with conflict the role of a mediator can help in getting the conflicting parties reach a common ground that will be mutually beneficial to them. Arguably, this can only apply to a context where the mediator is neutral and impartial, which of course was not the case in the *Amapetu*/Mafimisebi I imbroglio.

After those letters by the Acting Resident and the District Officer, the chieftaincy conflict kept deteriorating. This was as a result of two things: the *Amapetu*'s factor which was a creation of the colonial administration and the much contested father-to-son method of succession advanced by Napoleon Mafimisebi III which has been expansively elaborated upon. Nonetheless, it is apt to reassess the *Amapetu* factor *vis-a-vis* the contending issues raised by Napoleon Mafimisebi which is believed to have accounted for transferring the chieftaincy dispute to the Okitipupa Federal Council.

Going by available facts, it was clear *ab initio* that Napoleon Mafimisebi was never comfortable with resolving the chieftaincy dispute at the Native Council for explicable reasons. As stated in his letters of 27th November, 1953 (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II), 5th December, and 19th December of the same year (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.I) to the District Officer, he expressed his reservation of obtaining justice at the Native Council where the *Amapetu* presided as the President and Josiah Nana as Vice President. He expressed his lack of confidence in the work of the Board of Enquiry and on how *Amapetu* disapproved of their findings

and referred the chieftaincy conflict to Ugbo Elders to consult *Ifa* Oracle, the outcome of which the *Amapetu* unilaterally turned down having discovered that the Oracles preferred his (Mafimisebi's) candidature. According to him, the *Amapetu* threatened to arrest the Elders because they announced that the *Ifa* Oracle chose him.

He added that the *Amapetu* had openly boasted during the Ilaje council session saying, Josiah Nana should not worry as he is supporting Nana's interest and will certainly win the *Olugbo* stool for him with the help of his mates, friends, money, and by any other means possible. Since bribery, corruption and other forms of injustice have made securing justice impossible at the Native Council, Napoleon pleaded with the District Officer to transfer the chieftaincy dispute to a place where such will not hold sway and justice will be guaranteed (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

It is possible that it was as a result of this and other protests that the matter was later transferred to Okitipupa Federal Council. It is important to note that the decision to transfer the chieftaincy dispute to the Federal Council was in line with paragraph 4(b) of the machinery for settling chieftaincy disputes which provides as follows:

Where there is a dispute in the appointment of an Oba or Oloja the matter should be referred to the Federal Council of Okitipupa Native Authorities which shall set up a committee out of its members to recommend and report; but such report should be forwarded through Okitipupa Federal Council, the District Officer to the Resident (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

The foregoing was extracted from a letter written by the District Officer on 24th May, 1954 (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). The above cited paragraph further reiterates this study's theory of modernity. As can be seen here, in spite of the call to resolve the chieftaincy conflict by relying on indigenous methods as the Acting Resident and District Officer once noted, it was practically impossible because the colonial situation had compromised the possibility of achieving settlement. Undoubtedly, Napoleon's determination in holding on tenaciously to the father-to-son method of succession did not help the situation. Although there is an attempt at excoriating Western interference in the chieftaincy dispute, there is also a sense in which Western mechanism of resolving conflict was able to restore order after a

protracted chieftaincy conflict between Adebanjo Mafimisebi IV and other segments of the ruling house that is *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye*.

The Federal Council's intervention in 1952-1956 chieftaincy dispute turned out to be a game-changer. In a letter written by the President of the Okitipupa Federal Native Authority dated 12th April, 1954 to the District Officer, he noted that when the matter was tabled before the Federal Council for deliberation, the recommendations of the Ilaje District Council were carefully examined, after which it was rejected and a 12-man committee was empanelled with the following terms of reference. First, enquire into the chieftaincy dispute afresh, and second, to submit findings and recommendations to the Council at its next meeting (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

Looking at the terms of reference, one would be inclined to conclude that it was done in such a way that it could help the Committee in ascertaining all the issues that were raised in the protest letters, Napoleon's response and the recommendations of the Ilaje District Council. Paragraph 2 of the letter stated that the report of the 12 man Committee which was submitted to the Council was carefully studied and unanimously adopted without dissension from Ikale, Ijaw Apoi, Bini Confederation, and Arogbo Councillors.

Paragraph 3 of the letter focused on the ignoble role of the Amapetu in the Council meeting. The President said that the Mahin section of the Counsellors from Ilaje tried to create challenges by attempting to block the Council from arriving at a decision on the chieftaincy conflict but did not succeed. He went on to say, regrettably, that the Amapetu of Mahin openly led this group, hence the Council's decision to remove him from the Chair and appointed the Abodi of Ikale to preside over the Council's acts when discussing the Olugbo dispute. Incidentally, the Amapetu's reason for opposing was based on the apprehension that the recommended candidate would never submit to him. In the paragraph, the President submitted that Mr Napoleon Mafimisebi is the unanimous choice of the Council as the Olugbo in line with the recommendation of the 12- man Committee with the exception of the Amapetu of Mahin and urged the government to recognize him (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). This was how Napoleon became the *Olugbo*.

The decision of Okitipupa Federal Council that confirmed Napoleon *Mafimisebi III* as the *Olugbo* of Ugbo reaffirmed all the allegations levelled against the *Amapetu* of Mahin. This then means that had the machinery for settling chieftaincy dispute not provided for the intervention of the Federal Council in the chieftaincy conflict, the *Amapetu* would have had his way and anointed his preferred candidate which obviously was Josiah Nana. Such an outcome would have ended the principle of father-to-son inheritance instituted by the Mafimisebi, but would have spelt doom for Ugbo Kingdom because the influence of the *Amapetu* of Mahin over Ugbo would have remained undisputed.

What the above narration clearly says is that Napoleon Mafimisebi's victory was validated by the confirmation of his candidacy by the Okitipupa Federal Council. This means that, it was the Western method of conflict resolution that was adopted in settling the chieftaincy conflict. Therefore, it queries a respondent's submission that, "during the chieftaincy dispute involving Napoleon and others, nobody went to court". Resorting to the Native and Federal Councils respectively as channels of settling chieftaincy conflict as seen in the Napoleon chieftaincy conflict and that of Samuel Ejagbomo suggests that using a courtlike system in settling chieftaincy dispute in Ugbo Kingdom had been in place before Adebajo's chieftaincy dispute in 1984 which led to his deposition by the Supreme Court of Nigeria in 2007.

Since there is a laid down procedure for selecting an *Olugbo* in Ugbo Kingdom, the contention is given the decision of the Okitipupa Federal Council which eventually validated Napoleon's *Olugboship*, was the decision in line with the native custom of selecting an *Olugbo* in Ugbo Kingdom? Having passed the other criteria, it has been documented – as indicated above – that Napoleon Mafimisebi was presented by Ugbo chiefs as the preferred candidate and *Ifa* Oracle was consulted in line with the tradition. *Oba Olubo* also affirmed *Ifa* consultation when he remarked that "Napoleon, Nana Ojomo, and Ayida contested and they consulted *Ifa* for the selection process. The head of those who consulted the *Ifa* was Baba Amoye from Ilepete, Sokiso family". The outcome of the consultation favoured Napoleon, although it was still contested by the other contestants.

The contention was still on succession principle of father-to-son which the Mafimisebi held on to tenaciously. As it were, the Federal Council did not take this into

consideration in reaching its decision, which was why a respondent observed that “the Exhibit J Series was set aside during the selection processes that produced Mafimisebi III as the Olugbo”. Looking at respondents line of argument, it is not out of place to say that the decision of the Okitipupa Federal Council which upheld Napoleon Mafimisebi’s candidacy was not in line with the native custom and tradition of the Ugbo people that is rooted in the *Ebi* system; a system that constitutes the source of legitimacy in social organisation in Yoruba culture.

It is important to note that while the outcome of the Okitipupa Federal Council favoured Napoleon, it did not imply that it was accepted by others who opposed his emergence in the contest like Josiah Nana. On April 13th and 17th 1954, after the Okitipupa Federal Council reached its decision on the Chieftaincy dispute which favoured Napoleon Mafimisebi, Mr. J. A. Majeyinbaje wrote to the District Officer protesting the decision of the Federal Council. He termed it “malicious, partial, unconstitutional, and unlawful” and called on the District Officer to revisit the decision in order not to avert the institution of a “precedent of partiality and injustice in the chieftaincy dispute of the Division” (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). Incidentally, this was exactly what played out after Napoleon’s death when his son, Adebanjo, insisted on father-to-son method of succession to the *Olugbo* throne which opened another chapter of protracted chieftaincy conflict.

While the protest that greeted the validation of Napoleon Mafimisebi’s *Olugboship* was valid, for those who opposed the succession by primogeniture, and rightly so, it goes without saying that the intervention of the Okitipupa Federal Council was a watershed in the Napoleon’s Mafimisebi’s chieftaincy conflict because it brought an end to *Amapetu*’s dominion of Ugbo. This is so because nothing about the *Amapetu* interference in the chieftaincy affairs of Ugbo was heard of after the decision of the Federal Council. Given this development, one can argue that it was the colonialists that created *Amapetu* who lorded over the Ugbo people; it was the same people that became his Achilles heels.

4.3.2 Selection Conflict during Adebanjo Mafimisebi IV (1982-2007)

Essentially, the solution to the chieftaincy dispute from Mafimisebi II to III had been impermanent. It only solved the problem at the time of the conflict, and then failed to

solve it whenever the dispute occurred again. This explained why another protracted chieftaincy conflict occurred when Napoleon Mafimisebi died.

Upon Napoleon's death, the need arose for the *Olugbo* vacancy to be filled. At this point, changes had occurred in the chieftaincy selection processes which were as a result of the recommendations of the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission. This had been elaborated on while discussing chieftaincy selection processes in the modern era. In the case of Adebajo Akingbade, Mafimisebi IV, whose emergence was vehemently protested in 1984, there was a public notice after his father's death by the Secretary of Local Government, announcing the vacancy and calling on the Ojadele Ruling House to provide candidate(s) to fill the vacancy, having met the requirements according to customary law.

It is important to note here that the processes of chieftaincy selection after the death of Napoleon Orioye began with calling on the *Olori-Ebi* – head of the ruling house– to convey a meeting of the ruling house to select candidate(s) to be presented to the kingmakers to fill the stool of *Olugbo*. This is after the public announcement by the government. That is why respondents said “it is the *Olori-Ebi* that would preside over their meeting. The *Olori-Ebi* would ask who is interested in the throne”. In Adebajo Akingbade's era, the chieftaincy conflict started right from the selection process as seen in the correspondence between the Secretary to the Local Government and the *Olori-Ebi*. The *Olori-Ebi* was Reverend Apostle E. L. Ogunfeyimi – also known as Baba Lene – who was the leader of the Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) Church.

Sequel to the public notice, the Secretary to the Local Government wrote the *Olori-Ebi* on the 31st May, 1984, asking him to forward the names of the nominated candidates to the Kingmakers and copy him as well. Paragraph 2 of the letter says “you will let them know that, the election of the new *Olugbo* shall take place in the presence of the Secretary to the Ilaje/Ese-Odo Local Government and the head of the Ruling House (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1984:10). In his reply on 1st June, 1984 the *Olori-Ebi* forwarded the following names:

Prince Adebajo Akingbade Mafimisebi

Prince M. E. Ehuwa

Prince E. B. Okiki

Prince Ephran Omotoye

Prince Albert B. Ebigbemi

Prince Misrael Ogunfeyimi, (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1984:13)

This implied that there were six contestants representing the four segments of the *Ojadele* Ruling House namely, *Agbedun*, *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo*, and *Atarioye*. Responses from field interviews indicated they were the contenders to the *Olugbo* throne. However, there was no mention of Prince Misrael Ogunfeyimi as indicated in *Olori-Ebi's* letter. It was after *Olori-Ebi's* letter that another chapter was opened for a protracted chieftaincy conflict which began with wrong timing of the meeting between the *Olori-Ebi* and the Ruling House and the Secretary of the Local Government. In another correspondence dated 1st June, 1984, the kingmakers wrote the *Olori-Ebi*, inviting him to the kingmakers meeting that was to take place on Sunday, June 3 of same year for the purpose of screening interested candidates and copied the Secretary (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1984:14). Looking at the first letter and the reply from the *Olori-Ebi*, it is obvious that the reply came the same day, which was 1st June, 1984.

In his reply, the *Olori-Ebi* stated in his letter dated 2nd June, 1984 that the appointed date for the meeting to select a candidate suitable to fill the vacant *Olugbo* stool was not convenient, hence his request for a convenient time within the five working days of the week in the interest of fair play and honesty in order not to give vent to public suspicion and criticism in the selection process (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1984:15). The appointed date clashed with the *Olori-Ebi's* religious commitments as leader of the C&S Church, hence his letter. Apparently, the *Olori-Ebi's* objection to the proposed date, which was a Sunday, was because of his religious commitment as the leader of the C&S Church. Carefully reading through *Olori-Ebi's* letter, there is reason to believe that he suspected something fishy in the offing in the chieftaincy selection processes, which was why he sent a note of warning. But was his warning taken seriously? The Secretary's letter says it all.

In his reply to the *Olori-Ebi* on 3rd of June, 1984, the Secretary made it clear that the meeting cannot hold on Sunday 3/6/1984 because Sunday is a free day. As such I have fixed Monday 4th June, 1984 at 10.00a.m prompt (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1984:16). Looking at the date this letter was written, 3rd June, 1984, which was on Sunday, it provides sufficient reason to believe that *Olori-Ebi's* suspicion which he

expressed in his letter to the kingmakers, dated 2nd of June, 1984 was not out of place. This was exactly his view when he wrote the Secretary on June 3rd, noting that the letter according to the date was written on the 3rd, which was Sunday, a free day at which the Secretary was not expected to be at work in the office. He also raised other serious issues which include: the letter was written on an ordinary memo paper which could be written by anybody; and that the signature on the letter was not the Secretary (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1984:17).

There was no evidence indicating that the Secretary responded to the issues raised by the *Olori-Ebi* convincingly. This further suggested that the suspicious moves allegedly noticed by Olori-Ebi in the selection processes, could actually be true. Nothing confirmed this more accurately than the letter written by the kingmakers on the 4th June, 1984 where they stated:

we are informed that Ugbo tradition does not recognize any day in the week during which traditional business cannot be conducted. We will like you to note that it is the responsibility of the kingmakers to fix any day for their meetings (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1984:21).

Although, it may be true that Ugbo tradition does not recognise any day of the week that traditional business cannot be transacted, but in the modern world which we live in today where traditional practices have to, at some point, bow to Western ways of doing things, it becomes necessary for tradition to recognise days that traditional functions cannot be performed. For instance, the Secretary to the Local Government, who is a public servant working in a modern administrative structure, is not expected to be in the office on a Sunday sending correspondence even if the kingmakers are allowed to be at their duty post discharging their responsibilities as they claimed. The tone of the letter makes it difficult to controvert that the kingmakers did not connive with the Secretary to select a candidate of their choice as the next *Olugbo*.

From documented evidence, it appeared the meeting did not hold on 4th June, 1984 as indicated in the letter of the kingmakers to the Secretary. In the letter, dated 8th June, 1984, the kingmakers alluded to the fact that they convened the meeting on 7th June, 1984, with the Secretary and the *Olori-Ebi* in attendance. Furthermore, they referred to section F subsection (f) of the Morgan Chieftaincy Report as their guiding principle,

hence their unanimous vote for Prince Adebajo Akingbade Mafimisebi as the new Olugbo of Ugbo (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1984:33-34). However, a critical examination of the above allusion indicated that other contestants to the throne from other segments of the Ruling House— *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye* were not present when the selection was conducted. This eventually breed discontentment. However, judging from the conflict that emanated from the outcome of the selection process, it is doubtful that the kingmakers dutifully followed the recommendations of the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission as they claimed. This was noted by elders from Ikorigho community during a focus group discussion. They averred that “Adebajo Mafimisebi had influenced the kingmakers to make him the Olugbo in 1984”. The outcome of the correspondence between the *Olori-Ebi* and the kingmakers who were not cooperating with him but with the Secretary affirmed this line of thought by the Elders. Again, that they were unanimous in their decision without a dissension is curious. On his part, the Head of C&S Church Ugbonla submitted that the selection process was manipulated. According to him:

when an Oba dies, the *Olori-Ebi* and the kingmakers will inform the Local Government and the same process is followed for the selection of the new Oba, but Adebajo’s installation did not follow this process. It was manipulated (IDI, Ugbonla, 11/11/2017).

To some extent, one can say the view expressed in the first sentence above was observed in the selection process, with some breaches though. But as he rightly pointed out, the process was manipulated to favour Adebajo. This was exactly what the *Olori-Ebi* warned against in his correspondence to the Secretary and the Kingmakers when he observed undue interference. Incidentally, *Oba Olubo* confirmed the manipulation of the selection processes when he posited that;

He (Baba Lene) did not say he wanted to become the *Olugbo*. He supported a candidate, but we manipulated the system and that was why he approached the court. Even at the lower court we influenced the ruling to favour our preferred candidate, Adebajo Mafimisebi. (KII, Olubo’s place, 21/10/17).

In a similar vein, the Abojutoro of Ugbo's remark sheds more light on the controversial circumstance that shrouded the selection of Adebanjo. According to him,

Baba Lene, the *Olori-Ebi* of Ojadele family said the Ogundere family should bring a nominee for the stool but we told him that we were not interested in the stool again. We told him to go and bring a nominee. Baba accepted and brought Ehuwa. We rejected his nomination because Ehuwa was rude to the throne some years back (IDI, Ode-Ugbo, 17/12/17).

There was an element of truth in Abojutoro's submission as captured above, but there was also the need to set the record straight based on documented evidence. Abojutoro presented the matter as though Prince Ehuwa was singlehandedly picked by Baba Lene. As findings from the field showed, this was not exactly the case. According to respondents, the choice of Prince Ehuwa was the decision of the four segments of Ruling House, reached in a meeting presided over by Baba Lene, on the 22nd day of May, 1984. After the meeting, Lene addressed the house as follows:

We have this day reached the long desired goal by this unanimous and constructive resolution which will help cure the ills of sentiment, agitations and unnecessary rivalry among the family.... We shall now channel this compromising resolution through the legitimate process to the appropriate Government Quarters for advice and ratification (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1984:10).

The "unanimous constructive resolution" referred to here is the acceptance of Prince M. E. Ehuwa as the choice of the Ojadele Ruling House. In the spirit of inclusiveness, the choice of Ehuwa was a wise one since he comes from the Oyetayo segment. The implication of this is the rotation of the throne from the *Agbedun/Ojogo* segment to *Oyetayo/Atarioye*. This was exactly the view expressed by a respondent who said "*instead of Adebanjo Mafimisebi to take over, it should go to other segments which is Oyetayo/Atarioye*". In a similar vein, the head of C&S Church in an IDI averred that "*when Adebanjo came to meet Baba Lene on this matter, he was told the stool must go to other segments, but Adebanjo insisted because he enjoyed support from some rich men in Ugbo*". The fact that Adebanjo ended up in Court against the family's decision

clearly showed that he was not part of the meeting that adopted Prince Ehuwa. Again, for Ojadele family to have expressed similar thought with Baba Lene as reflected in their decision, suggested that the family was determined to put an end to the lingering chieftaincy conflict that has been a permanent feature of the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom. Incidentally, it appeared that it did not take into cognizance what the aggrieved side had against the family's decision which they used when it mattered most.

Abojutoro's submission as a key player in the selection of Adebajo clearly showed that Ehuwa was a strong contender in the race to the Olugbo stool, given the support of Baba Lene who enjoyed the respect of the Ojadele as a spiritual leader and the head of the family. Although Baba Lene's decision for which he was able to get the support of members of the ruling family was aimed at ensuring peace in the chieftaincy selection processes in the spirit of "rotation" as against the principle of father-to-son which had been instituted by Mafimisebi section of the ruling house. Based on the allegation of rudeness, it can be argued that, were it not for Ehuwa's ignoble behaviour in the past, it is possible that Adebajo would not have emerged as the Olugbo with Ehuwa in the contest. From Abojutoro's remark, it is also possible that Ehuwa's "rudeness" to the throne was the reason the kingmakers teamed up against him. What then was the nature of Ehuwa's offence against the throne?. *Abojutoro* gave an insight into this during an in depth interview session when he stated that;

Ehuwa was in charge of the council at Atijere and he ordered Oba Napoleon Mafimisebi to tie a cow to his waist and bring it to Atijere or the council would construct a fishing boat and take Oba Napoleon to Oghoye to start fishing. The community pleaded but Ehuwa insisted until there was a change in government and that was why Ehuwa could not implement his order (IDI, Ode-Ugbo, 17/12/17).

Considering how *Olugbo* is revered and regarded as "a living ancestor" among Ugbo people, Ehuwa's behaviour was considered morally reprehensible and abomination. This no doubt, was used against him when he aspired to become the *Olugbo*. His rudeness, as Abojutoro puts it made the kingmakers susceptible to manipulation. Again, from Abojutoro's remark, it could be argued that, Baba Lene gave the

kingmakers reason to manipulate his choice, having noted Ehuwa for disparaging the throne. The punishment meted out to him was to deny him the opportunity to become candidate for the stool. While commenting on this, a respondent remarked that, “Baba Lene turned down the request to present another candidate when he insisted on the choice of Ehuwa as a viable candidate to the throne”. This signalled a protracted legal tussle that engulfed the selection processes. Findings from the field indicated that the failure to put an end to the hegemonic control of Olugbo’s throne by Mafimisebi during the selection process of Adebajo accounted for the unabated chieftaincy selection conflict in Ugbo kingdom, which lasted for 23 years. Considering the fact that this conflict occurred when modernisation had interfaced with tradition in most aspects of the selection processes, therefore, making reliance on traditional means of settling the chieftaincy dispute nearly impossible. The aggrieved contestants therefore, resorted to using judicial means to seek for justice, starting from the State High Court in 1984 to Supreme Court of Nigeria in 2007

According to *Oba Olubo*, the four Princes that took Adebajo to Court were from the different segments of Ojadele Ruling House. They included, Ebigbemi (Okoro Ajiga) from Agbedun, Omotoye from Ojogo, Ehuwa from Oyetayo, and Okiki from Ojogo. It is obvious from the foregoing that Adebajo’s emergence was protested by all the segments of the Ojadele Ruling House. This is worth suspecting that something went wrong in the selection processes that warranted litigation just like it happened when Napoleon emerged and the Federal Council was approached to settle the conflict. Commenting on the litigation, *Oba Olubo* stated that Baba Lene who was the *Olori-Ebi* of the Ojadele Ruling House, was the sole sponsor of the case against Oba Adebajo, though he died before the Appeal and Supreme Court verdicts. Such was to be expected because Adebajo defied the agreement reached by the *Ojadele* family which was not in his favour.

A careful examination of the case against Adebajo indicated that the aggrieved parties – *Ehuwa*, *Ebigbemi*, *Omotoye* and *Okiki* – backed their protest against Adebajo’s emergence as the new *Olugbo* with verifiable facts. As noticed in the Court proceedings, Exhibit “D”, presented by Ehuwa’s team, dated 10th June, 1984, it stated that the process that led to Adebajo’s emergence as the *Olugbo* was unconstitutional, illegal, and irregular. The selection took place against the norms of civil behaviour, given that the kingmakers perverted the laid down process of selecting a candidate for

the vacant Olugbo stool, citing the correspondence between the *Olori-Ebi*, the Secretary to the Local Government, and the kingmakers as shown above to back up their claims. They alleged, there was conspiracy by the Secretary, the kingmakers and Adebajo to deny other contestants a fair run. Therefore, they called for the cancellation of the processes and rejection of Adebajo as the Olugbo- elect; fixing of another date under a different Public Officer who would conduct the exercise in an unbiased manner, and requested that the Secretary should explain why he got involved in the selection processes which was against the law and the oath he swore to uphold (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1984:27-28).

Obviously, the issues raised by the protesters who were led by Prince Marcauley Ehuwa were germane to the chieftaincy selection processes. *Olori-Ebi* had also expressed the same view as indicated in his letter to the Secretary and the kingmakers. But as Abojutoro noted in his submission, the irregularity in the selection processes occurred because *Olori-Ebi*'s candidate was not popular among the kingmakers on account of his ignoble antecedent.

Expectedly, the kingmakers denied all the issues raised by Ehuwa and the other protesting princes. In a counter affidavit filed by the kingmakers, they stated that they acted on their volition and free will without any assistance, pressure or threat from the Secretary or Prince Adebajo or any other person (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1984:36). It is difficult to accept or believe the kingmakers' claim, considering the content of the correspondence which suggested something unusual when the chieftaincy selection processes was taking place. More importantly, the candidate the kingmakers unanimously voted for was not the choice of the Ruling House as indicated in Baba Lene's address after the four segments of the Ojadele family had met and reached a decision.

These were the claims against Adebajo by those who opposed his emergence as the *Olugbo* elect. On his part, Adebajo also had his version of what transpired. In his statement of defence at the High Court, he denied all the allegations against him. In paragraphs 7 and 8 of the statement of defence, he made the following submissions. Firstly, he stated that, he is the direct son of the late Oba Napoleon *Mafimisebi III* as well as a recognised member of the Ojadele ruling house. Secondly, he argued that according to the customary law governing succession to the Olugbo stool, which is

from father to son, he is the only candidate qualified amongst the other six contestants vying for the vacant stool. In number 9 of the same statement of defence, he said the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission having considered the evidence before it made recommendations that *Ojadele* is the only ruling house and that succession to the Olugbo stool is not rotational; and that the customary law concerning succession to the Olugbo stool had been from father to son as it were with his ancestors. He backed these claims with the evidence his late father – Oba Napoleon Orioye *Mafimisebi III* – tendered at the daily proceedings of the Morgan Commission reports (High Court Proceedings, Okitpupa, 1984:152).

It is obvious from Adebajo's Statement of Defence that he was holding onto the usual hereditary method of succession to the *Olugbo* throne which other Princes of the *Ojadele* ruling house considered offensive. While it is true that Adebajo's father and great grandfather ruled from father to son, reasons have been advanced as to why it was so, as indicated in responses from field interviews cited earlier. It was said that people used to run away from becoming Oba in those days unlike in contemporary times when the throne is associated with amassing wealth. This gave the *Mafimisebi* space to reign on the *Olugbo* stool consistently from father to son. For instance, when Molutehin ran away, he was told the installation ceremony was a plot to kill him as stated by a respondent. This made Ohun to become the *Olugbo*. This means that had Molutehin not run away, he would have become the *Olugbo* as a descendant of *Ojadele* from another section of Agbedun which would have altered *Mafimisebi*'s hegemony.

With respect to Adebajo's Statement of Defense as cited above, it is important to state that it helped in facilitating his victory at the High Court, the judgment as it turned out was entered in favour of Adebajo, in error. Looking at the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration, that is Exhibit "A" (Supreme Court Proceedings, Abuja, 2007:10), it states that for one to qualify as a candidate to the Olugbo stool he must be a male descendant of the *Ojadele* Ruling House. If that is the case, it then presupposes that the stool cannot be limited to the *Mafimisebis* alone. That is why the plaintiff – Prince Ehuwa, argued that Exhibit "A" was invalid, null and void because it does not represent the custom and traditions of the Ugbo people, as it failed to provide for rotation of the Olugbo stool between the Agbedun/Ojogo and Oyetayo/Atarioye (Supreme Court Proceedings, Abuja, 2007:11), all of which constitute the four segments of the *Ojadele* Ruling House as contained in Exhibit "A."

But in the wisdom of the trial Judge, this did not matter even when the plaintiff argued and presented facts to prove that succession to the Olugbo stool was not to be conducted observing the hereditary method as the Mafimisebi's claim. While entering judgment in favour of Adebajo on 7th June, 1990, the trial judge at the High Court stated as follows:

Apart from the oral evidence of the plaintiffs and their witnesses that the chieftaincy has been in rotation among the 4 children of Ojadele since the death of Ojadele there is no other corroborative evidence which can support this claim(Supreme Court Proceedings, Abuja, 2007:11).

The issue of "corroborative evidence" became an important issue to be addressed in the appeal that was later filed by Prince Ehuwa at the appellate court. That is where Exhibit J Series came into play. To enhance a proper understanding of the matter, there is a need to explain what Exhibit J Series is all about. From the archival source, Exhibit J Series is; a series of five documents from the National Archives which were admitted as Exhibit J, J1, J2, J3, and "J4" which was the report of Board of Enquiry set up by the colonial government to enquire into the Olugbo chieftaincy dispute held in 1953 (Supreme Court Proceedings, Abuja, 2007:13). These archival documents contained the proceedings of the Akinfolarin Tawose Board of Enquiry into the *Olugbo* Chieftaincy Dispute in 1953. The content of these documents are as follows:

Based on the evidence before it, Board resolved that the Olugbo stool is not HEREDITARY and that Napoleon is not the only son of Agbedun the descendant of Ojadele. It held that since Ojadele had four sons, Agbedun, Ojogo, Oyetayo, and Atarioye, the Olugbo stool should be evenly distributed among them. The Board also stated that the reign of Mafimisebi II was reward on the travails of his father Mafimisebi I who was deposed which was not meant to give Napoleon priority to monopolise the Olugbo stool. While refuting the claim in the Ilaje Intelligence Report (paragraph 25) which Napoleon used to validate his HEREDITARY claim, the Board was made to understand by Ugbo elders that the paragraph was

faulty and inappropriate (Supreme Court Proceedings, Abuja, 2007:13).

Furthermore, it was said that few relatives and friends close to Napoleon installed him unlawfully without the knowledge of the elders. This was also corroborated by seven out of the nine invited *Ugbo* elders who said Napoleon was not installed *Olugbo* constitutionally to their knowledge, and that the title of the *Olugbo* is not HEREDITARY. The ruling house as a whole expressed no objection toward any candidate vying for the *Olugbo* stool except Napoleon Mafimisebi whose father also witnessed opposition because he was not the only son of Ojadele. The ruling house also held that it is not in the history of *Ugbo* that anyone who is an *Ojomo* – second-in-command to *Olugbo* – cannot ascend the stool in the event of a vacancy. Presented with these evidence which it found convincing, the Board recommended Chief Josiah Nana and John Ayida as the *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* and *Ojomo* respectively (High Court Proceedings, Okitipupa, 1983:468-470). This recommendation and the oral evidence that were tendered at the Board of Enquiry’s proceedings is what later came to be known as Exhibit J Series. The foregoing explained why a respondent submitted that “the decision which the Council took was that, it was not Napoleon that should have been installed as the *Olugbo* but Josiah Nana”.

Looking at the Exhibit, it showed clearly that most of the issues that arose against Napoleon’s installation as the *Olugbo*, which have been discussed in great detail, were resolved by the 1953 Board of Enquiry in favour of Josiah Nana, from *Ojogo* segment of the ruling house. Unfortunately, the decision of the Federal Council which recommended Napoleon to succeed his father, Samuel Ejagbomo Mafimisebi II as the next *Olugbo* was at variance with that of the Board. As noted earlier, the decision of the Council went a long way in neutralising the power of *Amapetu* whose authority, the *Ugbo* people and *Olugbo* were forced to obey by the colonial government without questioning. While this helped in solving one problem, it did not address the internal problem of chieftaincy selection processes among the four segments of the Ojadele ruling house.

Now back to Exhibit J Series, the Appeal Court cleared the issue of corroborative evidence, the lack of which the trial judge at the High Court considered the basis, to the entire judgment in favour of Adebajo Mafimisebi IV. Having heard the appeal, the appellate Court ruled as follows:

In the instant case where the learned trial judge had failed to make any reference or pronouncement at all on Exhibit J Series, justice therefore demands that this case should be sent back to the court below for a fresh trial before another Judge of Ondo State (Supreme Court Proceedings, Abuja, 2007:14).

It was on the basis of this ruling that a respondent made the following remark:

When the selection processes were taken to court that Exhibit J Series was referenced, and interpreted. At the lower court the Exhibit J Series was not put into consideration but the Appeal Court ruled that the case should be heard again at the High Court by another Judge (FGD, Olugbo's Palace, 21/10/2017).

Furthermore, "in Exhibit J Series", it was specified that the *Olugbo* Kingship should be rotational and should not be from father to son. Incidentally, the trial judge did not see this as corroborative evidence instead, he dispensed with the matter on the basis of the oral evidences that were tendered to support the proceedings of the 1953 Board of Enquiry into the *Olugbo* chieftaincy Dispute.

Similarly, commenting on the verdict of the Appeal Court, a respondent also averred that:

The case had been won at the Court of Appeal that the stool should be rotational and not from father to son. The judgment was based on Exhibit J Series. The Supreme court also affirmed this, when the Court ruled that Adebanjo, Mafimisebi 1V and his father Napoleon, Mafimisebi III reigned in error (IDI, Igbokoda, 21/10/17).

The respondent was right about the case being won at the Appeal Court looking at the final verdict it entred, which was not in favour of Oba Adebanjo. In its final judgment where it remitted the matter for retrial, the Appeal Court said "all the other Exhibit J Series" dealt with the best method of succession to the throne by rotation (Supreme Court Proceedings, Abuja, 2007:29). What makes this judgment distinct from that of the lower Court was, it took into consideration what the trial judge at the Court of instance failed to address, though the corroborative evidence he averred was lacking as

presented in Court. However, the Appeal Court failed to dispense with the matter as expected based on the corroborative evidence it established. Instead, it remitted the matter back to the High Court for trial *de novo*, which was faulted by the Supreme Court.

According to Abojutoro, “Adebanjo did not want the Court to rule on Exhibit J Series and that was why he (Adebanjo) headed to the Supreme Court”. Having reviewed the matter, the Supreme Court in a lead judgment delivered by Justice Dahiru Musdapher held that:

It is submitted that the failure to consider the exhibits by the learned trial judge was fatal. Now there is no dispute what-ever that the learned trial judge had failed to evaluate, appraise the documentary evidence as contained in Exhibit J Series which were admitted in evidence mostly without any objection (Supreme Court Proceedings, Abuja, 2007:21).

Furthermore, he said,

In my view, it is quite clear with the above findings by the Court of Appeal on the evidence in Exhibit J Series, there is absolutely no need to remit the case back for retrial. These pieces of evidence was the evidence the trial judge was looking for when he said apart from their oral evidence the plaintiffs failed to show any corroborative evidence of rotation to the stool. The evidence is there in Exhibit J series which he failed to utilise (Supreme Court Proceedings, Abuja, 2007:29).

Sadly for Adebanjo, ground “C”, better still, issue (C) of his appeal which raised the question concerning whether the records of the 1953 Board of Enquiry could be used to alter, amend or modify the contents of a validly made chieftaincy declaration was turned down by the Supreme Court, because the Court considered Exhibit J Series as corroborative evidence and its admissibility. The Supreme Court unlike that Court of instance paid due attention to the evidential value of Exhibit J Series rather than dismissing that it lacked corroborative evidence. From these positions maintained by

the Court as outlined above, it clearly signalled that the final verdict was not going to favour the embattled *Olugbo*, and rightly so. The Court held that;

The learned trial judge was wrong to have failed to consider the evidential value of the document. On this note, the SP said “I accordingly resolved issue (B) and (C) against the 3rd defendant/appellant (23). There are 3 issues argued in the 3rd defendant’s/appellant’s brief. These issues having been resolved against the 3rd defendant, his appeal is accordingly dismissed by me (Supreme Court Proceedings, Abuja, 2007:30-31).

Issue (C) had already been resolved as stated above. Issue (B) revolved around the question on whether Exhibit J Series are inconsistent with the content of Exhibit “A” which is the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration, otherwise known as Morgan Chieftaincy Report. This was also resolved by virtue of the last verdict in which the Supreme Court entered judgment in favour of the plaintiff. The Supreme Court Judgment on this matter is a perfect exemplification of Martin Luther King’s aphorism which states that “*the moral arc of the universe is long, but it bends toward justice.*” For ages, the Mafimisebi succeeded in unjustly monopolizing the stool against other segments of the Ruling House. But in spite of their protracted reign, justice appears to have eventually prevailed with the deposition of Oba Adabanjo, Mafimisebi IV by the judgement of the Supreme Court in 2007.

The Supreme Court judgment brings to mind the appeal Mr Majeyinbaje made to the District Officer shortly after the Federal Council affirmed Napoleon’s Olugboship. He called on the District Officer to revisit the decision of the Federal Council in order to avert the “*precedent of partiality and injustice in the chieftaincy dispute of the Division*”. As it turned out, the District Officer did not pay heed to Majeyinbaje’s advice even in the face of the report of the Board of Enquiry which indicated that succession to the Olugbo stool was not from father to son but by rotation. With the Supreme Court verdict, it can be said that, modern institution of conflict resolution has restored sanity in the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom; thereby, resolving the perennial conflict that characterized the chieftaincy selection processes since 1952.

4.3.3 The Selection of Oba Obateru Akinruntan (The Okoro Ajiga I)

With Oba Adebajo's deposition, the need for another selection processes arose on the basis of Exhibit J Series which was based on rotation of the *Olugbo* stool among the four segments of the *Ojadele* Ruling House. It is worth noting that the father-to-son method instituted by the *Mafimisebi*, which was the source of protracted chieftaincy selection dispute in *Ugbo* kingdom, was laid to rest by the Supreme Court judgement of 2007. Therefore, the selection processes that led to the emergence of Prince Frederick Enitiolorunda Obateru Akinruntan started in earnest. The impression created by some of the respondents was that every member of the *Ojadele* Ruling House was carried along in selection of the new *Olugbo* – Oba Obateru Akinruntan. According to Abojutoro of *Ugbo* Kingdom every member of the *Ojadele* family was involved in the process that made Obateru the King because the process which the government set up was what the entire family abide by and the selection was done according to the customs and tradition of *Ugbo* Kindgom (IDI, Ode *Ugbo*, 17/12/17).

Going by the view expressed by a respondent, it seems as if the selection process that produced *Obateru* was not consistent with the verdict of the Supreme Court. *Oba Olubo* is worth citing here. According to him,

In the selection of the present *Olugbo* – Oba Obateru Akinruntan, Okoro-Ajiga, it was three kingmakers that voted, though we cannot write it down that it was not thorough because we did it in the right channel that the Supreme Court resolved the crisis. The kingmakers then were no longer kingmakers because we had been given staff of office as Kings by the government, but we still performed the role of Kingmakers for the selection and installation of the present *Olugbo* (KII, *Olubo's* Palace, 21/10/17).

The foregoing remark by *Oba Olubo* was based on the verdict of the Supreme Court and what transpired between Governor Adefarati and the deposed *Olugbo*, Oba Adebajo. With respect to the latter reason, it has to do with the strained relationship between the former Governor of *Ondo* State, Adebayo Adefarati and the deposed *Olugbo* which led to Adefarati splitting *Ugbo* kingdom. The implication of this move was that the Kingmakers were elevated to the status of Oba which meant that they

cannot perform the role of Kingmakers to select the new *Olugbo*. This is what *Oba Olubo* meant. Even though he participated in the selection process that produced Obateru Akinruntan as one of the Kingmakers, he explained why he had to do that as follows;

Since the next *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* would not come from the *Ohun* lineage as warned, prompted me (the kingmaker) despite my position now as king, accept to perform the role of kingmaker to the present *Olugbo*, although this was not supposed to be done that way. But if I did not play that role, Obateru can never be installed as *Olugbo* (KII, *Olubo's Palace*, 21/10/17).

Two things can be gleaned from *Oba Olubo's* submission. First, it seems the kingmakers believed the stool should shift from *Mafimisebi* family, to another segments of the *Ojadele* Ruling House, hence their participation in the selection process that produced *Okoro-Ajiga*. Secondly, performing the role of selecting another *Oba* by the elevated kingmakers was imperative in order to end the reign of interregnum since the deposition of *Oba Adebajo*. Aside this, *Oba Olubo* made it known that “*as at today there are no substantive kingmakers in Ugbo that can install subsequent Olugbo*”. What this means therefore, is that there is a vacuum that needs to be filled as far as the selection of an *Olugbo* is concerned, and that vacuum is the position of the kingmakers. With respect to the first point, it turned out that the stool went to the *Okoro-Ajiga* lineage, still under the same *Agbedun* segment that produced *Adebajo*, hence the following remark that suggested displeasure by *Oba Olubo*:

Adebajo and *Oba Akinruntan* are both from *Agboedun*. *Adebajo* is from *Ohun* of *Agboedun* and *Akinruntan* is from *Okoro-Ajiga* of *Agboedun*. The selection supposed to be from another segment that is *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo*, or *Atarioye*. *Ojogo* is next to *Agboedun*. *Ojogo* and *Agbedun* were from the same mother and *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye* also from the same mother. So, it was supposed to go to the segment of *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye* (KII, *Olubo's Palace*, 21/10/17).

This explained why he expressed displeasure with the selection processes. While this can be contested, it seems there is sense in *Oba Olubo*'s line of argument which is in line with the spirit of rotating the *Olugbo* stool among the four segments of the Ruling House. This is the reason some of the respondents did argue that the selection process was not done in line with the Supreme Court verdict.

With respect to the Supreme Court verdict which *Oba Olubo* contended was not followed in selecting the new *Olugbo*, and the issue of the elevation of the Kingmakers to the status of *Oba*, it is important to state that their elevation did not affect or invalidate their role as Kingmakers. The appointment of Kingmaker domiciles with each family lineage and the highest ranking chief in the family takes the position of a Kingmaker. The *Olubo*, *Alagho* and *Odoka* still remain the titles of high chiefs in the selection of the *Olugbo*, and their roles as high chiefs remain until stated otherwise.

The foregoing was the exact view expressed by *Oba Alagho* when he stated that;

The selection that was used to install Oba Obaterun Akinruntan, the Okoro-Ajiga 1, was through voting. He applied and it was only him that did so. We did not want the stool to be vacant. Our position as Kings cannot affect our role as Kingmakers because we had similar case in other places before.... Though in future, if Ugbo people plead with us that, they want us to stay clear from the installation of *Olugbo* we would consider their plea (KII, Alagho's palace, 22/10/17).

Oba Alagho explanation has shed more light on the views expressed by *Oba Olubo*. While *Oba Olubo*'s argument on shifting the stool to another segment of the Ruling House in the spirit of rotation is laudable, given its tendency to engender peace in the Ruling House, the other argument which faulted the selection process that produced *Okoro-Ajiga* on the basis of elevated kingmakers is entirely correct. As explained by *Oba Alagho*, kingmakers' position was not affected as a result of their elevation to the status of Obas.

Furthermore, findings from the field indicated that, the process that led to the selection of *Oba Obateru Akinruntan*, *Okoro Ajiga I*, was consistent with the one spelt out in the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration. The selection started with the appointment of the *Olori-Ebi*, who in turn forwarded the name of the candidate – Obateru Akinruntan – to

the Kingmakers for consideration and physical appearance test. After this, his name was forwarded to the Government for approval which was climaxed by the presentation of staff of office in 2009.

The emergence of *Oba Obateru*, also witnessed mild protest based on the fact that, he is from the *Agbedun* segment where the Mafimisebis come from. The matter before the apex Court was not a case between *Agbedun/Ojogo* versus *Oyetayo/Atarioye*, but a case of father-to-son selection process, instituted by Mafimisebi lineage at the detriment of all male descendants of *Ojadele* ruling house. *Obateru* who happened to come from *Agbedun* segment joined other segments to challenge the hegemonic power of the Mafimisebi family due to the fact that his identity as a male child of *Ojadele* ruling house has been disparaged. This brings to bear the theory of relative deprivation in the chieftaincy selection conflict. The Morgan Chieftaincy Report, which provided for all male descendants of *Ojadele* Ruling House to aspire and ascend the Olugbo's stool, qualifies him (*Obateru*) to do same. In addition, the resolution of *Ojadele* Ruling House contained in the memorandum of understanding signed by the four segments of the ruling house, further leveraged his ascendance to the throne. The resolution contained the following terms;

1. That in view of the judgement of the Supreme Court which deposed Adebajo Mafimisebi as the Olugbo of Ugbo, a declaration of custom should be made and registered to reflect the decision contained in the said judgment.
2. That ascension to the throne of Olugbo of Olugbo chieftaincy shall be among *Agbedun/Ojogo* and *Oyetayo/Atarioye* sections as decided by the Supreme Court.
3. That we know that the last Olugbo was from *Agbedun/Ojogo* section of the Ruling House.
4. That the father of Prince Adebajo Mafimisebi, *Oba Naoleon Mafimisebi III* was allowed to ascend the throne of Olugbo inspite of protests from other sections of the family because of his contributions to the entire family as a special concession to him.
5. That we appreciate the contributions of members of the *Agbedun* section of the ruling house in obtaining justice in this matter throughout the pendency of the suit in the courts.

6. That as a special concession, we now unanimously agree that the next Olugbo of Ugbo should come from the Agbedun branch of the family and the rotation should now be made in that order.

7. That a new declaration should now be made recognizing all the Ruling Houses starting with Agbedun section in the following order:

- i. Agbedun
- ii. Ojogo
- iii. Oyetayo
- iv. Atarioye... (FGD, Olugbo's Palace, 21/10/17).

In line with the above memoradum, a respondent contended that;

The Supreme Court did not appoint Oba Akinruntan for us, but nullified the selection processes that produced Oba Adebanjo and that of his Father Napoleon, as they reigned in error. It then asked us to go home to conduct another selection processes that reflected the spirit of rotation among the four segments of Ojadele ruling house (FGD, Olugbo's Palace, 21/10/17).

This submission is in consonance with the theory of modernity adopted for this study which postulates that, tradition and rational ideas are constantly being impacted by Modernity. It is important to note that, the decision of the ruling house to begin the order of rotation from *Agbedun* segment based on concession, as noted in paragraph 7 of the memoradum despite that the same segment produced the deposed Olugbo Oba Adebanjo appears to contradict the spirit of rotation as ordered by the Supreme Court. Worth mentioning, is paragraph 5 of the memo which acknowledged the support of *Agbedun* segment in obtaining justice for the ruling House. This gave concession to Obateru Akinruntan to be elected as the *Olugbo*. Drawing from archival source, concessional arrangement in the chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo Kingdom was not repugnant to the tradition and custom of Ugbo people. The same was recorded after the reign of *Oba Mafimisebi I*, when his son, Samuel Ejagbomo was considered for the throne based on his contribution and support for his father when in exile at Calabar.

Also, there is another dimension to the chieftaincy selection conflict within the *Agbedun* segment. In the segment, the *Mafimisebi* monopolised the stool and shut out his two brothers – *Molutehin* and *Okoro-Ajiga* from accessing the throne. In view of this, it can be argued that Obateru Akinruntan who is from the same *Agbedun* segment

with *Mafimisebi* might have gained favour of other segments of the ruling house as a result of the injustice meted on all the male descendants of the *Ojadele* Ruling House by the Mafimisebi lineage. Again, his active financial support in the litigation that ended the dynastic rule of *Mafimisebi* was also a factor. This was affirmed by *Oba Olubo* who said “they told him, if he can spend money to retrieve their crown from Mafimisebi, they will support him to become the Olugbo”. But examination of this factor shows that active financial support alone could not qualify someone to become an *Olugbo* rather the person must first qualify as a male child of *Ojadele* Ruling house, which *Obateru* is one.

From the foregoing, it is important to state that, the emergence of *Oba Obateru Akinruntan* as the *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* in December, 2019 marked an end to the father-to-son inheritance principle and re- introduction of the old order of succession principle of rotation. But, November, 2010 was a water shed in the history of *Ugbo* kingdom, because, that year witnessed the public presentation of Staff of office to *Oba Obateru Akinrutan* by the Governor of *Ondo State*, *Dr Olusegun Mimiko* at *Ilaje Local Government, Igbokoda*. The ceremony signalled public re-enactment of the succession principle of rotation among the four segments of *Ojadele* ruling house. This brought harmony and stability to the chieftaincy selection processes in *Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom*.

4.3.4 The Conflict Situation and Its Management in the Selection Processes

As stated earlier, one of the features of chieftaincy selection processes in *Ilaje Ugbo Kingdom* is conflict. This resulted from external influence by the *Amapetu* of *Mahin* who received considerable support from the colonial Government. There was also the internal conflict among the various segments of the *Ojadele* Ruling House. In the latter case, the resolute determination of the Mafimisebi family in holding onto the father-to-son system of succession to the disadvantage of other segments of the *Ojadele* Ruling House was the very source of the protracted chieftaincy conflict that lasted for more than half a century.

As the conflict ensued, different mechanism were employed in managing it, even though they failed to produce the result that was fair and just to all the parties to the conflict. In the first episode of the chieftaincy conflict, that is after the death of *Mafimisebi I*, his son *Samuel Ejagbomo* succeeded him in 1934 on the basis of compassion. *Olori-Ebi* is worth citing here. According to him,

when Josiah Nana and Mafimisebi II contested for the stool, the people had sympathy for Ejagbomo Mafimisebi for the suffering he went through with his father. His ambition to become the Olugbo enjoyed considerable support from the people because he went to Calabar with his father (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/2017).

What the forging implied is that Ejagbomo emerged because the Oja approved of his candidature on compassionate ground considering the agony of deportation he went through with his father, Mafimisebi 1. However, this was not without vehement opposition from his cousin and opponent, Josiah Nana, who was supported by the Amapetu of Mahin as indicated in paragraph 51 of the Ilaje Intelligence Report (Curwen, 1937), which necessitated the resolution of the conflict. This was when the District Officer at Okitipupa intervened to help manage the conflict. Aside the “sympathy” narrative advanced by *Ogbinmi* of Ugbo which was also corroborated by another respondent, *Ojomo* in an FGD with Olugbo-in-Council, Ejagbomo also allude to the fact that, succession to the Olugbo throne from time immemorial had been conducted using the father-to-son inheritance system. This was actually what Josiah Nana did not accept. And he was not alone in this, as other princes from other segments of the *Ojadele* Ruling House also shared the same position.

As a letter from a group who called themselves “Educated Men Ilaje Branch”, dated 9th June, 1952 indicates, Nana yielded to Ejagbomo because he was prevailed upon. The above named group said it was agreed upon in a general meeting that upon Ejagbomo’s demise, the throne should revolve around the other three segments that have not benefitted (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). Unfortunately, this was not the case when Ejagbomo eventually died.

In the spirit of father-to-son system, Napoleon the son of Ejagbomo contested for the throne and Nana and John Ayida were his opponents. According to the *Obamoyegun* of Ugbo Kindgom, “*the selection favoured Orioye Napoleon Mafimisebi III because Ejagbomo the father of Napoleon went to the council of Obas and did not last before he died. So, people agitated for his son to succeed him*”. When Napoleon eventually emerged, conflict arose again with barrage of protests against his selection.

According to archival source, the matter was brought before the Board of Enquiry into the Olugbo Chieftaincy Dispute of 1953, also known as Tawose Committee. The

outcome of the committee recommended Josiah Nana to be installed as the Olugbo. The report of this Committee which was considered to be exhaustive and fair was what came to be known as Exhibit J Series; which the Supreme Court relied on in passing the judgment that deposed Oba Adebajo. Back then, it was not considered, which was why Napoleon remained on the throne.

The field account suggests that in the management of the Mafimisebi III conflict, both traditional and modern channels were used. For instance, according to *Olori-Ebi*, during the reign of Mafimisebi III, the Council was involved; the contest was between Josiah Nana, Ayida, and Napoleon Orioye Mafimisebi. The issue was also taken to the Native Council at Ode Mahin. This is in alignment with the discovery this study made while examining archival documents. When the case came before the Ilaje District Council, the Council referred it to the *Ojoye* (the Chiefs) with an instruction to consult Ifa and revert to it. This they did in line with the native custom and tradition, after which Napoleon Orioye Mafimisebi was revealed to be the favoured candidate (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). However, the outcome did not resolve the conflict as expected and the reason could not be far from the distrust people tend to have on Ifa Oracle which some said could be manipulated. Much of this has been elaborated in earlier chapters including the foregoing.

It is important to note at this point that while the matter was taken to the Ilaje District Council, Napoleon was not comfortable with the composition of the Council and its capacity to resolve the matter in a fair and just manner. On this note, he wrote series of letters to the District Officer at Okitipupa asking for the matter to be transferred to a place where justice will prevail. Here are some of the reasons advanced by Napoleon as he sought for the matter to be transferred. He felt the Amapetu who heads the Council as its President has had a prolonged history of conflict with his ancestors and has openly bragged that Josiah Nana – the Vice President of the Court and Napoleon’s strong opponent in the Olugbo race – should not worry, he would surely deliver the Olugbo throne to him at all cost (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). As it turned out, the District Officer yielded to Napoleon request and the matter was transferred to the Federal Council.

This action was in line with paragraph 4 (b) of the machinery for settlement of Chieftaincy dispute. According to that paragraph,

where there is a dispute in the appointment of an Oba or Oloja the matter should be referred to the Federal Council of Okitipupa Native Authorities which shall set up a committee out of its members to recommend and report; but such report should be forwarded through Okitipupa Federal Council, the District Officer to the Resident (NAI/DIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II).

Having done as prescribed in the paragraph, it turned out that the council upheld Napoleon's victory as detailed in the sub-section on the mechanism adopted in settling Napoleon's chieftaincy conflict in chapter four. Again, this was perceived to be unfair by other princes of the other segment of *Ojadele* Ruling House. Hence the protest letters to the District Officer which amounted to nothing. Since an amicable resolution to the chieftaincy conflict was not sought for in the face of the protests, it meant that upon the death of Napoleon, another phase of chieftaincy conflict would erupt which was exactly the case.

Before the death of Napoleon, the government made effort in sanitizing the chieftaincy selection processes by instituting a Commission known as the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission of 1977-1981 which came up with what is now known as the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration, the enabling law to be used in the process of chieftaincy selection. As *Oba Olubo* remarked, under this regime,

The *Oja* now appointed six elder called *Iware-efa-mefa* that see to the affairs of *Oja/Ilu* headed by Olubo quarter, Ode Ugbo. The *Iware-efa-mefa* included Olubo, Alagho, Odoka, Yasere, Ashogbon, and Gbogunro (KII, Olubo's palace, 21/10/17).

During this era, the quarters were reduced from sixteen to six quarters, and these were the main actors in the selection of the *Olugbo*. There were other changes that were made to the selection processes in terms of requirement, much of which has already been discussed. As good as this enabling law was, it was not effective in resolving chieftaincy conflict. This was evident in the Oba Adebajo chieftaincy conflict that later erupted. At the lower Court, the law was applied and it affirmed Oba Adebajo's emergence as the lawful Olugbo. However, that was not the case at the Appeal Court where the appellate court referred the matter back to the lower Court for retrial. On reaching the apex Court, the lapses of the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration was

spotted by the learned justices when placed side by side with the archival documents now referred to as “Exhibit J Series”. Its verdict ended the much contested father-to-son inheritance system of chieftaincy selection and introduced the system of rotation.

In view of the above, it could be said that one major positive aspect of modernisation of *Olugbo* chieftaincy selection processes is the window of opportunities provided for by the judiciary for people to get justice at various levels of judicial intervention. The reliance on *Ifa* as the sole conflict resolution mechanism has been considered inadequate to address the injustice meted out to other segments of *Ojadele* ruling house by the Mafimisebi’s institution of father-to-son inheritance succession system of *Olugbo* chieftaincy.

4.4 Modernity, Chieftaincy Selection Processes and Identity Conflict

Relative deprivation theorists have advanced that groups are likely to react in violent manner if what they think they are entitled to as members of a given society is denied them or is not what they get in reality. In *Ugbo Kingdom*, the chieftaincy selection processes appear to be in favour of one segment out of the four segments – *Agbedun*, *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye* of the *Ojadele* ruling house. Other members of the ruling house perceived themselves as been excluded since the *Agbedun* segment has held the *Olugbo* throne since 1900. This hold on the throne which has spanned over a century (from 1900 till present: first the *Ohun* sub-segment from 1900 to 2007 and the *Okoro-Ajiga* sub-segment from 2009 till present – all from the *Agbedun* segment of the *Ojadele* ruling house) has generated mobilisations and deepened conflicts of selection process in the Kingdom. This section draws attention to how this relative deprivation of other segments among other factors has generated identity crisis and complicated the selection conflicts.

4.4.1 Identity of Self:

The issue of identity is one that has created divisions in societies, be it modern as is currently the case in established democracies in the West – right populism, or evolving ones in the global south. In Africa for instance, most societies that are still grappling with the challenges of evolving a modern state in the liberal sense of the term, are still struggling with identity problem which was created by the colonial situation. In Sudan, before it was divided, Idris (2005) posits that the imposition of *Sharia* in 1983 and the

Arabization policy created dual identities in which the people of Southern Sudan were accorded inferior citizenship as subjects while the Arabs were more superior. Implicitly, this is also true about Nigeria where the Northern part which houses the Hausa/Fulani arrogates to itself some superior identity over and above the people of the South. This has been the source of the renewed separatist movement in the South-Eastern part of the country.

In Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom, which is the focus of this study, the extent to which modernity affected chieftaincy selection processes is multi-dimensional. Beyond the politics, economy, and religion aspects, it has also created the “identity” issues on a couple of fronts. First is self-identity among the princes of the *Ojadele* Ruling House; community identity among the Ugbo people; and then the Zionist identity of the Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) Order. It is therefore, important to carry out sequential examination on these identities.

In the course of the chieftaincy selection conflict, dual identity was invented among the princes of the *Ojadele* Ruling House by a certain “sub-segment”. This sub-segment, the Mafimisebi family arrogated to itself a superiority status over and above other members of the *Ojadele* family by advancing and institutionalising the “Mafimisebi identity” through the father to son inheritance principle. This engendered the “us” versus “them” kind of dichotomy. *Baale Ajegunle* aptly captured the Mafimisebi identity when he remarked as follows:

It was just the Mafimisebi family alone. The Mafimisebi brothers too were not given a chance to rule since he took over from Ogundere. For example, if Adebajo Mafimisebi IV was allowed to stay and after him, his son would have taken over and not even any other members of the royal house would be allowed again. That was the plan on ground before the other families approached the Court and the Supreme Court ruled that they should go back home and rearrange the selection process on the basis of rotation (IDI, Ajegunle, 20/10/17).

The creation of Self-identity which later shaped the chieftaincy selection processes has a long historical origin. This is evident in *Oba* Napoleon’s explanation to back his claim of father-to-son argument in a letter he wrote through the District Officer to The Ministry of Local Government, Western Region, dated 19th December, 1953. In the

said letter, he argued that succession to the *Olugbo* throne from time immemorial has been from father to son. He supported this claim by referring to the succession between *Onojarogbe* and *Ojadele* the 15th and 16th *Olugbo* which was from father to son and that of *Ameto* and *Opa* the 8th and 9th *Olugbo* (NAI/OKITIDIV/1/1/OK535/VOL.II). Oba Napoleon relied on this in creating the Mafimisebi self-identity. Also, advancing the Mafimisebi's claim of father to son succession, Oba Napoleon relapsed into what Adesina (2017) referred to as "Selective Memory", a situation where people deliberately choose to remember certain events or situation differently to the point of reinforcing a bias position. But as pointed out earlier, some of these successions which occurred in line with father to son in time past, happened that way either because princes never indicated interest or did not want to become *Olugbo*, or the *Oja* rejected a prince that was presented for the *Olugbo* stool in preference to another. It may also be due to the fact that the stool had been instituted on the basis of father to son for so long, as emphasised by the Mafimisebi. The case of *Molutehin* and *Ohun*, and *Opa* and *Ajana* discussed earlier are good examples in this regard.

Baale Ajegunle is not the only person who held this idea of the self-identity being created by the Mafimisebi. *Olori Ebi* also expressed similar view when he averred that;

They (Mafimisebi) wanted to institute the system of father to son and that was why in 1934-1936 we opposed it, that we do not have that system. Also in 1952-1956, there was conflict. Then in 1984 which brought Adebajo Mafimisebi IV. We told them that it was not so (IDI, Igbokoda, 11/10/2017).

Here, *Olori Ebi* has been able to show the sequence of events which led to the consolidation of the Mafimisebi identity in the chieftaincy selection processes. Modernisation cannot be absolved from the creation of the Mafimisebi identity, because it aided their grip on the stool when Okitipupa Federal Council affirmed the selection of Napoleon Mafimisebi III, as the *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* in 1954. The decision was relied upon by Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi IV to clinch the throne. This reflects the theory of modernity where modern institution interferes with the chieftaincy selection processes to engender conflict. If the colonial Government had adhered to the recommendation of the Tawose Board of Enquiry in 1953, Mafimisebi identity would not have persisted beyond Samuel Ejagbomo Mafimisebi II.

In spite of the fact that, the Tawose Board of Enquiry was a creation of modernisation, its composition was essentially of traditional chiefs that understood the customs and tradition of Ugbo people in respect to Chieftaincy selection processes in the Kingdom. What can be deduced from this is that, modern institution of government during colonial era most relied on the traditional institution for direction as it was the case when Lord Lugard introduced the indirect rule system.

The regrouping of the other segments of the *Ojadele* Ruling House to challenge the Mafimisebi self imposed superior identity, is what happens when one's identity is being disparaged. As noted by Rupesingne and Anderline (1988);

Identity is an intrinsic element of "Self" encompassing the psychological, physical, social and spiritual sense of a person's existence. A sense of security based on a distinctive identity, a wider social recognition of that identity and effective participation in social, economic and political processes are the basic needs of all humanity. The denial of such needs can lead to a feeling of Victimisation and also conflict (p: 20).

Fukuyama (2018) also captures this in his seminal work on how the denial of one's identity can result to conflict. He used the concepts of *thymos*, *isothymia*, and *megalothymia* to explain this. *Thymos*, a concept he borrowed from Platonic philosophy is "*that aspect of human personality that wants recognition of its dignity*". With the creation of the Mafimisebi identity, the *thymos* in the other segments of the ruling house was undermined, hence the protest in search of it.

Isothymia on the other hand, "*is the demand to be respected on an equal basis with others*" (Fukuyama, 2018:9). This was what other princes from other segments of the *Ojadele* Ruling House were asking for when they kept demanding for a cancellation of the father-to-son system and adherence to the system of rotation which gives all princes equal opportunity in aspiring and ascending the Olugbo stool. Lastly, Fukuyama also talked about the concept of *megalothymia* which means "*the desire to be recognized as superior*" (Fukuyama, 2018:9). The Mafimisebi created this identity of wanting to be recognized as the superior in the *Ojadele* ruling house the moment they started advancing the view that succession is from father to son which created Mafimisebi I, II, III, and IV. This means that princes from other segments are lesser children of the *Ojadele*. Had this *megalothymic* identity not halted by the Supreme Court judgment in

2007, the Mafimisebi reign would have persisted to the disadvantage of the other segments thereby creating an identity of superiority for Mafimisebi while other princes of the same ruling house would have been accorded the identity of inferiority which will continue to generate conflict in the chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo Kingdom.

4.4.2 The Community Identity

The second kind of identity the chieftaincy selection conflict engendered is community identity among the Ugbo people. This identity arose as a result of modernity's interference in the chieftaincy conflict through the institution of the state which led to the *balkanization* of Ugbo Kingdom. As the strained relationship between Governor Adebayo Adefarati and Oba Adebajo ensued, without the latter being subservient to the former's government, the Governor, before leaving office decided to break Ugbo Kingdom (Kudehinbu, 2013). Examining the events that led to elevation of erstwhile high chiefs of Olugbo- *Olubo*, *Alagho* and *Odoka* to the status of kings in their various communities, it can be argued that, *Olubo*, *Alagho* and *Odoka* chieftaincies could be traced to Olugbo's chieftaincy. Having been made high chiefs by *Olugbo* and their subsequent appointments as kingmakers by Morgan report, therefore, their elevation to the status of kings in their various communities stemmed from their appointments as Olugbo's high chiefs. In this connection, *Olubo*, *Alagho* and *Odoka* chieftaincies are directly connected to Olugbo's chieftaincy. In this case, modernity has created an identity of an *Oba* from the erstwhile chiefs of *Olugbo* in their various communities. Consequently, this saw the creation of community identity. Instead of the people seeing themselves as Ugbo people, they began to see themselves as members of *Odoka* dynasty, *Alagho* dynasty, and *Olubo* dynasty. This act which is a clear case of group identity is in line with the theory of modernity as it brings to the fore the relationship between modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and identity conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom.

Aside the above mentioned identities which the chieftaincy conflict brought about, there is another identity which arose as a result of the emergence of modern economy – Oil. As understood in traditional terms, the *Olugbo* is expected to be there for his people and protect them in the face of oppression like *Mafimisebi I* did when the *Amapetu* sought to bring Ugbo kingdom under his dominion. But this was not the case

under Oba Adebajo Mafimisebi IV when oil spillage occurred in some parts of Ugbo Kingdom. As the Elders in Erunna community explained in the course of our interview, after the oil spillage, Chevron Nigeria Limited paid compensation to Oba Adebajo to be given to his people. He in turn used the money to finance his chieftaincy litigation. This singular act of gross insensitivity on the part of the Oba to his people led to some sort of detachment by the people from their King who they no longer saw as their leader since he was not serving their interest, hence the creation of a new identity. It is on account of such an inhuman style of administering the Kingdom that caused Oba Adebajo's deposition by the Supreme Court to be celebrated by a vast majority of Ugbo people.

Lastly, there is also the Zionist identity created by the Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) Order. While the Zionist identity had been discussed previously in great detail, it will be necessary to briefly look at how the C&S Church, led to inventing an identity which became a force in the chieftaincy selection processes. Since the establishment of the Church in Ugbo Kingdom, it has grown and gained a lot of followership including princes of the *Ojadele* Ruling House; with some assuming leadership positions in the Church. The involvement of the princes in the Church brought about the idea of consulting Prophets before chieftaincy selection processes can be completed. This was the view by King of Zion when he opined that;

We play a very important role in the chieftaincy selection in Ugbo as members of that family, and two, as Zionists who are being consulted for spiritual guidance in the selection process. For example Napoleon Mafimisebi III was baptised by Baba Lene at Jordan River in Ugbonla before he became the Olugbo (IDI, Ugbonla, 10/11/17).

While the Zionists have no recognized role to play in the chieftaincy selection processes in modern time under the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration, they have succeeded in creating one, hence the invention of the Zionist identity which has become a force to reckon with. This is so because the identity succeeded in bringing about the emergence of Olugbos that are of the C&S bloc, beginning with Samuel Ejagbomo Mafimisebi II and Oba Obateru Akinruntan, the Okoro Ajiga I. This identity was resisted by the Ugbo people when Samuel Ejagbomo emerged, as noted by *Osomolu*;

When Samuel Ejagbomo became King, the Ugbo people complained about the new religion at Ugbonla which led to disagreement between him and the Ugbo community. He agreed with the Ugbo community that he will not go to Ugbonla. That was how the matter was settled in 1936 (IDI, Okitipupa, 21/10/17).

Incidentally, the C&S identity has not ended in Ugbo Kingdom. It is very much alive and continues to shape and reshape the Ilaje-Ugbo identity as far as the chieftaincy selection processes are concerned

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study interrogated and explained the relationship between modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. It addressed the questions of how modernity influenced chieftaincy selection processes leading to conflict and how chieftaincy selection processes in turn influenced modernity in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom. This is with a view to ascertaining the nature of chieftaincy selection processes, how modernity has reinforced or mitigated conflicts in the chieftaincy selection process, how modern methods of resolving conflicts in the chieftaincy selection processes have affected the interaction of the people with the traditional stool and the extent to which modernity, chieftaincy selection process and conflict have shaped Ilaje Ugbo identity and Community in the modern age. Adopting the theories of modernity and relative deprivation, and utilizing the case study and historical descriptive research designs, the study established that chieftaincy selection processes influenced by modernisation have generated conflicts and affected everyday life in Ilaje Ugbo Kingdom. Chieftaincy selection processes had stimulated, escalated and sustained various forms of conflicts in modern Ugbo. Although, the period was also characterised by different conflict management approaches, it induced more conflicts than it managed.

The study showed that the trajectory of the chieftaincy selection processes combining with processes of modernisation is ridden with conflicts emanating from both internal and external forces. This led to various state interventions at different times and some actors cashing on the weaknesses of the processes to manipulate the system. The study, argued that the interactions between chieftaincy selection processes and modernisation have facilitated several forms of conflict in the chieftaincy institution which allowed elements of modern structures such as the state and local Governments, and the law courts to determine how occupants of the traditional stool emerged rather than solely through the traditional process of Oja system and Ifa divination. However, same

elements have also been used to manage the conflict in the chieftaincy selection processes.

Data for this study were gathered through primary and secondary sources. The primary sources comprised Key informant interviews (KII), In-depth interviews (IDI), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Archival sources. Secondary sources consisted of government reports, Intelligence reports, personal letters, periodicals, books and journal articles. These were content and thematically analysed using narrative and descriptive styles. Major findings of the study are as follows:

- a. The study showed that the *Ugbo* identity could be traced to *Ile-Ife* in South-western Nigeria. As such, narratives of *Ugbo* people also trace the *Olugbo* stool to *Ile-Ife*. As shown in the study, the widely held belief in *Ugbo* Kingdom is that *Obamakin* also known as *Oronmakin* in *Ilaje* dialect, ruled over the 13 communities that existed in ancient *Ile-Ife* which he named *Ugbomokun* as the paramount ruler long before the arrival of *Oduduwa* in *Ife*. *Ugbo* people claimed autochthonous status of *Ife*. Apart from the aboriginal narrative, the study drew attention to the fundamental issue of the displacement of the *Ugbo* people, which subsequently resulted in their migration from *Ile-Ife* to *Ode-Ugbo*, their current abode. Findings showed that the displacement and migration of the *Ugbo* people from *Ugbomokun* is not unconnected with the supremacy battle that existed between *Oduduwa*, *Obatala* and *Ugbo*.
- b. In examining chieftaincy selection processes and conflict in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom, the study identified two eras – the pre-modern, which existed before the Kingdom’s contact with Europeans – and the modern era. The study showed that pre-modern *Ugbo* had sixteen quarters that formed the body that selected the *Olugbo*. Although some respondents referred to this body as the ‘original kingmakers’ in *Ugboland*, others believed there were no kingmakers but a process through which all members of the Kingdom through the representatives of the sixteen quarters selected the *Olugbo*. Thus, the study showed that in pre-modern *Ugbo*, the role of the “*Oja*” (the community) was very crucial. The *Oja* referred to here, were settlements not from *Ojadele* lineage but inhabitants of *Ugbo* kingdom. They were subjects who are not inhabitant of *Ode-Ugbo*, where the *Olugbo* resides, but were very influential in the chieftaincy selection processes. The point to underscore, as shown in the study, is that in the pre-

modern chieftaincy selection process, the entire *Ugbo* kingdom was involved in selecting the *Olugbo*. The study, therefore, argues that the chieftaincy selection process in pre-modern *Ugbo* had a semblance of the Athenian version of direct democracy where the people make decision on issues affecting them directly, instead of electing some representatives to do that on their behalf, as is the case in modern liberal democracy. It also showed that the *Oja* system of chieftaincy selection has the idea of checks and balances ingrained.

- c. Nevertheless, in the modern period, the Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission of 1977 introduced the use of 'kingmakers' (The *Afobajes*), Head of the Ruling House (*Olori Ebi*) and other criteria in the selection processes. This engendered conflicts in the selection processes.
- d. The study revealed that conflict in chieftaincy selection in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom lasted over four decades (1952-2009). The study showed that the chieftaincy institution in *Ugbo* Kingdom experienced two forms of conflicts in the selection processes – the external and internal conflicts. In the external conflict, the study drew attention to the role of *Amapetu* of *Mahin* Kingdom who had a running battle with the *Olugbo Mafimisebi* 1. The supremacy tussle persisted to the eras of *Mafimisebi* II and III. The period saw *Mahin's* interference in *Ugbo* chieftaincy selection for *Amapetu's* personal benefit and this created serious conflict in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom. On the internal conflict, the study showed that the royal family in *Ugbo* Kingdom is divided into four segments namely: *Agbedun*, *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo*, and *Atarioye*. It noted that these segments of the ruling house were manipulated to give way for the father-to-son method of selection advocated by the *Mafimisebis* which was not in agreement with *Ugbo* history and tradition but rather stimulated conflicts.
- e. On the concept of modernity, the study showed that in *Ugbo* Kingdom, modernisation started with the 1884 Treaty that was signed by the *Ugbo* chiefs with the British, on behalf of *Olugbo* which came before another epochal event in African history popularly referred to as the Scramble for and partition of Africa. It suggested that for *Ugbo* people modernity is conceived in the light of the modern structures and western values such as western education and the elite it stimulated. They also conceive the emergence and constitution of kingmarkers (*Afobajes*) as element of modernity. In addition, they claimed that monetary influence on the Obaship can also be conceived as modernity and

also, state, and local government involvement in the chieftaincy selection process.

- f. In addition, the study suggested that there were strong connections between modernity and chieftaincy selection processes and conflict. Using selected cases, the study showed the influence of modernity on chieftaincy selection processes in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom which were transported by colonialism. This was examined through the lenses of political, economic, and religious dimensions. On politics, the study indicated that in the modern period, politics played significant roles in chieftaincy selection processes and induced conflicts. Also, oil exploration in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom significantly affected chieftaincy selection processes as the oil wealth stimulated the interest of certain members of the elite on the emergence of the *Olugbo*. On the other hand, religion also played significant roles in the selection processes. Successive leaders of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church continued to influence the selection processes, as the traditional method through *Ifa* Oracle was complemented by the predictions and prophesies of the prophets.

5.2 Conclusion

Recent scholarship on Yoruba chieftaincy institutions explored diverse approaches to explain the interaction between chieftaincy conflicts and modernity. Several of such studies interrogated the role of power, influence and status in establishing the genealogy of chieftaincy disputes in Yoruba Kingdoms. Many of these studies have not adequately engaged the theories of modernity and relative deprivation to interrogate the dynamics of chieftaincy selection processes, the conflicts they stimulated and how it generated identity conflict. As such, policy initiatives enacted as consequences of such studies have not addressed the rifts that emerged from such processes. Adopting the theory of modernity, this study argued that whereas modern structures have initiated several processes of addressing conflicts that its intervention in the chieftaincy selection process created, the approach is conflict ridden and this has continued to influence everyday life in *Ilaje-Ugbo* kingdom. Although the influence of modern structures on the selection processes has come to stay, this study argues that the conflict-generating aspects could be expunged. Also, the theory of relative deprivation has shown how chieftaincy selection processes could generate identity conflict.

The point of emphasis is that the chieftaincy institution in Ugbo Kingdom which has spanned several centuries has undergone changes, adapting and accommodating the influences of modernity. It is for this reason Nyamnjoh (2014) claimed that the institution has been wrongly reduced – one of the influences of modernity – to the chief as an individual and credited with far more might than right. Yet, the institution continues to play central roles in providing governance, exchange of redistributive economy, security and justice delivery despite the rifts and conflicts embedded in its selection process.

The nature of chieftaincy selection process in *Ilaje-Ugbo* Kingdom in the pre-modern period indicated that it was less conflict-ridden with little or no influence of self-acquired riches. Crucial to the selection process at that time was the recognition of the role of the “*Oja*” – the community. However, this changed in the modern period when the Morgan Report introduced Kingmakers (*Afobajes*) and the *Olori-Ebi* (head of the family) in the chieftaincy selection process. These approaches are more likely to give undue advantage to those who either are in good terms with the *Afobajes* or the *Olori-Ebi*. Although there was conflict without in the selection process induced by modernity, the conflict within triggered by the same phenomenon – modernisation – appears to have affected the institution significantly in *Ilaje-Ugbo*. The internal conflicts stimulated the idea of father-to-son mentality exhibited by the Mafimisebi. Nevertheless, the conflicts generated in the selection processes by modernity were equally adjudicated and addressed through modern structures.

The study revealed that the fundamental nature of chieftaincy selection process in Ugbo Kingdom is that there must be a title, a taker of the title, an appointing authority and the ceremonial rites of conferment. Apart from these crucial elements of the selection process, the taker of the office must be seen to have met all physical screening conditions as enumerated in the study. Whereas modernity has significantly intervened with these fundamental nature of the selection process, the efficacy of the ceremonial rites is not in question despite the employment of modern religious processes such as the use of ‘anointing oil’. As such, while some ‘modern people’ with modern approaches no longer adhere to the traditional processes – the approaches, rules and regulations laid down by the ancestors – the remnants of the traditional processes are manifest in Ugbo Kingdom. Since these traditional practices are salient to

the people and their everyday life, the legitimacy of the *Olugbo* is further enhanced. This is because the remnant of the traditional processes – ceremonies and rites – do not only serve to produce a meaningful context for social action and identity but also makes the presence and influence of the *Olugbo* throne highly revered by the people. Through the findings of the study, the concept of modernity significantly interfaced with the chieftaincy selection process and generated conflicts that have continued to affect everyday life in *Ugbo* Kingdom. However, this conflict has been mitigated by judicial intervention. Although the conflicts in the selection process became more prevalent in the colonial period, it worsened with the changing social and economic conditions in post-colonial *Ugbo* Kingdom. Thus, the increasing and rapid pace of modernity alongside the changing socio-economic conditions shaped and reshaped the chieftaincy institution instituting a culture of stiff competition for the stool. Particularly, the advent of Native Courts and Native Treasuries likewise opened new areas of contention. For example, with the exploration of oil, disputes between traditional stools became intensified. The increased revenue available and, in general, more ways of capitalising on office holding, led to greater competition for traditional stools, increased rivalry and further worsened the conflicts in the selection process.

The prevalent interaction between traditional selection process and modern structures indicate that the relationship between the ancient and modern processes is unending. This underlies the centrality of reforms in bridging existing gap between the past and present and consequently reduce conflict in chieftaincy selection processes. Such glaring importance of the chieftaincy institution, the *Olugbo* throne to be specific, and the traditional selection processes among *Ugbo* people as demonstrated in this study as well as the implicit close relationship between culture, politics and modern structures is well exposed. Thus, it becomes crucial to argue that this relationship between chieftaincy selection process and modernisation must be taken seriously and first as a starting point of efforts at improving country wide politics and significantly domesticating the twin processes of democratisation and decentralisation.

In a face off between Governor Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State and some traditional rulers in the state, the Alaafin of Oyo, Oba Lamidi Adeyemi contends that:

Unlike in some tribes, where there was nothing attached to their traditional institutions, the Yorubaland traditional institution is ancestral

and spiritual in nature, any attempts by anybody to disparage the institution may incur the wrath of the ancestors
(The Punch, March 15, 2020, P: 58).

This foregrounds the fact that Chieftaincy Institution in Yoruba land is rooted in what Akinjogbin (1979) refers to as the Ebi-System where kingship is built around ancestral lineage. This is the case with *Ugbo* kingdom where only the ancestral lineage of *Ojadele* can aspire to the throne of *Olugbo*. The ancestral belief associated with the Chieftaincy institution has made it to retain its value, prestige and honour, as the king is seen as the representative of the dead and the living. As noted by Olaoba (2005), one of the important aspects of African cultural heritage embedded in the kingship institution is the network of relationship between the living and the living dead-ancestor. The belief of the Africans in their ancestors is borne out of the continuity of the network of interaction as the mystery of death has been de-mystified (Olaoba, 2005:143-145).

This study therefore, contends that despite the tendency of modernity to stimulate conflicts and instigate claims of illegitimacy in the chieftaincy selection processes, the *Ugbo* case presented a scenario where the throne is still held in high esteem and the processes of emergence of an *Olugbo* significantly recognises the traditional “Ebi commonwealth” which is domiciled in *Ojadele* ancestral lineage. As it stands in *Ugbo* kingdom, only the descendants of *Ojadele* are entitled to *Olugbo*’s throne. This is an important area of the selection processes which has not been effaced by modernity.

5.3 Recommendations

Since the introduction of the kingmakers – as invented by the Morgan chieftaincy Report, the selection processes in *Ugbo* Kingdom has become more vulnerable to conflict. This is because the invented tradition has restricted the chieftaincy selection processes to the hands of few kingmakers who are highly susceptible to financial inducements and political manipulation. The *Oja* system of selection, which is more participatory in nature and less crisis-ridden, should be reintroduced to replace the role of the kingmakers in the selection processes. In this sense, the selection and nomination of a candidate should be done by the *Oja*, while government approves of the nomination. Therefore, this study recommended the hybridisation of the *Oja* system of

selection with the modern governance structures. This is because modernisation has come to be accepted by the people as part of culture, norms and new way of life, neglecting that the process has the tendency to stimulate questions of legitimacy of the king. As such, both traditional and modern models of selection must be incorporated into the *Olugbo* chieftaincy selection processes. This will reduce conflicts by providing windows for redress in a situation of dissent. The approach will mitigate future chieftaincy selection conflict in Ugbu.

Over time, changes had occurred in the chieftaincy selection processes in such a way that it was almost misconstrued or seen as an unwritten law to pass the *Olugbo* stool from father to son within the *Mafimisebi* lineage of the *Agbedun* segment of the ruling house. In this way, modern process completely eroded the role of the community – the *Oja* – in the chieftaincy selection processes in *Ugbo* Kingdom which in turn initiated conflicts. This brings to the fore the need to review the process and tame conflicts emanating from the influences of modernity. This could be done by enshrining the recent change made in the selection process – the rotational system of selection – into the Registered Chieftaincy Declaration, which is the enabling law. While it can be argued that *Ugbo* chieftaincy selection process is from father to son – this is the logic of the *Ojadele* descendants (*Ojadele* ruling house) ruling over *Ugbo* – there were four segments of the ruling house – *Agbedun*, *Ojogo*, *Oyetayo* and *Atarioye* – in which each of them is eligible to take the *Olugbo* stool. It was suggested in this study that Exhibit J Series was the major decider that ended the father to son system of selecting an *Olugbo* at the apex Court. Since this was the source of the protracted conflict, it becomes necessary to lawfully enact a process of selection (*Olugbo* Chieftaincy Declaration) – in rotational pattern that accommodates the four segments of the ruling house.

The power of the *Olori-Ebi* in the chieftaincy selection processes should be curtailed in order to improve and have a just selection process. As currently structured, the *Olori-Ebi* plays a vital role in the selection of the *Olugbo* by presenting the list of candidates – princes – to the kingmakers, which then implies that the segments of the *Ojadele* Ruling House that produces the *Olori-Ebi* can decide where the *Olugbo* will come from. This makes the office very sensitive in the selection process. In this sense, some politicking could be embraced by the *Olori-Ebi* in designing the process. Thus, decentralising the power of *Olori-Ebi* to reflect the four segments in rotational basis

becomes crucial. Each segment should have *Olori-Ebi* to present a list of candidates to the *Oja* for consideration and probably election where the need arises.

Partisan politics has significantly influenced and affected the chieftaincy selection in Ugbo Kingdom. *Oba* Adebajo had meddled in partisan politics – as is the case with several traditional rulers in Nigeria – in which the then Governor of Ondo State, Adebayo Adefarati wanted the *Olugbo* – *Oba* Adebajo – to provide support for his political party – the Alliance for Democracy (AD) – rather than doing this, *Oba* Adebajo provided tactical support for the candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) who eventually won the election. This led to a strain in the relationship between Adebajo and Adefarati. Governor Adefarati responded by elevating the former Kingmakers – *the Afobaje* – as *Oba*. This elevation split the Kingdom and created a divided identity – whether or not the new *Oba* are part of *Ugbo* Kingdom – and created a scenario where the former subjects of the *Ugbo* stool disregarded the throne placing their loyalty in the new kingdoms. In this sense, modern approaches and partisan politics created a vacuum in Ugbo which has affected the larger community's interaction with the traditional stool. As such, it is paramount for the traditional rulers who are seen as father to all to steer clear of partisan politics. In this way, the influence of the modern state on the chieftaincy institution will be minimised.

The oil economy in Ilaje Ugbo has significantly influenced the chieftaincy selection processes in Ugbo Kingdom. Apart from inducing the phenomenon of militancy in the area, it became an incentive which provided enormous resources for the occupant of the *Olugbo* stool. The oil economy provided revenue and rent for the deposed *Olugbo* through which he significantly prosecuted the legal battle for twenty three (23) years. The implication is that the resources flowing from the oil economy have the tendency to sustain a flawed process. While it is the right and privilege of the *Oba* to enjoy the proceeds in his territory, it is important to reduce the effect of money in the judicial process. Thus, other approaches such as joint problem solving could be applied to manage conflicts emerging from the chieftaincy selection processes. Since this encourages participation and accommodation, it will enhance the community's idea of legitimacy, reduce the influence of money and more effectively guarantee justice.

The role of the Church in the chieftaincy institution in Ugbo Kingdom has been monumental. Although this influence provided temporary solutions in the selection

processes for a while, such influence created two crowns in the same Kingdom. Subsequently this created ripples in the relations between some segments of the ruling house; some of the people questioned the role of ‘Anointing oil’ in the installation of chiefs in the Kingdom rather than the conventional traditional tools. As such, if there are laid down rules for the selection process, the influence of the Church – Cherubim and Seraphim – will be mitigated, thus the need for reform.

5.4 Contributions to Knowledge

This study has made four important contributions. One, it established that the *Olugbo* chieftaincy is autochthonous of *Ile-Ife* which pre-dated the advent of the *Oduduwa* dynasty in Ife. Apart from classifying the chieftaincy selection processes in *Ugbo* Kingdom into the pre-modern and modern era, the study suggested that the inclusion of the *Afobaje* and the *Olori-Ebi* are modern developments in *Ugbo* history. The study distinguished the external dimension of the conflict from the internal conflict in the chieftaincy selection processes in *Ugbo* Kingdom. This is important since the remedy to the challenges in the selection processes also emanated from internal and external factors as witnessed in the installation of *Oba* Obateru Akinruntan, *Okoro Ajiga* I as the *Olugbo* of *Ugbo* Kingdom. Earlier approaches have not highlighted this distinction. Two, attention is drawn to the peace building structure in *Ugbo* Kingdom initiated by a hybridisation of culture – modernism and traditionalism – in the selection process which has restored hope in *Ugbo* Kingdom and reinforced legitimacy in the *Olugbo*’s throne. This is captured in the use of modern religion – Cherubim and Seraphim’s prophecies to complement *Ifa* divinations in the chieftaincy selection processes in *Ilaje-Ugbo*. Three, the study called for reforms in the chieftaincy institution and went further to glean from existing discourses on chieftaincy conflicts to argue that despite several conflicts induced by modern interventions in the selection processes, modernity brought with it an inbuilt conflict resolution mechanism through judicial procedure. The modern process has not totally abolished the tradition and custom of *Ugbo* people in the selection of an *Olugbo*. Candidate to the throne still needs to pass the traditional physical appearance screening before the final nomination. Four, the study demonstrated the need for a hybrid mechanism – the *Oja* system and the modern structure of appeal – to reduce conflicts and provide window for redress in situations of dissent.

5.5 Limitation of the Study

Considering the difficult terrain of the study area where many of the selected communities for the study were basically in the riverine areas, it became difficult for the researcher to access most of the respondents. This however, resulted in an elongation of the period of the study.

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APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW GUIDE

A. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

- (i) Number of Discussants in Group _____
- (ii) Age bracket of Discussants
 - (a) 18-39 {} _____
 - (b) 40-59 {} _____
 - (c) 60 years and above {} _____
- (iii) Sex of Discussants: Male _____, Female _____
- (iv) Educational level of Discussants:
 - (a) Primary education
 - (b) Secondary education
 - (c) Tertiary education

B. QUESTIONS

A. What is the nature of the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo kingdom?

1. What would you consider as the origin of the chieftaincy institution in Ugbo Kingdom?
2. How did Ilaje-Ugbo people select their king?
3. To what extent did processes of Chieftaincy selection in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom initiate conflicts?
4. What are the factors responsible for conflicts in the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom?
5. Who are the people involved in the Chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom?

B. How has Modernity reinforced or mitigated conflicts in the Chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom?

6. How did modernity interfere with elite interest in the chieftaincy selection processes and how such interest complicate chieftaincy conflicts in Ilaje-Ugbo?
7. To what extent did colonialism interfere with the chieftaincy selection processes in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom?

8. What are the changing characteristics and factors of chieftaincy succession in Ilaje-Ugbo?
9. What are the relationships between modern religion and chieftaincy conflict and what are the implications of the interaction for the throne's legitimacy in Ugbo kingdom?

C. How have methods of resolving chieftaincy conflict affected the interaction of the people with the traditional stool in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom?

10. In what ways has the chieftaincy selection process in Ilaje-Ugbo influenced and interfaced with modern political structures?
11. How has modern state structures of conflict management been implicated in chieftaincy conflicts in Ilaje-Ugbo?
12. To what extent has these structures facilitated or mitigated chieftaincy conflict in Ilaje- Ugbo?
13. What is the nature of tension existing between the chieftaincy selection processes and modern state structures in Ilaje-Ugbo?
14. How has chieftaincy selection conflict been implicated in modern governance structure?

D. To what extent have modernity, chieftaincy selection processes and conflict shaped and reshaped Ilaje-Ugbo identity of self and community in the modern age?

15. How did modernity and chieftaincy conflict shape and reshape the Ilaje-Ugbo identity?
16. To what extent is chieftaincy conflict facilitating inter and intra group conflict in Ilaje-Ugbo Kingdom?
17. How did elite struggle for resource control complicate the chieftaincy selection conflict in Ilaje- Ugbo?
18. What roles do politics and political partisanship play in the chieftaincy selection conflict?
19. What are the roles of the youth in chieftaincy selection conflict and how does conflict shape their identity among Ilaje-Ugbo people?

APPENDIX II

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Key Informant Interview (KII) participants

S/N	NAME	AGE	POSITION/TRADE	LOCATION	DATE
1.	Oba Obateru Akinruntan	72	Olugbo of Ugbo Kingdom	Olugbo's Palace	23/02/18
2.	Oba Andrew Ikuesan	82	Olubo of Obenla	Olubo's Palace	21/10/17
3.	Oba Obafemi Ogbaro	52	Odoka of Obe-Ogbaro	Odoka's Palace	19/01/18
4.	Oba Alias Ikuomola	76	Alagho of Odonla	Alagho's Palace	22/10/17
5.	Prince Adebajo Mafimisebi	57	Dethroned Olugbo	Phone call	18/03/18

In depth Interview (IDI) participants

6.	Prince Robert Nana	82	Olori Ebi Ojadele	Igbokoda	11/10/2017
7.	Chief Happiness Abiye	60	Baale Awoye	Awoye Comm.	10/10/17
8.	Chief Mese Ilemobayo	58	Baale Mese	Mese Comm.	''
9.	Chief Oluwole Banwo	60	Baale Obe-Lomore	Obe-Lomore	''
10.	Chief Emorioloye Manasi	79	Baale Obe-Rebimino	Obe-Rebimino	25/10/17
11.	Chief Ojajuni Ohunayo	51	Baale Sukuma	Sukuma Comm	''
12.	Chief Ebietomiye M.A	73	Baale Idiogba	Idiogba	''
13.	Chief Oyetomi Andrew	66	Baale Ajegunle	Ajegunle	20/10/17
14.	Chief Odusola Goodluck	73	Baale Apata	Apata Comm.	''
15.	Chief Marokutimi Yemi	56	Baale Sedara	Sedara Comm.	''
16.	Chief Mekuleyi Richard	78	Baale Ogboti	Ogboti Comm.	''
17.	High Chief B. Mafimisebi	65	Baale Idogun nla	Idogun nla	31/10/17
18.	Chief Ephenous Ebijimi	70	Baale Ebijimi	Ebijimi	12/12/17
19.	High Chief M. Ogundere	61	Abojutoro	Ode Ugbo	10/10/17
20.	High Chief Ikuesan A.	65	Oro Cult	Ode Ugbo	17/12/17
21.	High Chief Babatunde Sedara	80	Osomolu of Ugbo Kingdom	Okitipupa	21/10/17
22.	Hon. Mesogboriwon Adewale	54	Fmr. Secretary ILGA	Igbokoda	21/10/17
23.	Hon. Nomiye Adegbenro	55	Fmr Chairman ILGA	Okitipupa	19/10/17
24.	Hon. Bamiduro Dada	57	Comm. Chieftaincy & LG	Akure	07/12/17
25.	Hon Aladetan Oyebo	58	ODHA on Chieftaincy	Igbokoda	21/10/17
26.	King of Zion H.M.Ogunfeyimi	64	Head of C & S Church	Ugbonla	10/11/17

FGD 1, Erunna Ero Community

27.	Chief F.A Abayomi	70	Elder	Baale's House	06/11/17
28.	Chief Ayodele Guard	75	''	''	''
29.	Chief Eliu Akingboye	70	''	''	''
30.	Mr. Asotito Oyetomi	65	''	''	''
31.	Mr. Oyetomi Setofe	70	''	''	''

32.	Chief Modimu Akintimehin	70	“	“	“
33.	Pastor J.O. Oyetomi	70	“	“	“
34.	Apostle Segun Lowo	66	Clergy	“	“

FGD 2, Idiogba Community

35.	Chief Ibukunola Owowa	74	Elder	Baale's House	13/11/17
36.	Chief O. Olowoniyo	78	“	“	“
37.	Chief Ayodele Okuntimehin	75	“	“	“
38.	Prince Ojalatan Tayo	67	“	“	“
39.	Mr. B.A Owowa	68	Retired Head Master	“	“
40.	Chief Dele Ojalatan	67	Fishing	“	“
41.	Chief Epetelomiran	70	“	“	“
42.	Chief Nocase Igbameru	73	Fishing		“

FGD 3, Ebijimi Community

43.	Chief Sede Ebijimi	82	Elder	Baale's House	07/09/17
44.	Mr. Ogunmola Romans	76	“	“	“
45.	Mr. Steven Onagbojaye	70	“	“	“
46.	Mr. Fransis Ajimosan	70	“	“	“
47.	Chief Number Ebijimi	75	“	“	“
48.	Mr. Oluwatobi Omosogbe	65	Fishing	“	“
49.	Mr. Adebamigbe Ebijimi	67	“	“	“
50.	Mr. Orimisan Ebijimi	69	Retired Teacher	“	“

FGD 4, Ojumole Community

51.	Mr. Fidelix Ehinola	80	Elder	Baale's House	17/09/17
52.	Mr. Moses Owoyele	72	“	“	“
53.	Mr. Owoyele Ebilolorun	70	“	“	“
54.	Chief Jedo Emalekun	71	Fishing	“	“
55.	Cjief Omolaye Saanumi	76	Fishing	“	“
56.	Chief Wale Tomiye	80	Elder	“	“
57.	Chief Eddy Ikuejimola	65	Fishing	“	“
58.	Chief Moses Edunola	70	Fishing	“	“

FGD 5, Ikorigho Community

59.	Chief Wilson Erejuwa	85	Elder	Baale's House	24/09/17
60.	High Chief Ogunfeyimi Festus	72	“	“	“
61.	Chief Emupene Rotimi	62	Retired Teacher	“	“
62.	Chief Ajaluwa Ileewa	60	Fishing	“	“
63.	Chief Segun Temebanmi	70	“	“	“
64.	Chief Segun J.O Mbanmi	70	“	“	“
65.	Prince Nana Fokansi	60	“	“	“
66.	Prince Segun Ayemobuwa	67	Retired Civil Servant	“	“

FGD 6, Awoye Community

67.	Chief E.M Eyinbo	92	Elder	Baale's House	07/11/17
68.	Rev. Ajoisi Omolafe	80	"	"	"
69.	Pa Shedrack Omomowo	81	"	"	"
70.	Chief Ebisanmi Ayaya	82	"	"	"
71.	Prince Nomiye Bababo	70	"	"	"
72.	Chief. Toye Ikueyinmino	71	"	"	"
73.	Chief Ogungbamila Olatunji	70	Fishing	"	"
74.	Chief Bababo Tene	70	Fishing	"	"

FGD 7, Olugbo in Council

75.	Chief I.A Demehin	76	The Asogbon of Ugbo Kingdom	Olugbo's palace	21/10/17
76.	Chief Rapheal Ikuesan	67	Moran of Ugbo Kingdom	Olugbo's palace	"
77.	Chief Fagbiye J.A	77	The Ajagajigi of Ugbo Kingdom	Olugbo's palace	"
78.	Chief Olorunsebi Ogorun	71	Oronmija of Ugbo land	Olugbo's palace	"
79.	Chief Iperepolu H.E	71	Obamoyegun of Ugbo Kingdom	Olugbo's palace	"
80.	Chief Omotoye E.O	81	Ojomo of Ugbo land	Olugbo's palace	"
81.	Chief Obele T.A.B	75	Lema of Ugbo land	Olugbo's palace	"
82.	Chief Nana Oyeyemi	72	Ogbinmi of Ugbo land	Olugbo's palace	"

APPENDIX III

PHOTOGRAPHS WITH INTERVIWEES



Plate. 1: The researcher in a KII with Oba Elias Ikuomola, the Alagho of Odonla in his palace. (Source: fieldwork, 22/10/2017)



Plate. 2: The researcher with High Chief Babatunde in an IDI in his house, Okitupupa (Source: fieldwork, 10/10/2017)



Plate. 3: The researcher in an IDI with High Chief Robert Nana, the *Olori-Ebi* of Ojadele Ruling House, Igbokoda (Source: fieldwork, 24/06/2017)



Plate. 4: The researcher at the famous River Jordan at Ugbonla, where Samuel Ejagbomo, Mafimisebi II was baptised by Saint Lene Ogunfeyimi (Source: fieldwork, 11/10/2017)



Plate. 5: The researcher at the Olugbo's palace during KII, Ode Ugbo (Source: fieldwork, 23/02/2018)



Plate. 6: The researcher in a KII session with Oba Andrew Ikuesan, the Olubo of Obenla (Source: fieldwork: 20/10/2017)



Plate. 7: The researcher in a speed boat with passengers on his way to conduct FGD with Ikorigho Elders (Source: fieldwork, 24/09/2017)



Plate. 8: The researcher with High Chief Ogundere- the Abojutoro at his shrine after an IDI session (Source: fieldwork, 10/10/2017)



Plate. 9: The researcher in an FGD session with Ikorigho Elders (Source: fieldwork, 24/09/2017)



Plate: 10. The researcher with M. A Ebietomiye, the Baale of Idiogba after an IDI session (Source: fieldwork, 25/10/2017)

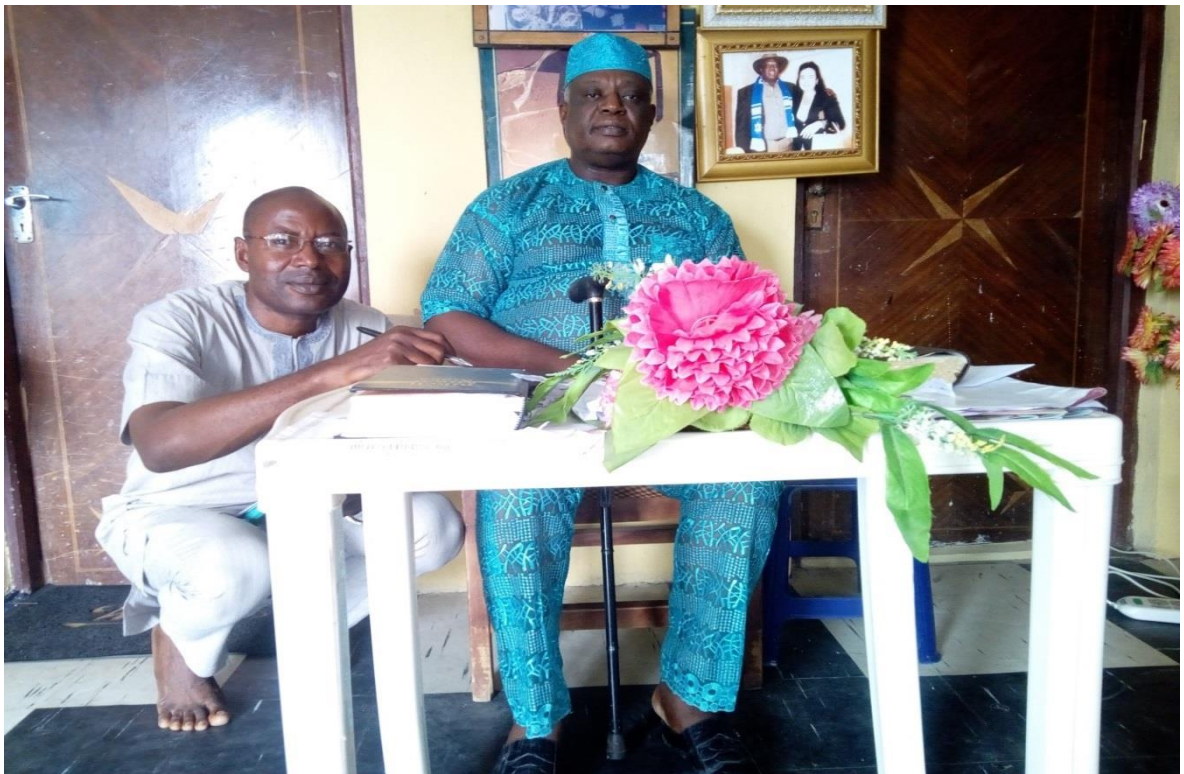


Plate: 11. The researcher with Dr. H.M. Ogunfeyimi, C & S Church, Ugbonla after IDI session (Source: fieldwork, 10/11/2017)

APPENDIX IV
SOME ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

Recommendation of 6 members of the Ilaje District Council, who were elected
to ruminate over the Recommendation of the Board of Enquiry.

23rd Nov, 1953.

Members:-

1. Chief Aiyem of Ighekun
2. " Samuel Nkaleyi of Ugho
3. Mr. H.C. Ejiwom of Ugboma
4. " S.M. Ajimola of Idiogba
5. " S.O. Onwale of Mahin
6. " E.E. Ilesobolati of Akata

After long debate and thorough interpretation of the Minutes taken down by the Board of Enquiry, under the Chairmanship of Mr. A.A. Tawoza on the tenth July 1953 and 17th. We, on behalf of the Ilaje District Council thereby resolved:-

That we the members of the Enquiry were delegated only for the Ojomo Chieftaincy Dispute, which is vacant, and not for Ugho stool which is still occupied by Josiah Nana Vice President of the Ugho Native Authority.

2. No ~~insufficient~~ historical evidence by the youths and olds of Ugho that a man should pass from Ojomo stool to become Ojomo.

3. It was also read that Mr. John Ayida would have been the best of the candidates, if not of his close relationship with Mr. Napoleon Oricye whose father has just vacated the throne according to the recommendation of the Board of Enquiry. Then we ~~thereby~~ thereby suspect the Board of Enquiry, for Mr. John Ayida was only compensated with the title of Ojomo. He was a grand son of Ojodale from Agboidun House. But Agboidun and Ojomo were born by the same mother. ~~Therefore~~ then why not the title be given to Ojerayo house which is of another different mother or Ojaha House which is the second ruling house in Ugho land?. Therefore we found matter of relationship to be quite irrelevant and cannot materialise to deprive the best man Mr. John Ayida as the Ojomo of Ugho.

4. Josiah Nana who is still holding the Office of the Ojomo of Ugho and at the same time still the Vice President of the Ugho Native Authority himself declared to the Board of Enquiry that he has no objection to the installation of any of the contestants save Napoleon Makindisi.

5. We hold the same opinion with the Board of Enquiry on their objection to the recommendation of Napoleon Makindisi. ~~Therefore~~ We thereby confirm their reasons therein.

RECOMMENDATION.

Following the above, We thereby comply with paragraph 3 headed (John Ayida Makindisi) under finding of the Board of Enquiry as in paragraph 3 above.

2. We thereby recommend the appointment of Mr. John Ayida as the Ojomo of Ugho.

(Sgd) E.E. Ilesobolati

CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE.
Dated at Mahin this 23rd day of November, 1953.

0045

MEMORANDUM

CONFIDENTIAL.

1927
September, 1927.

From
SECRETARY, SOUTHERN PROVINCES,
LAGOS.

To
THE HONOURABLE
THE CHIEF SECRETARY,
LAGOS.

General Form No. 16
O.P.D., Lagos. 17-3-27 100,000 (1927)

19/9/27

OLUGBO of IGBO.
Your file No: 06452

(62)

(47)

I am directed by the Acting Lieutenant-Governor to refer to my confidential memorandum, No. C.153/19, of the 19th of July, 1926, regarding Mafimishebi, the deposed Olugbo of Igbo, ONDO Division, who is at present residing in Calabar as a deportee. The history of the case is set out in Sir Hugh Clifford's confidential despatch of the 12th of February, 1923.

2. In June, 1927, Mafimishebi approached the Resident, Calabar Province, and sought his assistance in again laying before Government an appeal for permission to return to Igbo. In support of his petition Mafimishebi signed an undertaking, a copy of which is attached. This undertaking discloses the first real sign that the ex-Olugbo is prepared to recognise the authority of the Amapetu of Mahin.

13.6.27

3. The promises made by the ex-Olugbo have been communicated to the Igbo sub-Chiefs who have undertaken faithfully to assist in the fulfillment of them. The present Amapetu of Mahin has intimated that he is prepared to receive Mafimishebi in a friendly manner and to deal tactfully with him.

4. The Resident, Ondo Province, with the above facts before him, has recommended that Mafimishebi be allowed to return to his country and His Honour endorses that recommendation. I am to suggest therefore for His Excellency's consideration that the Order for deportation dated the 15th

of

Encls. 2 (13)

of August, 1921, should be cancelled.

W. H. ...

Acting Secretary,
Southern Provinces.

N. A. Central Office,
Okitipupa, 12 April, 1954.

The District Officer,
Okitipupa Division,
Ebute Irele.



My Good Friend,

Olugbo of Ugo: Appointment of.

I have to inform you that at the January meeting of the Federal Council the question of the appointment of an Olugbo of Ugo was discussed. After examining the conflicting recommendations from Ilaje District Council, the Council rejected them and appointed a 12 man Committee to -

- 286-
1420 A.
- (a) enquire into the Chieftaincy Dispute afresh and
 - (b) to submit findings and recommendations to the Council at its next meeting. Vide page 3 paragraph 3(ii) of the minutes of the Federal Council Meeting held from 12th to 14th January, 1954.

2. In accordance with their terms of reference, the Committee submitted their findings and recommendations to this Council in session. These were carefully gone into by the Council and adopted with no dissentient voice from Ikale, Ijaw Apoi, Bini Confederation and Arogbo Councillors.

3. It is to be noted that the Mahin section of the Councillors from Ilaje attempted, without success, to create difficulties and obstruct the Council from coming to a decision on the issue. It is a matter for regret that the Amapetu of Mahin offered open leadership to this group. The Council was reluctantly compelled to remove, by majority vote, the Amapetu from the Chair and appointed the Abodi of Ikale to preside over the Council's acts when discussing the Olugbo Chieftaincy Dispute as the Amapetu's only ground for opposition was his personal fear that the recommended candidate would never submit to him.

4. I forward herewith in duplicate copies, the findings and recommendations of the Committee as adopted by the Federal Council at its meeting held as from 8th to 10th April for your necessary action.

5. Finally, Mr Napoleon Mafimishibi is the unanimous choice of the Council as the Olugbo of Ugo with the exemption of the Amapetu of Mahin therefore, early Government recognition is highly craved for.

Your Good Friend,

E. Adedunwa

President
Okitipupa Federal N. A.

See P.

A TREATY OF 1884.

Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain
Ireland Emperor of India do and the Chiefs of the Territory of
Ogbo being desirous of maintaining and strengthening the relation
of peace and friendship which have so long existed between them.

Her Britannic Majesty has named and appointed William
Alexander George Young Esquire Companion of the Most Distinguished
Order of Saint Michael and Saint George Governor and Commander
in chief of the Gold Coast Colony conclude a Treaty for this
purpose and.

This said William Alexander George Young and the said Chiefs
of the Territory of Ogbo have agreed and concluded the following
articles ...

Article I : Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland
heroby undertakes to extend to the said Chiefs and to the Territory
under their authority. Her gracious favour and protection.

Article II.. The said Chiefs agree and promise to refrain from
entering into any correspondence agreement or Treaty with any
foreign nation or power except with the knowledge and sanction of
Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

Article III. It is agreed that full and exclusive jurisdiction
civil and criminal over British subjects and their property in the
Territory of Ogbo is observed to Her Britannic Majesty to be
exercised as Her Majesty shall appoint and direct.

Article IV... This Treaty shall be provisional only when
certified, conjected by Her Majesty Government.

Done in duplicate on board Her Britannic Majesty's ship Alect
of the town of ANRONNA in the Territory of Ogbo the twenty
fourth of December 1884.

Signed... Governor and Commander in Chief of
the Gold Coast Colony.

Oyo his mark x Head Chief of Ogbo and first son of the
late Olugbo King of Ogbo.

Masissi his mark x second chief of Ogbo.

Witnesses to signatures and marks.

Signed..... Lieutenant and Commander H.W.S.Alects.

Signed..... J.W. WANS. ASSISTANT COLONIAL SECRETARY GOLD COAST
COLONY.

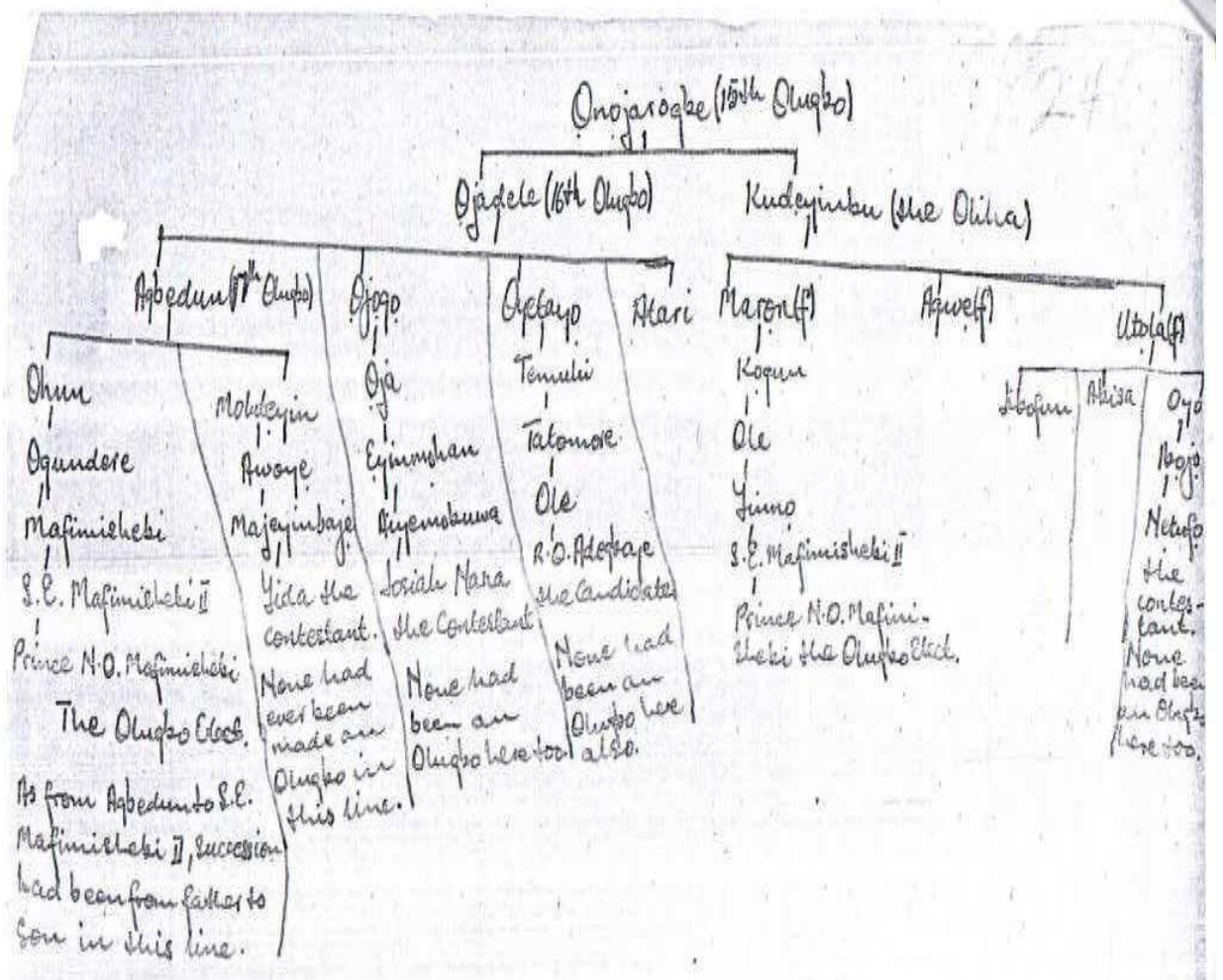
Certified true copy:

S. Ajimuda, 10 Coats Street, E. B.

the great grand sons of

O Y O.

First son of the late Olugbo King of Ugbo.



Mafimicheki
The Oluqbo Elect.

Igbokun - Ugo.

Ugo via Okitipupa.
19th Octo 1952.

The District Officer,
Okitipupa Division,
Okitipupa-Obute Inle.



Election for the New Oluobo of Ugo.

We are very pleased indeed for your visit to Ugo on the 15th instant.

This matter of the Oluobo of Ugo is an important matter. We shall be very glad if you can go through your file affecting this matter before you make an decision as a new man. We are not concerned with this matter, but we are saying this for what we have seen or what will benefit the State as a whole in future.

The arrangement made for the son of the late Oluobo is bad and helpless arrangement, being that the four ruling houses were not present on the day that the arrangement was made. The other houses were not invited, even Chief Ojom, the next man to the Oluobo was not present on that occasion.

What Mr. Jaturase said in the meeting held with the former D.O. in the meeting before the last was the cause of the trouble between Igbokun peoples. Although what he said was actually true ^{with} reference to the letter of the Educated men Ijaye, Lagos, of 9th June 1952.

P.T.O.

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There is some thing behind the arrangement made for the son of the late Olupo. He gave some money to some set of people who gave him this house. It was entirely a bad arrangement that was made for Napoleon Maximisheli the son ~~to~~ of the late Olupo.

The man himself is a man who can not lead at all, in all case. He is a bad Citizen. From this point, we want the D.O. to know that the man actually a bad Citizen. He took the Court warrant from the Court Clerk which almost lead to another matter again.

We beg the D.O. to think Carefully about this matter before you makes any decision because this is what will bring trouble to this Division in the nearest future.

We have the honour to be Sir,
We are remain,
Your's Obedient Servant

- 1 T. Ogunseunro
- 2 L. K. Ogunfuhis
- 3 M. Yoyo
- 4 J. Bayo

writer
June
17/10/52.

A.S. 17/10.
6/2/10.

L. A. Aiyemwa,
Hussey College,

Warri,

20th. Sept 1952

District Officer,
Opapa Division,
Ebute-Irele.

Dear Sir,

I humbly forward this to the District Officer concerning the enthronement of the new Oba at Ugbo.

I am a free born of Ilaje (Obiadun), and I am also a student in the above named College.

I write not to change the mind of the District Officer, but to allow me to say something about the confusion on the floor about the right Oba; with the hope that the District Officer will put mine into consideration.

It is definite that the late Mafimishebi II. and Nana Ojomo of Ikorigho struggled for the throne at first, but the fact that the late Mafimishebi III. became the Oba was not through the consent of Ojomo, but there was a vote made by the whole towns in Ugbo District which I feel the District Officer can introduce which will work better. Secondly, it was not written then that Ojomo or his son can be the Oba after Mafimishebi II.

The boy Napoleon has got some experiences in a secondary school, bold, though young and can even speak more fluently and more correctly than Ojomo.

I therefore suggest that Napoleon Mafimishebi son of the late Oba should succeed the throne.

None of them is either my brother or enemy. I have the same love and interest for both of them, but we want the successor to have a good knowledge of English language.

Thanks till yours.

I have the honour to be Sir,

Yours faithfully.

.....
L. A. Aiyemwa.....

over.

239 Ode - Uqbo.
27th August 1950

The Resident,
Uqbo District Council
Makin.



Kabiyesi,
Olugbo Chieftaincy Dispute.

1. With reference to the last decision of the Uqbo District Council, in which the above mentioned dispute was referred back to the Uqbo Elders and Ojoes in order to Consult the Ifa Oracle as to know who is to be the best Candidate out of the five Contesting, to be the Olugbo in accordance with the Native Law and Customs.
 2. We beg to reveal to the Council that we had carried out the order of the Council and the Ifa Oracle had been consulted, whereby the Ifa Oracle declared Prince Napoleon O. Mafinshabi to be the best person to be made the Olugbo.
 3. And as for the such, we support, admit and believe what is declared by the Ifa Oracle. Therefore, Napoleon O. Mafinshabi is the person we choose, appoint and select to be the Olugbo.
- We are:

Samueli Abugben
Olugbo


Right thumb impression
Chief - Seife


Right thumb impression
Chief Odeho
For Pribo


Right thumb impression
Chief Amajoye


Right thumb impression
Chief Odeho


Right thumb impression

The District Officer,
Okitipupa Division,
Ibute - Irele.

26/2
533
Olugbo's Palace,
Ugbo, 13th February, 1953.

Sir,

The District Officer can know that ever since my UCD/100 of the 21st October 1952, that I had not written except this one. Today, the matter on ground is of academic interest only but referring to an English proverb which says "All that you have to do, do it in time". I beg once more to say something about the dispute. I should know that my writing will not do something better but still I should not fail to disclose my view to you as the representative of the Government under the Flag of which I am.

Frankly speaking, as far as common sense which is the root of every thing is concerned, I should know democratically that what the Ugbo do is what the Government will approve of. The Government cannot forcibly make someone an Oba but still, it can decide better for as Africans with our African blood in our veins, if we are to do things as done by prior the adventure of the whites, chaos it will be and whereas it is the very Government that some rely upon and begin to do or fight for a right that had never once in history 'his' ancestors'.

Referring to all my letters, and those written by the Ugbo in the years 1934 to 1936 the first time Nana contested the Ugbo Throne with my father, it will be certain that none in his house had ever been made an Olugbo in history. In the minutes sent you as an attachment to my letter of the 2nd 1st September, 1952, the District Officer might have made out that one Alpheus Kolombo Aiyemobuwa who is a brother of Josiah Nana did represent him and he indeed had hands in all done and was aware of it.

The District Officer can know too that the lasting of the dispute for years is the trial and prayer of Josiah Nana who is now either the President or Acting President of the Ugbo Native Court. As I have been able to make out that the contestants will never agree with what the Townspeople have done or going to do, that the District Officer should for justice' sake transfer the matter to any where he knows it will be settled but once for all or can permit anyone else to do, if it lawful at all. It is no need I should do anything without the advice of the District Officer - representative of the Government - otherwise, I am fully prepared to sue Nana in the Magistrate's Court Of Justice where the Ilaje Intelligent Report and many other old Documents will prove everything. If it will not be against the will of the District Officer to do so, he can make me know. That of Lagos is tried in the court and on the whole Oba Adele 11 whose candidature is supported or approved by the Townspeople as mine is supported and approved by the Ugbo Townspeople too, is recognised as the Oba of Lagos attending meetings even the Western House of Chiefs

In this case, I do not self appoint myself to be the Olugbo and whereas the Townspeople over whom I am to reign had approved of my installation as I was firstly unanimously produced by the members of the Ruling Houses of Ugbo. The ~~main~~ minutes, the copy of which is with the District Officer makes known everything done when I was installed. On the whole, the advice of the District Officer I will stick to as I do not want to do anything contrary to his will, otherwise I may be compelled by necessity to freedom to take a way I know will do me much good.

Your Most Oppressed Subject,

...
Prince N.O. Mafimishubi
The Olugbo Elect.

APPENDIX V
REPORT OF BOARD OF ENQUIRY IN 1953: OLUGBO CHIEFTAINCY
DISPUTE

FINDINGS OF OLUGBO CHIEFTAINCY DISPUTES BOARD OF
ENQUIRY 10TH JULY, - 17TH

1. (a) Napoleon Mafimishebi: Olugbo stool is not HEREDITARY.
 He is not the only son of Agbedun the descendant of Ojodele his great grand father.

(b) He is the grand son of gundere the Olugbo who was the father of Mafimishebi I from whom Mafimishebi II came out and begot Napoleon Mafimishebi the "Contestant".

2. Ojodele had four sons (a) Agbedun; (b) Ojogo; (c) Eyeteye (d) Atarigye. Therefore the stool must be evenly distributed.

The reign of Mafimishebi II was the REWARD of Mafimishebi I who went on exile to Calabar, according to the statements of contestants and the elderly people of Ugbu. This should not give Napoleon Mafimishebi the right to monopolise the Ugbu stool.

4. The Intelligent report page 25 chapter 4 under Administrative and page 18 paragraph 4B (according to the sorry Napoleon produce) The ELDERLY people of Ugbu were called to the hall to identify this. They told the Committee that it was faulty and inappropriate. It means that the Olugbo had misled the Government by giving such untruthful history, intending to seize the Olugbo chieftaincy and confind it to Agbedun (Ohun) house alone and make it HEREDITARY.

GOVERNMENT: You are please hereby requested to see this for maintenance of PEACE in Ugbu land in the near future. The Committee refers you to the President Ilaje Native Authority and Ilaje District Council.

5. Few of the youths who are close relatives and friends of Napoleon Mafimishebi installed him unconstitutionally without the knowledge of the elders.

6a. The Wise Elderly people of Ugbu are invited by the Committee. (Two were absent) Told the Committee that Napoleon Mafimishebi was not installed to their knowledge, constitutionally and that the Olugbo title is not HEREDITARY. Moreover when an Olugbo is installed in history of Ugbu without the knowledge of ELDERS.

6b. Only one of the elders who supported him failed in Committee's cross examination.

7. Ugbu V.A. Vice President was kept neutral of this installation by the so called kingmakers.

CONCLUSION: It is not yet his turn.

Jarish Nana Aiyemobuwa: (The Ojogo of Ugbu) Despite letter D & F 243/132/60 dated 7th July, 1953 from the Honourable Secretary Southern Provinces Enugu: Ojogo

(to which Aiyemchuu belongs was the next son to be chosen out of the Four sons Ujale had.

2. He contended with the late Mafimishabi II the father of the present incumbent from the other house is from 1934-6. According to the letter dated Oct. 24/1934 while he was contesting in 1934-6, the whole people, elderly persons in Ugbu, and his Highness the Amator of Ibin (Ilije the President) begged him to give up the stool and help us up to maintain peace in his Country "Ugbu". At the same time he was asked to give it up to Mafimishabi II being he went on exile with his father as a reward to him. He peacefully left the then vacant stool. To the Committee it shows how obedient he is to his Country and the President Ilije N. Authority. The Committee now find it unnecessary, uncomfortable to preach him any counsel to leave it at this time.
3. Had it been that it is not his right to mount up the vacant stool of Ugbu, he would have been called by the virtue of his Office as the Vice president of Ugbu N.A. to the place where N. Mafimishabi was proposed to be installed.
4. All the ruling houses said, that they have no objection to any one installed from the rest houses but N. Mafimishabi whose father had just dismounted the stool and because he is not the only son of Ujale Ujale's descendant.
5. It is not in Ugbu History that anyone entitled OUMC should not ascend Ugbu stool whenever it is vacant.
1. John Aiyido Mafimishabi of Agbodun Melutehin. He is from the same house Agbodun with Mafimishabi II who reportedly vacated the stool. He is the son of Melutehin descendant of Agbodun. He is actually from Ugbu Royal Home or Ruling houses.
2. When next the title shall come to Agbodun house, Ilije (Ugbu) should be aware that Melutehin - Agbodun is the next son Ogun-Agbafun Mafimishabi II's house.
3. He would have been the best Candidate to be recommended but being of the same house with Mafimishabi II this being of the same house with Mafimishabi II the Ex-Chief of Ugbu. To avoid hereditary according to Ugbu elderly people.
1. William Tatumbe for Abochye - "yetayo" house:- it is a real fact, and there is no iota of doubt that this candidate comes from Ugbu's Royal house or ruling house. He is a descendant of Ujale son of the Ugbu Ujale's. He is the next son to Ujale.

CONCLUSION: NOT YET HIS TURN.

Jonathan Ibrje-Oliho Asr house: There is no doubt that Jonathan Ibrje of Oliho Asr: Is the or only son of the

Olugbo Omojogbe: father of Olini and "Jadele" out of the the house which Abisa Agbagba (Olugbo Designate) came. The Committee now declared that what the Contests called four ruling houses are not but the ruling houses. Name y Elini-Asi an Jadele houses.

2. The relationship between the Elini ruling house and Ojodele ruling house had "diminished" by the power which had been ever exercised by the past Olugbos from the other side of the House now lifted up by the history, supported by the Ugoe Elder. The Committee suggest that after this, that that house MAY be considered.

1. RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE (B/9).

The Committee hereby recommends Chief Josiah NANA AIYEMBUNA (Chief Ojodele of Ugoe) the OLUGBO OF UGOE this day: the 17th July 1953 Unanimously.

2. The Committee hereby also recommends Mr. JOHN AIYEDA MAJEHI BAJE the Ojodele or any other TITLE as he likes it. In one word he is the next name to the Olugbo of Ugoe. It is unanimously done.

(Sigd.)
" 1. Bailey Balogun
" 2. Albert Arulesor
" 3. E. F. I. Martins
" 4. M. E. Rege
" 5. A. A. Tawose

(Sigd.) Aug. Akinfolarin Tawose
Chairman Olugbo of Ugoe Eh.
Dispute B/C

To The Council (Ilaje)
Makin (Sitting on the 10th or any other time)
The above for your action please.

A. A. Tawose
17/7/53.

APPENDIX VI
EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF MORGAN CHIEFTAINCY REVIEW
COMMISSION

MORGAN WHITE PAPER
ULUGBO OF UGBO CHIEFTAINCY

72. Government accepts the Commission's recommendation as contained at page 125 of Volume III of its report. The approved Chieftaincy Declaration for the Ulugbo Chieftaincy shall be as set out below.

ULUGBO OF UGBO CHIEFTAINCY DECLARATION

- A. Number of Ruling House(s) - One
- B. Name of Ruling House - Ujodele
- C. Order of rotation in filling vacancies - None
- Present Ruling House - The stool is vacant
 Next Ruling House - Ujodele
- D. The persons qualified to be proposed as candidates by the ruling house entitled to fill a vacancy in the Chieftaincy shall be
1. Members of the Ruling House
 2. Of the male line only.
- E. Kingmakers -
1. Chief Ulubo
 2. Chief Gbogunron
 3. Chief Yosere
 4. Chief Alagho
 5. Chief Asogbon
 6. Chief Udnk.
- F. The procedure to be followed in filling the vacancy in the chieftaincy is as follows:
- (a) Within three months after the death of an Gbo, the Secretary of the competent Local Government shall ask the ruling house to present a candidate or candidates within fourteen days from the date of such notification;

- (b) The Head of the ruling house shall summon a meeting of the ruling house, composed according to the local tradition, to select a candidate or candidates who will be presented to the Kingmakers;
- (c) The Head of the ruling house shall be the Chairman of the meeting and he shall call for nomination.
- (d) Either the Head of the ruling house or the person nominated by the ruling house shall, within three days of the nomination, present the nominated candidate or candidates to the kingmakers for their acceptance or rejection;
- (e) The Head of the ruling house shall also communicate the name or names of the nominated candidate or candidates to the kingmakers in writing within three days. A copy of the letter shall be sent to The Secretary of the competent Local Government.
- (f) The kingmakers shall meet within fourteen days of receiving the name or names of the candidate or candidates nominated and consider his or their suitability according to custom. Unless a candidate suffers a disqualification in accordance with the Chiefs Law, his name shall be submitted by the Kingmakers for consultation of Ifa (if that is the custom) by a person appointed by them for the purpose. Where however there is no unanimity by the candidate by a simple majority of votes;
- (g) The election shall take place in the presence of the Secretary of the competent Local Government and the head of the ruling house as observers.

Certified true copy

Sgd.

State Commissioner
DEPT. OF SPECIAL DUTIES
Office of the Military Governor
Akure Ondo State.
6/6/89

APPENDIX VII
EXTRACTS FROM THE SUPREME COURT JUDGEMENT IN 2007

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF NIGERIA
HOLDEN AT ABUJA
ON FRIDAY THE 12TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2007
BEFORE THEIR LORDSHIPS

SALIHU MODIBBO ALFA BELGORE

SYLVESTER UMARU ONU

DAHIRU MUSDAPHER

ALOMA MARIAM MUKHTAR

WALTER SAMUEL NKANU ONNOGHEN

CHIEF JUSTICE OF NIGERIA

JUSTICE, SUPREME COURT

JUSTICE, SUPREME COURT

JUSTICE, SUPREME COURT

JUSTICE, SUPREME COURT

SC. 160/1995

BETWEEN:

OBA ADEBANJO MAFIMISEBI

CHIEF FRANCIS OMOTUNDE EWARAWON
 Substituted by Order of Court 2/5/2006

3RD DEFENDANT/APPELLANT/
 CROSS - RESPONDENT

7TH DEFENDANT/APPELLANT/
 CROSS - RESPONDENT

AND:

1. PRINCE MACAULAY EHUWA
2. PRINCE ETHIOPIA EYTWUMI OKIKI
3. PRINCE EPHRAIM O. OMOTOYE
4. PRINCE ALBERT S. EBIGBEMI

PLAINTIFFS/RESPONDENTS/
 CROSS - APPELLANTS

AND:

1. THE MILITARY GOVERNOR OF ONDO STATE
2. THE SECRETARY, ILAJE/ESE-ODO LOCAL GOVERNMENT
3. THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL OF ONDO STATE

DEFENDANTS/RESPONDENTS/
 CROSS-RESPONDENTS

AND:

Handwritten notes:
 (Kaduna) Bala
 (Kaduna) Bala

1. HIGH CHIEF S. A. ADUGBEN
2. HIGH CHIEF A. M. AGBARO

} DEFENDANTS/RESPONDENTS
CROSS-RESPONDENTS.

JUDGMENT

(Delivered by DAHIRU MUSDAPHER, JSC)

In the High Court of Ondo State of Nigeria in the Okiti-pupa Judicial Division and in suit No. HOK/7/84, the plaintiffs who are the respondents and the cross-appellants herein commenced this action on the 14/6/1984. In their Further Further Amended Statement of Claim as per paragraph 36 thereof, they claimed against all the defendants therein, that is the appellants/cross-respondents and the respondents/cross-respondents herein the following declarations and reliefs:-

- * (i) Declaration that the Registered Declaration of Ugbo Chieftaincy are (sic) defective and inexhaustive of the customs and traditions of Ugbo chieftaincy and therefore null and void.
- * (ii) Declaration that under the traditions and customs of the Ugbo people regarding Ugbo chieftaincy the appointment of an Olugbo is by rotation between AGBEDUN/OJOGO and OYETAYO/ ATARIOYE section of OJADELE ruling house since the demise of OJADELE.
- * (iii) Declaration that the Registered Declaration of the Ugbo Chieftaincy to the extent that it fails to provide for rotation between AGBEDUN/OJOGO and OYETAYO/ATARIOYE sections of OJADELE Ruling house is defective, inequitable, invalid, null and void.

- (iv) Declaration that the findings and recommendations of Morgan Chieftaincy Review Commission of 1981 relating to the Olugbo of Ugbo Chieftaincy in Ondo State and the Government White Paper issued on it are invalid null and void on the following grounds:-
- (a) That the findings and the recommendations of the said commission on which the 1st Defendant based its decision are contrary to law having disregarded vital evidence placed before it.
 - (b) That the findings and the recommendations of the said commission which the 1st defendant based its decision are contrary to law having taken into consideration extraneous matters.
- (v) Declaration that under the customs and traditions of the Ugbo people, the head of the OJADELE ruling house must present candidates aspiring to the OLUGBO Stool physically for screening and selection before the kingmakers at the meeting where a candidate will be appointed.
- (vi) Declaration that the 7th defendant is not a kingmaker of the Olugbo of Ugbo in Ilaje/Ese-Odo of Ondo State.
- (vii) Declaration that the purported appointment and approval of the candidature of the 3rd defendant as the Olugbo by the 4th – 7th and 1 to 2nd defendant respectively is irregular, illogical, uncustomary, invalid, null and void and of no effect whatsoever.
- (viii) An Order of perpetual injunction restraining the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th and 7th defendants by themselves or through their servants, agents or privies, or otherwise howsoever from taking any steps or actions in relation to or in furtherance of the purported appointment of the 3rd defendant as the Olugbo elect.

- (ix) An Order setting aside the purported appointment of the 3rd defendant as the Olugbo elect.
- (x) An Order of perpetual injunction restraining the 3rd Defendant from further presenting or parading himself or holding out himself or allowing himself to be held out as the Olugbo and from exercising any right or performing any functions ascribed to an Olugbo."

Pleadings were filed, exchanged and amended. At the trial the parties gave evidence, and called other witnesses and documentary evidence were tendered. At the conclusion of the trial, in his judgment delivered on the 7th day of June 1990, the learned trial judge dismissed in their entirety the declarations, reliefs and injunctions the plaintiffs claimed as reproduced above. The plaintiffs felt unhappy with the situation and appealed to the Court of Appeal on one original ground of appeal. With the leave of the Court of Appeal 13 additional grounds were allowed to be canvassed on behalf of the plaintiffs.

In the determination of the matter before it, the Court of Appeal per Akpabio JCA [who read the lead judgment which was concurred by Ogebe and Ubaezonu JJCA] at page 622 of the printed record of the proceedings stated as follows:-

"I have carefully considered all the issues formulated

arguments under issue (B) of the main appeal and having regards to the answers I gave while considering Issue (B) I see no need to repeat the arguments or my reaction to them.

Now, with reference to the evaluation of the evidence as contained in the Exhibit J series. In its judgment the Court of Appeal at page 638 in the lead judgment stated:

✱ "At the High Court the appellants as plaintiffs produced and tendered inter alia a series of five documents from the National Archives which were admitted as Exhibits J, J1, J2, J3, and J4. (They will hereinafter be referred to as Exhibit J series). It is unnecessary to produce any of them here, as they are rather lengthy. The important thing however, setting up the Morgan Commission, and the making of Exhibit "A". These exhibits all showed that the appointment of Oba Mafimisebi III as the successor to his late father Oba Mafimisebi II. Exhibit "J" for instance was the Report of Board of Enquiry set up to enquire into the Olugbo chieftaincy dispute held in 1953. They contained the evidence of few supporters of the Oba who sought to show that succession was hereditary, while the vast majority testified that it was originally rotational and sought to restore it. The general conclusion in Exhibit J was that the "Olugbo stool is NOT HEREDITARY," and that it was NOT

YET the turn of Napeoleon Mafimisebi [i.e the father of the 3rd defendant] to be an Olugbo. Exhibit J1 was also a record of proceedings of another enquiry set up in January, 1954. Exhibit J2 was the report of District Officer Okitipupa Division on the same subject matter. All the other Exhibit J series dealt with the best method of succession to the throne by rotation."



In my view, it is quite clear with the above findings by the Court of Appeal on the evidence in the Exhibits J series, there is absolutely no need to remit the case back to the High Court for retrial. These pieces of evidence was the evidence the trial judge was looking for when he said apart from their oral evidence the plaintiffs failed to show any corroborative evidence of rotation to the stool of Olugbo. The evidence is there is Exhibit J series which he failed to utilize. It is very important to bear in mind that the cross respondents did not appeal against the finding by the Court of Appeal after evaluating Exhibit J series, that there was overwhelming evidence that the method of succession to the Olugbo is by rotation.