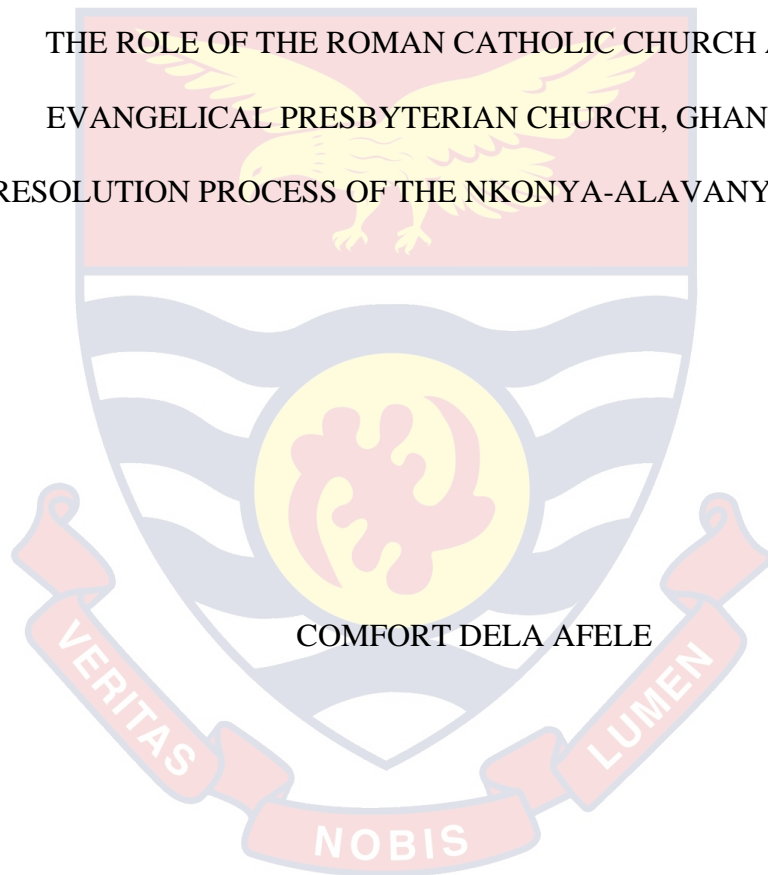UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

THE ROLE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE

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RESOLUTION PROCESS OF THE NKONYA-ALAVANYO CONFLICT

COMFORT DELA AFELE
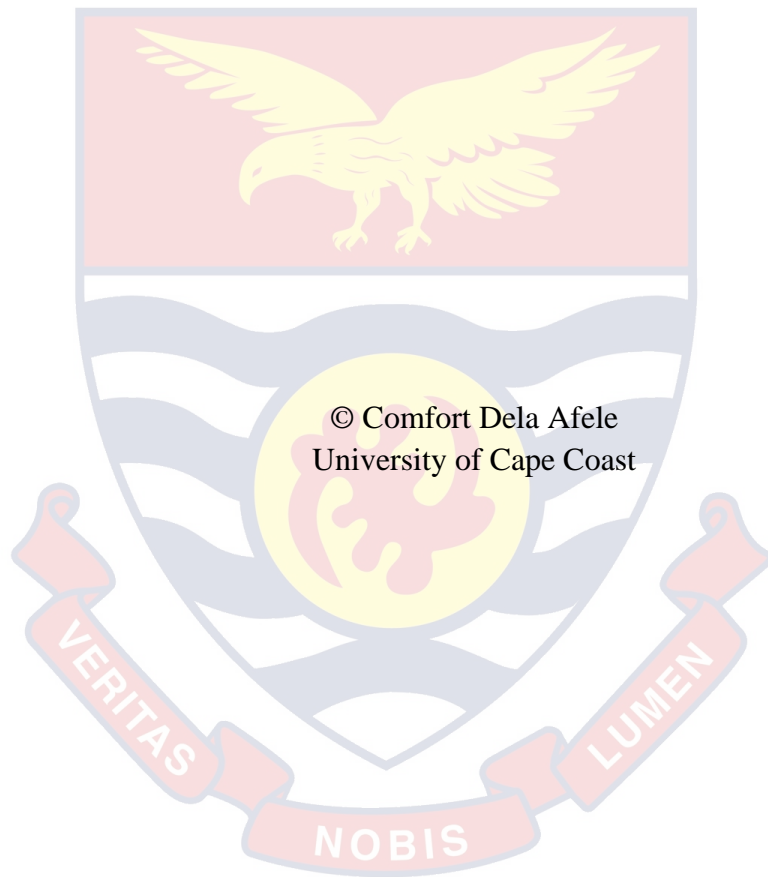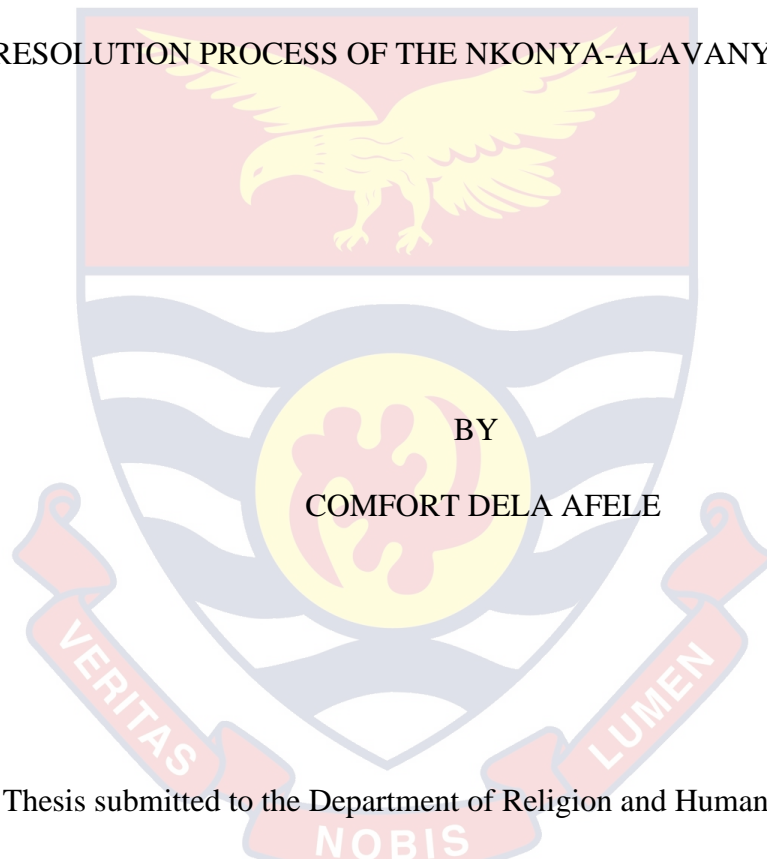
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THE ROLE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND

THEEVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GHANA IN THE

RESOLUTION PROCESS OF THE NKONYA-ALAVANYO CONFLICT

BY

COMFORT DELA AFELE

Thesis submitted to the Department of Religion and Human Values of the

Faculty of Arts University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the

requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy degree in Religion and

Human Values

DECEMBER 2020

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: ....………………… Date:………………………

Name: Comfort DelaAfele

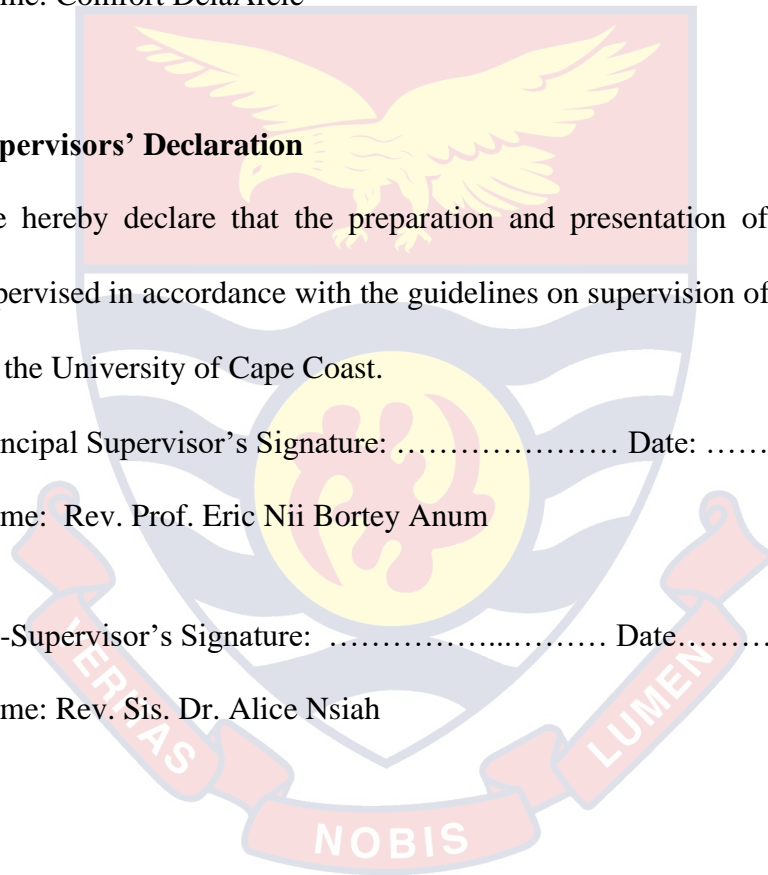**Supervisors' Declaration**

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature: ………………… Date: ……………………

Name: Rev. Prof. Eric Nii Bortey Anum

Co-Supervisor's Signature: ……………...……… Date………..………

Name: Rev. Sis. Dr. Alice Nsiah

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ABSTRACT

This work looked at the roles that the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana (EPCG) played in the resolution process of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. A number of researches have been conducted on this conflict with references to RCC and the EPCG as one of the mediators. Even though Darkwa et al. (2012) and others mentioned the Church in the mediation process, their emphases were not on the churches' involvement perse. Darkwa et al. wrote on violent conflicts in Ghana with the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict as one of them and so, did not dwell so much on the mandate of the Church to participate in the conflict resolution. This research used a historical approach and focuses on the RCC and EPCG and their full participation in the resolution of the conflict because of the position of the author in recognising the two selected Christian Churches as key stakeholders in the areas under consideration and therefore, are interested parties in the context. For instance, it was through the efforts of the churches that the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo experienced peace and reconciliation process and were able to interact with each other freely, in 2006, after a long period of hate, antagonism and enmity. The work covered the period between 1983 and 2015, when the conflict escalated severally. The researcher found out that the Nkonya-Alavanyo are predominantly, RC and EPCG and therefore hold the leaders in high esteem. It also found out that the churches, in collaboration with the leaders of the two communities, played an immense role in the resolution process. However, the resolution has come to a stalemate. The researcher recommended that the Church re-invites the parties to revisit the resolution process, for peaceful co-existence, growth and development.

KEY WORDS

Conflict

Conflict resolution

Disputed land

Mediation Committee

Nkonya-Alavanyo

Protracted conflict

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DEDICATION

To my family – Mawusi, Eyram, Akorfa and Selorm

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AC	Aquah Committee
ACD	Armed Conflict Data
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
ATA	Aflao Traditional Area
ATM Card	Automated Teller Machine Card
BD	Biakoye District
BM	Bremen Mission
BSPF	Bible Study and Prayer Fellowship
CC	Catholic Church
CC	Consultative Committee
CCG	Christian Council of Ghana
CCM	Cape Coast Mission
CDS	Catholic Diocese Secretariat
CM	Concerned Members
CM	Consultative Meeting
CPP	Convention People's Party
CRS	Catholic Relief Service
CS	Catholic Relief Service
CSC	Catholic Service Centre
CWACB	Council of West Africa Catholic Bishops
DCC	Divisional Chief Commander
DCE	District Chief Executive
DPT	Diocesan Peace building Team
EC	Ewe Church

EPC	Evangelical Presbyterian Church
EPC	Ewe Presbyterian Church
EPCG	Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana
EPCoG	Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana
EPTTC	Evangelical Presbyterian Traders Training Centre
EST	Enemy System Theory
FA	Frustration Aggression
GCBC	Ghana Catholic Bishops Conference
GCM	Gold Coast Mission
GEC	Global Evangelical Church
GM	Gruner Map
HTC	Hohoe Traditional Council
I.M.C (a)	Interim Management Committee
IMC (b)	International Missionary Council
IPP	Inclusive Peace Process
JCC	Joint Consultative Committee
LC	Local Courts
MC (a)	Mediation Committee
MC (b)	Mireku Committee
MP	Members of Parliament
MUSEC	Municipal Security Council
NADMO	National Disaster Management Organization
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NDRCE	National Disaster Related Conflict Escalation
NPP	National Patriotic Party

OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PEC	Presbyterian Evangelical Church
PRIO	Peace Reach Institute Oslo
PS	Peace Setters
RC	Roman Catholic
RCB	Roman Catholic Bishops
RCC (a)	Roman Catholic Church
RCC (b)	Regional Coordinating Council
RCDH	Roman Catholic Diocese Conference Hall
RCPSC	Roman Catholic Prayer and Spiritual Centre
RESEC	Volta Regional Security Council
RG	Revolutionary Guards
SHS	Senior High School
TLNA	Traditional Leaders of Nkonya and Alavanyo
UCC	University of Cape Coast
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Programme
UER	Upper East Region
UGCC	United Gold Coast Convention
USA	United States of America
UWR	Upper West Region
VR	Volta Region
VRCC	Volta Regional House of Chiefs
WANEP	West African Network for Peace Building
WASR	West African Sub-Region

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WCC   World Council of Churches

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The rampant and continued escalation of conflicts around the world tend to question the effectiveness of the peace-building processes of the various political, social and religious organisations such as the United Nations (UN) and the World Council of Churches (WCC). Thus, the increasing number of violent wars especially in Africa makes one a bit suspicious about the impact of the respective mediation strategies on peace-building and conflict resolution and management across the world. To this effect, and considering this research on the Nkonya- Alavanyo conflict, it can be recalled that a dispute between two individuals of Nkonya-Tayi and Alavanyo-Kpeme over a land-boundary demarcation some ninety-three years ago has resulted into the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

This conflict erupted in 1923, to be specific and has since surged many times to date, characterised by killings, unrest, violence and destruction of property of various forms and degrees. Darkwa, Attuquafio and Yakohene (2012) maintain that there were times of relative ceasefire. However, on other occasions such as in 1980, 1983, 1990, 2003 and 2004, there were resurgences at the least provocation from the opposite side. According to the indigenes of Nkonya, there were current resurgences in 2013 and 2014 to date irrespective of the various interventions from the government, social and religious bodies and well-meaning people from both within and outside Ghana.

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Nkonya and Alavanyo are neighbouring towns in the Volta Region (VR) of the Republic of Ghana (RG) and share a common land boundary. It can be said that the 'twin towns' have enjoyed more than 500 years of peaceful co-existence until the conflict erupted between them in 1923 over a land dispute (William Kwakye, personal communication, October 2, 2017).

Since then, there have been series of attempts to resolve the conflict by various stake holders, including religious bodies and the government of Ghana but to no avail. For example, the Acquah Committee (AC), Mireku Committee (MC), Members of Parliament (MP), the Volta Regional Coordinating Council (VRCC) and the Nkonya-Alavanyo Conflict Mediation Committee (NACMC), all set up by the government were unsuccessful in their bid to bring about a lasting solution to the conflict. Similarly, other non-governmental bodies and institutions such as the Conference of West African Catholic Bishops (CWACB) and the Volta Regional House of Chiefs (VRHC) have also failed in their attempt to bring the situation under relative control. However, in the meantime, the police and the military have been deployed to keep the peace by protecting life and property on both sides of the mountain mainly, through education and the enforcement of curfews.

Prominent church leaders such as the Rt. Rev. Dr. Livingstone Buama, the then Moderator of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, Most Rev. Francis Lodonu, the then Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Ho and the Most Rev. Gabriel Mantey, Catholic Bishop of Jasikan Diocese, have all been part of the church oriented (NACMC), set up by the government of Ghana to resolve the outstanding issues that would pave the way for reconciliation. However, this committee has also failed in attaining lasting peace.

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Notwithstanding the failure of the churches to mediate lasting peace, the role of the Church in reducing the ongoing atrocities should not be underestimated. This viewpoint concurs with McGuire (1992) that religion still remains a strong contributor to social cohesion and moral unity of peoples. This view underscores the fact that religious concepts play and continue to play a very important role in conflict resolution (Said, Funk and Kunkle, 2001). It is in this vein that the study attempts to critically assess the role of the church in promoting lasting peace and reconciliation among the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo traditional areas.

Statement of the Problem

The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict has been in existence over the past ninety-three years with varying degrees of violence, insecurity and social unrest. As such, there have been series of interventions from various individuals and stakeholders. Nonetheless, one major institution of most significance in the whole process of peace-building and reconciliation is the Church. However, sadly, irrespective of the involvement of the Church in finding a lasting solution to the conflict, the violent escalating continues repeatedly. It is in the light of this that people have questioned and continue to question the justification and the ability of the church to settle conflicts and disputes of this nature. This doubt raises an essential hypothetical question regarding the mandate and the ability of the church to resolve ethnic conflicts. The study thus sought to critically examine the mandate and the role of the Church in mediating (in) and managing ethnic conflicts in order to recommend

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some contemporary theological approaches that will help to promote peace and reconciliation among the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo.

Research Objectives

The study critically sought to:

1. Find out the trend of global conflicts.

2. Evaluate conflict trends in Ghana.

3. Assess the nature of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict in Ghana.

4. Catalogue the Biblical principles, traditions and practices of conflict resolution.

5. Analyse the major contributions of the Roman Catholic Church and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, in the mediation process of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

6. Make recommendations as to how the Nkonya-Alavanyoconflict can be resolved.

Research Questions

The research questions are as follows:

1. What are global trends of conflict?

2. What are conflict trends in Ghana?

3. What is the nature of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict in Ghana?

4. What are the Biblical principles, traditions and practices of conflict resolution?

5. What are the major contributions of the Roman Catholic Church and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, in the mediation process of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict?

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6. What are some recommendations for the resolution of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict?

Scope of the Study

The study investigated the periods between 1983 and 2015 of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. These were the periods when the conflict escalated on different occasions and incidents of violence manifested. In addition, the study focused on the mediation of the Local Council of Churches (LCC), the Mediation Committee (MC) of the Volta Region (VR) and the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG). Other groups of interest to the study were the leadership of the conflicting parties such as, the Traditional Leaders of Nkonya and Alavanyo (TLNA), giving special attention to Nkonya-Tayi and Alavanyo-Kpeme where the conflict started. The research also operated within the parameters of the Volta Regional House of Chiefs and the National Peace Council. Some resourceful individuals in Nkonya and Alavanyo were duly consulted. The research was conducted between 2015 sand 2018.

Significance of the Study

This research is significant at this point in time when the rampant resurgences of conflicts have become a global issue. Also, conflicts over land and chieftaincy issues as well as pre-election and post-election conflicts are gaining dominance in Ghana and the Government in collaboration with the NPC is working frantically to resolve these issues and bring about peace. This research will create awareness for the training of religious leaders in theological institutions and other faith-based institutions such as Islamic institutions, to become professionals in conflict and conflict resolution. After

all, when conflict arises, it is religious leaders that the Government and other stakeholders call on for mediation. Furthermore, the findings of the study will help to sensitise church leaders, Christians and the citizenry to respond promptly to conflict warning signs.

Furthermore, it will create awareness for the citizens of the nation to try as much as possible to prevent conflict and make conflict resolution their priority. By so doing the nation will be creating a peaceful and harmonious society.

In the final analysis, it is hoped that the study will add to existing stock of literature for researchers in the field of study and the findings will serve as a point of reference for future academic work.

Research Methodology

Sources of the Study

This research employed two major sources in the collection of data. These are primary and secondary sources.

Primary Sources

This was done through field work. The primary sources comprised focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews. The rest are, inter-personal communication, individual interview, and in-depth interviews. Policy statements were also used for groundbreaking information. In some cases, self-administered questionnaires were used for feedback.

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SecondarySources

Secondary sources for the study included books, journals, magazines, theses, dissertations, reports, Policy statements, Encyclopedia, diaries, photographs and other materials from archives. Additionally, electronic media as well as the internet, newspapers and other related literature were consulted to enrich the study.

Methodology

This study used the historical method, which is exploratory. This method was used to explore the history of the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo and to delve into the history of the conflict. Since the qualitative method is deductive and aims at testing the validity of the data collected, through observations, the researcher employed it to gain insight into the complex issues of the study. This approach helped in the development of ideas and opinions that led to the formulation of theories (Glaser and Strauss, 1967 &DeFranzo, 2011).

The qualitative research method was chosen over other research methods based on the fact that it uses small sample sizes that are purposively selected to respond to specific questions, investigate beliefs, attitudes and concepts (Hammarberg, Kirkman & de Lacey, 2016, & DeFranzo, 2011). Thus, respondents were purposively selected to respond to specific questions that helped in gaining insight into and understanding of the subject matter. Indeed, unlike the quantitative data collection methods, which rely on random sampling and are structured and aim at quantifying and measuring variables, qualitative data collection methods make use of unstructured (and sometimes semi-

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structured) interviews. Some of these are focus groups and individual interviews to understand the history of a group of people. Data was also collected from archival materials which helped in understanding the history of the conflict.

Historigraphy, which employs specific approaches and tools to study history by way of drawing lessons from the past, analysing events scientifically and also predicting future events, enabled the researcher to do theological analysis and also predict some difficulties that might arise during the peace process (Clifford, 2002 & Mandavilli, 2015).

Using the theory of bracketing and reflexivity, I bracketed my biases and worked academically even though I was an insider. My position as Ewe, belonging to the tribe of one of the warring factions and a Rev. Minister of one of the selected Churches did not influence my judgements and interpretation of data (Tufford & Newman, 2010).

The historical method is time consuming and needs thorough cross-checking of facts through the application of both the internal and external historical designs, in order to minimise biases and inaccuracies. From the above explanations, it is apparent that the historical method seems more appropriate for this research since collecting of historical facts and assembling them more or less guide historians to understand the history of the people and also check facts.

Sample Size

The study used a sample size of 20 people who were purposively selected and interviewed. These were key memberssuch as heads of churches, chiefs, elders, family heads and opinion leaders of both communities who were also eyewitnesses to some or all of the conflicts under study.

Literature Review

Introduction

It is appropriate to understand what conflict is before we proceed toreview literature on it. Conflict as a term is subject to a variety of interpretations in different contexts and times. Conflict has different and numerous definitions from different schools of thought. Depending on the author's field of study, worldview, experience, cognitive and affective domains, social, political, religious and economic background, he or she would emphasise different elements of conflict.

The varied definitions equally depend on one's inclination and other related factors. These definitions though varied, have commonalities. They use similar words or terms running through them. Some of these words are; intra, inter, opposing, opponent, disagreement, inevitable, incompatible/ incompatibility, compete/competition, freedom, justice, injustice, clash, strife, struggle, party, against, interest, needs, resources and wealth.

Definitions of Conflict

Conflict as a term is derived from the Latin word *confligere*which means, to strike together. This act of two or more bodies hitting each other or one another physically has been maintained as an empirical definition of

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conflict. Conflict here is perceived as an overt and coercive behaviour which is initiated by one contending party against the other. The fact is that before there is a disagreement, two parties would have to clash or hit each other. This is when a conflict starts (Bercovitch, Kremenyuk and Zartman, 2011). Conflict is therefore a clash between or among two or more parties based on a clash of ideas, opinions, perceptions and emotions. This clash can be non-verbal, verbal or physical that is, emotional/psychological conflict, conflict of words (by word of mouth) or a fight with fist, weapons or any implement or device used with the intent to inflict damage or harm.

As human beings continue struggling for survival, individuals and groups compete with each other/one another, in order to achieve their aims, goals or ambitions. It is during this struggle for survival that people clash with each other/one another, leading to conflict. Life in general is full of competition, from basic school, little children struggle for the top positions during examinations, thus creating enemies for themselves. Students struggle to compete for prizes and positions such as school prefects, athletes, footballers, politicians and all groups of people, compete to undo each other/one another for positions and other aspirations.

What then is conflict? It can be defined as the clash that takes place during competition for survival, the competition for the rights and privileges that qualifies one to become a citizen in a nation-state. When citizens are denied these rights and privileges, they are denied their citizenship, which amounts to the invitation of conflict (Tonah, 2007). This is where the Human Needs Theory comes in. Galtung (1958) explains that citizens want the right to freedom, security, interaction with the natural environment, participate in

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politics, education, mobility, growth and a host of human needs. Consequently, if these needs are not provided, the people form groups to cause destruction, then, there is conflict. This is exactly what is prevailing in Nkonya and Alavanyo.

After the 1983 escalation, there has been regular imposition of 1800hours to 0600hours curfew on the two communities. As a result, the people have no freedom as they cannot live normal lives. There is no security, as opponents take advantage of the curfew to ambush and kill. For fear of being killed, most people do not go out to interact with the natural environment let alone, till the land to get some farm produce for survival. During referendums, citizens are scared to go out to exercise their franchise (to participate in politics) notwithstanding their eligibility and the presence of the military to maintain peace and protect lives.Education is affected as some school children have dropped out of school for fear of being shot and killed (In a group discussion, a female respondent, 8thJanuary, 2018).

Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall (2011) see conflict to be a universal feature of human society, which takes its origins in economic differentiation, social change, cultural formation, psychological development and political organisation. They believe that all these, are inherently conflictual and becomes overt through the formation of conflict parties as observed by Galtung (1958), which have or are thought to have mutually incompatible goals. This conflictual relationship arises when people disagree on issues, be it social, political, economic or otherwise. According to Awedoba (2009:5) "Conflict is a relationship between two or more parties that centres on, differences, disagreements, incompatibilities and clash of wills.'' He sees

conflict as a relationship between two or more parties. However, this relationship centers on negative issues such as differences, disagreements and others that can bring about derailed relationships. Social conflict arises when two or more people or groups of people manifest the belief that they have incompatible objects. Conflict is also described as the end product of overt and covert incompatible interest, goals, beliefs or activities. It is a situation in which one party's interest cannot be fully realised, without their infringing on the right of the other party (Johansen, 2012; Kriesberg, 2003).

It is agreeable that conflict is universal and has to do with disagreements and differences, which are inherently conflictual. It is equally agreeable that it is a phenomenon that arises as a result, of selfishness of one partywho seeks to infringe on the rights and desires of another party, in order to achieve their own desires or goals. This is where competition comes into play as one party has to 'fight' the other in order to pave way for their own rights or whatever selfish goals they are aiming at. Naturally, when two groups are contesting for the same object, one party would have to 'kick out' the other in order to attain their own goal. The other alternative is to let go which is mostly not the case thus, the numerous conflicts in our societies.

It is however difficult to agree with the fact that conflict arises as a result of people having 'mutually incompatible goals, desires or any incompatible object.' Apparently, conflict arises when two parties have compatible goals, desires or any other object of contention. The explanation here is that the fact that two parties are targeting the same object or have interest in the same object, inherently, makes them adversaries as they have to fight over it thus, bringing conflict. On the contrary, if two parties have

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incompatible goals or targeting different objects, they have no moral, psychological, emotional or intrinsic will to fight as they may in effect help each other in order to achieve their individual goals. Assuming two politicians are aiming at the positions of a president and an ambassador, the one who desires the ambassadorial position, logically will campaign for the presidential aspirant to win, in order to help him/her to become an ambassador. It is therefore difficult to accept the above definitions.

Tonah (2016) defines conflict generally as a struggle between individuals or groups who hold contrasting views, needs, ideas, demands, beliefs, values or goals. He argues that as long as human beings live together and continue to have conflicting views, conflict becomes part of their everyday life and for that matter, inevitable. Weeks (2011) and Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse (1999) describe conflict as intrinsic and inevitable and the outcome of human diversity. The definition goes on to say that a world without conflict is undesirable for, it would not bring diversity. The assumption here is that conflict in itself helps to bring about multiplicity. Hence, conflict can be viewed as a means to an end rather than an end to a means and not a bad thing in itself but the consequences of conflict labels it as such. Conflict here can equally be understood to be congenital or innate and part of human nature. Brunk (2012) argues that life without conflict will be boring and unsatisfying and that the only human community that exists without conflict is the cemetery.

He argues that "even if humans were perfectly good beings, conflict would be inevitable" (2012:14). Analysing this definition, conflict is synonymous to human existence and as long as human beings exist, conflicts cannot be avoided. Conflict has been with human beings, from time

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immemorial. Cain had a conflict with his brother Abel and killed him (Genesis4:5-8). Jacob and Esau, even as fetuses in their mother's womb, had conflict despite the fact that they were twins (Genesis 25:22). Seemingly, the definitionsof Weeks (2011), Mial, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse (1999) and Brunk (2012) as discussed above, are the most appropriate for conflict among the lot. No matter the relationship between human beings, whether by blood, marriage, association or whatsoever, there will still be conflict because it is 'inevitable' and synonymous to human existence.

Mayer (2000) defines conflict as something that occurs along cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions. By using 'cognitive', 'emotional' and 'behavioural', he is referring to the perception, feeling and action of the conflicting parties. This three-dimensional perspective can help us understand the complexities of conflict and why it sometimes looks to be moving in contradictory directions. Conflict reflects/portrays a purposive action or a struggle over an object that is seemingly overt or covert, manifest or imaginary. However, no matter the nature of the conflict, either as a perception or real conflict situation, "it is a function of the mindset of the parties in a relation" (Aja Akparu-Aja, 2007:15). Both authors define conflict as 'a perception and action/real conflict situation' and that is my focus. Human beings by nature are suspicious of one another as it is not humanly possible to know what one's neighbour has on his/her mind or heart. This is a kind of security consciousness or precautionary measure to curb will-be danger. For this reason, individuals or groups in relationship watch moods, actions, utterances, demeanours and misdemeanours.

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They also use history and experience such as human occurrences and activities in our human setups to perceive that they are in a conflict, for that matter, they are. The victim should perceive that danger is looming and can escalate at anytime so he/she must be careful and take warning signs seriously. It is therefore apt to define conflict as a function of the mindset of the parties in a relationship.

Conflict is defined by another school of thought as; an endemic feature of society which takes place over a span of issues such as differences, inequalities, values, scarcity, status, power and prestige among individuals and groups. Conflict is defined as the fight over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired values but also to neutralise, injure or eliminate their rivals (Ahorsu, 2016 &Coser, 1968). This is where the needs theory becomes applicable. To analyse these definitions, the inequalities, differences, values, scarcity/scarce resources, status, power and prestige, have been discussed earlier.

The definition of Ahorsu, (2016) and Corser (1968) are confirmations that some aspect of society is full of competition to amass wealth and flaunt riches, struggle to get to the top to control people. It is worth commenting on conflict as an 'endemic,' According to Horny, (2000:382) an 'endemic' is, "a disease or condition regularly, found among particular people or a particular area." Just as 'endemic' is found among 'particular group of people', conflict is prevalent is particular areas that are known as 'conflict prone' areas. This definition of 'endemic' is not far from the schools of thought that define conflict as 'inevitable'. A disease is no respecter of persons; it attacks any

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caliber of person as mentioned earlier that conflict occurs in any human set-up no matter the caliber of people even if they are saints. In the same vein, a disease attacks whoever it chooses. It is written, "Now, Naaman was commander of the army of the King of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the Lord had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy" (2Kings 5:1). His position notwithstanding, Naaman had leprosy, a dreadful and disgraceful disease. As discussed earlier, the 'endemic conflict' is part of human nature according to Brunk (2012). Seemingly, no matter how careful human beings are there will still be conflict. Reflecting on these definitions, one is tempted to ask the question; "Should human beings be held responsible/blamed for conflict"?

Fairchild & Hunter (2014) equally defines conflict, as a process or situation in which two or more human beings or groups seek actively to threaten each other's purpose, to prevent each other's interests, even to the extent of injuring or destroying the other. By this definition, human beings would try to prevent other people from achieving their goals through any means possible, whether fair or foul, even if it means the termination of life of the other person. Persaud and Turner (2007:417) view conflict as "the disagreement between two or more parties in which one or all parties perceive(s) a denial of right, or resources, or the absence of capacity to obtain justice which leads to anger, hurt, hate, and the possible verbal and violent actions and reactions resulting in damage to person(s), emotionally and physically and/or property''! Horton and Hunt (2014) define conflict as, a process by which people seek to eliminate or weaken competitors in order to

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monopolise rewards. One can see selfishness at its core, in a bid to have everything to one's self. Clearly seen, greed and selfishness are combined factors that are brought to play and the end result is conflict. For Green (1956) conflict is the deliberate attempt to oppose, resist or coerce the will of another or others. The presupposition here is that conflict does not occur accidentally but it is premeditated by perpetrators. It is a well orchestrated and purposive phenomenon, aimed at combating, displacing, hating, hurting, eliminating, injuring, killing or destroying others, in order to achieve one's selfish aim or ambition.

Sandole (1993) defines conflict as a dynamic phenomenon which has been characterised by phases of initiation, escalation and controlled maintenance, with an end stage that is normally reflective of settlement, resolution and transformation. This definition is appropriate and can be used for academic work. The reason is that a critical analysis of conflict reveals that violent conflicts do not just surge but build up gradually. Some of these conflicts last for a short period while others drag on, sometimes for decades, as in the case of Nkonya-Alavanyo. The nature of this conflict is that these two communities lived together, irrespective of the land issue which went through a lot of stages for seventy-threeyears before escalating. Simply put, violent conflict is not static but graduates in stages, from a beginning to an end and a lower level to a higher level. If not properly managed, resolved or transformed, it escalates violently and drags on for a long period of time thus, becoming protracted.

Collier (2004) asserts that initial conflict is caused by greed and conflict in turn causes some effects such as grievance. This grievance goes to cause further conflict thus, making conflict a vicious cycle. The fact is that when conflict arises as a result of greed or the insatiable desire for human beings to 'own the earth', combatants or warring factions make certain demands during mediation processes to ceasefire. However, when these grievances are not met, the conflict escalates, sometimes, violently. Examples of such conflicts are; Niger Delta Conflict, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Zimbabwe (Sibanda, 2009).

Examining the different definitions of conflict, it is clear that some human beings are full of greed, selfishness, materialism and covetousness, all in the name of prestige, fame, wealth, power and status. In their quest to achieve their aims, these group of people endup fighting and clashing with people they perceive as obstacles to their chances of achieving their goals. It is also apparent that conflict is dynamic and inevitable as long as human beings exist and live together with opposing views. The definitions equally indicate that conflict strengthens as well as destroys relationships and brings about gains or losses. Furthermore, it has revealed that denial of human needs such as rights and privileges can be detrimental to human life and property.

After discussing the definitions of other scholars, my own working definition of conflict is, a condition where two individuals or groups of people, disagree on issues such as value systems, religion, culture, ethnic differences, linguistic/dialectic differences, hegemony and other social, economic and political issues that lead to strained relationship. Simply put, it is a discord, disharmony, disagreement or strife that exists between individuals or groups of

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people as a result of contrasting views, thus dislodging the hitherto smooth or cordial relationship either temporarily or permanently, depending on the way and manner the actors handle it.

Causes of Conflict

The chapter one of Kriesberg (2007) titled "Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution" espoused the causes, types and stages or processes of conflicts. He maintains that conflicts are caused by antagonism of objectives of two or more individuals living together in a particular setting, be it social, political or economical. The antagonism here, is not the ill-feeling against others objectives and/or goals, but driven by the power of coercion for others to adopt another's goals and objectives, without considering its consequences and implications to self and/or group identity and integrity. Thus, this power of coercion results into insecurity and threats of co-existence among people. The author further indicated that conflict arises due to injustice, driven from the denial of the truths they consider so essential in life which is tantamount to oppression and suppression.

For Kriesberg, each conflict is unique, based on the issues of contention such as norms and values, the characteristics of the contending parties such as self-ego, group ego and religious ego as well as geographical boundaries, demarcations and lack of respect for individual differences. Also, the relationships between the adversaries, the context in which the adversaries contend, the means used to conduct the struggle and the outcome of struggle.

This means that for Krisberg, conflict arises as a result of coercive control by some group of people over others. Conflict istriggered by values and

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norms,self-ego/group-ego or lack of respect for others' values and norms. Additionally, the intensity of any conflict according to the author is defined by the interaction between relationshipsand the perceptions holding such relationships thatfueltheconflicts. Also, when truths, which are considered as essentialin life,are missing in relationship, justice is affected thus, breeding conflict and every conflict is distinctivedepending on various factors according to the author and discussed earlier.

Resource-Based Conflict

Lei & Michaels (2014) assert that giant oilfields discovery was the cause of internal armed conflicts in 193 countries during the period between 1946 – 2008 using panel data analysis. Ironically, the study revealed that during the period under study, oil production increased averagely by 35% – 50% within 4 – 10 years of oil discoveries. Resultantly, there was increase in oil exports from the giant fields by 20% – 50% within 6 – 10 years of the giant discoveries. Relating giant oilfield discoveries with internal armed conflicts in the countries indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between increased giant oilfield discoveries and increased internal armed conflicts such that on the average, 25 or more conflicts can arise from an oilfield discovery within the 4 – 8 years of discovery. However, this is more plausible in countries with history of internal conflicts or civil unrest and coup d'etats. Examples of such countries are Peru, Mexico, Chile and Colombia (Viscidi&Fargo, 2015).

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This resource-based conflict is related tothe Nkonya-Alavanyo issue.The submission of Lei & Michaels (2014) confirms that there is a relationship between natural resources and conflicts. The Nkonya-Alavanyo issue is based on a 100-mile square/6459.82 acre piece of land that is purported to have mineral deposits. The land has cash crops and food crops on which the people depend for their livelihood. They cultivate cash crops for commercial purposes and food crops for consumption. They also benefit from royalties from settlers (Personal communication, Nana Eletey & William Kwakye, July, 31, 2000).Lessons from the different resource-based conflict suggest that the Nkonya-Alavanyo issue would have been different if the land was infertile without natural resources that generate income as it would not be worthwhile struggling over an unproductive land.

Religion and Conflict

In Chapter Six and Seven of McGuire (1992) he posits that religion contributes to social conflict as well as cohesion. For him, some conflicts are unifying factors for groups of people. He maintains that when the content, rather than the process of conflict and cohesion are analysed with a neutral stance, people will realize that it is not all conflicts that are bad and not all cohesions are good. McGuire however observes that according to integration theories, it is the functioning of certain institutions such as religion that assures societal cohesion and stability. For him, religion is one important factor that contributes to the integration of societies. He explains that religious symbols can portray the unity of the social group where religious rituals, such as the communion, can bring Christians together as a unified body of believers.

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Similarly, the RCC and EPCG used religious rituals such as retreat, prayer, fasting and communion to bring together the Nkonya and Alavanyo during agitations thus, preventingconflict escalation on many occasions.This is the act of bringing equilibrium and harmony into the group.McGuire's analysis of the religious institutions such as the Church, having influence on societal cohesion and stability, is in accordance with my research which sets out to analyse the role of the Church in conflict and conflict resolution. It therefore served as a guide that helped enhance my findings.

Conflict Resolution

Villa-Vicencio (2009) whose central theme is, 'political reconciliation', bases his argument on the activities of colonialism and their aftermath on the people they colonised. For him, the African would prefer the African traditional courts' conflict resolution to that of the international courts for fear of biases and prejudices, on one hand. On the other hand, Villa-Vicencio maintains that traditional African courts have their shortfalls paramount among them is gender exclusivism since Africa is a male-dominated society, where women are excluded in the traditional court proceedings. However, Villa-Vicencio believes that local and international communities can cooperate in ensuring that perpetrators of gross violation of human rights are held accountable for their deeds. For him, the flaws of the traditional African conflict resolution mechanisms notwithstanding, it has values, principles, rituals, ideas and the time to listen to conflict parties uninterrupted that enables former adversaries to express themselves freely. These give room to perpetrators to apologise for their wrongs.

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Similarly, in order to find out strategies and mechanisms that will help in the management of conflicts, for peace to prevail in Ghana, Darkwa, Attuquayefio and Yakohene (2012) examined three major protracted conflicts in Ghana including the Nkonya-Alavanyo. They maintain that in order to develop peace processes, one has to go into the past to assess the tools, strategies and mechanisms used in the resolution of conflicts. By so doing, the tools that helped in bringing peace should be adopted and built upon whiles those that aided in the escalation of conflict be analysed and avoided.

For them, different conflict management strategies, both indigenous and conventional as well as the activities of various actors and stakeholders with their success and failure stories, matter in conflict resolution process. Also, the role of the youth, women, prominent and respectable citizens of the warring factions in the diaspora, is very useful in the peace-making process. This is why Villa-Vicencio (2009) sees exclusion of women from African court proceedings as a flaw since women and the youth matter in conflict resolution process.Darkwa et al. (2012) maintain that all the three conflicts studied had political underpinnings and wrong timing that is, delay in responding to warning signs of the conflicts and believe that they are the factors that cause conflict escalation in the country. In addition, the absence of ownership to the peace processes, by feuding parties and lack of interaction between the warring factions are setbacks to peace processes.

However, Darkwa et al. (2012) state that the involvement of the heads of churches, traditional leaders and prominent members of society, in the conflict mediation helped in bringing peace among the Nkonya and Alavanyo. Also, dialogue was a tool that helped former adversaries to talk about the past

and future and voluntarily called for cease fire. This assertion agrees with the submission of Villa-Vicencio (2009) on the preferred African traditional conflict resolution mechanism by the African in conflict resolution process.

Agyei (2015) examined the persistence of the protracted ethnic conflict between the Nkonya and Alavanyo in the Volta Region of Ghana from the perspective of the Nkonya. He specifically analysed the causes of the conflict, its effects on the people, the resolution mechanisms and the reasons for the persistence of the conflict, using a qualitative research method. Twelve (12) respondents were reached and this included the Assembly members, District Chief Executive (DCE) of the Biakoye District (BD) and the hiefs of Nkonya. The study revealed that the object of contention, which led to the conflict is a piece of land which apparently, belonged to the Nkonya but forcibly taken by Alavanyo due to their belief that fixed concrete that demarcated boundaries for each community during the colonial period was a mistake. Besides, the conflict has an ethnic sensitivity which is linked to the ownership of the land. Furthermore, the study revealed that the conflict has claimed many lives, there is increased insecurity and economic activities; both farming and trade have been affected. Most significantly, the study revealed that the conflict has been unresolved since the Alavanyo has never respected the court rulings, which have always been in favour of the Nkonya. On the land issue, there has been lack of enforcement of the judgement/law, on the part of the government, on anyone who goes contrary to the court verdicts. Perhaps,the court rulings are flouted since their outcome, are not mutually satisfactory between both parties. Ostensibly, the mode of resolving the conflict has not favoured both parties, which could ensure a lasting peace and security in the area. The appropriate

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conflict resolution approach such as Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) could have been used, looking at the protracted nature of the conflict. The presupposition is that the ethnic and political sentiments which have arisen from the simple land issue should be overruled based on social and traditional norms, values and structures as championed by traditional conflict resolution approach.

In the same vein, Mensah (2013) examined the conflict resolution mechanism deployed in the resolution of the 'age-long' Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, using qualitative research method. To achieve the purpose of his study, he reviewed three conflict resolution mechanisms, namely; the track-one diplomacy, track-two diplomacy and the multi-track diplomacy. Track-one diplomacy refers to using coercion and intimidation to force decisions on the parties to the conflict by the government, irrespective of the mutual acceptance/satisfaction or rejection/dissatisfaction of the verdict by the parties. In such a situation, there is either a win-lose or lose-lose verdict on the case. Track-two diplomacy is an informal and unofficial interaction with parties to the conflict which seek to resolve the issues without any coercion and intimidation. In this case, decision of the resolution process, is a win-lose situation.

The multi-track diplomacy however, is a system approach that involves all actors, such as, the parties to the conflict, the government, civil society, and the media, in resolving the conflict. Conflicts using this multi-track diplomacy approach are resolved based on mutual agreement and satisfaction on the outcomes of the rulings based on normative principles. The study revealed that both track-one and track-two diplomacy approaches, have been used to resolve

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the conflict, thus, producing a win-lose situation in favour of the Nkonya. The study further indicated that the best mechanism is the multi-track diplomacy, which involves both state and non-state actors. This will produce mutual satisfactory outcomes that will resolve the conflict amicably thus, achieving peacebuilding and security for socio-economic development.

The studies of Mensah (2013) and Agyei (2015) were useful to my study in the sense that I was able to make recommendations that would involve both state and non-state actors and also recommend approaches that would help the Church, MC and the Government to re-visit the issue in order to bring lasting peace.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Similarly, Aubyn (2015) examines how the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU), have cooperated to respond to conflict in some African countries such as Mali, Sudan, Somalia and the Central African Republic. According to him, although the partnership suffers from a variety of challenges, it has resulted in pragmatic and flexible responses to conflicts in the aforementioned countries and provided a way of sharing resources between the UN and the AU.

In spite of the fact that Aubyn's thesis focuses on the role of the UN and AU in resolving African conflicts, two useful lessons can be drawn for the resolution of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. First, it shows that the complex nature of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict demands cooperation from different stakeholders involving the state institutions, traditional authorities and religious

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groups in the area. Second, it shows that the state alone cannot resolve the conflict.

These issues are some of the important factors that most existing studies have ignored. Thus, unlike existing studies, this study will fill the gap by looking at how religious bodies can compliment state efforts to resolve the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

Ethnic Conflict

Ellingsen (2000) examines the relationship between multi-ethnicity and domestic conflict in selected countries in the post war period of 1946–1992. The study revealed that diversity of ethnicity in a nation-state increases the likelihood of domestic violence in nation-states and the conflicts are usually contextualised in the political powers of the time as well as socio-economic growth level of the ethnic groups. This presupposes that ethnic diversity influences alignments with political and socio-economic interests thus, influencing conflict. This material will guide me in my recommendation on the resolution of political conflicts that are gaining grounds in Ghana.

Peace and Reconciliation

Ekem (2004) examines reconciliation from biblical perspective byfocusing on the Book of Colossians, which is a letter of the Apostle Paul to people of Colossae. The paper explains that at the time when the city of Colossae was characterised by multi-religious doctrines comprising of Greek religion, Judaism from the Jews and Christianity from the followers of Christ, the doctrines of the Greeks and Judaism were antagonistic to the Christian faith, particularly, the notion that fullness or wholeness does not come from

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Christ. For this reason, the Apostle Paul wrote a letter to help the Colossians to reconcile with Christ. According to Ekem, the Apostle Paul exhorted the Colossians to be filled with the will of God through all understanding and wisdom, since that is what fullness in Christ means. It means that the reconciliation of mankind is imbibed in the knowledge of Christ's redemption, through His Blood and Resurrection as the Apostle Paul explains extensively in Colossians Chapter 1:15-23. This denotes that the fullness that the Colossians were looking for is found in Christ Jesus, so the Apostle Paul charged the Colossians to accept this fullness in order to be reconciled to God.

This is because the acceptance of the fullness of Christ, remits sin and brings about newness as it is stated that in Christ all things are made new and the old has passed away, 2 Corinthians 5:17. Ekem (2004) emphasised that fullness achieved in Christ is expected to transform the culture of people so that the cultural elements of any group of people or generation can be aligned to the word of God, in order to avoid any conflicts that could result in the loss of salvation. He makes this assertion in order to contextualise reconciliation within the African context so that similar to the people of Colossae, the Christian life, walk or journey shall be strictly based on God's will through revelation and not the will of humankind. Presumably, reconciliation in the Christian life is a continuous process that should be earnestly sought for in our daily living.

Similarly, Asamoah-Gyadu (2004) examines reconciliation from theperspective of African religion. He is of the view that reconciliation, as a healing process that empowers individuals to live a community-centred life in biblical terms, is such that an individual cannot enjoy the fullness of Christ's

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salvation alone but with the community (human relationships). This assertion was made within the context of Isaiah 2:3-5 and Romans 12:9-18. In both scriptures it is evident that reconciliation or healing can only be achieved in Christ since the power of God through the Word, can bring healing such that warring parties will abandon the sword, do away with their differences and live at peace with each other. However, this can only be achieved when people in a community appreciate one another's weaknesses and do not pay evil for evil.

The question anyone will pose is; "How can this living in harmony with others and not paying evil for evil practically manifest when conflicts in Africa and other parts of the world are purposed to protect the sovereignty of tribal and ethnic kingdoms and their possessions as in the case of the 'aged long' conflict between the Nkonya and Alavanyo in the Northern Volta of Ghana?" In response, Asamoah-Gyadu (2004) maintains that each warring party should note that bitterness and vindictiveness do not breed reconciliation and liberty but only destruction, which results into poverty whiles reconciliation and liberty bring about peace, productivity and prosperity. For him, with regards to tribal, ethnic and communal conflicts, the sovereignty of any kingdom is in its ability to let go of the pain and bitterness without revenge or vengeance, as Archbishop Desmond Tutu admonished South Africans after the end of the apartheid system in the country.

For that matter, it is the mandate of the 'Church' to use the opportunity to preach the message of reconciliation to warring parties of Nkonya-Alavanyo in order for them to ceasefire and also entreat them, to focus on their heavenly inheritance which is more powerful than the earthly inheritance they may be fighting for.

Fayose (2001) examined the causes of conflict in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana (EPCG) and strategies deployed in resolving the conflict. The study revealed that the causes of the conflict are constitutional, theological, liturgical and personal. Although these causes are no more the driving force behind the conflict, the study indicates that the wounds from the conflict are not healed since the legal justice system only deepened the wounds of the factions and left no reconciliation system that will restore relationships. It means that the divine reconciliatory system discussed by Darko (2004) and Asamoah-Gyadu (2004) were not deployed. Perhaps, this was not effectively deployed since the new administration led by Moderator Ledo was known to be a defendant of Moderator Dzobo, who introduced constitutional amendments that was not popular to the Church membership nation-wide. It means that with Ledo as the new Moderator, the scars of marital divorce, destroyed properties, locked church halls and dissensions were left unattended to. Therefore, the continuous hailing of the wound and scars along with the cry of justice against alleged culprits, inevitably, escalated the conflict.

Thus, all efforts of reconciliation which was led by the (CCG), Bremen Mission (BM), Legal Courts (LC), Roman Catholic Bishops (RCB) and the Volta Regional House of Chiefs (VRHC) came to a stalemate. The author indicated that the strategies of reconciliation were deployed without any critical analysis of the conflict and mechanisms of reconciliation, thus deepening the dissensions and factionism in the EPCG. This underscores the assertion of Darkwa et al. (2012) that in order to do effective conflict management, one needs to start with conflict analysis in order to understand the issues at stake, the actors who are involved and also, the context in which the conflict is taking

place. Without the analysis, the employment of all forms of conflict resolution methods, strategies and mechanisms will prove futile, thus making the conflict protracted.

In view of the above, this research sought to examine how religion can facilitate the multi-track diplomacy as recommended by Mensah (2013) and the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) as recommended by (Aubyn, 2015; Midodzi&Jaha; 2011) in order to lead both state and non-state actors in the resolution of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict which will bring a lasting understanding and/or peaceful co-existence and satisfaction to the warring factions.

Church Interventions in Conflict

Darko (2004) examines the concept of reconciliation as stated by Apostle Paul, in 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 and provides the explicit role of the Church in promoting communal reconciliation in the political, economic and social settings of any nation. Darko (2004) moves away from heralding the Church as a tool for reconciliation, to charging the Church to be a hall-mark of reconciliation, that is; an example of Christ's reconciliation. In this context, he is describing the Church as a human institution, where conflicts are inevitable and in situation of this nature, the leaders or the clergy are expected to promote forgiveness, fairness and transparency, which are the basis of reconciliation and church growth. The author was emphatic that reconciliation is not about promoting justice but restoring relationships in order to avoid victimisation of anybody and the expression of God's love in word and deed. The expression of God's love is expressed in Romans 5:8,18 and John 3:16. However, Darko

(2004) admitted that the expression of God's love should be led by the Spirit and not the flesh since the embodiment of the new creation as noted in 2 Corinthians 5:17 is talking about the renewal of the Spirit. This means that until the community sees the 'Church' as an institution flourishing in the Love of Christ, it cannot lead communal reconciliation since the community, no matter its divisiveness is also observing the Church in the performance of her reconciliation mandate within its four corners.

Theoretical Framework

Theories are very crucial in dealing with human phenomena as they help in finding comprehensive meaning to issues and the understanding of dichotomies, paradigms, complexities and the entire dynamics of a given phenomenon, in order to resolve them or arrive at meaningful conclusions. According to Horowitz (1985:140), "A bloody phenomenon cannot be explained by a bloodless theory". For this reason, the only theory appropriate for the Nkonya-Alavanyo protracted conflict is the protracted conflict theory. Protracted conflict theories relevant to this study are Frustration-Aggression (FA), Protracted Social Conflict (PSC) and Enemy System theories.

Frustration-Aggression Theory

Frustration-Aggression (FA) Theory was developed by Dollard, Miller, Mowrer and Sears in 1939. Neal Miller (1941) and Leonard Berkowitz (1969) posit that aggression is the product of frustration. The theory explains that frustration may not trigger aggression but sufficient to breed aggression in any form. This explains that frustration is the breeding ground for violence. Thus, Breuer and Elson (2017:2) assert that "the occurrence of aggressive behaviour

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always presupposes the existence of frustration". The theory explains that those who suffer from aggression are the innocents, who become scapegoats. This means that the innocent become scapegoats due to lack of proper frustration management.

According to Berkowtiz (1989) lack of proper frustration management is fueled by the disappointment arising from the inability to achieve a goal solely. This demonstrates the individual's lack of personal well-being (Ryan, 2009). Ryan argues that personal well-being is a self-determined behaviour that is inherent to help an individual to naturally seek challenges and overcome them. This means that aggression or violence arises due to the thwarting behaviour by individuals to gain control of themselves when frustrated by disappointing incidents (Fransen, Vansteenkiste, Vande-Broek, &Boen, 2018). Ryan reiterates that such situations are not only influenced by the individual's psychological and cognitive traits, but also by social and cultural conditions.

Rahmati &Momtaz (2013) maintain that social condition is part of human behaviour since there is a tendency of learned behaviour, which informs one's decision that disappointment should lead to aggression. Cultural condition also has become part of human behaviour since aggression has become the way people voice their frustrations arising from disappointment to achievetheir goals. Therefore, the Nkonya-Alavanyo recurring violence can be attributed to more of social and cultural behaviour, instead of human psychology and cognition. This research, therefore, submits that relationship between frustration and aggression can be understood by examining human psychological and cognitive behaviour as well as the social and cultural conditions that influence human behaviour. The FA theory has therefore

become a device with which conflict and conflict resolution analyst and mediators can assess in order to understand reasons for some aggressive behaviours causes of conflicts and conflict escalation. This will help them predict eminent conflict and conflict escalation and strive to curb, resolve or manage it as much as possible.

Protracted Social Conflict (PSC) theory

The PSC is a technical term for a theory developed by Edward Azar. This theory refers to the kind of conflict situation that is characterised by prolonged and most of the time, a violent struggle between and among communities. Besides its violent and protracted nature, protracted conflict seems to elude all kinds of conflict resolution and peace processes (Azar, 1985). This situation is prevalent in the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. In spite of all the peace processes that started since its eruption, from the local level to national level and traditional to religious levels, the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict remains unresolved and keeps escalating.

The only difference is that the violence of Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict is on a "low key" and escalation is sporadic. The PSC is the type of conflict other researchers refer to as 'protracted' or 'intractable', which are complex, severe, prolonged and mostly violent (Coleman, 2000; Kriesberg, 1998; Maiese, 2003). Furthermore, such conflicts keep escalating with the destruction of lives and properties. These struggles arise as a result of the quest of the masses, for basic human needs such as security, the right to participate in politics, recognition, acceptance and the desire to get access to economic activities.

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In order to get an in-depth understanding to explain the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict and recommend appropriate conflict resolution method/approach, this research dwelt on the three key characteristics of PSC, namely, Genesis, Process and Dynamics and Outcome Analysis. Azar (1990:7) explains 'Genesis' as "a set of conditions that are responsible for the transformation of non-conflictual situations into conflictual ones." The above statement reveals that certain situations, ideally, would not have degenerated into conflicts but some conditions fuel them. Using Azar's Genesis, the 1923 episode of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict would not have erupted if both parties had exercise restraint and resolved the land issue rationally and peacefully. The identification and appropriate handling of the set of conditions will bring remedy to conflict situations.

The second attribute is Process Dynamics. At this stage, certain factors such as insensitivity to communal issues, fuel overt conflict. Communal actions and strategies are very powerful tools to escalate latent conflict. Trivial issues such as, an attack on an individual with communal ties, which has been recognised collectively, is taken to a broader dimension by the communal group. This leads to collective protest which is usually met by repression. The victimised communal group then draws attention beyond the issue at stake, to series of grievances such as; communal security, access and security needs such as, selected poverty and political inequality. As tension intensifies, the communal group mobilises resources. Communal mobilisation and organisation, formulation of strategies, tactics, development of strong leadership and seeking external support are factors for PSC (Azar, 1990).

The last variable of the process looks at the effects of long-term conflicts on perceptions of the other and its effect on the behaviour of belligerent group. The perceptions, motivations of the state and communal actors, are conditioned by the experiences, fears and believe systems of each communal group. As there is little or no interaction, anything negative is attributed to the other side, so communal groups become antagonistic and this ossifies PSC. When communal groups become antagonistic, violence sets in as each group sees the other as a deviant group and a threat to their group.

Finally, we come to the last of key phases of Azar (1990) which is Outcomes Analysis. This spells out effects of PSC on life and property as well as individuals and the state. From Azar's analysis, it is clear that the PSC has no clear end-point and no clear winner. Also, the PSC damages and retards sociopolitical progress, psychological alertness and innovation. Leaders as well as the populace give up on life and stick to the status quo. Azar suggests four consequences of PSC as; Deterioration of physical security, Institutional Deformity, Psychological Ossification and Increased Dependency &Cliency.

Azar (1990) defined PSC, and was able to explain the causes and effects into details, mechanisms needed to prevent its genesis and its devastating effects. He also submitted that resolving PSC is quite a task and why they become protracted. However, even though he agreed that resolving it is quite a task, he did not come out to suggest how best PSC can be handled or resolved, its complex nature notwithstanding. Azar could have come up with a strategy for instance, to suggest that due to the difficulty in resolving PSC, Conflict Transformation or Conflict Management approaches should be used. Meanwhile I will maintain it for my theoretical framework.

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Enemy System Theory (EST)

The Enemy System Theory (EST) was developed as a model to explain the complexities of group behaviour, especially, with reference to antagonistic group relationships. It was developed to make it easier for the explanation of intractable conflict. The EST and the Human Needs (HN) Theories collaborated to theoretically explain terrorism in Northern Ireland (Cunningham, 1998). Volkan (as cited in Cunningham, 1998) observes that the essence of the EST is the hypothesis that humans have a deep rooted entrenched psychological need that enables them, to dichotomise and identify who their enemies are and who their allies are. This situation happens on both individual and group levels and it is an unconscious need that informs conscious relationships, mostly in our group levels. When people come together to form ethnic or national groups, identification with these groups determines how we see or perceive people in our 'in-group' which is 'us' and those in the 'out-group' which is 'them'. A peculiar feature about these groups is that the manner in which group members perceive themselves and their relationship with the groups with which they are associated with, aid them to decide whether their relationship will be founded on cooperation, competition or conflict. It is also based on the historic relations between the 'groups' (Cunningham, 1998).

The enemy is perceived as less human, wicked and just out to kill. Meanwhile, the enemy is unknown and what the media publishes about the perceived enemy is what "we" know about "them". For example, most Americans know only what is published in the social media about the Soviet

Union. Sadly, these perceptions are transmitted from infancy, from one generation to another (Mack, 1988). When tension increases among groups, the in-group becomes desperate in finding attributes to describe the out-group, to make them look inferior or inhuman. A typical example is the attributes given to the Negro in the United States of America (USA). With the exception of the dark colour, which is a true definition, the numerous attributes to them were made up of the conceptions that were conceived of them by the out-groups (Tajfel, 1981). This theory is founded on the relationships between intrapersonal concerns, the individuals within their environment, as well as the interaction of individuals within groups and the actions between those groups (Cunningham, 1998).

Motivation for the Study

As a pastor of the EPCG, I was overwhelmed by contributions of the R.C.C and the EPCG to the resolution process of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. This motivated me to carry out the research with the hope of publishing the findings for reference purposes on the subject. Also, I think that the dissemination of the findings will help give the desired credence and prominence to the role of religion in conflict resolution, peace-building and reconciliation to challenge the nation that religion is a tool of destruction.

Limitations of the Study

The major limitation of the study was the difficulty in getting access to the front line, due to the security implications and the unsafe nature of the area. This was due to indiscriminate ambushing and shooting to kill adversaries. At that moment, the Military was keeping surveillance on the area and declared it

a security zone. Every visitor to the area was a suspect and not welcomed. It was therefore very difficult getting access to the people who have the first-hand information but residing in the main war zones. I was however able to seek permission from the soldiers who protected me to conduct an in-depth research without any incident. For this reason, with the exception of the key speakers such as the Chief of Alavanyo-Kpeme, the Chief of Nkonya-Tepo, the Regent of Nkonya-Tayi, his Linguist and Spokesman and some Pastors, all the other respondents remained anonymous out of fear and suspicion.

Also, as a result of the 'six to six' curfew in the area, all activities start late and end early. Consequently, people rush through their daily chores haphazardly and visitors to the area are warned by soldiers to leave an hour ahead of the curfew time. This badly affected the time and duration of the administration of the interviews and the questionnaires with the targeted population who were unwilling in the first place to give out information they believed had security implications.

In the second place, the researcher was equally security conscious and was therefore sitting on a 'time-bomb' during interviews and discussions. This made the researcher to work under enormous stress and fear, in order to collect the desired data as scheduled through the adherence to the standard research ethical procedures of the University of Cape Coast (UCC). The study was nevertheless thoroughly conducted using the necessary available resources that proved to be informative, reliable and insightful.

Organisation of the Study

The study comprises seven chapters. The first chapter which is theIntroduction includes the background of the study, definition of concepts, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions and scope of the study. It also comprises significance of study and sources of the study. The rest are research methodology, sample size, literature review, theoretical framework, limitations of study and organization of the study. The chapter two analysed global conflict trends. Chapter three evaluated conflict trends in Ghana. Chapter four assessed the nature of the NkonyaAlavanyo conflict in Ghana, focusing on the period from 1983 to 2015. Chapter five catalogued the Biblical principles, traditions and practices of conflict resolution. Chapter six looked at the contributions of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana (EPCG), in the mediation process of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. The final chapter, which is seven,is the summary and conclusion of the study and offers practical and theological recommendations to the Church regarding sustainable conflict resolution in Ghana.

CHAPTER TWO

GLOBAL TRENDS OF CONFLICT

Introduction

This chapter looks at trends of conflict globally that is, the general development or change in conflict situations in order to help readers understand the dynamics of conflict globally. The chapter therefore discuses: phenomenon and concept of conflict, causes of global conflict with special reference to Africa, as the most vulnerable and causes of conflict escalation.

Conflict as a Phenomenon

While some schools of thought see conflict as a positive natural phenomenon, others see it as negative and some also see it as both positive and negative. This is because conflict can turn out into something good while it can equally become catastrophic. Conflict in a sense, can be a source of mutual understanding that will strengthen relationships in families and societies. It can lead to a better understanding of one another and also straighten up issues at stake, thus leading to growth and productivity that will foster development. Furthermore, social differentiations and divides can equally promote social innovation and creativity. On the other hand, conflict as a phenomenon is dynamic and not static. For this reason, it can escalate into a violent conflict situation thus, revealing the negative aspect of conflict (Donku-Oyeshola, 2005; McGuire, 1992; Tajfel, 1978). With this in mind, it is apparent that conflict per se is not bad or evil but the way it is handled or managed that determines its outcome, whether good or bad.

Conflict as a human phenomenon, exists as a friction between two or more parties, as a result of different factors, ranging from internal to external, trivial issues to serious issues, natural to manmade and abstract to reality. It exists in all facets of human life and at all levels of human existence. It can be violent or nonviolent, short-lived or drag on for a long period of time. Some conflicts keep escalating so much that they drag on for a long period of time such as the 'age-long' Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. Some of these violent protracted conflicts live in their trails, various degrees of destruction of life and property.

Conflict as a Concept

There are so many notions, ideas, conceptions and opinions about conflict that need to be studied in order to understand the dynamics of conflict. In this discourse, the conception and/or misconception of different authors on types/nature of conflict as developed and categorised by different schools of thought will be discussed.

Miall, Ramsbotham& Woodhouse (1999) observe that there are different typologies of conflict from different analysts and the criteria they use vary and are not compatible. They have this to say, "Unfortunately, the overall state of current conflict typology is in a state of confusion." (1999:29) Different schools of thought have come up with different types of conflict with varied analyses, by using different inconsistent criteria. This anomaly arises because of the varying notions, conceptions and/or misconceptions the many schools of thought have developed and carried over the years about conflict.

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Typologies of Conflict

- Armed conflicts – These types of conflicts are defined as "open, armed clashes, between two or more centrally organised parties, with continuity between the clashes, in disputes about power over government and territory." (Smith, 2004:3) He identifies long-term, socio-economic and political conditions as factors that cause armed conflicts. He maintains that of the 118-armed conflicts which ensued from 1990 – 1999, ten can be strictly defined as inter-state conflicts. For me, the distortion here is that in a conflict, once weapons of destruction, such as guns, machetes, bows and arrows, spears and clubs are used, it becomes an armed conflict. For example, a football match, in which the score from both sides is nil and in another that the scores were six goals to two are all football matches irrespective of the number of goals scored. Also, whether the parties are organised or not, so long as arms were used, they qualify to be armed conflicts. The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict for example has never been organised, people hide in the bush to shoot and ran away or come to the villages under the cover of darkness, shoot and flee into the bushes. This has been the pattern but they still use arms.

- Intractable Conflicts – Maiese (2003) defines intractable conflict as the ones that remain unresolved for a long period of time and therefore become stuck at a high level of intensity and destructiveness. This description is appropriate for protracted conflicts such as, theNkonya-Alavanyo, Iran-Iraq, Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Sudan and all other wars that dragged on for a long period of time.

- Miall, Ramsbotham&Woodhouse (2001) categorised conflict as Factional, Revolution/Ideology and Identity/Secession conflicts.

- Factional Conflict – This covers coups d'état, intra-elite power struggles, brigandage, criminality and warlordism, where the aim is to usurp, seize or retain state power merely to further particular interests. It is merely a struggle to control the state or part of the state. All these conflicts are just to wield power and resources and amass wealth.

- Revolution/Ideology Conflict – This conflict includes the more ambitious aim of changing the nature of government in a state, for example by changing the system from capitalist to socialist, or changing the form of government from dictatorship to democracy, or changing the religious orientation of the state from secular to Islamic or Christianity. Additionally, this type of conflict is a struggle to change the nature of the state.

- Identity/Secession Conflict – "It involves the relative status of communities or communal groups, however defined in relation to the state. This type of conflict may as well be a threat to the integrity of the state" (Mial et al., 2001:3).

- War or Major Armed Conflict – Rupesinghe&Anderlini (1998) explain that war or major armed conflict is the kind of conflict that records over one thousand (1,000) battlefield-related deaths per year. They also identify Intermediate conflicts as those that had battlefield-related deaths between twenty-five (25) and one thousand (1,000) during a particular year but exceed one thousand (1,000) throughout the duration of the conflict.

- Low Intensity Conflict – Rupesinghe&Anderlini (1998) further describe another form of conflict where violence is more sporadic and less intense as low-intensity.

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On the contrary, where one of the parties threatens to use violence or deploy military troops or where the agitation for the use of force is present, they describe as, serious disputes.

- Domination Conflicts – They are a special type of high-stakes distributional conflict in which the resource to be distributed is social status. This type arises as most groups want to be on top of the social, economic, and/or political hierarchy, there is often a perpetual struggle between the top and bottom group. Social status conflict can occur between individuals or between nations (Maiese, 2003).

- Ethnic Conflict – Ethnic conflict does not only mean that parties involved are ethnically different but also, that ethnic difference is central to the conflict. "It implies not only to a description of at least one of the parties, but also an ascription of at least one cause, (if not the cause) of conflict as ethnic difference" (Smith, 2004:10).

    The word ethnic conflict is understood as the conflict between parties with ethnic differentiation. However, ethnic conflict also arises as a result of diverse cultures, norms, values and identities. Conflicts that are labelled as ethnic conflicts should not be understood as conflict between races. The problem is that too many schools of thought do not understand what ethnicity means in conflict situations because there is too much knowledge on ethnicity. Ethnic conflict as they are referred to, are mostly caused by collective fears of the future. As groups begin to fear for their safety, conflicts that are said to follow the same pattern such as ethnicity erupt and there is the suspicion that they have the tendency to explode into murderous violence (Brubakar, 2004; Horowitz, 1985; Lake &Rothchild, 1996).

Apparently, there is so much misconception about ethnicity and ethnic conflict that so many scholars are attempting to define what ethnicity and ethnic conflicts are. The fact that most conflicts encompass a variety of purposes, makes branding them as ethnic conflicts appear simple and obscure. The supposed ethnic conflicts are usually the result of political power struggles between elites whose actions are identified with ethnic groups (Williams, 2011). Naturally, everyone belongs to an ethnic group, with an ethnic identity and a sense of solidarity. For this reason, most conflicts, no matter their remote causes, end up as ethnic conflicts. I want to believe that people ascribe the word 'ethnic' to variety of conflicts be it political, economic, competition or otherwise. According to the description of Williams, the conflicts that are labelled 'ethnic wars,' are the spillover effects of political conflicts. For example, the1994 Rwanda genocide that claimed the lives of 800,000 Rwandans in 100 days, started as a political conflict but erupted into ethnic conflict with ethnic identities between the Tutsi minority and Hutu majority ("Rwanda: How the genocide happened," 2011).

Civil War – Generally, 'civil war' is the term used to describe a range of conflict situation. Thus, 'civil war' has become a generic term for conflicts. It is a sustained, violent conflict between the military forces, comprised mainly of citizens of the state and different in nature, from other forms of internal conflicts. The distinction is seen in terms of the objectives, the degree of coordination required for successful prosecution and the more protracted nature and level of destructiveness in the conflict. Obviously, these are concepts of different authors that can be debated, accepted or rejected (Henderson, 1999; Henderson& Singer, 2000; Rupesinghe &Anderline, 1998).

Organised Conflict – Levinger (2013) describes various forms of organised conflicts as; interstate war, intrastate conflict and internationalised intrastate wars. Deadly conflict can take a variety of forms, be it interstate or intrastate and the term conflict covers all forms of organised violence. Levinger describes the various forms of organised conflict as follows:

- Interstate–This is a war between two or more states. However, interstate wars have constituted just a small fraction of the conflict events around the world, since the end of World War II. Ironically, these events have accounted for a considerable percentage of battlefield death.

- Intrastate – This is a conflict between a government and an opposition movement as the case of Liberia. This kind of conflict is also known as civil war.

- Internationalised Intrastate Conflict –This form of conflict, which Levinger (2013) calls 'hybrid events,' is a spill-over effect of intrastate conflict. This situation arises when an intrastate conflict spills over its boarders and enters a neighbouring country. Also, when a government or other nations sponsor competing factions, this situation arises. He observes that deadly conflict can also involve campaigns of one-sided violence such as 'genocide' or 'mass atrocities' as the Rwandan issue mentioned earlier.

Internationalised Armed Conflicts – Similarly, Pettersson and Wallensteen (2015) explain that internationalised armed conflicts are conflicts in which one or more states contributed troops to one or both warring sides. This conflict is similar to the one before it and it also causes a lot of violence as more troops are exported to warring factions to strengthen their forces.

 We now discuss the Three-Dimensional Perspective of conflict designed by Mayer (2000) and mentioned earlier in this chapter. These are; Conflict as Perception, as Feeling and as Action.

- **Conflict as Perception**

This is a situation according to Mayer, where conflict is perceived as a belief or understanding that one's own needs, interests, wants or values are incompatible with someone else's. To explain further, there are two elements to this dimension which are; objective and subjective**.**

Objective: This is a situation where two people have different projects to embark on using the same vehicle, for example, rental services and carting goods from the harbour. In this case, there is an objective incompatibility in their wants.

Subjective: In this case, when one of two individuals, for example, couples believes that the way his or her spouse desires to guide their child's tertiary education is incompatible to his or her ideology, then there is a subjective component. Even if only one party believes that there is incompatibility, there is still a conflict because the party who believes there is incompatibility is engaging his or partner into conflict, whether that person shares the same perception or not.

- **Conflict as Feeling**

 The explanation here is that in a conflict situation, an emotional reaction such as fear, sadness, bitterness, anger or hopelessness or a combination of any of these, to a situation or interaction signals a disagreement of a sort. If one experiences these feelings in regard to another person or situation, then we feel

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that we are in a conflict and for that matter, we are. This conflict can be said to be 'latent' as it has not yet manifested and if properly handled, will not erupt into violent conflict.

•**Conflict as Action**

Also, conflict arises as a result of actions that people take to express their feelings and articulate their perceptions in order to get their felt needs such as money or respect. This process has the tendency of interfering with other people's ability to obtain their felt needs. This conflict behaviour can be a direct attempt to cause something to happen at someone else's expense. It may be an exercise of power and may be violent (Mayer, 2000).

Similarly, Rupesinghe&Anderlini (1998) came up with four typologies of conflict that they constructed. They based the typologies on the most prevalent causes of conflict that will create a framework, in which the nature of contemporary conflicts can be examined. They are: resource-based conflicts, such as the Nkonya-Alavanyo issue, conflict over governance and authority, ideological conflicts and identity conflicts.

- Resource based: These are based on competition for economic power and access to natural resources. This pertains to the Nkonya-Alavanyo issue meanwhile, no economic activity is going on and both communities are living in impoverished conditions with no development going on.

- Conflicts over governance and authority: These types of conflicts are based on competition for political power and participation in political processes.

- Ideological Conflicts: They are based on competition between rival ideologies and value systems. This is a system where people's beliefs, ideas, dogma, faith, principles or views are conflicting or when parties do not agree with each

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other/one another on certain issues then conflict arises. This brings about religious or political conflicts for example.

- Identity Conflicts: These types are based on competition between rival, ethnic, religious or other communal identity groups for access to political and economic power and social justice.

- Symmetric Conflicts: They are the example of conflicts of interest between relatively similar parties.

- Asymmetric Conflicts: Asymmetric conflicts on the other hand are conflicts that arise between dissimilar parties such as a majority and minority, an established government and a group of rebels, a master and his servant, an employer and her employees or a publisher and his authors.

  With the asymmetric conflicts, the root of the conflict does not lie in particular issues or interests that may divide the parties but rather in the very structure of who they are and the relationship between them. Talking about the asymmetricconflict, it may be that this structure of roles and relationships cannot be changed without conflict. In severe asymmetric conflict, the cost of relationship becomes unbearable for both sides (Miall et al., 1999:12).

- Direct Conflict: This is when people seek to attain some objective by restraining, injuring or destroying one another. Examples of direct conflict are revolution and street fight.

- Indirect Conflict: Here, the people do not restrain or injure others in seeking their goals but rather manage to attain their own goals as the opponents cannot approach his own goals anyway. This means that an obstruction is created in the rival's goal. In this situation, group opinion is coloured against the rival about his aims. These are frequently occurring instances in the social life of

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people. Examples of indirect conflicts are litigation, fighting, killing and sectarian conflicts (Brett, Behfar, & Sanchez-Burks, 2014).

Another concept of conflict to be discussed is the Three Levels of Conflict, developed by Dana (2006) to enable conflict analyst know the various levels of conflict in order to select the different strategies to use in conflict situations. These levels are: Level 1 – Blips, Level 2 – Clashes and Level 3 – Crises. Dana explains that "The severity of conflict ranges from insignificant Blips through a middle range of Clashes to severe Crises that threaten the life of the relationship" (Dana, 2006:37).

Level 1: Blips

He maintains that Blips are inevitable and some people would find life without Blips boring. Dana explains Blips to be the minor annoyances that occur in everyday interdependent interaction with people. Blips, he postulates do not pose any threat to the relationship or produce disharmony. However, if poorly handled over time, blips can grow more severe and escalate to Level 2 Clashes. As Blips accumulate, tensions mount and communication breaks down, then Level 2 Clashes develop.

Level 2: Clashes

Clashes are triggered when repeated disputes about the same issue spread over time and arguing over an increasing number of issues occur. These bring about the feeling of less cooperation and less trusting of the other and the trusting of the other's sincere goodwill. Also, when one remains angry at the other for a longer period of time and begins to privately question the value of the relationship. When this happens, naturally, parties begin to distance

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themselves and start using coercion, this level then erupts into Level three Crises.

Level 3: **Crises**

Crises arise when parties decide to terminate the relationship. This occurs when one party fears the other will terminate the relationship. One party senses that the relationship is no longer healthy enough to remain in, as fears of emotional harm arise. At this point, there is risk of physical violence as no one wants to accept responsibility of destroying the relationship or accepting the defeat of rejection (Dana, 2006).

Individuals have conflicts from the family, schools, work places and communities. Besides, we organise ourselves within racial, religious, ethnic, economic and political groups in which conflicts erupt regularly. For these reasons, if human beings should encounter other beings from other galaxies, "intergalactic conflict" will be added to the list of conflicts (Brunk, 2001:12). This concept of conflict means that human beings by nature are 'conflict-like,' 'warlike' or 'conflict beings' and will therefore have conflict with whoever they encounter or come into contact with. Simply put, the notion is that conflict is inevitable as long as human beings exist (Brunk).

Conflict has many roots with many theories that try to explain these origins. It is seen as arising from basic human instincts, from the competition for resources and power, from the structure of the societies and institutions people create and from the inevitable struggle between classes. The assumption is that the pivot around which all human conflict revolves is 'human needs'. People engage in conflicts because they either have felt-needs that are met by

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the conflict process itself, or they have needs, or believe to have needs that are not consistent with that of others. Consequently, conflict cannot be resolved until these needs are somehow addressed. There are five basic forces or sources of conflict named; "The Wheel of Conflict''. These are; Communication, Emotions, Values, Structure and History (Mayer, 2000).

- Communication: This is the ways by which people communicate. The explanation is that humans are imperfect communicators, as a result, this human imperfection as far as communication is concerned, gives rise to conflict. Communication is therefore one of the greatest sources of both difficulty and hope in dealing with serious conflicts.

- Emotions: "Emotions are the energy that fuel conflict" (Mayer, 2000:49). The presupposition here is that 'emotion' is a conflict exacerbation element or, but for 'emotion', there would not have been conflict escalation. If people could always be circumspect and stay focused when addressing their needs and that of others, be equally sensitive to the needs of others, as well as strive to calmly establish effective communications, then many conflicts would either never arise or quickly de-escalate.

- Values: they are the beliefs that we have about what is important, what distinguishes between right and wrong, good from evil and what principles govern how we lead our lives. When conflict is experienced within the context of values, it is difficult to control. This is based on the fact that people hold their belief systems in a very high esteem. For that matter, when they believe that their values are being threatened, they feel they are being attacked. Though values are often a source of conflict and an impediment to its resolution, they

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can also serve as a source of commonality and an ingredient to curb conflict escalation.

- Structure: This is the external framework in which an interaction takes place or an issue develops. Mayer (2000) believes it is another source of conflict. Some elements of a structure are: available resources, decision-making procedures, time constraints, communication procedures and physical settings. Even if there would be a common interest that would be a drive to bring conflicting parties together, some structures such as, litigation and voting that are designed to ameliorate conflict, ironically tend to exacerbate conflict. This is due to the fact that litigation for example, makes compromise difficult and cast issues as win-lose struggles. Meanwhile, voting brings about polarisation thus, making constructive communication difficult. Other structures are, proximity of disputants, distribution of resources, access to information, legal parameters, organisational structures and political pressures.

- History: As human beings learn from the known to unknown, conflict cannot be understood and dealt with in isolation without knowing the history of the conflicting parties. Also, one needs to know of the systems in which the conflict is occurring and the history of the issues themselves. This history has a great influence on the course of the conflict. Conversely, history is not a determinant of conflict although sometimes it can seem that way (Mayer, 2000).

All the above sources of conflict interact with one another as people's history affect their values, communication style, emotional reactions and the structure in which they operate. As history is consistently recurring, it is affected by these other sources. Analysing these sources that constitute the

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wheel of conflict will help to some degree, in understanding the dynamics of conflict. Conflict can arise when people refuse to forgive, understand each other or one another and bear with or reconcile with each other or one another. It also arises when people refuse to control their ego but see themselves as more important than others.

Global Causes of Conflict

From time immemorial, conflict over land, strategic routes, water ways, oil, fresh water, precious minerals and a myriad of other resources have plagued humanity. Many a time, these conflicts come in various forms such as ethnic warfare or ideological struggles and often, in circumstances of great poverty. Ironically, it is not the absolute lack of resources that breeds violence but the struggles for the control of certain resources that generate the worst conflicts. The increasing nature of global population and diminishing natural resources have also exacerbated conflicts over access to agricultural land, woodlands and water (Rupesinghe &Anderlini, 1998).

Also, religion is being blamed by the West, as the root cause of numerous violent conflicts in the modern world. This is largely due to the conflicts in which the religious factor appeared to play a role. One of such events is the September, 11, 2001, when hijackers crashed American Airlines Flight 11 into the World Trade Center in the United State of America (USA) which made religion to become associated with violence (TerHarr, 2005). Political conflicts become reflected in the dominant ideology, which today is often religious. Some examples are the religious-related riots in Nigeria which left hundreds dead, the violent conflict between the Hindu and Muslim

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believers in India, with loss of lives and the longstanding bloody conflict between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland (TerHarr).

Natural resources have been identified as one the causes of global conflict. Averagely, giant oilfield discoveries increase the incidence of internal armed conflicts by about 5–8 percentage points within 4–8 years of discovery, compared to a baseline probability of about 10 percentage points as discussed earlier in the literature review. Giant oil field discoveries increase oil revenues, generally. Resultantly, when the incumbent does not share the windfall credibly, the opposition may want to challenge it and this may lead to an internal armed conflict (Lei&Michael, 2014).

On the contrary, giant oil fields discovered in countries such as Norway, Canada and Australia are unlikely to fuel internal conflicts. This is based on the fact that their history not long before the discovery includes, little political violence. All over the world, local opposition and conflicts over energy and extractive industries projects are on the rise. Conflicts over natural resources, such as oil and gas and mining projects, arise as a result of disregard for the local communities and their cultural rights. While the central governments consider natural resource projects to be in the interest of the nations, the local communities become aggrieved of the fact that besides their environment being degraded, economic benefits derived from such projects are not adequately distributed among the local communities. Papau New Guinea is one of the nations where local opposition has had major impacts. There were incidents of halting or delaying projects in the oil and gas, mining and renewable energy sectors, from local opposition around the globe. Also, Latin

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America is one among the regions where such conflicts over resources are most widespread (Lei &Michaels, 2014; Viscidi & Fargo, 2015).

The issue is that marginalised groups that were hitherto silent have become vocal as a result of the awareness created by democracy and democratic ideals such as equality, participation, accountability and transparency among others (Darkwa, Attuquayefio and Yakohene, 2012). Resultantly, this awareness triggered increased demands for political, economic and social participation within states. As a result, current conflicts have diverse causes due primarily, to the combined impact of democracy, globalisation and the internet. This is the reason why conflicts occur when individuals do not live according to their values or when they feel their values are being threatened (Kendie, 2010).

Conflicts have complex causes rooted in history, domestic governance, economic circumstances and international relations. Deadly conflicts were fought in low-income countries especially in the form of civil wars since the end of the World War II. Le Billon (2009) argues that resource related conflicts have historical, political and geographical underpinnings. It is therefore dangerous to single out resources as the cause of conflict, without looking at other structural and institutional dimensions. Poverty, inequality and resource exploitation should equally be considered as the causes of conflict.

Conflict arises as a result of the lack of provision of fundamental human needs that include; basic needs for food, water, shelter and more complex needs such as safety, security, self-esteem and personal fulfillment. These conflicts are most often intractable. Identity is one of the fundamental human needs that underlies intractable conflicts. Conflicts over identity arise

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when group members feel that their sense of self is threatened or denied legitimacy and respect. This is because identity is integral to one's self-esteem and how one interprets the rest of the world. As a result, anything that threatens the identity of the group is likely to produce a strong response (Maiese, 2003; Ruth, 2017).

Semi-democracy has the greatest impact on the probability of postcolonial civil war. Also, militarised post-colonial states are more likely to experience civil war. These go to buttress the findings of proponents who maintain that political factors play a greater role than economic or cultural factors in the incidence of post-colonial civil wars. As if the Colonial activities were not enough, the colonial powers joined forces with other local and foreign powers to fuel conflicts among the post-colonial states. The activities of colonialism have rendered the post-colonial states fragile, resulting in their fight against one another (Henderson & Singer, 2000).

Evidently, the root causes of conflict are complex, as a result, to put them into simple categorisation will be inadequate. However, when loose typologies of conflict are constructed based on the most prevalent causes, it will help create a framework in which the nature of contemporary conflicts can be examined. The fact is that it is not the absence or lack of the resources that generate violence but rather the struggle for the control of certain resources that generate the worst conflicts. These conflicts arise over the distribution of political, economic, military and legislative power and all these have an impact on people's freedom. Declining economy and inequality are other causes of conflict. It is believed that conflict arises when the masses do not benefit from the national cake, or when the once vibrant economy starts failing. This

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happens when the masses arise to fight for survival in a dwindling economic situation (Lundahl, 2000; Rupesinghe & Anderlini, 1998).

Countries with fast population growth are more likely to have conflicts. This is because the hitherto good economy with rich resources that was fairy or equally distributed among the masses, reduced drastically, as a result of the rapid population growth. When this occurs, unfairness and inequality set in, then the people down the ladder suffer. It is the suffering masses who have to struggle for survival that resort to violence in order to fight for their rights. Ironically, as the economy grows, people become wealthy and in their quest to amass wealth, resort to violent means to acquire the available economic resources. Ostensibly, there is some nexus between the economy and/or the availability of resources and conflict. This is due to the fact that it is the available export commodities, in terms of natural resources that breed the susceptibility to conflict (Bates, 2001; Collier, 2000; Collier &Hoeffler, 2001). These complexities arise as a result of greed, selfishness and over ambition of human beings in their quest to acquire human needs such as food, security, education, survival and social justice among others. Contrary to the findings that wealthy economy gives rise to the struggle over available resources that bring about conflict, leaders of poor countries equally compete for available economic resources. Since the countries are poor, the available resources will be too scanty for the leaders to scramble for hence, the likelihood of the use of violence (Collier, 1999; Collier &Hoeffler, 1999).

Weber (1968) maintains that conflict arises if action within a socialrelationship is oriented intentionally, to carry out the actor's own will against the resistance of the other party or parties. It is apparent that selfishness

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within a social group is an ingredient for conflict eruption. Also, conflict arises when parties think they have been treated unjustly or principles and decisions taken were biased. As a result, people lose confidence in decision makers (Deutsch, Coleman & Marcus, 2006).

A myriad of factors characterised the violent communal clashes or riots in the US between 1900 and 1919. However, competition for jobs and the migration of a large number of blacks into new housing accommodations that used to be predominantly white neighbourhoods were the main causes of the 1919 Chicago riot in America. The migration of blacks from the South resulted in the struggles between blacks and white civilians over areas that were of nuclear racial domain. Besides, the blacks were accused wrongly for raping white women and the newspapers carried improper reports of blacks that gave them out to be molested, jailed or lynched without trail. These were factors that perpetuated violent conflicts in the US between whites and blacks. Other factors that ignite violent conflicts in the US are; inequality, racism, victimisation and the way and manner in which racial conflicts are handled and controlled (Upton, 2003).

The end of the Cold War led to the emergence of an entirely new set of conflict dynamics, all over the world. They are of the view that the post-Cold War dynamics have facilitated the upsurge of deadly armed conflicts which are driven by the effect of global trends on international, state and intra-state relations (Darkwa et al. 2012).

It is evident that the presence or the discovery of natural resources per se, is not the cause of conflicts in the world but prevailing issues that arise as a result of their presence and discovery. These are environmental degradation,

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opposition from environmental groups, unequal distribution of royalties among producing and non-producing communities and the lack of consultation with thecommunities. These are the issues that have led to a large increase in a number of conflicts.

Globalisation has equally been identified as a cause of conflict in the world. An example is the conflict between the ethnicised peasants and the Bolivian government. The conflict which centered on land ownership and rights for decades has been aggravated by the forces of modernisation and globalisation. The crux of the matter is that the indigenous communities in the Andes, consumed coca for over 2,000 years, for the alleviation of hunger, fatigue and altitude sickness. However, the United States, in her bid to eradicate illicit drugs, backed the Bolivian Government to stop the production and consumption of coca. Also, the US proposed a programme to construct three US financed military bases in the Chapare area. These and other mechanisms of the internationalisation of indigenous communities of Bolivia brought about interethnic conflict (Dent, 2003).

Similarly, one of the leading causes of regional conflicts today that are likely to develop into world conflicts, is the concept of "universal values" that came with globalisation. The challenges of globalisation have become more aggressive, making them potential ingredients for violent territorial changes that lead to geographical conflicts. The policies of globalisation are woefully inadequate for this time and age, as they do not bring advancement to the vast majority of the people in the world. To this end, the 'giant' policy making nations, are being blamed for the hardships in the trails of globalisation. Paramount among them is the U. S. who is being blamed for provoking local

wars of different degrees. Not only that but also contributing, to the development of global opposition of people, civilisations and religions. Many conflicts today are determined by the transformation of modern geopolitical space, which is an aftermath of violent globalisation (Sidorenko, 2015).

The rise in ethnic consciousness and a long history of outside control has its root in the economic, social and political changes of the twentieth century France. Ultimately, language, ethnic identity, cultural traits, clan lineages and political autonomy were the causes of violent conflicts that were provoked by the autonomous and separatist Corsican groups in France from the late 1960s to mid1970s. Linguistic diversity has an explanatory power on the probability of conflict occurrence. Actors of different characteristics have occasionally ended up in war with one another. People are being separated and divided into groups by various characteristics such as language, religion, ethnicity and ideology thus, making peaceful co-existence difficult or impossible. It is therefore apparent that civil conflicts in particular are ignited by clashes of cultures (Charlton, 2003: Eriksson, 2015).

One exogenous causal factor of conflicts in the world is foreignintervention. U.S. foreign influence is a sizeable drive of conflict around the world. Foreign interventions generate persistent uncertainty on fighting over the resources available for each party in conflict. These foreign interventions, might explain long-lasting conflicts as foreign influence is a prominent determinant of civil conflicts globally (Albornoz & Hauk, 2014). In a civil conflict situation between two parties, whenever a deal is offered to one of the domestic parties, it is likely that the party allied with the foreign government, has the upper-hand in taking the final size of the spoils, in case of

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victory. It is also likely to be well-informed about the amount of resources the foreign country is willing to provide in case of a conflict.

Conflicts with other states in the world arise from conflicting claims, interests, ideologies or perceptions and it is likely that these perceptions will be fueled by social or psychological drives that are not fully understood. For example, interstate conflict arises as a result of the desire of states, to either acquire or enhance or better still, to persevere their capacity to function in the international system as independent actors. Causes of conflict remain rooted in perception just as they were in the pre-industrial age. Over the years, the perceptions by statesmen about the growth of hostility from other states that will endanger their own power and fear, has not changed. States fear growing hostility from other states, as they see it as a threat to their own growth and development. A typical example was the general perception held about the growth of German power that was awakened by the naval challenge. Coupled with that was the fear that a German hegemony on the continent, would be first step to a challenge to her own hegemony on the oceans, that led Britain to involve herself in the continental conflict on the side of France and Russia (Howard, 2005).

In addition, attempts from governments to exploit the natural resources and encroach on the boundaries and territories of the indigenous populations generate conflict. Some of the countries facing these problems and as such, likely to experience violence are Indonesia, where the government is encroaching on the lives and territories of the indigenous people. Also facing the same problems are Iran and Jaya, where their forests are being destroyed by the exploitation of copper and mineral deposits. The story is not different in

Brazil, where their rain forest is being depleted. Others are Nepal and Malawi where deforestation has resulted in soil erosion and desertification. The likelihood for a violent conflict between a global population that is ever-increasingwith an ever-decreasing natural resources is very high (Rupesinghe&Anderlin, 1998).

Also, the struggle over governance and authority are a cause of conflicts in the world. This comes in the form of the control and distribution of political, economic, military and legislative power. In most cases, the government uses power to marginalise and persecute different sectors of society. A typical example is the apartheid rule in South Africa where the majority blacks suffered the tyranny of the minority white population and the government. Blacks were excluded for years from the political process, had limited access to education, they were uprooted from their homelands and families and their very lives were controlled and monitored daily by the government. All these affect the freedom of the people. A similar condition arose in Sri Lanka, where in spite of a boast of democratic state by the government, the minority Tamil population, were marginalised and excluded from decision-making process. As a result, the country is embroiled in a civil conflict, between Tamil separatists and the government (Rupesinghe &Anderlini, 1999).

According to Darkwa et al. (2012) Africa as a continent is particularly prone to social conflict as a result of developments, which led to the formation of the contemporary modern African states. Colonial rule, the independence and post-independence struggles for power and resources et cetera, all facilitated the exacerbation of the differences between groups and societies

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within the state. The challenges being faced by post-independence states particularly in Africa should be envisaged because the way they came into being makes them naturally prone to conflict. Some of these groups are said to be clustered forcibly while others through agreements made through negotiations with colonial governments. These were equally driven by economic considerations. Also, when the would-be colonial masters apportioned land among themselves at the Berlin Conference in 1885, they did not take into consideration; kith, kin, tribe, ethnicity, monarchies, chiefdoms, language, tribe, culture, religion and boundaries that separated colonies that were decreed by the drawing of geometric lines but just succeeded tearing clans, communities and nations apart (Villa-Vicencio, 2009).

The grievous experiences of post-colonial Africa, is the insensitivity of the colonial masters. The colonial masters did not respect the cultural differentiations of the numerous ethnic identities of the African, before embarking on the scrambling and partitioning of the continent into various colonies. They therefore succeeded in leaving behind a white legacy/colonial legacy which is conflict, for the African. For these reasons, "peace has remained elusive" for most of the postcolonial African history and development has equally proved difficult. African conflicts are extraordinarily unimpressive with complex histories, complex causes, courses and consequences. If the colonialists were sensitive enough to have respected the culture, values and ethnic identities of the African, the story would have been different today (Ayeniyi, 2011; Francis, 2008:3; Henderson, 2000; Mazuri, 2008: Zeleza, 2008).

Causes of conflicts in Africa are many and they frequently recur as a result of political and institutional factors such as; weak state institution, elite power struggles and political exclusion. Others are; breakdown in social contract, corruption and identity politics. Also, socio-economic factors are informed by inequality, exclusion and marginalisation, absence or weakening of social cohesion and poverty (Kendi et al., 2014). For these reasons, Africa has been the grounds for some of the world's most deadly conflicts in the last few decades particularly, those in Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. The sad aspect is that each of these conflicts resulted in battlefield deaths or war-induced famine and diseases of 500,000 to 1,000,000 people (Henderson, 2000; Kendie et al.).

African civil wars in the post-World War II era broke out to a large extent, from domestic political factors that are related to state building and nation building. As colonialism was not aimed at creating strong, viable, autonomous states, leaders of the new African independent states were faced with a lot of challenges. First, they had the burden of building the institutional apparatus of the state and at the same time constructing an overarching, national identity among disparate cultural groups. Since the colonial masters were not prepared to help them build the structures and also put mechanisms in place to make them strong, viable and fully independent, the new African independent states became weak and therefore, vulnerable to conflicts. The idea that political, economic and cultural factors sparked civil war in Africa is therefore an assumption. The fact is that the remnants of colonialism were the most powerful precipitants of civil war (Henderson, 2000).

One of the reasons attributed to the plethora of conflicts in Africa is "the absence of good governance, with corruption assuming central stage" (Asongu & Kodila-Tedika, 2014:467). African development is largely being retarded by consistent myriad of crimes and conflicts. Additionally, the institutional environment in Africa over the past decades has been plagued by violence, crimes and conflicts. Some of the conflicts have been identified as:

The Darfur humanitarian tragedy, Kenyan post-election crises in 2007/2008, Zimbabwe's economic meltdown, Nigeria's marred transition in 2008, the Ivorian political crisis and the unending Egyptian revolution. Also, the long-standing issue of Somalia as a failed state, coups d'états in Mali and Guinea-Bissau, the mounting rebellion in the Central African Republic and the Malian crisis among others (Asongu & Kodila-Tedika, 467).

Another cause of the myriad of conflicts that ran through the African continent is the power struggle that has plagued the African continent. The leaders are so much 'power infested' that they fail to let go of their offices even after five to six successive terms as presidents. Some of these leaders are greedy, selfish and intolerant so they infringe on the rights of others in their quest to amass wealth. Most of them stayed in office for over 30years thus forcing the military to stage coup de' tats that bring about violent conflicts as well as power struggle (Abaka, 2003; Lemarchand, 2009).

The major cause of armed conflict in Africa is climate and future warming is likely to increase the number of deaths from war. Research across the African continent revealed that conflict was about 50 percent more likely to erupt during warm years. The researchers found out that there is a nexus between lack of rain and conflict which they attribute to scarcity of food. The

research shows that warm years increased the likelihood of conflict by about 50 percent and the assumption is that 'food is the reason for the conflict'. The US researchers maintain that if temperatures rise across the continent as projected by computer models, it is likely that future conflicts will become more common.

According to Stedman (1996) some endemic conflicts in Africa drag on and are labelled, 'very long wars'. Examples of these conflicts are the Sudan and Angola, each of which lasted for more than twenty years. In 1995, there were five civil wars that dragged on in Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan. Some wars are also identified as endemic such as Chad, Uganda and Ethiopia which had multiple conflicts of various durations since independence. However, some conflicts such as Mali among others in the 1990s were short wars that lasted for few years. Armed conflict especially civil war, has been central to African's post-colonial experience, as a result, Africa is and has been vulnerable to war and brutalities (Straus, 2012).

The Uppsala Conflict Data Programme(UCDP)/Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) and Armed Conflict Data (ACD), show that civil war in particular has been the central feature of Africa's post-colonial political history. About 30 countries in sub-Saharan Africa which constitute about 65 percent of all the states in the region have experienced an armed conflict since independence. The UCDP/PRIO data divides conflict into three major types that are relevant to post-independent Africa. They are:

- Interstate armed conflict

- Internal state armed conflict

- Internationalised interstate armed conflict (Straus, 2012).

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Henderson (2000) argues that internal factors within the African states are the causes of African conflicts. Some of these internal factors are the inability of the African states to respond to the challenges of state and nation building. After colonialism, African chiefs and leaders did not take state and nation building seriously, by re-demarcating the African states according to dialectical and ethnic groupings in order to bring about good brotherliness and neighbourliness. Thus, boundary and territorial conflicts, ethnic, governance, political and ideological conflicts became causes of conflicts in Africa (Kendie et al, 2014). The numerous and violent conflicts that occur in the West African Sub-region, make the region the 'riskiest' in Africa (Edi, 2006).

Conflict as a phenomenon, does not just erupt but goes through a process and like any other event or episode, it has a beginning, continuation and an end. Some conflicts are short-lived and as such, can be described as having no "continuation" or not "eventful" as they start and end after a brief period. This depends on the anger management, self-control, guarding against hate speech, derogatory statements, abusive words and insults. Also, when the conflicting parties decide to forgive each other/one another and/or the appropriate conflict resolution strategies, mechanisms and practices are employed, the conflict is resolved after a short period.

Conflict Escalation

Noll (2000:1) describes conflict escalation as "a gradual regression from a mature to immature, level of emotional development. The psychological process develops step by step in a strikingly reciprocal way to the way…"
From the above definition, it is apparent that conflict escalation is not an extemporaneous occurrence. It is a situation that builds up gradually when

conflict parties or other stakeholders, move from the mature path that leads to conflict resolution, conflict management or a ceasefire, to an immature path or infant level that mismanages the conflict that leads to further violence. Conflict can therefore be said to escalate when it graduates from a rational stage to an irrational stage, where conflicting parties fail to analyse situations in a mature manner but resort to aggression and violence as a means to an end.

This is the stage where parties lose every sense of belongingness and see each other/one another antagonists. As a result, the warring factions aim at nothing but the destruction of the 'enemy', even if it means losing their own lives in the process. Conflict escalation takes place at a certain stage in a conflict situation, where there is an increase in the intensity of the conflict and also in the severity of the strategies used by the combatants who pump more resources in terms of money, fighters and materials, into the conflict. This is when the level of conflict leaps beyond known levels (Mischnick, 2017; Villa-Vicencio, 2009).

It is evident that conflict escalationcan be prevented as it does not escalate from the onset. Combatants can agree not to enter the immaturity or irrational stage of conflictbut reason in rational terms in order to decrease the intensity of conflict.

Causes of Conflict Escalation

There are so many factors that give rise to conflict escalation, from covert to overt, non-verbal to verbal communications, negative behaviours and attitudes among others. Conflict escalation takes place at a certain stage in a conflict situation, where there is an increase in the intensity of the conflict and also in the severity of the strategies used by the combatants who pump more

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resources in terms of money, fighters and materials, into the conflict. Conflicts escalate when one party in a conflict situation thinks it is being pressurised or coerced to surrender. For example, in the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, the Nkonya think they are being coerced to relinquish what rightfully belongs to them, to be shared equally (50-50), between them and the Alavanyo. For this reason, the Nkonya has become adamant to the final verdict of the MC thus, creating tension in the conflict situation with its accompanying sporadic escalations. Similarly, the Alavanyo who think the Nkonya will agree to the sharing of the land that will call for a ceasefire, are disappointed because they have agreed to the equal (50-50) sharing, during their last meeting with the MC.

This agreement would have enabled the Alavanyo to continue theirfarming activities and everyone would have been going about their normal duties. Consequently, their disappointments have generated frustrations which resulted into sporadic violence and escalation. The outcome of these attitudes and behaviours are conflict escalation.

Conflicts can escalate in situations where ethnic, racial, economic, religious and cultural exclusion are heightened by economic exclusion. Also, political exclusivity in Africa and other parts of the world is an ingredient that intensifies anger, which gives rise to rebellion and open violence that led to escalation. Similarly, when the right to some basic necessities such as food, housing, cultural life and employment are denied and large groups of people are excluded from the decision-making processes of the society, there is the likelihood that there would be great social unrest. It is under these conditions that social conflicts arise and parties demand that their basic needs be met. It is

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the intensity of these ills in conflict situations that cause conflict escalation (Villa -Vicencio, 2009).

Human beings by nature want to belong, to be loved, cared for, treated fairly, respected, identified and acknowledged. For this reason, any attempt to show dislike, hatred, disrespect, arrogance, contempt, exclusion, segregation or neglect, brings about conflict. Hence, in an already conflicting relation, such negative attitudes and behaviours escalate it. For example, conflicts escalated in Bolivia and the USA, as a result of racial, economic and political exclusion of the Indians and the segregation, hatred and neglect of the Blacks respectively (Dent, 2003; Rudolph, Jr. 2003).

Incompatible goals have also been identified as factors that give rise to some conflict escalation. It is believed that destructive social and inter-personal conflicts predominantly start with the onset of disputable goals of two adversaries (Mischnick, 2017). When this happens, the parties believe that there should be a way of finding a beneficial solution to their problems in order that their goals would be achieved or their needs met. However, if these adversaries do not envisage the possibility of finding any mutually beneficial solution, and one of the parties is confidently convinced to significantly change the aspirations of the other, it may try to intimidate the other party into submission. In the process of pursuing their incompatible goals, the adversaries may issue threats and try to pressurise their opponents in order to satisfy their desires, by way of giving them what they are looking for. This is the stage when each party heightens or intensifies its pressurisation because each party believes that her opponent is being driven by forced power. In the process, if one party is harmed or threatened by another, the threatened party (victim) is

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more likely to respond with hostility. These intensifications of threats, coercing and the intensity of the sense of grievances, fuel conflicts to escalate.

Similarly, when people think that they have been treated unjustly, they build up anger and resentment which result into attempts to revenge. For that matter, this revenge intensifies and leads to further injustice that causes the conflict to escalate out of control (Maiese, 2003). In conflict situations of such nature, if attention is shifted from focusing on addressing the issue of injustice, as the central issue that gave rise to the conflict escalation, vengeance becomes the focal point and therefore treated as the primary goal thus, making the conflict intractable as it keeps escalating. Looking at issues of injustice in conflict situations, it can be said that there is a nexus or a strong interdependence between human rights violations and intractable conflicts. For example, in the case of Nkonya-Alavanyo, the issue of injustice and unfair treatment is not being tackled but just the issue of demarcation, sharing of the disputed land, peace and reconciliation. Meanwhile, the Nkonya thinks there is so much injustice, as the MC wants to share what lawfully belongs to them, between them and the Alavanyo. Nevertheless, the Alavanyo claims the Nkonya gave them the "dangerous forest" to destroy the wild animals that were terrorising them which they did to enable the Nkonya live in peace. Secondly, the Alavanyo claim they helped the Nkonya to defeat the Akans as enumerated in chapter six of this research. For these reasons, the Alavanyo think the Nkonya is being unfair to them as they do not see the reason why after "saving them from their enemies" on two occasions, they should not compensate them (Alavanyo) but rather want to take the land the Nkonya had given them (Alavanyo) from them.

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Another major identified problem that gives rise to conflict escalation on the Africa continent specifically, the West-African sub-region, is the proliferation of small arms and light weapons by belligerents. It is this unregulated trade of proliferation of small arms and weapons that contributed to conflict escalation in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire.Unfortunately, as if the escalation of conflicts were not enough burden on the sub-region, the flood of arms had been accompanied by a rise in mercenaries' activities thus, prolonging violence and conflict escalation (Annan, 2003; Nna, Pabon & Friday, 2012). This issue of proliferation of small arms and light weapons was responsible for the intensification and escalation of the conflict in Sudan. The militants used them as a major support to maintain their ground, thus turning the once peaceful country of Sudan into a range of battlefield with armed struggle between groups and among groups and governments, for the past four decades. Sadly, this unregulated trade in small arms, that fuel conflicts in Africa, are often funded by the illicit exploitation of natural resources that could be used to alleviate poverty on the continent.

Even though the people of Southern Sudan were granted autonomy with its own legislature, executive and judiciary, the Northern Sudanese undermined the agreement that was signed in Addis Ababa, in 1972. The Southern Sudanese were not allowed the right to self-determination, which they saw as an affront and an effort to thwart their desires to become independent. Meanwhile, the north continued with its project of Islamisation and Arabisation of the country (Nna et al., 2012). Clearly seen, the trend continues that conflict escalates when people's needs are not met or when people think they have been unfairly treated. Human beings by nature want to be treated fairly and would

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not allow their rights to be infringed upon. Thus, any attempt to infringe on the rights of people especially, by the perceived enemy, with those in a conflict situation, conflict escalates. With this in mind, if warring factions would be circumspect enough, in their speech and action, adversaries will avoid conflict escalation and strive to co-exist.

Conflict escalation arises when one party perceives the other party's action or utterance as a threat. Consequently, he or she moves with the perceived threat to anger and will subsequently behave in a self protective or self defensive manner as a result of that anger. In the same vein, the other perceived 'provocator' or 'perpetrator' equally sees the perceived 'provocated' or 'victim's behaviour as a threat. It is the demonstration of the same perception-anger behaviour pattern of both parties that escalate conflict (Harris, 2010). In South Sudan for example, the conflict between the actors, especially, President SalvaKiirMayardit and Vice President RietMachar, is prolonging and resisting conflict resolution because of the underlying rift that brought mistrust between them. Each one perceives the others behaviour as a threat. For this reason, anypronouncement, action or inaction on the part of each of the parties, escalates the conflict thus worsening the already worrisome situation in the country (Dockins, 2014). Harris (2010) came up with a model to help readers understand the dynamics of conflict escalation better (See fig, 1 below/next page).

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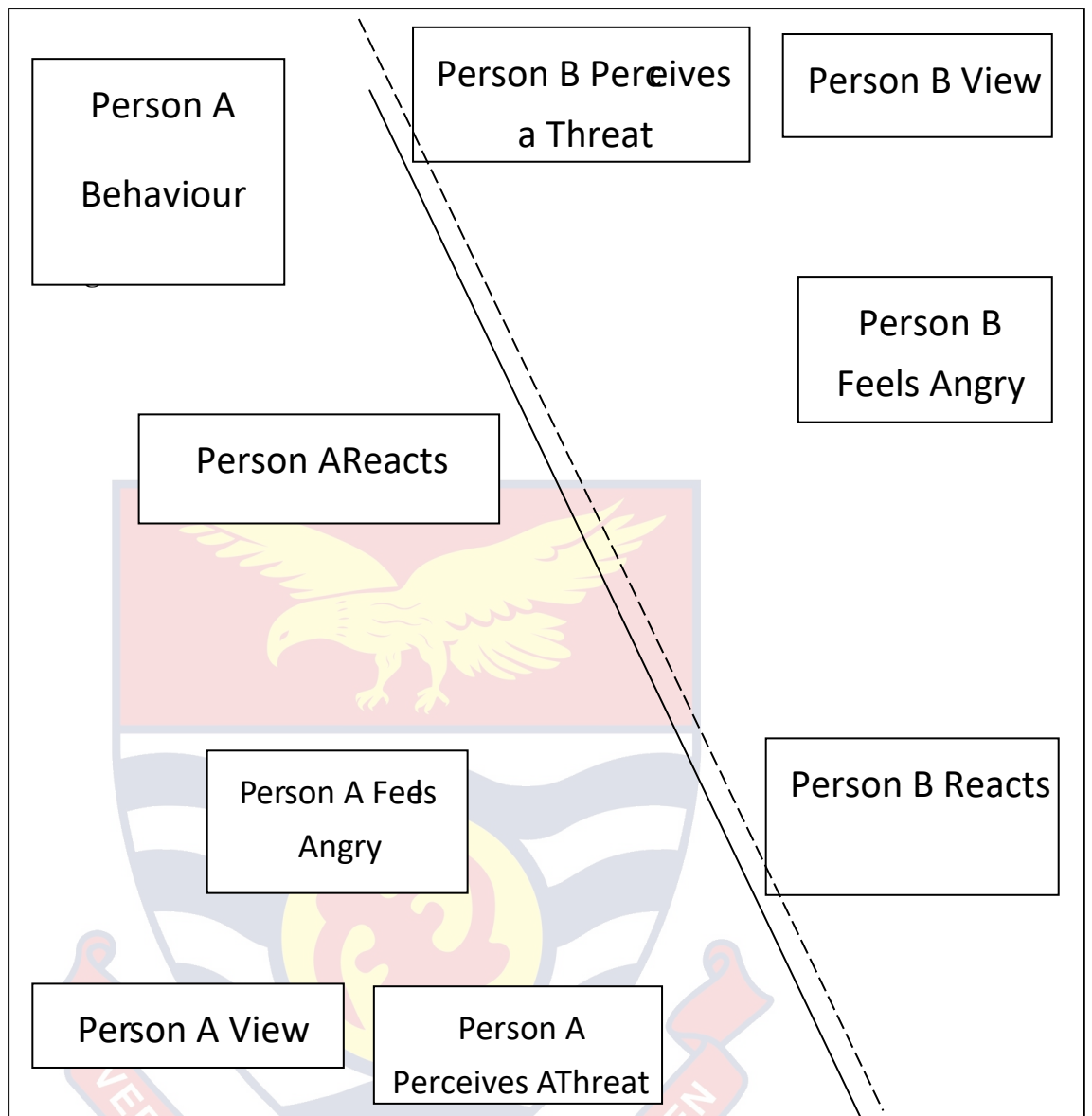
Figure 1: **Why Conflicts Escalate**

Harris' (**2010**) **ConflictModel**

Harris (2010) believes that conflict escalates when Person 'A' makes a pronouncement or puts up a behaviour which Person 'B' perceives as a threat as mentioned above. The word "perceives" is used because it does not really matter if Person 'A' meant his or her action or word as a threat. The only thing that matters is if Person 'B' sees those actions and words as a threat. This

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perception of threat can take many forms and it is likened to the process of conflict escalation.

This is to expound perceived anger illustrated in the chart above and mentioned earlier. Person 'A' puts up a behaviour which Person 'B' perceives as a threat. Person 'B' therefore reacts to the perceived threat of 'A' and becomes angry. This causes Person 'A' to perceive the reaction of Person 'B' as a threat and so counter reacts with anger. As a result, the process continues to the escalation of conflict. This conflict escalation process is illustrated in the model to enable people understand the dynamics of conflict escalation in order to help in the de-escalation of conflicts.

A political decision based on political will, economic and military capability, is another causal factor of conflict escalation. What happens is that when one conflict party is aligned with a well-endowed political party that can afford sophisticated weapons and has so much money to supply all needed logistic that can combat and subdue the adversary and also has a strong military force, conflict keeps escalating. This is because the stronger and economically endowed party intensifies the fight, in an attempt to defeat the weaker party or compel it to surrender. In some instances, the strong and economically endowed party decides to continue fighting, and disregards cease-fire initiatives thus, intensifying the fight that leads to escalation. This is a situation where the decisions to set up the fight is a political one, based on political will and military capability of the leaders to accelerate the conflict beyond the ability of the opponent. Nonetheless, the weaker opponent capitalises on the decision of the stronger opponent not to end the fight, and continue fighting. "Escalation is

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a political decision based on political will and military capability" (Duyvesteyn, 2012:737).

Additionally, the adoption of higher destructive strategies, contributes to conflict escalation. For instance, in a situation where a party to a conflict even has lesser money and materials, their psychological and ethical will to continue to intensify the fight for their right, contribute to conflict escalation. This means that the party does not necessarily have to be economically strong or have a strong military force. However, the fact that the combatants have the psychological and ethical will power to fight for their rights, they continue fighting. As a result, their opponents equally intensify fighting in order to defeat the weaker party and this brings continual escalation that contributes to "age-long" conflicts.

Similarly, politicians across a wide range of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries constantly entangle themselves in illicit schemes, to enable them finance parties, in rapidly escalating electoral campaigns (Walle, 2007). Obviously, the escalation of post-election conflicts, are sometimes funded by the politicians themselves in their heightened political interests. Politicians artificially create conflict escalation for their selfish interest, in their quest to attain political positions, wield power, amass wealth and earn popularity.

It is intriguing to know that natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes and drought among others, cause conflict escalation in contemporary times. The fact is that natural disasters may attract looting, riots and intensified contentions between different ethnicities or classes. This is because people will have to struggle over the scanty available commodity

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during these disasters. In the midst of the crises, more resilient social systems may be able to withstand the situation. Subsequently, social cohesion can quash existing opposition. An example of Natural Disaster Related Conflict Escalation (NDRCE), is the violent escalation of conflict in Darfur, which was fuelled by the Sudanese government's involvement in a civil war with rebel movements. For example, the continual severe droughts in recent decades compelled Nomads, who are mainly of Arab ancestry, to migrate towards the South, a situation which resulted into conflicts between the Southerners and the Nomads from the north.

The critical point of view is that the severe drought had equally dealt a severe blow to the Southerners and they as well, had to struggle for survival, on the same land that the migrant nomads had come to inhabit with their animals for survival. This issue is the struggle over scanty resources that bring about upsurge of conflict. It is worth noting that it is not the natural disaster per se that causes the conflict escalation but the already prevalent issues such as poverty, civil war, the struggle over resources and the aftermath of the natural disaster (Kriesberg & Dayton, 2012).

Concerning natural disasters and conflict escalation, it was recorded that 1998 was the worst for weather-related natural disasters, accompanied by the breaking out and the re-eruption of armed conflicts the same year in countries such as Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Kashmir, Kosovo and also between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, observes that war and natural disasters remain the major threat to security of individuals and human community worldwide. He therefore called for the strengthening of the capacity of the organisation in order to bring relief to victims and also for

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the formulation of more cost effective prevention strategies to prevent emergencies from arising (Annan, 1999).

The choice of a conflict strategy is jointly determined by four sets of factors. They are, (a) the goal sought, (b) the characteristics of the adversaries, (c) the relationship between the adversaries and (d) the social environment of the adversaries. Paramount among these is the characteristics of adversaries that will enable them employ specific strategies for example; employing a legitimating ideology and formulating a particular conflict method and also having the capability to execute it. This situation helps adversaries to legitimise their actions thus, taking entrenched positions which prolong the conflict. This is exactly the case of Nkonya and Alavanyo who have both taken entrenched positions. While the Nkonya has decided not to agree to the sharing of the disputed land, the Alavanyo has refused to accept the Gruner Map as a legal document. Equally important are the proximate circumstances that the adversaries go through and their conducts towards one another. The latter is very relevant to the formulation of constructive strategies (Kriesberg & Dayton, 2012). It is of importance to know that each course of action of one of the conflicting parties affects the opponents' choices and subsequent trajectory of the conflict. For example, the use of terrorism by one party is likely to arouse strong reactions that are favourable/ appropriate ingredients for destructive conflict escalation.

Having looked at some factors that trigger conflict escalation, the research would discuss stages of conflict and processes of escalation as propounded by some scholars of thought. As discussed earlier, conflicts do not erupt suddenly but go through processes or stages until they reach the height or

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'summit' where they escalate. With this in mind, Oyeshola (2005) came up with five stages of conflict as follows, emerging stage, escalating stage, severe stage, de-escalating stage and rebuilding and reconciliation stage. The five stages are illustrated below.
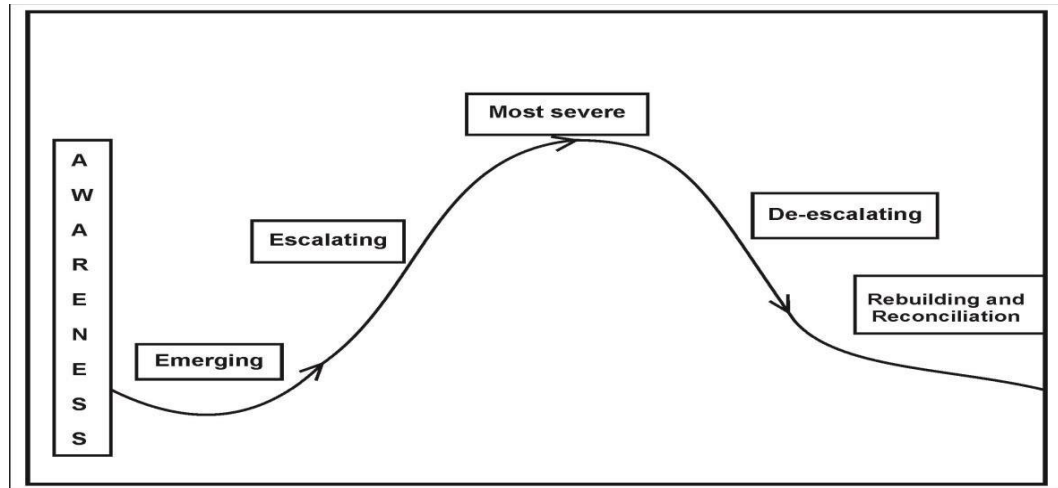
Figure 2: **Oyeshola's (2005) Five Stages of Conflict**

Emerging Stage – This is the stage where signs and signals of conflict become visible and the cordial relationship begins to fall apart and take a different dimension. The fire that keeps the relationship going begins to quench, frequent visits reduce drastically and indifference in attitudes become prevalent. At this stage there is still the opportunity for different forms of intervention, preferably, nonviolent intervention. However, if the signals and signs are not taken seriously with interventions, it erupts to the second stage.

Escalation Stage – The escalation stage is normally short and parties are aware of the strained relationship. If prompt steps are not taken to reverse the situation, it gets out of control into the most severe stage.

Most Severe Stage – This stage is characterised by complete chaos and violence resulting in destruction of life and property. Paradoxically, when the energies of the combatants are supped or a mediator emerges, then the progress

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is being made into the next stage where de-escalation begins thus leading to rebuilding and reconciliation stage.

Rebuilding and Reconciliation – Broken relationships are mended and other destroyed structures are rebuilt and reconciliation takes place. "Rebuilding and reconciliation imply demilitarization, the control of small arms, institutional reform, improved Police and judicial systems, the monitoring of human rights, electoral reform and social and economic development" (Oyeshola, 2005). The fact is that the control of small arms after peace agreement is a difficult thing because former adversaries would want to keep their arms handy in case of any eventualities. This will continue to be the case as a result of mistrust, as discussed earlier in this chapter. In the case of Nkonya-Alavanyo, the Alavanyo are manufacturers of arms and the Nkonya accused them of their continual production of arms irrespective of the closure of the factory and the embargo placed on the manufacturing of arms by the government. Nonetheless, the Alavanyo lament that they have been banned from producing arms meanwhile, the Nkonya has "big men" in the military who supply them with sophisticated weapons. Not only that but they also complained that the Nkonya has "rich men" in Europe and America who support them to purchase weapons. For this reason, sporadic shooting has characterised the 'age long' conflict.

As discussed earlier, conflict does not escalate just after 'take off' but goes through different levels, stages and/or processes. These levels change in ascending order, from 'lower' to 'upper', each with its emotions that heighten as they climb up the emotional ladder. The danger is that the more the stages with their accompanied emotions climb up, the more dangerous the conflict becomes.

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However, if interventions come in time, to prevent the stages from 'climbing higher', the conflict could be resolved or managed in order to prevent escalation or further escalation. Noll (2000) maintains that escalation is in five stages with their various emotional developments and each has its own characteristics and triggers. On the contrary, Levinger (2013) is of the view that conflict can escalate suddenly and unexpectedly depending on a triggering event prevalent at the time. This cannot be refuted because every conflict is unique as every human being is unique, the causes may be similar but not the same and the history of the people and of the issues would definitely be different. Thus, some conflicts can escalate suddenly. Levinger believes that it is the de-escalation that tends to be a more gradual and halting process. That notwithstanding, this research is working on this chapter with the notion that conflicts do not escalate but go through a process of mediation and transformation to bring about reconciliation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, conflict is a global phenomenon that affects every continent on the globe especially, Africa. Some of the causes of conflict identified by this research globally are:

- Competition/struggle for natural resources (land, oil, water, gold, iron, timber, copper and other natural resources), exploitation, selfishness and corruption.

- Competition for position/power struggle, bad/poor governance, greed and grievances.

- Discrimination, racism, superiority and inferiority complex, marginalisation, inequality and victimisation. Also, human rights abuse, hate speech and intolerance, identity problems, cultural and ethnic differences.

- Globalisation, foreign influence/interventions, poverty, economic, politics, geopolitics, and religious intolerance.

- Natural disasters such as famine, drought, flood, earthquake, landslide, tsunami, hurricane and epidemic.

Knowing the trend of global conflicts and major causes of conflicts in Africa would inform readers to understand the dynamics of conflicts in Ghana. The next chapter is 'Conflict Trends in Ghana'.
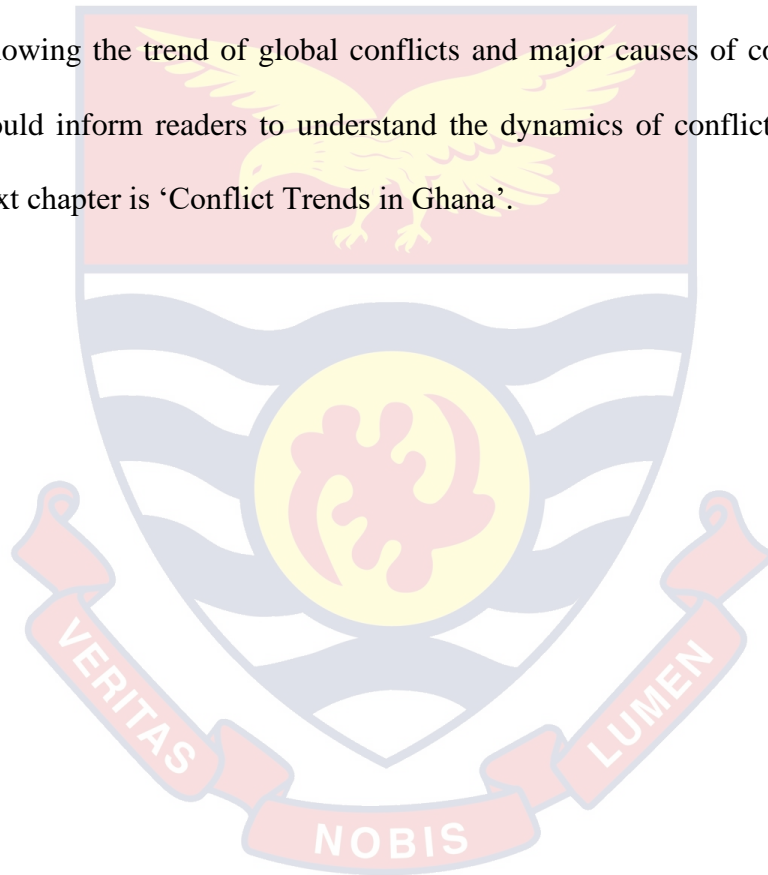
CHAPTER THREE

CONFLICTS TRENDS IN GHANA

Introduction

Ghana has myriad of conflicts that are violent and rampant, ranging from individual to group conflicts, domestic to community-based, intra-ethnic, inter-ethnic and inter-tribal conflicts. Causes of conflicts in Ghana range from trivial to complex, imaginable to observable, overt to covert issues. These conflicts arise between individuals, between groups and among groups. The West African Sub-Region (WASR), where Ghana finds herself is infested by intra-state conflicts that come about as a result of ethnic and religious causes (Annan, 2014). Ethnic conflicts in Ghana are normally centered on the control of land and other resources and sovereignty issues (Tsikata and Seini, 2004). The root cause of the numerous intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic conflicts in the NR of Ghana (1980– 2002) was chieftaincy (Brukum, 2007). The remote causes of majority of the inter-ethnic and armed confrontations in Ghana are rooted in colonialism. These persistent conflicts are "largely traceable to the introduction of secular political authority/chieftaincy in areas which, before colonialism, were described as stateless or acephalous" (Longi, 2016:234).

It is prudent to look at the nature, degree and causes of conflicts in Ghana in general before proceeding to discuss the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict in the country. This will help readers to understand the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict better. The studies conducted by the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Cape Coast (UCC), on Spatial Analysis of violent conflicts in Ghana: 2007 – 2013, compiled by Kendie et al. (2014) will be used for this chapter.

Ghana has ten (10) regions (now 16 regions) and each has her fair share of conflict(s). The regions are, Upper West, Upper East, Northern, Brong Ahafo, Ashanti, Eastern, Volta, Western, Central and Greater Accra.

The Upper West Region (UWR)

The UWR has been identified as the most peaceful. So far, two minor chieftaincy disputes have been identified in the region that is, at Nadowli and Wallembele.

The details of these conflicts are:

- Nadowli Chieftaincy Conflict: This conflict started from 1999 after the death of the Nadowli Chief. The bone of contention is the rightful successor to the skin/throne, as one party accuses the other of not being an indigene and therefore, has no legal and legitimate right to rule. This issue has not been resolvedhowever, plans are underway to settle the case out of court.

- Wallembele Chieftaincy Conflict: This is another long-standing dispute between the Chief and people of Wallembele. The crux of the matter is that the Chief has consistently refused to perform some rituals as required by custom. Not only that but was also accused of being greedy and misusing power. What triggered the conflict was the demand of the Chief for President Kuffour to nominate his son in-law, as DCE even though he does not come from the area. Meanwhile, the people wanted a native of Wallembele to be the DCE. The people and king-makers therefore decided to deskin him. As a result, the Chief sued the people and the king-makers in court and won the case. However, the people and the king-makers do not recognise him as their Chief and refuse to pay allegiance to him. Even though the issue has been resolved, the people do

not recognise the Chief but resolved not to install a new chief (inorder not to contravene thecourt ruling) until the current one dies. The situation is however calm and people go about their normal duties.

Upper East Region (UER)

The causes of conflicts in the region are mainly chieftaincy and resource based, that is land and mineral. The distributions are as follows;

- **Bawku Skin Affairs**

This chieftaincy has become so political that some of the previously reported conflicts were between the supporters of the two main political parties in Ghana namely, National Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC). Also, there is increase in the struggle to have access to land for agricultural purposes. Sadly, political interference has currently become the immediate cause of conflicts in the Bawku area. The reason being that the ethnic groups, have aligned themselves with political parties. The sequel is that conflicts in the area are waged along ethnic lines such as the Mamprusi and the Kusasi ethnic groups in the Bawku conflict. The situation is however under control and Bawku is calm (but the conflict is not resolved and can escalate due to the suspicion between the ethnic groups). Mediation process is in progress and relative peace has been maintained.

- **Bolgatanga**

Conflict between the Namolgo and Tindongo – This conflict arose when the Namolgo who are migrants refused to follow custom by allowing the Tindongo, the indigenes to allot them with lands but wanted to control land that is said to have gold deposits. The Namolgo Chief defied all orders to meet with

the Tindongo Chief as well as the Paramount Chief of Talensi but went ahead to authorise farming on the disputed land. Fighting erupted as a result and lives were lost in this conflict. However, the security agencies intervened and calm was restored.

- **Gbane Conflict** – **Resource-based Conflict**

This was a conflict betweentheyouthofthe area and the Chief. Gbane has gold deposits and the Chief gave concession to two licensed individuals to mine without consulting the youth who are also into small-scale mining. The conflict arose when these two men contracted a Chinese company to engage in deep mining without consulting the youth, Assemblyman and some elders. Also, the Chinese failed to honour the promise to construct roads and build a school for the community but are rather destroying shea-nut trees and polluting the waters without compensating the people. The issue is not resolved as the people are threatening to remove the Chief and have petitioned the Overlord to that effect. This conflict has come to a stalemate and there is only fragile peace.

- **Yekene/Sirigu/Land Conflict**– This is conflict over farm lands and land boundary. This conflict is similar to the Nkonya-Alavanyo issue. The Yekene share a common land boundary with the Sirigu who are said to be the original owners of the land before the arrival of the Yekene. Theancestors of the two communities planted trees and certain grasses to demarcate the land and respected the boundary but with time, the trees and grasses disappeared due to farming activities. The conflict began when a group of people from Yekene decided to extend the boundary into Sirigu land. Basically, the increasing prices of land in the Bolgatanga area and the desire to protect land and territories are underlying factors of the conflict. Meanwhile, the Earth priest who is settling

the case out of court isnot respected by the Chief of Yekene due to his (Earth Priest) alleged inappropriate installation. The two communities were tasked to go and resolve the case peacefully and report to the Overlord but the two parties have never met. The mediation failed at the decision making stage and has since come to a stalemate. Nonetheless, confrontation from both parties have ceased and there is calm. Again, this issue has confirmed that land and boundary conflictsare difficult to resolve.

Northern Region (NR)

The social structure has been divided traditionally into chiefly and acephalous societies. The chiefly groups who see themselves as superior are the indigenes and in the majority. These are the groups that take leadership positions such as chiefs, from the lower level to the high level. Nonetheless, the acephalous groups who are not indigenes are referred to as minority. These groups do not have lands but had to farm on lands given them by the 'indigenous' groups, and the minority 'alien' groups had to pay tribute to their Landlords. This act of majority group exerting power over minority group is a major cause of conflict in the Northern region of Ghana and dates back to the Colonial period when the Gonja wielded so much power over the minority group such as the Vagala, Nawuri, Ntchumuru (Brukum, 1995; Kendi et al., 2014).

Conflicts in the NR are not just a variety of causes of conflict but different types of causes. However, the violent conflicts are ethnic in nature and are influenced by issues such as succession to skins, land ownership, superiority and inferiority complexes. Others are pride, and discrimination

against the so-called minority ethnic groups. A new wave of conflict that is creeping into the NR is political conflicts that occur between supporters of the two major political parties, the National Democratic Party (NDC) and National Patriotic Party (NPP).

Areas with their Peculiar Conflict Type(s)

- **Chieftaincy Conflicts**

   These are prevalent in places such as Buipe, Kpandai, Yendi and Bimbilla. These have to do with succession to skins and are either inter-ethnic or intra-ethnic.

- **Buipe Chieftaincy Dispute**

   This is purely chieftaincy dispute arising from de-skinment of the Buipe Chief and his subsequent court action that brought a clash between two parties.

- **Kpandai Wura Dispute**

   Chieftaincy dispute over legitimacy to the throne. This was a tussle between two individuals who wanted to be recognised as the Paramount Chief in order to control resources and also gain power and prestige.

- **Yendi Conflict**

This conflict is a result of an extended intra-ethnic lineage-based succession crisis between two gates, Abudus and Andanis, the murder of the Ya-Na, Yakubu Andani IV, Overlord of Dagbon, in 2002 and political interference. Subsequently, any misunderstanding between individuals of the two gates in whatever situation triggers the conflict. The most recent violent conflict between the two gates in 2012 was triggered by the enskinment of a chief at Kpatinga. The conflict continues as the Andanis want those who killed the Ya-

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Na punished and still have someone from the Andani gate as the Overlord of the traditional area. Nonetheless, the Abudus want to gain access to the throne by the performance of the funeral of their late father, Mohamadu Abdulai. The conflict is not resolved, the place is relatively calm but mutual suspicion as well as tension is high.   However, implementation of peace process is in progress.

- **The Bimbilla Chieftaincy Succession Dispute**

    This dispute occurred after the death of Naa Abarka, the Bimbilla Chief, in 1994. Getting a substantive chief to succeed him became a struggle between the Andani and NakpaNaa gates and this has been dragging on since 2002/2003. The conflict escalated when supporters of Andani Dasana enskinned him as the Bimbilla Naa. There is relative peace but the issue has not been resolved.

    Political Conflicts

- **The Gushiegu Conflict**

    Post-Election violence between the NDC supporters and the NPP activists.

- **The Tamale Conflicts**

    These Political conflicts occurred in Gumbihini, Choggu and Changli as a result of political violence between the two main political parties in Ghana (NDC and NPP).

- **The Chereponi Conflict**

    This is equally a political conflict that was sparked by a by-election rally that was held by the NDC and NPP supporters. According to Kendi et al. (2014:46),

"Though the political hand has meddled in chieftaincy conflicts since the time of the colonial government, the introduction of NPP/NDC partisanship struggles within the arenas of chieftaincy related conflicts is a new development in the conflict landscape in the Northern region".

- **Resource-Based Conflicts/Other Conflicts:**

    The nature of this conflict is mainly inter-ethnic struggles over access to land, to have control over land or the struggle over land ownership. Places identified with resource-based conflicts in the NR are; Kpandai, Bimbilla, Bunkprugu, Yonyuo and Gusheigu.

- **Kpandai Conflict**

    This conflict is a struggle over land ownership between the Gonjas and the Nawuris. The causal factor was that the Gonja and Nawuris were contesting for land and this brought about multiple selling of land. What complicated the conflict was the support theNawuris had from the other minority groups such as the Nchumuru and Kokomba.

- **Bimbilla Conflict**

    The Bimbilla issue was an inter-ethnic conflict between the Kokomba-Nanumba and dates back to 1994. The conflict arose from the quest for recognition and respect and also to attain power to control natural as well as political resources.

- **Bunkpurugu-Yonyuo Conflict**

    The Bunkpurugu-Yonyuo conflict cannot be categorised due to its multilayered nature and is therefore labelled as 'other'. This conflict, which erupted as a result

of competition for land ownership among the Mamprusi, Bimobas and Kokombas, occurred in many villages such as Kpamala, Terma, Jimbale, Kambatia and Bakoni.

- **Other Conflicts**

- **Gusheigu Conflict – Fulani Herdsmen and Indigenes**

This was a violent conflict between the Fulani from Burkina Faso and the indigenes in Zamashegu in the Gusheigu district. This conflict over landownership stemmed up from the destruction of crops of the indigenes by the cattle of the Fulani herdsmen. Besides the destruction of farm produce, the animals polluted water bodies in the area and the Fulani herdsmen were brutalising the indigenes, who did not allow their animals access to graze or cause harm to the animals for the destruction of farm produce.

- **Mpaha Conflict – Religious**

This was a religious conflict between two Muslim sections; the Tijaniyya (who are in the minority) and the Al'usuna (in the majority), at Mpaha in the West Gonja district. The Tijaniyya sect wanted to build a mosque on a piece of land that was in the middle of the village but the Al'usuna sect objected to the decision with the argument that the land in question was closer to their (Al'sunna) area than the Tijaniyya area. Clearly seen, this conflict which became violent was the result of gaining control over another or to dominate the other concerning religious activities.

Ashanti Region (AR)

The categorisation of the AR conflicts are; resource-based, inter-ethnic, chieftaincy, religious and other conflicts.

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Resource-Based Conflicts

•Owabi Conflict

This conflict arose as a result of perceived idea, by people of the community that the relief items (in terms of building materials) meant for them by the government, had been diverted by official of the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO). This incidence took place in 2007, when a dam constructed by the government at Owabi, had overflowed after a torrential rain and destroyed the properties of the people.

Akumadan Conflict

This is a farming community with vast fertile land suitable for both agriculture and pasture. For this reason, pastoralists migrated to the area. Pockets of violence occurred between the farmers and the herders, not only resulting from competition for farm land but also, the destruction of farm crops. The indigenous farmers have accused the chiefs of the area, of collecting cattle from the herdsmen thus, conniving with them and giving them land to settle on and providing them with pasture for their flock. This has been accusation of chiefs by farmers in all areas of the country where the herdsmen settle. This resource-based conflict has become complicated, as the indigenous people have also become cattle rearers. The dispute has shifted from the indigenous farmers and settler Fulani (s) to cattle owners and herders.

• **Inter-Ethnic Conflict**

The area recorded inter-ethnic conflicts as well during the period under review. The cause of these conflicts is mainly the feeling of superiority of mostly the indigenous people over others. One peculiar feature about these

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conflicts is its complex, multi-layered nature because despite the fact that the root causes are xenophobic in nature, they erupt as a result of unremarkable issues.

- **Abuakwa Zongoand Boaso Violence**

This violence is a clash between settler zongo communities who are mainly Muslims and the indigenous community. The remote cause of the conflict was a remark made by someone from the indigenes, against the zongo community concerning their untidiness. The immediate cause was the protest against waste water from someone from the indigenous community to the zongo community. What escalated the conflict was the arrest of 17 members of the zongo community by the police and the subsequent killing of one of them. Here, it is clear that injustice and equity among others can exacerbate conflict.

- **Jamasi Conflict**

Cause of the conflict here was a misunderstanding over the right person to get access to a football field. This is a conflict caused by control over resources, identity and politics. The structure of the Jamasi conflict is marginalisation and differences between indigenes and the zongo community. The conflict is said to be xenophobic and went unpunished. Some of the settlers have left the community to a more tolerant community. However, there is an easy calm.

- **Chieftaincy Conflicts**

There are two cases recorded under the chieftaincy conflict which are Juaso and Nkenkenso. In Juaso, the conflict was between two installed chiefs that was, dispute over who to be the chief of Juaso. The underlining cause is, power and access to the control of resources especially land.

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With the Nkenkenso issue, it was a misunderstanding between a family and the chief concerning a decision to sell land. This conflict was therefore the desire to control land and resources that is to say, to get access to and control land.

- **Religious Conflict**

This conflict occurred at Ejura after the death of a Chief Imam and the subsequent contest for a successor. This conflict, even though religious has ethnic connotation and political undertone.

Other Conflict Hotspots

These other conflicts were caused by the government's inability to provide the Sarboa community with the needed resource (speed ramps on a high way that passes through the town). While the youth took it upon themselves to construct it in order to curb fatal accidents, the police were called in to stop them. In the scuffle between the police and the youth, warning shots were fired and two persons were seriously injured.

- **Kumawu Conflict**

The Kumawu conflict emerged as a result of political intolerance of the two main political party supporters. The crux of the matter was that the posters of the NPP were destroyed so, the NPP supporters who are Asanti (s), took on the settler community who are predominantly NDC supporters. The conflict therefore took an ethnic dimension. The other face of the Kumawu conflict is the Kumawu protracted chieftaincy succession dispute between two royal families.

- Also identified were resource-based conflicts at Nsiana, Abodom and Obuasi. The conflicts were caused by land allocation and its use for gold prospecting. The degradation of the environment by foreign small-scale miners is also

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sparking conflicts in the area. Other struggles over resources by settler/indigenes and chieftaincy succession conflicts have been recorded in the region.

Eastern Region (ER)

Key conflict causal factors in this region are put into three categories namely; Fulani herdsmen versus farmers, illegal mining (galamsey) and chieftaincy. These three categorisation, fall under generic terms that are resource use, land rights and power. A total of fifteen (15) conflicts were recorded between2000 – 2013 in this region and are described as, perennial and simmering. However, conflicts in the Eastern region do not escalate.

• **Chieftaincy Conflicts**

Chieftaincy conflicts which dominate the conflicts, occur at; Koforidua, OdumaseKrobo, Akwamufie and Akropong.

• **Koforidua**

This is the New Juabeng chieftaincy affair, a conflict between Kwahumanhene and DasebreOtiBoateng, the Paramount Chief of Koforidua, over the appropriate enstoolment of the Kwahumanhene. Another conflict recorded was the tension between the Omanhene and the Queen mother, where the Omanhene claimed to destool the Queen mother.

• **Kwabeng/Awenare**

This was a dispute over the rightful successor to the throne, a dispute over who should become a chief. This is a conflict that arises as a result of the crave for resources and power.

Akropong/Akwapen

Violence over rightsto use a cemetery. The key causal factors of this violence are dissatisfaction among other groups over perceived excessive power wielded by Akropong Paramountcy and the desire of other traditional areas to become paramountcies and be independent of Akropong.

This is one of the oldest conflicts in the region. The root cause appears to be tribal differences between the Akan speaking Akropong and the Guan speaking Abriews. The immediate cause of the violence however was the prevention of the Abriews from burying their dead in a cemetery sited on Akropong land. The structure of this conflict therefore is the dissatisfaction among other groups over perceived excessive power wielded by Akropong Paramountcy.

- **Odumasi-Krobo Succession Conflict**

This conflict was caused by the desire by each family to become a ruling family. The conflict is among three eligible factions where it is claimed that one of the gates has produced a non-royal.

- **Akwamufie Succession Conflict**

This is a protracted conflict that has lasted for over 20 years and is between the Queen mother and the family head. The causal factors are; the dispute over the rightful heir to the throne, desire by each party to be the king-maker and the desire to attain power and status. The underlying factor is the recognition of legitimacy.

Resource-Based Conflicts

- **The Yayawso/Yawtana-Newmont Clashes**

    This is contestation over the ownership and right to use natural resources and issues over the inadequacy of compensation paid to affected people in the bid to exploit resources. The hidden agenda here is the desire by the youth to exploit the mining company in spite of the payment of the agreed compensation by the mining company (Kendi et al., 2014).

- **Ntronan**

    This resource-based conflict was caused by the confrontation of the Chief, by the youth, for misusing the resources, of the community. The Chief was accused of spending the accrued income from the resources on himself, instead of using it on the community.

- **Abetifi**, **Hwehwe**, **Nkawkaw**

    This conflict between the indigenes and Fulani herdsmen, was caused by the indigenes' desire to protect their resources/farm produce from destruction by the cattle of the herdsmen.

- **Afram Plains Northand South**

    The Kwawu chiefs and Ewe settlers had a conflict over the right to install a chief by the Ewe settlers. The dispute was sparked by the fact that the Ewe(s) installed their own chief in order to become independent. As a result, the Kwahu are reclaiming their land from the Ewe settlers. This conflict however did not turn violent.

The Samang – Kibi Goldfields Conflict

    This is caused by a contest over the use of the River Akusu that feeds Samang, Osino and other townships. The bone of contention, which is between

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the Kibi Goldfields and some community members, is three-fold. These are, the pollution of the Akusu river, the source of drinking water due to mining activities, the destruction of farms without going through the necessary procedures and lack of transparency in the payment of loyalties.

Religious Conflicts

- **Koforidua** – **ChiefImanvs the Youth**

This intra-religious conflict keeps recurring perennially, during the celebration of EidulFitr, among Muslims and between the youth and Chief Imam. The causal factors are, the eligibility of the Chief Imam that is questioned by the youth thus, disqualifying him as the Chief Imam and the need for a replacement of a new Chief Imam.

- **Nsawam–Zongo Tijanniyyavs Wahabis**

This inter-religious conflict is caused by doctrinal differences that have to do with contest over the public pronouncement that one's interpretation of the Holy Quran is superior to the other sect. This is also a perennial occurrence, specifically, during the celebration of Ramadan. Evidently, most of the Eastern Regional conflicts are chieftaincy-based and protracted.

Brong Ahafo Region (BAR)

A total of 26 conflicts were reported in the national dailies during the period under review and three distinct types of conflicts were identified in this region. They are; chieftaincy succession, which are mostly intra-ethnic, resource-based and political conflicts.

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- **Chieftaincy Conflicts**

Nsoatre chieftaincy conflict borders on the rightful candidate for the throne. There was succession problem, as some other royals felt the candidate nominated to succeed the deceased chief was not a royal while some other royals also felt it was not his turn to succeed the throne.

- **Berekum Chieftaincy Conflict**

Similarly, the Berekum Paramount stool became vacant following the death of the Paramount Chief. Consequently, the Queen mother played hercustomary role, for the installation of a new chief but the other royal families felt someone from their families should have been installed.

- **Wenchi Chieftaincy Conflict**

In this case, each of the two royal families wanted to perpetuate the occupancy of the stool. The Wenchi conflict is a three-fold cord that is overlapping. They are; religion, competition for land and chieftaincy succession. With the chieftaincy case, a royal stool of the Paramountcy became vacant following the death of the Paramount Chief. As the custom demands, the QueenMother was contacted to nominate a candidate for selectionand enstoolment. The Queen Mother however delayed thus, creating a stalemate. As a result, the kingmakers approached the Obaapanin (Eldest Woman) of the Royal Family to perform the customary rites by selecting a candidate for installation. A faction of the kingmakers therefore installed a king to occupy the vacant stool. The Queen Mother took offence, for the fact that other people had usurped what was her sole prerogative. The assumption here is that the Queen Mother wanted a member of her family to occupy the stool while other

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families also wanted someone from their families to occupy the stool. This is competition, selfishness and injustice.

- **Konkomba Chieftaincy Succession Dispute and Resource Conflict**

This conflict is multilayered however, the underlying cause is chieftaincy related accompanied by struggles over resources. "In Konkomba, there are two succession disputes which are; the queen mother dispute and the chieftaincy dispute" (Kendie et al., 2014:143).

The dispute occurred between two royal families after the death of the Paramount Chief, concerning the right to ascend the vacant Konkomba stool. The two royal families went ahead to install their respective paramount chiefs and this brought about a conflict. The key casual factor is, the struggle between two royal families to ascend a vacant seat.

- **Yeji Conflicts**

There are two conflicts within this traditional council. The first is the conflict between the two royals of Yeji and KaduaYeji respectively. The second is the chieftaincy succession dispute between the two royal families in KwadwoBafuor. The cause of these disputes is that the sub-chief of Yeji Traditional Council wanted to be elevated to the status of a paramount chief while the Chief of Kadua wanted to be at par with the Konkomba Chief, a sub-chief who was elevated to the status of a Paramount Chief. In the case of KwadwoBofour, there was installation of rival chiefs by two royal families as a result of the quest to possess power and get access to control resources.

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- **Atebubu Chieftaincy Succession Dispute**

It is between the Queen mother and another sub-chief (Krontihene) over the one who has the right to select and nominate the chief of Atebubu. The issue is that the Queen mother who customarily has the right to select and nominate a candidate for installation as chief, was accused of not being properly installed hence, not qualified to nominate a chief. Based on that the sub-chief who is the next in command, to lead the kingmakers to nominate and install a chief, went ahead and installed a chief for Atebubu to the displeasure of the Queen mother who took the matter to court. The intension of the Queen mother was that the installation of the chief should be declared null and void. The cause of this dispute is the rightful heir to the stool.

- **The Amanin Chieftaincy Succession Dispute**

It started in 1984, between the Queen mother and the current Paramount Chief of Amanin. The cause of this dispute is the rightful candidate to be installed as a chief and the subsequent destoolment of the Chief of Amanin, on the grounds that he was not a royal.

- **Nkomi Traditional Area Chieftaincy Dispute – Kajeji**

This is between three royal families from the Nkomi Traditional area namely; Kelata, Klempputa and Somey. The key causal factor is the right person to occupy a vacant stool as the new Omanhene of Nkomi.

- **Dwan Traditional Area Chieftaincy Dispute** – **Kwame Danso**

A chieftaincy succession conflict between two royal families – (Dwankrom and Banyako) of Kwame Danso. This conflict emerged after the death of the Omanhene and the need arose for another royal to occupy the vacant seat. Subsequently, one of the royal families presented a candidate for

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installation and occupancy of the vacant seat. The conflict emerged when the other royal family rejected the candidate.

To worsen the situation, the other royal family went ahead to install a member of their family as the Omanhene. To invalidate the action, the Queen mother on the other hand, installed a chief from the second royal family. This conflict has dragged on for over 10 years. This is a dispute over the rightful heir to the stool.

- **Tuobodom/Techiman Chieftaincy Conflict**

  This is a protracted conflict between two rival chiefs who have different allegiances created by History. While one of the chiefs (BarimaObengAmeyaw I), owes allegiance to the Techiman stool in the BrongAhafo region, the other one (Nana BaffourAsare II), owes allegiance to the King of the Asantes (Asantehene, OtumfuoOsei-Tutu II), in the Asante region. These two chiefs sit in state separately. What fueled this conflict is the kidnapping and arrest of the second chief (Nana AsareBaffour II) by some youth.

Resource-Based Conflicts

Conflict over access to and control over land has plagued the Ahafo area of the region currently as a result of the recent discovery of gold deposits especially, in and around the Kenyase area. This struggle for and over land is between divisional chiefs and several small-scale gold miners. There were also violent conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and local farmers as a result of the struggle for land for grazing and land for farming respectively. Also identified in the area, are sporadic violent conflicts between chainsaw operators and the

Forestry Commission and intractable conflicts between indigenous communities and migrant communities, in some areas of the region.

- **The Sunyani Traditional Areavs Fiapre Traditional Area**

    This has to do with the different claims to land ownership between the Sunyani and Fiapre Traditional councils. The bone of contention is recognition as both traditional areas want their names to be indicated or identified with the new university situated on a land between the two traditional councils. However, the Act of Parliament, Act 830, 2011, indicates Sunyani as the location of the school and not Fiapre even though, the chief and people of Fiapre claim and prove that the said land belongs to them and not to Sunyani. This conflict is just about recognition as there is no outstanding compensation to be paid by the state. The situation is calm and there is no violence.

- **Drobo and Japeikroml and Ownership and Boundary Dispute**

    Similarly, there is conflict about land ownership and land demarcation between Drobo and Japeikrom Traditional councils. Each party is claiming ownership with evidence in history that dates back to colonial era, from 1896 to 1942 (46years) when the French and British were demarcating lands within their territories. Meanwhile, the two traditional areas are located within the same political administrative unit. As a result, the location of development project and trivial issues such as which traditional area makes libation during public events at the district assembly, increase tension and triggers conflict. There is however relative peace since there is no violence even though tension is high.

- **WenchiL and Conflict**

Land tenure between the indigenes particularly, the youth and migrants, is the cause of this conflict. The youth want to protect the land for future use, as they foresee that the continuous renting of land to migrants will make them landless in future.

Religious Conflict

- **Wenchi Religious Conflict**

During the period of analysis, there was an intra-religious conflict between the Al-usuna and orthodox Muslims. These religious conflicts are sparked by doctrinal differences during public preaching especially, when one sect tries to condemn the practices of the other through insults. These intra-religious conflicts are perennial.

Thus, the conflicts in BrongAhafo are mainly, chieftaincy and control over resources region. Theregion has a peculiar issue of queen-mothers dominating the selection of candidates for enstoolment, to occupy vacant stools and also the spear-heading of destoolment of incumbent chiefs.

Western Region (WR)

Key causal factors in this region are chieftaincy related conflicts which are very high and resource-based specifically, mining.

Chieftaincy Conflicts

- **Sukusuku Chieftaincy Conflict**

This is a violent, inter-gate succession dispute between two royals – (the Korsah siblings and the Gyabeng siblings.) The conflict arose as a result of the distortion of the rotation system of leadership, by the Omanhene, after the

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death of the last occupant – a Gyabeng and the subsequent refusal of a Korsah to occupy the vacant stool.

- **The Sekondi Conflict**

The domination of power by way of maintaining the stool in the same lineage is the cause. One gate has been ruling for three successive terms without allowing the other four gates, the opportunity to rule. In spite of a court ruling, permitting the other four gates to nominate and install a chief, that did not materialise. This was due to the fact that all the key kingmakers belong to the ruling gate and stood their ground that the other four gates were not royals. As history has it, this chieftaincy conflict has a political undertone.

- **Sefwi Wiawso Chieftaincy Conflict**

The cause is power struggle between the Queen mother and successive chiefs. The conflict escalated when the Queen mother master-minded the destooling of the gazzetted chief and enstooled a rival Chief, from another gate as a substantive chief. As a result, deep-seated rivalry has been created between the rival chiefs and their supporters. The conflict however, took a different dimension when the new enstooled chief died and the destooled chief started fighting back to reclaim his throne thus, creating many violent incidents. Beneath the struggle to become a chief, lies the desire to control the rich natural resources of the Sefwi.

Wiawso Traditional Area.

- **The Egyambra Chieftaincy Conflict**

This long standing issue is another chieftaincy succession conflict between two royals. It is caused by the refusal of one royal gate that had enjoyed their

term as chief, to allow the candidate of the other lineage to rule. Even though the Traditional Council had ruled in favour of the gate that is being deprived of their right to rule (Armo lineage,) the other gate that already completed their term on the stool (Amantwi) and does not want the Armo gate to rule created series of bloody clashes in the town which resulted in driving some followers of the deprived gate into exile.

- **The Takoradi Chieftaincy Conflict**

    This was a non-violent succession conflict. A chief died and his nephew, who was a Minister of the Gospel (Reverend FiifiQuayson,) with the stool name, OsaheneKatakyieBosomakra III, wanted to succeed him contrary to the tradition of rotational succession. The conflict was between the OsaheneKatakyieBosomakra III and Nana Yaw Nketsiah VI, representing the two royal gates.

- **Elubo Chieftaincy Conflict**

    The over 50 years old, Elubo conflict, is between Nana Allah Kpanyi II, and Nana KesseKpanyi. The underlying factor is that a dominant majority is seeking to maintain their democratic right to become chiefs. It is stated that the Asona are the royals in the Elubo area, by virtue of the fact that they were the first settlers and as such, the ruling family. Meanwhile, according to the Akan tradition, besides the Asona, there are six other clans. The conflict arose because, the other six clans came together to install a rival chief whose gazette was later annulled by a judge. This was after documents proved that the Nana Allah Kpanyi lineage, are the sole occupants of the stool since 1764. The conflict escalated into a violent clash when the other clans resisted the

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enstoolment of Nana Allah Kpanyi X. The conflict is resolved involuntarily due to avoidance by both parties and there is partial peace. However, the Chief cannot perform his duties and the other faction does not pay homage to him.

- **Supomu–Beposo**

The cause of this conflict is disrespect for tradition, authority and due process. A chief was installed in Beposo (after their chief died), by the Omanhene of Shama, without consulting the SupomuDunkwa Chief who is the immediate divisional authority as tradition demands in chieftaincy. The chiefs and people of SupomuDunkwa Division therefore felt sidelined. The tension escalated during a festival celebration, when the people of Beposo prevented the Supomu, who felt sidelined from marching through their town to pay homage to their ancestral shrine. This act generated a bloody violence which has become perennial and recurs during the celebration of the annual festival.

- **The Grabodo Dispute**

The root cause of this conflict appears to be a long-standing boundary dispute. The conflict, which is basically a dispute over installation, is between the Chief of Upper Shama and the NkyirikyirAgona family. It is alleged that the Chief of Upper Shama, who is a Divisional Chief, wanted to prevent the NkyirikyirAgona royal family of Komfueku from installing a chief at Grabodo, where he claims falls under his jurisdiction. The tussle here is that while the Divisional Chief is contesting the right of the Agona royal family to install a chief in a town he claims to be his, without involving him, the Agona royal family members on the other hand, are claiming their royal right to elect and install a chief in the town. However, a higher authority is blaming the

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Nkyirikyir family for not following the due traditional process. Ostensibly, land ownership and power to control resources are the cause of this conflict.

Resource-Based Conflicts

- **The Komfueku Resource-Based Conflict**

It is essentially centered on the struggle for resources, which is land and involves three protagonists namely, the Wassa-Manso community, the Komfueku community and some ex-servicemen, who are settlers and have bought portions of the said land. The issue is that the chiefs of Wassa-Manso sold a vast area of land to the ex-servicemen for real estate and rubber plantation businesses. However, the Komfueku community is claiming ownership of the land and that resulted in the conflict between the two communities.

- **Teleku Bokazu Resource-Based Conflict**

The cause is unlawful acquisition of land by some ex-service men and the subsequent accusation of the Chief and the government, by the youth of their connivance with the mining company, against their interest. The conflict erupted as a result of the youth going on rampage. While some groups who are receiving compensation from the company are comfortable with the mining activities, those who are denied benefits are complaining and also accusing the chief of collusion. The key causal factors of these resource-based conflicts are; selling of land, drilling and blasting on the land by mining companies.

Greater Accra Region (GA)

The conflicts in GA were put into three categories in descending manner according to their magnitude. They are; resource-based, chieftaincy and

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political. Many of the conflicts in this region are said to be non-violent and hardly erupt into violence.

Resource-Based Conflicts

- **The Gbawe – Anyaa– Weija land Conflict**

    This two-layered conflict arose as a result of contestation over land between the people of Gbawe and Anyaa at one level and Gbawe versus Weija at another level. The conflict ensued due to the fact that people who once pleaded for land for farming, are now arrogating land and also selling them. While the people of Gbawe claim they were the original owners and older settlers, the Anyaa and Weija claim the land was given to them by their forefathers. To protect their lands, each party hire the services of armed persons known as "Land guards" to terrorise people in order to obviate their activities.

- **Madina Zongo Land Resource-Based Conflict**

    This contest over a piece of land erupted into a violent conflict when one of the factions, the Faith Baptist Church, decided to reclaim and develop the land. The conflict is between the MadinaZongo and Faith Baptist Church, over land that was being used for recreational, religious, sporting and other activities by the youth and people of the community. Both parties claim the land belong to them.

- **Dahwenya Resource-Based Conflict**

    This conflict is between two clans who are brothers. The dispute which is somewhat violent is over the ownership of the land and the right to use it. The conflict has been triggered by the activities of clans encroaching on the territories of other clans and getting away with these activities.

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- **Kubekro No** 2 **and Apollonia Resource-Based Conflict**

    This is a boundary dispute that is over a century and is between two adjoining communities. The conflict stems from the desire to take advantage of the high demand for land in Accra. Even though the first judgment was given in 1887, there is no clear demarcation and pillars are not erected. Meanwhile one party is accusing the other for forging title documents. There is also alleged destruction of farmland belonging to the people of Kubekro No 2.

Chieftaincy Conflicts

- **The Ga Chieftaincy Conflict**

    The conflict was caused by the legitimacy of a successor to the late Chief, Boni Nii Amugi II. The tussle was between the TeikoTsuru We and AbolaPiam We. After the death of the Ga Chief, NiiAmugi II, the TeikoTsuru We installed a chief with the stool name, King TackieTawiah III, but the AbolaPiam We, argued that it was rather their turn to install a chief to occupy the vacant position of the deceased chief. The TeikoTsuru family however, contended that their opponents were not royals but slaves and therefore, not qualified to become Ga chiefs. King Tackie Tawiah on the other hand was also accused for not coming from a patrilineal side and therefore, disqualified as a chief. Moreover, his installation did not follow the Ga tradition. The case was sent to court and the ruling was in favour of King TackieTawiah but the Abola We, appealed against the ruling. In the midst of the tussle, King TackieTawiah passed away and there was contestation as to whether he should be given a royal burial. Meanwhile, tired of waiting for the court ruling, the AbolaPiam We installed a rival chief with the stool name, BoniNiiTackieAdamaLatse II. This conflict was violent as the rival group seized the palace and broke into the

stool house of the Ga Mantse with AK47 and machetes. Meanwhile, the political undertone of this conflict was not ruled out.

- **The Dansoman Chieftaincy Dispute**

This non-violent conflict is between two parties from the same royalfamily. The conflict arose as a result of the claim of one party that their candidate should have been the chief, instead of the installed and gazetted chief. This protest came after the incumbent had gone through all the processes. In the meantime, the Paramountcy is willing to look into the case.

- **Ablekuma – Oblogo Chieftaincy Conflict**

The Ablekuma – Oblego conflict is similar to that of Dansoman. Here, the authenticity of a chief was being questioned. The conflict, which is non-violent, is between two families; the OdumAdjin and the NiiKwekuFosu. While the former are accusing the latter as not legitimate royals to occupy the stool, the latter are describing the former as squatters, from Oblego and are therefore not the rightful heirs to the Ablekuma stool.

- **The Amanfrom Chieftaincy Dispute**

The root cause of this conflict is the desire to control the sale of lands. The customary succession to the throne of rotation was not followed. In view of this, two rival gates installed their respective chiefs and between them one was gazetted. Meanwhile, the other party had taken legal action because they claimed it was their turn as the other chief was from the same family of the gazetted chief.

- **The Botianor Chieftaincy Conflict**

This is a protracted one, between two royal families and also has to do with the installation of a rival chief during the reign of a gazetted chief. The cause of this conflict is not different from the others, that is; the desire for power and the sale of land. There has been disturbances and violence associated with this conflict.

- **Nungua Chieftaincy Conflict**

There was chieftaincy succession conflict among four royal houses. The cause of this conflict is the struggle for power as some of the royal gates refused to follow due process or the customary rotational system of succession to the throne. However, this conflict was not violent.

Greater Accra Religious Conflicts

- **Banon Drumming**: - Another cause of conflict in Ghana which is peculiar to the people of the Ga Traditional Area in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana is the traditional ban on drumming. This practice has been there from time immemorial. Prior to the celebration of Homowo, the traditional festival of the Ga(s), a thirty-day ban is placed on drumming and any form of noise-making in the traditional area or within the Ga state. Since the Ga State is the capital of Ghana and for that matter a cosmopolitan area, settlers find it very difficult to adhere to the directives of the Ga traditional rulers. Paramount among those who flout the rules and therefore clash with the traditional leaders, are churches. Congregants drum, sing, shout and dance and these practices go on especially on Sundays.

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Darkwa et al. (2012:26) observe that "another factor that may havepointed towards the emergence of the conflict is dissatisfaction and resentment within Ga communities over the privatisation drive embarked upon by the government between 1992 and 2000". It is in this regard that private individuals and organisations, including churches, moved in to acquire the divested assets and since some of these, including the churches are situated in the heart of the city, it is difficult for them to observe the ban. There is therefore an annual violent conflict, between churches and the traditional leaders in the Ga Traditional Area.

Political Conflicts

- **Agbogbloshi Political Conflict**

This violent conflict is perennial and purported to be an extension of the Dagbon Chieftaincy conflict, in the Northern Region of Ghana. The conflict assumed political dimension, which erupts during general elections in Ghana. This is so because each of the protagonists has been aligned to one of the two leading political parties – NDC or NPP. The cause of this conflict is mainly between factions associated with the Dagbon chieftaincy dispute.

- **The Ashiaman Riots**

The riot was between the community and the Municipal Assembly, concerning the delay in road construction. This was a riot carried out at night and the culprits were not known but it is believed to have been master-minded by the Ghana Private Road Transport Union. The GA Conflicts are mainly chieftaincy and the nexus between chieftaincy and the sale of land cannot be ruled out.

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Volta Region

The key conflict causal factors in the region are struggle over natural resources. A total of eleven conflicts are recorded in the region and fall under the categories of; competition over natural resource (5), chieftaincy related conflicts (4) and political conflicts (2).

Chieftaincy Conflicts

- **Nkwanta North District (Kpassa) Conflict**

    The protracted chieftaincy conflict in the Kpassa area, is between two ethnic groups and it is all about who has the right to be the chief of Kpassa. The two groups are both settlers in the area, but one claims they were the first settlers and so have the right to be the chiefs. This conflict erupted into violence and still has the tendency to escalate if proper conflict mechanisms are not put in place.

- **Aflao/Anlo Dispute**

    The conflict is between the chief of Aflao and the Anlo Traditional Council (ATC). This conflict is a two-layered one and both are related to chieftaincy, supremacy and territorial control. The complex chieftaincy conflict in Anlo has many faces. In the first place, the chief of Aflao rejected the claim of the Paramount Chief of the Anlo to be overlord of the Anlo state. Secondly, he denied that the Aflao Traditional Area (ATA) is part of the Anlo Kingdom. He further rejected the planned visit, of the newly installed Anlo Paramount Chief of the ATA. This third issue, actually triggered the conflict, with the people of Aflao, writing to state emphatically that the Aflao are not part of the Anlo Kingdom. Another issue of the chieftaincy conflict, is the delay of two

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clans to nominate and install a Paramount Chief of Anlo thus, paving the way for another clan, to install someone who was not a royal. The youth however, foiled an attempt by some kingmakers, to perform the final installation rites for the said non-royal. The chieftaincy succession dispute was finally resolved and another person was

installed.

- **The Hohoe Indigenes and Zongo Residents Clashes**

    The Hohoe conflict is between the youths of the Zongo community and the indigenes of Hohoe. In spite of innumerable attempts by the leadership of the Zongocommunity and the Hohoe Traditional Council to intervene and resolve the conflict, it dragged on for some time. The research revealed that the conflict to a large extent, is about who controls the political economy of the Hohoe area, given the increasing population of residents of the Zongo community, as well as their dominance in the commercial sector. The Hohoe conflict escalated as a result of the decision of the Hohoe indigenes and the Traditional Council to exert control over the youth of the Zongo community.

- **The Nkonya-Alavanyo Land Dispute**

        This protracted conflict, which keeps escalating violently, is between Alavanyo-Kpeme and Nkonya-Tayi. The dispute is over land located between the two communities as each claims ownership of the disputed land. As the Nkonya support their claim with a map, the Alavanyo used a boundary tree, 'anyaa' to support their ownership of the land.

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- **Peki-Tsito Boundary Conflict**

   The Peki-Tsito conflict is resource-based and has to do with control over territory and natural resources which is land. As usual, both communities claim ownership over the disputed land. This conflict escalated into violent clashes when the Peki tried to prevent the Tsito from farming on Peki lands. The core issue here is the quest to have control over fertile lands.

- **Conflictover the Legitimate Overlord and Owner of Nkwanta Area**.

   This conflict relates to struggles among three paramount chiefs, over the rightful owner of Nkwanta Township and its associated lands. Each traditional area provides oral accounts, to their claim to ownership of the area. Having access and absolute control over the area is the hidden agenda for all the contestants of Nkwanta area land.

- **Political Conflicts**

- **The Adaklu/Anyigbe**

   The conflict relates to the location of district capitals, with the creation of new districts. Initially, the capital of the new Adaklu/Anyigbe district was to be sited at Kpetoe but the Adaklu objected to it, due to the fact that the Kpetoes are settlers and also, the land in the area belongs to Adaklu. In view of that the appropriate thing was to create the district in Waya, an Adaklu town. The key causal factor for this conflict is the naming of the district capital but the hidden agenda is to benefit from the gains of development.

- **Nkwanta North District** (**Kpassa**)

   The cause of the violent conflict in Kpassa was the re-nomination of the Nkwanta DCE by the President. This act resulted in a violent demonstration by

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irate youth, when they heard the announcement confirming the incumbent DCE. The reason was that the youth felt the DCE did not bring any development to the area and as such, did not merit re-nomination.

Central Region (**CR**)

Key conflict causal factors in the CR are mainly; chieftaincy and natural resource related.

Chieftaincy Conflicts

- **The Winneba Chieftaincy Dispute**

The Winneba Chieftaincy conflict is one of succession, which is a longstanding dispute between two royal families. The rotational system has been abused to the extent that none of the two royal families trusts and accepts that the other must ascend the stool when it is vacant. The rivalry between the two families does not allow recognition to be given to the Paramount Chief.

Enyan-**Denkyira**

The cause of this conflict is the need to have a new 'head of house', Abusuapayin. The selection of the Abusuapayin, became a problem as the candidate chosen by the chief after the death of the Abusuapayin, was traditionally not acceptable. This was a Head of family succession dispute.

- **Gomoa Fete**

The conflict here is about chieftaincy and land. The problem of the Gomoa Fete arose, when the chief became blind and therefore people became agitated that he had to step down since a chief was not supposed to be physically challenged. A new chief was installed when the blind one was still active and for that matter, occupying the stool.

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The consequences of having two chiefs in the community, summed up to lawlessness that affected land ownership and the sale of land as people were selling lands indiscriminately.

- **Pedu Chieftaincy Dispute**

The Pedu dispute started long ago, when a rich stranger who came to live in Pedu, was given the royal stool in exchange of gold dust. This stranger and his people increased, to dominate Pedu and even installed a chief. The cause of the conflict is that the original royal family wants to reclaim their stool.

Ebubonko

This is another chieftaincy succession conflict between two royal families. The conflict arose when the Ebusuapanyin installed a rival chief as the Chief of Ebubonko.

- **Gomoa Nyanyano**

The conflict arose as a result of the refusal of the estate developer, to fulfil terms of the purchase of land, to the chief and people of Nyanyano. Ostensibly, there was a breach of agreement on the part of the estate developer and this sparked the conflict. The conflict would not have arisen if the estate developer had fulfilled his part of the agreement, by putting up a SHS in the community for the people of Nyanyano as promised. This conflict is alleged to have a political hand in it.

- **Agona Swedru**

According to the Secretary of the Omanhene, with the exception of a problem that the Tufuhene had with the Omanhene, there is no chieftaincy

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problem. This problem came about when the Tufuhene flouted the orders of the Omanhene, to bury his sister at the royal mausoleum.

A more serious conflict in Swedru, is between the Zongo community and indigenes and has to do with the use of public space by the settlers in the community. This dispute was caused by the refusal of a boy from the Zongo community, to participate in an entertainment event.

Diaso Conflict

The Diaso conflict is a chieftaincy succession dispute between royal families. The conflict erupted during the installation and out dooring, of the new chief. The root cause of the conflict lies in the emphasis on matrilineal system of inheritance and the fact that only males should be chiefs. The argument here is that where there are no nephews from the chief's maternal lineage, a problem arises, as the sons of the chief might be interested in ascending the stool.

- **Mankessim Chieftaincy**

The Chieftaincy issue in Mankessim traditional area is between two families. One family insists that it is their turn to ascend the stool, as paramount queen mother, so they subsequently installed a queen mother who is not recognised by the other family.

Resource-Based Conflicts

• **Gomoa East Nyanyano Land Conflict**

The Nyanyano conflict is a boundary dispute between an estate developer and the chief and people of Nyanyano.

Conclusion

Apparently, the preponderant causes of conflict in Ghana are generic and consistent in all the ten regions in the country. The causes are mainly:

- The struggle over chieftaincy succession, struggle over natural resources and scuffles between supporters of political parties.

  Others are superiority and inferiority complexes, discrimination against perceived minority groups, pride and greed.

- Dispute over grazing of animals and destruction of crops and farmlands, misunderstanding between two individuals leading to ethnic conflict and denial of social service or amenity by the government are equally other causes of conflict in Ghana.

- Population increase is another causal factor.

  It is very worrisome to know that conflict between Fulani herdsmen and indigenes has become pervasive in recent times. The problem is that the Fulani, who are from neighbouring countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger come to Ghana with their cattle which they send out to graze in the fields and farms of the indigenous people among whom they dwell. Unfortunately, these animals destroy large amount of farm produce thus, causing financial loss to the farm/land owners. Sadly, when the land owners protest against their activities and try to prevent them from grazing, the herdsmen take offense and sometimes attack the indigenes violently.

  Tonah (2007) underscores this problem by saying that the increase in population in Ghana has heightened the conflicts between the farmers and the herders because the two groups have to compete for the resources in the area. This problem is particularly prevalent in the Middle Volta basin of Ghana.

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Seemingly, population increase is another causal factor that continues to contribute to the farmer/herder conflicts in the country and beyond as it is not just a Ghanaianproblem but also a Sub-Saharan Africa problem. "Besides, pastoralists (mainly Fulani) have now settled permanently in all the countries of West Africa" (2007:241).

- Another cause of conflict identified is the none-payment of compensation by small scale miners, breach of contract and protest against the destruction of land by the youth. (This is peculiar to the regions endowed with mineral resources such as the WR).

- The disagreement between Zongo communities is also prevalent and volatile. There is also an isolated case of breach of agreement and taking the ignorance of villagers for granted in the CR. It is worthy to note, that apart from general causes of conflict in Ghana, some causes are peculiar to particular areas.

Kendi et al. (2014) after analysing violent conflicts in Ghana came up with the causes of conflicts as follows:

- Resource-based conflicts –This is the struggles over access to/control over available resources such as gold, diamond, timber, land, water bodies and any other natural resources that generate income.

- There are also boundary disputes, where neighboring communities clash over the rightful owner of a boundary or the exact demarcation of a boundary is.

- Chieftaincy – This type of conflict is caused by dispute over the succession to a throne or a stool (in the southern part of Ghana) or skin (in the northern regions of Ghana)

- Political Conflicts –This is the conflict that occurs between rival political groupings, mostly between supporters of the ruling party and the opposition,

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during elections or after the declaration of results. Ghana therefore experiences pre-election, election and post-election conflicts which are mostly violent with loss of lives and properties.

• Conflict between Indigenes and Settlers – Violent conflicts arise when settlers try to abuse the hospitality of the indigenes. The main cause of this type of conflict is the destruction of farm produce and the pollution of water bodies by the animals of Fulani settlers. This conflict turns out to be very violent as the Fulanis are accused of unleashing brutality to the indigenes (Kendie et al. 2014:49). There is also conflict over the use of properties, especially between settlers and indigenes.

• Religious-based conflicts –This is a conflict that is caused by superiority of indigenes who are mostly Christians over settlers who are predominantly Muslims.

• Inter-Ethnic conflicts – Also identified are some communal/inter-ethnic conflicts in the regions of Ghana. These conflicts are mainly caused by feelings of superiority by one ethnic group (mostly the indigenes) over others. "One peculiar attribute of these conflicts is their complex multilayered nature where the root causes are often xenophobic in nature but the violence is sparked off by some mundane totally unrelated event" (Kendie et al., 2014:101).

Alarmingly, almost all these conflicts, be it chieftaincy, border or otherwise, have political undertones, as each of the warring factions blames one or the other political party for either supporting their opponents against them or for fueling the conflict. A typical example is the Dagbon conflict which was sparked by succession to the throne. This conflict arose between two gates; Abudus and Andanis, who have aligned themselves to the NPP and NDC

respectively. "The people believe that without the politicians, the conflicts would not have escalated to such degree in which they find themselves" (Kendie, et al. 2014:36).

Ghana has varied causes and types of conflicts. However, Kendie et al. (2014) assert that even though Ghana is plagued with numerous conflicts and four coups d'etats that brought instability into the country between 1957 and 1981, Ghana has neither experienced civil war conflict nor interstate war. Meanwhile, sporadic violence does occur with diverse and complex origins and encompassing economic, political, cultural and social parameters. Besides the consequences of colonial rule and its aftermath as causes of conflict in Ghana, other factors such as ethnic differences, poverty, inequality, chieftaincy disputes and the effects of urbanisation have been identified. Not only that but also, the introduction of multi-party democracy, has ironically exacerbated political tensions in Ghana instead of reducing inequality and poverty and also bringing about development. From all indications, no single factor can be blamed for conflict, as the causes of conflict are numerous. One can therefore not agree enough with Haider, (2012) when he maintains that there is no single cause of conflict. The knowledge of the dynamics of conflicts in Ghana will aid readers to understand the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict better. The next chapter discusses the nature of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE NATURE OF NKONYA-ALAVANYO CONFLICT IN GHANA

Introduction

The 'age-long' Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, that started as a 'little trespassing' between two individuals from Nkonya-Tayi and Alavanyo-Kpeme, took a different dimension over the years, and became a conflict between two communities; Nkonya-Tayi and Alavanyo-Kpeme and now, it has become an intense and enormous conflict among all the Nkonya and Alavanyo communities. This conflict, is an ethnic issue and resource-based, in terms of landownership. It bothers on a disagreement over the rightful owner of the land between Nkonya-Tayi and Alavanyo-Kpeme. Currently, the conflict has attracted allies from neighbouring villages and beyond. The people of Nkonya-Tayi maintain that the land in question is very fertile and serves as a source of livelihood all year long and the people use it for farming activities. They claim that the disputed land has high economic value as a result of timber lumbering and some indigenes allege that there are some precious minerals on the said land (Personal communication, NanaEletey, July 31, 2017).

The people of Alavanyo-Kpeme are the users of the land currently for their farming activities meanwhile, the Nkonya-Tayi are demanding the land as the rightful owners. The issue is that the people of Alavanyo-Kpeme are not prepared to relinquish the land with the claim that the people of Nkonya gave it to them to settle on (Personal communication, NanaEletey, July 31, 2017).

The stories about the causes of Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict are many and varied, some similar others conflicting based on the different oral traditions and the quarters from which they came as every group would want to tailor the story to suit them. However, before discussing the nature of the conflict, we need to know the history of the people for, that will help us understand the dynamics of the conflict better. Without the history, we will be treating the conflict in isolation and for that matter, out of context thus making understanding difficult.

Mayer, (2000) maintains that conflict cannot be understood and dealt with in isolation. That is to say, without knowing the history of the conflict parties.In this case, Nkonya and Alavanyo. Knowing the system in which the conflict is occurring and the history of the issues themselves is necessary for the proper understanding and dealing with conflict. For Mayer, history has a great influence on the cause of conflict. It will therefore be judicious to know who the Nkonya and Alavanyo are in order to get a proper insight into when, why and how the conflicterupted to its current stage.

Whoare the Nkonya?

Historical Background

The people of Nkonya migrated from Nyansaland, in Kenya and lived in various places before settling at their present abode. During their stay in Kenya, there arose a misunderstanding between two brothers who were twins. These twin brothers had extreme contrasting characters, while one was an extrovert the other suffered severe introversion. It was therefore an open secret that the reserved twin was the heir apparent, to their father. This brewed

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jealousy in the extrovert twin and thus, ignited a row between the brothers. In order to avoid conflict, the sober twin left Kenya with some of the people.

After journeying for some time, the Nkonya settled around Lake Chad. They however found out that the land was not fertile enough for development, so they named the place Indiabekpakpo (not fertile enough) and left. From there, they went westward, to the coast of Accra and settled at a place that has become the present day Labadi in Accra. Nkonya, as a religious people journeyed with their gods, paramount among them was their great deity, Nana SiaLakpa (Personal communication, WilliamKwakye, July 31, 2017).

The Nkonya has one common appellation which goes thus; "the Nkonyawant to rule and not to be ruled." With this injected in the hearts and minds of the people, they would not be the subject to any nation but would rather have people to be their subjects, pay homage to them and acknowledge them as their rulers. For this reason, when pressure started emanating from the people of Labadi, the Nkonya embarked on another journey from Accra to Larteh, in the present day ER of Ghana. However, Nkonya left their great deity; Nana SiaLakpa behind when they left Labadi. They maintain that "till today, anytime Nana SiaLakpa 'is in mood', it speaks Nkonya dialect even though the priests of the deity are Ga(s) and do not speak Nkonya dialect" (Personal communication, William Kwakye, July 31, 2017).

This means that the Ga priest of the Lakpa, becomes possessed by the Nkonya deity and speaks through him in its original language. The Nkonya did not stay in Larteh in present day Eastern Region of Ghana for long but moved on to Nsawam, also in the ER. From there, they continued to Aduagyire in present day Central Region of Ghana and relocated the second time to

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Akwamu, in the same region (Personal communication, WilliamKwakye, July 31, 2017).

During their stay in Akwamu, they planted a sword in Akwamufie. Meanwhile, they had a problem with the people and therefore had to leave. This time around, they were led by three elders namely, Akpatasi, Atutenten (tall Atu) and Ayisi. After trekking for some time, they encountered the Volta River. The three leaders decided to see how deep the water was before they venture out into crossing it. As a result, Atutenten, the tallest of the three was tasked to go through the water. However, before he could cross, he was almost neck-deep so the other two called out to him in the Nkonya dialect "sentsiba, sentsiba!" this means, "come back! come back!". This, the people claim, became the name for the present day, Senchi, a town situated near the Adomi Bridge on the Volta Lake. The Nkonya sojourned at Senchi, at the bank of the river, for a while before crossing over to Ho, where they lived on the mountains on the western part of Ho, from Sokode in the VR. They again left Ho, the capital town of the Volta Region and went to Kpando before eventually settling at their present abode, in the 13th century, which was in the year 1200 (Personal communication, William Kwakye, July 31, 2017).

According to the people of Nkonya, they were living in Nkonya for about 600 years before the people of Alavanyo arrived. They maintain that the Alavanyo claim to have migrated from Ketu in the present-day Benin and came to settle at Notsie, under the dictatorship of King Agorkorli. As the oppressions of the king became unbearable, they fled to Saviefe. From there, they settled at different places before arriving at Nkonya to escape justice. An incident took place between the people of Alavanyo and people of Sovie so the Alavanyo

fled and sought refuge with a man named, Tatse Koku from Kpando-Tsakpe. Tatse Koku then directed the Alavanyo group to Kondo, a man who was fair in complexion and for that matter called by the Alavanyo group "Kondodze" (meaning fair colouredkondo, "Akondo"in the Nkonya dialect was corrupted to 'Kondo'. It was then that Akondo or Kodondze led the Alavanyo group to the chiefs and people of Nkonya to ask them for land to settle on (Personal communication, WilliamKwakye, July 31, 2017).

After the Chief and his elders had conferred, they decided to give the Alavanyo a place between Nkonya-Akroba and Kpando-Dafor near a mountain called "Loklumbo" meaning 'Dark Mountain" ("Loklum" means dark and "bo" means mountain in the Nkonya dialect). The Alanvanyo people settled around the mountain which they called "Logloto in the Ewe dialect, (they borrowed from the Nkonya 'loklo and added the "to" which means "mountain" in Ewe) for a period of time but later complained that their children were drowning in the Volta river that was very close to them (Personal communication, William Kwakye, July 31, 2017).

Besides, they realised that the land allocated to them was not fertile enough to give them bumper harvest and also enable them engage in gainful commercial activities. They therefore pleaded with the Nkonya for relocation to a better place. The plea of the people of Alavanyo was taken and they were subsequently given the farmlands of the Nkonya. This was the way the apportioning went; the farmlands of the Nkonya-Asakyere, Ahenkoro and Ntsumuru, were distributed among the Alavanyo-Agorme, Deme and Dzogbedze while those belonging to Nkonya-Tayi Abehenease and Kedjebi

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were handed out to Alavanyo-Kpeme, Wudidiand Agorxoe (Personal communication, William Kwakye, July 31, 2017).

Contrary to the willingness of the Nkonya to accommodate the Alavanyo, their closest neighbours the people of Gbi, objected to it and warned the Nkonya against the Alavanyo. The Paramount Chief of Gbi, TogbeGabusu, told the Nkonya in a forthright term that he and his people could not share boundaries with perpetrators because they were criminals.

In order to respect TorgbeGabusu's sentiment and stance, the Paramount Chief of Nkonya, Nana Okoto III and his people left a portion of land along the Fantibi River between the Gbi and the Alavanyo to prevent the former from sharing a common boundary with the latter. Alavanyo therefore share a common boundary with Fantibi and after crossing Fantibi, one gets to Akplamafu before getting to Gbi (Personal communication, William Kwakye, July 31, 2017).

Geographical Location

The Nkonya who are Guan (s), maintain that they were the first to arrive in the area and shared boundaries with four other communities namely; Gbi, Akpafu, Sankrofi and Bowiri. The Guans were the first settlers in Ghana and can be found all over the nation, from Northern Region through to the Central region.

Dialectically, the Gonja, Nkonya, Krachi, Effutu, Larteh, Anum, Boso, Okere, Kyerepong, Nchumuru, Chereponi and Nkami among others are from the same stock (Ampene, 2011; Brukum, 1995). Guan(s) in the Volta Region are the Akpafu, Lolobi, Buem, Likpe, Logba, Amedzofe and several others.

Central Region has the Effutu, Awutu and Senya. Northern Region has the Gonja as Guan-speaking (this same Guan group can be found in the BrongAhafo Region). The Guan(s) are said to be found in five regions in Ghana – Volta, Northern, Central, Eastern and the BrongAhafo (Personal communication, Gilbert Ansre, July 31, 2017).

The people of Nkonya are located in the Biakoye District, in the central part of the Volta Region of Ghana. They live along the eastern part of the Volta Lake and surrounded by the people of Santrokofi, Gbi and Ve on the West, Kwamikrom, Tepa, Kedjebi and Jasikan on the north, Kpando, Sovie and Anfoega on the South and the Volta Lake on the west.

The people have a very thick rain forest made up of timber such as Odum, Mahogany, Ofram, Sanfra, Dahoma and Atikusa. They have mountains that serve as farmlands. Some of these mountains, listed according to their importance are; Abuipepe, Nateka, Pleabota (meaning smooth rock); Okajabo, Okrabo, Ntsanabi and Bofutu (white mountains) or Aklantobo. They also have rivers and streams, among them are River Kpei, Okrabumbe (Okra's stream), Lenkebombie (crocodile stream), Obumbekontonkron (a small winding stream), and Esasa (Personal communication, William Kwakye, July 31, 2017).

The Nkonya assert that the Alavanyo adulterated some of their names with Ewe words to suit them. The notion is that the Alavanyo want to claim ownership of these natural resources thus, the adulteration of their names into the Ewe dialect. Lenkebombi (crocrodile stream) as Tsimeloe (literally – crocrodile living in water) "tsi" meaning water in Ewe dialect and "lo" is crocrodile). The area around River Kpei is called by the Nkonya; "Kpeito" meaning; "by Kpei" or "at the banks of kpei" in this sense, the area was named

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after the river. However, this came to be known as, "Kpeime" or "Kpeme" the capital of Alavanyo. The Obombikontronkron is called; "Gododotsi" by the Alavanyo. (Literally translated means; meeting water or meeting place because of its winding nature). The vegetation, which is fertile, produces crops such as, yam, cocoyam, plantain, cassava, maize and vegetables. In terms of livestock, the forest has wild and domestic animals as well as birds – swine, antelope, pythons and all kinds of snakes, monkeys, sheep, goats, eagles, fowls and snails (Personal communication, William Kwakye, personal July 31, 2017).

Occupation

The Nkonya are predominately farmers who cultivate cash crops such as, cocoa and coffee on large scale for commercial purposes and food crops for consumption. They also engage in petty trading.

Political System

The Nkonya has the chiefs and elders as the governing body of their towns and village. They have a hierarchical structure of governing body that operates from a top-bottom order (Personal communication, William Kwakye, July 31, 2017).
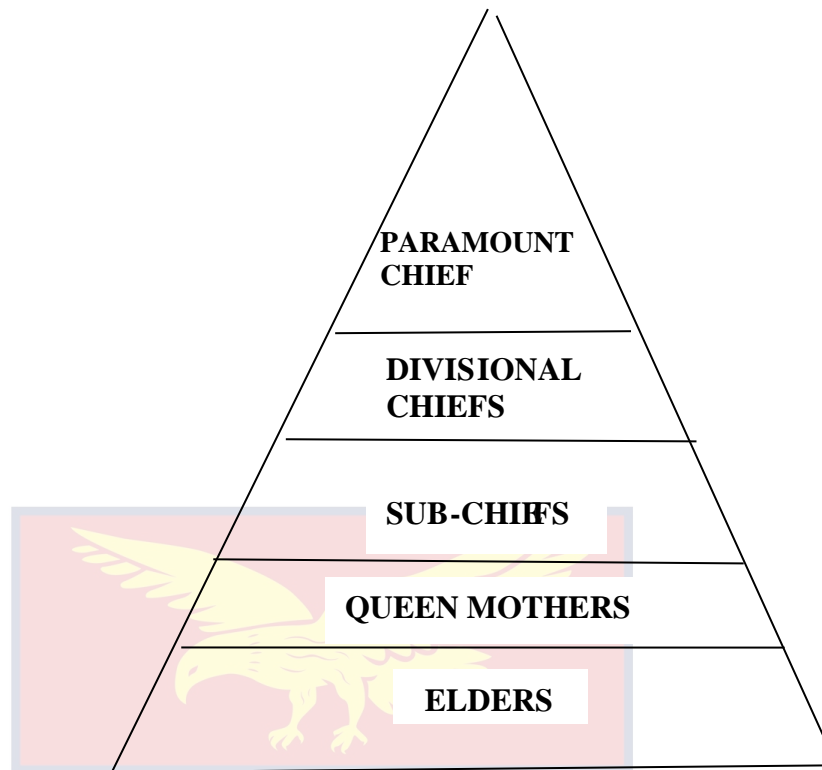
Figure 3: **The Hierarchical Structure of the Governing Body of Nkonya (Nana Eletey, personal communication, July 31, 2017).**

The Nkonya has two paramountcies which are Wurupong and Ahenkrong and are therefore governed by two Paramount Chiefs with the stool name; Okoto (meaning crab in the Nkonya dialect.) Hence their emblem is a crab which has been carved in gold on their Linguist staff. Over the years, they have had Nana OkotoKwesi I right down to Nana OkotoKwesi the IV, then Nana OkotoKwabraI to the IV, Nana OkotoKodjo I to IV and the current Paramount Chief is Nana Okoto Kofi III. This title will change after the next chief. Under the Paramount Chief according to the chain of command, arethe Divisional Chiefs, followed by the Sub-Chiefs, Queen Mothers and the Elders. The chiefs are appointed from particular villages. This means that offices or titles, are designated to villages and it remains theirs forever. Moving that particular office or title to another village would bring conflict. For example,

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paramount chiefs are selected from Nkonya-Wurupongand Ahenkrong only

and from no other village. The offices of the divisional chiefs are as follows:

Paramount Chief – Nkonya-Wurupong and Ahenkrong

Adontenhene – Nkonya-Kadjebi

Kyidomhene – Tepo

Gyasehene – Tayi (the Chief of Tayi is as well the Warlord of the Nkonya)

Nifahene – Ntumda (Personal communication, Nana Eletey, July 31, 2017).

Enstoolmentin Nkonya

   The enstoolment of a chief varies from one place to another in the VR but

has a lot of commonalities and similarities. Before a chief is enstooled in

Nkonya, the royal family meets to decide on one person who is from the royal

family and of a good reputation. The preferred candidate is then taken into

custody and kept in confinement for seven days, where some rituals are

performed alongside grooming of the candidate for the position. On the 8th day,

the candidate is released from custody provided approval is given by the

paramountcy. The 8th day marks the out-dooring of the Chief. All the Chiefs of

the communities send delegates. However, women are not allowed to witness

the out-dooring. The out-dooring takes place in the evening with the new Chief

sitting in state (Personal communication, Nana Eletey, July 31, 2017).

        All the divisional Chiefs and sub-Chiefs swear oaths of allegiance to

the new Chief. After that the out-doored Chief is sent to Ahenkro to swear to

all the sub-Chiefs, that he will be with them in times of trouble and anytime

they call on him, he will respond to their call. Thereafter, the Paramount Chief

selects one chief among the sub-Chiefs, to swear on behalf of all the Chiefs of

Nkonya. After all these, the out-doored Chief is carried shoulder high amidst drumming, singing and dancing. In the case of a paramount chief, the out-dooring is done before the Amankorado at Ahenkro, the seat of government, which is the Paramountcy, with the elders who come with money. After the swearing-in of the Paramount Chief, all the sub-Chiefs swear the oath of allegiance to him, (the Paramount Chief). Rituals follow immediately with prayer and slaughtering of sheep. Finally, the Paramount Chief comes to swear to the whole "Oman" (community) that is the Nkonya state that he will help his people anytime there is trouble and respond anytime he is called (Personal communication, Nana Eletey, July 31, 2017).

Destoolment

In case of misbehaviour, wrong doing, or the people losing confidence in their Chief, he is destooled and a more suitable person is installed in his place to occupy the vacant stool. To destool a chief, he is taken out of the palace and made to sit on the ground. His sandals are removed and used as "rod" to hit him on the head three times. After these, the Chief is stripped of his title and declared destooled and subsequently thrown out of the palace. The destooled Chief at this point has no right to sit among chiefs and every regalia in his custody is taken away from him. The act of hitting the head of the Chief three times with a sandal is the ritual that disqualifies a chief and renders him destooled in the Nkonya traditional area (Personal communication, Nana Eletey, July 31, 2017).

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System of Inheritance/Land Ownership

The system of inheritance of the Nkonya is patrilineal, that is, children inherit their fathers not mothers (matrilineal). Lands are owned by family heads. Lands are not inherited but allotted by the family heads of the various clans (Personal communication, William Kwakye, July 31, 2017).

The Nkonya apportions lands to people who need them and collect tokens from them in terms of money and drinks. However, settlers pay homage to land owners by giving them part of the crops cultivated on the said lands. If a farmer hunts for a game, part of it is as well given as loyalty. According to the Regent of Nkonya-Tayi, until 1940, when there was the issue of amalgamation, the people of Alavanyo were still paying loyalties to the people of Nkonya. Before the Alavanyo stopped paying the loyalties, one man called Sampele, a son of Torgbe-Atakora III, poured libation before the two communities parted from signing the end of Alavanyo's loyalty to Nkonya.

Religious Life

The people of Nkonya have three main religious groupings which are, Christian, Islam and Traditional religion with Christianity having the highest percentage and Islam with a very small number. In spite of a great majority of the people being Christians, the Nkonya still make libation anytime they meet at the Chief's palace or as elders, or during a sad or joyous occasion. They make libation to evoke the spirit of the gods to have drinks with them and help them deliberate on issues. They also plead with them for guidance and protection and then ask for their blessings in all their endeavours (Personal communication, William Kwakye, July 31, 2017).

Relationship Between the Various Religious Leaders and their Followers

The various leaders have cordial relationship as there is no conflict between them. The three religious leaders and their followers come together to pray for peace each time the Christian religious leaders declare a fast. Sometimes, the fasting and prayer last for three days or more (Personal communication, Rev.Tordzo, October 2, 2017).

Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

One of their conflict resolution mechanisms is the ritual of swearing an oath. In a land dispute for example, the two parties are made to pour an amount of drinks (particularly gin or schnapps) into a glass and swear that if the said litigated land is not truly his or hers, then he or she should die within a stipulated time. The person swearing the oath, after mentioning a number of days, three, five, seven, or longer, breaks the glass by hitting it on the ground. After these rituals, the guilty person dies on the day he or she mentioned. However, if the person is innocent, he or she survives. In some cases, culprits are listened to and judgements passed with the innocent person exonerated while the guilty culprit is convicted and made to pay a fine ranging from a bottle or more of drink (schnapps or Castle Bridge gin), and or a sheep, money or any two items of these or all the three. Sometimes, the parties were not fined but spoken to, to be of good behaviour and asked to shake hands with each other or one another (Personal communication, William Kwakye, July 31, 2017).

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Social Life

The whole of Nkonya has only one clinic to their credit serving 14 communities. The only good thing is that the people are not far from Hohoe and Kpando so they use the facilities of the hospitals in these places for their health needs. There is a police station at Nkonya-Ahenkro and a Post Office at Tayi. They also have a library and a community centre. The road network are however good even though not a first class road. They also have Senior High School that serves many towns and villages in the Volta region (Personal communibation, William Kwakye, July 31, 2017).

Whoare the Alavanyo?

Historical Background

The Alavanyo migrated from Notsie under the leadership of three leaders whom they called 'Gbogbomemewo' (spiritual beings). The leaders were referred to thus, as a result of their possession of spiritual powers with which they led the Alavanyo and this made the people highly religious (Gavua, 2000). These leaders used their religiosity to exhibit their spiritual prowess in times of trouble during their exodus. From Notsie under the leadership of Amega Exe, they came to Akrofu near Ho in the Volta Region. After sojourning at Akrofu, the Alavanyo, led by TsatsuGbara went to settle at Saviefe. The Alavanyo moved again to Sovie near Kpando, under the tutelage of Tsedatsu, Head of the Alavanyo and for that matter, the fetish priest (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017).

On their journey from Saviefe to Sovie, they got to the Volta River which was deluged, making crossing to the other side impossible. However, the Alavanyo suddenly saw a log on the river, bridging it to the other side so they walked on it and embarked on another phase of the trekking. Obviously, what the people walked on to cross the river was not a log but a python, which was their deity. The Alavanyo headed westward from Tafi area till they arrived at Sovie Konda near Kpando. The people of Alavanyo settled at Sovie which they thought was going to be their permanent home. However, as fate had it, an Alavanyo man whose mother came from Aveme, a village not far from Sovie, borrowed money from an Aveme person but could not pay for a long time. The man from Aveme, the creditor, came with some people from Aveme to negotiate the indebtedness of his debtor at Sovie. This was to enable the Aveme man retrieve his money. In the midst of the interposition, a misunderstanding ensued and unfortunately the Alavanyo debtor killed the Aveme creditor (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017).

When news of the murder reached Aveme the people started mobilising troupes from Aveme for revenge. Knowing that his life was in danger as a result of the murder, the culprit fled with a few family members to the Bubulubu or Agaglo forest to take refuge. When the Bubulubu refuge seekers realised their insecurity in the forest, they escaped once more to KpandoDeveme for refuge with one Tatse Koku, who accepted them and gave them shelter. While at Kpando-Deveme, they still sensed danger because of the proximity between Kpando and Aveme. Consequently, their host, Tatse Koku led them to Kondodze at Nkonya-Akloba who in turn sent them to the then Paramount Chief, Nana Okoto Kofi, to request for land to settle on in order to

be far away from the crime scene (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017).

The Nkonya Paramount Chief accepted their request and absorbed the Alavanyo refugees. Shortly after that the Alavanyo wanted to be independent rather than to be absorbed by the Nkonya, so they expressed their desire to be separated. Subsequently, the Nkonya Chief told the escapees that the land along the river Volta was lying fallow so they could inhabit it.

After sometime, the Alavanyo complained that since they left Notsie, they never lived near a river so they could not stay there along the Volta. Based on that sentiment, they were asked by the Chief and people of Nkonya to go towards the east to settle but were forewarned that the forest was full of wild beasts but as the Alavanyo were hunters and warriors, they were not perturbed. They therefore accepted the new area allotted them and told the Nkonya chief that they could not be bothered so they would live with the wild beasts in the forest because they could handle them. In view of that the Alavanyo relocated to the forest and became a shield to the Nkonya (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017).

The Paramount Chief of Alavanyo, TogbeAtakora VII, maintains that Alavanyo people's stay in the forest was a great blessing for/to the Nkonya in many ways. The people of Nkonya started complaining that wild animals were devouring their women and children. The trend was that each time the Nkonya families went to their farms wild beast would swoop on them causing the men to flee, leaving their wives and children behind to be devoured. The people of Alavanyo therefore promised to watch over the Nkonya in order to protect them from the attacks of the wild beast. By reason of their promises, the

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Alavanyo decided to survey the place in order to strategise for their attack on the beasts (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017).

After conducting feasibility studies in the area, their professionalism and wisdom as hunters and warriors prompted them to suspect that the 'beasts' were not beasts. This is because wild animals do not devour clothes in the first place and secondly, they do not break the bones of their prey and thirdly, wild animals leave nail prints for the arduous preys. These findings heightened their quest in search for the 'wild beasts'.

The men of Alavanyo upon their promise, tactfully kept the said area under surveillance and not long after, the 'wild beasts' appeared again and asusual Nkonya men fled. The Alavanyo men however pounced on them and captured them. Their suspicion was confirmed when they realized that the 'wild beasts' were slave raiders who kidnapped the Nkonya and sold them to slave traders. Thus, the Nkonya people were saved by the Alavanyo people for, the attack by the 'wild beast' ceased (Personal communication, TogbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017).

According to TogbeAtakora VII, shortly after that incidence, slave trade was abolished. He however maintains that the remnant of the slave raiders still live in the Volta Region of Ghana. As a result of the act of bravery of the Alavanyo, the raiders gave the Alavanyo the name 'OkyerefuKotoko'. This name was corrupted to become 'Klifufuo'. TorgbeAtakora VII recounted that it happened that the Asante General, sent the Adobofuo Army to conquer the VR.

When the army entered the region from the west, they descended on Nkonya-Ntumda in an attempt to capture it but the Alavanyo swiftly intervened and foiled the conquest. In their disappointment, they vented their anger on the

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Alavanyo and attacked them with rage but they were no match to their opponents, Alavanyo, the great warriors who would not sit down for strangers to destroy them in their own land. They therefore fought the Akan (s) in a fierce battle and defeated them. For this reason, the remnants of the Adobofuo army named the Chief of Alavanyo after the Mamponghene at the time, OseMampongTakoraraOheneaWonitiOkusee. That was how the paramount chiefs of Alavanyo came to be known as TorgbeAtakora. He maintains that until the conflict erupted, anytime there was a festival and he went to Nkonya, they sounded a drum language in his honour that hails him with a special appellation as a tribute to the Alavanyo, for supporting them (Nkonya) during the 'Adobofuo war'.

Another Versionof the History of Alavanyo

It has always been the case that history has different versions as a result of the various oral traditions, interpretation of oral traditions, analysis of archeological and cultural materials, dialectical problems and other human errors. There is therefore a written history about the Alavanyo that is different from the oral history I gathered from the chiefs and people of Alavanyo. In order to be fair to the Alavanyo and also understand them better, it is imperative that this second story is told.

In the distant past, a man called Wenya in the city of Oyo in Nigeria gave birth to a son called Da. This boy grew into a brave warrior, a great man of valour, who became the ruler of Oyo. This warrior fought battles and defended the whole Nago territory between the Niger and Kwara Rivers, a

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place that became present day Nigeria. In his old age, he decided to migrate and settle faraway, from his enemies. Da therefore left Oyo with his nuclear and extended family, friends and   admirers. His nephew who lived in Ketu in present day Nigeria also followed him with his family and friends. After sojourning at many places, they finally settled at a place called Tando (Dzathor, 1998).

When Da, the ruler was migrating from Oyo "on an expedition into the unknown, to explore and to build a new home" (Dzathor, 1998:3), one of the people who stayed behind was Amega Sa who lived in Sodo near Oyo. He and his family and some others however decided after sometime, to join King Da and the rest at Tando but did not move immediately. King Da migrated again with his last son, Akoli and other kinsmen and friends, to move farther from his enemies so they moved to a place the king named Kli, which later became Notsie. In order to fortify the place against enemies, King Da decided to build a wall around the place. King Da died, leaving a legacy of a peaceful reign and was succeeded by Prince Akoli who followed his father's footsteps. It was during the reign of King Akoli, that Amega Sa and his people finally moved to Notsie and all the people who went with Sa settled in the same location. With time, where "Saviwo" (children of Sa or Sa's children) settled became known as "Sa-Kome" which means "Sa quarters" (Dzathor, 1998).

After the death of King Akoli, another king was installed with the stool name, Agokoli I who was called "Adza," an appellation of honour and respect. Adza's rule was characterised by tyranny to such an extent that his subjects could not cope but to leave. A great number of the Ewe nation therefore embarked on an exodus in the 13th century (Dzathor, 1998).

The Journey of Saviwo

Saviwo moved from Notsie under the leadership of AmegaBlema since Amega Sa, had passed away. Saviwo moved along with a group of friendly people who later became known as the people of Kpando. These two groups stayed along the eastern banks of River Haho. Unfortunately, by the time the two groups were ready to leave the river flooded, so they had to stay for some time before moving on. After crossing the river, the two friends parted company. Saviwo kept sojourning at different places at different times until they got to a place near present day Kpele, in the Republic of Togo. Saviwo stayed there for quite some time so they made farms and planted crops that mature early such as vegetables, cereals and beans and legumes. After Saviwo had left the area of Kpele, AmegaBlema passed away (Dzathor, 1986).

Amega Xotosucceeded Amega Blemaas their thirdleader**.** Under his leadership**,** the people founded many temporary settlements and solived together with other groups of people such as the Tsevie, Tove, Nyive and Ave**.** Duetothe unavailability of water and other problems, the Saviwo left the Tsevie area and wandered for some time as far as the Atlantic coast. After some years, AmegaXotor died and was succeeded by AmegaXefonu, a popular but dynamic leader who was popularly called "Xe" by his people (Dzathor, 1998).

The Saviwo lived with the Akoviawo, in the Akoviwofe area after staying briefly at Agogoe Lume and Taviefe. They were hosted for sometime by the Ziavi, who made it possible for them to settleat Blikoli. The Saviwowerede pendingona brook during their stay at BliKoli but laterd is cove red that the water was being polluted from up stream. To solve the problem, they sentadele gation to the community up stream, to notify the people

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however, the humble appeal of the Saviwo ignited hostility. Apparently, the water pollution was not accidental but intentional, as the people could not afford to accommodate anymore newcomers as the area was already over populated. In response to the hostility of the community upstream, Saviwo had to scheme very fast as they were not equipped for warfare, meanwhile, their opponents had sophisticated weapons. The only thing the Saviwo could do under the circumstance was to make weapons from the stalk of the fan palm, which is hard with jagged edges. With these primitive and seeming frail and puny weapons, Saviwo launched a surprise attack on their opponents and were able to defeat and kill some of them in the war. This led to the appellation of Saviwo thus, "Agorkpalasiame exe dua wo" which means, "Agokpala that cuts down people for birds to devour" (Dzathor, 1998:24).

Akrofu the First Town of the Saviwo

For fear of their enemies who had sophisticated weapons, the Saviwo fled to take refuge at Kpega. From there, they moved to Gbagbatoe, a temporary settlement, where they built structures and stayed for about two generations by which time, AmegaXe became very old. Meanwhile, the place became too congested that they decided to look for a bigger land that was not inhabited. As a result of the condition of AmegaXe, the Saviwo decided to leave him behind with some of his closest relatives who were dedicated to take care of him while the rest move on in search for a dwelling place. Subsequently, they had a leader, Tsatsugbada, the fifth leader, who led them from Gbagbatoe and after a while, they found a virgin land that they were content with and put up structures with the aim of making it their first

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permanent home. In the midst of jubilation, news came that AmegaXe had died. In order to pay tribute to their Cherished leader, the small group that took care of Xe was tasked to go back and settle at Gbagbatoe to make it their first permanent home. The town became known as "Xeviwofe", "home of the children of Xe". Later on, some Akan traders who came around to sell goods referred to the people of Xeviwofeas "Ekroafo", meaning "villagers". This name was corrupted to become "Akrofu" (Dzathor, 1998).

Saviefe the Second Town of Saviwo

After some explorations, the Saviwo decided to move from the new settlement that they were so excited about, to another place that had been located as more suitable. Based on that decision, all the people prepared themselves to leave but one man named AmegaAgenu decided not to move as he was content with where he was, "leaning against a palm tree" (de me deti). He was therefore left to remain and that place became known as Deme, (the second permanent home) till today. The rest of the Saviwo moved on and founded another settlement called Tokome but seeing that it was larger than Deme, the people started calling it Gbogame (the large town). The two towns therefore became Saviwofe (home of the children of Sa). The Saviwo leaving in Gbogame started experiencing misfortunes that they attributed to a large rock near their settlement, that shines at night so, they decided to move from the place they anticipated was going to be their final permanent home. The people therefore abandoned Gbogame in search of asuitable place. During their search, a group of them decided to go to a place called Anyigbe while the other group settled at a place where there was a very large but short fan pan.

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This place was named Agokpo (shot fan palm) and has remained so till today and was led by the over-all leader of the Saviwo. The group that moved to Anyigbe however maintained the name Gbogame. Thus, Gbogame has remained the seat of leadership of the Saviwo, who settled in Saviwofe. A third group settled at Gbalakokoefe and since they were not far from Agokpo, it was administered as part of it. The four communities of Deme, Gbogame, Agokpo and Gbalakokoefe became known as "Saviwofe" (home of the children of Sa) which had been corrupted with time to become "Saviefe" (Dzathor, 1998).

The First Disaster

The people of Saviwofe enjoyed peace and tranquility until disaster struck. It happened that the people from Saviwofe went to make mounds in the farm of their leader, AmegaTsatsugbada when there was a misunderstanding between a young man, from Todome and another young man, from Gbalakokoefe. The young man from Todome came to live with his maternal uncles at Agokpo and was said to have been flirting with the wife of a man from Gbalakoekoefe. In no time, the misunderstanding erupted into a free for-all fight, in which the Todome young man was killed. The 'rival' of the deceased was from the clan of an elder, Tsedatsu hence the suspicion that they might have been the killers. Sensing danger, Tsedatsu and his family fled Saviwofe under the cover of darkness. On their way, the people of Nyagbo wanted to intercept them because their flight at night was suspicious. AmegaTsedatsu, their leader, who was also the priest of "So" (God) while they were in Saviwofe, told their captors that they were "Soviwo", (members of the

cult of "So") hence, no one could hold them captive without suffering the consequences. For that reason, the people allowed them to go and from then on, they started calling themselves "So-viwo" (children of So)

(Dzathor, 1998).

Sovie the Third Town of Saviwo

After wandering for some time, the So-viwo came to live with the people of Tafi. Their host complained to them about an evil in a forest nearby, that tormented them for a long time and sought their assistance. AmegaTsedatsu then selected five of his people, who possessed mystical powers to lead the Tafi to the forest and with their mystical prowess they were able to drive away the monster. This story is similar to that of the Alavanyo, killing monsters in the Nkonya forest and was narrated by the Paramount Chief of Alavanyo, earlier in this chapter. After staying at Tafi-Mado for some time, the So-viwo moved to the banks of River Dayi which had over flown its banks but with enough feasibility studies, experience and dexterity, they were able to cross and settled briefly at a place they called "Gbudugbudu". From there, Sa-viwo settled temporarily at Afobu, Kpegoloe, Atiedeke and as far as the River Volta, at Dukludza but came back to settle around Afobu at a place called Agumedo where they said was their final permanent home and named it "Sovie" (Dzathor, 1998).

The Second Disaster and the Bubulu-Bu Party

During one of their expeditions, the Soviwo came into contact with their long lost friends, the Kpando who also came to settle not far from Sovie and the friendship continued. Their treasured bond led to inter-marriages to

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such an extent that the Chief of Kpando-Tsakpe, TogbeTatse Koku, married the daughter of AmegaTsedatsu, leader of Sovie.Besides Sovie, a member of the clan of Tsedatsu called Bubulu, decided to live in a cottage north-east of the town. Before long, the whole area became known as "Bubulu-Bu" (Bubulu's down). As fate had it, AmegaTsedatsu died and a grand funeral was held for him by the Soviwo which was well attended. During the final funeral rites, when drumming and dancing were going on, a man from the family of Tsedatsu decided to collect a long outstanding debt from his debtor, who comes from Aveme but lived at Sovie, his maternal home. In the process, a fight ensued that attracted others and before they knew it, the debtor died. It must be recalled that a similar episode took place earlier and that compelled the Saviwo to change their name to Soviwo to enable them flee from possible justice for murder, until they became the people of Sovie (Dzathor, 1998).

This story is not different as the culprits and their families, sixteen men with their wives and children, escaped to their relative in the forest of Bubulu-Bu. Note should be taken that these are the family of Tsedatsu, the same family that committed the crime at Saviefe. Not long after their arrival in the forest, a man from Kpando came to warn the fugitives of imminent danger, as the people of Aveme had joined forces with a section of the people of Kpando to capture and bring them to face the full rigours of the law. Without wasting time, they left that night. The party sort refuge from their brother in-law, Togbe Tatse Koku, at Kpando. After hosting them for a shot period, the chief, who would not want to tarnish his reputation for harbouringfugitives, sent his in-laws to his friend, Kondodze at Nkonya-Akloba to direct them to an uninhabited land, beyond the borders of Nkonya. Kondodze received the

escapees but suggested that they "should live with them in Nkonya so that they might eventually become integrated in the Nkonya community" (Dzathor, 1998:52). The Sovie fugitives declined that offer and were insistent on founding a land for themselves in order to maintain their identity. On that account, their kind host unwillingly, directed them to a land that was uninhabited, between Nkonya-Akloba and Kpando-Dafo, around the River Volta. Now, they had the opportunity to explore (Dzathor).

Alavanyo the Fourth Town of Saviwo

Their leader, To, and his people were not pleased with the area, as it was too close to the River Volta and was also not fertile. As they were exploring, they came to the foot of a mountain and after digging and getting some water to drink,

To sat on the ground with his followers, looked up and exclaimed: "Miano fii kpo; adabanyo" this means: "Let us venture settling here; it might turn out to be successful" (Dzathor, 1998:53). The Bubulu-Bu party made this place their home but later found out that there were virgin forests around them. Subsequently, they believed in what To said that the situation will change for the better. The phrase "adabanyo" became the name of the Bubulu-Bu community and was corrupted to become, "Alavanyo" till today (Dzathor, 1998). Thus, Alavanyo came into being and became the fourth town of the "Saviwo".

The Leopard-skinmen

Unknown to the Alavanyo, they had settled in a dangerous area inhabited by wild animals. Besides, their settlement was a route to slave

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raiders. Apparently, their host, Kondodze warned them about these dangers and advised them to leave the area but they said, "they were afraid of neither beast of prey nor men of aggression; and should the seasonal raiders come again they would surely meet men of valour" (Dzathor, 1998:54). That being the case, the Adabanyo community tasked some men to keep surveillance day and night by rotating. When the raiders did not show up for a long time, they thought Kondodze wanted to dissuade them from settling there and go back to be integrated with the Nkonya. Nonetheless, their host was proved right as the raiders appeared just to see a new settlement. The Nkonya who had laid ambush, took them unawares and killed ten of them but the rest fled. The Adabanyo then discovered that they were slave dealers who were always clad in leopard skin coat. After some time, a greater number of the raiders came but were again met by Adabanyo 'men of valour' so they fled leaving behind seven dead bodies. That was the end of the wild animals of prey and aggressive men and the Nkonya became permanently free from attacks (Dzathor, 1998).

In 1948, SASADU – SAVIEFE – AKROFU – SOVIE – ALAVANYO DEVELOPMENT UNION was created at Akrofu. The man who initiated the idea was Mr. G.N.K. Tsekpo, from Alavanyo-Abehenease. He was therefore acknowledged founder of SASADU and he became the SASAKLOLA VIII, during a grand celebration at Saviefe in 1959. In this case, he became the eighth leader of the Saviwo. For this reason, the Nkyonya assert that the people of Akrofu and Saviefe join the Alavanyo to fight them anytime the conflict escalates (Personal communication, Nana Eletey and William Kwakye, October 2, 2017).

Chieftaincy

Torgbe Atakora observes that the traditional system of government has the Paramount Chief as the head of Alavanyo traditional area, followed immediate by the Ngor Fia (Front Chief). He sits in front of the Paramount Chief when he sits in state. Next in the chain of command is DusimeFia (Right-Wing Chief) then the MiameFia (The Left-Wing Chief). These two sits at the Paramount Chief's right hand and left hand side respectively when he sits in state during festivals or other celebrations or meetings that demand so. Since Alavanyo-Kpeme is the Paramountcy, the Paramount Chief must come from Kpeme withthe stool name Atakora. The NgorFia comes from Agorme, DusimeFiacomes from Dzogbedze and the MiameFia must come from Wudidi. The Sub-Chiefs, Queen Mothers, Linguist, Elders and Family Heads follow the Chiefs in descending manner (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017).

Conflict Resolution Mechanism
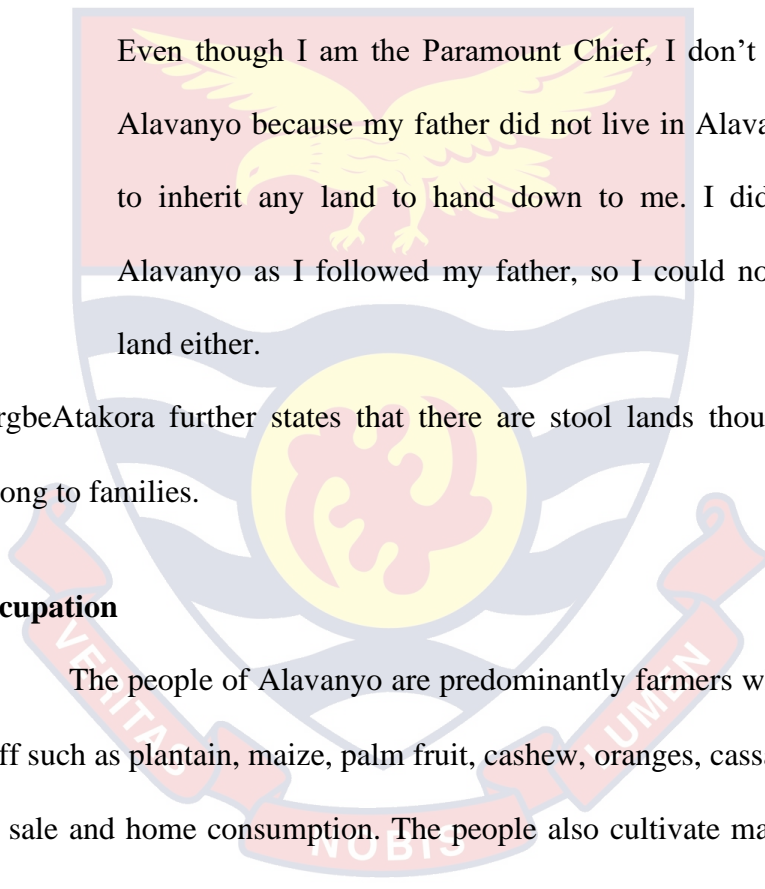
Issues concerning land disputes, chieftaincy, murder cases, serious crimes and abominable issues such as incest, swearing by the stool or ancestors are brought to the chiefs and elders. However, spiritual matters are sent to the fetish priest while petty issues such as theft, quarrel between spouses, siblings and other family issues are settled by family heads and sub-chiefs when the need arises (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017).

System of Inheritance

The system of inheritance of the Alavanyo is patrilineal as pertains among the Ewes in the VR of Ghana. Ascension to a stool is by rotation in the

royal family from one's father's lineage. Property is as well inherited from the paternal line for that matter land is inherited from one's father. What has been handed down traditionally is that the piece of land a people have been farming on for many generations becomes their land (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017).

According to TorgbeAtakora VII, Paramount Chief of Alavanyo, he does not have any land. He said:

> Even though I am the Paramount Chief, I don't have land in Alavanyo because my father did not live in Alavanyo in order to inherit any land to hand down to me. I did not live in Alavanyo as I followed my father, so I could not inherit any land either.

TorgbeAtakora further states that there are stool lands though but they still belong to families.

Occupation

The people of Alavanyo are predominantly farmers who cultivate food stuff such as plantain, maize, palm fruit, cashew, oranges, cassava and coconuts for sale and home consumption. The people also cultivate mangoes for export and are also blacksmiths who manufacture guns (Dzathor, 1998).

Religion

The Paramount Chief of Alavanyo stated emphatically that:

> If anyone wants to see God, the person should come to Alavanyo. We are very God-fearing and we believe in the true God, the Highest God. There are basically three religions in

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Alavanyo, Christian religion, which is dominant, Muslim and Traditional religion which has a very low percentage (See Appendix B).

Social Amenities

The Alavanyo do have a fair share of social amenities. The whole of Alavanyo has only one Health Centre. They however have pipe-borne water, a police station and electricity. The roads to Alavanyo are currently very good from Kpando through Alavanyo to Gbi-Wegbe. The Alavanyo are also blessed with a Senior High School (SHS) and a Vocational Training Centre – The E. P. Trades Training Centre (EPTTC) (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora, personal August 4, 2017).

Remote Cause – Nkonya Perspective

The Nkonya and Alavanyo lived in peace until 1905 when petty issues started emerging. Nana Eletey, in his comments on the relationship between the Nkonya and Alavanyo in the past recounted that:

> We lived in absolute peace for years. They marry our women and we also marry their women. Our sons marry their daughters and our daughters are married to their sons. We visited them and they visited us. We are very good people, a peace-loving people but the people of Alavanyo have spoilt the relationship and branded us to the whole world as callous and treacherous people.

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The good relationship between the Nkonya and Alavanyo starteddistorting in 1905 when the Alavanyo betrayed their trust and started trespassing by way of entering the Nkonya side of the land. However, that was transient and both parties were able to contain it. Not long after that the Alavanyo perfidiously re-entered the Nkonya side of the land. That generated a dispute between the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo. Apparently, that was the incipient stage of the Nkonya- Alavanyo conflict. Consequently, the German Administrator to Togo, Dr. Gruner, who lived in Mesahohe, Togo, invited all the Paramount Chiefs and the people of the six states living on the Togo plateau namely; Nkonya, Alavanyo, Gbi, Santrokofi, Akpafu and Bowri to the disputed land. Gruner inspected the place, surveyed it and made the people erect pillars on their boundaries. To avert conflict, Dr. Gruner went back to the inhabitants of the Togo Plateau in 1913 for inspection. The people of Nkonya maintain that Gruner's ultimate goal for going to them was first, to settle the land dispute between them and the people of Alavanyo and secondly draw a map of the disputed land. Subsequently, Dr. Gruner, in 1913, came up with a map based on his survey, showing the boundaries of all the six communities of the Togo Plateau, Nkonya, Alavanyo, Gbi, Santrokofie, Akpafu and Bowli (Personal communication, Nana Eletey, October 2, 2017).

Nana Eletey maintained that Dr. Gruner further handed a copy of the map to each of the six chiefs. This map, which is referred to as "Gruner Map" (GM) by the people, is titled, "Karte des Sechcherrenstockes" at the top and beneath the map, is the inscription, "Kunja Berge" meaning "Nkonya Mountains" as the Germans called the Nkonya, "Kunja". Shortly after Gruner settled the dispute between the Nkonya and Alavanyo and also drew a map to

show the boundaries between the two communities and their four neighbours, the First World War broke out in 1914 so the Germans had to leave the territory.

The spokesman for the Nkonya, William Kwakye, maintains that:

> After the Germans left, the Alavanyo started encroaching on the Nkonya farmlands with impunity. To curb this attitude, the people of Nkonya-Tayi decided to meet with the people of Alavanyo in order to find a lasting solution to the issue. Subsequently, on Empire Day, 24th May, 1923, the people of Nkonya, went to the people of Alavanyo so that they could go together to the disputed land for each party to agree on the demarcation according to the GM.

> Nana Eleteycomplained that the people of Alavanyo continuedencroaching on the Nkonya land and that attitude was a disregard to the rules of the demarcation by Dr. Gruner. "We tolerated them for a long time so we decided to go to Alavanyo on Empire Day that was, 24th May, 1923, to settle the boundary issue. We got to Alavanyo and without any provocation, a scuffle erupted. The Alavanyo became violent, they entered the disputed land, vandalised the concrete pillars and replaced them with the "anyaa" tree what we call in the Nkonya dialect, "ntome" (A tree used to identify boundaries in the VR. It is used because it has a very long life spun)".

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According to the Nkonya, peace prevailed after the Empire Day celebration episode. The peace that prevailed was not to be absolute as the Alavanyo again flouted the rules and started encroaching with high level of impunity. Meanwhile, a law to establish forest reserves in the territory was passed. In order to enforce this law, Nortten Jones, a British Forest Conservator (BFC), was sent to the Togo Plateau to carry out this duty. He then went round the whole land with each of the six chiefs of the states of the Togo Plateau. Nortten Jones surveyed and demarcated the disputed land in accordance with the Gruner map.

In all 18.5 square miles of land was marked as Forest Reserve for Nkonya while Alavanyo's Forest Reserve was 4.7 square miles (Personal communication, William Kwakye, October 2, 2017). William Kwakye stated that on June 10, 1931, Nortten Jones invited all the Head Chiefs to Hohoe and showed them the map of the Forest Reserve (FR) and they all agreed with Dr. Gruner's map. After that Santrokofi said the map was similar to the Gruner Map so they have accepted it. Each of the Head Chiefs has a copy of the map.

The Alavanyo restarted the encroachment unabated. This time around, the Nkonya saw the recurrence as an affront so they had no option than to send the case to Akpini Native Court (ANC) 'B' at Kpando in 1953, for the law to take its course. The case was however referred to Accra because the government had established new courts for land cases as such, the case went to Land Division of the High Court. The Nkonya tended the GM of 1913 in court showing all the boundaries between Nkonya and Alavanyo and that of their other four neighbours, Gbi, Santrokofi, Akpafu and Bowli. Alavanyo on the other hand presented a map showing boundaries from Alavanyo right to Krachi

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but that map was rejected by the court. The court therefore ruled in favour of the Nkonya in 1957 by Justice Van Lare. Based on the ruling, the Nkonya-Tayi called for perpetual injunction restraining the Alavanyo from further trespassing on Nkonya-Tayi Stool land (See Appendix A).

Table 1: Chart illustrating Court Proceedings of the NkonyaAlavanyo conflict from 1953 - 1980

YEAR	PARTY	COURT	PRESIDING JUDGE	CASE	RULING
1953	Nkonya	Akpini Native Court (ANC)B	Justice Van Lare	Nkonya	The case was referred to the High Court, Accra
1957	Nkonya	Accra High Court	Justice Van Lare	Nkonya	Ruling was in favour of Nkonya
1959	Alavanyo	Appeal Court	Granville Sharp	Alavanyo v Nkonya	Appeal was dismissed
1961	Nkonyav Alavanyo	High Court, Ho	Justice G.R Francois	Nkonya	
1966	Nkonyav Alavanyo	Appeal Court	Mc Van Lare	Nkonyav Alavanyo	The court placed a ''no entry injunction'' on Nkonyaand Alavanyo
1970	Alavanyo v Nkonya	Appeal Court	Justice G.R Francois	Alavanyo v Nkonya	Ruling was in favour of Nkonya
1970	Alavanyo	Appeal Court, Accra	Justice Francois	Alavanyo	The Appeal was overruled
1975	Alavanyo	Court of Appeal, Accra	Justice J. Ammisah	Alavanyo v Nkonya	Appeal Dismissed Judgement put in Ghana Law Report, (pages 194-203)
1980	Alavanyo	Appeal Court	Justice Amorin	Stool Land Boundary Commission	Ruling was held in favourof Nkonya
1980	Nkonya	High Court, Accra	Justice Cecelia Koranteng – Addow	Nkonyav Alavanyo	Quashed re-demarcation case

Nana Eletey lamented thus:

> For all these while, the conflict was just between Nkonya-Tayi and Alavanyo. The other Nkonya communities felt it was not their issue as the disputed land was not part of their land. We were therefore left all alone to fight our attackers. The people of Tayi were struggling to retrieve what lawfully belongs to us, while our brothers sat unconcerned. It was later, when the conflict escalated and the Alavanyo started killing people indiscriminately from other Nkonya communities that they all joined in the fight.

According to the Nkonya, the intransigence of the Alavanyo made them appeal against the 1957 ruling on June 28, 1959. The presiding Judge was Granville Sharp who dismissed the appeal with the statement that "The GP is what shows the boundary between the Nkonya and the Alavanyo".

After this judgment, the Nkonya went to the land to cultivate it but as usual, the Alavanyo continued encroaching on it. Again, in 1961, the Nkonya sent the case to the Ho High Court, but the Alavanyo were not satisfied. The court presided over by Justice G. R. Mcvane Francois, ordered Henry Hagan, a Licensed Surveyor, to demarcate the disputed land based on the GM. In 1966, the Hagan demarcation was completed and an interim injunction of no entry was placed on Nkonya and Alavanyo (Personal communication, William Kwakye, October 2, 2017).

In 1970, Justice Francois passed judgment in favour of the Nkonya. He then advised the Alavanyo that they had lost for three consecutive times so

they should meet with the people of Nkonya to atone tenancy (See Appendix B).

Nana Eletey submits that:

> Based on the above ruling, some people came in 1970 to atone tenancy. We therefore collected sheep and palm wine from them and their farms were shared into two parts. We also took cocoa farms from them.

> We have a list of people who came to atone for tenancy (See Appendix B2). When some men from Alavanyo came to atone for tenancy, the Nkonya alleged that they enquired from them the names of people who were still encroaching and they gave the names of Joseph Foli and Eugene Prekutse. As a result, the farms of the two Alavanyo men who refused to atone for tenancy were shared. The Nkonya gave this information to confirm that they were the rightful owners of the disputed land and all they wanted from the Alavanyo was to respect them as such and also respect the tenancy agreement.

> However, the Alavanyo were still not satisfied. In view of that they relitigated the matter at the Appeal Court in Accra where the presiding Judge Francois overruled the appeal on the basis that the GM is the boundary (See Appendix B2). The Alavanyo appealed again in 1975 but Justice J. A. Ammisah dismissed the appeal (See Appendix B3). After 1975, the judgment was put in Ghana Law Report pages 194 – 203, headed, "Nkonya-Alavanyo case" (See Appendix B4). (Personal communication. William Kwakye, October 2, 2017).

The case was again sent by the Alavanyo to the Stool Land Boundary Settlement Commission where Justice Amorin ruled in favour of Nkonya on

25th January, 1980 but said he had seen a slight variation in the Gruner Map so the boundary should be redemarcated (See Appendix C). The people of Nkonya were not satisfied with the issue of redemarcation because Justice Amorin was once the Alavanyo's Lawyer. By the reason of that the Nkonya proceeded to Accra High Court on 2nd December, 1980, where Justice Cecelia KorantengAddow, quashed the redemarcation case based on the premise that no Lower Court can overrule a Higher Court (See Appendix C1). (Personal communication, William Kwakye, October 2, 2017).

NanaEleteyrecalledthat:

> After the 1980 judgment, peace prevailed. We visited each other, taking women from each other. For me, when people are saying the conflict is about 91 years, I don't like it. It is not true. For me, the conflict actually started in 1983. From this statement, it can be established that the people do not regard the 1923 issue as a conflict. However, the 1983 scrimmage can be labelled as the immediate cause of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

The Immediate Cause – Nkonya Perspective

During the narratives, Nana Eletey of Nkonya, never spoke of conflict but the disregard of the Alavanyo, for authority and for the Nkonya stool by way of trespassing on the Nkonya-Tayi lands. The story was unfolding until they talked about the peace that prevailed after the 1980 judgment. Nana Eletey then raised his head and said; "Now the conflict!" Evidently, the 1983 episode was unanticipated. From the Nkonya side of the story, all along, the two

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communities were having petty misunderstandings which did not involve arms (Personal communication, October 2, 2017).

William Kwakye recalled that:

> On 7th April, 1983, some young men and women went to fetch water in a river called Dzinana at Nkonya-Ntsumuru. The river lies between Nkonya-Ntsumuru and Alavanyo-Kpeme and it was used by both communities from time immemorial. While they were fetching the water a young man from Ntsumuru came and one Alavanyo-Kpeme girl, upon seeing the Ntsumuru man, started shouting. As a result, the Alavanyo-Kpeme young men who were present pounced on an Alavanyo-Kpeme man and beat him up mercilessly for he was mistaken for an Nkonya person. When the people realised that they had beaten their own kinsman, they asked him in the Ewe dialect: "Wo mado be woe wa"? (Won't you say it's you)? They then rushed him to the Margaret Marquart Hospital, Kpando, where he died the following morning (Personal communication, October 2, 2017).

Nana Eletey lamented that:

> After the 1983 conflict, the Nkonya has been the target for the Alavanyo. They ambush and kill us indiscriminately without any provocation and the authorities sit down unconcerned.

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When an Nkonya person is killed, it is not an issue but when an Alavanyo person is killed, it becomes an issue (Personal communication, October 2, 2017).

The Alavanyo men and women, who were by the river, rushed and reported the incidence to the police. Subsequently, the police arrested and brutalised the people of NkonyaTayi. Some of the Nkonya people were sent to the police station but the Paramount Chief of Alavanyo managed to rescue them and sent them back to Nkonya-Tayi. For his punishment for allowing the Nkonya to go back home safely, the Alavanyo-Kpeme youth dragged their Paramount Chief, TorgbeAnkuAtakora V, to the street, beat him up severely, stabbed him and put lorry tyres around his neck in an attempt to burn him. He was subjected to brutal torture but fortunately, he was rescued and rushed to the Margaret Marquart Hospital at Kpando where he spent 18 days. To make matters worse, before he came back from the hospital, his people had destooled him in absentia. TogbeAtakora VII is currently with his children in the United States for his safety. He suffered all these because he refused to endorse the conflict between the Nkonya and Alavanyo (Personal communication, Nana Eletey and William Kwakye, October 2, 2017).

Just after the riverside incidence, the Alavanyo-Kpeme went on rampage to Nkonya cottages, killed and burnt everyone. Some school boys who went to the farm were also killed. The people of Nkonya-Tayi reported the obnoxious acts of the Alavanyo to the Police but no action was taken against them. Ironically, the police entered Nkonya-Tayi, beat and brutalised people to such a dehumanising extent that an old man was forced to defecate on the street. In the wake of the crisis, teachers from Nkonya went and collected their

salaries from Hohoe and passed through Alavanyoen route to Nkonya. When they got to Alavanyo-Kpeme, the people pounced on them, beat them up and took their salaries and left them to their fate. The 1983 conflict escalated when the Nkonya went to the cottages to discover the decomposed bodies of their people. They also took arms and descended on the Alavanyo for revenge. The Nkonya lamented that till today, the people of Alavanyo lay ambush to kill their people (people of Nkonya) and ran away however, each time they did, victims identified the perpetrators (Personal communication, Nana Eletey, October 2, 2017).

One of the elders from Nkonya-Tayi maintains that covertly, the Alavanyo's continual disrespect, arrogance and brutalities meted out to the Nkonya are a ploy to push the government into either sharing the disputed land between the Nkonya and Alavanyo or seizing it to become a government property. In other words, making it a 'no go zone'. Another elder said even though the Alavanyo kill them (Nkonya) more than they (Nkonya) kill the Alavanyo, the day the government will share the land into two, they will fight until there is no one left to be killed (Personal communication, KyeameAtobi and William Ohene, October 2, 2017).

One of the sub-chiefs lamented that the government is taking sides and that anytime the NDC is in power, the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict escalates but when the NPP is in power, there is calm. He said that during a visit of former President Rawlings to the warring factions, he was given a gun at Alavanyo and he took it instead of rejecting it and also putting measures in place to stop the people from manufacturing the guns.

He asked:

> What do they use guns for? Are they not for shooting? The fact
>
> that he accepted the gun means he is encouraging the Alavanyo
>
> to be killing us.

The Nkonya complained that when President Atta-Mills visited the two communities, he warned that anyone who shot again would be severely dealt with. However, a few minutes after the President left, and got to Kpando, the Alavanyo killed two Nkonya people on their farms but he did not come back or do anything about the killings. One elder said, the fact that he is an elder in the church does not mean that when the Alavanyo come to their towns to shoot, he will fold his arms and watch them but will also pick up a gun and fight. For him, anytime the Alavanyo come to pick a quarrel with the Nkonya, they would retaliate and continue fighting till the end (In a group discussion with the Chief and elders at Nkonya-Ahenkro, January 8, 2018).

A female respondent lamented that their girls are at home. They have dropped out of school for no fault of theirs and some of them are at home for over three to four years. Most of the girls attend the Trade School at Alavanyo but stopped for fear of being kidnapped or killed. Both boys and girls who go to Senior High Schools at Hohoe, Kpando and Anfoega have also stopped for obvious reasons. She concluded that the Alavanyo have brought them untold hardship because they cannot live normal lives but living in perpetual fear (In a group discussion, January 8, 2018).

Complaining about the Alavanyo and the unfair settlement by the stakeholders, William Kwakye, said the Alavanyo are disrespecting the Laws of the High Court and also the Law of God. He went ahead to support his claim

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by quoting the Book of Proverbs which states that "Do not move an ancient boundary stone set up by your forefathers" (Proverbs 22:28). He therefore did not understand why the Alavanyo should go and vandalise the pillars laid by the Colonial Government to demarcate their various boundaries according to the GM. Coupled with that the Nkonya cannot fathom why the Church, MC and the Government would not give back what rightfully belongs to them but would rather want to 'move ancient boundary stones' and share the land between them and the Alavanyo (Personal communication, October 2, 2017).

Nana Eletey concluded by saying:

> Anytime we went for meetings they gave materials, maps and rulings to them to study. Instead of studying the materials for clarity, the Alavanyo said we should not use documents as 'fetish'. We want peace, for we are peace-loving people but we cannot sit down for what lawfully belongs to us to be taken away from us (Personal communication, October 2, 2017).

Overtly, the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict is not different from other resource-based conflicts especially land. The land and boundary cases are violent and protracted. Combatants never give up in resource-based conflicts, they drag on and keep escalating as it is depicted in the boundary or border disputes in the world especially, in Africa and specifically Ghana and discussed in chapters two and three of this thesis. Most of the cases have to do with indigenes and settlers and the sad aspect of these resource-based conflicts is that lives are lost, progress is retarded and the actors take entrenched positions. Stakeholders handling protracted resource-based conflicts must be experts who understand the dynamics of such conflicts and employ appropriate conflict

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theories and resolution strategies and mechanisms in the resolution process in order to bring about reconciliation.
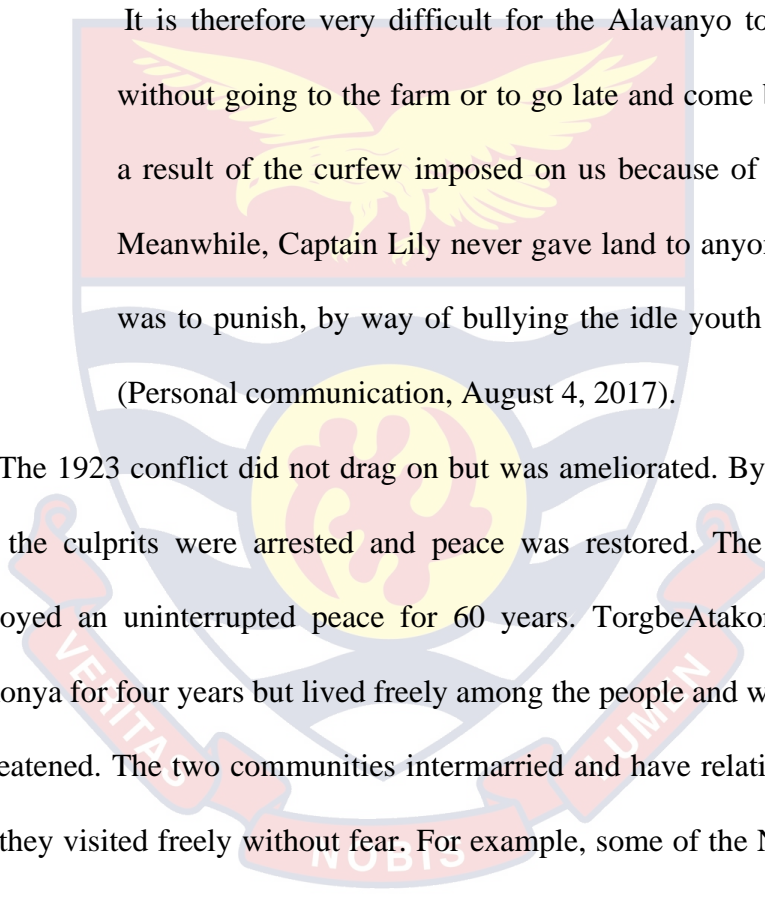
Remote Cause– Alavanyo Perspective

There are various versions of the remote and immediate causes of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, some similar, others contrasting. According to the Alavanyo, the conflict started on 24th May, 1923 at Alavanyo-Kpeme. On that day, the Chiefs of Alavanyo were having a meeting in a very serene atmosphere with the least suspicion that the calm they were experiencing would be short-lived. Suddenly, the chiefs heard some commotion and before they knew it, the people of Nkonya had closed in on them. The people of Nkonya led by Kwesi Addae, trooped to Alavanyo and alleged that KwesiAddae's grandfather gave their family land to Captain Lily, Governor for the British Togoland, who in turn gave it to the grandfather of the Paramount Chief of Alavanyo. In the midst of the pandemonium, the Linguist stuff of the Paramount Chief of Alavanyo, hit the forehead of an Nkonya person and this sparked the conflict. The Nkonya started shooting indiscriminately for, they came fully armed, "and that was the beginning of the conflict" (TorgbeAtakora VII, personal communication, August 4, 2017).

TorgbeAtakoraVII divulged that Captain Lily was the Governor for the British Togoland at that time and had two offices, one in Kpalime, present day Togoland and the other one at Kpando-Kpodzi, present day Ghana. Torgbe maintained that the accusation from the Nkonya was false and had no basis because Captain Lily gave no land to anyone. He recalled that what the Governor abhorred was to see the youth idle in the street. For that reason, anytime he was passing and saw idle youth, he would park his car and ask them

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to push it until they got to the next village where he would command the idle youth there to also push his car and release those who pushed the car from the first village to walk back home. Captain Lily would continue doing that until he got to Kpalime. For that reason, the Alavanyo youth were always in the farm to avoid his wrath (Personal communication, August 4, 2017).

TorgbeAtakora lamented:

> It is therefore very difficult for the Alavanyo to sit at home without going to the farm or to go late and come back early as a result of the curfew imposed on us because of this conflict. Meanwhile, Captain Lily never gave land to anyone, all he did was to punish, by way of bullying the idle youth in Alavanyo (Personal communication, August 4, 2017).

The 1923 conflict did not drag on but was ameliorated. By the end of June, all the culprits were arrested and peace was restored. The two neighbours enjoyed an uninterrupted peace for 60 years. TorgbeAtakora VII taught in Nkonya for four years but lived freely among the people and was not harmed or threatened. The two communities intermarried and have relatives at both sides so they visited freely without fear. For example, some of the Nkonya have one parent from Nkonya and the other from Alavanyo and some of the Alavanyo also have the same family lineage but they did not encounter problems (Personal communication, Torgbe Atakora, August 4, 2017).

Immediate Cause – Alavanyo Perspective

Until 1983, when the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict escalated, there was no conflict as far as the people were concerned. The Alavanyo

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Paramount Chief said:

> "I taught in Alavanyo as a teacher for four years but was not
> killed" (TorgbeAtakora, personal communication, August 4,
> 2017).

TogbeAtakora VII complained that:

> The Nkonya goes into surveillance and shoot us, they attack us.
> When an Alavanyo person is killed, there is no reaction from
> the government but when an Nkonya is killed, Government
> officials go to the bereaved family to sympathise with them.
> The government has given the Nkonya a leeway.

An Alavanyo poultry farmer was killed by an Nkonya person and the
assailant's relatives went to steal the birds. When the incident was reported to
the Divisional Chief Command, the Alavanyo were rather blamed to be the
perpetrators (Personal communication, August 4, 2017).

TorgbeAtakora VI argued that the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict keeps
escalating as a result of the attitude of the Volta Regional Security Council
(RESEC) which has a Guan as Head. When a Guan person is killed, RESEC
moves swiftly but when an Ewe is killed and they go to report, appointment is
not given to the Alavanyo to present their case as exhibited by the Acting
RegionalMinister, Mr. Ametefe (Personal communication, August 4, 2017).

TogbeAtakora VII adduced that:

> During a Consultative Meeting (CM) at the Catholic Secretariat
> (CS), Nana Eletey, Regent of Nkonya-Tayi, took his phone,
> went out and came back with the news that the people of

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Alavanyo were killing people at Nkonya-Tayi. I took my phone immediately and called Alavanyo to find out what was happening just to be told there was nothing going on and even a woman from Nkonya was selling fish in the market place at Alavanyo-Kpeme. How can we achieve peace if things continue this way (Personal communication, August 4, 2017)?

Also, TorgbeAtakora VII, on another occasion, had a phone call from the Divisional Chief Commander (DCC) that some Alavanyo people were felling timber in the disputed land and also threatening the Nkonya. The Commander therefore mobilised police from Hohoe, Kpando and Golo-Kwati who chased the people to the bush but no arrest was made. The suspicion is that they went there just to realise that the people were not the Alavanyo but Nkonya-Tayi themselves so they left them (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017).

TorgbeAtakora VII lamented that:

It looks as if the whole Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict is about me. I wanted to hold a Thanksgiving Service for surviving the bouts of conflict escalation, so I applied for Police protection but the. Municipal Security Council (MUSEC) at Hohoe did not give me the protection but rather stopped me from giving thanks to God for helping me survive pockets of conflict escalation. When I demanded an explanation, the Police Commander at Hohoe said, the Police Service Act of Public Procession was against it. Instead, theCommander went ahead

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to write a letter to put an embargo on my Thanksgiving Service. On one occasion, there was a killing incidence at Tayi. The Police Commander did not go to the crime scene but accused Alavanyo of killing the Nkonya victim. I do not go anywhere, my children are afraid to disclose their identity and my wife is scared (Personal communication, August 4, 2017).

According to TorgbeAtakora VII, his daughter completed Senior High School and he wanted her to go to St. Theresa's College of Education at Hohoebut the whole family is scared that they would not give her admission if they should know that she was his daughter. His wife was scared when she went with her to the school but by the grace of God, she was admitted. People call on phone just to threaten him. Meanwhile, an Nkonya Chief was travelling to Kpando and the vehicle he had boarded broke down and Torgbe Atakora VII protected him till he got to Hohoe even though the shooting was on-going (Personal communication, August 4, 2017).

On 21st March, 2014, a memorandum for peace was signed by the Nkonya and Alavanyo but three days after the memorandum, the Ademega (Chief Hunter) of Alavanyo was killed by the Nkonya. TorgbeAtakora was at home with the Crime Officer (CO) when the Nkonya came in their numbers to shootIndiscriminately, for one hour. His sister, (Togbe's sister) was hit in the arm by a stray bullet, which penetrated through her arm. His uncle, a stroke patient who was sitting in a wheel chair was shot but fortunately, these two relatives did not die. When the shooting erupted, the (CO) asked Torgbe whether the perpetrators were not his own people but he did not answer (Personal communication, Torgbe Atakora VII, August 4, 2017).

How can my own people, the Alavanyo just storm Kpeme and start shooting their kinsmen? The Nkonya have "very big" men in the military to support, aid and protect them, so they roll every shooting and killing to the Alavanyo. There is a Brigadier in the military who comes from Nkonya and is ready, to aid them. We had information that the Nkonya have sophisticated weapons in an armoury, in the disputed land that releases bullets that travels $3^1/_2$ kilometers to hit its target. Where did they get these weapons from if not supplied by the military (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017)?

According to TorgbeAtakora VII, it is a dictum that the Alavanyo do not just shoot in the street indiscriminately. They shoot when there is a dispute. They have very close relatives in Nkonya-Tayi and other Nkonya communities because of the intermarriages and vice versa, so there is no reason why they should be fighting each other/one another.

He maintains that all those talks about calabash, drought, water and two girls fighting are all false, it is just an act of hiding under the coat of diplomacy. The main issue is that people just wanted to cause destruction and that was what they did, it has nothing to do with a girl or girls fetching water and a broken calabash (Personal communication, August 4, 2017).

The Paramount Chief of Nkonya is a close friend of the Paramount Chief of Alavanyo. At the last Consultative Meeting they attended at Ho, both of them sat together and also ate together for two days, to the admiration of all, to the extent that the Vice Chairman of the MC, Bishop F. A. K. Lodonu, commended them. The Paramount Chief of Alavanyo said, all that he wanted for the two communities, is peace so they could go about their normal duties

and live normal lives (Personal communication, TorgbeAtakora VII, August 4, 2017).

An opinion leader of Alavanyo said in an interview with him that the conflict started in 1923 and escalated in 1983, during a severe drought. As a result, all the waters dried up and the only stream that served the people of Alavanyo-Kpeme and Nkonya-Ntsumuru was River Dzinini, at Ntsumuru. An Alavanyo girl went to fetch water when a misunderstanding ensued between them and the calabash of the Alavanyo girl got broken. As a result, the Alavanyo girl went and reported to the Alavanyo Police who trooped in to Nkonya, to arrest the Nkonya girl and some other people. Subsequently, the Nkonya became angry and decided to seek revenge. They went to Alavanyo-Kpeme to lay ambush for innocent people who were returning from their farms at dusk and in the process, a man called Foli died. In retaliation, the Alavanyo in turn launched an attack on the Nkonya who retaliated violently and that was when the conflict escalated. "The 1983 violence was very, very severe" The people complained that the conflict was violent and keeps escalating. (Personal communication, Mr. Kpende, January 3, 2017).

Mr. Kpende recounted that:

> On May 5, 2017, the RC resident minister in charge of Alavanyo-Kpeme, the Rev. Fr. Tawiah, went for early morning mass around 5:00am just to realise that the whole area, including the church room was beseeched with strange faces.

He immediately knew they were the Nkonya so he asked them; "What do you want here"? "Why did you come"? "Have you come to destroy us"?

The people did not respond to his questions so the Rev. Father raised an alarm which caused the Nkonya to flee (Personal communication, January, 3, 2017). According to this respondent, if Fr. Tawiah had not gone to the church earlier, there would have been genocide. After that eruption, the conflict escalated several times but the violence was not as severe as the 1983 episode. Just as any conflict in Ghana, the indigenes alleged that the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict has a political undertone. They observe that while the Nkonya belong to the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), the Alavanyo belong to the Convention People's Party (CPP), the first opposition party in the First Republic. This informant blamed the stalemate of the conflict on the Nkonya. He maintained that the conflict would have been resolved long ago 'and died its natural death', if the Nkonya had made an input during the negotiation. He said that during the negotiation, the Alavanyo made the first input for the peace process but the Nkonya refused to do so and took an entrenched position thus, bringing the resolution to a stalemate (Personal communication, Mr. Kpende, January 3, 2017).

Commenting on the nature of the conflict, a respondent from Alavanyo said that what happens is that when an Nkonya person is killed then the Nkonya retaliate by laying ambush to kill the Alavanyo. In the same vein, when an Alavanyo person is killed, they also lay ambush to kill the Nkonya. According to this resource person, since the conflict escalated in 2003, it keeps escalating violently with both parties shooting each other. Sometimes the shooting goes on a whole day or a week with various degrees of violence until the authorities call for police or military enforcement to salvage the situation (Personal communication, Vincent Normenyo, August 4, 2017). For instance,

when the conflict escalated again in 2003, the Member of Parliament for Biakoye District, Dr. KwamenaAdjei, had to fall on the Government for the deployment of the military (Daily Graphic, 1st March, 2003).

The man continued that some Nkonya men who took cover to watch out for any eventuality, as was pertaining at the time, emerged and beat up the Alavanyo girl who was presumed dead. "This was the beginning of the violence that keeps escalating to this day." He said. According to this informant, severe violence broke out when news about the supposed death of the Alavanyo girl quickly spread.

According to another respondent from Alavanyo, he was told that the Nkonya were the first settlers in the area before the Alavanyo arrived. He maintains that he was neither an eye witness to the 1923 nor 1983 conflicts but he could comment on the violence that erupted as a result of felling of timber. He recalled that one day, news got to Alavanyo that the Police had a message that the Alavanyo youth had entered the disputed land and were felling timber. Based on that information, a Police re-enforcement from Hohoe, Kpando and Golo-Kwati was despatched to the scene.

When the Alavanyo went into the forest to ascertain the truth of the matter, they saw to their surprise that the culprits were rather Nkonya youth, at the Alavanyo side of the land, felling timber with chainsaws. When the Alavanyo tried to stop them, it turned into a violent conflict between the two communities and that was what escalated the conflict. The man lamented that the portion of the land which is rich with timber, has become a "no-go" area till today because of the conflict.

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Another informant from Alavanyo states that what actually caused the Empire Day conflict was not the fact that the Nkonya went to the Alavanyo for settlement of the land issue but the fact that they did not respect the "anyaa" trees that the Alavanyo used for the demarcation of their boundaries. He maintains that from time immemorial, the "anyaa" tree was what their forefathers used for demarcation and everybody respected it, so why should the Nkonya disrespect what was handed down to them by tradition and give all the respect to the GM that they glorify so much. He concluded that if theNkonya had respected the "anyaa" tree, they would have been living as brothers and sisters and both communities would have developed.

One respondent from Alavanyo-Kpeme described the nature of the conflict as "Unexpected shootings and killings. There is no battlefield". He said one morning he went out to buy some provisions with his car even though it was a short distance. After buying the items, he was walking back to his car when he heard a gunshot and saw two bullets around him. He said he quickly opened the car door and knelt down. After a third shot he managed to enter the car and sped off.

He did not see anybody and people around too did not see the person or people who were shooting. According to him, these things happen anytime the conflict escalates. The people hide, shoot and ran away. That is the nature of the conflict (Rev. Atiley, personal communication, January, 12, 2018). Commenting on the conflict, the Assembly Woman of Alavanyo said the conflict has been violent, keeps on escalating for too long. For her, the peace process should be completed in order that the Nkonya and Alavanyo can live in peace and harmony. The people need growth and development and it is only

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peace and security that will make it a reality (Personal communication, Hon. Josephine Asigbetse, August 4, 2017).

Conclusion

The history of the Nkonya-Alavanyo has shown that they have both travelled from very distant places and the two communities had lived in so many places before settling at their present abodes. From both histories, Nkonya were the first settlers before Alavanyo came. However, there are conflicting events in the Alavanyo history. According to the Paramount Chief of Alavanyo, the Nkonya gave them the land and they were able to destroy "wild beasts" from the forest, upon a request from The Nkonya. Contrarily, Dzathor 1998 maintains that the Bubulu-Bu fugitives explored and found the land meanwhile they also encountered "wild beasts". In both stories of the Alavanyo, they killed men in leopard skins. Also, both stories of the Alavanyo recorded internal fighting and murder. From primary source (oral history), there was one murder case that occurred at Sovie while the secondary source (written story) reported two murders, the Sovie episode and that of Gbalakokoefe.

Both the Nkonya and Alavanyo are blaming the government for taking sides during shooting incidents. The remote and immediate causes are also quite conflicting but as said earlier in the introduction of this chapter, all the parties want to present the stories to favour them. These are making it quite difficult to actually identify the exact immediate cause of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

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It should also be noted that the Nkonya are resolute in their decision that the land belongs to them because of their evidences discussed earlier to confirm their ownership of the land. From all indications the remote cause was the 24th May, 1923, misunderstanding but was resolved and peace prevailed. After that episode, even though the Alavanyo continued 'disrespecting the Nkonya' and continued 'trespassing', the two enjoyed 60 years of uninterrupted peace.

In any case, irrespective of the conflicting stories, the fact holds from both sides that the immediate cause is the 1983 riot. However, knowing the history of the people and the history of the conflict will help the stakeholders of the resolution process especially, the Church, the MC and the Government of Ghana to find a lasting resolution to the conflict.
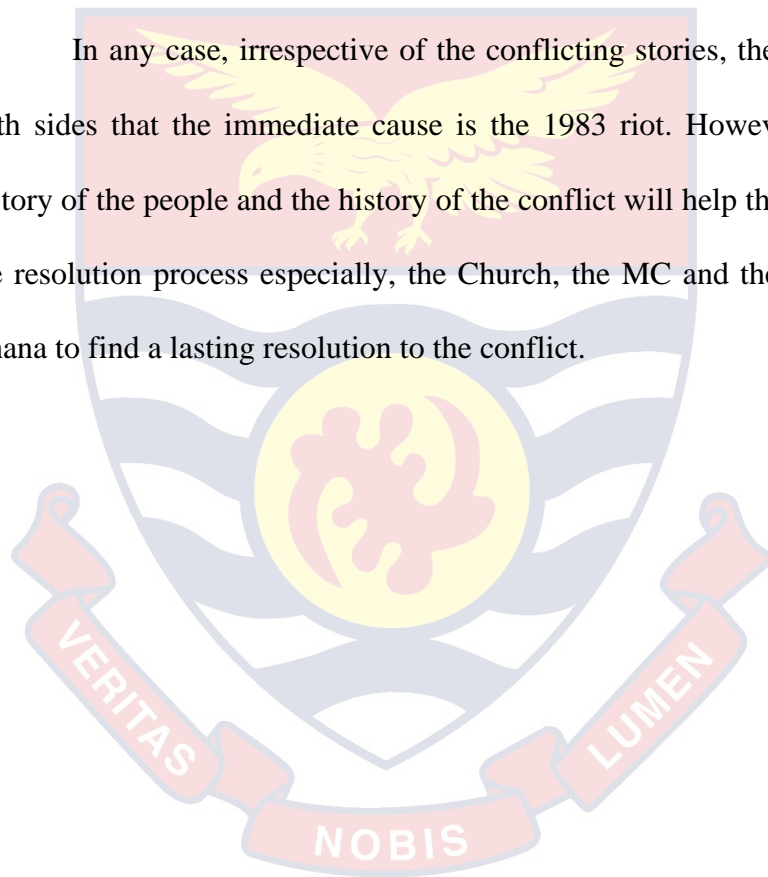
CHAPTER FIVE

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES, TRADITIONS AND PRACTICES OF

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Introduction

It is necessary for one to analyse the Biblical principles, traditions and practices of conflict resolution before embarking on assessing conflict resolution as a theological issue. The questions to answer here are:

i.   What are the Biblical principles, traditions and practices of conflict resolution identified in the Bible?

ii. Are Christians mandated to resolve conflict?

iii. Does the Church have a legitimate role in conflict resolution?

To answer these questions, one needs to delve into pointers and/or allusions to conflict resolution in the Bible. These pointers or examples were treated as historical and traditional issues since the research is in the area of Church History and not Biblical Study. Moreover, the researcher is not a Biblical Scholar. The research looked at the following themes:

i.   God's promise of peace and His position on conflict and conflict resolution.

ii. Issues of conflict and conflict resolution in the Old Testament.

iii. Jesus' position on conflict and conflict resolution among the Apostles and other believers.

iv. Handling of conflict among the apostles in the Early Church.

v.   The position of Apostle Paul on conflict and conflict resolution among Christians in the Early Church.

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Regarding

God'spromiseofpeaceandHispositiononconflictandconflictresolution, the Bible says;

> I will grant them peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid. I will remove savage beasts from the land and the sword will not pass through your country (Leviticus 26:6).

The presupposition here is that God does not want the use of arms; be it the sword, gun, spear, arrow, knife, machine gun or any other deadly weapon among His children. We can therefore say that He does not want conflict for his people but 'peace,' that is void of the sword and destruction. Similarly, in order for His people to live in peace and harmony, God spoke through the Prophet Ezekiel thus: "I will make a covenant of peace with them and rid the land of wild beasts so that they may live in the desert and sleep in the forests in safety" (Ezekiel 34:25).

Issues of Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Old Testament

AbramandLotDuring the sojourning of Abram and Lot, a quarrel arose between their herdsmen when they were living together in Bethel. The quarrel was sparked by land acquisition and possessions acquired by Abram and Lot after they had left Haran. However, Abram, knowing the effects of conflict, intervened timely and resolved the issue. This, he did by negotiating with Lot to choose wherever he wanted for himself.

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Abram said to Lot:

> Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your
> herders and my herders; for weare kindred. Is not the whole land
> before you? Separate your selffromme if you take the lefthand,
> then I will goto the right; orif you take their ghthand; then I will
> goto the left. (Genesis13:8-9).

Lot then chose the whole plain of the Jordan and settled there. After Lot had left, God gave Abram the land of Canaan so he also settled at Hebron. The situation could have been bloody, if it had dragged on without intervention. Who knows? These were shepherds in the fields who were armed, ready to defend themselves from wild animals and bandits. This simple act of immediate intervention and negotiation by Abram, prevented violent conflict and brought peace between the two parties. Most importantly, the two parties explicitly kept their promises by living in the lands that they chose and not crossing over to breech the negotiation. Ikle (1967) maintains that during negotiation in conflict situations, the violation of a set of rules mars the friendly relationship between parties, at least temporarily. Some of these rules are, "unambiguous lies must be avoided, explicit promises must be kept and explicit threats must not be issued…" (1967:87). Abram and Lot kept their promises, avoided lies and also did not threaten each other so there was peace to the extent that Abraham, as he was then called, interceded on Lot's behalf some years later when God wanted to destroy the land on which Lot lived. Herders of Gerar Quarreled with Herders of Isaac A quarrel erupted between the herders of Gerar and that of Isaac, concerning digging of wells. The issue was that when the herders of Isaac dug and found water, the herders of Gerar

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took it from them, saying it was theirs. This practice went on until Gerar's herders quarreled with Isaac's herders. It is written;

> "the herders of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herders, saying, 'The water is ours'." So he called the well Esek (contention) because they contended with him (Genesis 26:20). Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that one also; so he called it Sitnah (enmity) (Genesis 26:20-21). To avoid further quarrels, Isaac left the area to another place where he dug a well and nobody quarrelled with him. Here, we see Isaac withdrawing from the area to avoid strife. Sometimes a party in a conflict situation needs to surrender as a conflict resolution practice or mechanism. What Isaac did prevent the conflict from escalating. It can be said that as a result of withdrawing quietly for peace to prevail, God further blessed Isaac and he dug a well without strife. It should be noted that there was no mediator but Isaac took it upon himself not to fuel conflict so, he kept withdrawing until he found peace. From the discussion of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, it is clear that retaliation is the cause of the constant escalation as no party wants to let go. The people pick up arms at the least provocation.

Jacob flees from Laban

After serving Laban for twenty years, Jacob wanted his freedom. He wanted to live an independent life with his wife and children without the control of Laban, his father in-law. Fearing his wicked in-law might take his

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daughters from him, he fled without his knowledge. When Laban learnt of Jacob's disappearance, he pursued him for seven days until he caught up with him. Laban verbally assaulted Jacob, for leaving his household with his daughters without informing him. He further accused him of stealing his gods. (meanwhile, they were stolen by Rachel his daughter) After Laban's search for his idols proved futile, Jacob became angry with him and equally attacked him verbally for pursuing and embarrassing him by unbraiding all his belongings (Genesis 31:36-37). He denounced Laban for accusing him of theft and for treating him unfairly for twenty years, irrespective of his dedication to work and faithfulness to him. However, instead of showing remorse and apologising, Laban quickly covered up, by talking about his intention of not harming his daughters and grandchildren. He also told Jacob about his intention for them to enter into a treaty. However, after talking about their feelings and listening to each other, they both came to an agreement to make a covenant that would bind them for the rest of their lives. That is, they would not pursue or harm each other from then on. Here, both parties listened to each other, spoke about their pent-up feelings and agreed to live in peace. The parties therefore signed a peace agreement thus avoiding protracted conflict or conflict escalation.

Jacob and Esau

After Jacob deceived his father Isaac and took away his brother, Esau's blessings, Esau nursed a grudge against him. He said to himself; "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob" (Genesis 27:41). As a result, Jacob fled to Paddan Aram for his life. However, twenty years after he had left, he had a change of mind and sought his brother Esau in

order to make peace with him by pacifying him with gifts. Jacob thought to himself; "I will pacify him with these gifts I am sending on ahead, later when I see him, perhaps he will receive me" (Genesis 32:20b). While Jacob saw Esau approaching, with remorse, he started bowing to the ground seven times until he came near his brother (Genesis 33). Esau on the other hand, who was the victim of Jacob's 'wicked scheme', ran and embraced his brother when he saw him coming, "threw his arms around his neck, kissed him and both of them wept" (Genesis33:4). Jacob presented gifts to Esau to pacify him for robbing him of his blessings but the latter rejected them. In this instance, it can be deduced that Esau turned down the offer not because he had not forgiven his brother but because he felt he also had enough. In that sense, it would have been perceived as greed or taking back part of the blessings Jacob cunningly robbed him of. However, after Jacob's humble persistence, Esau accepted them.

The brothers interacted with each other with love as if nothing had happened. Esau asked Jacob, "What do you mean with all this company that I met?" Jacob answered, "To find favour with my Lord" (Genesis 33:8). The humility with which Jacob addressed Esau is a very important component of conflict resolution mechanism in Africa. He addressed Esau as his 'Lord'. In another instance, he addressed himself as Esau's 'servant.' The two brothers resolved the twenty-year old conflict themselves through the acceptance of one's wrongdoing, pacification, humility and kind words from the perpetrator and forgiveness, love and mercy from the victim. This brought about reconciliation between them.

Proponents of traditional African mechanism for justice and reconciliation are of the view that rituals, symbols, and ceremonies have an impact on different levels of human consciousness. This situation, it is believed facilitates new ways of thinking thus, making it possible for "a person to respond more thoughtfully and with less spontaneous aggression to attack" (Villa-Vicencio, 2009:134). He observes that each of the traditional practices "provides space and opportunity to deal with conflict through dialogue, reflection, negotiation and compensation" (2009:137). It cannot be disputed that the aforementioned traditional practices helped in the reconciliation process of Jacob and Esau. The brothers dialogued and Jacob employed the use of ritual and cultural practices of bowing seven times with his entire family to Esau as a sign of rendering apology. Jacob went further to compensate Esau. There was also some level of negotiation in terms of the acceptance of the gift. It can be said that most likely, Esau could have behaved aggressively but was affected by Jacob's thoughtfulness. This is the practice that the Church should refer the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo to, as a good conflict resolution practice, in order to live in peace.

Joseph Reconciles with his Brothers

Similarly, Joseph's brothers offended him greatly, by selling him into slavery as a result of jealousy (Genesis 37). As a servant in Potiphar's house, his master's wife wanted to have an affair with him and harassed him consistently but he did not give in to her advances for he feared God (Genesis 39). Consequently, the woman implicated him and he was thrown into prison (Genesis 39). While in prison, the Lord was with him so he was able to

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interpret dreams for Pharaoh's cupbearer and butler who were with him in the same prison (Genesis 40). Joseph requested that the cup-bearer should remember him when he was reinstated but that did not happen. (Genesis 40:14-15) However, after enduring for two years, King Pharaoh had dreams and needed someone to interpret them and it was then that he was remembered. (Genesis 41) The King was so pleased with Joseph's interpretations and advice that he made him governor over all the land of Egypt. (Genesis 41) The interpretation of the dream was that after seven years of bumper harvest, there was going to be famine for seven years. Joseph then advised that the King appointed someone discerning and wise and set him over Egypt, with overseers to take one-fifth of all the produce during the seven years of plenty.

As a result of the famine, Joseph's brothers went to buy grain in Egypt and came face to face with him but while he recognised them, they did not recognise him. However, he feigned anger and spoke to them harshly, accusing them of evil intentions. "When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognised them, but he treated them like strangers and spoke harshly to them…" (Genesis42:7) After taking them through some 'drillings,' he allowed them to go. During their second trip, Joseph again feigned anger and dealt with them harshly but was kind to them by giving them grain and also feasting with them at his table. After his brothers had left, he sent for them and this time round, he could no longer conceal his identity and compassion towards them but revealed himself to them. He said; "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" (Genesis 45:3a) His brothers became speechless but he urged them on. "Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come closer to me.' And they came closer". He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or

angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life" (Genesis 45:4-5).

After offending him greatly by robbing him of his parental love, affection and care, in fact, his birth-right, Joseph forgave his brothers. The unique feature here is that he did not wait for his brothers to beg for forgiveness but rather took the initiative to forgive them in an outright term. Compared to the case of Esau and Jacob, even though Esau, the victim, ran to embrace his brother, the perpetrator, it was Jacob who took the initiative to meet him and pacify him. In this case however, Joseph did not wait for his brothers to apologise and beg for forgiveness; he went ahead to kiss all his brothers and wept. "Then he fell upon his brother, Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him" (Genesis45:14-15). Joseph took these steps to make his brothers feel at home, for they were scared. Also, he did not want any conflict between them but wanted peaceful co-existence. Knowing that his brothers would start a 'blame game' on their journey back home, which might spark a conflict, he advised them not to quarrel on their way. "Then he sent his brothers away, and as they were leaving, he said to them, 'Don't quarrel on the way'" (Genesis 45:24)! Clearly seen, Joseph was a man of peace and would want peace to prevail between his brothers and him and among his brothers. Here, we see love and forgiveness at the core of this episode thus preventing a conflict situation.

The People Quarrelled with Moses

When Moses and the Israelites left the wilderness of Sin, they camped at Rephidim but there was no water for them to drink. For this reason, the people quarreled with Moses to give them water. In response, Moses said; "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord (Exodus 17:2)? As Moses was not able to find water for them to quench their thirst, they went on complaining against him and said; "Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst" (Exodus 17:3b)? At this point, Moses cried out to the Lord, asking Him what he should do (Exodus 17:4b). In the heat of the strife, Moses was frightened and thought the furious Israelites were going to stone him. God then answered him by instructing him to get them water from the rock of Horeb.

We realise that God's prompt response and Moses quick action brought the riotous situation, under control because the felt-needs of the people were met. Moses would have been (probably) stoned to death had there been a little delay. Prompt response to warning signs and immediate reaction to reports on conflict situations, are mechanisms that help resolve conflict and prevent it from escalating. Another conflict resolution practice exhibited here is the meeting of the felt-needs of the mob. Conflict is de-escalated when the needs or the grievances of the disputants are met. The Israelites became calm when the water they needed was provided.

Commenting on timing during conflict, Darkwa, et al. (2012) maintain that "Timing is a valuable resource in conflict resolution, which must be utilised effectively to maximise its potential. Intervention at the right time can either prevent the escalation of conflict into armed violence…"

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Avoiding Vengeance

God told the Israelites, "You shall not take vengeance or bear grudge against any of your People, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the Lord" (Leviticus 19:18). Taking vengeance or bearing grudges against one another brings about protracted conflicts. The truth and fact is that as long as bitterness is harboured, conflict keeps escalating. Unless individuals or groups let go of their anger and reconcile, conflict will not cease. Villa-Vicencio (2009) states that in order to achieve sustainable peace, it is necessary to go beyond an agreement to stop the killings. He believes what needs to be done is, antagonists to see one another differently and find ways by which they can create a different kind of future. For him, reconciliation is about recognising our own susceptibility to evil, without excusing evil or condoning it either in ourselves or in others. Forgiveness, love, avoidance of evil and aggression and reconciliation are the prescribed tools for conflict resolution. If the people of Nkonya-Alavanyo can avoid vengeance, this 'age-long' conflict will cease and reconciliation achieved.

Mosesand the Israelites

Moses, the leader of the Israelites judged their cases for them while they stood around him from morning to evening. Moses used the word of God to establish peace between parties and among the people. (Exodus 18) He told his father in-law; "Whenever they have disputes, it is brought to me, and l decide between the parties and inform them of God's decrees and laws." (Exodus 18:16) Moses did this in order to prevent conflicts. He used the word of God that taught the people to love peace and pursue it. They were also taught to forgive one another for peace to prevail in the land.

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Quarrel betweent woin Dividuals

The law states that:

> If two men quarrel and one hits the other with a stone or with his fist and he does not die but is confined to bed, the one who struck the blow will not be responsible. If the one gets up and walks outside with his staff; however, he must pay the injured man for the loss of his time and see that he is completely healed. (Exodus 21:18-19)

This act of showing concern to the injured man; the victim, by the perpetrator is an act of resolving conflict that will heal the wounds of the victim and bring about reconciliation. Without the act of concern for the victim, strife might develop and if not properly handled, could bring about violence. In order to bring a cease-fire and live in peace; "Antagonists need to see one another differently and find ways of creating a different kind of future" (Villa-Vicencio, 2009:155).

Moses and the Israelites

In a bid to resolve conflicts with justice in order to bring about peace among the Israelites, Moses instructed the people; "Choose for each of your tribes men who are wise, discerning and reputable to be your leaders" (Deuteronomy 1:13)." Moses appointed these people to judge their cases according to their tribes because they had become so numerous that he alone could not keep an eye on them. He commanded the leaders saying; Give the members of your community a fair hearing, and judge rightly between one person and another, whether citizen or resident alien. You must not be partial in

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judging: hear out the small and great alike; you shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgement is God's. Any case that is too hard for you,

bring it to me, and I will hear it (Deuteronomy 1:16-17).

Moses employed this military strategy in order to avoid continuous conflict for the people were numerous 'as the stars in the sky.' (Vs. 10) He warned the leaders not to show partiality which brings about conflict and conflict escalation. In conflict management or conflict resolution, if a party feels unfairly treated or knows that there was partiality, they resort to arms. This fuels crisis situation that results into violent or bloody conflict escalation. Justice and fairness must therefore be the hallmark for judging disputes. In resolving conflicts, renewed antagonism may erupt if one or more of the parties come to perceive the agreements as unfair or believe they have been violated (Kriesberg, 1999:4). Justice and fairness must therefore be the hallmark of handling conflict situations. By so doing, parties will accept agreements as fair deals which will enable adversaries to agree to co-exist peacefully. In this regard, the Nkonya as well as Alavanyo, are blaming the Governments (these are, the two major political parties in Ghana) for taking sides thus fueling and prolonging the conflict. While Nkonya blames the NDC, the Alavanyo blames the NPP.

Deborah the Prophetess and the People of Israel

Deborah, the prophetess of Israel sat under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in Ephraim and settled disputes among the people. As a leader, Deborah settled the disputes in order that they do not escalate into violent conflicts and also for the people to reconcile with one another for

peaceful coexistence (Judges 4). This is the promise and will of God for His people Israel. Deborah used mediation to bring peace between and among the Israelites. It should be noted that at any given point in time, the Israelites were given a leader to listen to their grievances. This brought order, fairness and justice which prevented conflicts from escalating among them.

Gideon and the Ephraimites

After Gideon had defeated the Midianites, the Ephraimites became angry and criticised him violently, for not involving them in the fight. On the contrary, Gideon took his time to explain to them that his achievement was of no significance, compared to theirs. He told them; "God has given into your hands the captains of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb, what have I been able to do in comparison with you" (Judges 8:3a)? After Gideon had said these, the people's resentment against him subsided. He dialogued with the Ephraimites and calmed their tempers. If he had equally reacted violently, the conflict would have escalated.

David and Nabal

Nabal's refusal to provide David and his men with food in the desert of Carmel, angered David so much that he vowed to destroy Nabal and his household. David sent a message to Nabal thus;

> Now, l hear that it is sheep-shearing time. When your shepherds were with us, we did not mistreat them, and the whole time they were in Carmel, nothing of theirs was missing. Ask your own servants and they will tell you. Therefore be favourable towards my young men, since we come at a festive time. Please, give

your servants and your son David whatever you can find for them (1Samuel 25:7-8).

In response to David's message, Nabal said; "Who is this David? Who is this son of Jesse? Many servants are breaking away from their masters these days. Why should l take my bread and water, and the meat l have slaughtered for my shearers and give it to men coming from who knows where"? (1Samuel 25:10-11) It was this message that incensed David and in his fury, he vowed to do the unthinkable. However, Abigail; Nabal's wife, sensing danger, was quick to resolve the issue by supplying David and his six hundred men with enough food and wine. Consequently, David's temper chilled out so he did not carry out his threat. But for the timely intervention of Abigail, there would have been genocide. Also, the people's felt-needs were met so there was no need to fight (I Samuel 25).

The two Prostitutes and Solomon'swise Judgement

In another instance, a conflict arose between two prostitutes over a living baby, after one of them slept on her baby and it died. As both of them were claiming the same baby, the issue had to be sent to King Solomon. After listening to the two women, the King said; "Bring me a sword," and they brought a sword before the King. The King said, "Divide the living boy in two, then give half to the other one, and half to the other" (1Kings 3:24-25). On hearing these heartbreaking words, the real mother of the living boy, with compassion burning within her, pleaded with the King not to kill him. Meanwhile, the other woman insisted that the baby be killed so that none of them would have him. She said, "It shall be neither mine nor yours, divide it" (I Kings 3:26b). With his wisdom, after listening to the two women, Solomon was

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able to discern who the rightful mother of the living baby was. Justice was established and the conflict resolved (1Kings 3:16-28). This episode buttresses the issue of fairness in judgement, by Kriesberg (1999) that was discussed earlier. The Nkonya are using this particular story, as a typical conflict resolution practice, to condemn the Church and MC. They argue that as a church, they should have been well informed about Solomon's fair judgement, to know that the disputed land was for them and not the Alavanyo. This is because the MC wants the land to be shared 50-50 between the Nkonya and Alavanyo. They argue that while they object to the division of the land, the Alavanyo accepted it because it does not belong to them. Based on this behaviour from the Alavanyo, the Nkonya is of the view that the Church and the MC should have deduced that they (Nkonya) are the rightful owners of the land.

However, the story can equally be interpreted from a different perspective. In the first place, there was human life involved so Solomon used his wisdom to discern the rightful owner of the living boy. In the real sense, he was not going to divide the baby under any circumstance. In the second place, the real mother of the baby voluntarily begged the King to give it to the other woman. It was through this that he was able to know whom the child belonged to. However, it is difficult for the Nkonya to part with their property.

Seeking Peace

The Psalmist wrote; "Turn from evil and do good. Seek peace and pursue it" (Psalm 34:14). Here, the Psalmist is exhorting believers to have peaceful disposition and live in peace with their neighbours. When conflict arises, instead of fuelling it, being partial or passing unfair judgement that will

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propel the conflict to a higher level, we should make the conscious effort as children of God to pursue peace that will go a long way to de-escalate conflict.

Avoiding quarrels

"Do not quarrel with anyone without cause, when no harm has been done to you" (Proverbs 3:30). Children of God are advised not to engage in sheer wanton behaviours or activities. The allusion is that we should not pick up quarrels without provocation or without cause or justification. With this, one may be tempted to ask whether one could go ahead and quarrel on condition that they have been attacked, harmed, offended or wronged in one way or another. Considering the words of the Psalmist in (Psalm 34:14), which is treated above, "Turn from evil and do good…," do Christians have to stir strife when provoked? It is prudent for Christians to seek peace even when they are harmed, they should avoid quarrels that breed violence.

Pridebreeds Quarrel

"Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice" (Proverbs 13:10). Here, it can be inferred that we are being advised against pride that 'breeds quarrel'. This means that people quarrel and fight as a result of their own ideas and selfishness that stem from pride. In such situations, pride makes people think their ideas and aspirations are superior to all others. When this happens, others feel slighted, humiliated or abused. If the situation is not properly handled, it leads to strife. We are therefore advised to seek wisdom and humility, instead of pride and arrogance, in order to live in harmony. When people perceive that they have been rejected, shown contempt, arrogance, neglect and dislike, conflict arises. In an existing conflict situation,

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conflict escalates as a result of these negative attitudes (Dent, 2003; Rudolf, Jr., 2003). According to the Nkonya, the Alavanyo defied their orders and entered their farmlands with impunity. That was what incensed them to take a court action against Alavanyo. If they had consulted the Nkonya, in humility to give them more land as a result of their increase in population, the Nkonya would have done that thus averting this 'age-long' conflict.

A Gentleanswer Against Harshword

"A gentle answer turns away wrath. But a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverb 15:1). This proverb is a pointer to reconciliation. We are being admonished by the writer, to be circumspect in times of anger or misunderstanding, with our choice of words. Using kind words that will avert antagonism will depend on how considerate and kind we are, in choosing our words. Using harsh words will incur displeasure which leads to hostility. 'Two wrongs do not make a right,' the popular adage goes. For example, Abigail went on to apologise on behalf of her husband as discussed earlier. She said, "Please, forgive your servant's offense…" (1Samuel 25:28). I believe that with this act of using 'gentle words,' even without sending David and his men food, David would have still changed his mind from causing harm.

Preventing Quarrels

"Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out" (Proverbs 17:14).

Breaching a dam is the breaking or battering of the fortification or walls that keeps the water from flowing. When this happens, the water gushes out and causes havoc such as flood that displaces families, takes lives of both

humans and livestock, and destroys farms and other properties. We can imagine as homo sapiens, if we breach the 'dam' that holds us together as a family, group, community, society, nation and the world. It is this 'dam' that helps us to co-exist and live in harmony. 'Breaching the dam' therefore means causing havoc and creating chaos to our very existence. It can be deduced from this proverb that to avoid conflict that will disintegrate our human encampments, we should be assiduous, in fact, thread cautiously in order not to spark issues that have the tendency of starting disputes. The bottom-line is, 'just let go.'

Avoiding Hasty Courtactions

"What your eyes have seen, do not hastily bring into court, for what will you do in the end when your neighbor puts you to shame" (Proverbs 25:8)? In this context, we are advised to be patient and not rush to court at the least provocation. Little disagreements will arise between friends, neighbours, communities and any other group of people in every human settlement but we should not be litigants. MacDonald (1995) states that the Bible condemns litigious spirit which is the desire to rush to the law court to settle every little grievance. He is of the view that an eye witness could narrate everything that he saw but could be put to shame after his or her neighbor testifies. We should therefore settle little disagreements with our neighbours or in the Church to avoid conflict, shame and embarrassment. The Nkonya and Alavanyo went to court several times. Meanwhile, the Nkonya are referring to Solomon's wise judgment in the Bible that the MC should have given the disputed land to them. If conflict resolution practices should be adhered to, as the Nkonya are

alleging, then court actions should be avoided based on the above Scripture (Proverbs 25:8).

Avoiding Gossip

Without wood a fire dies out, without gossip a quarrel dies down. As charcoal is to embers and as wood to fire, so is a quarreling man for kindling strife (Proverbs 26:20-21).

In this proverb, the writer uses metaphors such as 'wood,' 'fire,' 'charcoal' and 'embers,' which are fuels that can set the whole world ablaze, when not controlled. It is evident from the above that our utterances, attitudes and general behaviours, can 'set our families, communities and all other human settlements ablaze.' In other words, 'gossip' is a 'weapon of destruction.' The writer believes that the absence of trouble, in terms of our utterances and attitudes will enable us live in peace. Believers are again enjoined by this proverb as the previous one, to desist from gossip, hate speech, lies, slander, malicious words and all other negative utterances that will breed anger, aggravate quarrels and escalate conflicts.

Patience is better than pride

The end of a matter is better than its beginning. And patience is better than pride. Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools (Ecclesiastes 7:8-9).

Here, we are advised to be patient and not to allow ourselves to be quickly provoked. For, by so doing we may act violently. It is also clear that anger is an act of foolery and an angry person behaves foolishly. Patience is the weapon with which a believer can fight anger and resist provocation that brings conflict or causes it to escalate. Believers can take a cue from the patriarch,

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Moses, who out of impatience became a prey twice, to the provocation of the Israelites. The first episode took place when he went up to Mount Sinai to take two stone tablets containing the Ten Commandments. When Moses came back, the people, led by his brother Aaron had made a golden calf for themselves and were worshipping it. He became so furious that he threw the tablets on the ground and broke them into pieces. As if that was not enough, he ground the golden calf and made the Israelites drink it. After these, he commanded the Levites to kill their relatives, neighbours and friends so three thousand people were killed that day (Exodus 32:19-28). The second episode took place at Kadesh, in the Desert of Zin. It happened that the Israelites quarreled with Moses and Aaron because they had no water to drink. After they had prayed, God instructed them to speak to the rock for water to come out for the people to drink. Moses instead struck the rock twice out of anger and impatience. Water gushed out anyway but God felt insulted and dishonoured. As a result, God punished them. The price paid for anger and impatience was that after labouring for forty years in the wilderness, Moses and Aaron did not live to lead the people to the Promised Land (Numbers 20:1-13).

God Shall Bring Peace among the People

Many people shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths'…He shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more (Isaiah 2:3-4).

God will teach the people His ways in order that they may walk in His paths so that He will judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many people. God will judge between warring factions and they will reconcile for peace to prevail. For this reason, nations shall destroy their weapons of war and rebuild them into tools for agriculture that will feed nations. "Swords" shall be made into "plowshares" and "spears" into "pruning "hooks". This passage is a confirmation of God's promise of peace for his people. In place of conflict that will bring pain, suffering, death and destruction, God will intervene and bring about reconciliation and peace. Commenting on the above passage from Isaiah, Asamoah-Gyadu (2004:2) observes that "In the powerful words of Isaiah, instruments of destruction are converted into tools for production, nations abandon plans for war and shalom prevails".

He took Ourt Ransgressions

Surely, He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered Him stricken by God. Smitten by Him and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him; and by His wounds we are healed (Isaiah 53:4-5).

Isaiah spoke about the coming of Christ who would bear our infirmities and endure our punishment so that we may be delivered from our diseases, sicknesses as well as our sins. Christ was crucified because we have sinned and been found guilty before God. The problem is that there was conflict between God and humankind because we sinned against Him but could do nothing about it. In order to reconcile us to Himself, God laid our

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transgression on Jesus Christ so that we may have peace and healing. Clearly seen, God who was the victim of our 'misbehaviour' or 'disrespect' towards Him had mercy on us. He went the 'extra mile' to lay our transgressions on His only Son to bring us back to Himself. In this case, the perpetrators did nothing about reconciling with the victim or even showing remorse. God could have left humankind and the conflict between us would have escalated to the detriment of the 'fallen world.' This is a good base for Christians to resolve conflict, make peace and seek reconciliation.

The New Testament

The Gospels

Jesus'Positionon Conflict and Conflict Resolution Among Believers and Within the Church
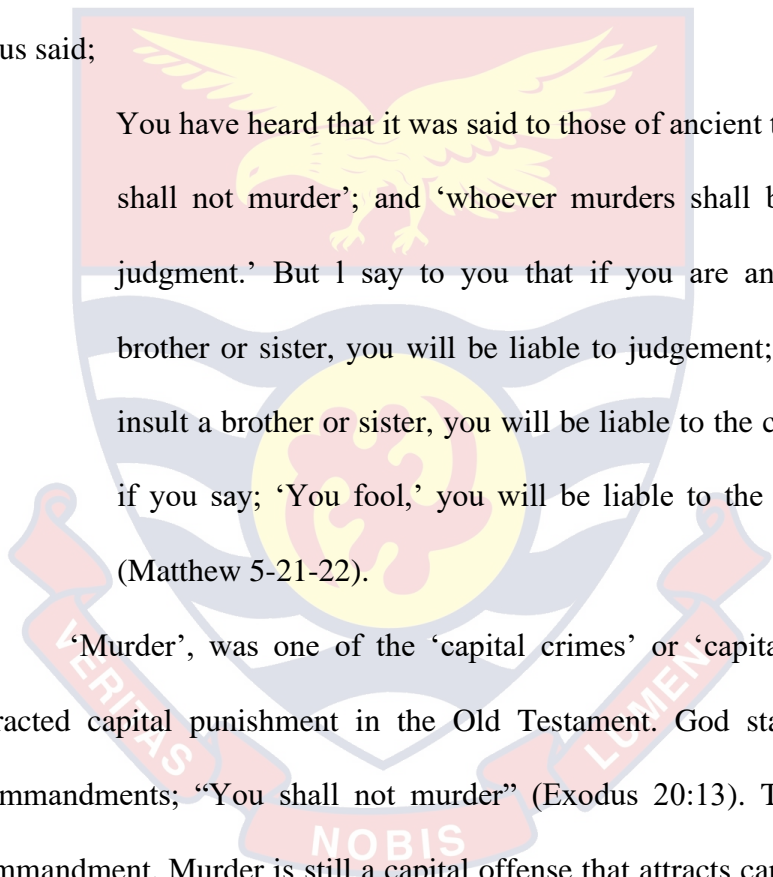
The Sermon the Mount

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught the people saying, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God" (Matthew 5:9). According to MacDonald (1995) the peacemakers are those who actively intervene to make peace. For him, people naturally watch strife without concern but the "divine approach is to take positive action toward creating peace even if it means taking abuse and invective" (1995:1217). By doing the will of God and making peace, believers manifest themselves as sons of God. The promise or assurance from Jesus concerning peacemakers should be encouraging enough to empower believers to make peace. Peacemaking curbs conflict. However, we stand aloof and watch conflict from a distance to escalate once it does not affect us directly. Lang (2007) observes that conflict can escalate when we do not respond to God's gentle tug by becoming adamant

in our humanity and refusing to accept God's love and gracious invitation. Peacemaking is perilous, peacemaking is self-sacrifice, peacemaking is time consuming but peacemaking comes with a crown, 'you shall be called the sons of God.' If a good number of Christians, respond to Jesus' invitation to become peacemakers there would be some amount of conflict amelioration and a lot of conflicts will be avoided extensively.

Anger

Jesus said;
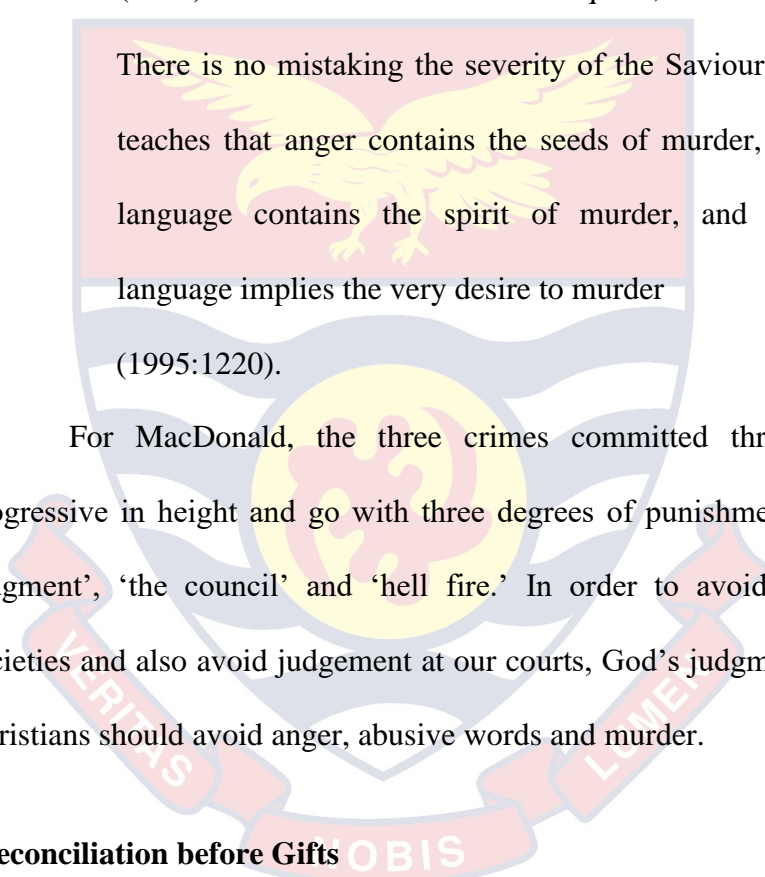
> You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder'; and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' But l say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgement; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council: and if you say; 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell of fire (Matthew 5-21-22).

'Murder', was one of the 'capital crimes' or 'capital offenses' that attracted capital punishment in the Old Testament. God stated in the Ten Commandments; "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13). This is the sixth commandment. Murder is still a capital offense that attracts capital punishment and continues to be a serious ethical issue in the whole world. Among the twenty-one offenses listed for ethical discussions, murder is the first on the list. Commenting on the list, Geisler (2008:200) says; "Although they can be numbered differently, there are some twenty-one offenses that called for capital punishment in the Old Testament." Jesus likens murder to unrighteous anger and warns against it. He goes on to warn against insulting a neighbor with the

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word, 'Raca', an Aramaic term meaning; 'empty one' and calling someone a 'fool'. For Jesus to liken murder to anger, presumptively means that anger is equally a grievous offense that qualifies to be classified as 'capital offense' that attracts 'capital punishment'. For this reason, Jesus warns that the culprit who uses these strong but common abusive words such as 'Raca' or 'fool' will be liable to judgment.

MacDonald (1995) makes this submission and I quote;

> There is no mistaking the severity of the Saviour's words. He teaches that anger contains the seeds of murder, that abusive language contains the spirit of murder, and that cursing language implies the very desire to murder (1995:1220).

For MacDonald, the three crimes committed through anger are progressive in height and go with three degrees of punishments namely; 'the judgment', 'the council' and 'hell fire.' In order to avoid conflict in our societies and also avoid judgement at our courts, God's judgment and hell fire, Christians should avoid anger, abusive words and murder.

Reconciliation before Gifts

Jesus teaches Christians to make peace, in other words, reconcile with their neighbours before bringing gifts to God. There is every indication that God will not be pleased with the gifts of someone who is bitter against a neighbour or one who nurses a grudge against the neighbour and is not on talking terms with him.

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Jesus says;

> Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift (Matthew 5:24).

For Jesus, it will be an act of hypocrisy if one sends a gift to God meanwhile he hates his brother. He would rather the person goes back to make amends and comes back with a clean and loving heart. The First Book of John underscores this issue. "If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And He has given us this command: whoever loves God must also love his brother" (1John 4:19-21). The fact is that we neither see God nor interact with him physically but we see our neighbours and interact with them intimately and constantly. For this reason, loving our brothers and sisters cannot be as problematic as loving God. It is therefore difficult for John to accept the claim of people who do not love but hate their brothersand claim to love God. The logical conclusion here is that 'if you do not love the person you see, you cannot love someone you have not and cannot see.'

John concludes this chapter reminding Christians that Christ has commanded us that anyone who loves God 'must also love his brother.' It is a command to love our neighbours and reconcile with them before going to the altar with our gifts. If we go contrarily to these instructions, it is evident that our gifts will be rejected by God who loves us all.

Critisising others

Jesus forbids Christians from criticising others when they cannot identify themselves as sinners. He accuses Christians from seeing 'specks' from their neighbours' eye without noticing the 'log' in their own eye. This is an act that condemns hypocrites who project themselves as holier than others. The truth of the matter is that it will be naturally very difficult for one to see, if one has a 'log' on his eye let alone, seeing a 'speck' on someone else's eye.

Why do you see the speck in your neighbour's eye but do not notice the log in your own eye?

Or how can you say to your neighbour, 'Let me take the speck from your eye,' while the log is in your own eye?

You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your neighbour's eye" (Matthew 7:3-5). In this case, Jesus is warning us to desist from acts that will stir conflict between neighbours. Criticisms such as false accusations, blame-shitting, humiliating, maligning, defaming, slandering and all other utterances that will bring about conflict are what Christians are advised to do away with.

Dealing with Disagreements

> "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one… (Matthew 18:15-17).

This is an instruction from Jesus concerning the Christian's responsibility when a believer is wronged by a fellow believer. Jesus certainly, does not want

believers to live in strained relationships. He therefore admonishes us to iron out our differences. By so doing, you will win back your neighbour. However, if the issue is not fully resolved, it might develop into conflict. In order to win back a brother, the believer has to go through a process which I will call 'three levels in ascending order.' At the First Level, the believer is to go to his neighbour alone and point out his fault or misdeed to him. "Go to him and tell him his fault between you and him alone" (Matthew18:15). If the perpetrator refuses to accept his fault and apologise as expected, the victim is to take one or two people along to meet with him.

The fact cannot be disputed here that from the biblical point of view, Christians must pursue love and reconciliation until they find it. We should continue striving to win back our neighbours. Jesus equally wants third and forth parties so that whatever transpired may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses (Matthew18). However, if the person refuses to give in after the Second Level, then the matter should be told to the Church. We can see that the issue has risen to a higher level, the Third Level, which is the Church. Jesus concludes this subject by saying that if at this level, the believer is still adamant, he should be written off as an unbeliever. '…if the offender refuses to listen even to the Church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector" (Matthew 18:17b). MacDonald (1995) comments that the problem about believers is; we do not go according to the guidelines given to us by Jesus but contrarily, we go about gossiping about the issue to other people. As a result, the matter spreads like wild fire and strife is multiplied (1995). Christians have to follow the steps spelt out by Jesus, in order to avoid conflict and win back our neighbours.

Ultimate Forgiveness

Peter enquired from Jesus how often he should forgive a fellow believer, that is to say 'a Church member.' in our context today, who wronged him. In response, Jesus said as many as seventy times seven. It can be deduced from Jesus' standpoint that Christians are to continually forgive one another in order to avoid quarrels, anger or enmity that are likely to spark conflict. Humanly speaking, it will be quite impossible to sin against the same person for seventy times seven times in a life time. Even when it happens, the believer is to forgive. It is an instruction from Jesus to believers.

Then Peter came to Him and said, Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times? Jesus answered, I tell you not seven times but seventy times seven (Matthew 18:21-22). MacDonald (1995) states that it is not Jesus' intention to make us understand the 490 times literarily but he uses it figuratively to mean; "Indefinitely" (1995:1274). This means that Christians must reconcile with each other/one another and live in peace and this is what the Nkonya-Alavanyo should do in order to bring reconciliation.

Consequences of Unforgiveness

Jesus in his teaching warns believers against unforgiving spirit by telling them a parable of the Kingdom of Heaven. In the story, a King wanted to settle accounts with his servants. In course of the settlement, one servant who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. As he could not afford to pay because of his hopeless situation, the King commanded that the servant, his wife, children and all his belongings be sold to defray his debt. On hearing this, the devastated servant fell on his knees and pleaded for mercy. Out of pity,

the servant was granted mercy by his master; his debt was cancelled and he was released. "The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me," he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' The servant's master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go" (Matthew 18:26-27). On his way home, the servant met a colleague who owed him a hundred denarii. In spite of what his master did for him, he held the throat of his colleague and demanded his money. Just as he pleaded for mercy earlier on, his colleague did same but he denied him mercy. This heartless servant went ahead to throw his colleague into jail until he could pay all the debt. This act distressed the other servants so much that they reported him to their master. The master called the unforgiving servant and after rebuking him in anger, threw him into prison to be tortured until he could pay up all his debt.

The master said to the ruthless servant; "You wicked servant, I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you" (Matthew 18:32-3)? Jesus concludes this topic by warning the disciples saying; "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart" (Matthew18:35). The teaching of Jesus here is two-fold. In the first place, Christians are admonished to be merciful towards their neighbours and forgive them sincerely, no matter how much or severely they have been hurt. The truth is that if forgiveness is not from the heart, in conflict situations reconciliation becomes difficult thus leading to conflict escalation. Secondly, Jesus has warned Christians that if they fail to forgive their neighbours, His Father in heaven will as well not forgive them but throw them into hell fire where they will experience torment; this is the reward for unforgiveness.

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Commenting on the Church and reconciliation, Lang (2007:53) has this to say; "When an offender repents, forgiveness should be given for God forgives us." Lang believes that 'Punishment' is meted out to the unforgiving. These are all mechanisms to deter Christians from unforgiveness in order to avoid conflict and escalation of conflict. This will enable them live in peace and harmony.

Jesus Accused of Blasphemy

One day, while Jesus was teaching, some men came carrying a paralysed man on a bed. As the crowd was so thick that they had no place to pass, they made an opening in the roof and let the paralysed man down in the middle of the crowd, in front of Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith, He said; "Friend, your sins are forgiven you" (Luke 5:20b). When the Pharisees and Scribes heard this, they began to question Jesus' authority to forgive sin. Jesus knew their questions so, he asked them; "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk'…" (Luke 5:22 -23)? After saying these, he said to the paralysed man, "I say to you, stand up and take your bed and go to your home" (Luke 5:24b). Earlier, we saw Jesus rebuking the people for criticising others (Matthew 7:1-5) and calling them hypocrites. In the same vein, the Pharisees and Scribes were trying to criticise Jesus and this time around, He rebuked and embarrassed them by showing them that He has power to forgive sins as well as to heal and perform miracles. This similar episode buttresses the fact that Christians should resist from the act of criticism that breeds anger, disagreements, strife and disharmony that eventually escalates conflicts.

Unconditional Love

Christians are called upon by Jesus, to love unreservedly and unconditionally. "But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, Pray for those who abuse you…(Luke:6:27-38). Unless humankind decides to love unreservedly and unconditionally, and agrees to see opponents in conflict situations as neighbours, conflict resolution will be very problematic. If we continue hating our enemies, cursing those who curse us and doing unto others the exact things that we will not have them do to us, conflict will become a monumental phenomenon. Villa-Vicencio (2009:65) argues that "Reconciliation, in the modest sense of being willing to engage an opponent in dialogue, joint decision making, civic respect, and self-criticism, although time consuming, is ultimately the most effective way of promoting sustainable peace." Similarly, Barash and Webel (2009:4) maintain that; "Humans can behave rationally, creatively, and with compassion." They believe that as rational beings, filled with compassion, positive steps can be taken to resolve conflict instead of relying on violence. For them, the reliance on virtues rather than violence will facilitate the development of a more just and truly peaceful world. The above submissions underscore the fact that we need to love unreservedly and unconditionally in order to achieve sustainable peace. I want to believe that Matthew chapter 18 has provided an explicit mechanism for conflict resolution that brings about reconciliation and sustainable peace.

Avoiding Superiority Complex

An argument arose among Jesus' disciples concerning which one of them was the greatest. Jesus, who perceived their inner thoughts took a little child and put it by His side and said; Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sends me; for the least among you all is the greatest" (Luke 9:46-48). MacDonald (1995) remarks that the disciples aspired to positions of greatness in the kingdom and already arguing among themselves. For him, true greatness is seen in loving care for the little ones, for those who are helpless, those who the world passes them by. He maintains that taking the place of humility as Christ himself did is true greatness. By this, Jesus extinguished the quest for human greatness that would bring unhealthy competition and rivalry that would lead to discord and factions among the disciples. Struggling or competing for positions is a causal factor for conflicts in the world, it must therefore be avoided.

Avoiding Sectarianism

In one instance, Jesus' disciples had found someone casting out demons in Jesus' name. They immediately forbade him for no apparent reason but simply because he was not one of them; the twelve disciples. John told Jesus, **"**Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he does not follow with us" (Luke 9:49). To their disappointment, Jesus answered them on the contrary; **"**Do not stop him, for whoever is not against you is for you" (Luke 9:50).

Jesus does not want division that brings about strife among believers so, He promptly disabused their minds about anyone who calls on His name.

With this statement, Jesus prevented His disciples from further divisions and quarrels. I can see the disciples here, were claiming Jesus for themselves and also being envious and jealous of the man casting out demons. These attitudes are unhealthy for the unity of the Church. Commenting on this episode, MacDonald (1995) states that

> …They were sectarian and narrow. They should have been glad that the demon had been cast out of the man. They should never be jealous of any man or group that must cast out demons than they did. But then, every disciple has to guard for his desire for exclusiveness, for monopoly, of spiritual power and prestige" (1995:1406).

Jesus foils Conflict

On the night when Jesus was betrayed, Judas led the mob from the temple to the Mount of Olives to arrest Jesus. His disciples who were with Him stood in anticipation of what would happen and were ready for a combat. When one of them realised that the people were armed and about to fight Jesus, he took his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. However, Jesus, the person they were trying to defend said, "No more of this" (Luke 22:51a)! He then touched the ear of the servant and healed him. Jesus does not encourage conflict but rather, curbs or resolves it. We see Jesus scolding one of His disciples who wanted to defend Him. Evidently, but for the timely intervention of Jesus there would have been a violent clash because both parties were armed. This is a principle and practice of resolving conflict by Jesus.

The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles

Avoiding Partiality

In accordance with the Biblical mandate to care for widows who do not have other means of livelihood, (1Timothy 5:9, James1**:**27), the apostles of the early church were catering for the Jewish widows. Keener (2000) states that Judaism took this culture of responsibility to widows, seriously, contrary to the Gentile culture.

For this reason, the disciples were catering for their Hebrew widows but however neglected the Hellenist widows in their daily distribution. Consequently, there were gossips and complains about the disciples for their partiality. "…the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution of food" (Acts 6:1). When the disciples heard this, they came together and decided to choose some caliber of men who could take care of the charity work concerning the widows. This was to enable the rest of them to devote their time to the propagation of the gospel. The Apostles said; It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we appoint to this task, while we for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word (Acts 6:2-4).

Keener (2000) observes that there were a disproportionate number of Jewish widows, who lived in Jerusalem and did not have enough foreign Jewish synagogues (Acts 6:9). This made it difficult for their distributers to supply adequately for the widows. Keener is of the view that the problem encountered by the disciples with the distribution of charity, was a spill-over

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effect from the social urban problem of Jerusalem (2000:338). Based on this decision, seven men who were of good reputation, filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom and had faith were chosen. They were prayed for and hands were laid on them. Thus, the seven were commissioned to take care of the widows and the rest continued to spread the word of God. MacDonald (1995:1601) explains that judging from the names of the seven deacons most of them were Greek-speaking Jews before their conversion. He believes that the choice was just apt as there could no longer be complains about favouritism from the complaining quarters. This timely intervention halted a possible conflict which would have created trouble and affected the growth of the Church. The end result was that peace was restored while the word of God continued to spread rapidly in Jerusalem. Also, a large number of priests became committed and obedient to the faith (Acts 6).

Peter Criticised Wrongly

After Peter's vision and subsequent conversion of Cornelius and his household, news got to the apostles and believers in Judea that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. In view of this, when Peter went to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticised him saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them" (Acts 11:3)? Peter then took his time to narrate the whole episode to them. It is written, "Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying…" (Acts11:4). He told them everything and when they heard that the Holy Spirit fell upon the Gentiles, they had no option than to praise God saying;

"Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that

leads to life" (Acts 11:18b).

Agreeably, Peter took his time to talk with the believers in Judea and they in turn listened to him. As a result, they were affected both psychologically and emotionally and had a change of mind and change of heart to praise God. Peter used the right mechanism so he was able to silence the people and brought peace and harmony. Villa-Vicencio (2009) believes that integrated talk and listening which are designed and structured to promote a level of engagement, are progenitors to dialogue and the investigating of novel options for addressing the quarrels and challenges that thrust societies into violent conflicts.

Conflict over Circumcision as the 'gateway' to Salvation

During Paul's First Missionary Journey among the Gentiles, many of them became converts through baptism into the Christian faith. These conversions took place in Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, Pisidia, Pamphylia, Perga and Attalia among others. However, some people came down from Judea, teaching that, "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1b). For these individuals, before one becomes a Christian, one must first be converted to Judaism before qualifying for 'graduation' into Christianity. Paul and Barnabas debated with the people on this issue, which became a bone of contention between Paul and Barnabas on one side and the Judaisers on the other.

For this reason, Paul and Barnabas and some of the Brethren were appointed to go and discuss the issue with the apostles and elders. When they

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got to Jerusalem and reported the conversion of the Gentiles to the Church and elders, there was division. While some of the believers were happy about what God had done through Paul and Barnabas, some of them who converted from the Pharisees, stood their grounds that, "It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the Law of Moses" (Acts 15:5b).

Keener (2000) states that some believed that the Gentiles had to convert to Judaism through circumcision of their males before they are baptised both male or female. Without that the Gentiles were still considered, impure by virtue of the fact that they are Gentiles. For this reason, they were expected to undergo "proselyte baptism when they converted to Judaism" (2000:364). In order to come to a consensus, the apostles and elders came together and after a fierce debate, Peter came up to arrest the situation. He narrated his encounter with Cornelius and his household who were all Gentiles. Peter said to the assembly;

> …And God who knows the human heart testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us; and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us. Now therefore why are you putting God to test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of our Lord Jesus, just as they will
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> (Acts 15:7-11).

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After Peter's narration, Paul and Barnabas also recalled the 'signs and wonders' that God had done through them among the Gentiles and the gathering listened with rapt attention. Eventually, James gave the final verdict that the Gentile believers be accepted and just be written to, to observe certain rules. The Gentile converts were therefore written to, to observe the following; "to abstain only from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from whatever has been strangled and from blood" (Acts 15:20). The assembly chose Judas (Barsabbas) and Silas to accompany Paul and Barnabas to Antioch to encourage them by word of mouth, the contents of the letter. After they had met the brothers who were disturbed, and gave them the letter which was read to them, they rejoiced. Thereafter, the Gentiles had peace of mind and peace between them and the members of the Church, elders and members of the Council.

Calmingriotsin Ephesus

The impact of Saul's propagation of the gospel in Ephesus was so great that many people came to believe in the Highest God and denounced idol worship. Consequently, artisans who made idols and shrines, prominent among them was a silver smith called Demetrius, started losing their jobs. In order to protect his business, Demetrius schemed and succeeded in stirring the artisans, in Ephesus to mutiny. The author wrote; "About that time no little disturbance broke out concerning the way. A man named Demetrius, a silver smith who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to artisans…" (Acts 19:23-24). After convincing the artisans that Paul had persuaded and drawn away considerable number of people by saying that gods made with hands are not gods. He impressed it upon them that they were going to lose their

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businesses as people were no longer going to contract them to make idols or silver shrines. Demetrius further told the artisans that the temple of the great goddess, Artemis would be scorned and she would be deprived of her majesty that attracted the whole Asia to her. When the people heard these words, a great commotion arose. The crowd started shouting the name of the goddess, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" In the midst of the turmoil, Saul's companions, Gaius and Aristarchus were dragged to the theatre. Paul wanted to follow suit but was advised not to go out for his own safety. For two hours, the riot continued until the town Clerk stepped in to silence the people. He spoke to them to do nothing rash for the men they brought (Gaius and Aristarchus) to the theatre were neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of their goddess. The Clerk concluded by saying; "For we are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion (Acts 19:40).

After saying these words, he dismissed the assembly. We will realise that it is important to use people of integrity, people whom the combatants or conflicting parties would listen to in conflict situations. The Jews pushed Alexander to silence the crowd but when he motioned for silence and the mob noticed that he was a Jew, they became furious and caused commotion for two hours (Acts 19). The strategy or mechanism used here was talking and listening. However, personality, was what calmed the conflict. The personality of the orator, as the town Clerk, made the people give him attention.

Also, the assurance he gave the people concerning the greatness of their goddess made an impact. It should be noted that frankness, honesty and impartiality are also essential ingredients for conflict resolution. The Clerk was

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frank with his people he did not take sides or mince his words but told them they could have a problem if they should harm their captives because they were innocent. Based on his message, they dispersed.

No Evil for Evil

Let love be genuine, hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection;…Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all… (Romans 12:9-18).

Paul concludes this chapter, by warning believers never to take revenge for that is the prerogative of God. He goes on to place a very difficult task on them, that is; believers should feed their enemies and also give them something to drink.

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; …Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good (Romans 12:19-21).

Taking revenge brings about conflict and conflict escalation, revenge actually results in protracted conflicts as no party wants to let go. Secondly, God has stated categorically that vengeance belongs to him. "Vengeance is mine…" (Deuteronomy 32:35). Avoiding vengeance and allowing God to do His will, bring about peaceful co-existence. Also, if believers strive to

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overcome evil with good instead of the other way round, they will be able to 'feed their enemies who are hungry', and 'give their enemies who are thirsty, something to drink'. This seemingly difficult and impossible task is easy and possible for peace loving Christians, who are empowered with the Holy Spirit to do the impossible. Jesus said to the disciples; "And see I am sending upon you what my father has promised…" (Luke 24:49).

Paul's exhortation to the Romans is very appropriate for Christians to hold on to in order to live in harmony. The question however is; 'Can we live such a perfect Christ-like lives that we will not offend one another?' I want to think that Christians can live as Paul spelt out if they resolve to do so. However, since there is human imperfection, humankind will err, but the godly or prudent thing to do is 'to forgive,' as Jesus instructed us to do as stated above. The fact is that there will always be conflicts wherever human beings settle but the way we handle them as children of God is what matters. A school of thought has this to say, and I quote; "Defined this way, it should be clear that conflict among finite beings on this earth is inevitable. It would be inevitable even if humans were perfectly good beings" (Webel and Johnson, 2012:14). This is a thought provoking statement made by, Webel and Johansen. The bottom line here is that disagreements, disputes, rows, and conflicts will arise, but adherence to Paul's words will bring prompt reconciliation that will prevent violent conflicts.

Reflecting on the theme; "Reconciliation As Healing," Asamoah-Gyadu (2004) uses two biblical texts, one of them; the text in question, the powerful and thought provoking exhortation in Paul's letter to the Romans (12:9-18). For him, reconciliation becomes important or useful only when

things that have gone wrong are corrected. "It is operative when that which is broken, impaired, separated, alienated, hurt, or abused is repaired, brought together and restored so that an imbalance is corrected" (2004:2). This is the only way Paul's advice for Christians to 'live peaceably with all,' will be fruitful. Commenting on conflicts in the Church, Lang (2007:53) observes that "When conflict goes without attention, resolution, or reconciliation, the body of Christ suffers. You can see signs immediately. Worship attendance drops off."

For peaceful Co-existence

To prevent chaos, anarchy, conflict and all forms of hostility and disharmony in society and among believers, Paul exhorts the Jewish believers under Roman rule to subject themselves to authority; pay their taxes, revenues and give respect to those that respect is due. "Pay to all what is due them taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honour to whom honour is due" (Roman13:7). Paul believes that people in authority have been appointed by God so whoever resists or disrespects them goes against the will of God. For Paul, if believers do the right thing by fulfilling their civic responsibilities, they will be free from punishment. "…for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer" (Roman 13:4). He goes on to advise them to love one another for he believes that love is the bedrock of the Ten Commandments.

> "Owe no one anything; for the one who loves another has
> fulfilled the law. The commandments, 'You shall not commit
> adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall
> not covet'; and any other commandment, are summed up in

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this word, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Love does no

wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfillment of the

law" (Romans 13:8-10).

This logical conclusion from Paul is perfect and explanatory. The fact is that

if one loves someone, one does not hurt that person, envy that person, kill that

person or wish anything negative or evil for him or her. Christians must

therefore be circumspect in their actions and treat one another with love so as

to avoid conflict and live in peace and harmony.

Avoiding courtaction among Christians

Paul found it unwise and shameful for believers to send their cases

before ungodly judges. For him, believers would be given the opportunity to

judge the world and angels. It is therefore ironical that believers should stoop

so low, to send their cases to the same people they would be judging.

Ifanyoneofyouhas aconflictwithanother, do you dare to take it

to court before the unrighteous, instead of taking it to the

saints? Do you not know that the saints would judge the

world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you

incompetent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we

are to judge angels… (1Corinthians 6:1-3)?

We see Paul once again trying to resolve conflicts among believers in

Corinth after rebuking them. In the first place, Paul deems it unworthy for a

believer to file a lawsuit against a fellow believer. In his opinion, believers

should just let go when they are wronged. In the second place, he thinks it is

inappropriate for believers to go before unbelievers with their grievances. **"**In

fact, to have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why

not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded? But you yourselves wrong and defraud – and believers at that" (1Corinthians 6:7-8). Paul warned them that wrong doers will not inherit the Kingdom of God. He finally made them aware of the sins they committed before their conversion and their sanctification and justification in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of God. The presumption in this case is that the believers had already been justified, so they should not allow petty quarrels and issues to drag them back to their unbelieving state. Conflicts should therefore be resolved as much as possible, between and among Christians, out of court. This is another conflict resolution principle and practice as precedence for Christians.

Division in the Church Concerning Leadership

Division arose among the believers in the Corinthian Church concerning the choice of whom to follow. Lang (2007) comments that Paul was angry with the Corinthians, because they were fighting over whom their spiritual leader was; Apollos or Paul. To resolve this issue, Paul wrote a letter appealing to them to be united as brothers and sisters for, Christ has not been divided. Some of them claimed to belong to Paul, others, Apollos and others, Cephas.Paul went on to explain to them what the true wisdom of God is and also exhorted them on spiritual maturity. He then reprimanded them for their spiritual immaturity and being 'of the flesh'.

Paul wrote;

> You are still worldly. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? For when one says, 'I

belong to Paul,' and another, 'I belong to Apollos', are you

not merely human (1Corinthian 3:3-4)?

MacDonald (1995:1757) maintains that "Paul reveals in bold relief the folly of forming parties and divisions in the Church." He went further to explain to the Corinthians that they and their leaders were just ordinary servants working for God and each of them had roles to play but eventually, it is God who brings the work to fruition. He said; "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters, is anything, but only God who gives growth" (1Corinthians 3:6). Paul raised a lot of issues. He made the people aware of the fact that all Christians belong to Christ. He gave a lengthy exhortation just to unite the Corinthian church as people who were 'God's temple'. Paul concluded his talk on this issue, by telling the Corinthian church that if they showed a rebellious spirit, he would go to them with a rod. However, if they changed and were humble and submissive, he would go to them 'in love and a spirit of gentleness' (MacDonald, 1995).

Division in the Church Concerning the Lord's Supper

The people of Corinth had another division in the church and this time, it had to do with the Lord's Supper. They had a problem each time they went for the Lord's Supper. The people could not go for the Lord's Supper without problems or arguments (1 Corinthians 11:17-34). The import of gathering in humility, the fear of God and love to dine together in remembrance of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, was defeated by the exhibition of arrogance, greed, selfishness, gluttony and worldliness. Others were; sectarianism, disrespect for

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the poor, pagan practices and other evil acts that defiled the holiness of God. In fact, from the picture painted by the author, one can perceive the 'sacred communion fading away into a secular feast.' Paul could not on any easy term, gloss over these Behaviours but to lambast the Corinthians in a forthright term. He writes;

> When you come together, it is not really to eat the Lord's Supper. For when the time comes to eat, each of you goes ahead with your own supper, and one goes hungry another becomes drunk. What! Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you show contempt for the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? In this matter I do not commend you? Certainly not" (1Corinthians11:20-22)!

Paul condemned the attitude of the Corinthians who failed to live decent lives, as Christians living among ungodly people. Lang (2007:31) describes them as "…one big dysfunctional community struggling to understand itself as Christians in a pagan world." This attitude of the Corinthian believers was dividing the Church. Paul needed to nib the schisms in the bud before it became detrimental to the Church. After rebuking and putting the Corinthians right, Paul then discussed the origin and purpose of the Lord's Supper with them. He went on to educate them on the consequences of participating in it wrongly taking into consideration the shameful way in which the Corinthians conducted themselves during the Lord's Supper (MacDonald,1995). To resolve this issue once and for all, Paul gave them guidelines by metaphorically calling the Church 'the body of Christ.' He

advised them to remain healthy and care for one another. Paul also charged them to respect one another and most importantly, love one another (Lang, 2007). To avoid conflicts, believers must avoid divisions by way of respecting and loving one another. It should be noted that during the two episodes of division in the church in Corinth, Paul acted promptly and harshly in order to halt the ungodly attitudes and behaviours.

Warning Against Pagan Practices and Fighting One Another

When the believers in Corinth received the gift of tongues, instead of using them to glorify God, they started flaunting these gifts to the discomfort and displeasure of other believers and to the detriment of the peace and unity of the Church. This boasting of the gifts brought envy among them and some of those who did not have the gifts felt inferior. "They stood up in their meetings and spoke in languages which no one else understood, hoping that others would be impressed by their linguistic proficiency…" This led to pride on the one hand, and to feelings of envy, inferiority, and worthlessness on the other (MacDonald, 1995:1790). In order to save this situation, Paul came out to put them to order. He explained the varieties of the spiritual gifts to them and told them how they were all equally important. He referred to the gifts metaphorically as, 'members of one body', that cannot survive without the need to care for one another. He writes; "As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you'" (1Corinthians 12:20-21). This was to disabuse their minds of the superiority complex that was gaining grounds among the believers.

The abuse of tongues had apparently caused strife in the assembly. Using their gift for self-display, self-edification, and self-gratification, the 'charismatics' were not acting in love (MacDonald, 1995:1795). Paul concludes this admonishing in his next chapter with the explanation on; 'The Gift of Love' (1Corinthians 13:1-13) Here, he reminds them that even if they spoke different tongues but had no love, it was worthless. "If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels but do not love, I am a noisy gong, or a clanging cymbal" (1Corinthians 13:1). He handed down to them in a well spelt-out order, the virtues that love should exhibit and the vices that love should avoid. Paul enjoined the believers to hold on to love for love never ends and is the greatest virtue. "And now, faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love" (1Corinthians 13:13). Commenting on the need for love among the believers instead of strife, MacDonald (1995:1795) writes, "…Love is needed on both sides. If they would act in love toward one another, the problem would be largely solved. It is not a problem that calls for excommunication or division, it calls for love". Also, Lang (2007) comments on how this issue was resolved by saying;

> "They were told not to engage in pagan rituals or fight among themselves. Paul then exhorted them to live a transformed life so their new identity was in Jesus Christ and in His death and resurrection. This event changed everything" (2007:31).

Reconciliation

Paul, comments on God's act of reconciling sinful men to Himself, in 2

Corinthians 5:17-21. He writes;

> All this is from God who reconciled us to himself through
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> Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is,
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> in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not
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> counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the
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> message of reconciliation to us (2Corinthians 5:18-19).

Apparently, God saw the miserable state of the human race after the fall of

humankind in the Garden of Eden, (Genesis 3). He therefore decided to bring

us back to himself, by waving our sins through the atoning blood of Christ

Jesus (Romans 3:24-26). According to Keener (2002:502) "the Greek often

used the term 'concord' that urges 'reconciliation and unity'". The term,

translated 'reconciliation', he says, applies especially to relationship between

people among the Greek-speaking. However, he maintains that the term as

applied here, (2Corinthians 5:17-21), reconciliation between people and God

presupposes repentance and atonement by blood sacrifice (here by Christ's

death).

MacDonald (1995) states that the statement from Paul, "…It is the

same God who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ and has given

us the ministry of reconciliation," (2Corinthians 5:18) is the basis of the

scriptural doctrine of reconciliation. For him, the ministry of reconciliation

could have two possible meanings. That notwithstanding, he believes the fact

remains that God was actively removing the cause of the estrangement that had

come between Himself and man by dealing with sin. He observes that God

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does not need reconciliation with man but man needs to be reconciled to God. Based on this scripture, 'reconciliation' can be a Christian doctrine, based on the fact that God was merciful enough to reconcile us to Himself, unworthy as we are. Even if we have not been instructed to do so, Christians base their principles, ethics and values on the person of God, His deeds and words as well as that of Jesus Christ. God reconciled humankind to himself through His son, Jesus Christ. It is therefore prudent for humankind to seek reconciliation wherever and whenever there is division. Also, Keener (2002) reveals that the Greek were using the term to apply to relationship among people. In my opinion, this tradition can be extended to Christians.

In his theological reflection on Paul's 'Concept of Reconciliation', from Pauline writings in, 2 Corinthians 5: 17-21, Romans 5:10-11, Ephesians 2:16 and Colossians 1:20-22, (Darko, 2004) made some relevant submissions. He maintains that The community of the redeemed could then find grounds and motivation to resolve racial, ethnic, and mutual dissensions on the love demonstrated by God in His reconciling activity. Moreover, Paul cannot see reconciliation without both parties being reconciled first to God before applying His love and principles to horizontal relationships with fellow human beings (2004:32).

The issue here is that when humankind was in his or her sinful state, God reconciled us to himself unconditionally. Humankind should therefore strive to reconcile with his or her enemies or adversaries. Once we are reconciled vertically to God, we should strive to reconcile horizontally with our enemies.

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Donotmake way for the Devil

Believers are warned not to let the sun go down on their anger even though they are at liberty to get angry. For Paul, allowing anger to drag on for twenty-four hours gives room to the devil to aggravate the anger and thereby, breeding conflict. To let go of anger can prevent conflict from erupting. "Be angry but do not sin, do not let the sun go down on your anger and do not make room for the devil" (Ephesians 4:26-27). If believers will purge themselves of anger, they will avoid conflict or prevent it from escalating.

Resolving Crisis among Believers

Crisis arose in the Church of Colossae concerning false teachings, doctrines and other forms of traditional religious beliefs, worship and practices. For this reason, Paul had to write to them to disabuse their minds with regards to the teachings and also to encourage them to hold on to their faith in order not to be carried away by the new philosophy. Paul writes;

> See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in him, the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority… (Colossians 2:8-12).

Gnostic heretic teachings portrayed Jesus Christ as one of the angels or one of the spirits among the ranks. Paul however reminded the people that the fullness of the Godhead always dwelt in Christ. He went further to tell them, how it pleased God to reconcile all things to Himself ...

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(MacDonald,1995:1995). In response to the reconciliation in Colossae, Ekem (2004:45) observes that "Such areconciliation would then be highly relevant for a continent like ours that is characterised by ethnic and political intolerance, widening the gap between the rich and the poor, and ecological disasters arising from the mismanagement of our natural resources".

> He maintains that taking into consideration the religious pluralism prevalent in Colossae at the time of the crisis, Ghanaians as well as Africans should be conscious of religious pluralism in Africa in their interpretation of the Bible as well as during evangelisation in order not to generate conflicts.

Seeking Peace Through Prayers

In Paul's letter to Timothy, (1 Timothy 1:1-3), he exhorts Christians to lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and dignity. Paul believes that this kind of life style is right and acceptable before God who is our Saviour. However, for Paul, these virtues that make us live Christ like lives can be achieved if the believer makes prayer a priority. He therefore instructs believers to pray for all through supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving. It is only when kings, leaders and all in high positions live peaceful and godly lives that our communities, nations and homes will avoid conflicts and even if they arise, they will be resolved and we will experience peace. MacDonald (1995:2018) observes that "It is for our own good that the government should be stable and that the country be preserved from revolution, civil war, turmoil, and anarchy."

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Avoiding Quarrels

Paul exhorts Timothy to flee youthful passions and seek righteousness, faith, love and peace along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. He is warned by Paul to avoid stupid and senseless controversies that breed quarrels. Timothy is being warned beforehand because for Paul, Servants of God "must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, patient, correcting opponents with gentleness" (2 Timothy 2:24-25). We see that opponents are to be corrected with gentleness not to be attacked. This practice will go a long way to de-escalate conflict rather than fuel it. MacDonald (1995) comments that the Lord's bondservant must exhibit meekness and humility in dealing with opposition. Also, they need to be taught and corrected to do the right thing. If not, such people, in their ignorance, continue doing things that they wrongly believe are in accordance with the scriptures from their own view point. Instead of trying to settle scores or win arguments, which will be tantamount to fueling conflict, believers should talk with or dialogue with opponents with the ultimate aim of ameliorating conflict. This is part of traditional conflict resolution mechanism used in Africa which Villa-Vicencio (2009) commented on and was used earlier in this work.

For Villa-Vicencio (2009) sometimes when the hurt is so deep, adversaries come back into themselves to discover that they need one another to survive. At other times some moment of sanity crops up to interrupt the seemingly endless 'journey into the darkest night'. He goes on to explain that both situations require the acknowledgement of the humanity of the other that can only emerge as enemies sit together and think genuinely, courageously with imagination and hope discovering or rediscovering the bond of a common

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humanity. This is where Paul's righteousness, faith, love, peace, kindness and patience come into play. Opponents need all these virtues to enable and empower them to see one another as friends rather than foes in order to address their differences. These are some of the practices that the Church and the MC can apply to bring together the Nkonya and Alavanyo.

Do not cause Bitterness to Spring up

"Pursue peace with everyone, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble…" (Hebrews 12:14-15). Christians need practical holiness as proof of new life within. This will help them live righteous lives in order to receive the grace of God that will empower them to strive to live in peaceable relations with all. This will make it possible to avoid bitterness that will create chaotic situations.

Be Slow to Anger

Believers are advised to be slow to speak and slow to anger in order to do the righteousness of God. The tongue is a sharp "poisonous instrument" that needs to be tamed in order not to cause 'havoc'. If the tongue is not controlled, it goes viral thus, producing anger and if anger is also not controlled, it brings about conflict. My dear brothers, take note of this: Let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger, for your anger does not produce God's righteousness" (James 1:19-20). James cautions believers to be guarded in their conversations in order to avoid strife. Christians would have to be selective with their choice of words as discussed earlier in order to avoid conflict. During interaction with the Nkonya and Alavanyo, it is evident that both parties

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are filled with anger for each other, so much that none of them wants to let go. Additionally, the Nkonya and Alavanyo are angry with the two major political parties in Ghana (NPP and NPP), the DCE of the Volta Region and the military and police personnel assigned to protect and keep peace in the area. The conflict parties allege that the action and/or inactionof the above groups of people have caused the various escalations of the conflict that has prolonged to this day. The anger of the warring parties towards thesegroups is so intense that they express it each time they talk about escalation of the conflict and its protracted nature.

Christian Fellowship, an Epitome of love

To conclude this chapter is an exhortation from the apostle John, calling on Christians to love one another. For him, 'Love is from God' and 'God is love'. "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1John 4:7-8). I want to say that the truth and fact in this text is that if one really loves someone, it will be difficult to hurt that person intentionally. Even if it happens accidentally, because of the love that exists between the two, a conscious effort would be made by the offender promptly to make peace. This same love can as well propel the victim to just let go and call for peace between them (victim and perpetrator).

In the true sense, love gives birth to forgiveness and forgiveness gives birth to peace. Jesus Christ on the cross, asked His Father to forgive those who were torturing him because of the love He has for the human race (Luke 23). For this reason, through him, God reconciled the whole earth to Himself by making peace through His blood that was shed on the cross (Colossians1:20). If

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the Nkonya and Alavanyo will strive to be Christ-like enough to adopt the strategies, principles, mechanisms, practices and traditions of conflict resolution in the Bible, this conflict will cease. Love, forgiveness, patience and peace can be said to be ingredients for reconciliation that runs through this texts.

Some principles, traditions and practices of conflict resolution identified**,** in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible

- Negotiation

- Keeping of explicit promises

- Dialogue

- Mediation

- Reconciliation

- Compensation

- Prompt response to warning signs

- Talking and Listening

- To let go

- Forgiveness

- Alternative Dispute Resolution

- Victims taking the initiative to reconcile with perpetrators

- Administration of Justice and Fairness

- Exhibition of remorse by perpetrators

- Intervention of Advocates or Advocacy groups in conflict situations

- Meeting the demands of disputants

- The use of love, patience and wisdom

- Speaking kindly with humility to victims

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- Using people of integrity as mediators

- Reprimanding perpetrators

- The use of the Word of God
- Educating conflicting parties on the reward of love, forgiveness and peacemaking and the consequences of hatred, unforgiveness and wickedness.

Negotiation

This principle was used to resolve the conflict between Abram and Lot. Abram negotiated with Lot. He said, "…If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." (Genesis 13:8-9)

Keeping of explicit Promises

Both Abram and Lot kept their promises and remained in the parts of the land that they chose thus maintaining peace (Genesis 13:10-12).

Dialogue

(i). Esau and Jacob dialogued and the two understood each other so peace was restored. Initially, Esau rejected the gifts presented to him by Jacob with the explanation that he had enough but after dialoguing, he realized that he needed to take them in order to wave Jacob's guilt. They dialogued until they understood each other before going their separate ways (Genesis 33:8-11).

(ii). Moses dialogued with the Israelites before passing judgment and he enjoined the elders to do same. As a result, they were able to listen to both sides and pass fair judgment (Exodus 18:13-16, Deuteronomy 1:16-19).

(iii). There was a dialogue between Abigail and David that was why she was able to achieve her aim (1Samuel 25:26-29).

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(iv). Solomon dialogued with the two prostitutes, listened to each one's side of the story before passing judgment (1Kings 3:1625).

(v). During the settlement of the conflict between the apostles and the Judaisers, the parties and all stakeholders engaged in a comprehensive dialogue which gave everyone the opportunity to express himself. Also, the elders had the patience to listen to all their grievances and this helped the council to arrive at a tangible decision (Acts 15:6-29).

Mediation

i.   This was used by Moses in his dealings with the Israelites (Exodus 18:14-16).

ii.   Abigail mediated between David and Nabal (1Samuel 25:25-30).

iii.   In the case of the two prostitutes, King Solomon intervened and settled the quarrel.

iv.   He dialogued with them, listened to each one of them before passing judgment (1Kings 3:16-25).

v.   Jesus also exhorted the disciples to bring conflicts before the church to mediate, after two earlier attempts to resolve the issue had failed (Matthew 18:15-17).

vi.   When conflict arose between the apostles and Judaisers, concerning circumcision, the Council of Jerusalem mediated and peace was restored (Acts 15:6-29).

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Reconciliation

i. This practice prevailed between Esau and Jacob when the former ran to meet the latter, embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him and both of them wept (Genesis 33:4).

ii. Similarly, Joseph reconciled with his brothers by kissing them all and weeping upon them (Genesis 45:14-15).

iii. Jesus exhorts believers to leave their gifts on the altar and go first to reconcile with their adversaries before coming back to offer it (Matthew 5:24).

Compensation/Pacification

i. Jacob sent gifts to compensate Esau for the 'harm' he caused him. He wanted to compensate him in order to find favour in his eyes (Genesis 33:8).

ii. The Israelites were instructed to compensate an injured person after a fight for loss of his time and see that he had fully recovered (Exodus 21:18-19).

iii. Abigail pacified David as a ploy to turn away his wrath and this mechanism was able to foil the bloody conflict that David vowed to ignite (1Samuel 25:26-27).

Prompt Response to Warning signs

i. Abram responded promptly when he heard that his herders and that of Lot had dispute as he did not want a conflict between them so he avoided it (Exodus 13:8-9).

ii. Similarly, Abigail acted very swiftly to foil conflict, when she heard about the issue between her husband and David (1Samuel 25:26-29).

iii. The apostles acted promptly when they heard about the complains that they were discriminating against the Hellenists widows (Acts 6:1-7).

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iv. Also, Paul dealt promptly with conflict issues concerning the Corinthians. Each time news got to him on quarrels and misbehaviours, he never wasted time before writing to the culprits.

a. Division in the Church (1Corinthians 3).

b. Lawsuit among the believers (1Corinthians 6).

c. Abuse of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:17-34).

d. Flaunting of spiritual gifts and fighting one another (1 Corinthians 12-13).

e. The town Clerk acted promptly to talk to the Ephesians during the mob action initiated by Demetrius against Paul and his companions (Acts 19:23-24).

Talking and Listening

Talking and listening as traditional conflict resolution mechanism have been identified as some of the Biblical practices

i. When Peter was criticised by the circumcised believers for eating with Gentiles, he took his time to explain the genesis of the whole episode to them. The believers equally listened to him so in the end, peace prevailed (Acts 11:1-18).

ii. After Demetrius succeeded in mobilising a mob to attack Paul and his companions, there was commotion for two hours. Then the Town Clerk mounted the platform in the theatre where they were gathered, silenced the crowd and talked to them. At the end of his speech, the crowd dispersed without coercion. (19:23-24).

Toletgo

Another practice used in the Bible to resolve conflict is 'to let go.'

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Sometimes it is prudent to surrender to opposition just to allow peace to prevail. Most of the time, it is not a sign of defeat but under the circumstances, one party must succumb. If that would be the only option, a Christian should let go of emotions, positions and possessions, in order to give peace a chance.

(i). Abram let go of his position as Lot's uncle who brought him along to enjoy what God gave him (Abram). He gave Lot the opportunity to choose first so he would take what was left (Genesis 13:8-9).

(ii). In the same vein, when the herders of Gerar were causing problems for the herders of Isaac by forcefully taking their wells from them, Isaac left the wells for Gerar and departed from the area (Genesis 26:17-22).

(iii). During Solomon's judgment of the two prostitutes, the real mother of the living baby knew that the wisest thing to do at that crucial moment was to let go (1Kings 3:26).

Forgiveness

(i). Esau forgave Jacob after Jacob came before him and bowed seven times (Genesis 33:3-4).

(ii) Joseph forgave his brothers when they met after a very long time in Egypt (Genesis 45:1-5).

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

(i) People of God are advised in (Proverbs 25:8) to avoid hasty court actions. Even though the focus is on the hasty decision to go to court, the issue is that believers should settle their disagreements outside the court.

(ii) Instead of filing for lawsuits, believers are advised to use Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Paul chided the Corinthians for sending one another to the law courts that belong to unbelievers (1Corinthians 6:1-8).

Victim staking the Initiative to Reconcile with Perpetrators

i.   This practice is seen in the case of Esau and Jacob (Genesis 33:4).

ii.   Another example is that of Joseph the victim and his brothers who are the perpetrators (45:1-15).

iii. God took the initiative to reconcile humankind to Himself after offending Him by disobeying His commandment (2Corinthians5:18-19, Romans 3:24-26).

Administration of Justice and Fairness

(i). This principle was followed by Moses during his judgement of the Israelites (Exodus 18:13-16).

(ii). The elders appointed by Moses to mediate between conflicting parties among the Israelites equally exhibited justice and fairness (Deuteronomy1:16-17).

(iii). King Solomon as well administered justice and fairness which earned him the admiration of all and made him very famous in his days (1Kings 3:16-25).

Exhibition of Remorse by Perpetrators

(i). Jacob expressed remorse by bowing to the ground and begging for favour, when he met Esau (Genesis 33:3).

(ii). Abigail expressed remorse before David by apologising on her husband's behalf (1Samuel 25:23-25).

Intervention of Advocates and Advocacy groups in Conflict Situations

During the conflict situation between the Apostles and the Judaisers, the case was resolved by an advocacy group in Jerusalem (Acts 15:6-29).

Meeting the Demands of Disputants

The Israel it esquarreled with Moses because they needed water but found none **so** they start edagitating**.** Immediately, they were given water**,** there wascalm (Exodus 17:2-4).

The use of love, patience and wisdom

The use of love, patience, wisdom and peaceable disposition ran through the Bible (Psalm 34:14, Proverbs 13:1, Ecclesiastes 7:8-9, Luke 6:27-51, John 4:7-8 &Romans 13:4-7) These virtues were all used to calm violent situations.

Speaking kindly with Humility to Victims

Abigail spoke kindly with humility to David and was able to calm him to refrain from the havocheintended to cause (I Samuel 25:1-11).

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Using People of Integrityas Mediators

During the disturbances in Ephesus, Alexandermounted the plat formand motioned to the crowd to besilent. On the contrarily, because the people hadnores pectforhim, the ystarted shouting and it went on for two hours. Immediately the Town Clerkmounted the podiumand motioned to them to besilent, there was absolute calm (Acts19:23-24).

Reprimanding Perpetrators

Jesus normally reprimanded his disciples each time they did something that would lead to conflict or bring destruction.

(i). A typical example is seen in the case where a Samaritan village refused to receive Jesus. His disciples asked, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come from heaven and consume them?" (Luke 9:54b) It is written, "But He turned and rebuked them" (Luke 9:55).

(ii). In another instance, Jesus scolded the disciple who cut off the right ear of the slave of the high priest when they went to arrest him. "But Jesus said, 'No more of this' (Luke22:51a)!

Similarly, Paul lambasted the churches each time he heard about divisions and misbehaviours.

(iii)For example, concerning division in the church, this was what Paul said among other things, "Do you not know that you are God's and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person…" (1Corinthians 3:16-19).

(iv) In the case concerning lawsuits, he told them, "…I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to decide between one believer and another..." (1Corinthians 6:1-11).

(v) Also, when the people were misconducting themselves during the Lord's Supper, he scolded them (1Corinthians 11:22). These are some of the ways in which Paul reprimanded the believers.

Admonishing Believers with the word of God to avoid Conflict

(i). Moses used the word of God to remind the Israelites to love peace and pursue it in order to avoid conflicts (Exodus 18:13-16).

(ii). Believers are advised in the Book of Proverbs to avoid insolence that makes strife (Proverb 13:10).

(iii). Similarly, they are admonished against the use of harsh words that will ignite conflict but rather use kind words that will foil it (Proverb 15:1).

(iv). Also, believers are to avoid gossips, starting quarrels and do away with pride and rather be patient with theirneighbours in order to avoid conflicts (Proverb 17:14, 26:20-21 & Ecclesiastic 7:8-9).

(v). Jesus exhorts believers to forgive one another ultimately, that is believers should consistently forgive their neighbours, irrespective of the number of times that one had been offended (Matthew 18:21-22).

(vi). Again, Jesus warned his disciples against superiority complex, (Luke 9:46-48) and sectarianism, (Luke 9:49) that bring about conflict and division.

(vii) Jesus admonished the disciples against sectarianism that leads to division and brings about strife among believers.

(viii) Paul warns believers to avoid what is evil, hold on fast to what is good andlive in harmony (Romans 12:9-18).

 (ix) Similarly, Paul exhorts the Jewish believers under Roman rule, to subject themselves to authority in order to avoid all forms of hostility and disharmony in society and among believers. Instead they are to love one another so as to fulfill the commandments of God (Romans 13:4-10).

Educating people on there ward of love, for given essandpeace-making that resolve conflict and the Consequences of hatred, enmity, Unforgiveness and Wickedness that bring Conflict

Jesus educated His disciples and the crowd on the reward of Christ-like virtues and consequences of vices.

(i).In His Sermon on the Mount, he told His disciples and the crowd that peacemakers would be called the children of God (Matthew 5:9).

(ii).He also educated them on things that will make them liable to judgement and if you insult and hell of fire (Matthew 5:21-22).

(iii). Jesus equally taught the crowd on the dangers of criticising others (Matthew 7:3-5).

(iv). Jesus again made His disciples aware of the consequences of unforgiveness (Matthew 18:34).

(v).In the same vein, Jesus enlightened the disciples on the need to be like children or, they would never enter the Kingdom (Matthew 18:3-4).

(vi). He went further to educate his disciples on the need to love their enemies, do good to those who hate them, bless those who curse them and pray for those who abuse them. He made them aware that if they adhered to all that he taught

them, their reward would be great and they would be children of the Most High (Luke 6:27-36).

(vii). Paul enlightened the Roman church that vengeance belongs to God so, they should avoid revenge by paying evil for evil in order to live peaceably with all (Romans 12:9-21).

After looking at the Biblical principles, traditions, practices and mechanisms of conflict resolution, we shall now examine the pointers that direct or 'mandate' Christians to resolve conflict.

- To begin with, Abram resolved conflict between himself and Lot (Genesis 13:8-9).

- Joseph similarly, resolved the conflict between his brothers and himself (Genesis 45:3-24).

- In this research, we see Moses judging the cases of the Israelites by using the word of God to settle disputes (Exodus 18:13-16).

- God equally gave the Israelites the criterion for resolving quarrels between individuals who fight to such an extent that one person is wounded and confined to bed (Exodus 21:18-19).

- Also, in Deuteronomy 1:16-17, Moses appointed leaders for the Israelites, to resolve their conflicts with fairness and honesty, 'both great and small.'

- God appointed Deborah the Prophetess to judge the cases of the Israelites that is, to resolve their conflicts in order that they may live in peace and harmony (Judges 4:4-5).

- Abigail resolved a brewing conflict between David and Nabal (I Samuel 25:23-35).

- In I Kings 3:16-28, King Solomon judged a conflict between two prostitutes over a living baby and was able to bring about peace.

- We see God in Isaiah 2:3-4, coming to judge between the nations and arbitrate for many people. During His reign, the people shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. At this time, there shall be no war as there would be no swords.

   This is a pointer that God wants Christians to live in a world of peace and this would happen through fair judgment and arbitration during conflict resolution.

- In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said Peacemakers shall be called the sons of God. (Matthew 5-9) This is a charge to Christians to resolve conflicts. It can be said that Jesus used peacemaking as a criterion for being an heir or heiress of God. Viewing the issue from this point, conflict resolution has become mandatory to those who want to become children of God for that matter, heirs and heiresses.

- In the same vein, Jesus commands believers to reconcile with neighbours before they send their offerings to the altar. (Matthew 5:24) The assumption is that Jesus places a high premium on reconciliation which is one of the traditional principles and mechanisms for conflict resolution. Since this is a command from Jesus, conflict resolution is therefore mandatory in this context. This chapter concludes with a discussion on whether the Church has a legitimate role in conflict resolution or not.

- In the first place, as discussed earlier, Jesus has given believers the steps of resolving conflicts in Matthew 18:15-17, with the Church as the voice that gives the final verdict.

   Jesus said, "…If the offender refuses to listen even to the

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Church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and tax collector."
With the authority vested in the Church to resolve conflict, Jesus instructed the disciples that after two unsuccessful attempts by a victim to reconcile with the perpetrator, the case should be brought to the Church. Nonetheless, if the perpetrator refuses to listen to the Church, that person could be left alone or ignored as a Gentile or tax collector. This is a clear indication that the Church has been given the legitimate right to resolve conflict. Moreover, this right was not given by any person without authority or one of the disciples but Jesus Himself.

Also, Jesus charged the disciples to leave their offerings on the altar and go first to reconcile with their brothers and sisters against whom they have cases, before coming back to offer their gifts (Matthew 5:24). This is equally an obligation for members of the Church to resolve conflict.

Another typical example, which is a pointer to the legitimacy of the Church to resolve conflict is the episode discussed earlier under the topic;

"Avoiding Partiality." This has to do with neglect of the Hellenist widows. When the news got to 'the Church,' they came together and quickly resolved the issue (Acts 6:9). This is a lesson taught us by the early Church that the Church must resolve conflicts in order not to drag the name of the Church into disrepute.

Similarly, the conflict over circumcision, recorded in Acts 15:1-7, and discussed in this work is a typical example that the Church has a legitimate role in conflict resolution. When the issue arose, the Council of Jerusalem quickly appointed some people who came together and resolved it.

When believers of the early Church were sending one another to court, Paul became angry with them and reprimanded them. He said; "... do you dare to take it to court before the unrighteous, instead of taking it to the saints? Do you not know that the saints would judge the world and angels…"? (I Corinthians 6:1-3)?

If the Church has been mandated to judge angels, then they have the legitimacy to resolve conflicts within the Church and in the society. There are other pointers that the Church can play a legitimate role in conflict resolution that readers can identify in the discussions.

Conclusion

After looking at the Biblical principles, traditions and practices, it became obvious that Christians have the mandate to resolve conflicts. As such, the Church has the legitimate role, to resolve conflicts and bring about peace and reconciliation. It is therefore appropriate for the Roman Catholic Church and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana to resolve the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflictas a duty. Different types of biblical principles, traditions and practice of conflict resolution that are strategies, mechanismsand approaches to resolve conflict have been identified. These biblical conflict resolution tools were used to prevent conflicts, resolve conflicts and also prevent conflicts from escalating. These tools will be helpful to Christians in their conflict resolution processes. The next chapter discusses, 'The major Contributions of the Roman Catholic Church and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, in the Mediation processofthe Nkonya-Alavanyo Conflict.

CHAPTER SIX

THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GHANA IN THE MEDIATION PROCESS OF THE NKONYA-ALAVANYO CONFLICT

Introduction

The Church as a Christian body believes that it is her incumbent duty to maintain or bring about peace. Christians believe in the principles, teachings and practices of Jesus Christ on peace. A typical example is Jesus' Sermon on the Mount about peacemakers, who would be blessed and called the children of God (Matthew 5:9). Besides His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus admonishes Christians to make peace with their neighbours when they have problems, as captured in chapter five of this research. He stated that the case should be pursued till it gets to the Church. However, if the culprit does not listen even to the Church, then the victim has played his or her role in an attempt to resolve conflict and bring about peace and also save his or her neighbour from sin.

The above point is buttressed by McGuire (1992) and mentioned earlier in the literature review, when he posits that religion tries to maintain the equilibrium of a group whenever it is threatened. Clearly seen, religion helps resolve conflict or maintain peace. It is a fact that religious legitimacy has over the years gained dominance in monarchies, when they form alliance with the dominant groups in political arenas, economic domains, the socio-economic sector, religious groupings and the social system in order to bring about socialisation, social control and in the promotion of social change. As such, religion continues to play a dominant role in the affairs of people in societies,

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be it political, economic, social or religious and even in development and environmental protection, just to maintain peace.

It is worth noting that some conflict resolution mechanisms, principles, practices, methods and theories have Biblical bases and have been discussed in chapter five of this research. (Some of them are; negotiation, mediation, dialogue, reconciliation, prompt response to warning signs and ADR), It can therefore not be far-fetched that it is the theological imperatives of Volf that led victims to reach a point that they can interact with former enemies and "ultimate others", as an expression of New Testament ideals (Villa-Vicencio 2009).

The involvement of the Church in conflict resolution, reconciliation, healing, peace-making and peace-building is founded on the gospel imperative and there are many Biblical texts to support this claim. However, conflict resolution, peace-making and peace-building are not limited to the New Testament, but also the Old Testament as discussed in details in chapter five and mentioned earlier.

The traditional conflict resolution processes in Africa, are part of a well structured social system that has proved to be effective over the years and designed to suit the traditional form of reconciliation and the improvement of social relations. This is due to the fact that the indigenous African healing and reconciliation practices, help people in conflict situations to deal with the violence and trauma of the past, through rational debates and conversations. As a result of the 'efficacy' of the traditional African healing and reconciliation practices, they are having impact on society and are also being integrated into contextual forms of religion such as, Christianity and Islam, in contemporary

times. Evidently, traditional African conflict resolution practices and mechanisms are neatly woven into the Christian conflict resolution practices and mechanisms in order to achieve desired results (Villa-Vicencio, 2009; Kobia, 2016).

This is so because, traditional rituals that are used during conflict resolution processes, purge victims of their psychological and emotional feelings and bring healing that enable both victims and perpetrators to live together in harmony. Furthermore, perpetrators are able to shed their guilt, adjust themselves and live in their societies rather than flee and become fugitives in strange lands.

It is the "Gospel imperative", "New Testament ideals", "the Ministry of reconciliation" and the Old Testament basis for peace-making, peace-building and reconciliation discussed above that laid it upon Christians, to see the interplay of forgiveness, reconciliation, conflict resolution and peacemaking as a duty. It is in this regard that the RCC and the EPCG took the initiative to help resolve the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

A brief history of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana

A German Missionary, Lorenz Wolf, arrived in Cape Coast in the then Gold Coast, with three others namely, Luer Bultman, James Graff and Karl Flato, on May, 1847 (Ansre, 1997). Two of the missionaries died soon after arrival. Upon the invitation of Prince Nyagamangu of Peki, Lorenz Wolf left Cape Coast for Peki on 14th November, 1847. At Peki, Lorenz Wolf preached his first sermon which marked the birth of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Ghana and Togo (EPCG Year Book, 2014).

In 1848, with the assistance of the local people, a mission house was built for Wolf, where he started a school with 13 pupils. Lorenz Wolf was not left alone as some missionaries; Groth Quinius and Johannes Menge, were sent to assist him. However, the unfavourable weather conditions, coupled with mosquito bites, took their toll on the health of the missionaries (EPCG Year Book, 2014). Consequently, seven of them lost their lives in the first seven years of their missionary activities in the Volta Region of Ghana.

Lorenz Wolf was not spared the catastrophe, as he became ill and had to be sent home in 1851. He however died shortly before he arrived in Hamburg. All the misfortunes notwithstanding, the missionaries were not deterred but sent two more missionaries, Wilhelm Daeuble and Johannes Menge, who arrived at Peki in January, 1852. As fate had it, Daeuble and Menge equally suffered the afflictions of the unfavourable tropical weather. Meanwhile, in the first seven years seven of them died and only seven converts were made (EPCG Year Book, 2015).

From Peki, missionary work extended to Keta, Adaklu-Waya, Ho and Anyako. A seminary was established in 1864 at Ho to make it possible to train indigenous workers. While work was progressing steadily, the unexpected happened, the Asante war erupted in 1869 to disrupt missionary activities once again thus, forcing some of the Missionaries to return to Germany. Ironically, during that period, the first African Pastor, Rudolf Mallet, was ordained in 1882. In order to enhance their work, the missionaries decided to train some indigenous workers in Germany. As a result, 20 young men were sent to Germany to be trained, between 1884 and 1900. Prominent among them were Revs Aku, Kwami and Baeta (EPCG Year Book, 2016).

The Church celebrated its 59th anniversary in 1897 when its membership was 2,000 and its schools registered 900 pupils. In 1901, additional two indigenous pastors, Rev. Samuel Newell and Rev. Adolf Lawoe, were ordained. In 1910, the Rev. Andreas Aku, who later became the first Moderator of the E. P. Church, Ghana, was ordained as minister together with Rev. David Bensah, who later succeeded Rev. Aku as Moderator. Also, Rev. Kwami, who became the first Synod Clerk of the E. P. Church, Ghana (1922-1944), was ordained in 1911 (EPCG Year Book, 2017).

In the 1950s, there was political agitation among the Ewe(s) in Ghana for unification with the Ewe(s) in Togo. This move stirred counter agitation from the non-Ewe(s) in the Church particularly, the Buem who felt threatened and therefore wanted to be independent. To achieve their aim, they formed their own church and named it "Presbyterian Evangelical Church" (P. E. C.) and subsequently ordained their own pastors (Prof. Ansre, personal communication, December 18, 2017).

In order not to lose their members and also for peace to prevail, the E. P. Church had to make a quick move that would win back the people of Buem who are not Ewe(s) back into their fold. The need therefore arose, for the change of name of the mother Church, particularly the word, 'Ewe', when the Leaders of the E. P. Church became conscious of the dialectical problem brewing between the Ewe(s) and the Buem within the church. "Ewe Presbyterian Church", was therefore changed to, "Evangelical Presbyterian Church", (E. P. Church.) in 1954, at a Synod held at Kpedze (Personal communication, Prof. Ansre, December 18, 2017). Obviously, but for the

timely intervention of the Leadership of the E. P. Church, this incident would have recorded another schism in the history of the Church.

Schisms in the E. P. Church

The first Schism, led by Prophet Mawufeame Wovenu, occurred in 1942. The Prophet, who was a Catechist in the E. P. Church, started a prayer group in 1942 at Tadzewu. The doctrines of the group were however not in line with that of the E. P. Church. There was therefore a breakaway and the group became known as the Apostles Revelation Society. The second schism was the formation of the White Cross Society, which started as a prayer group, led by Nunorla Doh from Todome. It also separated from the mother church in the 1950's as a result of doctrinal issues. The current location of the society is Yordan-nu near Vakpo where their headquarters is sited (Amevenku, 2016).

The Lord's Pentecostal Church, founded by Rev. Amedzro, from Peki, was the third group to secede the church. This breakaway also bothers on practices such as "the adoption of ecstasy and frenzied styles of praying" (Amevenku, 2016:7). This group of people, broke away in 1959 and are popularly known as; Agbelengor, among the local people. In 1972, another group, which started as a prayer group at Teikrom, called Nutifafa Nami (Peaceful Healing Church) founded by Prophet Borkumah in 1964, broke away when the leader took a second wife. Also, another group came out of the E. P. Church, Accra New Town congregation, in 1964 due to leadership problem. This group, known as Christ Evangelical Mission, was led by the Catechist, Emmanuel Ntum Atiega. The biggest schism that seemingly weakened the very foundations of the EPC that the Missionaries laid down their lives to lay occurred in 1991, a schism that never gave in to all attempts at reconciliation.

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"It is therefore referred to as the "Great Schism" in the E. P. Church…" (Amevenku, 2016:7).

There are many factors that contributed to the "Great Schism". Nonetheless, the remote and immediate causes will be outlined but not discussed as that is not the focus of this researcher. However, the researcher will give a summary of the immediate causes that fuelled the conflict and attempts made to resolve it.

Remote Causes of the "**Great Schism**":

1. The issue of Bible study and prayer fellowship (BSPF)

2. Financial Mismanagement

3. Mel'agbe Theology

4. Fellowship Awards and Transfers

5. Dumedefɔ Choir

6. Policy Guideline Committee

7. Constitutional Development (Fayose, 2001).

Immediate Causes of the 1991 Schism

According to Fayose (2001) two main factors were responsible for fuelling the conflict in the E. P. Church, Ghana in 1980. They are; "the mysterious appearance of the 1980 Constitution and the re-election of the Moderator Dzobo, to a third term of office. The conflict escalated, engulfing other areas of church life" (Fayose, 2001:128).

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1. 1980 Constitution

2. The January 1988 Election

3. Concerned Members or the Revolutionary Guards of the E.P.C.

4. Demonstration at Ho

5. Lawsuits (Fayose, 2001).

Attempts to settle the case out of Court

When the schism occurred, the Pastors' Association of the E. P. Church, appointed a committee of distinguished members such as, church leaders, chiefs and some prominent members of society to settle the case out of court based on 1Corinthians 6:1-6 (Fayose, 2001). This committee was known as, Committee   Appointed to Settle the E.P. Church case out of Court (Amevenku, 2001). The committee found out that the Joint Synod of Betania, in 1980, did not complete their work on the constitutional proposal. Subsequently, another committee was appointed by Synod and all the causal factors outlined earlier were deliberated upon. The Synod Committee later came up with certain recommendations but they were rejected by the concerned members (Fayose).

The CCG, the VRHC, the Bishopric of Keta-Ho Diocese, the President of the Methodist Conference and the Secretary of Interior strived to settle the case but it yielded no fruit. This brought about a major break away from the E. P. Church making it to lose 5% of its members which accounted for nine thousand and ninety (9,090) congregants (Fayose, 2001).

As the 'breakaway group' was confusing members of the church as well as the general public with the new name, which was similar to the original name, the EPCoG and EPCG. The EPCG therefore filed a suit restraining the

EPCoG, from using the name of the Church. The EPCoG therefore changed their name to Global Evangelical Church (GEC) (Fayose, 2001).

The Jiagge Committee found out that most of the problems lodged by the concerned members were genuine so they proposed firm ways of resolving them (Ansre, 1997). Both parties accepted the recommendations of the committee except that the concerned members insisted on the exit from office of Rev. Dzobo. The Committee exhorted both parties to live in Love and Unity as Christians. Quoting the Apostle Paul, this was what the committee wrote to the parties:

> Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate the lowly; never be conceited. Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought of what is noble in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peacefully with all (Romans 12:16-18) (Ansre, 1997).

Nevertheless, the parties could not agree to various issues, so the case that was permitted to be withdrawn from court and settled by the committee had to be sent back to court.

When all persuasions failed, the Committee wrote to the trial judge who had permitted the case to be withdrawn from court for settlement by the committee to say that it had failed to settle the matter (Ansre, 1997:140).

The "Great Schism" of the E. P. Church, thus dragged on for years with devastating effects. However, there is hope for peace and reconciliation between the EPCG and GEC. After reading the brief history of the EPCG, noting the schisms, curiously, one will be tempted to ask; "If the EPCG, could not resolve its own conflicts, what legitimate and moral rights does it have to

resolve the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict when their role in their own conflict was so insignificant and ineffective?"

These and many other questions would all be genuine and logical conclusions. However, twenty-seven years (27 years) have passed and conflicts in the Church have left devastating spiritual, moral, financial, psychological and social effects that have become lessons learnt for the EPCG. Consequently, awareness of conflict and conflict resolution, have been created among leaders and members of the EPCG. Measures are also put in place to prevent/guard against any scuffle.

Amevenku, (2018:88) buttresses this point when he postulates that "The crisis has taught the Church to be alive to member concerns and shun smugness completely".

During the 55th Synod of the EPCG, held at Ho, some major decisions which were the Church's concern were taken. These decisions were nine and the first on the list had to do with reconciliation with the GEC.

1. The commitment to reunite with the EPCG, without preconditions.

2. The condemnation of the use of children as soldiers and the abuse of human rights in many parts of Africa… (Ansre, 1997:150).

This is a clear indication that the EPCG has not given up on the conflict resolution and reconciliation between the GEC and the EPCG. A committee has been engaged to resolve the EPCG and GEC conflict and the process is on-going. As a sign of reconciliation, the EPCG Pastors' Association sends delegations to the GEC Pastors' Association, during their annual association meetings for fraternal greetings with some token and the GEC recipocrates.

The GEC invites EPCG to their Synods and the EPCG invites them to their General Assemblies. Both churches attend each others' festivals and funerals and also play liturgical roles such as, prayer and exhortation. This has been going on for some time and it is a clear sign that the EPCG is on course, as far as conflict resolution and reconciliation are concerned.

A Brief History of the RCC

The RCC held her first Mass in 1482, at Elmina in the Gold Coast. In 1879, Sir James Marshall made a request to the Office of the Propagation of Faith in Rome that missionaries be brought to the Gold Coast. That marked the creation of the Apostolic Prefecture of the Gold Coast. In 1880, Fathers Auguste Moreau and Eugene Murat, SMA Fathers landed in Elmina. That year, the CC in the Gold Coast had the first baptism of a one-year-old boy named George August Salmon in Elmina. In 1882, first attempts were made to open a mission in Kumasi. The following year, 1883, O.L.A. Sisters; Sr. Ignatius an Irish and Sr. Potential from Switzerland came to Elmina and in that year, the first girls' school was opened in Elmina. That same year, Keta became S.M.A. resident station and O.L.A. Sisters open a school for girls in Cape Coast (Palmer-Buckle, 2018).

In 1893, a station was opened in Accra but was closed and in 1895, the second attempt was made to open a mission station in Kumasi. Meanwhile, in 1896, the Cape Coast Mission became the headquarters of the Gold Coast Mission Cape Coast then became Apostolic Vicariate that same year. While mission stations elsewhere were staggering and some were being closed, Cape Coast station was making a tremendous stride. From1904 to 1905, Bishop

Klaus became Bishop of Cape Coast and in 1906, Bishop Ignatius Hummel became the third Vicar Apostolic and Bishopof Cape Coast until 1924. In 1907, Sekondi became a resident station and in 1908 there was foundation of Kumasi mission. The first Mass was held in Tamale in 1917. There was a groundbreaking record in 1922 as Fr. Anastasius Odaye Dogli, was ordained as the first African Priest in the Gold Coast. The Golden Jubilee of the Gold Coast Mission (GCM) was celebrated in1930 and the Foundation Stone of the Seminary for African priests was blessed at Amisano. The RCC did not only found churches but also built schools and hospitals (Palmer-Buckle, 2018).

The Development of the CC in Ghana

Upon the attainment of independence in Ghana, the CC in Rome realised that the independence would have an impact on all spheres of life as well as the church in Ghana. For this reason, the CC thought it wise to enable Ghanaians to take full ecclesiastical and religious responsibility for its people. In 1960, Bishop John Kwadwo Amissah was appointed the first Ghanaian Archbishop, who was subsequently appointed the Metropolitan Archbishop of Cape Coast and also the head of all Catholic Churches in Ghana. That same year, the Ghana Catholic Bishops Conference (GCBC) was formed and all Bishops in Ghana were members. The conference deliberated upon issues of concern, encouraged activities in accordance with the needs of the time. They also saw to it that all activities of the dioceses conformed to the activities of the CC in Ghana. The Bishops were also empowered by the Conference to have a stronger voice in national issues. From 1962, ordinations were done locally

even though their missionaries remained in Ghana, they did not dominate ecclesiastical matters (Nsiah, 2018).

The RCC evangelised vigorously by way of sharing the word of God to people from house to house, building of schools, hospitals, socio-economic projects, and charitable organisations and other institutions. As part of evangelisation, the RCC reached out to the masses through their various magazines such as, The Catholic Voice in which daily Bible readings were published monthly, The Standard and The Catholic Messenger. Workshops and Seminars were also organised to win souls for Christ. Additionally, church buildings and missions were also constructed through locally generated funds and communal labour of the faithful. These projects were however supported from Rome (Nsiah, 2018).

In 1980, Pope John Paul II visited Ghana when the CC in Ghana was one hundred years old. His purpose for coming "was to give a new impetus to evangelism and to confirm the bishops in their mission to provide pastoral care for Christ's flock'', (2018:7). The Pope commented on how impressed he was by their courage in taking the initiative to embark on evangelisation (Nsiah, 2018).

The works of Bishop Lodonu and his Contribution to Peace Process of the Nkonya-Alavanyo Conflict

Having a fair idea about the RCC in Ghana, this section will focus on Bishop Lodonu who is the Diocecian Bishop of the Ho Diocese of the RCC. Bishop Francis Anani Kofi Lodonu succeeded Bishop Konings. He worked as a parish priest for sometime before becoming a Vice Rector and Rector of Saint Mary's Minor Seminary, from 1968–1973. He became Vicar General and was

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appointed auxiliary bishop to Bishop Konings in 1973. He became the substitute Bishop in 1976 and during his tenure of office, the seat of the diocese was relocated to Ho and renamed the Keta-Ho Diocese.

> "Bishop Lodonu worked hard to expand the Church in the Volta Region and to bring peace to the area, especially between the Alavanyo and the Nkonya   traditional areas" (Nsiah, 2018:14).

Bishop Lodonu worked tirelessly both physically and spiritually in the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict resolution process. He mobilised the people for fasting and prayer every now and then when tensions were high. He invited the conflicting parties to the Catholic Secretariat (CS) to meet the MC who took them through various conflict resolution processes. It was during his tenure of office that the Catholic Relief Service (CRS) provided money for the conflict resolution process. The Church grew very rapidly under the leadership of Bishop Lodonu as such, the Keta-Ho Diocese was divided into three dioceses. Bishop Lodonu remained the Bishop of Ho while Bishop Anthony Kwami Adanuty was Bishop of Keta and Akatsi.

Bishop Gabriel Akwasi Ababio Mante, who was also part of the MC, was in charge of the Jasikan Diocese. Today, the RCC in Ghana comprised of twenty dioceses of which four are provincial dioceses (a collection of those dioceses as a basic unit of administration led by a metropolitan archbishop) while the rest are suffragan dioceses (one of the dioceses other than the metropolitan archdiocese that constitute an ecclesiastical province) within the various provinces. The RCC continues to do charity work through the CRS (Nsiah, 2018).

Major Contributions of the Church

The RCC and the EPCG played vital roles in the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict resolution process both at the local and regional levels. The two churches equally collaborated with other religious leaders, traditional leaders and the Government of Ghana to help in the peace process of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

The Church started the resolution process between the two parties in 1983. Members of the two churches who started the resolution process are mainly Ministers of the Gospel. They are;

Most Rev. Francis A. K. Lodonu

Rev. Dr. Livingston K. Buama

Most Rev. Gabriel A. Mante

Rev. Msgr. Antony Konu

Rev. Fr. Raphael Tawiah

Rev. Fr. Francis Amuh

Rev. Sr. Margaret M. Ankamah

Rev. Sr. Rejoice Sedegah

Rev. Fr. Edwin T. Adzimah

Rev. P. Y. Pongo

Rev. Letsu-Kumah

Rev. Fr. Michael Odzamgba

When the conflict escalated violently in 1983, the RCC and the EPCG came together through the initiative of Most Rev. F. A. K. Lodonu, to mediate between the two parties in order to bring peace that would enable them coexist. The leaders of the Church therefore organised their local Ministers in the

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Nkonya-Alavanyo communities and some other places in the Volta Region to take up this task.

Nkonya-Alavanyo Local Council of Churches

The Local Council of Churches (LCC) lived up to their task to bring lasting peace between the warring factions. Their slogan was, "To Bring Peace Between the People". As a result, they came together to fast, pray and counsel the combatants. Victims of the conflict that is; those who lost their relatives during the conflict, those who were injured or maimed and all who were traumatised in one way or the other were counselled and prayed for. These spiritual exercises went on regularly and were frequent anytime the conflict escalated. The role of the Church in the resolution process is both physical and spiritual (Personal communication, Rev. Tordzo, January 4, 2016).

Between 1983 and 1987, Most Bishop Lodonu assigned Most Bishop Mante, (Secretary to Bishop Lodonu at the time), to head the LCC to mediate between the Nkonya and Alavanyo. According to Bishop Mante, they met representatives of both communities together, either at Alavanyo-Kpeme or Nkonya-Ahenkro and sometimes at St. Theresa's Training College, Hohoe (now College of Education), to dialogue with them and also celebrate mass with them. The Rev. Fr. Hevi joined Bishop Mante between 1987 and 1988 to intervene and they met the parties regularly for the mediation process and during this period, there were no skirmishes. However, between 1988 and 1990 the LCC became complacent so was not very active as a result the conflict escalated again in 1990. The LCC then resumed their activities of meeting the parties and taking them through all the spiritual and physical activities the

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Church has been running for them. When the conflict escalated again 2003, the LLC put in a lot of effort to calm the situation however, it escalated again just the following year, 2004 (In a telephone conversation, Most Bishop Mante, January 11, 2018).

An informant of Alavanyo maintains that the Resident Catholic Father at the time, Rev. Fr. Tawiah (2003 – 2010) played an immeasurable role both physically and spiritually especially during the 2003 escalation. He recounted that Fr. Tawiah from time to time prayed and fasted with the people. He sometimes brought the disputants together (since a good number of both communities are RCC and EPCG) in corporate prayers, to petition God for peace between the two communities (Personal communication, Rev. Father Terrence Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

Also, Fr. Tawiah provided food items for the people regularly. Sometimes, he had to send the Nkonya and Alavanyo to Grotto, the Roman Catholic Prayer and Spiritual Centre (RCPSC) at Kpando-Agbenoxoe, about twenty-four kilometers and twenty-five kilometers away from Nkonya and Alavanyo respectively, for fasting, prayer and peace talk. Father Tawiah further held Peace Mass for the two communities to help them reconcile and lay down their arms (Personal communication, Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

According to Rev. Fr. R. Tawiah, it is through the efforts of the Church that the Nkonya and Alavanyo are living in their communities in peace today. For him, but for the Church, the conflict escalation would have been more violent and rampant. (Personal communication, January 8, 2018).

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An informant recalled that in 2003, there was a funeral at Alavanyo-Kpeme which was attended by many Nkonya citizens. After the funeral, the Alavanyo wanted to murder the Nkonya who were unarmed. When news got to Rev. Fr. Tawiah, the Resident Pastor at the time, he rushed to the scene, laid prostrate in the middle of the road and begged the Alavanyo to kill him instead and set the Nkonya free. This single act of sacrifice from the Reverend Father disarmed the people of Alavanyo thus, saving the lives of the people of Nkonya. This shows the amount of commitment from the Church in the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict (Personal communication, Rev. Tordzo, January 4, 2016). Commenting on the above episode, Fr. Tawiah said he did that to save lives. He worked among the parties to prevent conflict. When he was transferred to Kpando-Agbenorxoe (RCPSC), he used the opportunity to build the parties up spiritually to see the need for reconciliation (In a telephone conversation, Fr. Tawiah, January 8, 2018).

Also, in 2003, Rev. Letsu-Kuma, the District Pastor of the EPCG, Nkonya Ntsumuru (2003 – 2007), mobilised the two communities with other church leaders for periodic prayer and fasting. He recounted that at a point in time, when "tempers were high," they had to climb the mountain to the disputed land to fast and pray in order to bring about peace (Personal communication, Rev. Letsu-Kumah, January 6, 2017). These religious activities were carried out by the local church leaders anytime the conflict escalated. Sometimes, the manses of the local pastors of the RCC and EPCG became a place of refuge for the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo anytime the conflict escalated. According to Rev. Tordzo, the District Pastor of EPCG, at Nkonya Ntsumuru (2012 – 2015), when the conflict escalated in 2013, the

shooting became so fierce that the people fled their homes to the Church where they prayed for divine intervention. Some people stayed in the manses for days until there was calm. During this escalation, the RCC and the EPCG were visiting the people regularly to counsel and encourage them and also dialogue with them to lay down their arms. They also supported them with food items and money.

When the conflict escalated again in 2004, the RCC again decided to intervene in order to prevent further violence between the two parties. Subsequently, Most Bishop Lodonu, invited some other Catholic Priests in the Diocese to celebrate Peace Mass, fast and pray for peace to prevail. It is this relentless effort of the RCC and the EPCG to bring peace between the warring factions that informed the Government of Ghana to intervene in the mediation process (Rev. Fr. Adzimah, personal communication, January 5, 2016).

It was worthy of note that for over 20 years that the Church was intervening in the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, it was unofficial, they were not mandated by the Government but took it upon themselves as a biblical mandate to resolve conflict. It was during the 2004 escalation that the Church was recognised by the Government and subsequently, tasked with various assignments in order to collaborate with the MC that was formed by the Government to intensify the work of the Church (Personal communication, Very Rev. Dr. Buama, January 4, 2016 & Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

Government Intervention

On 25th May, 2004, Hon. Kwesi Owusu-Yeboah, the VR Minister at the time, invited the two communities for a peace talk however, that meeting was

not fruitful as the conflict continued with intensity. Thereafter, based on the willingness of the warring factions to lay down their arms and live in peace, the VR Minister intervened in the peace process between the Nkonya and Alavanyo. In order to make this goal attainable, three committees, Mediation Committee (MC), Consultation Committee (CC) and Pace-Setters (PS) were put in place with a meticulous selection of a category of people whom the disputants would respect and also put their trust and confidence in (Personal communication, Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

The Mediation Committee

The Chairman of the committee is the Very Rev. Dr. Livingstone K. Buama, the then Moderator of the EPCG. The Vice Chairman was, Most Rev. Bishop Francis Lodonu, the then Bishop of Ho Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church (HDRCC). The rest are; the Most Rev. Gabriel Mantey, Catholic Bishop of the Jasikan Diocese, Mama Adokua Asigble, Queen mother of Tefle, Mrs. Hillary Gbedemah, a Ho-based Legal Practitioner and Nana Besemunah III, Krachiwura (the Paramount Chief of Krachi). Also included were a nominee each from Nkonya and Alavanyo who were to act as Secretaries to their respective communities in order to keep proper record of events and also report to the Volta Regional Coordinating Council (VRCC). The nominees are; Mrs. Felicia Okyere-Darko, Chief of State Attorney, Secretary for Nkonya and Mr. Evans Kanfra of the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC), Secretary for Alavanyo (Personal communication, Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5. 2016 and Darkwa, et al., 2012).

These two people were nominated by their own people in their communities and approved by the VRCC to ensure the people's trust in them. Also the placement of the church leaders as heads of the committee was to give it credibility that would build the confidence (level) of the combatants and assure them that there would be no biases. This is so because of the discipline the head of the Churches acquired per their training and their status in society. The MC will therefore be given credibility and make the people put their trust and confidence in them.

After the purposive selection of the members, the MC was inaugurated on 4th June, 2004, by Government officials. The first thing the committee did was to write a proposal to the government to be allowed to embark on a conflict mapping for, without mapping of the conflict zones, mediation would be problematic. Accordingly, the CRS donated five thousand dollars ($5,000) to foster the project in order to ensure a smooth and uninterrupted running of the peace process (Personal communication, Very. Rev. Dr. Buama, January 4, 2016 and Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

Consultative Committee and Conflict Mapping

To facilitate the project, a technical committee which is the Consultative Committee (CC), made up of prominent RC priest such as, Mgr. Konu (President) and Rev. Fr. Adzimah (both Priests from the HDRCC) was instituted as the next step, to act as the technical desk of the MC. On the 26th of October 2004, the two priests from the HDRCC and Mr. Aide (Official from CRS – Ghana) embarked on a conflict mapping in the Nkonya and Alavanyo areas. This was the first practical action taken by the MC to enable them find

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out the situation on the ground and subsequently come out with strategies and mechanisms that would help the MC to achieve its desired goal.

The conflict mapping was an eye-opener as the committee realised that in order to get the commitment of the warring factions, which would pave way for the peace process, there was the need for a Joint Consultative Committee (JCC). This means that the disputants must be involved in the consultative process and this was exactly what they did. In view of this, ten people; five from each of the two communities (Nkonya and Alavanyo), were nominated. The rationale behind this development was to find out the situation on the ground and come up with new strategies and mechanisms. The nomination of these ten people was however the sole prerogative of their Paramount Chiefs and not the MC. The JCC liaised between the people from their respective communities and the MC (Personal communication, Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

An Advocacy Group

To ensure that their set goals were achieved, the MC employed the services of the West Africa Network for Peace building (WANEP), as consultants or facilitators of the peace initiative, as a result of their experience in mediation processes. The Diocesan Peace Building Team (DPT) in Ho, who are well versed in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) equally played a prominent role in the peace process by way of helping to formulate strategies with directives from the MC. The composition of the DPT is; Rev. Msgr. A. Konu, Rev. Fr. F. Amuh, Rev. Sr. M. Ankamah, Rev. Sr. R. Sedegah and Rev. Fr. T. Adzimah. After the formulation of these strategies, the JCC initiated their implementation (Personal communication, Very Rev. Dr. Buama, January 4,

2016 and Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016). It should be noted that all the committee members were purposively selected, according to their expertise, to help the MC work professionally and come out with good results (Personal communication, Very. Rev. Dr. L. Buama, January 4, 2016 and Rev. Fr. T. Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

The Pace-Setters

After putting up the initial committees, embarking on conflict mapping, getting consultants, formulating and implementing strategies and establishing the JCC, the next thing was the formation of the Pace-Setters (PS) to gather information that were likely to bring about strife. The PS comprises; Rev. Fr. R. Tawiah, Rev. P. Pongo, Rev. P. Letsu-Kumah and Rev. Fr. M. Odzamgba (all from the RCC and EPCG). The peace mechanism had a chain of command that used the top-bottom as well as bottom-up approaches to resolve and manage conflict. These approaches were put in place for strategies to be formulated and implemented by the MC. These, they did with the input of the DPT and implemented in the communities, in collaboration with the JCC and the PS. The chiefs on the other hand would inform the PS or JCC of any rumours, activities and threats that were likely to cause unrest. Besides, the chiefs would give helpful information and contributions that are relevant to the peace process (Personal communication, Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016 and Darkwa et al., 2012).

The PS generally comprised the local resident clergy of the various churches in the two communities, mainly; the RCC and EPCG. However, the PS formed to assist the MC is basically RCC and EPCG. The local Clergy of these churches were identified to play this role because as said earlier, they

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meet most of the members of the two communities on regular basis. Besides, the people trusted and regarded these as being impartial in the conflict (Personal communication, Very Rev. Dr. Buamah, January 4, 2016 and Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

In order for the MC to achieve its objectives, WANEP was tasked by the VR Minister to design a conflict resolution strategy for the peace initiative. With an input from the MC and the DPT, the strategy was designed thus:

- To re-orient the mind-set of the two communities from one of suspicion, violence and warfare to that of peaceful co-existence and good neighbourliness.
- To create an enabling environment within which the two communities can finally settle the land dispute and all attended differences.
- To guide, facilitate and support the communities towards developing a road-map for the final resolution of the conflict and the restoration of sustainable peace.
- To facilitate, support and provide required technical guidance, inputs and other resources required for the implementation of the parties to agreements and sustained peace (Personal communication, Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2015 and Darkwa et al., 2012:71).

The MC collaborated with the DPT and met the JCC every now and then to discuss the conflict situation, what they had done so far and what they were anticipating in view of the peace process. The members of the JCC thereafter shared the decisions that were arrived at with their chiefs, elders and kinsmen from one community to the other. The JCC therefore was the platform on which information was shared for onward transmission to the communities for sensitisation and also to other stakeholders on the peace initiative. The JCC

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was the medium, so to speak, through which information was flowing to the MC and from the MC to the JCC. Based on information flow after the conflict-mapping, as said earlier, the MC found it judicious to create an avenue for training, which should be inclusive in nature, that is, involving people from all walks of life in the two communities. This was the composition of the people, chiefs, queenmothers, elders, and warlords/opinion leaders, as people in the first category. This was followed by women, the youth, teachers, school children and every other person in the community. This is what the MC called 'Inclusive Peace Process' (IPP). Besides these two categories of people, were the "strategic allies", (citizens from the two communities living in the diaspora – (Ghana and outside Ghana), forming the third categories (Personal communication, Very Rev. Dr. Buama, January 4, 2016 and Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

The Training Process

Due to the problem of organisation of logistics, the MC could not start training until 2005. The training grounds were mainly the RCDCH in Ho and the two communities, Nkonya and Alavanyo. The training was in the form of training programmes and dialogue workshops. The strategic allies were hosted three times by the MC in the Aviation Hall, Accra, with funds provided by the government of Ghana. The people were taken through briefings and dialoguing each time they met with the MC. The rationale behind these meetings was twofold. In the first place, to sensitise the people, in order to win their trust and confidence in the MC and in the second place, to understand and equally accept the fact that the need had arisen for peaceful coexistence.

Similar meetings were held at the Bishop Konings Hall at the Catholic Secretariat, Ho, to educate the people so as to arouse their interest in the peace process. In the same vein, people in the communities were taken through sensitisation programmes by way of dialogue. In a bid to get everyone in the community involved, the Church sent buses to the various communities of the Nkonya and Alavanyo to convey the parties to the CDS for the training. At the end of every training session, each group made a resolution in order to drive home the essence of the peace process. However, these resolutions were just on paper but not in practice (Personal communication, Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

The major training process came to an end, in 2006 and had actually achieved its goal by building confidence in the people of the two communities. At the end of the major training process, the MC saw the need to make the 'inclusive peace process' a reality thus, they came up with another strategy which was 'confidence and trust building visitation'. This was to give them the opportunity to interact with people in the communities who did not participate in the training programmes. The visits were to gather information in terms of issues, threats, rumours, gossips, complains and any other information or plans that would be detrimental to the peace and stability of the two communities. This strategy was put in place to curb any form of strife that could cause conflict escalation (Personal communication, Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

The Core Issue of the Conflict

The next agenda of the MC, after the confidence and trust building visitations was to go beyond calming down tensions and look at the problems of the conflict. The committee specifically looked at the remote and immediate causes of the conflict, why it keeps escalating and how to help the combatants lay down their arms so as to once again start enjoying the over 500 years of uninterrupted peace.

After listening to both parties, the committee identified a redemarcation of the boundaries as the core issue of the conflict. Subsequently, a redemarcation exercise was arranged and the VR Surveyor, Mr. Ayibontey, was tasked to survey the disputed area. The team went with the people of Nkonya-Alavanyo who took along their respective registered surveyors as well. The disputants were first told to indicate their boundaries after which the VR Surveyor went round the 100miles square/6459.82acres of disputed land and came up with a map. The said map of the disputed area was handed over to the MC, who in turn showed a copy to all present. Subsequently, a copy each was given to each of the chiefs of Nkonya and Alavanyo (Personal communication, Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2017).

The Negotiating Table

Having gone through all these processes, the MC, in 2009, went to the negotiating table with the disputants primarily to find a lasting solution to the 'age-long' conflict. The committee then selected 10 people each from each of the two communities. These people were however not just handpicked, the criteria for selection were, that they should be people who were with the MC

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from the beginning and had attended all the training programmes and workshops in Ho.

At the negotiating table, the Alavanyo on one hand proposed that the disputed land be shared, 50-50 between them (Nkonya and Alavanyo) or be used for a development project that would benefit both communities. Nkonya on the other hand remained adamant and made no proposal. The Paramount Chief of Nkonya was asked; "What do you want to do"? He however, did not answer. In view of that the Paramount Chief was tasked to go back to consult his people and come out with a proposal which he has not done till date (Personal communication, Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016).

From all indications, the strategy which actually helped the MC achieve its goal was the confidence and trust building in the indigenes of Nkonya-Alavanyo. This strategy is a "commendable mediation strategy" (Darkwa et al., 2012). The strategy reveals the mediators' non-complacent attitude, their commitment to the entire process and their ultimate goal for the peace process. The confidence and trust building strategy might have given the participants a sense of respect and appreciation for the mediators. This is based on the fact that the participants' views and observations were respected and found worthy by the MC.

African Conflict Resolution Mechanism

Reconciliation (Nugbedodo)

The most important day for the Church and the MC during the peace process was 31st May, 2006. That was the day the two communities smoked peace pipe. On that memorable day, there were reconciliation rituals on the

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road that links Nkonya-Ntsumuru to Alavanyo-Kpeme. The day prior to the performance of the reconciliation rituals, which is called "Nugbedodo" in the Ewe dialect, the youth of Nkonya and Alavanyo, were supervised by the Church and MC, to clear the road that was abandoned for a long time and was declared a 'no-go area'. As they were going to weed with cutlasses, strategies, and mechanisms were put in place to ensure the safety of the people, by way of curbing any eventualities and casualties (Personal communication, Rev. Letsu-Kumah, January 6, 2016).

This was what they did; the youth lined up on both sides of the bushy road such that an Nkonya and an Alavanyo person would not be together. In case an Nkonya person was positioned on spot, a Minister of the Gospel, an elder from the Church or the Community or any member of the MC was placed next to him. Then an Alavanyo youth was positioned next to the Minister or whoever was there. The arrangement continued with one elder, a Minister or MC member standing between an Nkonya and an Alavanyo person. In this case, one of these important people separated Nkonya and Alavanyo youths until they finished clearing the road. It is worth noting that even though they were together and pledged mutual love and loyalty, precautions were taken. The road was cleared that day amidst drumming, singing and dancing towards the historic event.

The next day, 31st May, 2006, the two communities performed rituals by slaughtering a ram and making libation. After these, the Paramount Chief of each community (Nkonya and Alavanyo) took an oath that they would live in peace from then on. As a result, a symbolic firing of gun was performed to signify the end of the use of guns or any weapon. The Heads of churches who

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were present prayed to thank God for the cease fire and also begged Him to help the people to keep the oath they had taken in order to bring a lasting peace to the two communities. After these, there was embracing of one another as well as jubilation as a sign of reunion and peaceful coexistence. Some people could not help but shed tears of joy (Personal communication, Rev. Fr. Adzimah, January 5, 2016 and Rev. Letsu-Kumah, January 6, 2016).

Even though Heads of churches as well as other Ministers of the Gospel were there with their Bibles, to pray during the reconciliation process, the people did not put their faith solely in the Christian God. The Nkonya and Alavanyo held on to their belief in their traditional conflict resolution mechanism that involves taking an oath especially, by a high authority such as a Paramount Chief. This oath is held in a very high esteem, for the people are highly superstitious just like any African. They believe that going contrary to the oath can invoke the wrath of the gods and ancestors of the two communities, by afflicting them with calamity.

It can therefore be agreed upon that traditional religions have permeated all facets of the African life, so much so that it is difficult to distinguish between what is sacred and what is secular, what is religious and non-religious and between what is spiritual and material aspects of life. "Wherever the African is there is his religion: he carries it to the fields where he is sowing seeds or harvesting crop; he takes it with him to a beer party or to attend a funeral ceremony; and if he is educated, he takes religion with him to the examination room…" (Mbiti, 1990:195).

For them, the authority of the Paramount Chiefs as the last legal customary entity to seal an oath is crucial. The use of the traditional sword or staff by the Paramount Chief, to take an oath, cannot be undone unless through a series of purification rites. In the traditional setup, people awe their gods and deities and believe that curses, afflictions, ailments, strange things as well as death can destroy them if they go contrary to their will. It is therefore not easy to undo an oath. This event which received wide media coverage was attended by people from all walks of life (Personal communication, Rev. Letsu-Kumah, personal communication, January 6, 2016).

The Church, MC and the Government went through all these processes because their objective was not to fuel conflict but to restore peace in order that the Nkonya and Alavanyo will pick up the broken pieces and continue enjoying peaceful coexistence from where they left off. The peaceful coexistence is so paramount for, that is the only way to revive socio-economic activities and education in the area.

The two communities look 'dead and empty' as there is no development going on. One can walk on the major Street of Tayi for about 5 – 10 minutes without meeting anyone as there is fear and insecurity. The Church was therefore satisfied on the day of "Nugbedodo" that the warring factions can at last put the past behind them, live in peace and start rebuilding their lives and communities.

Figure 4: **The Researcher and some respondents (From the Left, Joseph Attobi, William Kwakye and William Ohene) walking on the empty streets of NkonyaTayi)**

Talking and Listening/Negotiation

The training programmes and dialogue workshops helped the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo to express themselves to one another freely and brought out their pent up feelings. They talked about the change of the conflict, the conflict itself and it effects on the communities both individually and collectively. Rev. Fr. Adzimah observed that it was very gratifying to see the disputants together and also expressing their thoughts, feelings and emotions freely without prejudices (Personal communication, January 5, 2016). He recounted that another remarkable event took place on June 29, 2005, confirming that the work of the Church and programmes of the MC had a positive impact on the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo. During one of the workshops in Ho, the women and the youth came out voluntarily without persuasion or coercion and decided to bring to an end; violence, quarrels, hostilities, attacks and counter attacks or anything that will fuel conflict and

pledged to live in peace. This was the moment all the stakeholders especially, the Church and the MC were fervently waiting for however, it was short-lived.

Conclusion

As Christians, the paramount goal of the RCC and the EPCG and the MC is to restore peace, to enable the warring factions put the past behind them and embark on their socio-economic activities in order to rebuild the Nkonya and Alavanyo areas. There is no development going on in the two communities. The education of children in the area is in jeopardy.

The rampant escalation of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict notwithstanding, the RCC and the EPCG played immense roles in the resolution process of the conflict in diverse ways as enumerated in this chapter. However, peace has become elusive in the Nkonya-Alavanyo communities. In spite of all odds, the role of the Church in the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict cannot be over emphasised. The Church in collaboration with the MC used dialogue, negotiation, talking and listening, and other African traditional conflict resolution mechanisms such as the rituals of "nugbedodo" that involved swearing of oath, slaughtering of a ram, making libation and firing of a gun.

Others are embracing one another, drumming, singing and dancing. The Nkonya and Alavanyo believe that peace is attainable and they are hoping for it. Darkwa et al. (2012) maintain that the Nkonya and Alavanyo believe that peace is like a journey they have embarked on and think that they are almost at their destination. However, the present stage of the journey is quiet sensitive, challenging and delicate and it is imperative that the Government of Ghana ensures that peace is sustained.

After working relentlessly for four years, the activities of the MC came to a halt in 2009 however, the RCC and EPCG continued with the reconciliation process. The conflict again escalated in 2013, 2014, 2015 to 2017 in spite of all the efforts from the Church, MC and other stakeholders. During the 2013 escalation, as usual, the Church hierarchy met with the people, dialogued, with them and donated food items and money to them as they used to do. The LCC met the parties in both communities and took them through the usual procedures. The EPCG Ministers also visited the Chiefs and elders of both communities in 2013. They dialogued with them and also made donations to them. Meetings were held at St. Theresa's Training College and Kpando regularly with the slogan being hammered to sensitise the people that the ultimate goal for the engagements was peace.These meetings were attended by other Ministers from GEC, the Church of Pentecost and other Pentecostals in the two communities. According to Rev. Tordzo (Chairman of the LCC at the time), these meetings were fruitful as they prevented conflict on many occasions (Personal communication, Rev. Tordzo, January 4, 2016).

The protocols were carried out during all the escalations even under dangerous conditions, to the latter part of 2017 by the Church however, lasting peace could not be achieved. Despite the failure of the Church to achieve her desired goal, her role cannot be underestimated.

Summary of the major roles of the Church in the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict

The Church started the resolution process in 1983 and is still playing their role on the ground as a church. Some of their inputs are:

The proactive engagement of the two parties by the selected churches and allowing them space for dialogue, during escalations and sporadic clashes. This was done by the leadership of the Church as well as the local Clergy in both communities.

They organised faith-oriented activities such as retreats, fasting and prayer sessions in the communities and sometimes on the disputed land. Organising Mass for Catholics in the conflict area, to solicit divine intervention of the Almighty God in the peace process that was imminent.

They counselled, consoled and encouraged people who were bereaved, traumatised, injured, maimed or affected in anyway during the conflict. The Pastors did this individually and collectively in both communities.

They used the pulpit every Sunday to conscientise their members on peace and reconciliation, effects of conflicts and all that would help them lay down their arms for peace to prevail.

The Church engaged influential indigenous church leaders in the area to calm down tension among the elders and war leaders during escalations.

They allowed some experts within their church leadership to serve as technical desk for the MC. The selected churches have become reference points of call during sporadic clashes.

The Church Leadership of the selected churches visited the leadership of the two communities on several occasions to look at the situation on the ground and intervene when the need arises. Provision of resources to the actors in terms of finance, lodging and feeding, either free or at a reduced cost during the peace process. Sometimes buses were sent from Ho to both communities to convey the people for free to mediation center. This was to enable them participate in the peace process.

Assisting the poor, with income generating activities. Sometimes, food items and used clothing were provided for the needy and vulnerable. Additionally, committees put in place to facilitate the work of the MC are made up of leaders of the selected Churches.

The Government in collaboration with the Church and the MC should ensure that peace is achieved in Nkonya and Alavanyo. The next chapter is the final one that looked at the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

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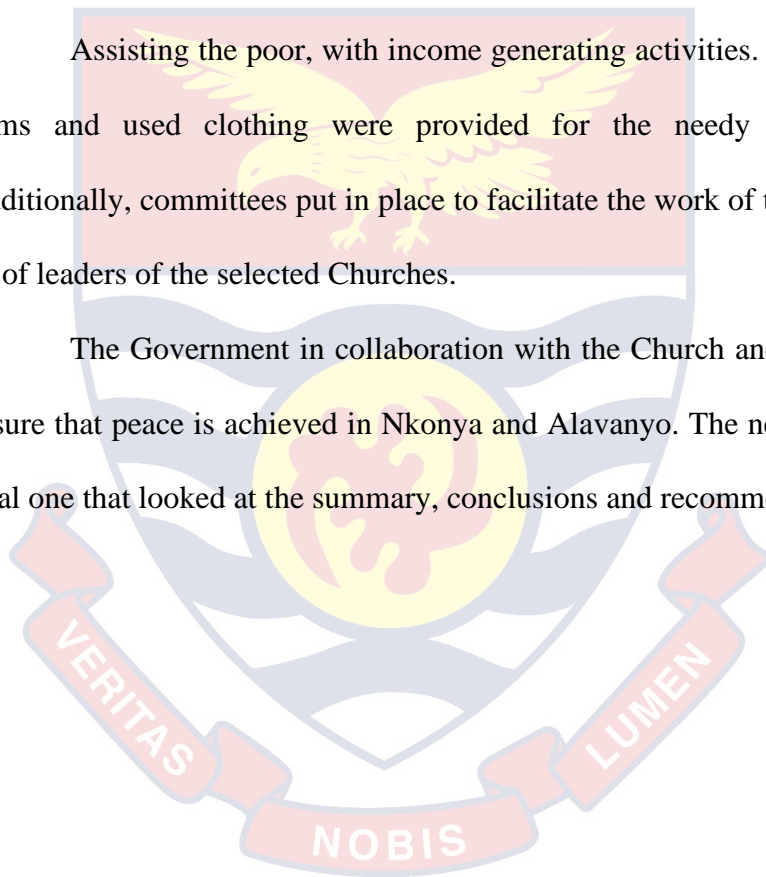
CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary

This study aimed at conducting a critical analysis on the major contributions of the RCC and EPCG, in resolving the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, between 1983 and 2015. The research was guided by specific research questions thus; what are the global conflict trends? What are the conflict trends in Ghana? What is the nature of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict? What are the Biblical principles, traditions and practices of conflict resolution and what are the major contributions of the RCC and the EPCG, in the resolution process of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict?

Since this research falls within the domain of socio-historical study, the historical method was employed. The researcher, used past documents of Nkonya and Alavanyo to enable her, delve into the history of the people on one hand and history of the conflict on the other. This was to enable the researcher gain insight into the complex nature of the conflict. Also, the researcher utilised the qualitative method, in the collection of extra data for the work. The primary and secondary data were collected and analysed in a descriptive manner.

This thesis comprises seven chapters. The chapter one, which is the introduction, consists of the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, scope of study, significance of study and sources of study. The rest are research methodology, sample size, literature review, theoretical framework, limitation of the study and organisation of study.

Chapter two examined global conflict trends generally with special reference to Africa. The phenomena and concept of conflict, causes of global conflicts, reasons why conflicts escalate and countries that are prone to conflict and conflict escalation were looked at. Additionally, the nature and types of conflict as developed by different scholars were equally assessed. Also, violent and protracted conflicts such as the Rwandan genocide, Angolan and Somalian conflicts were cited.

The third chapter evaluated conflict trends in Ghana. The nature, degree and causes of conflicts in all the ten regions (now fifteen) of Ghana were analysed with Upper West Region, emerging the most peaceful in the country. Conflict prone areas and reasons for the susceptibility of these areas to conflict were looked at. Types of conflicts prevalent such as, chieftaincy, resources-based, religious and political conflicts among others in each region were equally examined.

Chapter four assessed the nature of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, beginning with a brief history of the two communities. While the Nkonya history began from Nyansaland in Kenya to their present abode, the Alavanyo history began from Oyo in Nigeria to their present abode. Both the Nkonya and Alavanyo sojourned at different places before settling at their current communities. Their occupations, political systems, cultural and social lives and conflict resolution mechanisms were looked at. Also, the causes of the conflict were assessed.

The other areas this chapter tackled were the primary and secondary sources of the journey of Alavanyo, from Oyo to Notsie and finally to Alavanyo. The chapter concluded by saying that irrespective of the conflicting

stories from the Nkonya and Alavanyo and the violence both communities experienced and still experience (but sporadic), both communities enjoyed 500 years of uninterrupted peace before the misunderstanding in 1923. After that the people again enjoyed 60 years of peaceful coexistence until the conflict escalated in 1983.

Chapter five documented the Biblical principles, traditions and practices of conflict resolution, by purposively selecting episodes of conflicts that were resolved amicably in the Bible. All these episodes were treated as historical events. The Old Testament was the first book to be treated, where the position of God on conflict and conflict resolution were looked at. The next theme was Jesus' teaching on conflict and conflict resolution in the New Testament, conflict resolution among the Apostles in the Early Church and Paul's teaching on conflict and conflict resolution. The chapter ended by identifying some conflict resolution principles, traditions, and practices used such as negotiation, mediation, ADR and reconciliation.

The chapter six critically analysed the major contributions of the RCC and EPCG, in the mediation process of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. It opened the chapter with the basis for the two churches to take the initiative in the mediation of the conflict. This was followed by a brief history of the two churches. After a brief history of the missionary activities, the chapter continued with the activities of all the stakeholders in the conflict resolution process. The chapter recorded two historic events that took place between the Nkonya and Alavanyo during the reconciliation process, in June 2005 and May 31, 2006. In conclusion however, the chapter gave an account of how the

reconciliation was short-lived as the conflict escalated shortly after the reconciliation process and has since reached a stalemate.

Conclusions

Since the research looked at the mandate of the Church to resolve the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, time was spent on the participation of the Church in the mediation process of the conflict. After a critical analysis a number of issues were discovered.

Findings

- The researcher found out that the Nkonya and Alavanyo are predominantly RC and EP.

- That the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo hold the Church in high esteem.

- That these churches are easily able to collaborate with opinion leaders in both communities.

- That even though the Church tried to reconcile the Nkonya and Alavanyo, they could not resolve the conflict. Consequently, the resolution process came to a stalemate.

- It was also discovered that the Church's role in the mediation process was crucial, as they were given room to operate but somehow, their mandate was misconstrued by the two communities. While the Nkonya are blaming the Church for taking sides in favour of the Alavanyo who are Ewe (s), the

Alavanyo are of the view that they allowed the Nkonya too much time to make an input as to how the conflict could be resolved from 2009 to date thus, prolonging the stalemate.

- Individual Ministers of the gospel and the LCC played immense roles, both physically and spiritually, in the resolution process at the local level. With their Biblical mandate, they used some biblical conflict resolution mechanisms and recreational activities to bring together both parties, on many occasions, in order to prevent the conflict from escalating.

- The appellation of each of the two communities revealed some issues:

a. The Nkonya has this to say, "The Nkonya wants to rule and not ruled".

With this legacy handed down to them by their ancestors, it will be difficult for them to accept the suggestion of the Alavanyo whom they regard as their guests.

b. The Alavanyo also prides herself thus, "Agorkpala wua amexe duawo". (We kill with fanpalm frond for birds to feed on/Fanpalm frond that cuts down people for birds to devour. Ostensibly, the Alavanyo are fearless warriors who would find it difficult to succumb to the Nkonya. Additionally, they think the Nkonya owes them a reward so they have equal right to the disputed land.

- It has also been found out that the conflict never escalated in 1980 but 1983.

- Finally, PSC theory revealed that protracted conflicts are difficult to resolve as they are resilient to all conflict resolution, peacebuilding and conflict management strategies, mechanisms and approaches. These protracted conflicts are violent, intricate and problematic because they keep on escalating thus, destroying life and property. As they keep on escalating, they drag on for so long that some of them never come to an end and do not have clear winners. Furthermore, resource-based conflicts drag on for a long time because the actors find it difficult to give up their object of contention especially resources such as land. The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict is a resource-based protracted

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conflict that involves a piece of land. It is therefore important for the stakeholders to be circumspect in revisiting the resolution process.

Recommendations

The Church put in a lot of effort to resolve the conflict but could not. However, 2009 to date is too long a time to keep silent as though, nothing was happening. The silence on the part of the Church is not healthy enough for the reconciliation process.

- The researcher therefore recommends that the Churches use their biblical mandate to re-invite the communities to the negotiating table, using biblical principles as the two groups have their own popular theologies on which they stand to pass judgement on each other. This might bring a change of mind, knowing that the Church still cares, in order to bring about reconciliation which is a healing process that empowers individuals to live a community-based life.

- The researcher also recommends that the Church delves more into the biblical bases of conflict resolution. Besides the use of biblical principles, tradition and practices, the salvation message should be part of the mediation process. This is to enlighten the warring factions that an individual cannot enjoy Christ's salvation alone but with the community (human relationship). Forgiveness, love and peace should therefore be core words during the counselling and mediation sessions.

- The Nkonya are persistently complaining that the settlement was not fair to them and are resolute in their decision not to agree to the sharing of the disputed land. They also blame the Church for ignoring the fair judgement of King Solomon in the Bible. The researcher recommends that the Church goes

back, look at the Solomonic approach and emphasise the Biblical point of sharing.

- The Church should engage sthe NPC as stakeholders in future conflict resolution exercise since they have religious leaders on the Board.

- Conflict and conflict resolution should be included in the syllabi of all theological institutions as well as other faith-based institutions such as Islamic Institutions in the country. This is to train religious leaders to become professionals in that area in order to handle conflict situations professionally to avoid protracted conflict situations. This is based on the fact that religious leaders are the ones the Government and individuals engage when conflict occurs.

- Finally, it is recommended that the Church re-invites both communities, take time to re-listen to them and suggest to the offender to apologise for reconciliation to take place. This will go a long way to build hope and trust of the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo and other Christians, in the Church. It may in turn build their faith in God thus, maintaining them in the Church and also bringing other people to God. The Nkonya and Alavanyo will once again enjoy the peace they have been yearning for and also rebuild their communities for growth and development.

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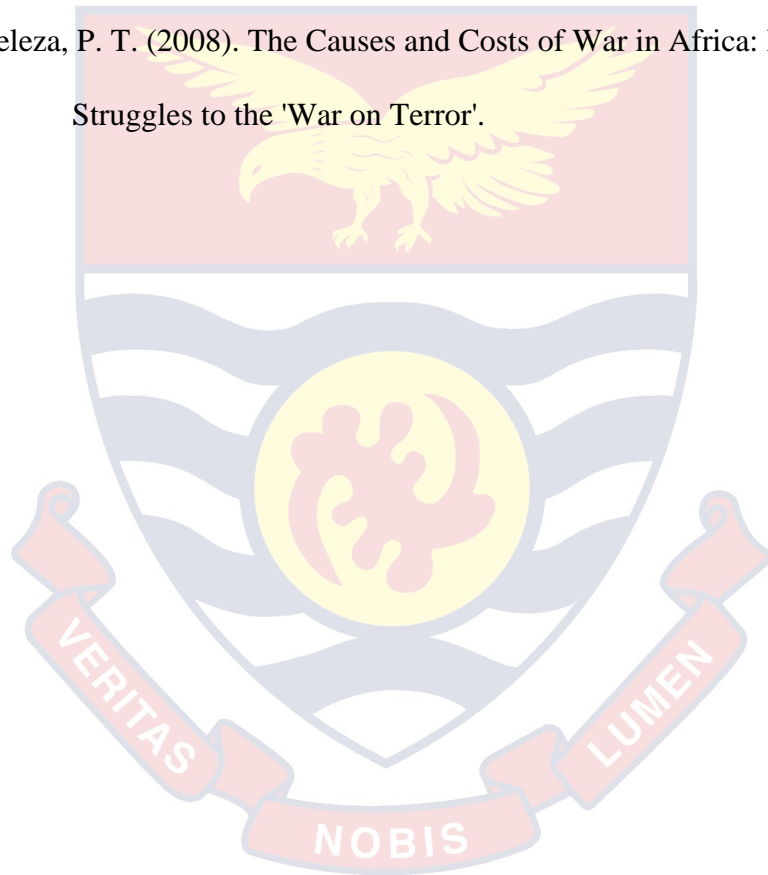
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LIST OF RESPONDENTS

S/N	NAME	BACKGROUND	PLACE OF INTERVIEW	DATE AND TIME OF INTERVIEW
1	Adzimah, Terrence(Rev. Fr.)	Member of MC	Ho-Catholic Secetariat	05-01-2016 @ 9:00am
2	Ansre, Gilbert (Rev. Prof.)	EPCG Minister & Retired Lecturer	Adenta-Accra	18-12-2017 @ 10:00am
3	Asigbetse, Josephine (Honourable)	Assembly Woman	Alavanyo-Kpeme	04-08-2017 @ 2:00pm
4	Atakora VII (Torgbe)	Paramount Chief	Hohoe	04-08-2017 @ 11:00am
5	Atiley, Edwin (Rev)	District Pastor	Alavanyo	12-01-2018 @ 1:00pm
6	Attobi, Joseph	Linguist	Nkonya-Tayi	31-07-2017 @ 9:00am
7	Buama, Livingston	Chairman-MC	Klefe	04-01-2016 @ 10:00am
8	Eletey, Christian	Regent-Tayi	Nkonya-Tayi	31-07-2017 @9:00am

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9	Kpende, William	Member-MC	Ho-Kpodzi	03-01-2017 @ 11:00am
10	Kwakye, William	Spokesperson	Nkonya-Tayi	31-07-2017 @ 9:00am
11	Letsu-Kumah, Cephas	Retired EPCG Pastor	Anyirawase	06-01-2016 @ 2:00pm
12	Mante, Gabriel	Retired Bishop of RCC	Jasikan	11-01-2018
14	Normenyo, Vincent	Trader	Hohoe	04-08-2017 @ 9:00am
15	Ohene, William	Catechist, EPCG	Nkonya-Tayi	31-07-2017 @ 9:00am
16	Tawiah, Raphael	RCC Priest	Agotime Kpetoe	08-01-2018
17	Tordzo, Samuel	EPCG Pastor	Nkonya-Ntsumuru	04-01-2016 @ 2:00pm

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APPENDIX B

NKONYA/ALAVANYO RELIGIOUS BODIES STATISTICS

TOWN/RELIGION	Christianity	Islam	Traditional	Without Religion
Nkonya	81%	8.5%	4.2%	0.08%
Alavanyp	89.1%	7.8%	1.2%	1.2%

Source – 2010 Population and Housing Census

District   Analytic   Report

Biakoye District   and   Hohoe   Municipality

Ghana   Statistical   Service, October, 2014.

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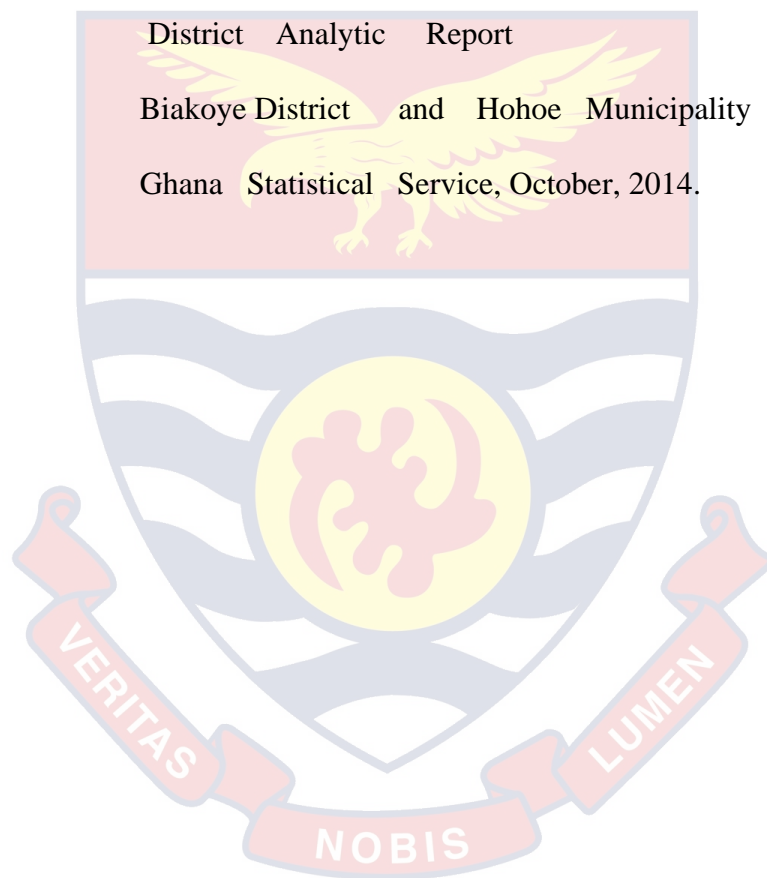
APPENDIX C

NKONYA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL SIGN BOARD

APPENDIX D

THE RESEARCHER WITH THE REGENT OF TAYI; NANA ELETEY, THE SPOKESMAN, WILLIAM KWAKYE AND MR. ATTOBI, THE LINGUIST.
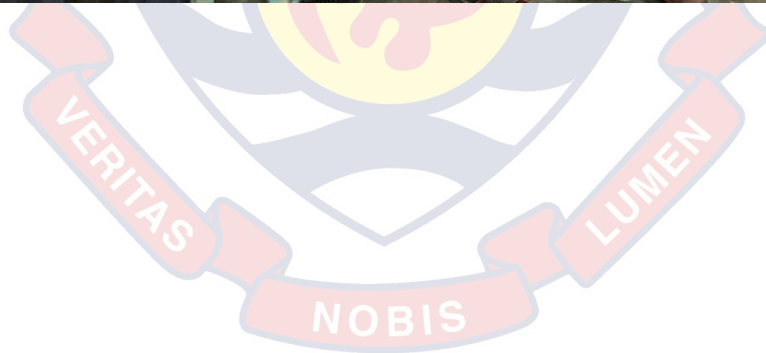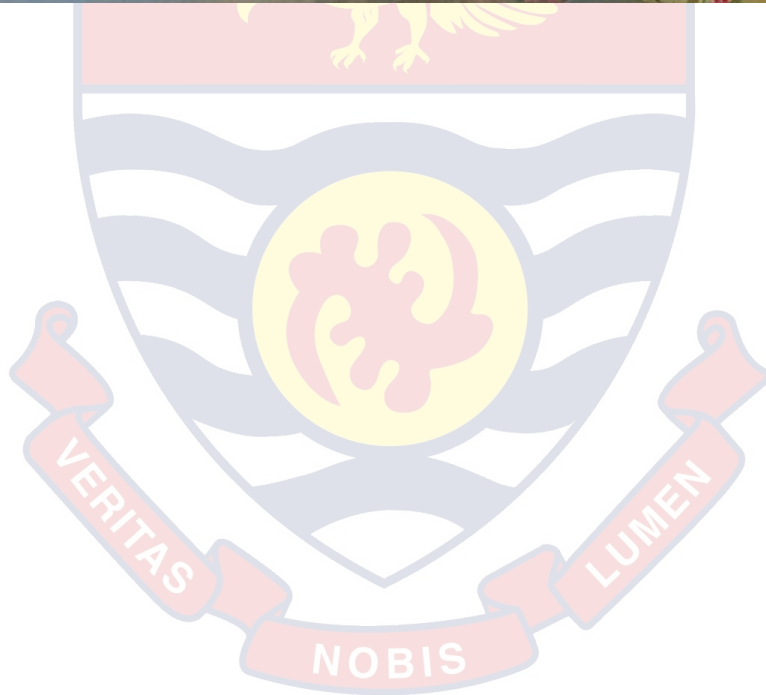
APPENDIX E

JUSTICE VAN LARE

10

IN THECOURT APPEAL
ACCRA GHGANA

(Sgd)...

JUSTICE OF APPEAL   Appeal from the judgment of van Lare, J. of the
High Court of Justice, Accra, Eastern Judicial
Division, dated the 24th day of May, 1957.

C.A. Civil Appeal
No. 12 of 1959

PAUL KODJO ANANE of Nkonya Tayi, Plaintiff/Respodent
NANA OKOTOR KWASI, Omanhene of Nkonya, and Co-Plaintiffs/
THE REGENT of Santrokofi

v:
1.   KWASI ASIGBETSE,   Appellant
2.   EUGEN PRIKUTSE,
3.   KOSIMU. 4. JOSEPH FOLI,
5.   KOKOR SAMPEDE & 6. AARON,   Defendants/
TSIAME KUMU all of Alavanyo Kpeme,   Appellants

7.   NANA DANIEL KABE ADJISAM,
Divisional Chief of Akpafu-Todazi,
8.   KWASI SIEPE of Alavanyo-Wudidi & Co-Defendants/
9.   NANA ATAKORA VI of Alavanyo-Kpeme, Appellants

This appeal coming on for hearing on the 19th
And 20th days of May, 1959 and the 8th day of June,
1959 before Granville Sharp, J.A. (Presiding) Acolatse
And Smith, JJ., in the presence of Akufo Addo for the
Appellants and Bentsi-Enchill for the Respondents.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that judgment was given as follows:-

Appeal dismissed.   Costs £91.11.6d

Court below to carry out.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF THE COURT

THIS 8TH DAY OF JUNE, 1959

REGISTRA, COURT OF APPEAL.

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Exhibit "A" – contd.

Counsel contended that the trial Judge had given too much weight to the evidence of this witness. We cannot agree. Mr. Norton Jones first gave his evidence, it appears, from recollection

5. but he was given an opportunity of refreshing his memory during the trial by studying the record of the Togo Plateau Forest Reserve Enquiry and the maps, and on recall clarified the points on which he had been doubtful at the beginning of his evidence.

Mr. Akufo Addo contended that the appellants, when they

10. agreed with the plaintiffs in the 1931 Enquiry with the boundaries as demarcated by Dr. Gruner, did not have in mind the 1913 demarcation but the 1905 one. We are satisfied that this contention is not well founded. If Exhibit "2", that is the 1905 plan, is examined it is clearly shown that it is not

15. a Gruner map. His initials are on the roads and not on the boundaries. Moreover, the maps does not show boundaries of the six states and therefore obviously could not have been the plan which in the 1931 Enquiry the parties had agreed as demarcating the boundaries of these states.

20. Furthermore, Mr. Norton Jones said:

"I recollect very clearly spending over a week on the "mountain explaining to the disputants then the Dr. "Gruner boundary, and the Santrokofin became satisfied "and agreed that their boundary was as laid down by Dr.

25. "Gruner. There was no question or suggestion during my "enquiry that the Dr. Gruner boundary lay anywhere else."

The learned Judge accepted the evidence of this witness and also found that the map which this witness had at the time was the original hand-drawn map by Dr. Gruner made in 1913. This

30. original plan for some reason was not tendered in evidence during the 1931 Enquiry and it cannot now be traced.

Having found as a fact and, as we have pointed out, there is ample evidence to support the finding that it was the 1913 plan which the defendants agreed in the 1931 Enquiry as forming

35. the boundaries in question, we agree with the learned trial Judge that the defendants are estopped per rem judicatam by the judgment in that Enquiry from raising again the question of their boundaries.

Apparently a survey plan was ordered in the Land Court

40. action. Mr. Akufo Addo contended that the plaintiffs had pointed out to the Surveyor different boundaries from those claimed under the 1913 Gruner plan. We think in the circumstances of this case that the survey plan was unnecessary. We think it is immaterial whether the plaintiffs pointed out to the Surveyor

45. different boundaries. All they asked for in their statement of claim was a declaration that the boundaries were as demarcated by Dr. Gruner in 1913, and it was on this claim that the learned trial Judge gave his judgment.

For those reasons we dismiss the appeal with costs

50. assessed at £91: 11: 6.

(Sgd) G. Granville Sharp
JUSTICE OF APPEAL

(Sgd) C. S. Acolatse
J U D G E.

55. (Sgd) H.C. Smith
J U D G E.

EXHIBIT "A"

Tendered in evidence by the plaintiff, not objected to, accepted and marked "A" in re: Paul K. Anano vs: Joseph Foli

(Sgd) J.B. Bannorman
4 - 5 - 70.

IN THE COURT OF APPEAL
ACCRA, GHANA

Coram:

Granville Sharp, J.A.
Acolatse, J.
Smith, J.

Civil Appeal
No. 12/59

8th June, 1959

1. Kwasi Asigbetse
2. Eugen Prekutse
3. Kosihu
4. Joseph Foli
5. Kokou Sampode and
6. Aaron Tsiame Kumu
   all of Alavanyo-Kpeme.   Defendants-Appellants

1. Nana Kabe Adjisam, Divisional
   Chief of Akbafu-Todji
2. Kwasi Siope of Alavanyo Wuddidi and
3. Nana Atakora VI of Alavanyo,
   Kpeme.   Co-defendants-Appellants.

v:

Paul Kodjo Anano of Nkonya-Tayi,   Plaintiff-Respondent

1. Nana Akootor Kwasi, Omahene of
   Nkonya and
2. The Regent of Santrokofi,   Co-Plaintiffs-Respondents.

JOINT JUDGMENT

This is an appeal from the judgment of van Lare, J. given on the 24th May, 1957 in the Land Court. The case was a boundary dispute between neighbouring states involving the divisions of Nkonya, Santrokofi, Alavanyo and Akpafu. The learned trial Judge found in favour of the plaintiffs who had claimed that the boundaries were determined and demarcated on a map made by Dr. Gruner in the year 1913. The defendants contended on the other hand that the boundaries had been demarcated in 1905 by Dr. Gruner and that those boundaries were redemarcated in 1931 by the District Commissioner, Captain Lilley. The evidence as to this was rejected by the Judge.

The simple issue in this appeal is whether the evidence supported the finding of the learned trial Judge in favour of the 1913 demarcation. In our opinion it does.

Mr. Akufo Addo, Counsel for the appellants argued that in deciding as he did, the trial Judge relied on what took place in the Togo Plateau Forest Reserve Enquiry held by Mr. Norton Jones in 1931. In the trial in the Land Court Mr. Norton Jones gave evidence and this was accepted by the learned trial Judge who remarked in his judgment:-

"This witness had impressed me favourably as a
"witness of truth and I regard him as an independent
"witness and accepted everything he has told the
"Court."

Counsel contended..../

APPENDIX F

JUSTICE FRANCOIS 1970

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APPENDIX 3

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE,
H O - VOLTA REGION.
A.D. 1970

SUITSNO. 28 – 35/61

NANA KWABENA AGYA-ATTA, Ohene
of Nkonya Tayi per PAUL K. ANANE
Regent of Nkonya Tayi per P.A. AKUFFO : PLAINFIFF
for and on behalf of his subjects

VERSUS

JOSEPH FOLI & OTHERS of
Alavanyo-Kpeme   : DEFENDANT

J U D G M E N T

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12

11 - 12 - 70.

In the High Court of Ghana, Volta Region, hild at Ho
On Friday the 11th day of December, 1970, before
G.R. Mcvane Francois, J.

SUIT NO. L. 28/61

NANA KWABINA AGYA – ATTA Ohene of Nkonya Tayi
Per FAUL K. ANANE Regent of Nkonya Tayi per P. A.
AKUFFO for and on behalf of his subjects   --   PLAINTIFFS
                    Versus
JOSEPH FOLI of Alavanyo Kpeme   --   DEFENDANT

SUIT NO. L. 29/61
NANA KWABINA AGYA ATTA etc   --   PLAINTIFFS
        Versus
TOGBE MENSAH ANIABOR Regent of Alavanyo Kpeme -- DEFENDANT

SUIT NO. L. 27/61
NANA KWABINA AGYA ATTA etc   --   PLAINTIFFS
        Versus
KOTOR SAMPENDE of Alavanyo Kpeme --   DEFENDANT

SUIT NO. L. 30/61
NANA KWABINA AGYA ATTA ect.   --   PLAINTIFFS
        Versus
TRIGATT KOSIRU of Alavanyo Kpeme --   DEFENDANT

SUIT NO. L. 31/61
NANA KWABINA AGYA ATTA etc   --   PLAINTIFFS
        Versus
W.A DONYA of Alavanyo Kpeme   --   DEFENDANT

SUIT NO. L. 32.61
NANA KWABINA AGYA ATTA etc   --   PALAINTIFFS
            Versus
KWASI ASIGBETSE of Alavanyo Kpeme -- DEFENDANT

SUIT NO. L 34/62
NANA KWABINA AGYA ATTA etc   --   PLAINTIFFS
            Versus

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EUGEN PRIKUTSE of Alavanya Kpeme   -- DEFENDANT

SUIT NO. L. 35/61
NANA KWABINA AGYA ATTA etc   -- PLAINTIFFS
Versus
AARON T. KUMA of Alavanyo Kpeme   -- DEFENDANT

CONSOLIDATED CASE

J U D G M E N T:

These suits which were consolidated for trial by consent of the parties on the 5th of May, 1970 have had a very chequered history. The writs were filed in November, 1961 and though attempts were made to dispose of the suits by 7 different Judges of this court, it remained part—heard from 1963 and it was only by order of the Chief Justice that trial de novo was commenced by me this year.

It is often not appreciated that our judicial system requires a Judge who commences a case to conclude it whenever possible. If such a Judge is transferred or assigned to other national work case are likely to grow hoary with neglect. It is also not appreciated that some delays are cause by the parties themselves. In this area where land litigation figures prominently in the categories of disputes before the courts, failure of the parties to co-operate with the appointed surveyors or abide by court orders in respect of interlocutory c matters are prime causes to delay. The day is not too far distant when determined Judges will boldly strike out of their lists causes whose claim of their prosecution.

The Plaintiff by his several writs suit for the following:-

"Recovery of possession of land lying in the
Nkonya side of Dr. Grunner's boundary in respect
of which the Ghana Supreme Court has declared
Plaintiff's stool to be the owner on a part of which
Defendant with the Regent Mensah Aniabor's encoura-
gement continues to make new farms and has refused
to come to terms with the plaintiff's stool."

In the statement of claim which were identical in the various suits, the plaintiff averred that the area in dispute belonged to the Nkonya Tayi division of the Nkonya State and that the Defendants who wee subjects of the Alavanyo stool had trespassed on to the Plaintiff's stool land. The plaintiff then proceeded to plead the following important averments.

minimize as far as legally possible any trial effects and procure the much desired racial homogeneity the country cries for.

Having deliberated rather anxiously on this matter I have come to the conclusion that the Defendants must be given a last chance to attorn tenants to the Plaintiffs. In entering Judgment for the Plaintiff I accordingly give each of the Defendants a period of one Calendar month from the date of this Judgment to enter into negotiations with the Plaintiff to attorn tenant. I must emphasize that this is the third Judgment the Defendants have lost, they have accordingly the last opportunity of showing their willingness to abide by the decision of the Courts of this land and acknowledge the boundary between them and the Plaintiff.

In Suit No.L.28/61 I giver Judgment for the Plaintiff for the reliefs claimed, but stay judgment for the month from date hereof. I reserve liberty in the Plaintiff to apply to this Court for further order should the Defendant fail to attorn tenant within the time limited herein.

I give a similar judgment in Suits Nos.

L.29/61	L.31/61
L.27/61	L.32/61
L.30/61	L.34/61
	L.35/61

I award the Plaintiff in each of the 8 cases Counsel Costs assessed at N 50.00. Out of pocket expenses to Be taxed.

<div align="right">

(Sgd)   G.R. Mcvane Francois,
J U D G E

</div>

COUNSEL:

MR. E.D. KOM FOR MR. A.W. ACQUAAH of Plaintiffs

MR. L.K. MAWUDOKU for MR. I.E. OSEI BONSU for Defendants.

APPENDIX G

LIST OF PEOPLE WHO ATTORNED TENANCY 1970

ALAVANYO CITIZENS WHO ATTONED TENANCY WITH NKONYA BEFORE THE 1970 HO HIGH COURT JUDGMENT

1. EWEBLEAME KWAME
2. AGBODOGLI ELIAS (His Evidence At Page 294 of Record of Proceedings)
3. ALEX KWAKU KOMEGBEY
4. AARON PRIKUTSE
5. AMPONY KOFI
6. GATOR
7. NYEMINKU MENSAH
8. EBRI PONGO
9. EBRITSE PONGO
10. KWASI NYAMPONG
11. KWASIKUMAH KOMEGBE (His Evidence at Page 296 of Appeal Record)

LIST OF ALAVANYO CITIZEN TRESSPASSERS WHO ATTONED TENANCY WITH NKONYAS AFTER THE 1975 APPEAL COURT JUDGMENT

1. JOSH FOLI
2. EUGEN PRIKUTSE
3. KWASI ASIGBETSE
4. WINFRED DORNYAH
5. TRAIGOT AKOSIHU
6. AARON FOLI
7. KOKOR STAMPEDE
8. YAW AGBODOGLI (His Evidence at Page 296 of 1970 Record of Proceedings)
9. AMPONY GATOR
10. ALEX KOMEGBE
11. KWASIKUMAH KOMEGBE
12. AKABU KOMEGBE

APPENDIX D

P. O. Box 3,
Alavanyo Kpeme - V/R.,

14th January, 1976

Sir,

In the matter of:-

Paul Anane of Nkonya Tayi   ..   ---- Plaintiff

versus

Joseph Foli & othrs   ..   ..   Defendant

With reference to your request of submitting
names of the people who farmed on your land in
connection with the above subject matter, we
submit as stated hereunder, the names as follows:-

1. JOSEPH FOLI
2. KWASI ASIGBETSE
3. WINFRED DONYA
4. TRAUGOTT AKOSIHU
5. EUGENE PRIKUTSE
6. AARON FOLI
7. KOKOR SAMPEDE.

We have the hohour to be,

Sir,

Yours faithfully,

1. ....
for   FARMERS
(JOSEPH FOLI)

2. E. K. Prikutse
for   FARMERS
(EUGENE PRIKUTSE)

PETER AKUFO
AND
NANA KOMLA ADJA-ATA,
NKONYA TAYI.

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APPENDIX H

JUSTICE FRANCOIS 1970

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE,
VOLTA REGION.
HO

N'LA KARIMA ABYA-AFTA of Ekorye :PLAINTIFF

VERSUS

JOHMS FOKI & ORS   : DEFENDANT

R U L I N G

(97): By G.L. Kovano Francois
J U D G E

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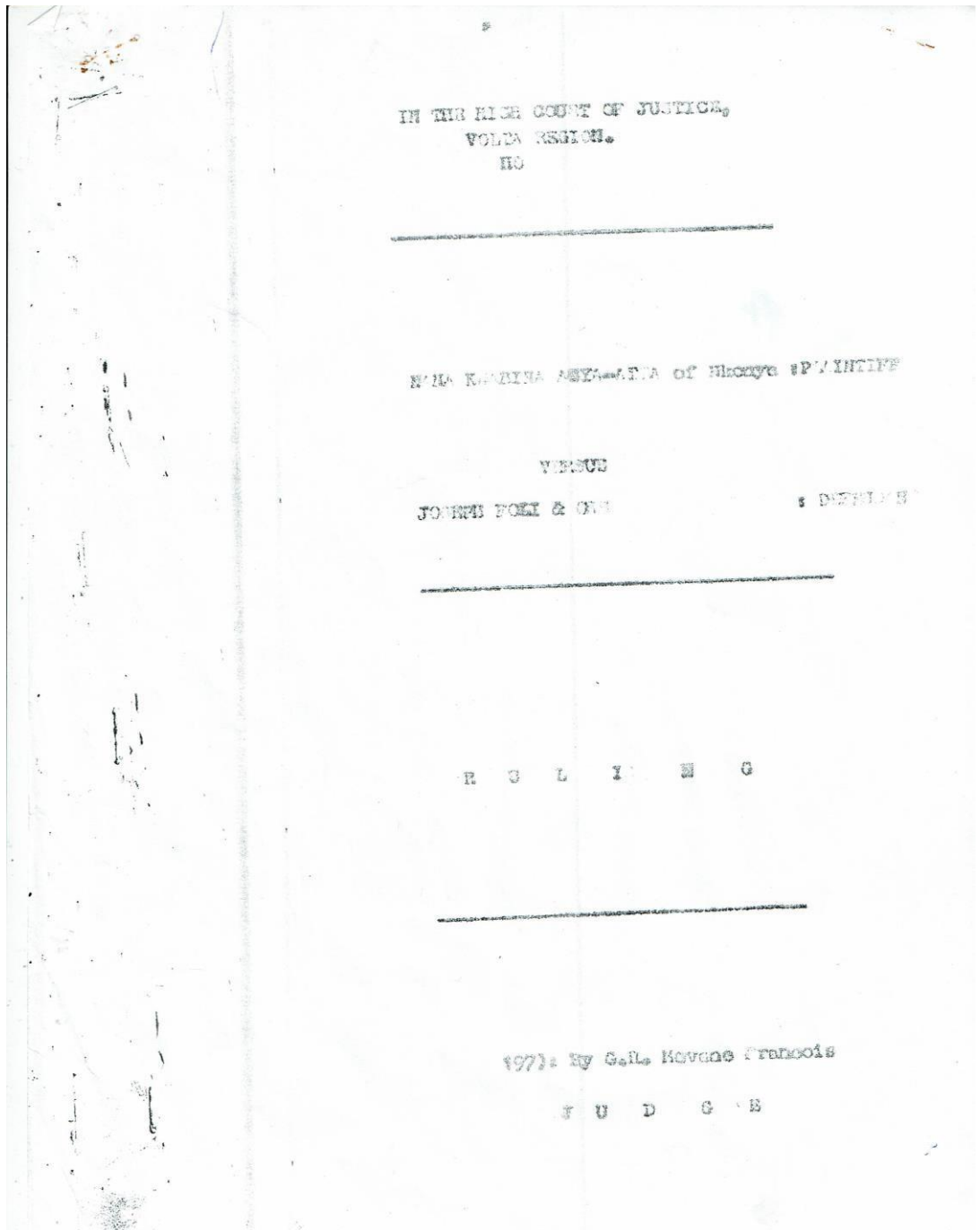
/my   In/view the order of Interim Injunction abated
on the final determination of the suit on 11/12/70.
The defendants not having taken advantage of the
judgment to attorn tenant, have no legal justification
to deny the Plaintiff his rights as a successful party.

This is not an application to stay the Plaintiff
in view of a pending appeal. Different considerations
would arise if such an application is made but certainly
not the incarceration of the victorious party as of
contempt.

This application has no merit to commend it. I
consequently dismiss it with costs of N¢30,00 to the
Respondent.

(Sgd) G.R.N. Francois
J U D G E.

COUNSEL:

MR. E.D. KOM of PlaintiffRespondent.
MR. OPOKU AKYAMPONG for Defendants.

pmk

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APPENDIX I

JUSTICE KORANTENG ADDOW 1980

IN THE STOOL LANDS BOUNDARIES SETTLEMENT
COMMISSION SITTING AT HO URBAN COUNCIL HALL
ON FRIDAY, 25TH JANUARY, 1980 BEFORE THE
COMMISSIONER F.T.C. AMORIN

ENQ. NO. 7/79

In the matter of the boundary dispute between
NKONYA AND ALAVANYO

NKONYA: ABSENT

ALAVANYO: PRESENT

JUDGMENT

This enquiry i.e. No. 7/79 has arisen as a
result of a petition addressed by farmers and elders
of Alavanyo Traditional area to the Regional Adminis-
tration No for determination of boundaries for six
traditional areas which later through various
processes finally found its way to this Commission.
On the 10th day of October, 1979, Mr. Okra learned
counsel for Alavanyo appeared before my learned
brother Deputy Commissioner J.K. Wusicc and submitted
that the boundary of the following six traditional
areas with the Togo Plateau Forest Reserve, that is
Nkonya, Akpafu, Santrokofi, Gbi and Bowiri be deter-
mined. Then on 30th October, 1979 an order was made
for each stool to file a statement of dispute within
a specified period. This having been done, learned
counsel for Alavanyo conceded on 4th December, 1979
that in paragraph 5 of the statement of dispute filed,
it appears that there is no boundary dispute between
Alavanyo, Gbi, Akpafu, Santrokofi and Bowiri and conse-
quently the said stools be struck off the enquiry with
¢100.00 costs against Alavanyo which was so done.
The dispute is now a straight contest between Alavanyo
and Nkonya stools and the enquiry was adjourned to
13th December, 1979 for hearing. At the said date
Mr. Kom for Nkonya stool drew the attention of the
Commission to Order 25 Rules 2 and 3 for preliminary
argument. He submitted among other things that the
matter was res judicata having regard to:-

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- 2 -

(1) Suits No. Tr.L. 19/1953 entitled
Paul Kodo Anane of Nkonya &
Duor   - Plaintiff.

The Regent of Santrokofi - Co-Plaintiff.

Kwesi Asigbetse and 8 others - Defendants
and

(2) C.A. 112/74 entitled
Nuna Kwabina Agya-Atta & ors. - Plaintiffs -
Respondents

Vrs.

Joseph Foli and 8 ors. - Defendants/Appellants

as set out in paragraph D(ii) (v) of the statement of
dispute filed on 31/10/79 dealing with 2 judgments, and
tendered in support thereof Dr. H. Grunner's plan of
1913 which was received as Exhibit "A" by consent of
Counsel. He also referred the Commission to Mr. Hagan's
plan which was equally received with consent of Counsel
as Exhibit "B". The said plan is proof of physical
demarcation carried out on the ground by the said Hagan
at the instance of the Ho High Court for both Alavanyo
and Nkonya stools based on Dr. Grunner's plan of 1913.
The High Court Ho accepted the boundary as shown by
Nkonya and gave judgment thereon. Dissatisfied Alavanyo
stool appealed to the Court of Appeal which said Appeal
was dismissed on 4th December, 1975 and the judgment
was tendered herein and marked Exhibit C by consent of
Counsel.

It was therefore strongly urged that having regard to
the judgments and the relevant plans that there cannot
be said in law that there is boundary dispute between
Nkonya and Alavanyo see paragraph D (vii) and (viii)
of the statement of dispute filed on behalf of Nkonya
stool on 31st October, 1979. Mr. Kom, learned counsel
for Nkonya stool submitted finally that where a party
pleads fraud as was done by Alavanyo stool in paragraphs
2,3,4,5 and 6 of its reply filed on 19th November, 1979
without giving particulars then the said allegation of
fraud must be ignored in law in compliance with Order 19
Rule 6 of the Rules of Court; moreover the Commission is
not competent to deal with questions of fraud and chall-
enges to plans used in previous proceedings as its juri-
sdiction is strictly limited to Section 4 of Stool
Boundaries Settlement Commission Decree of 1973

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December, 1980.

sense that it will have no power whether discretionary or obligatory over the matter. When the court has decided that it has no jurisdiction, then it becomes functus officio and it has no power over any aspect of the matter. What he did, i.e. ordering a redemarcation of the boundaries, amounts to granting the request contained in the petition presented to him by the respondent. What he did is palpably erroneous, it was done without jurisdiction. The error appears on the face of the record, certiorari therefore lies to remove the order to this court and to quash it. And I do so order.

(Sgd.) C.A. Koranteng-Addow (Mrs.)
JUSTICE OF THE HIGH COURT.

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APPENDIX J

JUSTICE AMORIN 1980

2nd December, 1980.

In the High Court of Justice, Ghana, held in Accra on Tuesday the 2nd day of December, 1980, before Mrs. Cecilia Koranteng-Addow, J.

Miscellaneous Matter
No.91/1980.

THE REPUBLIC

versus

STOOL LANDS BOUNDARIES SETTLEMENT COMMISSION,
EX-PARTE: NANA AGYA ATTA

AND

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION FOR CERTIORARI

AND

IN THE MATTER OF BOUNDARIES DISPUTE BETWEEN IKONYA AND ALAVANYO:

E. Obebo for applicant.

Okrah for defendant.

JUDGMENT:

The applicant in this application is asking this court for an order of Certiorari to bring up to be quashed the order made by the Commissioner of Stool Lands Boundary Settlement Commission in an enquiry petition brought by the respondent in this case. In the petition the farmers of the respondent stool asked for determination of certain boundaries between the stools of the parties therein. The applicant herein raised a preliminary objection to the inquiry on the grounds that the matter had been determined between the same stool in two suits namely: E.K. ANANE & anor., vs: K. ASIGSEBE, Transfer suit No.19/53 which ended at the Court of Appeal in 1959 and Foli vs: Agya Atta reported (1976) 1 G.L.R. 194 also a decision of the Court of Appeal. In both cases the plea of res judicata was successfully maintained. Again in each case, the fact that the boundaries between the stools are as those marked in a 1915 plan referred to as Grunner's plan was upheld by the respective courts. The High Court in Foli's case had actually ordered physical demarcation of the boundaries in accordance with his findings of fact in that case.

Not unnaturally when the plea of res judicata was raised by the applicant before the Commissioner, he upheld the plea and held that ......

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2nd December, 1980.   2.

that both stools were estopped by the judgments mentioned above.
Both judgments which the learned commissioner found binding on the
parties are both decisions of the Court of Appeal. One would have
expected that after he made that pronouncement, he would have stopped
at that. The Court of Appeal is a superior court and its judgments in
those cases have not been discharged, therefore they are of full force
and validity. A court of inferior jurisdiction cannot pronounce
against its validity. See Punjabi Brother v. Namih (1962) 2 G.L.R.
46 at 49 relying on the dictum in In Re: Padstow etc., Assurance
Association (1882) 20 Ch. D.137.

        The learned Commissioner after he had ruled that the matter
is res judicata, proceeded and ordered physical demarcation of the
boundaries on the grounds that he found variation in the plan made by
the surveyor whose demarcation the High Court had accepted and which
the Court of Appeal had affirmed. I think that after the learned
Commissioner had ruled that the matter was res judicata he became functus
officio, and he could not make any order which obviously contradicts
the judgments of the Superior Court. After that finding, the _
Commissioner's jurisdiction to entertain the matter was ousted, so
he had no power to make the order for a fresh demarcation. There was
nothing pending before him to give him jurisdiction to make that order.
The order therefore is void and of no effect. It was made in excess of
jurisdiction, and certiorari will lie to quash it.

        Mr. Cooho's argument is formidable and unanswerable. I have
not been shown any reason nor addressed any legal argument as to why
the application should not be granted. I have been told by counsel for
the respondent that the Commissioner had a discretionary power to order
the demarcation and he was right in using it in favour of the
respondent. This argument has no legal support, and it does not
accord with common sense either. The jurisdiction of the Commissioner
is not by statute. It is when a court is seised with jurisdiction
to try a matter that the issue as to the nature of the power or
discretion it has becomes relevant. If the judge has no jurisdiction
at all to entertain the matter then it is only a matter of common
                                                            sense ....

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thence running in north-westerly direction following the said Tsatadu stream or Fante or Sasatu stream to a point known or described as Tsietoe in the north.

Concrete pillars shall be erected along the boundary at reasonable distances except where the boundary runs along a river or stream.
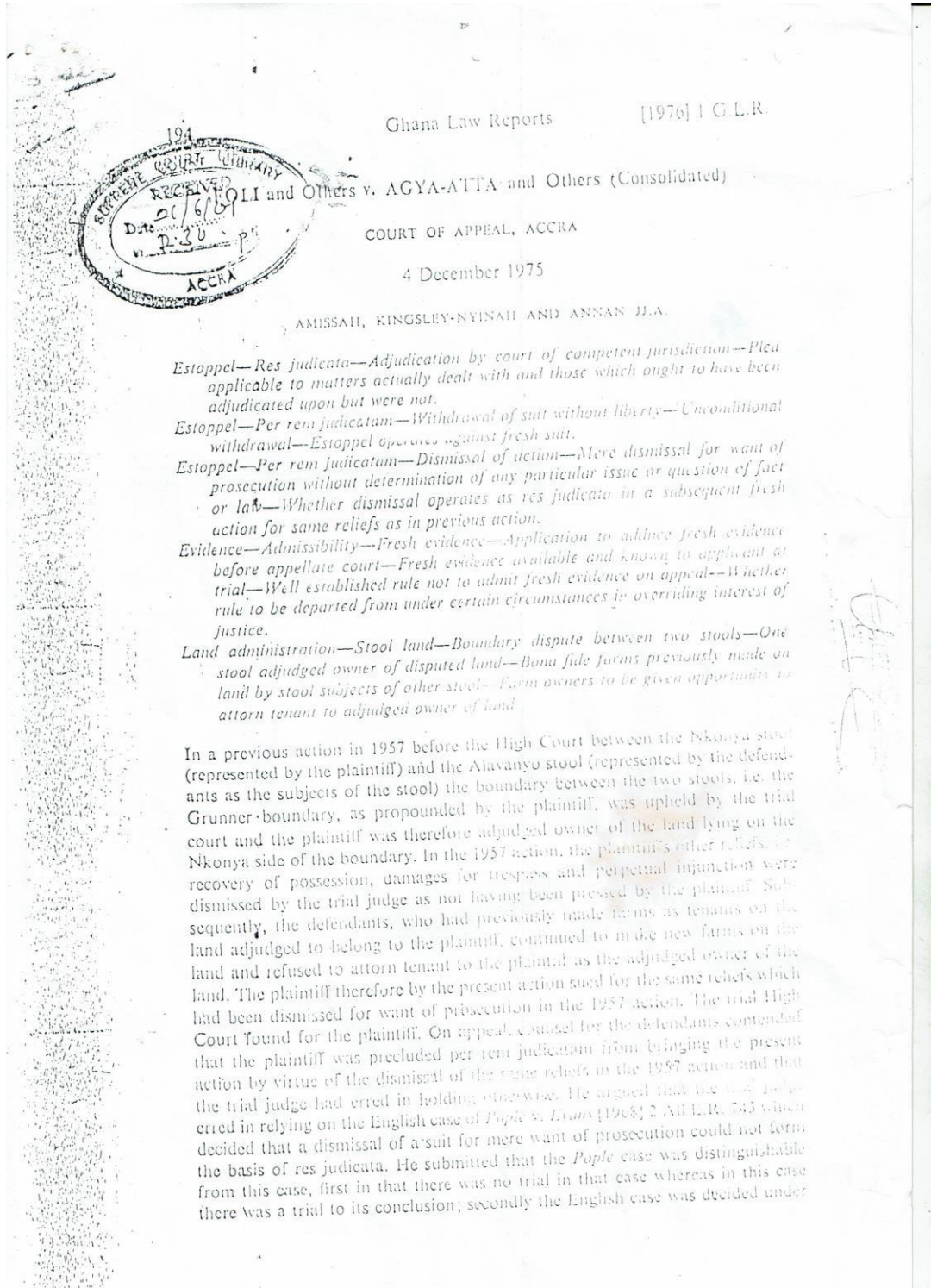
There will be costs of ₡200.00 in favour of Nkonya stool.

Dated at Ho this 25th day of January, 1980.

(Sgd.) JUSTICE F.T.C. AMORIN
COMMISSIONER

APPENDIX K

RULING IN GHANA LAW REPORTS

Ghana Law Reports   [1976] 1 G.L.R.

...OLI and Others v. AGYA-ATTA and Others (Consolidated)

COURT OF APPEAL, ACCRA

4 December 1975

AMISSAH, KINGSLEY-NYINAH AND ANNAN JJ.A.

Estoppel—Res judicata—Adjudication by court of competent jurisdiction—Plea applicable to matters actually dealt with and those which ought to have been adjudicated upon but were not.

Estoppel—Per rem judicatam—Withdrawal of suit without liberty—Unconditional withdrawal—Estoppel operates against fresh suit.

Estoppel—Per rem judicatam—Dismissal of action—Mere dismissal for want of prosecution without determination of any particular issue or question of fact or law—Whether dismissal operates as res judicata in a subsequent fresh action for same reliefs as in previous action.

Evidence—Admissibility—Fresh evidence—Application to adduce fresh evidence before appellate court—Fresh evidence available and known to applicant at trial—Well established rule not to admit fresh evidence on appeal—Whether rule to be departed from under certain circumstances in overriding interest of justice.

Land administration—Stool land—Boundary dispute between two stools—One stool adjudged owner of disputed land—Bona fide farms previously made on land by stool subjects of other stool—Farm owners to be given opportunity to attorn tenant to adjudged owner of land.

In a previous action in 1957 before the High Court between the Nkonya stool (represented by the plaintiff) and the Alavanyo stool (represented by the defendants as the subjects of the stool) the boundary between the two stools, i.e. the Grunner boundary, as propounded by the plaintiff, was upheld by the trial court and the plaintiff was therefore adjudged owner of the land lying on the Nkonya side of the boundary. In the 1957 action, the plaintiff's other reliefs, i.e. recovery of possession, damages for trespass and perpetual injunction were dismissed by the trial judge as not having been pressed by the plaintiff. Subsequently, the defendants, who had previously made farms as tenants on the land adjudged to belong to the plaintiff, continued to make new farms on the land and refused to attorn tenant to the plaintiff as the adjudged owner of the land. The plaintiff therefore by the present action sued for the same reliefs which had been dismissed for want of prosecution in the 1957 action. The trial High Court found for the plaintiff. On appeal, counsel for the defendants contended that the plaintiff was precluded per rem judicatam from bringing the present action by virtue of the dismissal of the same reliefs in the 1957 action and that the trial judge had erred in holding otherwise. He argued that the trial judge erred in relying on the English case of *Pople v. Evans* [1968] 2 All E.R. 743 which decided that a dismissal of a suit for mere want of prosecution could not form the basis of res judicata. He submitted that the *Pople* case was distinguishable from this case, first in that there was no trial in that case whereas in this case there was a trial to its conclusion; secondly the English case was decided under

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APPENDIX L

JUSTICE AMMISAH 1975

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Civil Appeal
No. 112/74

4th December, 1975

NANA KWABINA AGYA-ATTA etc.,   Plaintiff-Respondent

v.

JOSETH FOLI & ORS. ,   Defendants – Appellants.

(C O N S O L I D A T E D)

J U D G M E N T

Dr. Kludze for the Appellants.

Dr. Kom for the Respondent.

IN THE SUPERIOR OF JUDICATURE
THE COURT OF APPEAL
ACCRA-GHANA

COREM:

Amissa, J. A (Presiding)
Kingsley-Nyinah, J. A.
Anaan, J.A.

Civil appeal
No 112.74

4th December, 1975.

NANA KWABINA AGYA-ATTA etc., ,   Plaintiff-Respondent

v.

JOSEPH FOLI & ORS.   Defendants-Appellants.

(C O N V S O L I D A T E D)

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J U D G M E N T

AMISSAH, J.A.: The Plaintiff and the defendants in these consolidated cases are neighborsa. The plaintiff and his people are from Nkonya Tayi. The defendants ARE FROM Alavanyo Kpeme. The plaintiff and the defendants are separated by a new famous historical boundary. It is the Grunner boundary, so called after Dr. Grunner, a German administrator in Togo before the first World war, who drew it on a map showing the extent of British and German territorial interest in the area in 1913. The parties have always accepted that the boundary separating their lands was demarcated by Dr. "Grunner. Their dispute has been ever which map the authentic Grunner boundary could be found on, a matter that was settled some twenty years ago, and how this documentary demarcation is actually reflected on the land itself.

The writs in these actions were issued in 1961 by the then Regent of Nkonya Tayi for and on behalf of his subjects.

In each, he claimed:

"1.   Recovery of possession of land lying on the Nkonya
       side of Dr. Grunner's boundary in respect of which
       the Ghana Supreme Court has declared Plaintiff's Stool
       to be the owner, but on part of which Defendant with
       the Regent Mensah Aniabor's encouragement
       continues to make new farms and has refused to come to
       terms with the Plaintiff's Stool.

2.   Perpetual injunction restraining Defendant and his
       workmen or labourers from further trespass upon
       Plaintiff's said stool land."

The cases were eventually disposed of by Francois J., as he then was, in 1970. He gave judgment in favour of the Plaintiff. It is from that judgment that this present appeal is brought.

By far the most important question raised before us is that of estoppel. Dr. Kludze for the defendants has asked us to reverse the judgment of the Court below on the ground that the Plaintiff was prohibited by law from maintaining this action as there was a previous valid judgment between the parties on the point now brought by him. In other words, the Plaintiff is estopped per res judicatam. It is a well known rule of law that a person cannot bring an action where the cause of his claim or the issue which he seeks to have determined has as between the parties or their privies already been disposed of by a competent Court. This is sa statutory rule intended to prevent the harassment of people by a multiplicity of law suits. Accordingly, the rule is framed widely enough to cover not only matters which were actually dealt with in the previous judgment but those as well which ought to have been brought up than but which were not. Thus, in the most famous statement of that aspect of the principle, Wigram V.C. in Hendersen v. Hendersen (1843) 3 Hare, 114 puts the point this way:

       "I believe I state the rule of the Court correctly when
       I say, that where a given matter becomes the subject of
       Litigation in, and adjudication by, a Court of competent

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their continuation on the land. The Plaintiffs would be well advised to consider whether these terms are justified or fair in the present day and ago.

For the reasons given above, I would dismiss these appeals.

KINGSLEY-NYINAH, J.A.:   I agree.

ANNAN, J.A.:   I also agree.

Dr. Kludze for the Appellants.

Mr. Kom for the Respondent.