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Norwegian School of
Theology, Religion and Society

Conflict Between New Religious Movements and African Traditional Religion in the Bafut Community

The Clash Between Kingship International Ministries and African Traditional Religion

Chunyuy Shwei Emmanuel

Supervisor

Professor Roar G. Fotland

MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society,

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ABSTRACT

After identifying the conflict between New Religious Movements and African Traditional Religion as a potential area for academic research, this research set out to answer a main research question and sub questions. The main research question was: Why and how do New Religious Movements clash with African Traditional Religion in the Bafut community of the North West of Cameroon? This question was further broken down to four sub questions including; What does the NRM think of ATR theologically?, How has ATR responded?, How are these clashes resolved or diffused?, What impact do these clashes have in the community during and after the conflicts? These questions transliterated to the objectives of the project, objectives which were attained through various research methods and theories. Primary research was done through ethnographic interviews, participant observations and field notes. Secondary data was collected from libraries and the internet through mediums like books, journals, encyclopedias and other electronic materials. These materials reviewed were combined with the concepts of cosmic war and contextual theology to form the interpretational grid for the analysis in the thesis. After a closer scrutiny of the findings, the research concluded that the absence of contextual theology manifested in the presentation of Christianity (by New Religious Movements) as supra-cultural leads to the demonization of native religion (ATR) leading to consequent attacks and counter attacks and thus the conflicts that take the form of cosmic wars. The work concludes that the administration of corresponding forms of contextual theology and the promotion of interreligious dialogue for reconciliation can mitigate the conflicts.

1   ABBREVIATIONS

NRM (s) = New Religious Movements

ATR = African Traditional Religion

KIM = Kingship International Ministries

African Initiated Churches (AICs

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0   General Introduction

The post-World War Two period saw the rise and proliferation of sects and New Religious Movements in Africa, a situation which introduced new dynamics to the discussion of religion and culture in the continent because these new movements have radically different agendas than the mainline Western denominations that had been in the continent since colonialism. The relationship between NRMs and ATR is increasingly being seen as tensed as opposed to that with the mainline Christian denominations. The tensed relationship often degenerates to conflict which spans from verbal attacks to physical encounters and cosmic wars. While most West African countries like Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya have dedicated much academic attention to the conflict between these two religions, the situation in the Central African sub region in general and Cameroon in particular is different. Research by both state institutions and confessional schools of theology have neglected this aspect of conflict in the country despite its recurrence and relevance to the security situation of the country. The absence of research on the conflicts is opportunity for academic research. This thus gives the researcher the impetus to investigate the reasons behind the conflicts, the forms of the conflict and its impact to the community with the conflict between Kingship International Ministry and African Traditional Religion in Bafut being a succinct case study. It is the hope of this researcher to make a modest contribution.

1.1   Themes/ key words and Definitions

New Religious Movements, African Traditional Religion, Religious Conflicts, Cosmic Wars Contextual theology.

1.1.1   African Traditional Religion (ATR)

The definition of African Traditional Religion has provided a huge debate in the academia because of its complexity. The complexity comes at the level of identifying a unique and uniform religion which can be referred to as the religion of the African people. This is because of the multiplicity tribes and ethnic groups that exist in Africa and each of these tribes have their own independent religion such that the definition of ATR becomes difficult to be done in the generic sense. J. O.

Awolalu (1976:1) however attempts such a generic definition when he says the following about African Traditional Religion:

> When we speak of African Traditional Religion, we mean the indigenous religious beliefs and practices of the Africans. It is the religion which resulted from the sustaining faith held by the forebears of the present Africans, and which is being practiced today in various forms and various shades and intensities by a very large number of Africans, including individuals who claim to be Muslims or Christians.

From the definition above ATR is understood to be the religion of the African people(s) as has been handed down from one generation to another. Considering that more on ATR shall appear on the section for Literature review, an operational definition for this thesis shall refer to ATR as the indigenous religion of the people of the various tribes of Africa with Bafut as the scope of exemplification.

1.1.2   New Religious Movements (NRMS)

Peter B.Clarke (2006:x) presents a definition of NRM from the perspective of its characteristics. He submits that NRMs "…provide in each case new foundations for being religious, introducing new beliefs and practices, often by reshaping and transforming the purposes of old ones, and act as catalysts for change within the older religions. This includes not only change in beliefs and practice but also change at the epistemological level". The definition implies that NRMs have a tendency to spring up from any religion be it Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and even ATR itself. This study will regard NRM as a radical Christian denomination that is relatively new in its doctrine and practices. The NRM in question is Kingship Ministry International that just sprang in the early 2000s in Cameroon and proposes a radical change in the worship system of people in various communities using diverse means. Their radical sermons account for the various conflicts that occur between them and ATR.

1.1.3   Religious Conflicts/ Cosmic Wars

The core of this thesis is religious conflict which manifests in the form of cosmic wars. Religious conflicts refer to clashes either ideological or physical and violent which are underlined by religious differences. In Africa, these conflicts are mostly linked to Islam, yet as time evolves, it

has been discovered that they occur with every religion. Basedau, M. (2017:1) argues strongly that;

> Although Islamist insurgencies predominate in ideas-based religious conflicts, Christian rebel groups in Congo-Brazzaville, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Uganda have also been active since the turn of the millennium. Countries with mixed religious populations are prone to interreligious conflicts, which has materialized in cases such as the Central African Republic, Nigeria, and Côte d'Ivoire.

Basedau, M. (2017) does not focus on Cameroon, however, his findings are relevant in the Cameroon context. Following the clashes between NRMs and ATR in the North West Region of Cameroon, it is discovered that just as Basedau, M. (2017) states, that, religious conflicts are not exclusive to areas where Islam is the dominant religion. The religious conflicts in Cameroon like in the context under study take the form of cosmic wars that is in the reason behind the conflict, the features of the conflict and the aftermath of the conflict.

Either way, Juergensmeyer's concept of "Cosmic War" is fitting here. Concerning how such conflicts manifest, they take the form of Cosmic Wars as expounded in Mark Juergensmeyer (2000)."Terror in the Mind of God The Global Rise Of Religious Violence". In the absence of the consensus and subsequent deterioration of the verbal attacks, the ensuing conflict between the two religions always manifests in the form of comic wars. Juergensmeyer (2000:145-146) presents the phenomenon of cosmic wars which are always purportedly fought between good and evil and ensues from the disparity in belief and practice under the various religions of the world. These conflicts which are most often violent find their legitimization in the fact that they (the initiators of the conflict) are executing divine command to ensure the cleansing of the world from evil for the triumph of good. To him, religious conflicts/wars are largely cultural conflicts since they surpass individual struggles and are rather cultural and ethno religious conflicts that strive to establish the existence and survival of a particular religion, culture and worldview. He states in (2000:146) thus "I call … such "cosmic" because they are larger than life. They evoke great battles of legendary past, and they relate to metaphysical conflicts between good and evil". Life in the above quote is synonymous to the individual life. Cosmic wars are thus not individual issues but community issues that entails the survival of people as a community with a culture and a religion.

The statement above also indicates the relationship between the concept of "good and evil" and the fact that good and evil has the tendency to transcend cosmic wars.

Juergensmeyer's cosmic war theory is relevant here because it demonstrates the form of the religious conflict under study.The new religious movement before attacking the African Traditional Religion of give an "evil' tag and then proceeds to attack it under the pretext of executing the divine command. On their part local religions put up a stiff resistance so as to defend their culture, their religion and their world view. Faced with these conflicts, a possible way out is creating empathy between the two opposing religions, something which can possibly be achieved through contextual theology.

1.1.4   Contextual theology.

Contextual theology stands in favor of localizing the teachings of the church rather than subjecting various church practices to universal doctrines which often cause a number of problems at the level of reception. According to Stephen Bevans (1985), "Contextualization," or notions that approximate its meaning like "incarnation," "indigenization," "inculturation" or "constructing local theology," is a process that only relatively recently has come to full self-consciousness among theologians. They view it as not only interesting but also as vital and indispensable to the theological enterprise". The tendency for "inculturation" becomes important in the theological enterprise of the contemporary world because of increased literary rate and the consequent resistance against all forms of colonialism including religious and cultural colonialism through especially applying western theology in Africa. Bevans in a latter publication demonstrates the need for contextual theology through the response he received from after the sermon he presented in Rome titled "the sun" in which he made reference to the famous song of the Beatles titled "Here Comes the sun".

Stephen Bevans (2008) recounts that after the sermon he felt elated for in his mind he had delivered the greatest of all his homilies because in his imagination and as presented in the song by the Beatles, the sun actually represented Christ in many ways. Yet he became surprised when an Indian walked up to him to say (2008: xix)

The sun is not a very striking symbol for the coming of Christ into the world. In India the sun is an enemy. It is not something that brings refreshment; it is something that brings unbearable heat that is to be escaped by staying in the shade. The sun's heat makes men and women thirsty, and too much exposure to the sun causes sunstroke.

This particular incident gave Stephen Bevans the understanding that some predominantly western and northern liturgical concepts are totally meaningless in other cultural contexts thus demonstrating the need for contextual theology. This concept is relevant to this study as it will guide the understanding of the causes of the inter-religious conflict in Bafut and also the point to the ways by which the conflicts can be resolved. More on this will be seen under the chapter on theory.

1.2 Motivation

African culture is witnessing an upsurge in attack not only from mainline Churches under Christianity but very much so from Pentecostal churches and New Religious Movements. This results in multidimensional conflicts ranging from propaganda, attacks on individuals and physical confrontation between belligerent camps. The ramifications are both physical and mental (ideological). It is important that while the authorities are doing all in their competence to settle these conflicts, intellectual research should be done to document, analyze and examine the implications of the conflicts on the society at large. This gives me motivation to carry out this research.

1.3 Objectives

This research seeks to attain the following objectives:

- To present the perspective from which NRMs view ATR theologically
- To demonstrate how ATR has responded
- To advance and justify the reasons underlying the conflict between New Religious Movements and ATR in Bafut (North West Region Cameroon).
- To also discuss the form that such conflicts take.

- To examine the consequences of the conflict as well as present the way by which the conflict was resolved as well as the way forward.

1.4 Literature Review/ Research Overview

For the purpose of background and the analysis that shall follow, a review of literature is mandatory. The review is organized to present preliminaries on NRMs, ATR and the dynamics that lead to conflicts between the two and possibilities for resolutions of such conflicts. Religious conflicts in Africa have received relatively little attention as compared to religious conflicts in other continents. The effect is limited material to consult for a research like this one, however, since concepts are largely universal in nature, review of literature both from Africa and elsewhere is considered useful if relevant to the study. For this reason, this literature review will focus on relevant material written from both out of Africa and from the African continent. Considering the diverse nature of the topic, the review will be segmented into the following parts: the first will focus on New Religious Movements, the Second on African Traditional Religion and lastly on conflicts between ATR and NRMs.

1.4.1 Literature on New Religious Movements

Peter B. Clarke (2005) in "African Religions: New Religious Movements" presents the history and typology of African New Religious Movements. He traces the history from the colonial period with early traces of New Religious Movements in Countries like Nigeria and Kenya in which the movements posed a problematic to both the various colonial masters and to the natives. He posits that "The primary aim of these movements has not been to return in fundamentalist fashion to the past and remain there but rather to review critically the traditional cultural and religious processes with a view to constructive engagement with the new". One understands from here that these movements are dynamic and always want change in order to adapt to the "new". The new here implying current trends which give the founders of the NRMs the latitude to criticize historical (main line churches), the culture and tradition of the people as well as government institutions in order to show how far they have faltered thus presenting the NRM as the only way out of the status quo. Such criticisms expose the puritanical tendencies of NRMs and thus an underlying potential for conflict with many other institutions like ATR.

Haven presented a brief history, he goes on to present the typology of the NRMs. He underscores the fact that these movements differ in terms of liturgy, structure and doctrine and goes further to present three perspectives from which they can be classified. He borrows from Bryan R. Wilson's (1973) typology to present the first perspective from which the classification can be done. According to Willson, the classification can be done taking into consideration the movement's responses to the world and interpretations of the sources of evil and how it is to be overcome. In this line therefore, Peter B. Clarke (2005) believes that the NRMs in Africa can fit clearly with Willson's seven categories of Modern NRMs. Peter B. Clarke (2005) elaborates on these categories as follows:

> These are: (1) the conversionist response, which insists that individual and collective salvation can only come about through a profound, supernaturally wrought transformation of the self; (2) the revolutionist response, which believes that evil can only be overcome and salvation assured by divine action, thus no subjective change however profound will affect the state of the world for the better; (3) the introversionist response, which seeks salvation by withdrawing to a separate, purified community set apart from what is perceived to be an irredeemably evil world; (4) the manipulationist or gnostic response, which seeks salvation and the conquest of evil though the acquisition of the right means and techniques to deal with the problems of life; (5) the thaumaturgical response, which relies chiefly on miracles and oracles to attain salvation, which is identified as something specific such as the relief from a particular illness; (6) the reformist response, which aspires under divine guidance to overcome evil and save the world by transforming existing social structures and arrangements; and (7) the utopian response, which aims to reconstruct the world according to a set of divine principles that, if correctly applied, will result in the establishment of a world without evil.

Peter B. Clarke (2005) however further points out that this classification fails to take into consideration the dynamics of religious change and development movements undergo and their espousal of more than one orientation simultaneously. And I agree with Peter Clark here because looking closely to the NRMs in Africa today the above categories are seemingly characteristics of NRMs and not typologies. This is because most NRMs are a blend of the above seven categories.

Peter B. Clarke (2005) further alludes to Harold Turner's (1991) typology, which is based on different kinds of criteria (doctrinal, organizational, and historical).He syntheses Turner's typology into the following four classes. Using doctrine, organization and historical considerations he put forth the following four classes:

- The neo-primal which refers to the category of modern movements that stay close to tradition but reject magic and certain practices by the said tradition.

- Herbraist movements that refer to those movements with followers that believe that they are the descendants of the Israelites and the place and store of Bible prophecies.

- The third being the syntheist who combine both traditional and Christian phenomena, and lastly

- Diviationist who present themselves as similar to either Islam or Christianity but have marked differences.

This classification according to Peter Clarke can only have relevance where Christian denominations are concerned for it appears not to have value in places like Aisia and India where the religious movements are slightly different in concept and practice. Its scope is thus limited and appears to have little relevance in the discourse for religious innovation.

Peter B. Clarke (2005) continues with a third category which he borrows from Roy Wallis (1984). He posits that "Roy Wallis's (1984) typology of modern or new religions into world-denying or world-rejecting, world-indifferent, and world-affirming types,…".Such classification is however just academic as most of these NRMs are largely secularist than ecclesiastical in nature. This implies that most African NRMs are world affirming in their preaching and actions.

After this classification Peter B. Clarke (2005) goes further to make a panoramic recap of these NRMs across Africa with focus on various sub regions of Africa with specific attention to West Africa. Taking the example of Nigeria Peter Clarke observes that the drive for NRMs in Nigeria began and blossomed alongside the quest for independence. He posits that:

In the 1890s the decision to remove the Nigerian-born Anglican bishop of the Niger Delta, Samuel Ajayi Crowther, from his post fueled the drive for ecclesiastical autonomy. The investigation and subsequent dismissal by the London-based Church Missionary Society of Crowther had the psychological effect of putting on trial the capacity of a whole race to govern itself.

This had the boomerang effect of leading to the formation of NRMs as a way of protest. These new movements were somewhat nationalistic since they questioned the cultural and religious colonization of Africa. First in this category was the split of the American Baptist Church in Nigeria and the formation of the African Baptist Church in 1888.Clarke goes further to quote one of the founding members of this church as:

A Nigerian founding member of the African Baptist Church, Mojola Agbebi (baptized David Vincent), expressed the anxieties over cultural and personal identity and the undermining of African self-esteem in his attack on the foreign character of mission church Christianity: "Hymn books, harmonium, dedications, pew constructions, surpliced (sic) choir, the white man's names, the white man's dress, are so many non-essentials, so many props and crutches affecting the religious manhood of the Christian Africans" (cited in Clarke, 1986, p. 160).

The implication of the above is that the African NRMs of this era were largely nationalist who were involved in fighting the eradication of their culture and identity.

Nmah, Patrick Enoch (2017) in "*What Is New In "New" Religious Movements In Africa? An Analytical Approach*" presents another profound perspective from which NRMs can be viewed. He begins his write-up by speculating on a number of reasons for which NRMs are on the rise in Africa. The reasons include: quest for spiritual power, cultural identity, ethnical identity, health, economic emancipation, security, false prophecy, and ecclesiastical maladministration. These reasons cause dissenting communicants to go form their own churches with different doctrines and thus NRMs.

He presents an alternative name to NRMs which he also refers to as African Initiated Churches (AICs) and further identifies two categories of NRMs in contemporary African society. The first category refers to those for various reasons abandoned Christian Missionary founded Churches and are thus called "schismatic" or "separatist" movements. It is important to note that these churches maintain certain aspects of the mother church despite the enormous changes internally found in the New. The second of the categories are those that are founded by independent charismatic leaders with no link to any mother Church. They could be referred to spiritualists or "spiritist" because of their addictive usage of glossolalia and spiritual healing. Patrick Enoch posits that (2017:49):

> In customary parlance, the term "new religious movements" has four related meanings: (1) independence; (2) a territory not under the control of any other power; (3) in ecclesiastical usage, the principles that individual congregation or church is an autonomous and equalitarian society free from any external ecclesiastical control; and (4) the polity based on this principle.

The four features above are so explicit yet, in order for him to depict the "newness" in such religious movements, he does a panoramic study of about four churches in Nigeria and states what is new in each of the cases. For Nigerian Pentecostalism, what is new is the fact that they stress the concept of Baptism by immersion and associated the following spiritual gifts with such baptism. The gifts include; faith healing, prophecy (dreams, visions, predictions) trances, speaking in tongues and various forms of possessions by the Holy Spirit. He continues to state that (2017:51):

> Other similar newness features emerged among the Ibibio and Efik areas where the United Free Church of Scotland, the Primitive Methodist Church from England and the Qua Iboe Mission, and undenominational group from Northern Ireland are also the sense of public confessing one's sins, making restitution, affecting reconciliations, abandoning native magical practices and tobacco and alcohol, and displaying many of the ecstatic phenomena associated with a Pentecostal revival viz. tongues, shaking, removal of shoes, dancing, visions, and emotional displays of joy.

These churches for the above are referred to as "Alludura" (praying churches) which Mna Patrick (2017) further presents to have the two major characteristics which are the fact that they have pagan an occultic tendencies.

Concerning NRMs in Cameroon, there no available material to review. Yet the works reviewed above permits the possible categorization of NRMs everywhere in Africa and thus their relevance to this study. The works reviewed above conform to the features of KIM (the NRM under study). Faith healing, prophecy (dreams, visions, predictions) trances, speaking in tongues and various forms of possessions by the Holy Spirit are some of its characteristics as well as its tendency for being revivalist and separatist. The last two features demonstrate the puritanical nature of KIM which is part of the reason for the conflict under study.

1.4.2   Review for African Traditional Religion

J. O. Awolalu (1976:1) says the following of African Traditional Religion:

> When we speak of African Traditional Religion, we mean the indigenous religious beliefs and practices of the Africans. It is the religion which resulted from the sustaining faith held by the forebears of the present Africans, and which is being practiced today in various forms and various shades and intensities by a very large number of Africans, including individuals who claim to be Muslims or Christians.

From the above it is seen that ATR is part and parcel of all Africans be they converted to alien religion (Islam and Christianity) or not. Another important point that comes out glaring is the fact that ATR is orally transferred from one generation to the other. The oral nature of ATR is unfortunate since it is subject to misinterpretations and vulnerable to those who wish to misconstrue it.

Concerning the oral nature of ATR as oral, Aloysius M. Lugira (2009 :28) posits that:

> Oral traditions are passed on in a variety of forms—in myths, legends, stories, and proverbs. Stories generally say something about life in order to educate and entertain the community. Myths deal with the divine. They have religious subjects, such as the origin of the universe and of nature. They address and answer questions like, where did humankind

11

come from? How are human beings expected to act as they travel through life? What is the destiny of the human race? Legends are a body of stories about families, people, and particularly heroes of the community. Often based on real people and facts, they have been told and retold until they become part of the lore of the community as a whole. Proverbs are short statements that express wisdom about creation and human experience.

The implication of the absence of documentation of ATR is that many people find it easy to attack and attempt to distort the understanding of ATR because it is simply transmitted by word of mouth and thus most of its tenets cannot be easily verified. This makes ATR vulnerable to predator religions including all alien categories and especially New Religious Movements.

As Aloysius M. Lugira (2009) argues, one of the key doctrines of ATR is the Creation Myth and the doctrine about the Supreme Being. Myths of creation always concern the sacred beginnings of the people and usually concern the Supreme Being who according to African Oral Tradition created the world and its people. This Supreme Being (God the Builder) is at the center of ATR. It is important however to note that the belief in the Supreme Being does not presuppose the singularity or the plurality of the concept of God/gods in Africa. Aloysius M. Lugira (2009:36) elucidates this point when he posits that; "In Western religion religious systems are usually classified as either monotheistic, that is, believing in one God, or polytheistic, believing in many gods. In African religion monotheism and polytheism exist side by side". Monotheism in Africa avails itself on the African notion of the hierarchy of gods. God the builder or Supreme God is at the top of the paradigm and is single thus monotheism is part and parcel of ATR. The Supreme Being presides over a number of deities and divinities (gods) and thus polytheism also abounds in ATR. This explains why Monotheism and Polytheism both exist side by side in Africa.

1.4.3   Rites and Rituals in ATR

To Africans, life without religion is impossible. As J S Mbiti (1979) notes, "the African is notoriously religious". The implication is that for an African to think and act, religious implications must be taken into considerations. Such adherence to religion necessitates all forms of prayer and prayer intentions which are offered through rites, rituals and incantations. Aloysius M. Lugira (2009:64) posits that:

To Africans belief without ritual action would take away much of religion's natural power. Rites and ritual punctuate all aspects of African religious life. Religion is so deeply ingrained in the daily life of traditional Africa that it is all but impossible to separate it from other aspects of the culture. In an African community religion is the strongest influence on people's thoughts, acts, and lives. Rites of passage and other communal rites are the clearest examples of how religion permeates all aspects of African life.

With such tendency for religious rites and rituals, the importance of shrines and "holy places" cannot therefore be over emphasized as one cannot make a ritual or offer a sacrifice without an altar.

1.4.4 Sacred Places and Spaces

Aloysius M. Lugira (2009) postulates that where the rites and rituals are made are known as African Sacred Spaces or Places. Some are constructed like huts while others are simply natural spaces like stones, caves, giant trees etc. Because of the religious importance of these sacred places, the African guards these places jealously which that implies an attack on any of these places is not considered as an attack on the site but also on their religion but also on their world view and identity. It is important to note here that such attacks by mostly puritanical alien religions provide potential for religious conflicts in Africa.

Aloysius M. Lugira (2009) identifies certain misleading terms and misconceptions about ATR which possibly underlie religious conflicts in the line of the focus of this thesis. He does so in a defensive manner attempting to give clarifications so as to clear ATR. These misleading terms include:

- ATR as primitive religion. Lugira posits that this is the conception propagated by western investigators of ATR basically because of racial pride. It is however unfortunate that NRMs despite being African as in the case of Kingship Ministries still propagate the fact that ATR is primitive.

- ATR as savage. In line with primitive is the misconception that ATR is wild. Lugira (2009:7) however indicates that such is still the misconception of ATR which possibly has links to Hegel's depiction of Africa as the "dark continent".

- Fetishism.This is the misconceptions which equate ATR to some magical religion. Lugira (2009) observes that:

  Many writers used the word indiscriminately. Prayers said during worship by Africans have been described as fetish prayers; the functionaries of a cult have been described as fetish priests; herbs prepared by African priests have been labelled fetish herbs, and not medical preparations, however efficacious such herbs may be; and taking an oath has been described as undergoing fetish. This is ludicrous.

This is the exact perception of ATR from the perspective of NRMs which leads to a kind of stereotyping of ATR and a form of legitimization for violence against the practice of ATR in the communities chosen to illustrate conflict between New Religious Movements and ATR in this dissertation.

- Juju: According to Lugira (2009:7) "The word *juju* is French in origin and it means a little doll or toy. Its application to African deities has been perpetuated by English writers." It is closely related to the linking of ATR to fetishism and thus another factor from which ATR comes under attack.

- Paganism and Heathenism. These terms are more sociological than religious and form an attempt to distinguish between say Christianity and ATR. It is noteworthy that the words pagan and heathen all have pejorative connotations and NRMs use such negative words so as to find it easy to attack ATR.

1.5   NRMs and conflict with ATR

Aloysius M. Lugira's (2009) summary of the misconceptions about ATR above, form part of the reasons why NRMs conflict with ATR. Chukwuma O. Okeke1, Christopher N. Ibenwa1, and Gloria Tochukwu Okeke (2017:1) posit that:

  Conflict is a universal phenomenon that is inevitable in human interaction. Hence, it cannot be avoided in the interaction between Christianity and African Traditional Religion. Since Christianity came in contact with the traditional religion, there has always been a sharp

conflict between traditionalists and Christians. This bitter conflict has led to wanton destruction of lives and property, and this has become a source of great worry to the writers.

These conflicts are largely noticed at the following levels including socio-religious, ideological, physical, and even political characters that arise between them or more precisely, the conflicts take the form of clash of worldviews since religion is paramount in the formation and adherence to worldviews. Chukwuma O. Okeke1 et al (2017:5-8) further breakdown the worldview areas where conflicts between ATR and Christianity can be seen. These areas include; **"**Totem and Sacred Animals", **"**Eating Fishes From Sacred Streams", "Osu/Ohu (Outcasts/Slaves)", "Health Care", "Modes of Worship", "Sorcery, Magic Charms, and Witchcraft", "Massive Destruction/Demolition of Shrines and Sacred Grooves", "Prayers and Libations", "Birth and Naming", "Initiation Rites", "Marriage Customs", "Burial Ceremonies". The conflicts in any of these areas come from the fact that Christianity in all its denominations perceives all what the natives do under the features listed above to be a sort of the devil's enterprise and must be either castigated or purged. This attempt meets a stiff and resilient protest from the natives who want to conserve their culture.

Chukwuma O. Okeke1, et al (2017:9) conclude that and suggest that:

> Christians in Igbo communities should leave their opposition to traditional religion because they have given rise to disintegration and lack of unity. The Christians should rather brace themselves for inculcating the revelation contents of Christianity, namely, existence of one God for all men, reconciliation to the source of reality and brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God.

The findings and the conclusions in this article are relevant to my study in the sense that they support the theoretical analysis of my own findings. As will be seen in the Chapter on theory, the conflicts between NRMs and ATR come in the form or cosmic wars ie wars of worldview as also mentioned above. My research however differs from theirs in the sense that they have investigated Christianity in general whereas I have investigated NRMs for the sake of précised analysis.

Unfortunately, other published research on these conflicts is either lacking or records conflict between Christianity and ATR as a whole and with no particular reference to NRMs. This gives the researcher motivation to carry on this research to add his voice to what is available.

1.6   Implications for my project.

From the literature reviewed above, the implications to my project will be as follows:

- A sense of classification of NRMs

- Characteristics of NRMs

- The nature of ATR

- Misconceptions that underlie conflict between NRMs and ATR.

- Possibilities for the resolution of the conflict.

1.7   My contribution

Research in religious conflicts in Africa in general and Cameroon in particular is meager. Such research even when it exists is focused on either mainline Churches or Pentecostal Churches against ATR. It is my hope that at the end of this project, haven taken a new perspective of examining the conflict between New Religious Movements and ATR will have a contribution in that it will provide a new perspective from which religious conflicts in Africa can be viewed. This project will also help to document researchable undocumented religious conflicts in Cameroon.

1.8   Analytical Unit and the Research Question

1.8.1   The area

This area of the research is the Bafut Fondom of the North West Region of Cameroon. These areas are relevant because ATR in that locality has often come under strict scrutiny and attack by alien religions most glaring of which is Kingship Ministry (the NRM under study).

1.8.2 The person

Kingship Ministry as a NRM, can also be referred to as a Prophet Ministry because all its doctrines and practices are dictated by a single person-Prophet Afangnwi Frankline. This research will also focus on Prophet Frank as a person.

1.9 Problem statement

The fate of ATR in contemporary Cameroon is gradually becoming bleak as in various communities as puritanical religions including NRMs use various media to attack it. Worse are cases where some of these movements attack and destroy shrines and other spiritual belongings of the natives. In retaliation violent incidents occur as staunch ATR members always fight back to defend their belief system and identity. This results in sporadic and recurrent conflicts between ATR and NRMs. This study sets out to investigate, document and analyze the conflict between ATR in Bafut and Pinyin and Kingship Ministry as the NRM under study.

1.10 Research questions

This research had a major research question that was latter broken down to sub research questions. The major research question was: Why and how do New Religious Movements clash with African Traditional Religion in the Bafut community of the North West of Cameroon? This was later broken down to the following sub questions:

- What does the NRM think of ATR theologically?
- How has ATR responded?
- How are these clashes resolved or diffused?
- What impact do these clashes have in the community during and after the conflicts?

1.11 Limitations/Scope

This study will be limited contextually to the central concepts presented above. In terms of case study, inter religious conflict will be discussed with Reference to Kingship Ministries Douala Cameroon and its constant attack on ATR in the Bafut community.

1.12 The research design of the thesis

This research follows an eclectic approach and therefore uses the qualitative and quantitative methods. A number of written documents will red towards providing answers to the research questions. Also a number of people will be interviewed as well the administration of questionnaires towards further providing answers to the research questions. The methods and questions relate with the theories in the sense that the findings will demonstrate that the conflict between NRM and ATR in Bafut take the form of Cosmic War (the major theory of this research project).

1.13 Scholarly discipline

To be able to carry out this research properly I will observe the following research ethics principles.

- Honesty: All material to be presented in the theses will be originally mine without falsification. All material consulted will appropriately referenced in the reference list section.
- Objectivity: The research will be carried out in all objectivity without any bias for the conflicting parties in the conflicts that will be discussed in my theses.
- Openness: I will share my data findings with competent people and be open to positive criticism towards developing my theses.
- I will also respect intellectual property like copy rights and also obtain permission before using unpublished data.
- Since this is a research on a conflict situation, I will endeavor to keep my social responsibility to the optimum, to prevent social harm by avoiding the use of sensitive words or prejudiced opinions.
- I will also strive to be as legal as possible while carrying my research.
- I will also honor and respect human subjects like the interviewees and my informants and endeavor to respect their anonymity as the situation demands.

1.14 The structure

This thesis is structured into seven chapters with each handling a peculiar aspect of the project. Chapter One introduces the themes of the project, presents a review of related literature, the problem and research questions and other preliminaries. Chapter Two presents the theories that

will be used for the analysis. The cosmic war theory and contextual theology are paramount concepts presented as the theory for this project. Chapter Three focusses on the methodology and the strategy for the research whereas Chapter Four provides the background to the study which includes a brief history of Cameroon, the Bafut tribe, KIM and other relevant issues. Chapter Five presents the findings whereas Chapter six and seven focusses on the analysis and conclusion respectively.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORY

2.1   Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to providing a theoretical framework that will help provide adequate answers to the research questions raised and also to provide an interpretative grid for the analysis of the findings collected from the field. Alan Bryman (2012:21) posits that "Theory is important to the social researcher because it provides a backcloth and rationale for the research that is being conducted. It also provides a framework within which social phenomena can be understood and there search findings can be interpreted". This chapter complies with Bryman's assertion above and will present a theoretical blueprint on which this study will be carried out. As said above, without theory a research work becomes not only cumbersome but futile to an extent. Before getting to the peculiarities of the theoretical framework of this thesis a background check on what theory is, is considered indispensable.

Allan Bryman (2012) in his book *Social Research Methods* does a panoramic review of what theory is. He expresses his preoccupation with theory thus (2012:24): "I have tended to write as though theory is something that guides and influences the collection and analysis of data. In other words, research is done in order to answer questions posed by theoretical considerations". Bryman's submission above is important from two perspectives. First, it presents the fact that theory guides the collection of data which is the core of carrying out a research project like the one at hand. From the second perspective, he presents the fact that theory also helps in the analysis of the data collected in the first instance. This points to the fact that mere collection of data without any analysis is almost useless as data collection and analysis are supposed to be complementary all of which is made possible by theory.

After this apt definition of what theory is, he goes ahead to identify various typologies of theories as well as give their advantages and disadvantages. He makes a comparison between 'grand theories' and 'middle range theories' and settles for middle range theories to be used in social research. With reference to Berton (1967), Alan Bryman (2012:22) demonstrates the intermediate position of middle range theories has between grand theories and scientific findings (reality). He submits that "Middle-range theories, then, fall somewhere between grand theories and empirical

findings. They represent attempts to understand and explain a limited aspect of social life". The above quote demonstrates applicability of middle range theories to social research leading to Alan Bryman's conclusion that "Middle-range theories are much more likely to be the focus of empirical enquiry". Without focusing so much on the 'what' of the "grand theories" and "middle range" theories, Bryman gives an example of a middle range theory which is considered relevant to this study. This example has to do with concepts which are reviewed to form the theoretical base of a research project. He makes a case for this when he posits that (2012:24)

> In many cases, the relevant background literature relating to a topic fuels the focus of an article or book and thereby acts as the equivalent of a theory, as with the research referred to in Research…The literature in a certain domain acts as the spur to an enquiry…The literature acts as a proxy for theory. In many instances, theory is latent or implicit in the literature.

This particular kind of theory is more realistic than grand theories such as Marxism, structuralism, modernism, postmodernism and others. Conceptual review which serves as theory facilitates the collection of data as well as forms the background on which precise analysis can be done rather than the generalized standard linked to grand theories or what Frederick Jameson (1997) calls "grand narratives". The following concepts of cosmic war and contextual theology shall form the interpretative grid of this research work. The cosmic war theory will guide the interpretation on the how of the conflict under study whereas contextual theology will guide the interpretation and analysis of part of the reason of the 'why' and how the conflict can be resolved.

2.2   Cosmic war

One of the key theories to be used in this study is the Cosmic war theory, a theory developed by Mark Juergensmeyer (2000) in his book titled *Terror in the Mind of God*. The word cosmos has to do with the universe or the world where as war refers to physical or spiritual battle between opposing camps. An etymological definition of a cosmic war then is something closer to a war fought between "worlds". Despite how odd the war between worlds may sound, when looked upon from the religious and cultural perspective "these worlds" do exist within the world (universe or cosmos). Often, we have heard of the Christian world, Muslim world and or Jewish world. Worlds here are synonymous to world views thus a cosmic war is a war fought between world views with

religion as a major constituent of the world view. Mark Juergensmeyer (2000:1) defines a cosmic war as:

> A "cosmic war" is an imagined battle between metaphysical forces—good and evil, right and wrong, order and chaos—that lies behind many cases of religion-related violence in the contemporary world. These transcendent spiritual images have been implanted onto the social and political scene, magnifying ordinary worldly conflict into sacred encounter. There is nothing specific to Christianity, Islam, or any other religion about this idea of cosmic war.

As evident Juegensmeyer's quote above, the idea of cosmic war is usually between two realms; that of good and that of evil, the physical and the spiritual realms. This phenomenon is common in all religions in so far as they preach for good and against evil. They are not struggles at the individual level but struggles between cultures and religions and generally between people or communities with different ideologies especially those ideas concerning God and worship. Juegensmeyer (2000:146) further describes the cosmic war in this light as thus: ""I call … such "cosmic" because they are larger than life. They evoke great battles of legendary past, and they relate to metaphysical conflicts between good and evil". Thus, cosmic wars are fought at religious community levels with a possibility for such wars to transcend political boundaries depending on the religious affiliations of the countries concerned. Fox and Sandler (2004:71) gives an example of such where they give the following instance: "For example, the rebellion by Muslims in the Kashmiri province of India has contributed to sporadic military conflict between neighboring Pakistan, which is religiously and ethnically similar to the population in the province". The example above shows that a cosmic war is actually a conflict by people who have specific values that make them distinct from other groups of people; that is why an uprising concerning Muslims in India is able to trigger the same effect in Pakistan. This demonstrates the fact that cosmic wars are wars of ideologies and thus have the potential to penetrate national borders and can spread even around the world.

The Cosmic war is always an ideological war which when looked upon from the material level could be seen to be a venture nearer to stupidity as the belligerents never have a prospective of a material gain but have the aim of seeing the idea of what they consider as good triumph over evil.

The idea good triumphing over evil is considered the divine command which one of the warring parties always hope to see come to fruition. Mark Juergensmeyer (2016:2) makes this clear when he states that the enemy(ies) of the warring factions is/are; "Anyone imagined to be engaged with the shadowy forces of evil are potential foes. There is no gray area between opposing camps, but the determination of who is on whose side often seems arbitrary. What the supporters of these movements are clear about, however, is the idea that they are at war". This implication is that the underlying factor behind all cosmic wars is the tendency for one religion or worldview to tag the opponent as evil and struggle to put it out for good (light or God to prevail).

To better understand the concept, the study of its features is considered paramount. Mark Jurgensmeyer has outlined a number of criteria in *Terror in the Mind of God* (2000:62) for determining whether a group is engaged in a confrontation that could be called a Cosmic War. According to Jurgensmeyer there are three main criteria:

I. The struggle is perceived as a defense of basic identity and dignity, If the struggle is thought to be of ultimate significance a defense not only of lives but of entire cultures then the possibility is greater that it will be seen as a cultural war with spiritual implications.

II. Losing the struggle would be unthinkable, if a negative outcome to the struggle is perceived as beyond human conception the struggle may be viewed as taking place on a trans-historical plane.

III. The struggle is blocked and cannot be won in real time or in real terms. Perhaps most important if the struggle is seen as hopeless in human terms, it is likely that it may be reconceived on a sacred plane where the possibilities of victory are in God's hands.

The criteria above are closely related. The fight for identity and dignity is always an existential struggle such that none of the belligerents envision losing the war. This identity comprises of the cultural and religious values of a group of people who believe that a threat to these values is already a threat to their existence. They are thus compelled in the face of threats to fight to preserve their identity. In this light, Appleby Scott (2000) posits that: "Members of a worldwide religion, such

as Islam or Christianity, believe themselves to be bound together by a common *spiritual* heritage" That is why the likes of Ben Laden claim to be protecting Muslims and their identity everywhere.

Because either side is bent on winning, the possibility for an end to the war is not possible in real time. The tendency here is that the battle is carried out to fulfill a divine command and failing is tantamount to failing God. Juegensmeyer (2000:163) cites the following example: "Palestinian Muslims, for instance. Have refused to even consider the idea of a Jewish state in what they regard as Arab territory". This refusal is proof that cosmic wars do not envision the possibility of failing. This is the more so because ideological wars always endure and even when a solution is reached, there is still always there are still grudges in the minds of the conservatives or radicals. These grudges at times result in acts of cosmic wars which are carried out by individuals. Most of these acts by individuals for the sake of world views are often classified as acts of terrorism who commits such acts comfortably because their sacred books permit them to do so. The last of the characteristics is that the possibility of winning such wars may at some point not be feasible in the near future. When such a war is portrayed as hopeless in the human sense its fight and success is taken to the spiritual plane. Here religion is seen Karl Marx's terms to be "the opium of the people". The people fighting the war are viewed as drunk with religion.

Haven defined good and evil and demonstrated the possibility for a fight between the two ideas in the form of cosmic wars, it is important to mention the fact that such fights sometimes are fought in violent and terror dimensions. Considering the arguments of scholars like Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandier (2004) And Appleby Scott (2000) who argue for the place of religion in the public domain especially when it comes to peace and reconciliation, the following questions then arise: How then can religion be associated with violence and terror? Are there any justifications for violence and terror on religious bases? This leads us to the question of legitimization.

2.2.1 Cosmic War and the Legitimization of religious violence

Concerning man and laws Aristotle posits that: "At his best man is the noblest of animals; separated from law and justice he is the worst".https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/law. To avoid being the "worst", men in various societies have always created laws that guide and sanction their actions. What is done according to societal laws is considered legitimate. It is important to note that religious societies exist and have such laws. As a result, when religious laws permit violence or

terror it could be said that such terror and violent acts are legitimized or a just war. Fox and Sandler (2004:35) say that legitimization is "…belief by an actor that a rule or an institution ought to be obeyed". In this vein the legitimization of religious violence and terror is the conviction based on religious canons that the violent/terror act is right and ought to be obeyed.

To expand the concept of the legitimization of religious violence, Juegensmeyer (2000:10) uses extraordinary images of cosmic war and posits that:

> Such extraordinary images of cosmic war are meta-justifications for religious violence, because they not only explain why religious violence happens—why religious persons feel victimized by violence and why they need to take revenge for this violence—but also provide a large worldview, a template of meaning in which religious violence makes sense. In the context of cosmic war, righteous people are impressed into service as soldiers, and great confrontations occur in which noncombatants are considered part of the enemy to be destroyed.

A panoramic view of world religions including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and other minor religions shows that there is evidence of either quotes from their respective holly books or from their doctrines to demonstrate the fact that these religions have the tendency to legitimize violence and terror in cosmic wars situations. This possibility for religious violence and terror can be looked upon from two perspectives; the first being that undertaken by individuals who feel compelled to take action to save their religious groups and that taken by people (a group) of various religions inclinations. Either way, either the acts are perpetrated by one man or by a group, the unifying factor between the acts are that they are acts of violence and terror undertaken to preserve or to project a particular religious, cultural world view. These wars executed in respect of purported divine commands. Austin Wingate (2017:16) in a bid to corroborate this paraphrases Reza Aslan (2008) and argues that "a Cosmic War is a religious war in which God is perceived to be directly involved either on the side of one part or the other". The presence of god on either side problematizes the concept of God and further demonstrates the difficulty that exists in the process of quailing down cosmic wars. This however underscores the relevance of interreligious dialogue in the process of resolving the conflicts since both sides claim God and can only compromise when there is dialogue and reconciliation.

Juegensmeyer (2000:19) under the Chapter on "Cultures of violence" observes that;

> It is good to remember, however, that despite its central tenets of love and peace, Christianity-like most traditions-has always had a violent side. The bloody history of the tradition has provided images as disturbing as those provided by Islam or Sikhism, and violent conflict is vividly portrayed in both the Old and New Testament's of the Bible.

These bloody incidents are embedded in the various sacred books of each religion such that the perpetrators are at ease and conduct their acts of violence without remorse even when human life. These acts of terror/violence/war can be perpetrated by either individuals who identify with a different world view (religion) than that of his victim or they can be carried out by one religious' community against another. The motives are related but slightly different depending whether the conflict is between individuals or communities. That is why Juegensmeyer (20016:148) submits that "On the personal level it is a conflict between faith and the lack of faith; on the social level it is a battle between truth and evil". Thus as already been mentioned above, there is a sense in which there is the desire by "light" (good, God, religiosity) attempting to purge out darkness (evil, Satan, or paganism).

To buttress his points Juegensmeyer (2000) picks examples of individuals and communities who have taken up arms against each other from Christianity and Islam. He chooses Rev. Michael Bray of Bowie as his example of one who has indulged in acts of terror/violence that can be referred to as a cosmic war or war of world views. In an interview, he (2016:21) posed the following question to him: "Why would a Christian support violent acts of terror?". It is important to note that Rev. Bray is from Maryland, and was convicted was convicted of a series of abortion clinic attacks and defends the use of lethal weapons against clinic staff. Bray's response was that such a person is right in so far as he is fighting evil and in so far as he or she has scriptural backing. Juegensmeyer (20016) continues the interview by asking him if he is guilty of the allegation that he is the author of the book Army of God. Though Bray's response is inconclusive, it connotes his support for such works as noted in ""it was good to show solidarity with anyone who is being maligned for writing such a book."(22). Bray and his cohorts do not perceive a possibility of giving up since they as he states envisions as the outcome of that struggle the establishment of a new moral order in America, one based on biblical law and a spiritual, rather than a secular, social compact. As Jurgensmeyer

(2016:24) notes "Until this new moral order is established, Bray said, he and others like him who are aware of what is going on and have the moral courage to resist it are compelled to take action".

Another example but from the Muslim world that Jurgenmeyer makes mention of is Bin Laden. Jurgensmeyer (2000:145) submits that: "Bin Laden wanted to make clear that it was not he who started the war, however, but Americans, through their actions in the Middle East. These had constituted, in bin Laden's words. "a clear declaration of war on God, His messenger and Muslims."[1] His own acts of violence, by implication, were merely responses to a great ongoing struggle".(145). The mention of "war on God, His messenger and Muslims" points to the fact that his acts of terror and war are cosmic in nature since it is geared towards defending the Muslim worldview against American aggression. These images of divine warfare are persistent features of religious activism. They provide the content and the themes that are played out in the grand scenarios that lie behind contemporary acts of performance violence.

The relevance of this concept to the study of conflict between NRMs and ATR in Bafut is multifaceted. First, the New Religious Movement (Kingship International Ministries) considers their attack on the shrines and the religious beliefs of the Bafut people as a fight against evil and in respect to divine command. This therefore complies with the preconditions for a cosmic war which is often a war between 'good' and 'evil'. From another perspective, the resistance of the Bafut people is an attempt to defend their worldview. Even though King Ship Ministries is not a tribe, the attempt to force radical Christianity on the Bafut people is an attempt to introduce a new worldview, a situation which the Bafut people jealously fight to maintain their old traditional worldview as will be demonstrated in the findings.

2.3   Contextual theology

The concept of contextual theology is also relevant to this study. This is a concept and practice that has lingered in theology for a long time. However, its introduction into the academia is thanks to the exploits of Stephen Bevans who has written extensively on the concept. In his article titled "Models of Contextual Theology", he (1985: 186) asks and answers the question on the what of contextual theology.

What, then, is contextual theology? It is a way of doing theology that takes into account four things: (1) the spirit and message of the Gospel; (2) the tradition of the Christian people; (3) the culture of a particular nation or region; and (4) social change in that culture, due both to technological advances on the one hand and struggles for justice and liberation on the other.

The quote above presupposes the existence of a theology that is not contextual and thus faces a number of oppositions from the various cultures in which the Gospel is preached with little or no consideration of the native culture. Bevans thus finds a welcome alternative in contextual theology which puts both the dynamics of the gospel together with the dynamics of the culture in which gospel is reached. This theology also considers other global issues like technology and social advancement.

As mentioned above, contextual theology is a welcome alternative than the other forms of theologies. Bevans (1985) gives a mild warning and an expression of the efficacy of contextual theology especially in the third world. He submits that (186):

Third World countries are coming-albeit slowly-to realize that what makes a person educated is not necessarily a Western or North-Atlantic education; that what makes a theologian a theologian is not necessarily his or her ability to understand Karl Rahner; that what is good is not necessarily what is (as Filipinos say) "Stateside," or "made in Japan.

The above quote is relevant as throughout the Third World countries especially during the period of European colonialism, Christianity was accused of facilitating not only colonialism but cultural assimilation. This allegation is almost true as evident Kipling's (1899) famous poem "The White Man's Burden" where he presents the now "Thirdworlders" as sick not only of the lack of civilization but also devilish and should be Christianized alongside being civilized. The first stanza of the poem stereotypes non-European culture and gives the evangelist cum colonialist the legitimacy to destroy native culture alongside colonialism and evangelism.

Take up the White Man's burden—

Send forth the best ye breed—

Go send your sons to exile

To serve your captives' need

To wait in heavy harness

On fluttered folk and wild—

Your new-caught, sullen peoples,

Half devil and half child

Take up the White Man's burden

In patience to abide

To veil the threat of terror

http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5478/

The symbol embedded in "half child" "half devil" summarizes the link between the spread of European civilization and evangelism. Thus, for decades during that period of colonialism, evangelism was done in total disregard of native culture which was largely perceived as barbaric and needed to be tamed. However, after the Second World War and with the rise in third world intellectualism which was largely anti-colonial as evident in works such as Edward Said's Orientalism, Franz Fanon's Black Skin White Mask, Leopold Senghor's Negritude and others, the consciousness of the third "worlders" became more enlightened. As Bevans submits above, there was constant questioning of the superiority and relevance of alien culture in Africa for instance. Such enlightenment therefore as Bevans says necessitates contextual theology to facilitate empathy between Christian culture and native culture.

2.3.1   Models of Contextual Theology

The contexts of applying contextual theology vary and as such necessitate a variation of the contextualization. Stephen Bevans quotes a (1980:62) publication where the following assertion is made as it were to corroborate the need for a variation in the modes of contextual theology. "an

effort to express the never-changing word of God in ever-changing modes for relevance. Since the Gospel message is inspired but the mode of its expression is not, contextualization of the modes of expression is not only right but necessary" (quoted in Fleming 1980:62).This contextualization differs in respect to the context and in respect to the area in which it is applied.

Stephen Bevans (1985:) identifies six models of contextual theology:

> The models that I have discerned are as follows: the "anthropological" model, which lays particular stress on listening to culture; the "translation" model, which lays stress on the message of the Gospel and the preservation of Church tradition; the "praxis" model which sees as a primary *locus theologicus*the phenomena of social change, particularly the change called for by a struggle for justice; the "synthetic" model which attempts to mediate the above three by employment of an "analogical imagination"; the "semiotic" model which attempts to listen to a culture by means of semiotic cultural analysis; the "transcendental" model, a meta-model which focuses not on theological content but on subjective authenticity within theological activity.

These models have unique features that make them different from each other as will be briefly presented in the paragraphs that follow.

2.3.2   The Anthropological model

Bevans presents two ways by which this model can be understood. The first perspective sees this model as the social science of anthropology since it targets the cultural identity of the Christians. The second perspective focuses on the literary meaning of theology and traces it down to the Greek word 'anthropos' meaning the 'human person' (188). Synthetically therefore the two perspectives present this model as that model which takes into consideration the cultural identity of the 'human person' to whom the gospel is preached. Bevans (2012:188) himself precise that this particular model focuses on the human person and human experience and not "some scriptural expression or tradition formula-that forms the criteria of theological truth". Be it from the cultural identity or from the perspective of the human person and human experience, contextual theology is theology in which context affects content.

Anthropological model of theology has the following features. The first feature according to Bevans is that the basic goodness of human nature and culture are strongly affirmed. He (1985:188) asserts that "Culture is viewed as the place where God's revelation occurs, and one can speak of finding Christ hidden in a culture, rather than of bringing Christ to the culture". The implication is that the preacher strives as much as possible to locate what is of relevance to the message in the culture of the people and leaves but from that particular cultural item to the message of the gospel. William Ekow Ghansah (2012:71) narrates that "… Bevan's in the late 1960's when he was a theology student in Rome; he prepared an advent liturgy around the theme of the sun. According to him, the central idea of the liturgy was based on the song by the Beatles George Harrison. The title of the song was ''Here Comes the Sun''. The words of the song which he was referring to are: ''little darlin'',it's been a long, cold, lonely winter; little darlin', it seems like years since it's been here; herecomes the sun… it's all right'' (Bevans, 2008: xix)".

The response Bevans received from this preaching was not the one he expected. He points out a particular case of an Indian who reprimanded him for presenting the sun as a symbol of God. According to this Indian, Indian culture links the sun to the highest evil because of its heat and consequent drought and dust. This opens Bevans mind to the understanding of the necessity of a contextual theology in which every analogy must be linked to native culture such that it will be different in India than in America or Africa while maintaining the essence of the message.

Under the anthropological model, there is no need for any adaptation or accommodation of either culture or the gospel as these have been along in the culture and in the gospel. These points to the understanding of the fact that the concept of God (Christ) is universal and might only be misinterpreted by church ministers. Culture is thus taken seriously here and is often considered to be independent and unique. Bevans thus cautions that "…contextual theologians must guard themselves and their theology against any intrusion from other cultures outside their own".

This model also takes into consideration the language, behavior and experiences of ordinary people such that theologians could "… thematize aspects of culture" and as they do and relate how these things illumine the Christian message, a genuine contextual theology emerges.

2.3.3   The Translation Model

According to Stephen Bevans, it is the oldest model in contextual theology. Bevans (1985:190) quotes Kraft (1979) when he posits that:

> It is through Charles Kraftin his book *Christianity in Culture* (Kraft, 1979**)** that the translation model has reached its most creative expression. Using the approach taken in the translation of the Good News Bible, Kraftspeaks in his book about the need of translation of the Gospel message, or gospel core,by"dynamic" or "functional" equivalence, and this application of Bible translation to the enterprise of theology constitutes the genius of his approach.

It is worthy to note that this does not imply a word to word translation of the Gospel (Christianity) according to Kraft it is called "formal correspondence" and based on an outdated idea. Word for word translation is a kind of fantasy yet there is usually an ideational conceptual equivalence between languages and culture such that the possibility for a semantic translation becomes more plausible. Bevans believes that this is referred to as "functional" or "dynamic" equivalence and such translation can and should be used in theology.

A key feature in the translation model is the "… general presupposition of the translation model begins from the notion that the essence of Christianity is supra-cultural, in the sense that there is a certain content that must be held even if its preservation goes against and is destructive of a particular culture."(190)It is here that the distinction between the anthropological and the translation model is made evident. Bevans (1985:190) precise that: "If the anthropological model holds that "content includes context," the translation model holds that "content comes within a context." (190) This distinction demonstrates the ineffectiveness of the translation model and implies the efficacy of the anthropological model since it guarantees the purpose for contextual theology which is the preservation of culture and the mitigation of conflict between culture and Christianity.

Some of the supra-cultural phenomena conservatively upheld by those who do the translational model are:

- Belief and allegiance to the Triune God.

- Belief in the Bible as the only Inspired Word of God

- Belief of those central facts, commands, ordinance and doctrines set forth in the Bible.

Contextual theology from the perspective of this model therefore seems to be window dressing since there are clearly areas where cultures will not agree with the unchanging doctrines in the Bible and might lead to conflict. Conversely the advantage is that it spreads an un-tampered Gospel albeit the doubtful reception by the indigenes. This is one of the models used by KIM that sets them at conflict with ATR as will be seen in the analysis.

2.3.4   The Praxis Model

This model begins with an analysis of the reality that exists within a particular context and then acts basing on those analysis and as the administration of the theology is going on, the analysis is done again and again. Bevans (1985:192) submits that:

> If the anthropological model focuses on the cultural identity of the Christian, and if the translation model focuses on Christian identity within a culture, the praxis model focuses on Christian identity within a culture, from the point of view of social change.

Bevans believes that this is the theology that is administered to free people from oppression be it political, social or economic and that is why he calls it "liberation theology". As the name implies, the model is actually based on action both of God and the individual who receives the theology. It is thus distinguishable from the other two models in the sense that:

> If the anthropological model understands revelation as hidden within cultural contexts, and if the translation model understands revelation as a supra-cultural, propositional message, the praxis model understands revelation as God's ongoing action in history, manifested in situations and events. Theology, therefore, consists in discerning, through analysis, where God is acting, and then attempting through reflective action, to act in that same situation as God's partner.

The above gives the distinction which exists between this model and others and clearly demonstrates the fact that this model deals with the practicality of contextual theology.

2.3.5 The synthetic models

Stephen Bevan begins the description of this model by dismissing the understanding of this model that may link synthetic to artificiality. He thus defines this model thus: "… that (1) synthesizes the insights of the three models already presented, and (2) is open as well to the thought, values and philosophies of other contexts. In this sense, the term "synthetic model" can be understood in a Hegelian sense and perhaps the model could even be called "dialectical." Here faith is forged through dialogue with several insights, positions and ideas. To effectively carry out this theology, the theologian understands or needs to understand that there are several aspects of culture which are unique to certain cultures as well as others that are shared with other cultures. What the theologian does in this case is that he seeks cultural empathy between those unique features. Identity under this model becomes what Homi Bhabha calls "cultural hybridity". This research will argue that this model can help evade conflict between the two religions in the Bafut culture.

2.3.6 The semiotic model

Following the type, the theology comes to place only when it enters into a sustained dialogue with other local theologians in the present and past. It has similarities with the anthropological model as it believes that revelation is discovered in the context itself and not brought from outside. A semiotic theologian therefore understands that Christ as God is universal and can be sought and found in any culture without any effect on the culture in question. This understanding avoids the possibility of clash between cultures and Christianity. That is why Bevans (1985:197) quotes Schreiter where he warns that: "Unless theology starts here, warns Schreiter, Christianity will always be looked upon as a foreign element, as a stranger to the culture, and "dual systems" will develop".

Both the gospel and culture (tradition) are cultural texts that have stood the test of time and culture has fossilized in the minds and behavior of the people such that destabilizing it can lead to enormous problems. In the end tradition shapes local theology and local theology inturn challenges and shapes the ongoing tradition of Christian faith and all end by transforming each other.

2.3.7   The transcendental model

This model follows an induction model. Here, in the contextualization enterprise, one first disregards the scripture, tradition or culture and focuses first on one's experience as a cultural religious subject. The start of contextualization is not objective as in seeking the values of culture or the message of the gospel and the doctrines of the church. It rather starts with one's experiences as a Christian and also as a subject within a culture.

This particular theology understands the human mind to be transcultural. In this case the transcendental model seems to insist that the only true practitioner of contextual theology is the one who participates in the context. As a result, participants become genuine subjects both religiously and culturally. The transcendental model maintains that theology does not focus consist in discovering answers which pre-exist "out there" but its main focus is to express the presence of God's love in one's life in a way that is always everywhere culturally conditioned.

The concept of contextual theology will guide the answers to most of the research questions raised in Chapter One. In response to the question on why there are conflicts between NRMs and ART, it will be discovered that the absence of contextual theology or the administration of the translational model which argues that meaning comes with a context caused the Prophet to carry out evangelism in total disregard of the tradition of the people thereby crossing certain boundaries that called for the reaction of the indigenes resulted in the conflict under study. Other models especially the anthropological and the synthetic models will be proposed as a way out of such conflicts. The blend between the contextual theology and cosmic war is therefore in the argument that in the absence of contextual theology, there is religious conflict which takes the form of cosmic wars.

2.4   Summary

Two key concepts are discussed in this Chapter that will guide the analysis in this study. These theories include Juergensmeyer's Cosmic war theory and Stephen Bevans' Contextual theology. The blend between the two theories is at the level of the fact that in the absence of contextual theology, NRMs attack the culture and tradition of the people leading to cosmic wars. This assertion is further developed as the thesis progresses.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the presentation of the methodology used in obtaining the findings that shall be analyzed in this dissertation. In more details, it is the part in which the researcher outlines the research strategy, the research method, the research approach, the selection of the sample, the type of data analysis, the ethical considerations and the challenges faced. The methods employed in this research include the following:

3.1   Participant observation

I adopted the qualitative method in this case and exploited the possibility for participant observation and the administration of interview questionnaires to be able to get much of the content that will be analyzed in the Chapter that follow. In order to have a balance I interviewed diverse number of people representing all sheds in opinion in the stakes about the conflict in question. I interviewed the members of KIM Bafut as well as ATR stakeholders.

Bryman (2012: 431) presents the debate by scholars on the use of either observation or ethnography (participant observation) and settles for ethnography because participant observation appears to connote only a research method in which the investigator just does observation and nothing more. Bryman's preference ethnography is thus because that entails so much as he posits that ethnography is:

> …. associated with social anthropological research, whereby the investigator visits a (usually) foreign land, gains access to a group (for example, a tribe or village), spends a considerable amount of time (often many years) with that group with the aim of uncovering its culture, watches and listens to what people say and do, engages people in conversations to probe specific issues of interest, takes copious field notes, and returns home to write up the fruits of his or her labours.

For Bryman as seen above, the observer/ethnographer observes behavior, listens to and records what is said to the field worker as well as the discussions between the interviewees all of which is made possible by the fact that the investigator immerses himself/ herself in the culture and gets information first hand. The investigator also collects background documents on the tribe in question in order to be able to have a succinct background on the community in question.

This particular method according to some scholars becomes cumbersome for someone who is not a member of the community as he may not understand the language as well as the cultural behaviors of the people. Such a scholar is Spradley who talks about involving in "unfamiliar situations". For Spradley (1979 :53) this situation becomes relatively difficult for a stranger since he may not understand the tacit behaviors and even the language spoken by the people in question. The consequence is that it is difficult thereof for the investigator to reflect on and analyze what was collected. Despite not being from the Bafut Tribe of Cameroon, I still found this method relevant and useful. First, I employed a research assistant who is a member of the community as both a follower of ATR and Christianity. Also following the advantages provided by what Alan Kirby 2009 calls the "digital age" I was able to make videos with my phone and also to record what was being said and now as am proceeding with the writing of my research work I am still able to get interpretation from other Bafut friends apart from the field research assistant to whom I shared the videos and the audios.

Bryman (2012:433) identifies one of the most difficult issues in this method to be access which relatively depends on whether the setting is open or closed. He identifies closed (non-public) settings to be organizations of various kinds like "firms, schools, cults, social movements, and so on. The open setting therefore is every other thing else involving communities, gangs, drug-users and so on. To access closed settings Bryman (2012:433) suggests that the investigator assumes a "covert role" and not disclose the reason for his visit so as to obviate explaining the reason for visiting and subjecting people's privacy under study. However, organized groups have formalities that need to be followed as a result it is quite easy to access such.

Spradley (1979) points out that the participant observer comes to a social situation with the purpose to participate in the events and also witness. Though in my case I was investigating a conflict that took place in 2014, it was necessary for me to visit the various institutions both NRM and ATR in

order to be able to locate my interviewees and commune with them. For this reason, I visited the KIM Bafut branch on Sunday and after the service I booked an appointment with the prophet for the next Friday. The visit was easy since the church is an open setting that anyone can visit. In order to avoid receiving prejudiced answers, I introduced my topic to the Prophet as objectively as possible without any bias for either KIM or ATR.

The visit to the ATR group was a little bit difficult since most of its societies are closed and are open only to initiated members. However, there is possibility for males to attend as preliminary visits prior to being initiated. I took the opportunity for this window and visited the Kwihfor on their meeting days. I had to don on the regalia for the Kwihfor members which must be put on before one is granted access to the Kwihfor sanctum. This regalia consist of a locally made dress known as the "butterfly dress", a black cap, a scabbard and a machete with a local cup used in drinking palm wine. The observations here were facilitated by the Research assistant who as mentioned above was a member of the Kwihfor. Bryman (2012) arrogates that a real ethnographic study takes a long period of time and as such is only suitable for PHD studies. He however makes mention of the possibility for a micro-ethnography which can be used by undergraduate and Masters Students which takes relatively shorter periods of time.The possibility for micro-ethnography permitted me to have just two weeks in the community within which I was able to gather all the necessary data.

Spradley (1979) outlines a number of skills that must be used by the investigator. First is to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and to observe the activities as well as the people. This implies that the investigator needs to have explicit awareness. I tried as much as possible to inculcate this in my field studies. Spradley goes ahead to state that in order to become a good observer one must strive to avoid and overcome what he calls "years of selective inattention" and as a result observe everything into details. This was very necessary for me since I was new in the area.

Another skill which Spradley proposes is the ability to be introspective which implies that the researcher should be able to employ himself as a tool for research. This was very important for me as it guided my understanding of the connotative meanings of certain things that were done.

3.2 Interviewing

Concerning interviewing, Spradley (1979:57) writes that "an ethnographic interview is a kind of speech event and all speech events have cultural rules from beginning, ending, taking turns, asking questions, pausing, and even how close to stand to people". He goes further to explain that this is different from the normal friendly conversations that we have with our friends and relatives and should therefore be conducted differently for the desired results to be obtained. For this to be achieved the researcher needs to mix targeted questions with conversations such that at the end the results are gotten in a friendly atmosphere and not like in some kind of court room or class room.

Spradley outlines three components of an ethnographic interview which makes the process efficient. These include: the "explicit purpose", "ethnographic explanations" and "ethnographic questions". The explicit purpose requires the researcher to set specific goals for his research whereas ethnographic explanations necessitate the fact that the researcher be prepared to constantly explain issues to his informants. The ethnographic questions come in the formed well framed categories of questions that help the informant to give the right response to the researcher. All the above guided me in the process of interviewing my informants.

3.3 Field notes

Field notes are detailed summaries about the researcher's encounters, observations and immediate reflections on what is gotten in the field. Bryman (2012:447) observes that because of the frailties of the human mind, field notes are necessary in the process of carrying out field research. Bryman (2012:447) outlines certain principles as guidelines for producing effective fieldnotes which will be outlined briefly bellow.

- The notes should be brief and must be written as quickly as possible
- At the end of the day full notes should be developed from the jottings that were done on the field.
- If there are any recordings, they should be transcribed at the end of the day
- The notes should be vivid and clear so as to avoid confusion at a later date.
- The investigator should be able to write his personal feelings and reflections alongside the notes so as to guide interpretation at the end.

- Jot down initial analytical thoughts as they prick the mind in the process of writing field notes.
- The investigator needs to take down copious notes

The above principles coupled with the trainings during the course work guided my writing of field notes. The notes comprised of the three categories which Bryman (2012:450) makes reference to. He proposes that in areas where it will be inappropriate to seen taking notes, the investigator should take "mental notes" and in formal cases, the investigator should take "jotted notes" that which are latter developed into "full field notes".

3.4 Location

As mentioned earlier, this research was carried in the Bafut Fondom of the North West Region of Cameroon. The choice of the location was because of the 2014 conflict which erupted as a result of the attack on ATR shrines in Bafut by the NRM called Kingship International Ministries. Additional motivation for the choice was that no academic attempt had been made to study and analyze the implications of the conflict considering that the community is still living in the wake of the impact of the conflict. The entire North West has seen a rise in the proliferation of NRMs and similar attacks on ATR such that my choice of Bafut is the beginning in the context which I will enlarge as I go further in my studies.

3.5 The Process of data collection

I arrived Bamenda, Cameroon on the First Week of September 2018 to conduct my field work. On the 3rd of September I visited Bafut to discuss with my research team. The distance between Bamenda and Bafut is about 10 kms which is easily done by taxi. Driving out of town is a little bit difficult because of congestion but when out of town there is little or no congestion as from Mile 8 Bamenda through Mankon to Bafut is not all that a busy road. However, given the nature of the road, the drive over this short distance can take between 45mins to 1 hour. On this first day, I went with my former classmate who introduced me to my research team that he had contacted for me. We sat at my friend's house at Aghati quarter which is just a few moments' walk away from the palace. I briefed my research team on the purpose, content and modalities of what our activity will be all about.

After the discussion I made an appointment with them for the next day which was coincidentally the day that members of the Nda-Kwifor (traditional cult) always gather in the palace at the palace for their weekly meetings. After that I took a taxi back to Bamenda precisely to Ayaba Hotel where I was lodging. I returned to Bafut the next day now without my friend and was welcomed by my research team that was already waiting for me. We went to the palace together and waited at the palace esplanade till it was 1 Pm which is the meeting time of the Nda-Kwifor. I had bought some local palm wine which is customary for anyone visiting the traditional cult. My research team was just to introduce as a visitor who loved the Bafut tradition and I was latter to interview just key members which my team had made arrangements. My job this first day was however to some observations since I was to be in Bafut constantly throughout the research period. The Nda-Kwifor welcome me but after thirty minutes I was asked to step out since they had some private issues to discuss which could not be done in the midst of a stranger.

While out, I took time to visit the Bafut Palace Museum and while within, I took interest in visiting the rooms of the various Kings that had ruled Bafut up till date which were well arranged in the museum. I also solicited the assistance of one palace messenger who pointed the shrine where the age old ancestral tree was cut down that resulted to the conflict under study. I could only observe from afar since I could not go there without traditional authorization.

At about five pm I took a taxi to go back to Bamenda to come back on the next day for the first interview with the Traditional Prime Minister as was scheduled. On my way I was cut in crossfire being the Military and Armed separatists and decided to go back and stay in my friend's house. Because of insecurity, I modified my schedule and decided to stay for two weeks in Bafut so as to facilitate the research so as to leave the area soonest. Most of the days, I visited my interviewees and administered the interview questions as well visited the other traditional cults as well as KIM Bafut Branch. I finally left Bafut on the 21sst of September 2018 and spent the rest of the month as well as the early part of the Month of October in Bamenda and Douala developing my field notes into details also trying to get transcriptions from the various tapes I had recorded during the fieldwork.

3.6   Challenges

The major challenge I faced during this research was the insecurity as a result of the Anglophone Crisis that has been rocking the two Anglophone Regions of Cameroon the North West Region inclusive where this research was carried out. Starting from November 2016, this region has known no peace as activists have been revandicating against various categories of discrimination from the Francophone Majority Government. The crisis has degenerated to an armed conflict and sporadic shoot outs between the military and armed activists characterize life in this region especially around school reopening period in September. The activist declares every Monday as ghost town days as a way of peaceful resistance and the government on her part declare a number of curfews as a security measure. All of these paralyzed a number of activities hampering the smooth process that could have characterized this research in normal times.

The second problem was Language and cultural barrier since I am not from the area. I encountered the greatest problem with interviewing the members of ATR in the area since most of them are not educated and most of their rituals are mandatory to be performed in Mungahka-a (native language). However, together with my field assistants, we were able to overcome these problems.

Another key difficulty was that of Conservatism especially on the part of KIM members especially the prophet. He was at first reluctant to give information on the basis that what transpired between his church and ATR was a response to divine command to free the land from the bondage of ancestral spirits and he does not see any reasons why that was supposed to be considered as any conflict. However, I was able to convince him that the research was for the sake of documentation and I had no intention of favoring neither him nor the other camp.

There was also the problem of finances. Travelling from Norway to Cameroon and back as well as paying the research assistants takes a lot of money. Again travelling, hotel bills as well as getting some remuneration for the interviewees actually took a lot of money.

3.7   Secondary sources of data

Writing this thesis would have been an uphill task without the use of secondary data. Books from libraries on relevant concepts were used. Articles from journals, book chapters and information from various internet sites were also used. The constitution of Cameroon was also used with focus

on articles about the position of the state as far as religion is concerned. Relevant pictures and maps were also used. All secondary sources including books, journals, articles, constitutions, book chapters, pictures and maps used in this work have been dully acknowledged. Also, knowledge from my course work was very helpful in my research.

3.8   Research ethics considerations (discipline)

To be able to carry out this research properly I will observe the following research ethics principles.

- Honesty: All material to be presented in the theses will be originally mine without falsification. All material consulted will appropriately referenced in the reference list section.
- Objectivity: The research will be carried out in all objectivity without any bias for the conflicting parties in the conflicts that will be discussed in my theses.
- Openness: I will share my data findings with competent people and be open to positive criticism towards developing my theses.
- I will also respect intellectual property like copy rights and also obtain permission before using unpublished data.
- Since this is a research on a conflict situation, I will endeavor to keep my social responsibility to the optimum, to prevent social harm by avoiding the use of sensitive words or prejudiced opinions.
- I will also strive to be as legal as possible while carrying my research.
- I will also honor and respect human subjects like the interviewees and my informants and endeavor to respect their anonymity as the situation demands.
- I also shared some palm wine and beer as well as some small remuneration to my interviewees and research assistance. This falls in line with the African social norm that you don't come for a visit to someone's house with empty hands. This aspect is part and parcel of African communalism.

3.9   Summary

In this Chapter I have presented the various methods employed in carrying out the research. The methods include participant observation, interviews, field notes, consultation of secondary literature as well as insights of the location. Also, mention is made on the process of data collection which took place within the space of two weeks. I have ended the chapter with references to the ethical considerations guiding this research.

CHAPTER FOUR: SOCIOPOLITICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 History of Cameroon

4.1.1 Early History

The earliest inhabitants of Cameroon were probably the Baka (Pygmies). They still inhabit the forests of the South and East Regions of Cameroon till date. Bantu speakers originating from the Cameroonian highlands were among the first groups to move out before other invaders. The Mandara kingdom in the Mandara Mountains was founded around 1500 and erected fortified structures; the purpose and exact history of which are still unresolved. The Aro Confederacy of Nigeria had presence in Western (later called British) Cameroon due to trade and migration in the 18th and 19th centuries (DeLancey& Dike 2000). During the late 1770s and the early 19th century, the Fulani, a pastoral Islamic people of the Western Sahel (present day Mali and Sudan), conquered most of what is now Northern Cameroon, subjugating or displacing its largely non-Muslim inhabitants who then migrated to the Western Plateau and to the grassland.

Although the Portuguese arrived on Cameroon's doorstep in the 16th century, malaria prevented significant European settlement and conquest of the interior until the late 1870s, when large supplies of the malaria suppressant, quinine, became available. The early European presence in Cameroon was primarily devoted to coastal trade and the acquisition of slaves. The northern part of Cameroon was an important part of the Muslim slave trade network. The slave trade was largely suppressed by the mid-19th century. Christian missions established a presence in the late 19th century and continue to play a role in Cameroonian life (Heinrich, 1926).

4.1.2 Colonisation

Beginning on July 5, 1884, all of present-day Cameroon and parts of several of its neighbors became a German colony, Kamerun, with a capital first at Buea and later at Yaoundé. The Imperial German government made substantial investments in the infrastructure of Cameroon, including the extensive railways, such as the 160-metre single-span railway bridge on the South Sanaga River Branch. Hospitals were opened all over the colony, including two major hospitals at Douala, one of which specialized in tropical diseases. The Germans had discovered the 1912, wrote in an official report in 1919 that the population of Kamerun had increased significantly. However, the

indigenous peoples proved reluctant to work on these projects, so the Germans instigated a harsh and unpopular system of forced labour. In fact, Jesko von Puttkamer was relieved of duty as governor of the colony due to his untoward actions toward the native Cameroonians. In 1911 at the Treaty of Fez after the Agadir Crisis, France ceded a nearly 300,000 km² portion of the territory of French Equatorial Africa to Kamerun which became Neukamerun, while Germany ceded a smaller area in the north in present-day Chad to France.

In World War I the British invaded Cameroon from Nigeria in 1914 in the Kamerun campaign, with the last German fort in the country surrendering in February 1916. After the war this colony was partitioned between the United Kingdom and France under a June 28, 1919 League of Nations mandates (Class B). France gained the larger geographical share, transferred Neukamerun back to neighboring French colonies, and ruled the rest from Yaoundé as Cameroun (French Cameroons). Britain's territory, a strip bordering Nigeria from the sea to Lake Chad, with an equal population was ruled from Lagos as Cameroons (British Cameroons). German administrators were allowed to once again run the plantations of the southwestern coastal area. A British Parliamentary Publication, Report on the British Sphere of the Cameroons (May 1922, p. 62-8), reports that the German plantations there were "as a whole . . . wonderful examples of industry, based on solid scientific knowledge. The natives have been taught discipline and have come to realize what can be achieved by industry. Large numbers who return to their villages take up cocoa or other cultivation on their own account, thus increasing the general prosperity of the country.(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Cameroon)

4.2   Geography of Cameroon

Cameroon is a Central African nation on the Gulf of Guinea, bordered by Nigeria, Chad, the Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon. It is nearly twice the size of Oregon. Mount Cameroon (13,350 ft; 4,069 m), near the coast, is the highest elevation in the country.

Cameroon is sometimes described as "Africa in miniature" because it exhibits all the major climates and vegetation of the continent: mountains, desert, rain forest, savanna grassland, and ocean coastland. Cameroon can be divided into five geographic zones. These are distinguished by dominant physical, climatic, and vegetative features.

4.3 Religions in Cameroon

Christianity and Islam are the two main religions in Cameroon. Christian churches and Muslim centers of various denominations operate freely throughout Cameroon. Approximately 70 percent of the population is at least nominally Christian, 20 percent is nominally Muslim and 6 percent practice traditional indigenous religious beliefs, i.e., Animism. Other religious groups that constitute less than 5 percent of the population include Orthodox Jews, Bahá'ís, and persons who do not associate themselves with any particular religious movement. The Christian population is divided between Roman Catholics (38.4 percent of the total population), Protestants (26.3 percent), and other Christian denominations (including Jehovah's Witnesses) (4 percent). The vast majority of the Muslims are Sunni belonging to Maliki School of jurisprudence, with approximately 12% Ahmadiyya and 3% Shia. Christians and Muslims are found in every region, although Christians are concentrated chiefly in the southern and western regions. There is significant internal migration. Large cities have significant populations of both groups, with churches and mosques often located near each other.

The two Anglophone regions of the Western plateau are largely Protestant thanks to the remarkable work of the German explorer Eugene Zintgraf who spread Christianity through the German Basel Mission from the Sourth West through Bali to areas like Bafut and Bamenda. The Francophone regions of the southern, western and central regions are largely Catholic. In the northern regions, the locally dominant Fulani (Fula: Fulɓe; French: Peul or Peuhl) ethnic group is mostly Muslim, but the overall population is fairly evenly mixed between Muslims, Christians, and animists, each often living in its own community. The Bamoun ethnic group of the West Province is largely Muslim. Traditional indigenous religious beliefs are practiced in rural areas throughout the country but rarely are practiced publicly in cities, in part because many indigenous religious groups are intrinsically local in character. (Forum on Religious & Public life. August 9, 2012)

4.4   The Government of Cameroon

The Republic of Cameroon is governed by a democratic multi-party system structured after the French. The President of Cameroon is supreme, with all branches the government of Cameroon answering to the President: The Executive, Legislative (National Assembly), The Prime Minster, The Judiciary, The Senate and even The Economic and Social Council. All government activities take place from Yaounde, the political capital of Cameroon. There are over fifty (50) ministries with close to a hundred (100) ministers and minister delegates in the Cameroon government.

4.5   The North West Region of Cameroon

The North West Region is found in the Western Highlands of Cameroon. It bothered to the Sourth by the Western and Southwest Regions, to the East by the Adamawa Region and to the North by the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It is head by a Governor who is answerable to the Central Administration in Yaounde. It is comprised of Seven Divisions including Mezam. Bui, Boyo, Menchum, Donga Mantung, NgohKetungia and Momo Divisions which are headed by Senior Divisional Oficers who are answerable to the governor. https://en.m.wikipedia.org This study is carried out in the Bafut Sub Division of Mezam Division.

4.6   History of the origin of the Bafut Kingdom and ATR in Bafut

There are many elements that constitute the ensemble of ATR in Bafut but the particular element under study necessitates knowledge of the history of the migration and settlement of the Bafut Fondom. This is very important to this study because it gives a succinct background to the specific aspect of the Bafut traditional religion under study. Pat Ritzenthaler (1966:8) attempts a history of the origin of the Bafut kingdom far back to the years of population movements for various push factors of migration. He postulates that:

> The Bafut can be traced back about three or four hundred years to a large group of people called the Tikari, who had migrated into the grassland from what is now Northern Nigeria and the Sudan. They were victims of mounting pressure from slave seekers who for centuries had been supplying the slave markets in Northern America. In successive waves, the Tikari came to the grasslands, where for a time they found respite and comparative security.

The grasslands of Cameroon start from the Plateau of the Western Region of the country and extend right into the North West Region. This explains why the early settlement of the Bafut people was actually in the Western Region before they were latter again driven further to their final settlement in the North West Region of the country. While at the North West Region, they first settled at what is now known as the Ndop Plains till their Fon (King) died resulting in a succession dispute that almost resulted in a full-scale war (between the heir apparent) had it not been for the timely intervention of the tribe's Diviner who suggested that they split into three with each of the sons going with his followers to form a new Kingdom under his leadership. Pat Ritzenthaler (1966:9) establishes that: "One son stayed at Ndop, the son with two quarters moved his people over to what is now Big Babanki, and the last son moved his quarter to Mbabari, not far from the present site of Bafut village". While at Mbabari, the Bafut tried to force allegiance from their neighbors by either using tricks or subjecting them to the force of the Bafut army. This resulted in the expansion of the tribe which came with consequences of many ramifications. The greatest consequence of the increment in the size of the population was shortage in arable farmland since Mbabari was a hilly area which was not favorable to rudimentary/subsistent agriculture.

The migration of the people of Bafut to the present site was led by a woman who was latter killed as a result of the conspiracy between patriarchal chauvinists who could not bear to see a woman as a living legend in the Kindom. Calamity befell the people because of the curse shepronounced before dying, and in order to appease her, a shrine was erected in her honor and the destruction of this shrine forms the core of this study. Two different myths talk about the genealogy of this woman. One according to Pat Ritzenthaler (1966:12) holds that the woman was the Queen Mother that is mother of the Fon (King) at the time. And to him therefore one cannot end the history of the origin and settlement of the Bafut people without including the important role played by the Queen Mother of the Fon who was leading the Bafut people while at Mbabari. Pat Ritzenthaler (1966:12) posits that:

> In those days, one important personages in the King's household was his mother. As Queen Mother, she held the highest feminine position in the tribe. Her son took her advice upon many occasions, and she was treated with deference by all people, even judging certain cases of misdemeanor among women without help from the male councilors.

The Queen Mother is simply the mother of the reigning Fon (King) who in every tribe in the North West Region of Cameroon is conferred with certain powers that other women even those in the palace do not have. It was the privilege that she enjoyed that gave her the courage to venture into expeditions that were almost exclusively reserved for the men. On one of such journeys, she discovered the present settlement of the Bafut Kingdom.Pat Ritzenthaler (1966:12) records that;

> After fishing she wandered up to a level area rich in trees, with good land for farming. It was an excellent location for settlement, she realized and she reported this to her son. The Fon was impressed and sent four emissaries to look over the area. When they returned with a favorable report, it was decided that the entire village would move.

This was the final movement of the Bafut people to their final settlement where the constructed the Fon's palace at the central quarter in Achum.

The second version narrated by Festus Sama Ambe (2004) holds that the woman was just a commoner who was very hardworking and was known for her skill in fishing and other heroic exploits. Sama (2004:35) submits that during one of her fishing expeditions down the valley, she encountered an old man (possible the spirit of an ancestor) who spoke to her thus:

> Go and tell the Fon that the Royal House must continue its journey to where it was destined to stay. No more must it hunger and thirst on the top of rocks; no more must the old and tender continue to roll of tops of stones. There is more than enough here for everybody.

Sama's piece of drama titled "The Cries of Restoration" is dedicated to this woman. After the scene in which she is given this message to convey to the Fon, she is meet with so much antagonism from the elders of the tribe who accuse her of assuming the role of a man (for in the Bafut patriarchal setup women are perceived to be weak and have no powers of communicating either with the gods or with the Fon). However, the Fon dispatched a delegation to survey the land and when the report was positive, the Fon gave an order for everyone to relocate to that area which is Achum the place where the palace of Bafut today is found.

The history of the migration and settlement of the Bafut people at Achum (no matter the confusions in the genealogy of the woman) is very important as the one of the consequences of such migration contributed to an important aspect of their traditional religion which coincidentally is the focus of

this research project. While at Achum, the woman who founded the land was perceived (by bias) to have become so ambitious. The Bafut people in those early Historic years accorded divine powers to people who did acts of heroism like the discovery of a site for settlement. Those powers coupled with her position as the Queen Mother caused her to usurp power and started challenging the men folk and the most important cult in the Land (The Nda-Kwihfor). Faced with such a challenge their authority and that of the Fon, the men connived and killed the Queen Mother/the Woman in the most brutal way of burying her alive. In his book titled *Bafut History, Religion and Feminism,* Neba Rene castigates the patriarchal nature of the Bafut traditional setup. He records that (2009:15)

> The murder of the [female] founder of Bafut because of the power she wielded was simply because she was a woman. The event which occurred around the 16th century bears all traces of the conspiracy that men in most patriarchal societies have against women geared toward keeping them at a position of subordination in all aspects of life from politics, decision making and religion. This is so because the Queen Mother's discovery was enough to give her a respectable position in the society and in the case where the King opposed such a move, he was to be dethroned since the status of a king in those historic years in the grass field dependent largely on his heroic exploits.

Neba Rene (2009) thus lays the blame of the killing of the woman to the patriarchal nature of the Bafut Kingdom and the consequent discrimination against women as far back to the origin of the Bafut Kingdom. What is of much importance to the death of this woman is the fact that before dying, she cursed the Bafut people that they shall forever pay for the injustice they had done to her. Sama Ambe (2004:79) enlivens this curse in the mouth of his character Old Woman thus:

> Hear! You sacrilegious people, you profane generation of this fondom. Your irreligious sacrifices and praises laugh blood down the waters of these valleys. From this day on the rays of the sun will never smile on the soils of this land again. The calms of peace will forever drum disquiet in your heads and minds…the doors of fortune and progress are forever locked before you and generation upon generations to come.

Her curse proved to be potent as a myriad of calamities stroke the Bafut people. In Bafut mythology, it is believed that during this period, the Bafut hardly became pregnant as well as infant mortality was high. Epidemics like Chicken Pox and Malaria were also quickly linked to the curse. Most especially among these calamities was the monotonous suicide by hanging by most Bafut men over trivial issues. Faced with this crisis, the Nda-Kwifor concerted with the Fon (King) and they agreed to do a sacrifice of appeasement to appease the spirits of the brutally murdered woman.

In most African Traditional societies, an appeasement sacrifice of this magnitude is not a one-time affair since it entails erecting something like a monument a shrine where the person for whom the sacrifice was made is bound to be remembered annually. Mingjo Mathew (2000) notes that such appeasement sacrifices for them to be effective must constitute of an erected shrine where that particular ancestor's exploits will be celebrated and commemorated annually. Mingjo (2000:15) outlines the following as the qualities of such a shrine:

> It must be located in a public place so as to sensitize the present generation about the ancestor for whom the appeasement is made. Three key elements constitute such a shrine, a gourd which is broken at the end of the sacrifice to symbolize the sins that have been forgiven, a stone that represents the ancestor and a tree which symbolizes the peaceful future envisioned as the aftermath of the sacrifice of appeasement. This tree can be a peace plant or any tree depending on the tribe in question.

It was during the reign of MforAchirimbiin the early 17th century that such a shrine was erected in memory of the woman who was according to Sama Ambe named Ndela-ah Mbue (the greatest title a woman has ever had in the Bafut Kingdom). After the erection of this shrine and the subsequent annual sacrifices that were offered in memory of this Queen Mother the Bafut lived in relative peace for about 4 centuries until in 2014 that the man of God Prophet Afangwi Franklin re-ignited the narrative of the curse and destroyed this shrine, an incident which saw the apex of the conflict under study.

4.7 Religious societies and authorities in Bafut (ATR)

4.7.1 Bandankienfor

This is the highest religious authority in the land responsible for all national ancestral cults and the advancement of the Bafut traditional religion. Aletum (1990:33) presents that "the purification of the rulers and the society as a wwhole is under the care of this ministry". The leadership of this ministry is limited to the first seven members of the Bandankienfor. When they assume office, they are sometimes referred to as "bunwi" literarily meaning "gods". The Fon during certain sacrifices assume the post of the high priest to offer the sacrifice. This is usually done once a year in the Achum the Bafut ancestral shrine which is done at the same time with the annual appeasement sacrifice that is done in honor of Ndee-lahMbue as explained above.

4.7.2 NdaTakumbeng

This is a secret society of the Princes and has a small shrine in each quarter where offerings can be brought and wishes expressed through sacrifices. I always announces in the Market the day that people can visit the shrines and offer sacrifices to ward off evil and diseases.

4.7.3 Other religious organizations

According to Jonas N Dah (2011:160) include the Tchitewale whose religious task is to gather the paraphernalia for the annual dance in which most annual sacrifies are offered. They however meet every week to enliven the group.There is also the Nda Mandel whose religious task is to cleanse the land before the planting season and again before the harvesting season. The last category includes the Quarter Priests who are charged with running the spiritual affairs of the various quarters and are known for demanding heavy prices form people who indulge in witchcraft especially.

4.8 Christianity in Bafut

Christianity in Bafut just like any other tribe in Anglophone Cameroon clocked 100 years during the early 2000s.Following the German annexation of Cameroon in 1884 as mentioned above, the first Christian Missionaries to arrive Bafut were the Basel Missionaries. Jonas N Dah (2011:9) narrates that Christianity had taken root in Bali before 1904 when it entered Bafut under Rev. Hartman.The missionaries like Hartman, Ferdinand Ernst and Jacocb Keller came to Bafut with

the new religion and appeared before Fon (King) Abumbi 1 in 1904.After many gifts and persuasions, they were allowed to preach and teach religion at Takumbong's yard.

On realizing that the Fon was so hardhearted, the missionaries in a bid to placate him asked him to give his successor and some other children to be educated .These Basel missionaries opened a school at Njinteh where the Bafut Market is found now in 1911 with an enrolment of 80 pupils. The school ran smoothly as well as the activities of the Baptist church ran smoothly until 1914 with the eruption of WW1 and the subsequent ouster of the German from Cameroon in 1916. Despite the expulsion of the Germans from Cameroon, the activities of the Basel Mission which was largely German continued until a later date when all their belongings were transferred to the Presbyterian Church which is the leading Christian denomination in Bafut till present date.

4.8.1   The Presbyterian Church in Bafut

Jonas N Dah (2011:88-94) in Christianity and Tradition in Bafut, dedicates a Chapter the institutions of the Presbyterian Church in Bafut. These institutions include Churches, primary and secondary schools, vocational schools as well as training centers for Catechists and teachers. Prominent among these institutions include Rural Training Center Mfonta created in 1970 which was created to train mostly people involved in agriculture and other related activities. There is also the Sisterhood of Emanuel created in 1972 which was to act as a convent for the training of Rev. Sisters to serve in the presbytery. Jonas D (2011:93) records that the first consecration of the Rev Sisters in Bafut took place in 1985 with six sisters consecrated. There was also the Presbyterian Girls School of Science created in 1970. It was tasked with the responsibility of training young girls neither interested in agriculture or sisterhood on things like domestic science, cookery, tailoring and others. The center still exists today with the same objectives. There is also the Presbyterian Secondary School (PSS) Bafut which has been training students to take the Cameroon General Certificate Board Examinations both at the Ordinary and Advanced Levels. Today the Presbyetarian Church counts a total of Seven Congregations in Bafut with the headquarters at Njinteh.

Apart from ATR, Christianity is also a popular religion all over Cameroon Bafut inclusive. The main Christian denominations here are Catholic, the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon and the

Baptist Church. The Catholic church counts about five parishes in the entire Bafut with about 25000 followers all together same with the Presbyterian Church.

4.9   Kingship International Ministries

4.9.1   Biography of the founding Prophet

This NRM is a prophet-based church created by Prophet Anfanwi Ndifor Franklin. He was born on the 12[th]of November 1980 on a bare road (street) at the center of Bafut in the North West Region of Cameroon. His birth is believed to be divine as it happened at the central junction of Bafut. The spot where he was born is nicknamed "Nsaniwunwi" which means a field of God's child. He is the founder of Kingship Ministries International with headquarters in Bounaberi Douala Cameroon with national and international branches. He is also founder and CEO of the satellite Channel Kingship Tv that has as its mission to spread the Gospel of Christ to the ends of the world and win lost souls for the Kingdom of God. He is mentor and coach to many aspiring pastors and prophets some of whom have gone to establish their own churches and well as watching over the affairs of the various branches. He has travelled widely and had crusades in Europe and America as well as in other African countries.

4.9.2   The Formation of Kingship International Ministries

According to the account on www.kingshipministry.com, the calling of the then Mr Franklin Afanyi came like the call of Jeremiah when the Lord said "before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; appointed you as prophet to the nations". Unaware of his call, Prophet Franklin was an IT technician in 2009 when God took him off his day to day life and directed him to his purpose which for him to become his prophet over the nations. He finally answered the call in 2010when he founded Kingship International Ministry.

4.9.3   Life and Ministry

The anointing upon his life drew people from all corners of Cameroon and in six months a giant church was founded with headquarters at Ndobo-Bounaberi Douala Cameroon. His early ministry was characterized by miracles of healing and numerous breakthroughs as evident from the testimonies his early followers were giving, leading to the rapid growth of the church with many

branches now all over Cameroon including Bamenda and Bafut. He has organized nationwide crusades in which he conducts deliverance services as well as destroys what he calls "ancestral alters" for the purported liberation of the various areas where he organizes the crusades.

4.9.4 Activities

The activities of KIM include Sunday preaching, healing of the sick, organization of crusades for mass deliverance and especially the destruction of ancestral shrines which Prophet Frank believes is the root cause of the bondage that many people in the various villages live. He has destroyed shrines in the villages of Akum, Pinyin and Bafut in the North West Region of Cameroon. Before destroying each shrine, he always exposes the foolishness of worshiping idols and also the punishment that God promises to inflict on idol worshippers. As seen here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIYM-b5WFPc and other CD recordings, he always gives a biblical justification for the destruction of ancestral shrines by making reference to Bible quotations such as:

- Exodus 20:3-6) where God warns the Israelites against idol worship for he is a God who does not like competition.
- Deuteronomy 12: 1-3 where God's command on the destruction of various shrine is made explicit in the following words: " 2 In the land that you are taking, destroy all the places where the people worship their gods on high mountains, on hills and under green trees. 3 Tear down their alters and smash their sacred stones to pieces …". With this he preaches as well as believes that the destruction of ancestral shrines is therefore executing divine command.
- 1 Kings Chapter 18:1-46 where God disgraces the 450 prophets of Baal in order to vindicate his prophet Elijah causing the people of Israel to surrender themselves to the worship of only one God the God of Elijah.

Armed with these scriptural commands his preaching on occasions in which he is to destroy an ancestral shrine always focusses on exposing "the foolishness of worshiping idols" as seen in the on his YouTube channel at   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIYM-b5WFPc. There he castigates the worship of carved entities the offering of sacrifices to such gods and expresses his firm resolve to follow the divine command in Deuteronomy 12: 1-3.

4.9.5   Relationship between ATR, other Christian denominations and KIM

Following the presentation of ATR, other Christian denominations and NRM above, there is need for a synthesis on the relationship that exists between the three in the context under study. Considering that ATR is as old as the people or tribe itself, there is relatively no tension between the people and the traditional institutions since the ATR is there for the sake of the people. Progressively, with the coming of early Christian denominations like the Basel Missionaries as shown in ; 4.2.1. above, the Bafut tribe started opening up to alien religion despite little resistance like from that of Fon (King) Ambumbi 1. (Jonas D 2011:9). Considering the demand by the Basel Missionaries for the Fon to give his sons to be educated, it can be deduced that the Basel mission viewed traditional institutions as complementary with the Gospel. The Presbyterian Church taking over from the Basel Mission continued with elements of contextual theology and thus valued as well as preserved local tradition leading to relatively no tension between them and ATR. This serene relationship is definitely not the case with the coming of NRMs that seek to indicate a radical distinction between them and mainline churches like the Presbyterian and the Basel Mission. This has led them to wage a puritanical war against ATR as will be seen in the Chapter that follows.

4.10   Summary

The chapter contains a succinct background to the study. First, a brief history of Cameroon is presented after which the history of Bafut and ATR is also presented. The background to Christianity in Cameroon in general and Bafut in particular is presented with special attention to KIM. This background better informs the understanding of the findings in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: REPORT ON THE FINDINGS

5.1 Preliminaries

This section focuses on the presentation of the findings that were collected in response to various interview questions which were aimed at answering the research questions. The researcher in this Chapter sought to know the opinions of the interviewees about the reason behind the frequency of conflicts between NRMs (KIM) and ATR, as well as understanding how those conflicts are resolved as well as the impacts they have on the community. This main question was however subdivided as will be seen subsequently.

The ages of the interviewees ranged from 25 to around 70 years. This range encompasses the youths who form the crème of the very active militants of either of ATR of the NRM. The group also includes elders who are the senior citizens of the tribe, staunched members of the ATR who have lived with their culture and tradition for decades and do not see anyway by which they can part with tradition for another religion. The Traditional Prime Minister (locally known as Be Che) who doubles as the high priest of ATR was interviewed as well as some three other key ATR members. On the part of KIM, the local prophet of KIM Bafut branch was interviewed with three key members of his congregation. Gender balance was an issue because according to the Bafut metaphysics, women are not supposed to part take in certain traditional rites nor to belong to certain traditional circles, as a result the interviewees on the part of ATR were men whereas on the part of KIM the two women were among the interviewees balancing gender on their part. The meetings with the Prophet as well as the Traditional Prime Minister, and other interviewees were scheduled to hold during my visit to the Anda Kwifor and KIM Bafut and the interview took place at the same time.

5.2   Data on General Issues

Table one below summarizes the structure of the sampling of interviewees as explained in the paragraph above.

Village/Tribe	ATR	KIM
Bafut	4	4

As seen from the above, a total of 8 people were interviewed. The decision to interview just this number was based on the fact that the though the apex of the conflict was reached in 2012, there are still instances of clashes till today. As a result, this little number was chosen so as to get just the essentials and avoid creating scenes where conflict of ideas may arise since Bafut is a small tribe where either KIM or ATR members can easily notice the activities of each other and intervene in one way or the other. Also, during the interview with ATR members, despite the fact that key people were to speak, it was in the presence of a larger meeting in which everyone consented to responses from their spokespersons.

5.3   Interview Report

This report contains the interview that was carried out between September 1st to September 16th 2018 in Bafut. This will be segmented into two parts with the first dedicated to the interview granted to ATR members and the second being that granted to the members of KIM Bafut branch. For the purpose of chronology, each segment will be further segmented into sub headings relating to the sub-research questions as stated in Chapter One.

5.3.1   How does KIM view ATR theologically?

Because of the technicality of the question to the common man, this question was broken down into two questions as follows: What is your opinion about other religions? What then is the reason for the frequent conflict between KIM and ATR? These simpler questions helped break the barrier in the understanding of either KIM or ATR members who could not immediately understand what theology is. This is so because even the local prophet has not gone through any theological training

but was seemingly chosen on the basis of his eloquence and understanding of the Bible to act as the leader of the local KIM branch. The researcher assumed the position of deducing the theological stance of KIM from the responses of members of both camps. These theological deductions will largely appear in the next Chapter on analysis. The questions were first posed to ATR members before KIM members on a different day.

The interview with the ATR members took place precisely on the 6th of September in one of the huts at the Bafut palace. I left Aghati quarter very early in the morning in the company of my two research assistants and trekked down to the palace on the day the Anda-Kwifor usually meets at the palace to deliberate and also to pour libation .This day is known as Nwilaah, the equivalence of a Sunday in the Bafut community .The Bafut palace comprises of mostly German buildings that are monumental of the good relationships that existed between the people of Bafut and the German during the period of German colonization. Prominent among these buildings are the King's residential area, the museum, and a long rectangular building that separates the inner palace from the palace court yard. At the inner palace where I conducted the interview, three shrines built with bamboos and roofed with grass are conspicuous. The most gigantic among them is the Achum which is allegedly to be as old as the Bafut tribe though the structure shows signs of constant renovations.On tribal days of worship, the elders seat in an arena in front of the shrine to drink after pouring libation and discuss tribal issues. Though there is no place of communal worship apart from the shrines in the palace, all Bafut people do not go to their farms nor do they do other outdoor activities. They stay at home and worship NwiNdayi (the ancestor and creator of the family). Sacrifices at the level of the family are offered by Njinda (family priest).All Bafut people do everything to respect the solemnity of this day.

We arrived the palace at exactly 7.30 to wait a while before the members of the Andaa-Kwifor commenced their activities since they always wait for the sun to rise at around 8 before they commence. The ancestral shrine where the Andaa-Kwifor always offer sacrifices at is the Achum (the greatest ancestral shrine) where the Bunwis (the gods) who are largely the spirits of the dead Fons are believed to be residing. Not every member of the Andaa-Kwiforis allowed entry to the Achum as I observed. Only four key members who bear the following titles always enter. They include Be Tche (palace priest) who is the highest priest of the land and thus the traditional prime minister, Ta Bunwi who is considered as the Father of the ancestors, Ta Nefum who is the Father

of the Fon's grave and Ta Ngang who is the father of good medicine. I curiously asked to know if there existed a father for Bad Medicine also and was told that he was referred to as Ta Mafuh and is considered to be the highest dubious herbalist in the land who is not therefore considered in the Bafut public life.

I had brought some palm wine and some two crates of beer as was demanded by Be Tche the first day I meet him to arrange for my interview. They nevertheless had their own palm wine in gourds which they drank for a while before the four members mentioned above rose and entered the Achum to commune with the ancestors. Due to the secrecy and sacred nature of the Achum, we were not allowed entrance; we only remained at the arena with the other members of the Andaa-Kwifor who suddenly stopped their chatter after the four members made their entrance into the Achum. The atmosphere was filled with solemnity and as we could eavesdrop blurred sounds coming from the Achum, and the scent of the burning of camwood, we could feel some supernatural presence in the atmosphere. Their visit was just for about fifteen minutes after which they came out and reported success in their mission and sat down and it was time for me to begin my interview. Because of language barrier I employed the services of my senior research assistant who acted as a translator. After greeting the congregation and with the confirmation of Be Tche about my mission, it was unanimously accepted that the four members who just left the Achum a while ago will speak for everybody which spared me the ordeal of random sampling. In prelude to the first question, I expressed my satisfaction to the fact that they are keeping the native religion alive and also stated my respect for their tradition and promised to write everything in all honesty as exactly as they said it without any bias. I then stated the question thus: "Considering that this is your much-cherished religion, what is your opinion about other religions?". This question was intended to understand their own theological perception of other religions including KIM. After my translator did the translation, there was a chorus of laughter and some murmurs at the end of which Be Tche spoke. *(The speech of the members of ATR were translated by my research assistant cum translator and latter own confirmed by Prof. Paul Mbufong of the University of Bamenda who is a renowned Bafut linguist)*Be Tche spoke thus:

My son we welcome you once more. We understand that certain questions from you who are going to school can at times be funny and that explains the laughter of my kinsmen here. (laughter again). Our people worship ancestors whom we consider as messengers of Bunwi (God the creator) who created every land including here and the white man's country where you say you are coming from. We therefore respect any religion that talks about Bunwi (God the creator) in so far as that religion respects our own traditional religion which we inherited from our fore fathers who also inherited from their fore fathers.

Everyone nodded in concord and Be Tche added that his sons are all educated at the Presbyterian Secondary School in Bafut thanks to the Presbyterian Church (the Bafut man thinks that various denominations are religions on their own) which also preaches Bunwi as well as commands respect for the traditional religion without which he would not have sent his children to that school even for free.One could deduce from Be Che's response that the Bafut culture is welcoming to any religion and culture which permits a peaceful coexistence with the Bafut culture. From a theological perspective therefore, Be Che implies that they are open to any religion which practices contextual theology.

With that answer my translator indicated that I could go the next question. I followed up with: "After noting the peaceful coexistence between ATR and the Presbyterian church, what in your view is the reason for the frequent conflict between ATR and KIM?". I observed that this question was received with stern looks on the faces of all members of the Andaa-Kwifor. The look connoted the fact that my question was something closer to mentioning a taboo subject in holy ground; this was confirmed by the murmurs and petit conversation between the members. Be Tche indicated however that another person should answer that question. Ta Ngang who is aged around sixty and dressed in his traditional regalia rose, cleared his throat and started with a proverb. "Our people say that a child that says the mother will not sleep, he too will not sleep". Not so? He asked! Everyone responded in the affirmative then he continued.

Before I was born, the white man had already brought the message of 'Kristus" (Jesus Christ) to this land and our people under FuoAchirimbi 1 welcomed them and gave them where to build their own house of worship. That is why some churches are older than some of us here. But this boy Ndifor (native name of Prophet Frank of KIM) whose mother I

went together with the father to pay bride price has rose today and even claims to know the Bible more than the white man who brought it. We don't like him and will never like his church because he does not like our tradition and believes that everything, we do in this palace is a worship of the devil. This is the reason why we don't and will never like his church and if not because of government intervention his house and even him could have been dealt with as tradition demands.

He ended almost fuming and was calmed down by Be Tche and even after that one could still hear him swallow with difficulty as he gulped down his palm wine. Ta Ngang's response implied a peaceful coexistence between ATR and other churches which is clearly lacking with KIM. The intolerance of KIM as in "believes that everything, we do in this palace is a worship of the devil" underlies the polarized relationship between the two religions and possibly the reason why Be Che ended his answer byfuming. I however took my notes and continued with other questions which will follow in the following sections.For the purpose of chronology and consistency, I will switch to the response by KIM members to the same two questions above.

I spent the rest of the week after my interview with ATR visiting important sites in Bafut. Including the waterfalls etc so as to know more about the culture of the people and their worldview. My visit to KIM was on Friday 14th September 2018.The congregation usually meets every Friday to fine tune the preparations for the service which always takes place every Saturdays. I arrived there at 8 am when the activities were already going on. I observed that the church was largely made up of Middle age women and some few young boys including the prophet. In total, there were about fifty people in the building who often got into ecstatic fits whether during singing or praying. The décor of the church had curtains of diverse colors yet green and white dominated the curtains that were hung on the walls. The church had two lanes full of plastic chairs lining both sides of the aisle leading to the alter. The alter had wool carpet and a giant chair where the prophet usually sits on. There was also a Bible stand where the reading of the Bible as well as the sermons are often delivered. I participated in the choir practice after which at the end the prophet introduced me to the church members as well as my mission and went straight to designate three members of the congregation with whom we were to have the interview which held in the prophet's office. While there I noticed that all church activities were done in the English Language and as a result, I was spared of needing a translator as in the case with KIM. While in the office, the prophet said a brief

prayer, told me he has allocated 1hr maximum for the interview as he will have a deliverance service latter in the afternoon.

After all was said and done, I asked the first question. I directed the question to the prophet asking him his opinion about other religions just as I had asked with ATR. The prophet cleared his throat and indicated that his answer will come from numerous quotes from the Bible. He began with; John 14:6 "Jesus said to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the father except through me". He explained that Christ by virtue of being the "way" already points to the fact that Christianity was the only true religion. He secondly directed me to John 8:58 and read out " John 8:58 Jesus said to them, Truly truly ,I say to you, before Abraham was born ,I am" and continued to Matt.(11:27),Luke (10:22) and red out " All things have been handed over to me by my father, and no one knows who the son is except the Father, and who the father is except the son, and anyone to whom the son wills to reveal Him". He continued with the concept of the Resurrection in Luke (24;24-29), John (2:19) to show the strength and the reason for which Christ died and went further to say that Christianity is not only a religion but a life of constant relationship with God .It is trusting in Jesus and what he did on the cross 1Cor.(15:1-4) and not what you can do for yourself Ephesians (2:8-9). The prophet then turned to me and said;

> You can see for yourself that it is not me but the Bible that designates Christianity as the only true religion. You should not expect me as a servant of God to contradict the Bible, my opinion is therefore that any other religion apart from Christianity is not only a waste of time but disobedience to God's commands. It is sad to note that even within Christendom some denominations in their quest for popularity have gone out of the way directed by the Bible but we here we follow the Bible to the latter. Besides it is God's command that we should have no God except him.

The three church members expressed facial looks that communicated a message of victory as if to say I was in a debate with the prophet whose answer had defeated me. I was however amused by the mastery of the Bible the prophet demonstrated and went further with my interview. I went ahead by saying that I have understood that there are frequent clashes between KIM and ATR and asked the prophet; "What in your view is the reason for the frequent conflict between ATR and KIM?" I paid much attention to the response because it was to give me the theological perception

of ATR by KIM despite the fact that the prophet had given a general view in his response to the first question. The prophet smiled at this question and pointed to one of the prayer warriors Neba Alain who in the line of the prophet answered me with a lot of Bible quotes. He began by saying that the answer is obvious that light and darkness cannot coexist according to God's commands. After attaching ATR to paganism and evil, he referred to a number of Bible verses including Deuteronomy (18:9-14) where God warns his followers against doing the "abominable" things done by the heathens in the land where God is giving them. He went ahead to Rev (21:8) where pagans are referred to as "faithless" "murderers" "idolaters" and "liars" whose punishment is to burn in the Lake that "burns with fire and Sulphur". As he was about to end here, the Choir Mistress Bih Delphine added that Deuteronomy (12:2-3) goes beyond warning Christians against indulging into pagan sacrifice but also gives them a command to tear down all of those shrines so that he alone God can prevail over the land. With these responses, the prophet concluded by saying that he will always follow divine instructions and that if not for the Government injunction against attacking shrines he could have made sure that he continues burning down all pagan shrines in the land for the people to be freed.I observed that the prophet and his followers actually meant what they said from various bodily communications such as hitting folded fists on the table, stern looks on their faces and frequent bending of the head in meditation mood as if they were receiving instructions from the holy spirit.I jotted what was necessary and continued with the interview.

5.3.2 How has ATR responded?

The response by ATR is partially embedded in the April 2014 clash. As such I will present the response to the questions on the April 12th 2014clash before presenting other remote responses from ATR. As a result, I further broke the question into two first asking about the highlights of the 2014 clash and then further asking about other responses from ATR. As with the first question, will present the interview with ATR first before the one with KIM .

After the discussion with ATR in 6.31. above, I went straight to the next question. "I hear that in April 2014, Prophet Frank of KIM was in the palace to cut the tree and destroy the shrine of Ndee-lah Mbue; can you recount the highlights of the encounter between ATR and KIM in 2012? Ta Bunwi opted to answer the question.

65

I wish I was my colleagues who had died earlier and as such did not witness the sacrilege which occurred some years ago when this thief, rapist carried some bandits to this palace to desecrate the shrine of NdeeLah that great woman who is the reason for which we are standing here today. We cannot say much about what happened for as you know son somethings are better left on said. What we know is that this fool entered the palace one afternoon with a band of women and mad boys singing and latter entered the shrine and cut down the appeasement tree with a chain saw. I am happy that young men from this land rallied in time and chased him proving to him that this land still belongs to us. He was given severe beatings but the damage had been done to a shrine that has guided us for centuries. Our link to our ancestor was cut and the symbol of our worldview was desecrated.

The key point in Ta Bunwi's response was the fact that the prophet and his men were chased away with some violence recorded as seen in the video excerpts. So, I followed up with the second sub question:

That must have been hard for you people to take. Please forgive my asking further but for my studies, it is important that I know a bit further. I suppose this is not the only attack on ATR, there is a possibility that maybe through their preaching and other activities they may been attacking you people say verbally. So apart from the chasing away of these people from the palace, is there any other way by which you people have responded to the church?

There was a bit of murmur since everyone wanted to accept at the same time. However, Be Che spoke after the commotion.

We do not go to his church, so we might not know actually what he preaches about us. However, when he organizes public crusades, he keeps referring to us as pagans, idol worshipers and even the devil. In response, since we do not organize crusades, we make sure we mention his name and the church each time we are pouring libation for the gods to deal with them in whichever way they chose inherited our tradition from our ancestors and all we can do is to maintain and nurture it. Anybody fighting against it is fighting with the gods. At individual levels I hear people chasing them when they go for door to door

preaching. We also banished two women who abandoned their husbands and children and gave their life to the church. Those are bad seeds that should not be allowed to grow here.

His answer is understandable since ATR do not organize crusades or sermons one cannot expect them to preach counter discourse. Their actions against KIM are thus seen as retaliatory and proportionate to the aggression. Be it verbal or physical, the underlining factor is a response in order to defend religious identity and worldview.

On the day of the interview with KIM, I posed the same question to the interviewees. The prophet looked around to see if there was anyone opting to answer but everyone was looking up to him so he hemmed and began. He narrated to me how coming from Bafut, his mentor Prophet Frank (the founder and overseer of KIM) was sent by God to first liberate first his tribe before going ahead to liberate others. "That is why he was born at the main square (Junction) which is now named Nsaniwunwi (the junction of the child of the gods) because he was the child who was to liberate his tribe when his time will come to start his ministry. That is why by 2012 when his ministry was just two years old he felt the need to come and liberate his people from the curse of the woman who surprisingly is being worshipped by these natives. That is why the shrine of NdeelahMbue had to be destroyed because her curse was responsible for many illnesses, lack of progress and general ill luck in this tribe. So, on the 14th April 2012 after much spiritual preparation, we took the devil by surprise and before they could mobilize, we had brought down the tree and destroyed the shrine thereby liberating the land. It is surprising that they fought us and took us to court by the essential remains that since that day there is prosperity in the land. Here I felt the urge to ask him further to explain more on "we took the devil". The prophet indicated that the shrine and its worshipers are all devilish.

5.3.3   What are the impacts?

What were the consequences (impact) of the conflict? The response came from Be Tche. He directed us to look at the tree outside that is struggling to grow after it was cut as well as the shrine that shows evidence of resent renovations. He intimated that it was an attack on their worldview and thanked his ancestors for at least providing another alternative for renovation of the shrine and the continuance of the libation for posterity and also to maintain the life line of the Bafut people. He equally indicated that families have since then been divided and the members of KIM which

he referred to as a "cult" have since been considered and "necessarily so" as outcasts in the Bafut society. He also indicated a number of wounded people who were taken to the hospital after being injured and also the fact that the Fon of Bafut for the first time appeared in court. As he finished, Ta Nefuh also intimated that the spiritual ramifications are enormous as seen in climate change especially the heat which he says they have been struggling since that day to curb because Ndee La had sent it as punishment for such defilement of her shrine. The answer to the next question became obvious as because of the violence, there was a court case in which the matter was settled legally.

During my interview with KIM, I equally asked the question on the consequences of the incident both immediate and till date. The prophet intimated that Suh Peter one of the prayer warriors was best placed to answer. Peter, a man of around Forty Years dark in complexion with a scar on the face cleared his throat and spoke with a hollow voice. He began by saying that the scar on his face was as a result of the fight on that day. He went further to say that his house as well as some of the early followers were burnt and they were latter taken to court. He continued that they were latter taken to court -a situation that had a two-edged effect. The good effect was that they reversed the ban on the church and its followers in the tribe but on the negative side they paid a heavy fine. The prophet stepped in to add that the greatest effect was the victory they scored for the Lord. He proceeded to say that even if the church is slow to grow, there is at least improvement that the people around are copying from the Mega church that his mentor has in Douala the Economic capital of Cameroon. Madam Jesinta one of the prayer warriors also stepped in to say that she lost her husband (as she was asked to choose between the marriage and the church) as a result of the incident but she is happy the prophet offered her residence and that since then she had found happiness in the Lord than in the husband.

5.3.4 How is the conflict diffused?

In response to the question on how such conflicts can be avoided, Be Tche indicated that in as much as the prophet continued to preach against tradition, it was obvious that the conflict will continue. He went further to state that ATR in Bafut is the lifeline of the Bafut without which the Bafut people are finished as they will be living like fish out of water. He proceeded to show his concord with the government policy of secularism and religious tolerance which according to him has been constantly violated by KIM. He ended and to which everybody accepted that if in any

case that prophet ever attacked any shrine again, they will take government laws into their hands and wipe everything about KIM from the face of the earth as their forefathers could have one in their days.

At this point, I ended with the interview and brought the palm wine and beer which the elders thanked me and drank in all pleasure. We left the palace at around 3 pm and I was to stay around till one week before I could see the members of KIM according to the program given to me by the local prophet.

Posing the same question on how such conflicts can be avoided, the prophet referred me to some of the Bible verses he had mentioned at the start of the interview and also to the first commandment "I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other God except me". He then concluded that such conflicts can only be avoided if the ATR people drop their gods for the Almighty God. With his definitive answer I thanked him and closed my note book.

5.3.5   Others issues

The prophet latter asked me whether I was a Christian to which I answered yes and precise that I was a catholic Christian. The prophet smiled and was about to say something when I removed the envelope, I had put Twenty Thousand in to support the church with. He took it, prayed for me and we greeted and I left.

After this interview I finally left Bafut on the 16th of September 2018 back to Bamenda. While at Bamenda I had as objectives to do translations for my tapes and notes and also to visit a Bafut Linguist to confirm what my field assistants had done as translations. I also intended to visit the Bamenda High Court to ask about the case which both KIM and ATR members had mentioned. I did succeed to see Prof Paul Mbufong at his residence on the 18th who modified some of the translations and confirmed most. The next day on the 20th I went up to the Bamenda High Court at Up Station where unfortunately the lawyers were on strike due to the Anglophone crisis which started in 2016 and unfortunately has degenerated to an armed conflict with separatist resulting to guerilla war. So, I was not able to get access to the legal document settling the case. However I met one lawyer (Barrister Clement Wan Mingjo) who was in the vicinity of the court when I came in. He, after listening to me he offered to speak to me about the Cameroon Law on Religious Assemblies and Congregations which he presumed must have been used in trying belligerents.

5.4   Discussions with Barrister Clement Wan Mingjo

We sat at the famous Club 51 rest house Up Station in Bamenda and he presented to me a copy of the Cameroon Constitution as well as the Cameroon Penal Code. He offered to just interpret the relevant sections. He quoted the *Cameroon's Constitution of1972 with AmendmentsThrough 2008* (page 4) articles fourteen and fifteen which states: " 14. the state shall be secular. The neutrality and independence of the State in respect of all religions shall be guaranteed; (and) 15. freedom of religion and worship shall be guaranteed" . He went on to explain to me that there is no doubt that anyone who violates the constitution no matter on what account has to be punished. He went further to indicate that at independence religious intolerance was common only in the Northern Regions of the country where Islam is the dominant religion and refuses to coexist with other religions especially Christianity. He noted however that president Amadu Ahidjo (Cameroon's President 1960-1982) took measures to post Christian civil servants to the North and Muslims to the south such that secularism could be lived in practice. Barrister Clement continued that unfortunately religious intolerance has seen the light of day in south and west Cameroon with the advent of New Religious Movements and Pentecostal Churches which form just about 4 percent of the entire population. He cited the examples of the prophet under study and his attack on ATR in Bafut as reported on the online newspaper called the Cameroon Post Line https://cameroonpostline.com/born-again-prophet-in-court-for-destroying-bafut-ancestral-shrines-brutalising-fon/and also the case of Apostle John Chi of the Ark Of God Ministry and his attack on ATR in Bangolan as reported by Cameroon News Agency (CNA) http://cameroonnewsagency.com/understanding-thebangolan-crisis/ to say that if care is not taken such skirmishes will continue.

He went further to say that the Cameroon Law on Religious Congregations amended in 2008 was there to check such excesses. According to that law, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization must approve any religious organization before it goes into function. The law also stipulates various sanctions including suspension, imprisonment and the payment of fines for any defaulters of the various dictates of the said law. It was Barrister Clement's opinion therefore that the two laws above must have been used to try defaulters during the conflict.

After my encounter with Barrister Clement, I had just a few days in Bamenda and on the 21st of September I was back in Douala where I had in mind to meet Prophet Frank himself if his schedule

permitted. Unfortunately for my arrival in Douala coincided with the campaigns for the presidential election which prophet Frank had declared himself candidate as reported by Journal du Cameroon.com https://www.journalducameroun.com/en/god-gave-me-the-power-to-rule-cameroon-prophet-frank/ and I could not therefore meet the prophet in person. With the content that I had interviewed the prophet in the Bafut who had taken permission from Prophet Frank, I wasn't so bothered again by the prophet's absence. I however visited the church for sightseeing.

5.5   Summary

This Chapter records the interviews with the opposing religions in Bafut. The interview with ATR members took place at the palace court yard whereas the interview with KIM took place at the church premises. The same questions were posed to both groups and their contradictory responses demonstrate the conflict which still thrives at various levels, albeit not as intense as the April 2012 event. One neutral person Barrister Clement Wan Mingjo was interviewed on the legal implications of the conflicts. The raw data collected here offers a transition to the next chapter which is the analysis of the data.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.0. Introduction

This chapter handles the discussion of the finding recorded above in relation to the theory, literature review as well as the background to the study. For the purpose of systematizing the work, the chapter will have the same sub headings as the one above as well as will be representative of the various research questions such that the analysis will be the answers to the research questions.

6.1   How does KIM view ATR theologically?

This section focuses on the theoretical interpretation of the answers to the sub questions related to the theological impression of KIM as far as ATR is concerned. As in 5.3.1. above, the questions were posed first to ATR members and latter to KIM members. From the findings above, potential answer to the question is that KIM does not see ATR as a religion, but rather sees it as an evil organization and world view that must be destroyed for God's light to shine. This will be substantiated bellow with various theoretical ramifications.

The first question sought to know the impression that ATR and KIM have about other religions. During the interview with ATR, the interviewee, Be Che, gave a response with the following key statement; "Our people worship ancestors whom we consider to act as messengers to Bunwi (God the creator) who created every land including here and the white man's country where you are coming from" and continued to intimate that the position of ATR permits any religion that worships God the creator in so far as such a religion does not attack ATR. His response indicates that ATR is both monotheistic and polytheistic by virtue of worshiping ancestors and Bunwi (God Almighty) respectively. Unlike in the west where polytheism and monotheism antagonize one another, there is complementarity between the two as Be Che refers to the ancestors as messengers of Bunwi. Lugira (2009:36) corroborates this relationship where he exposes the misconceptions of ATR by the west and opines that "In African religion monotheism and polytheism exist side by side". This coexistence between the two believes exists even in Christianity and is propagated implicitly by NRMs. This is noted in the prayers of prophet-based churches where they talk about the God of this or that prophet implying a kind of ancestry in the church.

By continuing that any religion that preaches Bunwi is welcome is indicative of the religious tolerance by ATR which is evidently lacking on the side of NRMs (KIM) toward ATR. According to Be Che, "… in so far as that religion respects our own traditional religion which we inherited from our fore fathers who also inherited from their forefathers". This statement is not only revealing of the tolerance and empathy with alien religions that exercise empathy towards ATR but also exposes the difficulty for the ATR members to cede their religion for another or tolerate any attempt at wiping it out since the religion has been handed to them by their forefathers and they are expected to maintain it for posterity. It is also revealing of the fact that KIM uses the form of theology which Stephen Bevans (1985) refers to as the "translational model of theology" which subscribes to the notion of the supracultural status of Christianity, a situation that foreshadows many religious conflicts. These conflicts as per Bevans comes from the fact that preachers who practice the translational model of contextual theology preach Christianity in total disregard of and the demonization of (in this case) African culture and worldview which is inherited and preserved from one generation to another. As J. O. Awolalu (1976:1) notes of ATR, "It is the religion which resulted from the sustaining faith held by the forebears of the present Africans, and which is being practiced today in various forms and various shades and intensities by a very large number of Africans, including individuals who claim to be Muslims or Christians". Awolalu's argument buttresses the point on ATR as an inherited religion. It also demonstrates the persistence and relationship between ATR and African identity since even Africans who call themselves Muslims and Christians still practice ATR. The implication is that any new religion has to respect the religion and identity of the people through a possible practice of either the anthropological or semiotic models of contextual theology without which there is likely to be conflict. It also points to the fact that were KIM to be using the anthropological model of contextual theology, it would have found a meeting point with ATR thereby evading conflict.

The response to the second question relating to why there is conflict between ATR and KIM supports the observation above – that without contextual theology (the anthropological or the semiotic model), there is a likelihood of conflict. The respondent Ta Ngang, started by giving a brief history of the peaceful coexistence between them and other Christian denominations which had existed in Bafut even before his birth. These denominations as seen in the background to the study are the Basel Mission that later became the Presbyterian Church and also the Catholic Church. This peaceful coexistence is anchored on mutual respect between ATR and those

denominations. Yet the arrival of KIM signaled the beginning of a new theological narrative which angers the ATR members leading to conflict. Ta Ngang expressed this anger with the following statement: "… we don't like him and we will never like his church because he doesn't like our tradition and believes that everything, we do in this palace is a worship of the devil". This connotes intolerance by KIM and the absence of the practice of culture friendly models of contextual theology in their activities. It also demonstrates the theological perception of ATR by KIM which is that ATR is the devil's worship. The demonization of ATR here falls in line with the tendency one religion to demonize the enemy religion in cosmic war situations. This as seen under the theory is a regular feature of cosmic wars such that the battles ensue are often seen as the execution of divine command to eliminate the enemy- the devil.

Gregory F. Treverton, Heather S. Gregg, et al (2005:3) put up a strong argument to support the demonization of the enemy for subsequent attacks in a cosmic war situation. They observe that the leaders of NRMs as well as their believers "demonize their enemy …" and justify their acts of violence towards them. This demonization consists in drawing sharp distinctions between the two worlds (religious worlds) and consequently the spiritual advantage of one over another. The better one that purportedly has an advantage over the other is alleged to be given a divine command to either exterminate the other or purge it of certain aspects in an alleged execution of divine command which culminates in acts of violence like the attack in the Bafut palace by KIM. Thus Gregory F. Treverton, Heather S. Gregg, et al (2005:3) "The acts of violence unleashed by these believers are construed as symbolic, designed to make a statement rather than actually disable the enemy, which is often a secular state.

To balance the argument, the same sub questions were posed to KIM members. In response to the opinion of KIM members about other religions, the prophet directed me to a number of Bible verses that legitimize his stance. The prophet quoted scripture prominent of which was John 14:6 where "Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth and the life; no one comes to the father except through me". After making reference also to John 8: 5-8, Matt 11:27, Luke 10:22 he concluded:

You see for yourself that it is not me but the Bible that designates Christianity as the only true religion. You should not expect me as a servant of God to contradict the Bible, my opinion is therefore that any other religion apart from Christianity is not only a waste of time but disobedience to God's commands…here we follow the Bible to the latter.

This response demonstrates two elements which are theoretically relevant to this study. The intolerance and puritanical undertones need not be overemphasized. The first theoretical implication has to do with the theological perception by KIM of not only ATR but other religions and other denominations in Christendom. Their prophet view Christianity as the only true religion which raises questions about the kind of theology he uses. This however answers the question on the theological perception of ATR by KIM; the prophet's stance is clear that ATR is not a religion and that even if it were; it is a pagan religion that ought to be exterminated.

The implication of such stance are that he either ignores the relevance of contextual theology (the anthropological model) which has led to the success of earlier Christian denominations in Bafut or is practicing the translational model of contextual theology which believes that Christ is supra-cultural and that the context in which the concept of Christ was forged has to be forced on other cultures. Steven Bevans supports this by stating that such Christian denominations commonly NRMs "Belief in the Bible as the only Inspired Word of God" and thus spreads an ideology that is phenomenal of the Supra-cultural belief". These NRMs fall under Peter B. Clarke (2005) typology of the Hebraist movements which represent those movements with followers that believe that they are the descendants of the Israelites and the place and store of Bible prophecies. This theological perception can lead to conflict with ATR as will be seen bellow.

The second implication from the prophet's response is that of puritanism and religious extremism which is evident through the intolerance towards other religions. As the prophet states, "some denominations in the quests for popularity have gone out of the way directed by the Bible" implying that only KIM practices the right interpretation of the Bible. This implies extremism and where ever there is extremism and intolerance, there is bound to be conflict as evident in the Middle East, and other areas where cosmic wars have taken place. This intolerance party underlies the attack on ATR by KIM.

In order to pursue the question further, the question on the reasons for conflict with ATR was posed. The respondent Niba Alain gave scriptural backing for their attack on ATR. Particular reference made to the book of Deuteronomy and Revelations where believers of such religions (ATR) are viewed as murderers, faithless, idolaters, liars. To support the first respondent, Delphine Bih quoted Deut 12: 2-3 that calls on Christians to the fight against evil. The tagging of ATR as evil coincides with a similar fight which Juergenmeyer records in his Cosmic War Theory. He (2016:147) records that the Christian Identity-affiliated group Aryan Nations included this statement in their creed of faith: "WE BELIEVE there is a battle being fought this day between the children of darkness (today known as Jews) and the children of Light (God), the Aryan race, the true Israel of the Bible". The example by Juergensmeyer is fitting in the case of the conflict between ATR and KIM. As noted in one of the prophet's responses above, the attack on ATR (shrine) was symbolically an attack on the devil.

By attaching ATR to evil which they must overcome, KIM fits into any of the following two categories of Peter B. Clarke (2005) classification of NRMs according to their characteristics. Out of seven characteristics, two are fitting with ATR:

> (2) the revolutionist response, which believes that evil can only be overcome and salvation assured by divine action, thus no subjective change however profound will affect the state of the world for the better;

> (6) the reformist response, which aspires under divine guidance to overcome evil and save the world by transforming existing social structures and arrangements;

Either of the two features link the opposing world (religions and their worldviews) with evil and alleges that it is a divine command for evil or darkness to be toppled by light (God). This description is theoretically fitting to the dictates of cosmic wars and further demonstrative of the absence of contextual theology or the use of the translation model and which culminates in conflict. In his design for contextual theology especially the anthropological and the semiotic models, Bevans intimates that "…contextual theologians must guard themselves and their theology against any intrusion from other cultures outside their own". He (1985:188) continues that "Culture is viewed as the place where God's revelation occurs, and one can speak of finding Christ hidden in a culture, rather than of bringing Christ to the culture". By not applying this form of theology

which could likely evade conflict begs various interpretations. First the implication could the lack of theological education which is alarming with African NRMs since the founders of the church are largely self-proclaimed and base their anointing on a myth of answering "God's call". The second inference leads one to the possibility of a direct venture into conflict so as to carve out a separate world for the communicants of Kim or lastly a direct showcase of power by destroying the native sacred place and damning the consequences. Either way, the consequence is the cosmic war under investigation.

6.2   How has ATR responded?

The answer to this second research question is revealing of a number of implications. From the various responses, there is a sense in which one can argue that ATR's response is always proportionate to the aggression. The reactions are multidimensional including violent and other responses.

The violent intrusion and destruction of the shrine and cutting of the tree was meet with violence. The fight that ensured is recorded in the video excerpt in https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIYM-b5WFPc. This according Ta Bunwi is the apt response that KIM's aggression needed as he submits that; "I am happy that young men from this land rallied in time and chased him away proving that this land still belongs to us". This chasing of the prophet and the resultant fight demonstrates a protection of worldview. Every worldview has sacred sites in the form of shrines and other areas where they pour libation. These sites are symbolic of their history and the myth of their connection to the spirit(s) they worship such that these sites pass for the symbols of their worldview. The shrine in question as noted in the history of the Bafut people in Chapter Four belongs to the foundress of the present Bafut settlement area. According to myth and documented history, this woman received a divine command to "Go and tell the Fon that the Royal House must continue its journey to where it was destined to stay. No more must it hunger and thirst on the top of rocks; no more must the old and tender continue to roll of tops of stones. There is more than enough here for everybody Sama" (2004:35). When this lady died as a result of the conspiracy of certain patriarchal conservatives and chauvinists, she was named Ndela-ah Mbue (the greatest title a woman has ever had in the Bafut Kingdom) and a shrine of appeasement was erected in her name.

Haven understood the implications of the shrine to the Bafut people and the fact that the shrine was meant for appeasement or reconciliatory purposes, the theoretical implications of the attack can be ramified. As Aloysius M. Lugira (2009 :64) submits, "To Africans belief without ritual action would take away much of religion's natural power. Rites and ritual punctuate all aspects of African religious life". These rites and rituals are performed in these shrines such that the destruction of the shrine could imply a destruction of the religion since the connection of the people to the spirit realm has been cut. Such a happening is sacrilegious and forms one of the underlying factors behind cosmic wars elsewhere and in Africa. The war as seen in the brief fighting the ensued after the cutting of the tree is demonstrative of the fact that without government intervention the situation could have degenerated to a prolonged conflict. The Bafut cosmic war resulting from the attack on the local shrine is reminiscent of similar encounter between Jews, Christians and Muslims over holly sites in Israel and Palestine.

Other responses from ATR are indeed mild since ATR is not really that much of an organized religion. These responses include the pouring of libation and the resolution to defend ATR at all cost whenever it comes under attack. The prophet's response to the same question about the events of the 2012 attack is replete with meaning. He relates first to the metaphysics around the birth of the prophet (Prophet Franck) as stated in the background to the study. He was born at the main junction leading to the Bafut palace which was allegedly named Nsani Bunwi or junction of the child of the gods. The prophet and his followers interpret this as a sign that the prophet was to be the one to deliver the Bafut people from alleged bondage. As Gregory F. Treverton, Heather S. Gregg, et al (2005) present, religious fundamentalists and extremists base their commitments on founding myths, decisive stories, inspiring narratives, and forthright commands found in their scriptures – all these are indicators to which intelligence can be attentive. By alleging that the birth of the prophet at the junction implies that he will liberate Bafut, he appears to insinuate such a myth leading to a the conviction of the followers who defy tradition and go ransacking the shrine they had been used to by birth.

According to the prophet, the attack was therefore not only on the shrine but on the devil and a mark of fulfillment of the purpose for which his mentor Prophet Frank was born. As he relates, "…we took the devil by surprise and before they could mobilize, we had brought down the tree". The devil here implies the shrine, the priest and all who subscribe to ATR. It also implies the attack

on the bondage the prophet was allegedly born to liberate the Bafut people from. As already mentioned above, the demonization of other religions always underlies attacks by other religions that claim to representatives of God. This particular aspect results in cosmic war situations. Secondly, the evidence mounts on the fact that KIM is using the translation model of contextual theology which does not bother about the destruction of the culture of the people where it is administered. According to Stephen Beavans (1985:190), a key feature in the translation model is the "… sense that there is a certain content that must be held even if its preservation goes against and is destructive of a particular culture." The destruction of the culture of the people is evident in the destroyed shrine.

6.3   The impact

The impacts of the conflict are varied. Apart from the destruction of the ATR shrine and the scars of injuries that are evident on the faces of some of especially the members of KIM, there are equally far reaching sociological effects prominent of which is the separation among families. Gregory F. Treverton, Heather S. Gregg, et al (2005:35) opine, the separation of families by NRMs and fundamental groups even starts at the time of recruit. They submit that:

> The new recruit first forms links over that boundary then begins to cut off links with those outside the movement, reinforcing his or her separation. The process acts much like a filter for reality. The recruits see what the group wants them to see, dress as they dress, and live with them as they live. As changes in the recruits' degree of commitment occur, they become conditioned to espousing the group's perceptions of the outside world.

The excerpt above is endowed with meaning. First establishing of links over "boundaries" connotes the existence of ideological worlds such that people can leave in the same geographical environment but belong to different to different ideological/religious worlds. Because of the tendency for these NRMs to attempt to establish a new social trend and that is what makes them as per Nmah, Patrick Enoch ,in order to be new, they indoctrinate their followers to strive to live with a difference; baiting them with the preaching that any other religion apart from theirs is of the devil and theirs by consequence are of God, boundaries are erected within social circles. One of such social circles in Africa is the family which is under threats by NRMs by their puritanical tendencies. Madam Jesinta for example has lost a husband after she took part in the destruction of

the shrine and continued attending KIM despite the husband's objections. Also, as intimated by ATR members anyone from Bafut who attends KIM is an outcast.

Another impact is the conflicting views in the aftermath of the April 2012 incident. During the interview with ATR, the elders were only thankful that they had an opportunity to renovate the shrine and that with some sacrifices, their tree is growing back. Ta Nefuh however intimated that the god are angry with them as seen in the less rain and much heat that is now experienced in Bafut leading to poor performance of their crops. Though the researcher opines that these incidents are geographical and linked to the global warming and climate change, Ta Nefuh's submission however indicates his unrepentant attachment to ATR, a situation which can be ramified to indicate that ATR members see their worldview, their connection to their ancestors and shrines as their only reason for existence and subsistence. This is demonstrative of the third feature of cosmic wars in which none of the belligerents envision defeat since identity and worldview are concerned.

On the part of KIM, prophet and his followers are of the opinion that their actions have liberated Bafut albeit not having tangible evidence to show for that claim. Their followers however are in confidence that the tribe has been liberated. This conviction is demonstrative of the control that NRM leaders have over their followers. Gregory F. Treverton, Heather S. Gregg, et al (2005: 34) Further argue strongly about the control that NRMs have over their followers. That control extends to members' finances, friends and family – indeed, to their entire lives. These movements make extreme demands on members, and often isolate those members from mainstream society.

6.4   Discussion with Barrister Clement.

As indicated in the Chapter above, I had a discussion with Barrister Clement on the legal implications of acts of arson or attack on religious groupings by this or that group in Cameroon. Our discussion pointed to one fact, the fact that the Government's position on religion is that of secularism which is enshrined in the country's constitution and penal code. He offered to just interpret the relevant sections. He quoted the *Cameroon's Constitution of1972 with Amendments Through 2008*(page 4) articles fourteen and fifteen which states: " 14. the state shall be secular. The neutrality and independence of the State in respect of all religions shall be guaranteed; (and) 15. freedom of religion and worship shall be guaranteed". It is in line with this that puritanical prophets like that of KIM and in the case of the incident under study was convicted and later

released on bail. It is the opinion of the researcher that such actions by the government can reduce the possibility of cosmic wars in Cameroon.

6.5 Summary

In this chapter I have presented a discussion of the findings presented in Chapter Five. The discussions are done by way of blending the findings with the theory and related literature. The discussions help in providing a better transition to the conclusions in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions

7.0. Introduction

This research set out to answer the question on why and how do New Religious Movements clash with African Traditional Religion in the Bafut community of the North West of Cameroon. In order to systematically carry out the research, the question was further broken down to the following sub questions.

- What does the NRM think of ATR theologically?
- How has ATR responded?
- How are these clashes resolved or diffused?
- What impact do these clashes have in the community during and after the conflicts?

The following methodology was used to obtain the theory as well as the findings analyzed above. There was the review literature for theory and related literature. This particular method was helpful in the analysis and cross referencing. To better understand the findings, it was necessary to do a brief historical study of the country and Bafut as well as socio-political context. After these preliminaries, the research carried out interviews and observations with close attention to the research questions. All these were blended in the discussions of the findings as presented in Chapter Six above.

7.1   Answering each sub question one by one.

- ***What does the NRM think of ATR theologically?***

From the interviews and observations, it was discovered that KIM does not see the theological relevance of ATR. It rather looks at ATR as a reigion that has to be flushed out because of its demonic attributes. Because KIM believes that is has divine authority because of the scriptural backing, they don't only preach against ATR but go as far as match words with action by attacking the shrine.

- *How has ATR responded?*

The researcher found out that the response has been multidimensional. When KIM uses violence, ATR responds with violence as seen in the fight in which many people suspended injuries. On the other hand, there is libation poured with incantations against KIM and also using injunctions if not for government intervention.

- *How are these clashes resolved or diffused?*

In response to this question, it was discovered that there has been no attempt by the two parties to resolve the conflict. The government has however intervened as a third party. Making use of the constitution and the penal code, the government has placed certain injunction orders banning the two sides from attacking each other. This has reduced the frequency of the attacks but has however not ensured reconciliation between the two camps leaving room for an outburst for fresh confrontations in future.

- *What impact do these clashes have in the community during and after the conflicts?*

The impact of the conflict ranges from physical to ideological. The physical impacts include injuries that were sustained by members and the shrine that was destroyed. On the other level, the conflict succeeded to sow division in the tribe and especially within families. The physical effects are relatively short-lived, however following the open-ended nature of cosmic wars, the hatred that still thrives among the various groups is potential for future conflicts.

- **Answering the main research question.**

The answers to these entire sub questions sum up to the answer of the main research question which was: Why and how does NRMs clash with ATR in the Bafut community? From the above answers, it can be seen that the absence of contextual theology gives rise to the clashes that take the form of cosmic wars.

7.2 My contribution?

My contribution can be seen at various levels. First, my research has contributed to the documentation of the conflict and various issues related to it. As I discovered during the research, and as mentioned in the motivation above, part of the reason for doing this research was to document what has been neglected. This neglect in research of religious conflicts in Cameroon has led to the misrepresentation of especially African Traditional Religion since it is largely oral and has no permanent manuscripts for referencing. As Verkijika Divine notes in The Failure of Oral Tradition (2018:4)

> While western spiritual and philosophical schools of thought are well studied and documented, there often seems to be a certain confusion as to what the true African philosophical viewpoint is or if at all there is one. This confusion, further empowered by the excitement of a new found religion, helped to nourish the misbelieve both amongst a great deal of Africans and the West, that all traditional African beliefs are primitive, archaic and even bad for mankind in favor of almost everything from the west, leading to the emasculation of the African man and creating fertile grounds for western imperialism, slavery and colonization which also brought about their own problems to add to the already existing complex equation (fragile African states).

Divine's submission above demonstrates the desperate need for which ATR and related issues need to be studied and documented. Without such, there will continue be room for it to be misconstrued and vulnerable to colonialism which as he rightly continues to argue is facilitated by "new found religions", the new religion in this case being KIM. This study joins voice with Divine (2018) to emphasize the need for ATR to be documented.

My second contribution relates to the demonstration of the fact that the conflict between KIM and ATR is a Cosmic war. Because of the lukewarm attitude of researchers towards religious conflicts, ample analysis has not been done to understand the ramifications of what has been referred to as simply religious clashes. This research has clearly demonstrated the fact that the conflict has three key characteristics of cosmic wars. Considering that cosmic wars underlie terrorism in the west and instability in the Middle East , considering that this research has demonstrated the in roots of

such conflicts in Cameroon, the belief of this researcher that this research will help government in its security analysis and policy making.

From a third perspective, this research contributes to extending contextual theology to New Religious Movements. As noted earlier, the absence of conflict between ATR and earlier Christian denominations in Bafut is because those churches practiced a kind of theology that has respect for the culture of the people. By demonstrating how the use of the translational model of theology has led to the conflict, it is the hope of this researcher that NRMs, KIM inclusive will wake up and embrace contextual theology especially the anthropological and semiotic models so as to soften their stance and also evade conflict.

7.3   New Insight?

From the analysis above, it is seen that the conflict erupted largely because of the theological misunderstanding or and misrepresentation of ATR by KIM. This unfortunately led to conflict which could have been mitigated in case the right theological perspective was put in place. It is the conviction of this researcher that the use of the anthropological and the semiotic models of contextual theology could help evades subsequent cosmic wars.

From another dimension, the interview with the two factions revealed the fact that despite government intervention, there are still grudges in the minds of both parties. Hence, another insight is that interreligious dialogue can work better and go a long way to ensure reconciliation. This view of interreligious dialogue is supported by scholars such as Dr Robert. The Rt. Revd. Dr. Robert Innes - Bishop of the Anglican Diocese in Europe in his paper titled *The role of Inter-Religious Dialogue for the Promotion of Tolerance and Respect for Human Dignity* posits that:

> Interreligious dialogue brings individuals and communities together to talk about matters of doctrine and issues of mutual concern in culture, politics and society. The World Council of Churches has produced guidelines on inter-religious dialogue which urge that dialogue should be a process of mutual empowerment rather than a negotiation between people who have competing interests and claims. Partners in dialogue, they say, should be empowered to join a common pursuit of justice, peace and constructive action for the good of all people.

Such interreligious dialogue of mutual respect according to Applyby Scott (2000:171) results in building a: "Community beyond communities". The community here could be a state, a tribe like Bafut which is comprised of various religious communities that tolerate and respect each other. Appleby Scott further says that:

> While religiously motivated peacemakers are striving to build a societal network of associations across confessional boundaries, they seek not to undermine confessional ties but to foster different styles of religious expression emphasizing forgiveness and reconciliation rather than revenge and the nourishing of grievances.

Such a reconciliatory attitude ensures forgiveness thereby helping to reduce the risks factors of conflict thereby guaranteeing a relatively peaceful atmosphere in former conflict areas.

7.4   Further research needed?

To begin further research is needed and should be sponsored by the state. Cameroon has been battling Boko haram insurgence up North of the country as a result of the neglect of extremists preaching. It is important for new research to be carried out so as to establish the fact that NRMs and Pentecostal Churches are sowing seeds for cosmic wars and religious extremism in the Christian South with notable examples like the case under study. Such research is necessary for policy makers to act on so as to ensure the security and the peace of the country. One can infer from the frequency of religious conflicts down south within the last decade that if NRMs had existed for as long as mainline churches then the Christian south would have been at conflict than the Muslim North.

Further research is also needed in other tribes where such conflicts have occurred. Bafut is just a case, research should be carried out so that other cases should be documented. Such research will help future researchers in their review of literature and analysis. This is the more so since it appears that research on religious issues has been relatively neglected in Cameroon.

Furthermore, there is need for practical theology to be introduced in Cameroon's universities. This is because theology has only been left in the hands of seminaries or confessional schools that sometimes either focus so much on church theology or are biased in their findings.

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www.kingshipministry.com

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIYM-b5WFPc

APPENDIX

Appendix A: List of Interviewees

Neba Alain

Bih Delphine

Jacinta

The local prohphet.

Be Che

Taa Bunwi

Taa Ngang

Ta Nefum
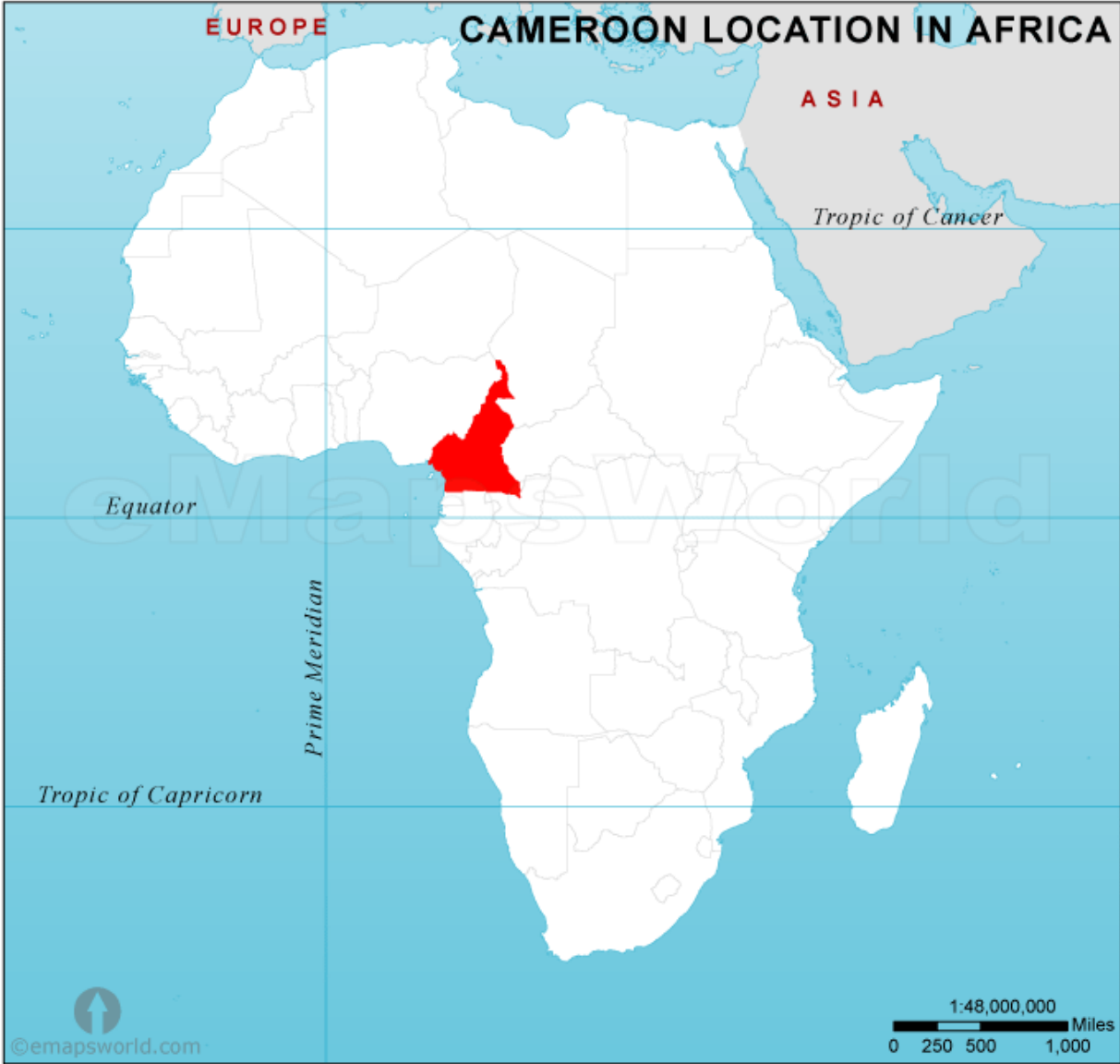
Barister Clement Wan Mingjo

Appendix B: Interview Guide

This guide contains the sub research questions whose answers provided the answer to the main research question. The questions were same for both ATR and KIM with the difference being the follow up questions that were formulated in the context of the discussions. The questions included:

- **How does KIM view ATR theologically?**
- **How has ATR responded?**
- **What are the impacts?**
- **How is the conflict diffused**
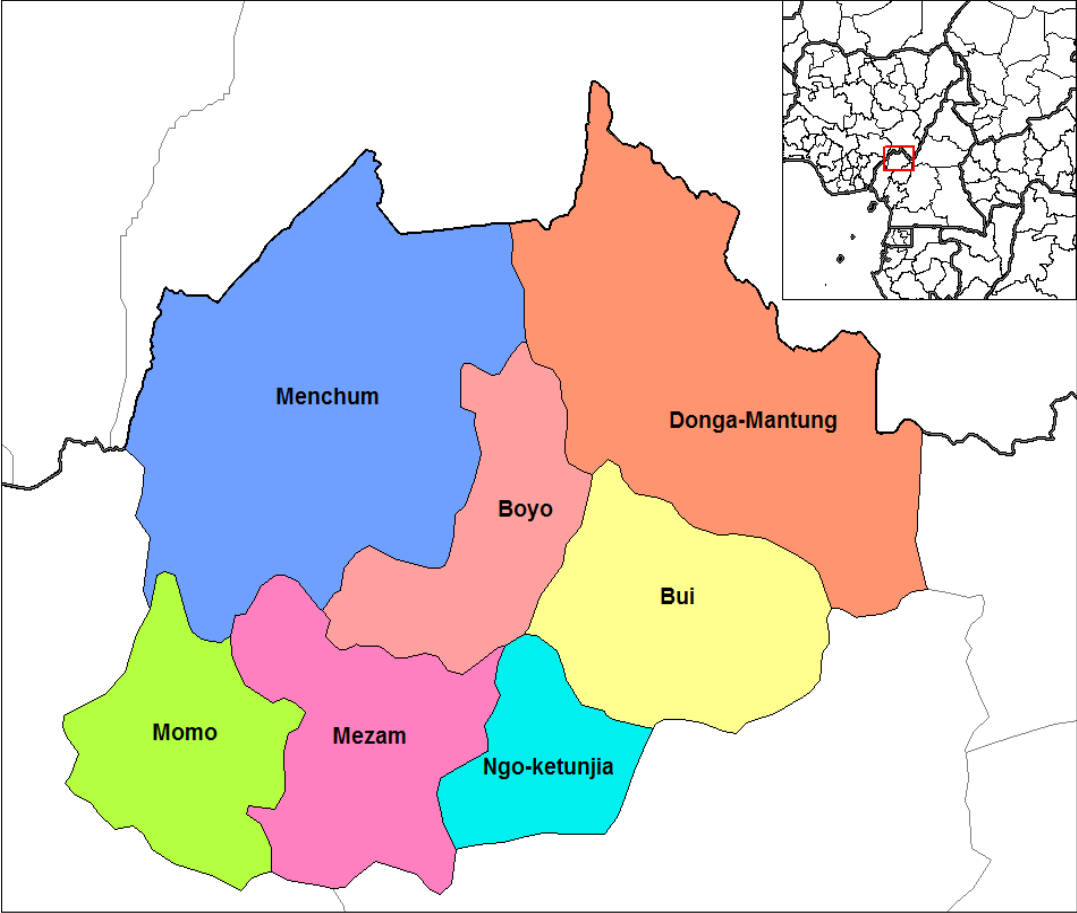
Appendix C: Maps and pictures

CAMEROON LOCATION IN AFRICA

CAMEROON
Political Map

FAR NORTH
Maroua

NIGERIA

CHAD

Garoua

NORTH

Ngaoundéré

ADAMAWA

NORTH WEST
Bamenda

WEST
Bafoussam

SOUTH
WEST

Buea

LITTORAL

Douala

Gulf of
Guinea

Bioko Island
(E. Guinea)

CENTRE

YAOUNDÉ

CENTRAL
AFRICAN
REPUBLIC

Bertoua

EAST

Ebolowa

SOUTH

GABON

CONGO

EQUATORIAL
GUINEA

Copyright © 2011-12 www.mapsofworld.com
(Updated on 25th April, 2012)

LEGEND
–·–·– International Boundary
– – – Regional Boundary
■ National Capital
□ Regional Capital

0   100   200 Km
0   50   100 Miles

Source: http://www.mapsofworld.com/cameroon/cameroon-political-map.html

94

Map of the North West Region Showing Various Divisions (Focus on Mezam)

Map Of Bafut Sub Division Under Mezam Division.

BAFUT SUB-DIVISION SHOWING VILLAGE COMMUNITIES AND QUARTERS
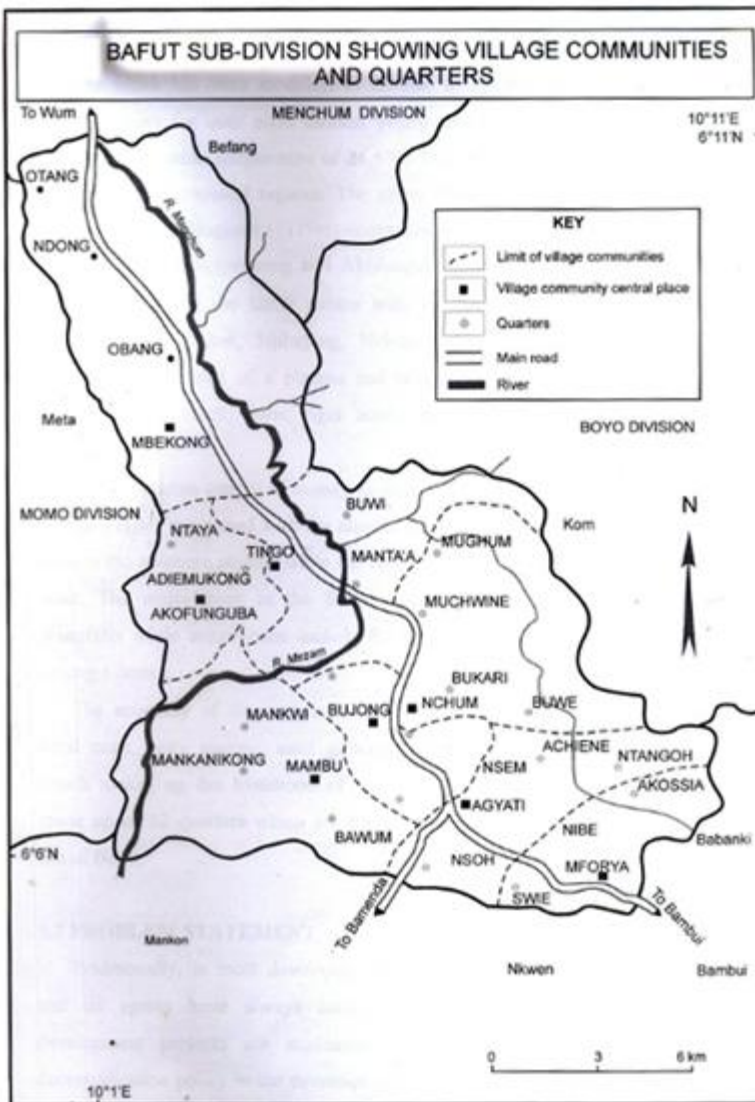
Source : Adapted from VCP, 1995

Appendix E: Pictures

1. The Centuries old tree before it was cut

2. Some traditional festivals in Bafut

3. The Bafut Palace from behind

4. Carved figures of Bafut gods

5. Replicas of the gods at the museum

6. The Achum in front of where the interview ATR was conducted

7. Zooming of the Achum

8. The Bafut Palace snapped from the museum showing the Achum at the extreme end

9. Kingship International Ministry