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Methods of Conflict Resolution in African Traditional Society

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Abstract

This study examined the patterns or mechanism for conflict resolution in traditional African societies with particular reference to Yoruba and Igbo societies in Nigeria and Pondo tribe in South Africa. The paper notes that conflict resolution in traditional African societies provides opportunity to interact with the parties concerned, it promotes consensus-building, social bridge reconstructions and enactment of order in the society. The paper submits further that the western world placed more emphasis on the judicial system presided over by council of elders, kings' courts, peoples (open place)

assemblies, etc; for dispute settlement and justice dispensation. It concludes that traditional conflict resolution techniques such as mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, and negotiation as well as cross examination which were employed by Africans in the past, offer great prospects for peaceful co-existence and harmonious relationships in post-conflict periods than the modern method of litigation settlements in law courts.

Key words: African Conflict, Mediation, Reconciliation, Adjudication, Negotiation, etc

Introduction

In the traditional African society, conflict may generally exist whenever or wherever incompatible events occurred and may result in “win-lose character”. The resolution, transformation and management of conflict may however produce win-win situation too. Truth is a covenant logo that disputants or parties in conflict must not miss. In contemporary African society, nobody cares about the truth. If Africans have to put the falling apart together, her original values must be revisited.

Conflict is as natural as the concept of peace contrary to the global or universal conception. Africans have particular ways of conceptualizing conflict. Traditional definitions of conflict regard it as “a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals” (Onigun Otite & Albert, 2001). However, conflict may generally exist wherever or whenever incompatible activities occur and may result in “win-lose character. The resolution, transformation and management of conflict may also produce a win-win situation.

Conflict: a conceptual analysis

Conflict takes various forms and dimensions in African societies; it is significant to note that conflict is difficult to define from the perspective of the Africans. It seems to be part of excitement for

networking relationship, whether negative or positive. Consequently, conflicts are in the magnitude of rage, rift, misunderstanding, family and market brawls, skirmishes and wars, public insurrections and assaults. It also includes chieftaincy and boundary disputes. These storms of conflicts are wide spread in Africa (Olaoba, 2005, pp. 22-37). Conflict as an element of social interaction has been defined in various dimensions. Some writers argued that, a conflict situation emerges when two or more parties could not agree on an issue. The parties to such conflict may not necessary be the government or nation states. In an incompatible stage among nation- states, every part involved seeks to achieve certain objectives, such as additional or more secure territory, security, access to markets, prestige, alliances and the overthrow of an unfriendly government (Omotosho, 2004)

The study of conflict in Africa has not always been mindful of the need to consider the interaction of local and international factors in the evolution of conflicts between African Nations. African conflict is not susceptible to prediction, although it can be explained. Overt manifestations of conflict are seldom unremitting, even in relations between rival cultures (Robert, 1981, p. 3). Conflict is a particular relationship between states or rival factions within a state which implies subjective hostilities or tension manifested in subversive economic or military hostilities (Quincy, 1971).

Conflict can be described as a condition in which are identifiable group of human beings weather tribal, ethnic, linguistic, religious, socio-political, economic, cultural or otherwise is in conscious opposition to one or more other identifiable human group because these groups are pursuing what to be incompatible goals (Ibid)

More importantly, conflict arises from the interaction of individuals who have partly, incompatible ends, in which the ability of one actor to gain his ends, depends to an important degrees on the choice or decisions that other parties will take. Conflict could be violent on uncontrollable dominant or recessive, resolvable or insolvable under various sets or circumstances (Omotosho, p.2). A.A Mohammed argues that Conflicts are inevitable wherever severe resources are

unequally distributed among competitors and inequity is reflected in cultural and political relationship between groups. With regards to various issues in dealing with conflict, it is important to bear in mind not just overt, physical violence, but also the sometimes subtly disguised forms of structural and cultural violence (Adam, 2000, p.13). Conflict management in general and conflict resolution in particular, are almost entirely determined by our understanding of the composition of a conflict and not only by symptoms (Kotze, 2000, pp.77-86).

In fact, Albert's position on conflict was that there is nothing wrong with conflict, it is a critical mechanism by which goals and aspirations of individuals and groups are articulated; it is a channel for a definition of creative solutions to human problems and a means to the development of a collective identity (Albert, 2001, p.3).

The repercussion of conflicts between person to person, group to group, community to community, state to state or nation to nation rarely cease with the termination of overt hostilities. However, conflict can solve contentions issues between nations or it can further exacerbate them. In any case, the consequences of conflicts are usually felt for some time after a war ends (Robert, 1981, p. 208).

Wadinga described African conflicts as phenomenon which are frequently brushed and dismissed as been chaotic, or worthy of some vague pity or humanitarian concern, but rarely of any in-depth political analysis. Wadinga added that the divide and rule policies of colonial administrators assured the docility of different ethnic groups and this shielded them from the menace of insurrection (Wadama, 2013, p.319).

Principles of conflict resolution in traditional African societies

In the pre-colonial days, there were many principles guiding conflict resolution in the traditional African societies. Those who want their conflicts resolved must have confidence in the tribunal that would resolve the dispute. These include elders, chiefs, priests, priestesses,

secret cult etc. The disputants must have confidence in them. They (disputants) must be ready to submit themselves to the constituted authorities. These conflicts could be interpersonal conflicts and inter-communal conflicts. These may range from person – person to person – community, nation – nation (Poku, 1998, p. 106)

Truth

This is the major significance of conflict resolution. How would the other opponents know that there will be no partiality? Both disputants must be truthful. The mediator, arbitrator, judge must also be truthful, the presence of the ancestral forces is a factor; some may collapse or forced to say the truth because of the ancestral forces. The mediator, judge and arbitrator must be well prepared because truth is not static. Truth is also a covenant logo disputant or parties in conflict must not miss. For one of the conflicting party to have come to the tribunal, it means that party is ready or agreed to settle or resolve dispute. Although this not always the case.

Levels of conflict resolution among some selected ethnic groups in Africa

In traditional African societies, the law enforcement agents, traditional police and courts were responsible for ensuring compliance with the laws of the land. Disputants often take their cases to elders and neighbourhood mediators who can be depended upon to resolve conflicts with dispatch in local language, using familiar standard of behavior. For practical purposes, three ethnic groups in African societies shall be examined.

Yoruba

Among the Yoruba peoples, indigenous law derives essentially from customs and traditions. Literacy was not associated only with the written word, but also very essentially, with verbal art and remembrance. Although, the legal traditions of the Yoruba were largely unwritten, their preservation and survival were done through performance to make them lively and easily understood. Because the

traditional society presented an atmosphere conducive for enduring performance, in short, the Yoruba people derived their sources of adjudication from wisdom and traditional knowledge of the forebears which were always dramatized. Olaoba confirmed that, the elders sit under a tree, and talk until they agree, the elders (old age or seniority) as the force behind order or decorum in traditional society. This indicates that elders, within the culture of the Yorubas, are the power house of wisdom and knowledge (Olaoba, 2001, pp. 1-2)

Cases of fighting among adolescents or young people were in the past accorded an impromptu settlement by the passers-by who normally ensured restoration of peace and harmony. There existed various community associations and guilds saddled with the responsibility of maintenance of peace and order in marketing operations include, stealing, debt and fraud. In certain circumstances, gods and ancestors (the living dead) are called upon, their spirit invoked and every one especially the disputants are reminded of the aftermath of their wrath if they refuse to say the truth. In the markets, and the palace (court) spirit is present. The spirit could be malevolent / benevolent (Olaoba, 2002, p. 9)

In Africa, there were levels or phases of conflict resolution, there were dispute resolutions at the inter-personal or family level, the extended family level and village or town level (chief in council). These tiers represent the political units making up the community. The smallest unit called *Idile* (Nuclear family) is headed by a *Bale*. The next unit is the *Ebi*, (extended family headed by *Mogaji* who is the most influential or usually the eldest person in the *Ebi*. Extended family includes all people who have blood ties. The last tier of the units is the quarter which comprises of several family compounds is headed by a *Baale*, (the chief-of-ward/quarter, while the head of household which includes the man's immediate family of wife or wives and children (Albert,1995, pp.13-31)

Cases resolved by *Bale* include conflicts among co-wives, brothers and sisters, truants, and street fights involving his children and his foster children or dependants. Conflict solved immediately includes

minor conflicts by scolding the trouble makers and appeasing whoever was offended. The “bale” is required to visit the offended person, even to thank him/her for accepting a peaceful resolution of the conflict. It is the duty of *Bale* to call together his household and warn them to desist from making any more trouble. The court imposed no fine. However, appeals could be made from court to the second court which is the court of the ward-chief (*Ile-ejo ijoye Adugbo*). This court tried civil cases. It could not try criminal case but it had the authority to conduct preliminary investigation into criminal cases before transferring them to the court of the king (*Ile-ejo Oba*) (Oguntomisin, 2004, p.10).

Baale (chiefs) also controls the relationship between members of his family and outsiders. Such cases can threaten the survival of the entire lineage or ward. Once the matter is resolved, emphasis is put on how good neighbourliness can be achieved and preserved. Land dispute, lack of good care for women and children by the husband, infidelity by the women, dispute over inheritance are the commonest in this category.

However, dispute resolution by the Chief-in-council (*Igbimo Ilu*) in Yoruba land was the highest traditional institution for conflict resolution. In the pre-colonial era, the council had the power to pass a death sentence on any offender brought before it. The court of the king was the highest court. It was also the last court to which appeal could be made but, among *Egba* and *Ijebu*, however, the *Ogboni* court seemed to be the last court of appeal (Oguntomisin, 2004, p.11). A woman is traditionally expected to be on her knees and to offer the traditional greetings unless the chief ask her permission to stand up. A man has to start by prostrating which is a way of offering traditional greeting. Whatever judgment is given is accepted.

In the traditional judiciary system in Yoruba land, fines of damages are not usually awarded by the mediators in civil cases. The utmost aim is to restore peace by setting disputes amicably. In other words, restoration of harmony is what is paramount in the traditional judicial system. Sometimes, however, mediators award simple fines as a

deterrent to the occurrence of particular anti-social behavior. This may be demanded in form of kola nuts or local gins both of which have ritual significance. Some of the kola nuts are broken and passed round for everyone to eat as a way of celebrating the resolution of the conflict. The drink is also passed round for all to taste. If no gin or palm wine is available, ordinary drinking water can be used. In some traditional settings, the palm wine or gin is used to pour libation to the gods and ancestors of the people involved in the dispute. These actions help to reinforce the term of the reconciliation. Next to be discussed is the Igbo traditional society.

Igbo

The Igbo traditional institutions for conflict resolution include: the family, Amala (council of elders), Okpara system (eldest male), Umuanna (clan), Umuada (female born in a town but married out), age grades, assembly of the people, Ohanaeze (assembly of the people and the king), hunters' Association, and agbara (local deities or oracles). These are not different from the one found in other traditional African societies.

However, Olurunsola, wrote that prior to European advent, the Ibos consisted of over two hundred independent territorial groups divided into villages. The internal organization of these groups rested upon patrilineal clans and lineages. These groups were autonomous with regards to governmental processes, but social bonds were strong among them. (Olorunsola, 1972, p.157)

Here, this section shall adopt the resolution of the Umurebo-Umokuza, and Umuleri-Aguleri land discard through traditional methods. The piece of land is called *ala ihu okpaula or ala mkpoku*, located between Umenebo and Umuokuzu clans of Obokwu village in Obinze, which is in the Owerri West local government area of Imo-State, Eastern Nigeria. Several peace efforts geared towards resolving this land dispute failed. Even the elders of Obokwu village made several futile third party mediation efforts. The *Nwanwa* group (men and women whose mothers were born at Obokwu village) also

intervened but failed. The autonomous traditional ruler (Obinze) and his cabinet also intervened. While these efforts were heading for roots too, a warning were received by both clans from the ancestors through the chief priest of Obinze, the messenger of *Alanlwn* (big Earth deity) saying that they are seeing an impending blood flow, insisting that there must be no bloodshed, and that the dispute over the land must be settled peacefully (Ibid).

Since 1933, the pathetic dimension of the conflict is that the Aguleri and Umuleri people have one ancestral origin in *Eri*, and had been living peacefully side by side in Otuocha for decades before the focus of division and anarchy emerged. The land conflict, before the disastrous war had passed through the court's strategy, political, bureaucratic, and military strategy without solution and peace in sight, before the traditional strategy was applied (Nwolise, 2005, pp.159-161)

However, the traditional formula which led to the peaceful resolution of the Aguleri-Umuleri-Umuoba Annam war involved oath-taking, declaration of "No more war" peace treaty and the performance of a cleansing ritual called *Ikomue*. The first traditional oath which took place on 25th January, 2000 involved only Aguleri and Umuleri, while other communities latter join in order to avoid further wars and destabilization in the Omambala area. All those communities came with their respective representatives, as well as local deities (oracles) to be sworn to in the presence of gods and all people present.

The oath which is binding on every indigene of the participating communities was taken to the effect that the contracting parties accept peace and there would be no more war and bloodshed amongst and between the five communities. Violators of this oath face the wrath of the deities present, and the ancestors, who in the presence of god constitute the source of moral sanctions and peace guarantors. This first Oath taking process relaxed tension in the war torn area and paved way for their processes that brought the final peace. The traditional method of resolving the conflict was adopted in peace

treaty making by traditional rulers and leaders of thought led by Igwe Nzekwesi, for sanity and rigidity.

It was however observed that the traditional leaders and rulers were also being touched, encouraged and propelled into action by the message of peace, and the direct challenge to them in President Olusegun Obasanjo's speech when he visited Aguleri-Umuoba-Anam conflict area. In his words;

I will be addressing our traditional and religious leaders here. What are we saying in the communities in which we are? What are we saying, and what are we doing to really dampen these types of senseless killing, this type of senseless destructions of lives and property? You only need to go down there (Otuocha) and you will be shocked. I was shocked. In a small community like this and will anybody tell me that these three communities are not related? Are they not brothers and sisters? The governor told me that he came here and asked same questions and you said you are not A small community like this, you have turned it into ghost town. A community, that known God as it should be known, this type of thing will not be happening... what has happened to our traditional way of life where elders intervene and help to resolve differences? Are there no more elders in the community? If there are, have they abandoned their responsibility? Then what are they doing? (Olusegun Obasanjo cited in Nwolise, 2005)

After the first oath process of 25th January, 2000, a second oath took place on 6th April of the same year. In this second oath, the leaders of Aguleri, Umuleri, and Umuoba Anam were invited to the centre of the field. Each community was been asked to come with a big goat, a small he-goat, some kola nuts, etc; along with symbol of their community deity and its chief priest (Ezemmo). After reading the contents of the oath, each community appointed one representative to

Oath on its behalf and in the presence of its deity, and other communities' deities (oral interview with Ediagbonya Micheal).

Finally, on the Igbo traditional institutions, one cannot but agree that the two case studies focused upon viz: Umunebo-Umnokugu, and Aguleri-Umuleri provide serious evidence of continued efficacy of both traditional methods as well as sanctions for conflict resolution.

Even, the Christians in these communities were called out to swear according to Christian doctrine, led by the respective priest of the Catholics and the Anglicans with their Bibles. Each denomination appointed a representative who took oath on behalf of others. Without sacrifice, it would have been difficult for members of these communities to eat together. It is also believed in the Eri kingdom that the spirit of those killed in the war would go on vengeance against their own people who eat together with their murderers. From that day, peace was restored, true reconciliation began and social harmony was restored among these communities (Nwolise, 2005, pp.160-166)

Pondo tribe of Zulu in South Africa

There are several methods of conflict resolution by the traditional society in South Africa such as Redi, Pondo, Tswana etc. The reconciliation of the parties in Pondo society was quite the opposite of the western model, which was designed to alternate and confuse the litigant (Bennet, 1993, p. 32)

Institution of Mat Association is one of the conflict resolution mechanisms which are prevalent among the Pondo tribes (Kuchertz, 1960). Mat associations are similar to izithebe/hospitality groups, which Hammond-Tooke has referred to in his study of the Mpondomise, (Hammoned, 1975, p.52); it is through mat association that the distribution of foods and drink is organized at social gathering. But the cases are first discussed at the Izithebet level where it involves two such groups, that the members of the two hospitality group would meet and attempt to settle the matter between themselves. Izithebets are unable to compel obedience; the power to compel obedience was preserved to the court of headmen in the event

of that, if the person remains dissatisfied then the problem would be referred to the warheads and invariably to the chief. This accompanies a request to establish a separate mat association, which, in effect secedes from that of the leader whose conduct is the subject matter of the complaints. The dissatisfaction is expressed publicly to the chief in a tactful manner (Rucherts, 1990). Proceedings in the chief's court are formal; the emphasis is no longer on mediation and reconciliation, but the correlation between proven testimony and the sanctions imposed by the court of a headman. The difference between the lower court (Mat association) and the court of chief which proceed on the assumption is nothing but a mutual trust.

Methods engaged in resolution of conflict in Africa

The methods of performing conflict resolution in the traditional African societies are as follows: mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, arbitration and negotiation. It also includes employing extra-judicial devices and usage of legal maxims to persuade or convince the disputants about the implication or otherwise of their behavior. These methods have been effective in traditional African Society.

Mediation

Mediation is an old method of conflict management surrounded by secrecy. It involves non-coercive intervention of the mediators(s), called third party either to reduce or ... go beyond or bring conflict to peaceful settlement. Olaoba, described mediation as a method of conflict resolution that had been so critical to traditional society. The mediators usually endeavoured that peace and harmony reigned supreme in the society at whatever level of mediation. This is also usually couched with the dictum of no victor no vanquished as buttressed by the maxim (Isurmona, 2005).

Bia ba be' eran wi

K'a si tun beran wi

If we apportion blame to the guilty person we must do the same to the other party in conflict. Mediators are sought from within the communities or societies of the parties concerned. Elders are respected as trustworthy mediators all over Africa, because of their accumulated experiences and wisdom. Their roles depend on traditions, circumstances and personalities, accordingly. These roles includes, pressurizing, making recommendations giving assessments, conveying suggestions on behalf of the parties, emphasizing relevant norms and rules, envisaging the situation if agreement is not reached, or repeating of the agreement already attained (Bright-Brock, 2001, p. 11).

Adjudication

In traditional African society, adjudication involves bringing all disputants in the conflict to a meeting usually in the chambers or compounds of family heads, quarter heads and palace court as the case maybe. Dialogue was linked with the ad judicatory processes in traditional (Olaoba, 2005).

Reconciliation

This was the most significant aspect of conflict resolution. It is the end product of adjudication. After the disputants have been persuaded to end the dispute, peace was restored. This restoration of peace and harmony was always anchored on the principle of give a little and get a little. This idea buttresses the idea of the disputing parties to give concessions. A feast was usually organized to confirm the readiness of the conflicting parties towards reaching points of compromise (Ibid).

At least, as characteristic of African traditional society, conflict resolution method is the use of arbitration. The reconciliation function is practiced by an authority figure that mediates between conflicting parties but is empowered to make binding judgments. The purpose is not to render a judgment in law but to reconcile the conflicting parties and its norms. The relationship between the authority and the community is cushioned by community representatives who advise authority (William, 2000, pp. 22-23).

Negotiation

Negotiation, “the secret is to harmonize the interests of the parties concerned”. Thus, even when the conflict involves a member against his or her society, there is an emphasis on recuperation and reinsertion of errant member back into its place in society. The recovery of a dissident member can just as well be seen as the restoration of the harmony and integrity of the community, as the assertion of value consensus and social cohesion, so that the management of the conflict favours the concerns of both parties (Ibid, pp. 220-221).

In traditional Yoruba society, peace was negotiated. Apology for wrongs done to individuals and the entire community was a feature of negotiation. Such apology was channelled through Yoruba elders, compound heads and chiefs of high calibre in the society. It is done on the representative level or quasi-representation. The *Babaogun* (patron) played the role of a representative in the sense of conflict resolution (Olaoba, 2005, pp. 220-221).

Importance of conflict resolution

Conflict resolution provides an opportunity to interact with the parties concerned, with the hope of at least reducing the scope, intensity and effects of conflicts. During formal and informal meetings, conflict resolution exercises permit a reassessment of views and claims as a basis for finding options to crisis and to divergent points of view. Those who organize conflict resolution exercises or meetings usually constitute the third party in a triangular arrangement and consist of traditional rulers (King, Chiefs, etc).

Conflict resolution in the plural societies can be quite complex, principally because of the determinate effects of culture and language symbolism. According to Airuch and Black (Onigun & Albert, 2001, p.16), “it is quite dangerous to relegate culture to the background in conflict resolution”. Although, culture is a marker of social differences, it should be regarded as an obstacle to conflict resolution in multi-ethnic/multi-cultural societies.

Conflict resolution performs a healing function in African societies. It provides opportunity for the examinations of alternative positive decision to resolve differences. Failure to resolve conflict over access to commonly valued scarce resources, and over divergent perceptions of socio-political situations, has the high potential of degenerating into genocide or fratricide as it occurred among Ife-Modakeke in Yorubaland³⁷ and Tis-Jumen of Nigeria, and the Hutu-Tutsi of Burundi and Rwanda (Punier, 1995).

Conflict resolution promotes consensus-building, social bridge reconstructions, and the re-enactment of order in society. Conflicts hardly break up societies (Otite, 2001, p. 9). For conflict resolution, the obvious implication is to view conflicts as non-isolated events in its social context. Such perspective is not narrowly focused on a conflict and its resolution. It takes into account the cultural setting and the social context. It looks at the history of preceding events which have led to the conflict concerned. And while concentrating on the conflict itself and process of resolving it, it takes possible implications for the future seriously. A wider look is taken than one which just includes the disputing parties, possible consequences for others in their families and social network are also taken into consideration. Potential effects on relationship and interests are envisaged.

Cross examination was an important mechanism employed in the process of conflict resolution in traditional African society. It was a means of weighting evidence through cross checking and corroborating of the facts of the conflict (Olaoba, 2000, pp. 6-8) In the Yoruba maxim, a good sense of justice is associated with cross examination which is expressed as follows:

Agbejo enikan da, agba osika -wicked and iniquitous is he whose judgement is based on the evidence of one party to a case)

Consequently, in traditional African societies, particularly, Yoruba land, in conflict resolution undue favour to the disputants was discouraged.

In traditional African Society, extra-judicial methods were employed in conflict resolution. These took the form of ordeals and the invocation of supernatural forces to expose all sides to the conflict. Olaoba has shown quite clearly that oath taking which was one of the extra-judicial methods usually assisted the judge or adjudicators to locate areas of weaknesses in the conflict.

Aside from the iron object (sacred to the god of iron) used for oath-taking, the Yorubas also use *apasa* (weaving instrument) and *iru* (chiefly scepter), royal shrine or religious sanctuaries are also used. The wrath of the gods is used for eliciting facts of the dispute. Such gods as *Sango* (god of Thunder), *Yemoja* (goddess of river) and *Ayelala* (guardian of social morality) are used to ascertain the veracity of the story told by disputants (Olaoba, 2001, pp. 15-16.).

Conclusion

Each people, race, or identity group have their own ways of doing things especially as they concern conflict resolution. While in Europe, for example, the police are an agency of crime detection, several African societies relied on oath-taking and divination in pre-colonial times. These methods still thrive today in some places on a very limited scale alongside torture and skull breaking in the name of interrogation and confession extraction. Also, while the western world placed emphasis on a judicial system presided over by lawyers and judges; traditional Africa uses council of elders, king's court, peoples (open place) assemblies, etc. for dispute settlement and justice dispensation (Nwolise, 2005, p.155).

However, in Africa, conflict takes various forms and dimensions. It is worthy to note that conflict does not have a single definition from African perspective. It could be a kind of social unrest or relationships, whether positive or negative. Consequently, conflicts are in magnitude of rage, rift, misunderstanding, family and market brawls, skirmishes and wars. These kinds of conflicts are wide spread in traditional African societies.

Finally, it is the advent of the slave drivers and colonial masters to Africa, that adulterated, and in some areas, wipe out the Africans' methods of monitoring, preventing, managing and resolving conflicts. Africans also had their peculiar ways and manners of effecting peace-making, peace building, and confidence building. These peculiar and very effective methods have today been wiped out by the forces of colonialism, including psycho-war forces. This resulted to instability and retarded development. Dialogue between disputants is today replaced by fighting, and the mediating role of elders, and other more peaceful institutions as age-grades, highly revered societies are replaced in several clashes with police actions (tear gas), military "peace keeping" operations, and endless court proceedings. This reminded us of the old saying that a people live out their culture and tradition for self confidence, self reliance, positive change and stability, and that a people without their culture are as good as dead and forgotten.

A society which neglects the instructive value of its past for its present and future, cannot be self confident and self-reliant; and will therefore lack internally generated dynamism and stability (Nwolise, 2005, pp.153-157)

Moreover, the essence of dispute settlement and conflict resolution in traditional African States include to remove the root-causes of the conflict; reconcile the conflicting parties genuinely; to preserve and ensure harmony, and make everybody involved in the resolved conflict happy and be at peace with each other again, and this required getting at truth; to set the right milieu for societal production and development; to promote good governance, law and order, to provide security of lives and property and to achieve collective well-being and happiness. These are different from what does obtain today where nobody cares about the truth. If Africans have to put the falling apart together, her original values must be revisited.

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Interviews

Oral interview with Mr. M. Ediagbonya, No.171, Eweka Street, New Benin, age 49 years on the crisis between Communities especially, Umuleri-Aguleri Areas, 20th January, 2014