**ROYSTON BOLUWATIFE**

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**PEACE AND CONFLICT DEPARTMENT**

**SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

**PCS 204- AFRICAN APPROACHES TO CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

**QUESTION: DISCUSS THE VARIOUS WAYS BY WHICH PEACE WAS NEGOTIATED IN THE AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SOCIETY USING YOUR TRADITIONAL SOCIETY.**

**YORUBA TRADITIONAL SOCIETY**

The Yoruba people were known for their outmost respect for their primordial history, so they believed a lot in their prehistoric history and how their forefathers handled things in the time. Hence, so they follow everything the elders say concerning issues to the letter.

Even though the Yoruba aren’t a set of people to enjoy partaking in violence, but still make preparations any ways just in case a siege happened and they needed to protect their citizens. But overall the King is the father of the whole community so he calls the shots. Now, here are a few ways the Yoruba maintain peace in their community

**Intermarriage**

This is a very effective way to ending long time coming feud between two disputing ethnic groups or even as small as neighbouring villages. And this method helps seal bonds for generation to come. Inter marriage is basically when two parties, conflicting parties, agree to cease fire and agree on terms for a truce, now these terms may vary, but usually if both parties have children of opposite gender and are ripe of age, they are advised to betroth them to one another. That way they is basically a citizenship handed to both parties’ offspring and they both partial indigenes of both conflicting villages, now no parent would bear to wage war on village his or her child is living especially a female offspring. And since they’ve being given a gift, the recipient would not be ingrates by waging war on their in-laws. So in the long run, a 15 year war could be settled with just two people joined together as one.

**Employment of extra judicial devices**

Extra Judicial devices in the sense of spiritual elements. The Yoruba have certain gods they believe in. Sango- god of thunder, lightning, fire, Ogun – god of iron. Esu, and the rest. For instance, Sango is believed to expose liars and cheats. If they were found guilty would die. Now the fear of this, kept most of the villagers in check so they were always of their best behaviour. And also its believed these deities oversee what happens in the village, they basically watch out for their own, as God would His children. At least those who believe.

**Wining and Dining with the “Enemy”**

Well wars are always fought by men, and in that era there were very little things that men held tangible and with importance these things include the 3w’s; War, Women, and Wine, now nothing meant more the men than these 3. It was basically and everyday lifestyle for them. Now when it seems like there is a conflict brewing, the conflict heads which can happen to be the head of the conflicting sides, can call a truce or seize fire to have lunch and make necessary negotiations, and men are more communication open than women. After two kegs of palm wine and goat meat, they could have forgotten what even brought them there and just end up bonding and repairing old relationships.

**LEVELS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION BETWEEN THE 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 Yoruba, are the power house of wisdom and knowledge (Olaoba), 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,) 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,) 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 behaviour. 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 liberation to the gods and ancestors of the people involved in the dispute. These actions help to reinforce the term of the reconciliation