
GEOLOCATION – THE EFFECT OF RELOCATION ON CONFLICT

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***Abstract:** The proliferations of academic literature on theories that adequately captured the causes, nature and the categories of conflict has left a gap, the absence of a theory that sufficiently explain the dynamics of conflict that are motivated by a divide of dwelling place, which provide a potential for violence between dwelling places. The possibility of people who are at each other throat could adjust to bury their historical enmity and their differences, but collaborate to fight those they separated their dwelling places. The conflict that arises from these two different locations often defies the conventional ties such as ethnicity, religious affiliation, and even blood relations. The paper is multi-disciplinary, employing qualitative research methodology. The discipline is Peace and Conflict Studies. The sources will include: interviews, internet, and library resources, personal and historical events. Historically, the paper made reference to violent conflict between the ten Northern tribes and the two Southern tribes of Israel. The second historical sources is the segregation between the British Colonial officials those heading to the Northern Protectorate and the ones going to the Colony and the Southern Protectorate. The potential for conflict transformation for historical enemies to be reconciled with one another as a result of living in the same geographical location is fascinating. The evidence present and assessed in this paper suggests that the understanding of the dynamics played by geo-location factor could help in transforming violent conflict.*

Keywords: Geo-Location, Conflict, Ethnicity, Protectorate, Mediation

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Mavalla, Ayuba Gimba (2016), Geolocation – The Effect of Relocation on Conflict. *J. of Social Sciences and Public Policy*, Vol. 8, Number 2, Pp. 87-100.

INTRODUCTION

The proliferations of academic literature on theories that adequately capture the causes, nature and the categories of conflict has left a gap; the absence of a theory that sufficiently explains the dynamics of conflict motivated by relocation (Geo-location), which, as used in this context, refers to moving to a new location. Relocation to the same dwelling place by historical enemies has served as a factor that helps them not only bury their differences, but also collaborate to fight those they had dwelt with earlier. The conflict that arises from these

two different locations often defies conventional ties such as ethnicity, religious affiliation, and even blood ties. Furthermore, with geo-location, there is a high tendency that two perennially disagreeing parties could collaborate for the purpose of warding off new enemies in their territory. Historically, people have fudged collaboration with people they had lived with as enemies in the face of a threat. To buttress the assertion above, this study makes reference to the violent conflict between the ten Northern tribes and the two Southern tribes of Israel. It also looks at the segregation that had existed between the British Colonial officials in the Northern Protectorate and those in the Colony and Southern Protectorate. The potential for transforming historical bitterness into collaboration, which could lead to people burying their differences, as a result of living in the same geographical location is fascinating. The evidence presented and assessed in this study suggests that the understanding of the dynamics played by geo-location could help in transforming violent conflict.

There are theories that capture the various dynamics of violent conflict. They include: conflict transformation theory, human need theory, biological theory. The purpose of conflict transformation theory is to capture the causes of conflict that arise from inequality and injustice perpetrated against individuals or a group of people by another group. The human need theory on the other hand deals with conflict that is motivated by basic human need. When these needs are denied the result is conflict. The biological theory sees the cause of conflict as inherent in the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. This means the propensity to do evil is inherent in man (Mavalla, 2014). However the researcher is not aware of any theory that adequately captures the dynamics of conflict initiated by geo-location. The paradox that historical enemies could reconcile with one another as a result of living in the same geographical location, thus, serves as a transforming factor for dealing with potentially violent conflict. Fundamentally, geo-location refers to a dwelling location, which might include: a kingdom, a nation, a state, a town or a suburb. Little is known of a theory that adequately puts the two dialectical tension of separate and same dwelling place effect as a factor in formatting and transforming potential violent conflict in society.

What is a theory? Scholars have answered this question thus: Theory is a phenomenal assumption, or set of facts, proposition or "principles analysed in their relation to one another, used in science and social science research to explain phenomena." According to scientists and philosophers, theories are unchangeable facts. However, scholars agree that what is described as a theory should go beyond a simple collection of facts, even though, not all statements that go beyond facts are theories. A theory should explain why a subject matter has a certain characteristic. In other words, historical facts are not theories (Best, 2006: 37). Lang and Taylor says "a theory explains phenomena—things that are happening or being experienced—the goal of a theory is to give meaning and structure to events, patterns, observations and behaviours to be predictive and sometimes to describe what to expect" (Lang and Taylor, 2000: 101). Geo-location is one of the factors that serve as a means of neutralizing historical enmity that exists between individuals or group of people

within a community who hitherto lived in separate locations. Changing one's dwelling place might momentarily bring relieve from hostility. This change in dwelling location, if temporal, avails one time for reflection that could be either positive or negative to peace. But on the other side, a permanent change in dwelling place could result in violent conflict among dwelling places. It is often difficult to categorize conflict that is motivated by the dynamics of geo-location into religious or ethnic/racial or even political ideology because it defies ethnicity, nationality, faith persuasion, race or even blood ties. The world of social science at large has not paid adequate attention to the role of dwelling location as a factor influencing historical, social, violent, conflict settlement. The geo-location factor could also serve as a means of transforming potentially violent conflict. This study will also look at how people defied ethnic, religious, race and even ancestral affiliations and paid allegiance to those who were their neighbours.

THE INFLUENCE OF GEO-LOCATION ON RELATIONSHIPS

It is mind boggling that someone could align himself with a historical enemy to fight even his blood relations. One reason for this may be the fact that they live in the same geographical location. This is because there is a strong ideological element that tends to bind a group of people in one location which will produce a solidarity that could fight to maintain that solidarity if threatened (Mavalla, 2012). Geo-location has the potential of influencing conflict by psychologically and socially dividing humankind into separate, uncompromising camps. For instance, in Kaduna and Jos cities of Kaduna and Plateau state, geo-location is a prominent factor in the violent conflict that occurs there and at the same time, a factor that could transform potentially violent conflict. The normal settlements in Northern Nigeria are often divided by religion. These settlements are often prone to influencing violent conflict with another dwelling place that holds different ideologies. For example, Kaduna North with its predominantly Muslim population and Islamic religious ideology is often at loggerheads with Southern Kaduna and its Christian religious ideology. This is also the case with Jos City where predominant population of Jos North are Muslims and those in Jos South are Christians. However, in both Kaduna and Jos cities, there are some suburbs that are heterogeneous in terms of faith persuasion. These heterogeneous suburbs, because of geo-location, have been able to defy their religious faith affiliations and consequently decline from participating in the violent conflicts that engulf these cities. Therefore, geo-location tends to give people a separate identity, which could be in the form of beliefs that differentiates them from people of other locations (Mavalla, 2012). There is a dichotomy between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. The Christians are predominantly found in the southern part of Nigeria while northern Nigeria is seen as a Muslim block. The implication of this segregation has bred a bitter relationship between the Muslim North and the Christian South, and this bitter relationship has been applied or carried out among Northern natives. The Northern Nigerian Muslims treat the Northern Nigerian Christians as aliens just as they would treat the Christians from other regions. This stereotype is also found among Northern Christians who regard Southern Christians as closer brothers than their closest neighbours, the

Northern Muslims. The general perception by Northern Muslims of the foreignness of Southern Christians is applied in equal measure to Northern Christians (Mavalla, 2014). The sour relationship has antecedents from the British Colonial rule in Northern Nigeria. The Colonial power subordinated all other ethnic groups under the Hausa/Fulani ethnic groups in Northern Nigeria. The non-Hausa/Fulani ethnic groups were marginalized and oppressed by Hausa Muslims, who had ruled them since 1900s (Kukah, 2003).

In spite of this historical oppression, the Northern Christians were able to forge collaboration with the Northern Muslims to fight their fellow Christians, the Igbo race, during the Nigerian/Biafra civil war of 1967 - 1970. Logically, one would assume that the Northern Nigerian Christians would collaborate with their co-religionist and fight their historical enemies, those who have oppressed them but rather they collaborated with their adversary, Northern Muslims, against their co-religionists, the Igbo. The plausible reason for this, again, is geo-location. The Christian Bible tends to offer insight into this phenomenon above when the prophet told the people of Israel who were carried to Babylon as captives to seek and pray for the peace of their captors. Jeremiah 29: 7 states thus: "And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace". Could self-preservation be a factor that the security of one's dwelling place is tied to ones neighbour's security? This could further be seen in what Durkheim called collective conscience.

Durkheim believed religion was a basis for the collective conscience—the shared moral beliefs and values of society. Although Durkheim does not use the term 'culture' to refer to the collective conscience, what he describes is very similar to the way the term culture is used by some other writers.... The totality of beliefs and the sentiment common to an average citizen of the same society forms a determinate system, which has its life; one may call it the collective or common conscience' (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008: 667).

Durkheim classifies the nature of solidarity into two. The first being what he called mechanical solidarity; that is the collective conscience based on similarity to one another. The second kind of solidarity is a move away from the pre-industrial societies where there was little division of labour. As society evolved into the era of industrial revolution, division of labour became more specialized. This specialization differentiated people from one another in that, they still will depend on one another more often than not—a symbiotic relationship. For instance, the farmer needs a teacher to educate his children while the teacher needs food grown by the farmers. This scenario could be described as organic solidarity. "In a society of organic solidarity a collective conscience—a shared culture—is still necessary. However, the collective conscience tends to be less strong than it was under mechanical solidarity. Individuals have to be different to carry out their specialized roles" (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008: 667). One could still argue that there is still a major similarity within a community

which is the bonding or solidarity that comes as a result of living in a single dwelling place. The geo-location dichotomy explains some phenomena in social science, in terms of potential factors responsible for violent conflict. There is a strong ideological element that tends to bind a group of people in one location which will produce a solidarity that could fight to maintain that solidarity if threatened. Once people identify with a group, they inevitably de-emphasize their individual identity. However, those with a strong sense of individual identity are likely to give less weight to the group identities (Stein, 2001: 192). This social phenomenon gives meaning and structure to events, patterns, observations and behaviour and certain predictability (Lang and Taylor, 2000: 101).

The physical layout of a settlement, which the researcher refers to as geo-location, is a factor that has the potential for violent conflict and at the same time is a means to conflict transformation as earlier mentioned. Social scientists have paid little or no attention to geo-location as a factor which could be used as a means of explaining conflict phenomena involving different geo-locations—regional or geographical locations. Geo-location as a factor could explain the phenomena of conflict involving inter-regional locations, which could be used in social science. However, there is a geo-location theory or IP (Internet Protocol) for a country, which is used in information technology (IT). For instance, “‘Google’ use geo-location to track down IP addresses and probably maintain databases” (Geo-location IP theory, 2011). In addition, there is a geographical theory or model of theories in geography which is more in economic studies as in the works of Thomas Falk from Stockholm School of Economics and Ronald Abler, from Pennsylvania State University on “Intercommunications, Distance, and Geographical Theory” wherein “Distance variables have mostly been concerned with the movement of goods or people. Transportation has long been recognized as a critical factor for individual entrepreneurs and the overall organization of society” (Falk and Abler, 1980). This does not adequately explain the phenomenon that influences conflict based on inter-dwelling places.

The influence of one’s location and his relationship with those whom he lives with, tend to dictate his allegiance. I was born in Kusheka, a village in Kauru Local Government Area of Kaduna state and I am quite conversant with the historical rivalry between my people, the Kusheka community, and the neighbouring Katishen community. As a child, I had witnessed physical fights between these two communities—Kusheka and Katishen. While growing up, my father migrated to a village called Anguwar Idi, a predominantly Muslim village which was dominated by Katishen people. Despite being aware of the hostilities between my people and the people of Katishen, I was at home living among them in Anguwar Idi and was willing to support them in any competition, even against my people. It didn’t matter to me that I was a Christian while they were predominantly Muslims. I recall several instances when I declined joining my people against the Anguwar Idi even when my people asked me to. I have often asked myself why I acted the way I did and the only probable reason I come up with in explaining my allegiance to a predominantly Muslim community—sworn enemies of my

people—when I was a Christian, and supporting same even at the detriment of my own people is based on a difference in dwelling location. Each location, in terms of the geographical compass, has its tacit ideology that encapsulates and binds the communities of that particular location which could be a suburb, village, town or city in a nation.

Let us examine further the reason why some suburbs in Kaduna and Jos did not take part in the bloody conflict that engulfed the two cities since 1999 to 2010. It is imperative that we examine whether or not geo-location played a role during the Kaduna and Jos ethno-religious and political violence that resulted in widespread fighting and killings which ravaged these two cities. Some of the suburbs that were heterogeneous religiously included Down Quarters, Kurmin Mashhi and Mando suburbs in Kaduna City while in Jos City the following suburbs were Sabon Layi and Yan Tifa. These communities had lived in peace with one another; they had shared their joys and sorrows together and had lived with mutual respect for one another. This study undertook a field research. During the course of the interviews conducted using a research assistant, a few questions surfaced. The purpose of the field study was to ascertain the reason these suburbs did not fight and whether there is any advantage for the people of heterogeneous faith to live together in the same dwelling place or not. How did they come to their decision not to join in the conflicts, could this stem from the fact that they were living together thus found it difficult to be at each other's' throat or raise knives and guns at their neighbours? In Kaduna and Jos, the physical layout is a key factor in the violent conflicts experienced in these cities. For instance, the people of Kaduna North are predominantly Muslim and are often in conflict with the inhabitants of Southern Kaduna, who are almost entirely Christian. In Jos City, majority of the people in Jos North are Muslims, and those in Jos South are Christians. The physical separation tends to give people a separate identity. Religious identity tends to eclipse other identities such as political, social and economic identities. This is why some politicians and the media see violence in these cities as a religious conflict. In addition, the interconnection between religious faith and ethnicity in Kaduna and Jos presents both the potential for conflict as well as conflict transformation.

It has been argued how powerful religion has been in mobilizing adherents and how religion has traversed national, ethnic and cultural boundaries. Yet, when Northern Nigeria was threatened by what later became the Nigerian civil war, Northern Christians and the African Traditionalists who were marginalized and oppressed by the Hausa/Fulani Muslims in Northern Nigeria did not consider the mistreatment they had suffered under Hausa/Fulani Muslim rule but rather joined their oppressors to fight their co-religionist. Again the plausible reason for such a shift in the part of the Northern Nigeria Christian and African Traditionalist is the influence of dwelling location. There could be other arguments for why Northern Christians and Traditionalist collaborated with their historical oppressors. It could be because the Head of State at the time, General Yakubu Gowon, was a Christian and a Northerner from the Middle Belt, Plateau State. I propose that the security of the Christians

in northern Nigeria could have been greatly compromised if the civil war had reached Northern Nigeria. Of course, the peace of their neighbours was also their peace hence a possible factor that led them into collaborating with their Muslim neighbours to fight the secessionists. The Hausa/Fulani, who are Muslims, ruled Northern Nigeria for over a century and at the same time embarked on an aggressive drive to convert other ethnic groups in the region to Islam. In spite of these efforts, most of the ethnic groups in Southern Kaduna revolted against Islam in preference to Christianity. The boundary between the non-Hausa/Fulani ethnic group in Kaduna coincided for the most part with the North-South divide, which was by no means a coincidence. The Southern Kaduna minority ethnic groups' initial acceptance of Christianity was to some extent a reaction to the marginalization and oppression they had suffered under Hausa Muslim rule (Human Rights Watch, 2006 cf. Kukah, 2003). Furthermore, violence between communities is based on a difference in dwelling locations. Every dwelling location, has its tacit ideology that encapsulates and binds each community in solidarity, which cannot be easily broken. The community could be a suburb, village, town or city in a nation. Social scientists have paid little or no attention to geo-location as a factor, which could be used as means of explaining conflict phenomena involving different geo-locations as earlier mentioned.

THE INFLUENCE OF GEO-LOCATION FACTOR ON SOME SUBURBS IN KADUNA CITY

Down Quarters

It was established that Muslims of Down Quarters had "respect" for their Christian counterparts. It could be argued that the reason why some areas in both Jos and Kaduna Cities did not take part in violent conflict is because they had shared the same dwelling place over time, and had accepted each other regardless of religious beliefs (Muslims and Christians) and have built and exhibited "respect", for each other's religious faith. It is reported that Down Quarters won a peace trophy from the Kaduna state Governor for maintaining peace in their community. According to Imam Suleman, the ways they have been able to secure peaceful co-existence has always been to make a call to alert all faith leaders in their community at the onset of any conflict. The call on these religious leaders is meant to help chart a path that will lead to peace thus tasking all concerned to work hand in hand as they have always done in the past. This togetherness and mutual respect did not stop with the leaders; it was inculcated into the psychic of the youth of that community, and it was evident among them. These youths refrained from carrying out violence in other communities but were rather determined to protect their dwelling place by resolving "to stop any outsider that will come into their suburb and cause confusion". Thus the youths, both Christian and Muslim, became vanguards for peace. It is also interesting to note that all those interviewed blamed the conflict on people from without the community. They argued that their community had potential of controlling conflict if they could keep away people who fuel such conflict from trickling into their community, hence the use of a joint task force of both Christian and Muslim youths. The youths patrolled their community, during times of crisis.

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Imam Suleman added that, himself, Reverend Yohanna Sarki (a reverend at Down Quarters), along with the leaders and members of the community are determined to continue living together in peace and harmony. Also, "after the crisis the two faiths constituted a peace committee, with members from both sides, saddled with the responsibility of strengthening peaceful co-existence in their dwelling place. Rev Yohanna A. Sarki, recapped all that was said by Imam Suleman, thus authenticating the reliability of their account on the steps they took to ensure peace in their dwelling places. Rev Sarki did not attribute the conflict to Religion but rather blamed it on politics. He argued that politicians were calculative in their self-seeking schemes and were using the umbrella of religion to achieve their political ambitions. Such politicians, he said, conscript the youths, who are illiterate, poverty stricken and often ready to cause destruction without first finding out the root causes of the crisis (Rev. Sarki, 2014). Rev. Sarki also echoed that he did not feel it was out of "cowardice or hypocrisy" that they did not engage in the fight but out of desire for peace and prayed "God to keep us in peace forever". The two accounts above demonstrate how conflict was kept out of Down Quarters region of South Kaduna.

Kurmin Mashi Suburb

Another community that had remained peaceful in the face of the violent conflicts that ravaged Kaduna city and environs was Kurmin Mashi suburb. Kurmin Mashi suburb is heterogeneous in faith. Rev. Y. A. Shekwa Agah, denied that the violent conflicts were solely caused by religious sentiments, even though, the disputants were divided along religious lines (Christians and Muslims). He accused politicians of using religion as a conduit for escalating violent conflict to their advantage. He also blamed some preachers who acted as 'spoilers', as they contributed to the escalation of these conflicts. The youths and some elders of Kurmin Mashi patrolled their community throughout the period of the crisis, so as to stop outsiders from coming into their dwelling place to cause havoc. They also formed a "committee of youth, and elders that meet from time to time for the purpose of discussing issues that bother on peaceful coexistence of the suburb. As a way of encouraging this collaborative peace initiative, the Governor of Kaduna state gave them a trophy of recognition for being peacemakers.

The Village Head of Kurmin Mashi, and his Dogorin (palace guard) argued that the conflict was triggered by politics, adding that, the political leaders decided to use the 'ulama' (Islamic scholars) and Muslim youths to achieve their selfish aims. The village head averred that the reason the crisis was contained in Kurmin Mashi, was because the Christians and Muslim of the suburb were a close knit community, who did a lot of things in common. He added that even before the 2011 post-election crisis, they had a good understanding and support of their people. As a guiding rule in Kurmin Mashi, in the event of any crisis, religious leaders call their members (Christian and Muslims) from various groups to find out the truth of the matter and the way forward in respect of the peace of their dwelling place. The village head had often taken the risk of touring the area in the night for the purpose of assessing things

for himself. Among other things, there was constant communication among and between groups. This approach helped nip incoming violent conflict in the bud, particularly whenever there were rumours of unrest in other parts of Kaduna.

Mando Suburb

Mando is another suburb of Kaduna that has strived to maintain peaceful coexistence. The ward head of Mando, Mallam Ibrahim J. W. Faringida, also believes that the violence was politically motivated. "It was a political crisis that metamorphosed into a religious conflict." Faringida added that it was difficult to see the crisis for what it really was—a political crisis. This is because religion is a powerful force that can easily galvanise people to carry out any action, hence politicians exploit this aspect of religion. Furthermore, Africans take their religion as a matter of life and death, hence, politicians use religion as a conduit for achieving their political objectives. The reason why Mando community was spared the aimless bloodshed and destruction of properties was because of the general knowledge that Christianity forbids murder of human life regardless of religious affiliation. This informed the decision reached by community and religious elders of Mando not to allow the conflict in other parts of the state to drift into their community. Faringida also said that Mando has more Christians than Muslims. Because of this, the Muslims of Mando, at some point, became so apprehensive they began to flee the community. It was the Christians of Mando that allayed the fears of their fleeing neighbours and discouraged them from fleeing the community, promising not to let harm come to any one of them. No case of violence was recorded in Mando eventually. In Kaduna State, all the communities unaffected by the violent conflict attributed it to mutual respect, tolerance and understanding among members of the community. They lived in proximity to each other, and this is reflected in the way they quickly converge at the first hint of trouble. Their togetherness and unity is evident in the system of patrolling their community so that no intruder could infiltrate their rank thus curtailing the effect of violent conflict.

THE INFLUENCE OF GEO-LOCATION FACTOR ON SOME SUBURBS IN JOS CITY

Sabon Layi

In Jos, Alhaji Dan Azumi Maigida Ibrahim (65yrs) of Sabon Layi maintained that the conflict was political. Why? Because, to his understanding, there is no religion that teaches its followers to go and kill people without any reason! The people of Sabon Layi could not fight each other because they had been living in peace and harmony with one another, regardless of religious affiliation, for a long time without any problem. Hence, "it was difficult, as earlier mentioned, for any of us (Christian or Muslim) to raise knives and guns at our neighbours no matter what had gone wrong". He further adds that the reason why Sabon Layi suburb did not engage in the violent conflict of Jos city was because most of the inhabitants of the community were predominantly Muslims with only few Christians. The community leaders strongly advised against attacks on non-Muslims in the community. In spite of assurances to safeguard their lives and properties, most or almost all the non-Muslims of Sabon Layi

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suburb decided to sell their houses after the conflict and move to Christian populated areas within the city. Alhaji Dan Azumi revealed that there is a committee in Sabon Layi, made up of Muslims and Christians, saddled with the responsibility of forestalling violent conflict and promoting peaceful co-existence. This committee is currently responsible for the peaceful co-existence in Sabon Layi and has helped to achieve non-violence in the community. Also from Jos, Mrs Lami Oja Dauda, said she can't say whether the conflict was a religious crisis or a political one. Mrs Dauda, who is from the Rikuba ethnic extraction maintained that, the reason why they were spared the violence was because they had good leaders capable of resolving issues which had potentials of escalating into violent conflict. They are still at peace in their community and by God's will, they are going to continue to live in peace. Mrs Lami Dauda concluded by saying they are contented with their peace efforts.

Yan Tifa

Alhaji Ibrahim Yahusa (75yrs) from Yan Tifa averred that the conflict was based on political motives rather than religion. According to him, they (Muslims) grew up to find their parents staying together with Christians, doing everything in common without interfering with each other's faith. When they were young they played together with their Christian friends, studied in the same schools with them and ate together. Interestingly, he pointed out that it was "later we started noticing changes and differences, most especially during the general elections, when people were quick to point out these differences". He added that at the onset of the Jos crisis, the leaders of Yan Tifa warned everybody in the community not to attack any non-Muslim in the area. As a result, no non-Muslim was attacked even though Yan Tifa was dominated by Muslims. Again, after the crisis, most of the non-Muslims left Yan Tifa. Field work has revealed that respondents unanimously indicated that most of the communities which were affected by the conflict did not have such conflict initiated by members of their communities but by people without their communities. However, some suburbs started the violence among themselves as they were fed by unsubstantiated rumours (Mavalla, 2012). It is very evident that family conflict and interpersonal conflict that happens in and among individuals in a given suburb, did not, however, affect the general structure that holds the society together in those dwelling places.

THE SEGREGATION BETWEEN THE BRITISH COLONIAL OFFICIALS

The segregation that existed between the British Colonial officials going to the Northern protectorate and those heading for the colony and Southern protectorate is another example of geo-location as a factor influencing violent conflict. The dichotomy and segregation between the British colonial officials working in the North and those working in the Southern protectorates of colonial Nigeria in the 1900s made the relationship of these leaders who were supposed to civilize the now Nigerian state unable to relate amicably with one another based on regions. Before and after the amalgamation of 1914, the two protectorates continued to maintain separate identities and never showed any sign they were a people serving under her majesty, the Queen, until 1st October, 1960 when their rule ceased.

This dichotomy hindered any meaningful interaction between the ethnic groups in Southern Nigeria and those of Northern Nigeria. Leith-Ross has a detail account of the protectorates of colonial Nigeria.

Leith-Ross first arrived in Northern Nigeria as a young bride in 1907, not long after Lugard had finally brought that vast and diverse territory of the now Northern Nigeria under British control. A year later she lost her husband from black water fever. The land that caused the death of her husband did not become her enemy; rather, she entered into a lifelong love affair with Nigeria and its peoples. Over the next sixty years she returned to Nigeria again and again and served in different capacities. "By the time of her last visit in 1968, at the age of eighty-five, she had travelled to most parts of the country and had lived for extended periods in all its regions" (Leith-Ross 1983: 13). Leith-Ross gave details of the interpersonal relationships that existed between the colonialist of the Northern and colony and southern protectorates thus:

It was said at the time of independence that if all Nigerians had been removed from Nigeria then the British administrators of the North would have gone to war with those of the South" (Leith-Ross 1983: 20). [Furthermore]: "no colour bar could be as strong as the intangible wall which stood between the protectorate of Northern Nigeria and the colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria. Even on the neutral ground of shipboard, no purser would have dreamt of asking a Northerner and a Southerner to share the same cabin, nor would a chief steward have ventured to seat them at the same table. Though no one could give me a rational explanation of this enmity, I immediately shared the prejudice, saw all Southern officials as fat and white and flabby, while in the North they were lean and lank and brown (Leith-Ross 1983: 39).

The bitter rivalry between the Colonialists who served in the Northern Protectorate and those of the Southern Protectorate is evidently influenced by geo-location. There is no rational explanation why these imperialists could not associate with one another in spite of their level of civilization. The reason was just the simple fact that they were heading for separate protectorates or a separate geo-location. This unpleasant relationship that has been fuelled by different location could account for the kind of relationship that exists between the southern Nigeria communities and the Northern Nigeria communities. The British colonial administration seems to tacitly admit the claim for contributing to the Nigerian non-cohesion. The British Colonialists in a memorandum on the future political development of Nigeria dated 11th January, 1940 stated in parts "...We ourselves, are to a great extent responsible for the lack of understanding between natives of the Northern Provinces and Southern Provinces but there is also a very strong racial distrust, which will be difficult to dispel" (NAK: Zarprof c. 2/1940). The relationship between Northern Nigerian

and Southern Nigerian communities has never been a healthy one. These two locations in Nigeria are divided by religious ideologies that serve as the glue that binds the communities. The South is seen as a Christian ideology, whereas the North is seen as Muslim ideology. The Northern Muslims consider the Southerners as people who opposed their ideological stance and are hence unfriendly to them.

The binding force for solidarity based on geo-location may be a political ideology, business ideology or anything else that could foster a unifying identity. For some unknown reason(s) if two former enemies, who were living in multi-ethnic community, migrate to another location accidentally, the two enemies would have a painful adjustment to do. Notwithstanding the past, there is a high possibility that they may gradually begin to bury their differences for the purpose of peace in their new dwelling place as well as to secure peace for themselves. It is even more likely for them to do so if they had been attacked from another dwelling place. At this point, it will become expedient for them to collaborate and ward off their enemies. Hence, the influence that comes as a result of same dwelling place-solidarity may come bare regardless of the past, particularly the bitter rivalry against each other when they were living in a cosmopolitan dwelling place. The bitter conflict between the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms of Israel is another good example of the influence of geo-location on conflict transformation.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TEN NORTHERN TRIBES AND THE TWO SOUTHERN TRIBES OF ISRAEL

From biblical accounts, Jacob married two sisters; Leah and Rachel. Though sisters, Leah and Rachel became bitter rivals because Rachel was barren but loved by her husband while Leah's womb was blessed with many children. However, God opened Rachel's womb and she bore Joseph and Benjamin. Joseph was later sold into slavery by his own brothers. It was Judah, Leah's son, who suggested that Joseph, Benjamin's elder brother, should be sold into slavery. All these brothers "enjoyed the same ancestry and heritage. There was among them a bond of blood as well as a bond of faith. But these were broken soon after the death of Solomon" (Stevenson, 2000). The twelve Jacob brothers would later form the twelve tribes of Israel which will be divided into two locations namely: the Northern kingdom and the Southern kingdom. The southern Kingdom consisted of the tribe of Judah, the offsprings of Leah and the tribe of Benjamin, offsprings of Rachel. The solidarity of the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin came about as a result of the influence of sharing the same dwelling location. This solidarity made Benjamin bury his grievances against Judah who championed the sale of his elder brother, Joseph. Also, the enmity that his mother Rachel had against Leah, the mother of Judah, was all obliterated by the influence of dwelling location. Therefore, this solidarity gave both Judah and Benjamin to count their relationship greater than that of their full brothers and sister, hence the impetus to fight against the Northern Kingdom and vice versa. As earlier mentioned one plausible explanation for this phenomenon is geo-location.

CONCLUSION

The study has demonstrated how geo-location is a major factor for transforming historical and even recent violent disagreement due to the concept of self-preservation. The peace of your next door neighbour could potential affect ones neighbourhood quickly. The cases of the British Colonial Officials serving in the Northern and Southern Protectorates and the twelve (12) tribes of Israel were both cases of conflict transformation within those geo-locations but at the same time they were sources of violent conflict. The case of Middle Belt Christians, who in spite of the oppression they had suffered in the hands of the ruling Hausa/Fulani, joined forces with Northern Hausa/Fulani to fight their co-religionist during the civil war is another example. Also, Western Nigeria had an option to decline joining the civil war but they did soon their own volition. These two cases above further authenticate the claim that geo-location can transform conflict on one hand and result to violent conflict on the other hand. The study has shown evidence that those suburbs affected by violent conflict in both Kaduna and Jos were influenced into doing so by neighbouring suburbs, who initiated the violence, and not by inhabitants of those suburbs. Therefore, if the people in one suburb unanimously agree to watch over their suburb, their territory will be safe from most violent conflict. However, some suburbs started the violence among themselves as they were fed by rumours that were unsubstantiated. This means that the concept of geo-location could be used as a mean of transforming potential violence.

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Interview:

Imam Nuhu Suleman interviewed at Kaduna in Jan 2014

Rev. Y. A. Shekwa Agah interviewed Kaduna in Kaduna State in Jan 2014

Rev Yohanna A. Sarki interviewed at Jos Town in Plateau State Kaduna in Kaduna State in Jan 2014

Mallam Ibrahim J.W. Faringida, interviewed at Kaduna in Kaduna state in Jan 2014

Mrs Lami Oja Dauda, interviewed Jos in Plateau State in Jan 2014

Alhaji Ibrahim Yahusa interviewed Jos in Plateau State at in Jan 2014

Village Head of Kurmin Mashi Kaduna interviewed in Jan 2014

The 'Dogori' (palace guard) of Kurmin Mashi Kaduna interviewed in Jan 2014