

SOCI 224:

Social Structure of Modern of

Ghana

Session 2 – The Political Institution in Transition

Lecturers: Dr. Fidelia Ohemeng & Dr. Mark K. M. Obeng Department of
Sociology

Contact Information: fohemeng@ug.edu.gh



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

College of Education

School of Continuing and Distance Education

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Session Overview

The first institution to be affected by colonialism is the traditional political system. This session describes how traditional rulers were impacted by colonialism. It also discusses the new form of political system which is the Local Government system.

Session Outline

The key topics to be covered in the session are as follows:

- The nature of the change in the traditional polity
- The local government system
 - the rationale behind it
 - components
- Functions of the various components
 - The Regional Coordinating Councils
 - The District Assemblies

Reading List

- Abotchie, C. (2016). *Social Change in Ghana*. Accra: Hans Publications. Chapter 2
- Nukunya, G. (2014). *Tradition and Change in Ghana: an Introduction to Sociology*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press. Pages 133-136



Topic One

THE NATURE OF THE CHANGE IN THE TRADITIONAL POLITY



The Nature of the Change in the Traditional Polity

- The Chiefs lost their independence in every respect
- They lost almost all their functions. These are:
 - Military: could no longer wage war against other ethnic groups
 - Legislative & Administrative powers: could not make laws. They were however allowed to make by-laws
 - Interpretation of Customary Laws
Subject to cadres of PNDC/ DAs



The Nature of the Change in the Traditional Polity

- Judicial: colonial courts were established, prisons
 - Chiefs could pass by laws on 15 subjects only (Amenumey, 1964)
- Economic: lost their monopoly over important trade routes and commodities

The Nature of the Change in the Traditional Polity

- The only functions being performed by the chiefs:
 - Cultural- persistence of the traditional criteria for selection of chiefs
 - Religious –As occupant of ancestral stools

Sample Question

- In view of the fact that chiefs have lost almost all their functions, discuss the view that chieftaincy should be abolished in Ghana

Topic Two

THE MODERN POLITICAL SYSTEM: THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE



The Local Government Structure

- The Modern Political system is made up of the
 - Central government
 - Local government system
- **The Local Government System**
- Promulgated in 1988 (PNDC Law 207)
- **Main rational** is to diffuse government business to the local people and allow local people to participate in governance and development



Components of the Local Government Structure

- This is a three tier system made up of the:
 - Regional Coordinating Council (RCCs)
 - District/Municipal/Metropolitan Assemblies (MMDAs)
 - Town, Area Councils and Unit Committees (TACUCs)

The Regional Coordinating Council

- The Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) consists of Regional Ministers, Government appointed persons as chairmen, all presiding members of the MMDAs, all Deputy Ministers and all District Secretaries (DCE/MMCEs)
- The roles of the RCCs includes coordination and formulation of the integrated plans and programs of the MMDAs in order to harmonize these programs with the National development policies approved by the government.

Composition of the MMDAs

- The MMDAs consists of the:
 - Metropolitan Chief Executive (MCE)/Municipal Chief Executive (MCE)/District Chief Executive (DCE)
 - Presiding Member, who is a government appointee
 - 2/3 of elected members
 - 1/3 members nominated by the government.

Topic Three

FUNCTIONS OF THE MMDAS



Functions of the MMDAs

- The overall development of the districts and ensuring the preparation and submission of development plans and budgets to the government for approval
- The formulation and strategies for effective mobilization of human, physical, financial and other resources
- Engagement of trade, industry or commerce for development



Functions of the MMDAs

- Maintenance of public works and services
- Cooperation with national security to provide security for the district
- Construction and rehabilitation of new social and developmental infrastructure.

Town, Area Council and Unit Committees (TACUC)

- The TACUC is the third component of the Local Government Structure
- These are yet to be established fully; their establishment is based on need
- The MMDCs should make recommendations to government for approval

Some Preliminary Achievements

- Awakening of the political consciousness of the MMDAs at the primary school level
- Expansion of infrastructural facilities at the district level
- Expansion of markets/lorry parks, etc.
- Construction of schools and rehabilitation of old one