

NKEREFI AND ANAEVUNA RELATIONS IN PRE-COLONIAL NIGERIA

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Abstract

This work focused on pre-colonial Nkerefi socio-political relations with Anaevuna in the present day Nkanu East Local Government Area of Nigeria. It discovered that inter-group relations that existed between Nkerefi and Anaevuna took various forms which ranged from socio-political and cultural exchanges. The similarities in language, festivals, social and political forms of organisation, among others lay bare the evidence of close-knit interaction that existed between Nkerefi and Anaevuna; a detailed examination of these factors form, the crux of this research work. The study employed the historical methods which emphasise description, thematic presentation, interpretation and analysis of facts. Information for this study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources came from oral interviews, with the persons knowledgeable on the research subject, as well as archival documents obtained from the National Archives, Enugu (NAE). Secondary sources like textbooks, journal articles, magazines, newspapers and so on were used. Related unpublished material like personal diaries, master's theses and PhD dissertations were also used. The findings show that there were strong inter-group relations between Nkerefi and Anaevuna mainly on socio-political factors. This research work shows that Nkerefi did not exist in isolation and that Nkerefi related with some of her neighbour through wars.

Keywords: Nkerefi, Anavaena, Relations, Pre-Colonial, Nigeria

Introduction

One may risk standing bold to argue that the Nigerian pre-colonial society may best be examined through the study of inter-group relations. Many Eurocentric historians and writers did not bother to attempt the historiography of inter-

group relations of African communities or societies. Understanding the varied relationships between communities, kingdoms and ethnic groups, otherwise called inter-group relations is perhaps the oldest approach to the study of Nigerian history.³⁵ The importance of inter-group relations in Nigerian history may not be overemphasised. This has been aptly documented by such historian as Obaro Ikime, Adiele Afigbo and O.D. Okpeh, among others. For example, A.E. Afigbo notes that,

...the theme of inter-group relations in Nigerian history is not a new invention of recent Nigerian historiography, only the emphasis given to it and the care, sympathy and understanding with which it has been investigated have varied from epoch to epoch.³⁶

Afigbo further shows that through varied accounts of origin and migrations most Nigerian ethnic group are keenly interested in preserving the perceptions of the inter-group relations between them and their neighbours.³⁷ Additionally, J.F.A. Ade Ajayi and E.J. Alagoa further underscored the importance of the inter-group approach to the study of Nigerian history when they held that,

It is of course, necessary to begin with the histories of the individual groups, but we need to lay greater stress on inter-group relationships, to compare developments within the various groups, and to relate developments in each group to the emerging Nigeria-wide pattern.³⁸

In Nkanu sub-cultural zone of Igbo land, the Nkerefi Clan is prominent and through accounts of origin, political institutions, trade, festival, and titles, among others, were known to have related over the ages with her neighbours. The inter-group relations between Nkerefi and Anaevuna provide a window into a better understanding of the history of the Nkanu people.

The inter-group relations that existed between Nkerefi and Anaevuna took various forms which ranged from socio-political and cultural exchanges. The

³⁵ U.D. Anyanwu, "Ikime and the study of Intergroup Relations in Nigeria" in C.B.N. Ogbogbo, R.O. Olaniyi and O.G. Muojama (eds), *The Dynamics of Inter-group Relations in Nigeria since 1960: Essays in Honour of Obaro Ikime @ 70*, Ibandan : Department of History, 2012, p.34.

³⁶ A.E. Afigbo, *The Igbo and their Neighbours*, Ibandan: University Press, 1987, p.1.

³⁷ Afigbo, *The Igbo and their Neighbours*,... p.2.

³⁸ J.F.A. Ajayi and E.J. Alagoa, "Nigeria before 1900: Aspects of Economic Developments and Inter-Group Relations", in Obaro Ikime (ed), *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, Ibandan: Heinemann, 1980, p.224.

similarities in language, festivals, social and political forms of organisation, among others lay bare the evidence of close-knit interaction that existed between Nkerefi and Anaevuna. Therefore, this study will examine the different forms of interaction between Nkerefi and Anaevuna in pre-colonial period.

Conceptual Clarification

The study engages a few words or concepts which may seem quite ambiguous. These concepts require some clarifications. These include inter group relation, clan and neighbour.

Inter Group Relations: inter group relations refers to interactions between individuals in different social groups, and to interactions taking place between the groups themselves collectively.³⁹ In 1966, Muzafer Sherif proposed a now-widely recognized definition of intergroup relations: Whenever individuals belonging to one group interact, collectively or individually, with another group or its members in terms of their group identification, we have an instance of intergroup behaviour⁴⁰. Research on intergroup relations involves the study of many psychological phenomena related to intergroup processes including social identity, prejudice, group dynamics, and conformity among many others. Research in this area has been shaped by many notable figures and continues to provide empirical insights into modern social issues such as social inequality and discrimination.⁴¹

Clan: A clan is a group of people united by actual or perceived kinship and descent. Even if lineage details are unknown, clan members may be organized around a founding member or apical ancestor. Clans, in indigenous societies, tend to be endogamous, meaning that their members can marry one another. Clans preceded more centralized forms of community organization and government, and exist in every country. Members may identify with a coat of arms or other symbol to show that they are an independent clan. The kinship-based bonds may also have a symbolic ancestor, whereby the clan shares a “stipulated” common ancestor that is a symbol of the clan’s unity. When this

³⁹ Kramer, M. Roderick, Schaffer, Jennifer, “Intergroup Relations”. *Wiley Encyclopaedia of Management*. Wiley-Blackwell. 2014, pp. 1 - 3.

⁴⁰ Sherif Muzafer, “Intergroup relations” *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Management*. 1966. Accessed on July 10 2021, <http://onlinelibrary.wil...onlinelibrary.wiley.com>

⁴¹ M., Kassin, Saul, *Social psychology*. Fein, Steven, Markus, Hazel Rose. (8th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Cengage Wadsworth, 2011

“ancestor” is non-human, it is referred to as a totem, which is frequently an animal⁴².

Neighbour: Neighbour is a person who lives next to another person or near the person. In the case of communities, it identifies a community that is located next or close to another. In this study, the term is used to identify those communities who the Nkerefi share common boundary. Some that were peaceful and some which the Nkerefi had clash with over time and the circumstances that inform their present peaceful co-existence.

Theoretical Framework

Although, many theories have been propounded by sociologists, psychologists and historians to explain varying dimensions of intergroup relations, such theories include Social Identity Theory, Theory of Common Needs, Theory of Natural Anarchy and Human Relations. However, for the purpose of this work, the theory most relevant to the study is the social identity theory to analyse the relationship of nations as a drive for identified interest or interests based on group membership.

The theory is all about a person or persons’ sense of who they are as a result of the group or community or nation they belong to. It was first propounded by Henri Tajfel in 1979 when he observed that the groups to which people belong were very important sources of pride and self-esteem. Tajfel said that groups create a sense of social identity: a sense of belonging to the social world.⁴³ The theory emphasizes that we enhance the status of the group to which we belong by discriminating and taking pre-judicial views against an out-group (the group to which we do not belong). Saul McLeod, in explaining the social identity theory, said that we divide the world into “them” and “us” based on a process of social grouping or categorization which is known as in-group (us) and out-group (them).⁴⁴

Social identity theory states that the in-group will always discriminate against the members of the out-group in order to enhance their self-image. Members of

⁴² Hugh Chisholm, ed, “Clan” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 6 (11th Ed.). Cambridge University Press. 1911, pp. 419 – 421.

⁴³ Henri Tajfel, “An Integrative Theory of Inter-group Conflict,” *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, Vol. 33. No. 47, 1979.

⁴⁴ Saul A. McLeod, “A Social Identity Theory”, 2008. Retrieved from www.simplypsychology.org/social-identity-theory.html, on 28/04/2016.

an in-group will tend to find the negative aspect of an out-group, thereby enhancing their self-image. This is actually the position group members take when they try to maintain the influence and prestige of their nations above other nations in inter-group affairs. Henri Tajfel proposed that putting people into groups and categories is always based on a normal cognitive process, that is, the tendency of grouping things together. In doing that, there is the possibility of exaggerating in identifying the differences between groups, and similarities of things in the same group. People are often categorized in the same way. The group to which people belong (the in-group) is always seen as different from the group of other people (the out-group) and the members of the same group as being similar than they are actually. It is this social categorization that breeds prejudicial attitudes; that is, “them” and “us” mentality that results to in-group and out-group. For instance, Americans and Nigerians, Europeans and Africans (nations and continents), Moslems and Christians (religion), blacks and whites (race), males and females (gender), poor and rich (social class), etc.

McLeod said that Tajfel held the opinion that three mental processes of evaluating people as “us” (in-group) or “them” (out-group) are obvious.⁴⁵ The processes are particularly arranged as social categorisation, objects are categorised for easy understanding and identification. In the same vein, people are categorised as black, white, African, students, Moslem and Christian in order to understand the environment. Social categorisation helps us to work effectively and efficiently. Also, we know ourselves better by knowing what categories we belong to. We can state what behaviour is appropriate by knowing the norms of our groups. This is only possible if we know who and who members of our groups are. That means an individual could belong to more than one group.

In social identification, people adopt the identity of the group which they belong to, and tend to behave like the members of that group. There is always an emotional attachment to one’s groups; the self-esteem will be bound with one’s membership of his group. The last stage is social comparison which compares one group with other groups. To maintain the self-esteem of a group, the group must favourably compare with other group. This is the actual cause of prejudice because once two groups identify themselves as rivals, they are bound to engage in a competition to maintain the prestige and self-esteem of the group.

⁴⁵ S. A McLeod

Competition and hostility between groups is also the result of competing identities rather than competing for resources only.⁴⁶

It is this competition that informs the position of diplomats or actors in the businesses of nations. In Europe, for instance, the categorisation, identification and comparison between diverse social statuses of different groups (nations) created a social conflict when each nation desired to establish its influence and prestige above the rest of the nations of the continent, a development that eventually led to the Thirty Years War from 1618 to 1648. In Nigeria, Nigeria and Biafra War of 1967 to 1970 was the result of the mental configuration of some Nigerians as Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo. In pre-colonial Igbo land, the notion that Eri, founder of the Igbo Kingdom, was deeply religious while leaders of other kingdoms were war-like, defined the Igbo enclave as the most peaceful. And finally, the recognition of the Nkerefi Clan by other groups in the entire North-Eastern Igbo land as a Clan of Brave and strong men helped to raise the self-esteem of Nkerefi people as a group, resulting in the Nkerefi belief that the Nkerefians are very industrious.

The usefulness of the theory with regards to Nkerefi and Anaevuna is borne out of the fact that the social identity theory of self-esteem has been the driving force in the relations between the Nkerefi people and Anaevuna. Nevertheless, the Social Identity Theory is not a flawless theory, as in fact, no theory is flawless.

A Brief History of Nkerefi and Anaevuna

In the historical study of inter-group relations between two communities, it is pertinent to establish an overview of these communities as this would enable a clear understanding of the variables that shaped the nature and patterns of their relation. Such variable includes geographical location and physical features, origin, migration and settlement, culture and ethnics, among others.

Geographical Location and Physical Features

It would be unnecessary to discuss the geographical location and physical features of Nkerefi and Anaevuna differently because both are of close proximity and share common physical features.

⁴⁶ S. A McLeod

Nkerefi is a clan⁴⁷ in Nkanu East Local Government Area of Enugu State in South Eastern Nigeria. It comprises of four autonomous communities namely: Imeoha Nkerefi, Ohuani Amofu Nkerefi, Ishienu Amofu Nkerefi, and Enuogu Nkerefi.⁴⁸ It lies within latitude 6.8N and 7.65E.⁴⁹ It also lies wholly within the tropics and stretches far beyond the Ovu River in the north, the Aesu River in the south and the east and the Okobo River in the west. The town is flat open grassland with a thick forest belt in the immediate vicinity of each village. The soil is light, sandy, clay, but all is reasonably fertile, thus the people have a big reputation as yam and rice farmers.⁵⁰

Traditions of Origin

While the origin of the Igbo people remains a subject of divergent views and hypotheses, archaeological discoveries and empirical researches as well as analyses have gone a long way to establish a scientifically valid point as to the possible origin of the people. The most romanticised hypothesis of the Igbo origin is that which traces the origin, migration and settlement of the Igbo to the Middle East. The Oriental hypothesis of the Igbo origin is basically hinged upon cultural similarities between the Igbo and the Jews on the one hand and the Igbo and the Egyptians on the other.⁵¹ However, it has been noted by renowned historians, among who is A.E. Afigbo, that it would be spurious to lay claim of the Igbo origin upon a hypothesis that cannot be empirically verified.⁵² This draws our attention to the important archaeological discoveries by Thurstan Shaw at Igboukwu and other location. One major significance of the famous archaeological findings was that it shows that the Igbo stock had inhabited that present place of abode for many centuries. This may give credence to some of the hypotheses which either claim that the Igbo originated from where they are

⁴⁷ A. U. Igwe, 52 years, a lecturer, interviewed in his office at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka on 7th June, 2021.

⁴⁸ Enugu State of Nigeria Official Gazette, no 2, Enugu – 5th September, 2002 Vol. 11, p. B. 20

⁴⁹ Emmanuel N. Aninwogo and Kelvin M. Aniemeka , *A History of the Nkerefi Igbo*, Lagos: First Academic Publishers 2002 p. 1.

⁵⁰ NAE/2/2ONP RoF: K.1.4740 and UDDIV 4/1/30 and UDDIV 4/1/29 An intelligence report on the Nara Group in the Nkanu Area of the Udi Division by S.P.L. Beaumoni, Esq. (Assistant District Officer.

⁵¹ A.E. Afigbo, *Ropes of Sand: Studies in Igbo History and Culture*, Nsukka: University Press Limited, 1981, p.13.

⁵² Afigbo, *Ropes of Sand: Studies in Igbo History...* pp. 13-14.

found today or that they migrated from locations not far away from where they are at present.

Nkerefi

The pre-colonial history of Nkerefi was essentially that of the migration and fusion of people and rise and full of kindred and villages.⁵³ Various people and claims point to the fact that Nkerefi people are the descendants of Ezeokeuna - a cattle rearer from Edemberri.⁵⁴ According to archival reports, "the people of Nkerefi being descendant of Ezeokeuna of Ezza at one time used to make periodic sacrifice at their ancestor's shrine at Ezza, but however, this custom has ceased for many years".⁵⁵

Nkerefi traced her origin from Ezzakuna (Ezeoke-una) the founder of Ezza, whose father Una Okpoto Okumeze came from Afikpo group of the Igbo history.⁵⁶ These people have been organized into something like vassal state by their possession of a common dialect (language) and culture, but in reality, there is no Nkerefi state or race. The word Nkerefi refers more to the dialect and occupation than people.⁵⁷ One particular legend and oral school of thought state that when 'Ezeoke Una' the father of Nkerefi saw that his son - Ezeoke UNA Junior (Ogbonnaa) has matured into manhood, he gave him few cows and some yams to start his own life and maintain his family. He received the paternal gifts and blessings from his father, and moved southwards in search of settlement and livelihood. He had acquired the art of cattle rearing and farming from his parents. As he moved, his cattle (Efi) multiplied and he started selling some through trade by barter (exchange of goods for goods), and people were happy with him for his clemency, industry and enterprise. Whenever a visitor said that he was going to the home of Ezeoke Una, people were confused it was going to be the home of Ezeoke or his father, they called him Ezeoke Una - 'Nke-na-ere-

⁵³ Aninwogo and Aniemeka, *A History of the Nkerefi...* p.4.

⁵⁴ Gabriel O. Aja, *The History of Nkerefi (A Reflection of Nkanu People)* 1993, Enugu: The AGOP Communications and Publishers, p. 5.

⁵⁵ Nigeria: NAE/2/2/ONP ROF. 8.1.4740 and UD DIV 4/1/30 and UD DIV 4/1/29 - An intelligence report on the Nara Group in the Nkanu Area of the Udi Division by S.P.L. Beaumoni, Esq. (Assistant District Officer).

⁵⁶ Chief Donatus Aniemeka, (Eze Ugo na Nkerefi), 75 years, Igwe Cabinet, Interviewed at his house in Umuokpalla, Nkerefi on 30th March, 2021

⁵⁷ Aninwogo and Aniemeka, *A History of the Nkerefi...* p.4.

efi' which means cattle seller or dealer. This was the genesis of the name Nkerefi.⁵⁸

Anaevuna: Most of the historical materials about 'Anaevuna' have not been well preserved due partly to inaccurate knowledge of the time and partly to lack of authentic books or records from which material could be gathered. But despite these obvious handicaps, some materials are available for the guidance of budding historians.

The people who lived west of Amofu, between the present Ihukulu village. Ekene Ogbuke, Umunama Etiti, Achi Nworji of Umuogbii and even extended to Ihuezeofia in Enuogu community, formed themselves into a strong, united village, originated from the descendants of Amofu (Ezubo), the elder son of Nkerefi. They migrated from 'Aegu Oma' Obuno the home of their elder brother, and the first settlement of their father. Another version of the origin of the Anaevuna people opined that the 'Anas' were not of the same stock with Nkerefi people.

The available materials do not give any evidence as to the time when the "Anas" emerged as some kindred came into existence as early as about AD 1700. They were predominantly Negro kindred known as the "Ana New Aeku n'uba". They were the members of the large Amofu people. The growth of the kindred cannot be separated from its wealth. It was her wealth which attracted a sizeable number of other kindred whose combined contributions made Anaevuna kindred to be reckoned with.⁵⁹

Nkerefi and Anaevuna Relations Pre-Colonial Period

There are different aspects of the relations between Nkerefi and Anaevuna and the cordiality of this relationship has been a subject that elicits various degrees of emotions and interpretations. However, there seems to be consensus among the scholars regarding the trends and nature of the relations. The position sometimes had been that the relations between both communities was cordial at first but later they related through conflict which saw the extinction of the Anaevuna.

Political Relations

⁵⁸Aninwogo and Aniemeka, *A History of the Nkerefi...* pp.4-5.

⁵⁹ Aninwogo and Aniemeka, *A History of the Nkerefi...* p. 33.

There appeared to be a kind of monarchical type of relationship in the villages where the descedants of Anaevuna were married, for such village automatically enjoyed seniority over others. However, a number of forces combined from the second part of about eighteenth century, to bring about the decline, and complete disappearance of the Anaevuna people. The following are summary of the causes which may be grouped under two main headings:

Internal Causes

These can be classified into three causes, for example, the wealth, kindness and weakness of the Anaevuna people.

(a) Wealth of the Village

The ancient Anaevuna was naturally blessed with abundant human and natural resources. This was because, apart from fertile land which made them the richest food producing village in Nkerefi land. It might be added that the Anaevuna had financial resources to maintain their kindred. It is said that the people of Anaevuna were the first village in Nkerefi land to produce the “king of yams” (Eze Ji) they produced yams in abundance. The ‘Anas’ got a lot of fish from ‘Aevuna’ River and the lake or pond of Anaevuna (Ovuu). In fact, they were the richest kindred in the whole Nkerefi in ancient times.

(b) Kindness of Anaevuna

Historically, the ancient village collapsed because of their milk-heartedness. History had the story thus: It was during the hard time of a famine (Unwu) in Nkerefi land, that a wife of an ‘Umuaekuma’ man gave birth to a bouncing baby boy. Because of the hardship of the time, not even a little quantity of food to feed the new baby and the mother was available.⁶⁰

The husband, Ónyiba Orgbu Njoku Aekuma, went to his best friend at Anaevuna. He narrated to his friend Nze Ogbuzulu Mkpume Ujoaga Odicha, his plight and bitter experience about his new baby and the starving mother. He told him that hunger was ready and very eager to snatch the life of the duo, if proper measures were not taken instantly. He also complained bitterly over the scarcity of food in his family.⁶¹

Nze Ogbuzulu Mkpume, being too generous, opened his barn and gave him some tubers of yams. He also gave him some cowries (ego) and dried meat.

⁶⁰ Chief Donatus Aniemeka, interviewed.

⁶¹ Aninwogo and Aniemeka, *A History of the Nkerefi...* p. 34.

Onyiba Orgbu thanked him and went home happily. The man (Orgbu) came again two times, and the same generosity was meted to him by the 'Anas' man. Greedily, he went home (Umuaekuma) and told his kinsmen and kindred what he had seen at Anaevuna. With mouth agape in amazement he said "I have seen where food is in abundance while we are dying in acute perpetual famine in our village". They conspired that, the people of Anaevuna should be invaded and their prosperous wealth looted.⁶²

Before taking action, they decided to consult the supreme gods Ani, Achi and Chukwu. They made some religious rituals (Ike Aekpa Mmaa) and decided on their plans. But in line with Nkerefi tradition, before one goes to 'mmaa' he must consult Ani Nkerefi – the god of the earth which disapproved of their plans. Yet they still cling to their former decisions. They then decided to consult Chukwu despite the serious warning from Ani and Achi that they should drop their resolutions and decision. They were still adamant. At the Chukwu (mmaa), Chukwu told them that before they could succeed in the attack or invasion, the most famous and highly regarded son – Oduololoko – would be the first victim. They accepted the spiritual divination.⁶³

(c) Weakness of the Kindred

The people had no firm central government that controlled the administration of the people property. The organisation of the kindred was absolutely poor and weak. The greatness of the village was based on the traditional religious practices and the cults of their ancestors. They had great hopes on their spiritual gods – Akpu Abada and Ani Nkerefi which gave them food, good health and luck, bumper harvest and blessings. The government did not make adequate security or defence for the village, this became a terrible mistake when they were taken unawares by their enemies.⁶⁴

External Causes

According to historical legends and several of traditions, the warlord of Nkerefi, Odujoloko who was as tall as (pandanus) "Iroko tree" (Orji) and as huge as the silk tree (ufu Akpu), must have posed magical powers. He was said to have as well possessed warlike spirits and indomitable courage. Historical evidence and

⁶² Gabriel O. Aja, 59 years, Former SSG to the Governor of Enugu State, at his office, New layout, Enugu on 22nd July, 2021

⁶³ Aninwogo and Aniemeka, *A History of the Nkerefi...* p. 35.

⁶⁴ Aninwogo and Aniemeka, *A History of the Nkerefi...* p. 35.

oral interviews state that when he stayed at Eke Amofu, Afor Umuogbii, Nkwo Obodo Okolo Enuogu or Afor Imeoha and about war cries (Mkpukpo), the whole Nkerefi land would hear his voice and immediately got ready for wars.

The day the Anaevuna disappeared from the map of Nkerefi came. The war group led by Ebube Dike Onua Oduojoloko, besieged the Anaevuna people. The first palm frond spear (alo ogugu) thrown by the Anas landed at the heart of Oguojoloko and pierced in, and he fell down and died. His group came in full force and power and overcame the Anaevuna people. They killed them in thousands and looted their yam, domestic animals and other valuable things. They forced the Anaevuna people to quit their fatherland.

Oral traditions state that some Anaevuna fled to various parts of the present Imo, Ebonyi, Abia, Anambra and Enugu state while others trekked to the present Delta State across the River Niger. They settled there and called it "Ukwuani" which means "trekking by foot". Another school of thought states that others went to different parts of the world through slavery later.

The remaining Anaevuna, comprised of the old men, women, children and disabled said that since their brothers had been mercilessly butchered by their fellow men, life would be hopeless and worthless for them to stay behind. The men, women, children and the disabled, then lined up in a single file. The men after singing meditative and heart-rending traditional melodies (Igbolo Inyinya), with their lambskins (Akpukpo Ebune) jumped into the pond (Ovu Anaevuna), one after the other. The children and the disabled also did same. The last woman (Oshine'efi Ada Ogene) after her heart-rending meditative and mournful tune (Itu Aefa), before she jumped into the lake made a historical remark, which has gone down in the history of Nkerefi land.

Even up to the modern time it is believed that their voices and the sounds of their mortars and pestles are heard at sunset during harvest time or festival days. Their coconut and Okro trees still grow there.⁶⁵

Socio-Cultural Relations

The Anaevuna was reputed to be so rich and wealthy, influential and domineering, and out of sheer enviousness and hostility, the Umuekuma hamlet allegedly drove the rich family away and exterminated them. But that was not

⁶⁵ Chief John O. Chukwu, 64 years, Technician, interviewed at Obu-Egu Umunama-Etiti, Nkerefi on 23rd March, 2021.

before the family flourished and multiplied and were married out to Imoha, Enuogu and Obuno village of Amofu.⁶⁶

This aspect of oral tradition states that because of the prosperity of Anaevuna who held the Ofo Stick – symbol of authority, respect and royalty, it was transferred to its daughter/son in laws at Ezinogu. This explains why in addition to the concession the Enuogu has made to Imeoha through Ezinogu, the Anaevuna factor contributed significantly to making Ogu (Ezinogu) the oldest village in Nkerefi.

Another daughter of Anaevuna was said to have been married in Obuno village of Amofu Community and the inheritance of the family's Ofo Status, symbol placed Obuno to be the oldest and enjoys seniority in Amofu Community. Like stated before, there appeared to be a kind of monarchical type of relationship in the villages where the descendants of Anaevuna were married, for such village automatically enjoyed seniority over others.⁶⁷

Conclusion

The subject of inter-group relations, especially in the developing African society, is sometimes difficult to define. This is because commentators of the Western school often cast group relations in Africa in the mould of wars, crises and murders. To them, therefore, group relations refer to destruction. However, in our examination so far, we have been able to establish how groups, with traces of biological ties, who were formally living cordially suddenly engaged in fighting wars which later lead to the extinction of the Anaevuna people. The suitability of the theoretical framework has been justified because, as seen in the course of this research, inter-group relations between Nkerefi and Anaevuna anchored more or less on drive for identified interest and interdependence.

Despite the modest contributions of this study, a lot of research still needs to be done on Nkerefi and Anaevuna relations. For example, detailed research is yet to be done on the spread and establishment of these communities in other parts of the country (Nigeria) today.

⁶⁶ Aja, *The History of Nkerefi*... p. 10.

⁶⁷ Aja, *The History of Nkerefi*... p. 11.