ISSN: 2408-6177

VUNA

Journal of History and International Relations

Volume 4, Number 3, 2020

A Peer Review Journal

SPECIAL EDITION

A Biannual Publication of the
Department of History and International
Relations, Veritas University
(The Catholic University of Nigeria),
Abuja - Nigeria

Yorùbá Writers' Worldview about Crime: An Examination of Selected Yorùbá Written Texts

Ògúnlọlá Ọmọlayọ̀ Dúrótadé
Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages,
University of Ilọ̀rin, Ilọ̀rin.

Abstract

A close look at the Yorùbá societies today reveals that a lot of changes have been brought into the lifestyle of the societies. The computer age we now experience in our societies have moved the societies forward both positively and negatively. Ògúnsínà (1984) observes that one of the major results of the Nigerian civil war are robbery, theft, prostitution, drug peddling, murder among others which Yorùbá society regard as vices and they frown at them. Òkédìjí also attests to this in his prose texts: *Atótó Arére* and *Àgbàlagbà Akàn* which are described as crime novels. Today, people dupe others through the internet, others kidnap and demand for huge financial ransom as condition for release. Whosoever is unable to provide the money loses his or her life. These behaviours no doubt are 'alien' to Yorùbá society of old. Quite a number of reasons are given as the cause(s of these behaviours which the Yorùbá describe as anti-*omolúàbí* hence, they are regarded as vices. People clamour for change and the Yorùbá literary writers are not left out in the crusade. This paper examines the daily increase in crime waves in the Yorùbá societies. It examines selected Yorùbá written texts with the aim of determining the writers' worldview on crime and to fish out the lessons therein. Our findings reveal that criminal acts have been on the increase in Yorùbá society for sometimes now partly as a result of the introduction of foreign ideas, the way out of this mess lies on the people and also on Government policies. The paper concludes that it is the duty of all stake holders to rise up to the occasion as observed by the selected authors.

Introduction

Yorùbá society is a gifted society. In the area of good character (*ìwà omolúàbí*), the Yorùbá are not push-overs. They cherish good character

(ìwà omolúàbí) and they are not prepared to exchange anything for it. In fact, anybody who fails to imbibe the spirit of *omolúàbí* is not accorded any recognition in the society.

Before the advent of Christianity and Islamic religions, there existed the Yorùbá Traditional religions whereby they worship God through the divin)ities (*òrìsàs* such as *Ifá (òrúnmìlà), Sàngó (the god of thunder), obàtálá/òrìsànìlá* (the arch divinity) to mention just a few of them. The Yorùbá people hold their faith in the divinities, however, it is pertinent to state that the divinities are not held as the end in themselves; rather, they are means to an end. They act as mid-way between man and his Creator. They are like errand boys but are highly respected. There is the belief that the divinities frown at any behaviour regarded as a vice and they punish erring individuals, group of people or community as a whole. Such punishments were instantly accomplished and commensurate with the kind of offence committed. The fear of being punished probably makes people to behave in accordance with what the society approves.

The fear is created. For example if there is theft and the perpetrator fails to confess, *Sàngó*, the god of thunder, is invoked and the offender is instantly stroked by thunder or pestilence or by public/open confession. Today however, these things have been overtaken by civilization, hence, the alarming rate of crime being experienced in our society today.

In the past, the local religions do not antagonize each other but today, the foreign religions embraced have divided this faith and they all antagonize each other. The division is even extended to people of the same religion. This culminated in the various degrees of crimes experienced in the society. Ogunsina (1990) believes that the major cause is the imported ways of living (imported culture/religion.

Ogunsina opines that prostitution, armed robbery, drug peddling/ abuse and the likes are part of the results of the Nigeria Civil War. The contribution of these factors resulted in anti-*omolúàbí* behaviours such as oppression, colonization, cheat, ruthlessness, murder and the likes, all of which are rampant in our societies today. The result is that there is no iota of truth between husbands and wives, parents and children, the government is unable to perform its duties to the people, workers are owed their salaries, allowances and emoluments, a large number of school graduates are unemployed. The result is the daily increase in the rate of crime in the society.

In Yorùbá philosophy, acts such as murder, stealing/robbery, jealousy, backsliding, backbiting, false witness, blackmailing and the likes are all forms of crime. Literary writers play major roles in the

efforts towards making the society crime free with their texts. The texts examined in this paper are those that have crime as their theme and they see the need for change as paramount. The selected texts are relevant because they expose all forms of crime currently experienced in our societies.

From inception, Yorùbá frown at committing crime in its entire ramification. Instead, they cherish and applaud good behaviour. Ogunsinà, (1989) opines that good behaviour (*omolúàbí)* has been with the Yorùbá before the introduction of the Whiteman's culture into our system. The Whites are responsible for the introduction of criminal acts into the African system in general and the Yorùbá system in particular. This is to say that crime is alien to the Yorùbá people. This claim may be true to some extent, however, there is no proof that the Yorùbá society was free of crime, but, it was not as pronounced as we experience today. This work examines four Yorùbá written texts namely:

1. Adérìnkòmí, M. (1978) *Gbé wiri*
2. Akínyelé Adétúnjí (1982) *Èèbù Ìkà*
3. Oládélé Sàngótóyè (1997) *Adákédájó*
4. Àrìnpé Adéjùmò (2010) *Afàgò kéyin Àparò*

The objectives of this paper include the following among others:

i. To establish the fact that crime/criminal acts are on daily increase in the Yorùbá society.
ii. To investigate into the causes of increase in the rate of crime in Yorùbá society today.
iii. To critically examine how Government policies encourage criminal acts
iv. To identify those behaviours that trouble our society today and their effects on the overall development of the society.
v. To examine how the selected authors tried to partake in the crusade for a crime free society.

At the end, the paper suggests ways out of this mess based on the opinions of the selected Yorùbá literary writers.

What is Crime?

The word 'crime' is subjected to various meanings depending on how individuals view it. This is also because crime in the real sense of the word may not be universal. What is described as criminal in a society may not be viewed so in another even though, there are acts that are regarded as criminal universally.

Cresey (1984, p.) opines that:

> Crime is a violation of criminal law. No matter how indecent or immoral an act may be, it is not a crime unless the criminal law has listed it as a crime and provided punishment for it.

Similarly, Collier's Encyclopedia (1979, p.437) sees crime as:

> Any act, commission or omission believed to be socially harmful to a group and thus forbidden by the designated authority of that group under threat of punishment.

Encyclopedia Americana (1981, p.194) simply defines crime as "acts that are legally forbidden by a society". *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary* defines 'crime' as "an action or omission which constitutes an offence punishable by law".

From the above definitions, crime can be described as an illegal activity or action. This infers that crime is any act that is dangerous to the human society and highly forbidden, hence, anyone who partakes in an act which is forbidden by the law of the land in any society is regarded as a criminal. Such person is dangerous to the society.

There are different kinds of crime namely Juvenile crime and crime against humanity, crime that makes a lot of people to suffer. Going by this, would it be right to say that any action that goes contrary to societal norms is criminal? The question is whether there is a universal crime. Crime is not pronounced in the Yorùbá society in the beginning. For instance, oral history says that people display their goods outside without anybody to monitor. Buyers would come, take the quantity they wanted and dropped the amount inside the tray. In like manner, people don't barricade their doors and windows or fence their buildings the way we do today.

Durkheim in Haralambos et.al. (1990, p.586) argues that:

> Crime is an inevitable and normal aspect of social life. Crime is present in all types of society; indeed the crime rate is higher in the more advanced, industrialized countries.

This claim is suggesting that crime cannot be erased in any society. We would like to defer on this. We believe that if all stakeholders in the area of moral discipline can play their parts well, it is possible to have a crime free society. The claim above suggests that crime is more pronounced in cities and less pronounced in villages. If this is so, one may be forced to ask if what is practicable in the villages cannot be practiced in the urban areas?

Abéjidé, (2016) opines that crime operated at a very minimal level in the pre-colonial and colonial eras among the Yorùbá. According to her, whenever it occurred, they had various means adopted to detect crime. Among the means was chained padlock (*àgádágodo).* The belief is that if the chained padlock is placed on any item, the potential thief would be put into a state similar to sleep until the owner surfaced. The culprit could start sweeping the floor or sleep till dawn and until he or she was freed by the owner.

Another method was the use of the *Ifá Oracle* who is believed to have witnessed man's choice of destiny. Hence, he is called *elérí ìpín.* For example, if sudden death occurs, especially if it involved a young or middle aged person, the *Ifá Oracle* would be consulted, the spirit of the dead will be evoked and the dead would appear to confirm the cause of his or her death.

There was also the *Òsanyìn,* a divinity that was well known for detecting any form of theft. If consulted, the *Òsanyìn* would reveal the identity of the perpetrator and the method used in carrying out the theft. If it was money that was stolen, the *Òsanyìn* would tell the exact amount stolen, the amount already spent out of the whole and the balance. Suspects were given concussions to drink and this could result in the person's death.

All these, point to the fact that the negative attitude of the Yorùbá to crime account for the low level of crime then. This is not the case with the contemporary Yorùbá society where crimes are perpetrated in the day light, criminals are known but nobody would be prepared to expose the perpetrator or give vital information that could assist law enforcement agents in taken immediate and appropriate actions. This in part is because the law enforcement agents themselves are not trustworthy.

Experience has shown that most times, they leave the body and run after the shadow. We have heard or seen occasions when the person who reported crime was arrested and detained. We have also heard of occasions when an innocent person was arrested and made to replace the accused that is highly influential or related in one way or the other to an influential figure in government/society.

Further still, even if the criminal is arrested and his or her involvement is confirmed, he may be released because he belong to the same cult group with the police prosecutor or/and the judge. This is the case with Àrèmú in *Adákédájó* who killed his brother-in-law and quickly ran to his cult group for solace.

Obiechinna, (2007, p.326) opines that:

> Before the introduction of Western Literary Education, African children were inducted into the traditional way of life in two ways: by formal teaching in initiation ceremonies and by informal in seeing and following the examples of grown-ups.

Ogunsina (1995) asserts that civilization brought about a new lease of life. School education produced educated graduates who had to leave the villages to look for white-collar jobs in the cities. Hence, the cities were filled up with people looking for employment while the villages became desolate. This culminated in the emergence of criminals perpetrating different kinds of crime all over the land.

In Yorùbá tradition, criminals were judged according to the laws of the land. In most cases, judgement would commensurate with the offence committed and it is given without prejudice or favourism. Whatever his or her position, criminals don't go unpunished. This is what Ògúnníran portrays in his play text *Ààre Àgò Aríkúyerí*. In the play, Basòrun Ògúnmólá sent Ògúnrìndé Ajé, the *Ààre Àgò*, a powerful, popular, prominent and highly influential chief who killed one of his wives alleging that the woman bewitched and killed three of his children in one day to death. According to the laws of the land, he was asked to take his own life for unjustly killing one of his wives, his position of eminence in the town notwithstanding.

Yorùbá people had their own moral philosophy and their traditional education system which was targeted at modeling the behaviours of the younger generations towards acceptable pattern of living. The said system of education can be viewed from three different perspectives namely: home training *(èkó ilé)*, vocational training *(èkó isé)* and communal training *(èkó ìlú)*. For example, under home training, children were acquainted with eating habits, system of greetings, modes of dressing, attitude towards elders and the likes. All these combined together, made peaceful co-existence possible. For instance, parents were not angry because a neighbour or passer-by condemned their child's anti-*omolúàbí* behaviours, after all, Yorùbá say *"enìkan soso níí bímo, gbogbo ènìyàn níí tó omo"* meaning: "one person gives birth to a child but the whole society trains the child. The said training is the joint responsibility of the entire society.

In the past, children and adults alike were rebuked for behaving contrary to societal norms. For instance, the masquerades act as moral police to the society. They sing to rebuke all forms of anti-*omolúàbí*

behaviours. For example, there were lyrics that warn people against evil acts. A typical example is the following:

To a wicked person who uses his power and position to oppress people, they sing:

E má sìkà láyé	-	Do not do evil on earth
Nitorí a ó r'òrun	-	Because we would go to heaven/2x
Bí a bá dé 'bodè	-	When we get to the boarder/gate
A ó rojó	-	We will give account/make statement

In the past, children were taught not to talk too much (talkertive). Children who talk too much are monitored by their parents so as to effect positive change in them. This is what Afoláyan, (2005, p.173) means when he writes: "A proof of self-discipline for the Yorùbá child is the ability to keep matters secret. This would be impossible for a talkative".

In contemporary society, loose talks are rampant among children. They leak family secrets. Such act multiplies crime because loose talks give information needed for criminals to operate. Abéjidé, (2016) observes that crime was manageable in the past because everyone was conscious of his or her behaviour. She observes further that where and whenever any form of crime was noticed, the punishment for each crime was readily available.

Causes of Crime

In this section of the paper, we examine causes of crime as presented by the selected authors. These include laziness, jealousy, hatred and the likes. Experience has shown that many people are lazy, yet, they want to live fine. In Yorùbá philosophy, laziness is not condoned. A lazy person has no significant recognition in the society. hence, the saying: *Eni tí kò sisé, kò ye kí ó jeun'* meaning 'there should be no food for the lazy man'.

In *Gbé Wiri*, Adérìnkòmí, the author makes us to believe that Owonikókó, the main character and his group take to crime not because there is no work for them to engage in, but because they defy working. From the beginning of the play, Owónikókó is presented as a lazy man when he says:

> *Ilè ojó òní tún mó ..... Mo jí ní òwúrò yìí, kóbò kan kò bá mi jí. Mo ní láti jeun, mo ní láti wòso tó dára, mo sì ní láti se omolúàbí, sùgbón àìnísélówó kò jé kí n lè r'ówó fi sayé. Béè sì ni owó ni kókó ohun síse gbogbo.....(o.i. 1).*
>
> It is a new dawn again..... I woke up this money without a penny in my pocket. I have to eat, I must wear fine attires,

> and I have to live fine but for this joblessness which deprives me of money for enjoyment. And money is of utmost importance in whatever one intends to do.... (p.1).

The reason given by Owónikókó for his poor financial position should not be taken to mean the absence of any job he could do, but rather, he is lazy and he is looking for an easy way to get rich. This is evident when Ìgbàlayé his friend comes knocking, there and then, they both start planning their strategies to get money. Ìgbàlayé says:

> Orísìírísìí ònà ló wà tí ènìyàn tó bá gbójú, tó gbóyà, tó gbón bí asarun lè gbà ní owó, sùgbón ònà wònyìí léwu o! Ti kíkú ti yíyè ni irú ènìyàn béè gbódò máa rin ònà wònyìí (o.i. 2).
>
> A brave, courageous and very wise person is exposed to many ways to get rich, but the ways are dangerous and risky. It is a question of life and death for such a person to walk on the road to riches. (p. 2).

It is not surprising that they take to stealing even when they are convinced of the dangers involved. This is typical of criminals. They both agree to take to stealing goods and money from passengers at the car parks through pick pocketing. Discussing the method they will employ, Ìgbàlayé says:

> *A ó máa bá bóòsì kiri a ó sì máa jáwó lára àwon èroÌ. Pèlú ìyára ni o, pèlú ìsóra nìlá sì ni pèlú. A lè já àpamówó, agogo owó, póòsì owó, yetí (yarîinì, séènì orùn àti ohun òsó mìíràn lára àwon èrò tí wón bá fé wo okò). (o.i. 3).*
>
> We shall be following commuter buses around and we shall be pickpocketing the passengers. With fastness and with carefulness. We can snatch handbags, wrist watches, wallets, ear rings, neck chains and other valuable materials from the passengers when they are about to enter the bus. (p.3).

The author makes us to understand that criminals zero their minds on the likely outcome of their actions. Like Owónikókó asks: *"Tí owó bá tè wá nì kó?* Meaning "what if we are caught"? and his friend Ìgbàlayé responds: *'Ó di àtìmólé àti èwòn nìyen"* meaning: " you will be locked up and sent to jail".

With this conversation, one would expect Owónikókó to shelve the idea especially when he knows that if caught, he will be jailed, but the fact that they are desperate to get rich (even if they do not work, they would not allow such thinking to come into their heads. Owónikókó agrees with the suggestion. They start going from one motor park to

the other, most especially, the highly populated parks such as Tinúbú and Ìdó motor parks in Lagos.

A lot of people fall victim of their actions. They would pretend to be helping passengers to take care of their loads and before the passengers know this; their money and valuables have disappeared.

To support the belief that poor financial situation should not be an excuse for engaging in crime, nemesis catches up with Owónikókó the day Owónikókó steals sixty naira from Oríyomí. Owónikókó raises false alarm, he tells Oríyomí that his vehicle has caught fire therefore, Oríyomí should open his burnet for possible assistance. While Oríyomí is trying to unlock the burnet, Owónikókó perfectly removes the sum of sixty naira from his pocket and escapes. With the cooperation of one of his gang members (Òkérékorò) and the secretary to the garage workers, Owónikókó is apprehended. He is eventually arrested prosecuted and fined despite all his desperate attempts to prevent his arrest and prosecution.

It is an irony that the criminals are well-known even to the Police. The Police officer confirms this when Oríyomí asks him whether he knows Òkérékorò and the Officer exclaims: *"Òré mi ni, kìí wón níbí yìí nígbà kan. Òkan nínú àwon Balógun Ìdó nìyen"* meaning "He is my friend. He is always here. He is one of the "high chiefs" of Ìdó park".

Equally too, the author makes us to understand that criminals like Owónikókó use bold face and charms to counter their detractors. For instance, when the Police Officer asks Owónikókó to follow him to the station, he threatens to use charm to fight the Police Officer. Here is their dialogue:

Owólabí: À – é – é – é - **Owólabí:** Hà – à - à
Olópàá ò lè mú mi bó bá dì ìyen - Policeman cannot arrest me when it comes to that
Èèwò, òwò ni ti owò - It is forbidden for the broom
A kìí fi'gi owò dá'ná - You don't burn fire with the broom
A kìí síwó lu'mí - You don't open your palm to hit **fasces**
Omodeì kìí mo èko je - A child would not perfectly take palp
Kí ó má rá a lówó - Without his hand getting defaced.
Kóbùrù: *Tèlé mi kálo* - **Police Corporal:** Follow me
Owólabí: *Tó o bá tún fowó kàn mi* - **Owólabí:** If you touch me again, I will
N ó dúnìbú re bí eran ìléyá - cut you into pieces like the Ìléyá ram.
Kóbùrù: *Tí o bá se nátonàto, n ó wó iná* - **Corporal:** If you misbehave, I will spit
mó o lórí, wòò lojú re yóó wálè - fire on your head, your eyes will come

O jé tèlé mi bí orí re bá fé o. (Ó fa ìbon yo lápò).

down. You better follow me if your destiny loves you. (He brings out a gun).

The author also gives the impression that the law enforcement agents also encourage crime. The request that Oríyomí should drop something for the Police for a job well done suggests that it is a normal thing; however, the author is opposed to this idea when Oríyomí bluntly refuses to comply with what Olórí Agbèrò (head of passengers converser asks him to do. This is further confirmed by the several unwarranted but deliberate postponement of the hearing of the case by the court of law. The Police officer in-charge deliberately prevented the case from being heard on several occasions not until the Judge gives a standing order that the case must be heard.

In the end, the case is decided and Owónikókó is found guilty and is sentenced to nine months imprisonment. Owónikókó regrets his action as all his appeals do not bring forth the desired result.

The crime in *Afàgò kéyin Àparò*, involves the workers of a business company headed by Adéagbo, who are fond of stealing the company goods under the leadership of Adéagbo. The author uses Adéagbo to represent the unfaithful workers who instead of working for the progress and success of the company prefer to destabilize or if possible run down the business of their employer.

In the text, *ojúkòkòrò* (covetousness), *owú jíje* (jealousy), *ìkojáàyè eni* (exceeding one's bound), *ìfé Obìnrin àti orò ayé* (love for women and lust for earthly) things are identified as causes of crime. In the text, Adéagbó who heads the stores Department engages in stealing the company's goods by inflating the numbers of items supplied not minding the fact that the junior workers under him are aware of his criminal acts. He has many girlfriends who extort money from him. Adéagbo presents himself as a rich and well-to-do person. Despite the several warnings by his juniors, he spends most of his time enjoying life with women in beer parlors, canteens and restaurants. He hardly knows what is going on at work. This gives Síji and Dáre the opportunity to transact illegal business by inflating the number of items supplied in their record. They are confident that Adéagbo would not know this. In the discussion that ensued between them, Dáre orders Síji saying:

Dáre: *Máa se tire nígbà náà. Odù kan ni mo fé se kí ògá àti Doyin tó dé (ó wo) yàrá Adéagbo lo, ó kó fáìlì máyà, Síji yára gbà á lówó rè…..Ìwo náà lo máa sisé yen. Yí kétùrù tí wón gbà sí méjo.*

Síji: *Mérin mà ni wón gbà!*

Dáre: *Mo ní k'ó o yíi sí méjo. Sé a kò ní gbádùn òpin òsè ni?*

Síji: Ó ti yé mi. (o.i.16).
Dáre: Continue with your assignment. I want to play a joker before the master
and Doyin arrive (*He enters Adéagbo's office and comes out with some files. Síji immediately collects the file from him…*) You should also continue with that work. Change the number of kettles collected to eight.
Síji: But it is only four they collected.
Dáre: I ask you to change it to eight. Shall we not enjoy the week end?
Síji: I can understand. (p.16).

One should not be surprised that they do the business often times. This is because they have regular customers who buy the items from them. For instance, after Dáre has ordered Síji to inflate the number of kettles supplied, he instructs Bisi saying:

> *Wò ó Bísí, lo rí àwon òré wa yen, kí won wá kó o ní ìròlé. Wón ti moye tí owó àwon jé, wón á se ètó fún e.* (o.i.16).
>
> Look here, Bísí, go and see our 'friends and tell them to come and pack the items in the evening. They know the price already; they will give you your right. (p.16)

By this statement, the author is telling us that the society also encourage perpetration of criminal acts. It is evident that the 'costumers' know that they are buying stolen goods at very cheap prices, yet they are indifferent to this. The author also makes us to understand that negligence on the part Adéagbo the chief stores officer is another factor for perpetrating the crime. In the discussion, Dáre asks what if their secret leaks? Síji answers:

> *E è jérìí. Èmi kó ni mo ní kí Déagbo má fidí mólé. Báwa ó se máa gbé nnÌkan gbèyìn rè lo nìyen òga mi. èyin fúnra yín, ìpátá àgbàlagbà.* (o.i.17).
>
> You do not trust me. I am not the one who asks Adeagbo not to stay in office always. This is how we will continue to bye pass him. You yourself, an old thug. (p. 17).

In the text, we are made to understand that greedy people are never satisfied. Inside Hilton Hotel, Adéagbo and Sèlye are discussing a business worth six million naira which Sèye is pursuing at the Headquarters. When asked where he was three days ago, Sèye says he was away at the headquarters to negotiate a business and he is promising that if he succeeds in the business, he would quit the dirty business. However, it is easier said than done. Experience has shown

that satisfaction is never in their programme. They would not stop until they are caught.

It is an irony that criminals also engage 'men of God' (Pastors) for assistance in terms of mystical power. They request for charms such as *afòràn* that makes people to overlook issues no matter how serious such issues are. When Adéagbo's nefarious activities are exposed to the management and he is to be investigated, he approaches Wòlîi Amósì (a Pastor) offering him the sum of fifty thousand naira and says:

> *Sé e mò pé láti ìgbà tí e ti bá mi se afòràn ojósí, n ò tîi ráyè dé'bí? Isé wa pò báyìí. Sùgbón lónìí ni mo gbó pé wón nì pète àti gba ìje lénu mi níbi isé. Bàbá e dákun, e ràn mí lówó o. E gbèjà mi jà.* (o.i.32).
>
> Do you know that since you gave me the *afòràn* charm, I have not been chanced to see you? We have been very busy. But today, I overheard it that they are planning to get me out of job. Daddy, please help me. Solicit on my behalf. (p.32).

The author also gives the impression that religious worship has been commercialized. Wòlîi Amósì does not waist time to instruct Adéagbo to write the names of those behind the move. He says:

> *Fi okàn re balè. N ó sisé lórí rè. Ko orúko àwon tó wà nídi òrò náà fún mi. Won ò mò pé o léni léyìn ni; béè bájá bá leìni léyìn yóó pòbo…..Kí lo fé kí n se fún won? sé kí n pa wón ni àbí kí won rìn lo bí ako ajá?* (o.i. 32-33).
>
> Do not get worried. I will work on it. Write the names of those who are behind the move. Don't they know you have somebody behind you? And if a dog has someone behind it, it can kill a monkey…… Do I kill them or they just walk away like a male dog? (pp. 32-33).

This is in line with the situation in contemporary society. One would be forced to ask the question if truly we have Pastors who are divinely called anymore. Money has changed the faith of quite a lot of them. The genuiness of their call is always questionable as many of them encourage and partake in criminal acts. Wòlíi Amósì confirms this when he says:

> *Olúwa o mà seun o. Awórò tí babaláwo yen se fún mi mú yányán. Àbí, a wí tàìwí, àwon òpè kan ní kí n má se dógbón sí òrò ara mi. Lóòótó l'Olúwa pè mí, sùgbón n ò lè ní sùúrù irú èyí tí àwon ìránse Olórun kan nì ní yen. Ojó wo ni mo fé wo sòkòtò yíya àti bàtà Àbùdóòlù dà? Ení bá forí tì í láyé òde òní, àfàìmò kí ó máà pá lórí. Olórun ò ko aájò.* (o.i. 35).

> Thank you God. The charm the herbalist gave me works very effectively. Some novices are against my making effort. It is true that God called me but I cannot have the kind of patience displayed by some servants of God. For how long do I wear a torn trouser and Abdul type of shoes? Anyone who endures today, it is doubtful if his head will not be bared. God is not against making effort. (p. 35).

Wòlíì Aìmósì eventually gives Adéagbo a medicinal soap instructing him to birth with it from time to time. He also gives olive oil to rob his body assuring him that his 'enemies' will henceforth see him and be happy with him.

Yorùbá say *'bí a bá pe èníyàn ní elénu yákànyànkan, elénu a sì pa enu rè mó'* literally meaning if you are accused of a bad habit, you ought to stop the habit. It is evident that the Pastor's assurance further encourages Adéagbo to see nothing criminal in his acts. Instead of going into hiding, he attends parties and spends money lavishly. Unfortunately for him, that is the last stroll that breaks the camel's back. From that time, Sanmí is hell bent on investigating Adéagbo. He says: *"ní ti Adéagbo yìí, n ò ní fi í loìrùn sílè, ònà yóó mú olè rè lójó kan"* meaning: "as for Adéagbo, I won't give up. Nemesis will catch up with him one day".

It is not surprising that despite several opportunities that come his way, Adéagbo refuses to change. He is an archetype of hardened criminals present in our society today. As their finger is being cut, he wears a ring as one Yorùbá proverb would say. Adéagbo is eventually suspended. Yorùbá says *"Ajá tí yóó sonù, kìí gbó fèrè ode"* meaning "a dog that is destined to get lost, would not listen to the hunter's whistle". When he is called back after a month, he has another 'business' with Síji. They divert a lorry load of goods from the store to another destination. They are apprehended.

The author presents Adéagbo as a hardened criminal. Adéagbo approaches Wòlíì Aìmósì for assistance. Wòlíì Ámósì in his usual practice assures him and he gives the sum of fifty thousand naira to Wòlíì Ámósì. Unfortunately, the money could not solve Adéagbo's problem. Adéagbo regrets his actions saying:

> *E wa ráyé mi lode bí? Eni a wí fún, oba jé kó gbó. Húù! Owó pálábá mi ségi gbáà....Dáre wí títí, Doyin wàásù wàásù, Àjoké pàápàá kìí yé so; mo jáwú betí. Tólá dà? (Ó nujú nù. Ogbón ni n ó dá sí òràn náà o jàre. Mo kuìkuì ti fàgò kéyin àparò ná...*(o.i. 96
>
> See what my life has become? He who is warned, may God give him a listening ear. Nemesis has really caught up with me...Dáre warned severally. Doyin preached endlessly. Àjoké

> also will always warn; I turned a deaf ear. Where is Tólá? (*He wipes off the tears on his face*. I have to be clever in approaching the issue. After all, the deed had been done. (p.96.

To avoid being prosecuted and possibly sent to jail, Adéagbo disappeared into the thin air. He left the town and never surfaced again. From the above, we can say that the author believes that according to the Yorùbá saying "*elésè kan kò níí lo láìjìyà*'' meaning "no sinner will go unpunished". It is certain that if Adéagbo had stayed, he would have been punished according to the law.

Similarly in *Adákédájó*, Sàngótóyè gives the impression that membership of secret cult is one of the reasons why people commit crime. In the story, Àrèmú, the main character lavishly spends the money he is asked to help exchange for new currency notes by his father-in-law. When the time is ripe for him to return the money, he lays ambush and murders his brother-in-law in cold blood and immediately runs to his cult members for possible assistance.

The author laments the fact that those who are supposed to uphold the law are discovered to be enemies of the law. The Police prosecuting officer in the case, the judge in charge are both members of the same secret cult with Àrèmú, hence, they pervert justice. The cult group sends an emissary to the Police Officer and the judge saying:

> Olúwo ìlèdì ló rán wa wá. Wón ní lórí ejó òdaràn tí ó wà lódò yín tí e fé gbé lo sí kóòtù láìpé, wón ní omo awo ni, awo kò sì gbódò tojú ògbèrì da ifá nù, kí e bá ni síjú àánú wò ó. (o.i. 81).
>
> Olúwo ìlèdì sends us here. He says concerning the criminal case before you which you intend to refer to court soon. That he is a member and the cult member should not fall before a novies. That you should temper justice with mercy. (p. 81).

In reaction to this request, the Police Officer responds:

> E seun. Lára isòro tí àwa agbófinró máa nì ní nìyen. Àwon ènìyàn a máa fa okùn gbòòlògboolo won kò sì níí fé ìyà ìdí rè. Sé eni bá fa nnìkan tó nípá, ó ye kí ojú rè rí nnÌkan tó tóbi. Sùgbón ohun tí e wá sí yìí, kín ni kí a se? (o.i.82).
>
> Thank you. This is part of the problems facing the Law enforcement agents. People will pull long ropes but they are not prepared to face the consequences associated with it. He who does what nobody had done should see big trouble. But for the issue at hand, what do we do? (p.82).

Responding, Chief Lísà confesses that the group knows that Àrèmú is guilty. He even believe that it is wrong for anybody to behave contrary to what the law says simply because he or she belongs to a powerful group like theirs. He says:

> *Àwa náà mò, a sì mo irú ìsòro tó nì kojú yín. Inú wa kò dùn sí kí a máa tori pé a jé omo ìyá hùwà tó lòdì sí òfin, ohun tí kò bójúmu ni, sùgbón sá, a feì kí o ràn wá lowó.* (o.i. 82).
>
> We also know, we know the kind of problems confronting you. We are not in support of behaving contrary to the law because we belong to the same group, it is not appropriate, however, we solicit your assistant. (p.82).

In the above excerpt, the author makes us to know that members of such cult groups are selfish. They have the ego personality controlling them. To them, no matter how grievous the offence could be, members of the group should be exonerated. Their demand further confirms that people commit crime intentionally because they belong to one powerful group or the other. The author however makes us to believe that the Yorùbá saying that; *Elésè kan kò níí lo láìjìyà* meaning "no sinner would escape punishment is still relevant in the contemporary society. Although, the judgment is perverted, all those who have hands in the case are rewarded. They pay the price. Gbenga promises to avenge the death of his brother on his killers. Despite the appeal by his father, Gbénga engages the services of hired assassins. Here is his request:

> *Mo fé kí èmí Àrèmú lo síi, kí ìyàwó Adájó tó dájó èrú lo síi , kí Sénìbà Agbejóró Àrèmú jóná, kí omo ògá Olópàá tó wà nídìí òrò náà méjì ó máa múlìe de bàbá won lórun (o.i..)*
>
> I want Àrèmú dead; the wife of the partial judge to pay the price, the Lawyer's chamber should be burnt to ashes. Two children of the Police officer in charge should be preparing ground for their father in heaven. (p.97).

Although Gbenga and his 'contractors' are arrested, prosecuted and sentenced, it is not until their missions are accomplished. All major stakeholders in the case have their taste of Gbénga's action.

Similarly in *Èèbù Ìkà,* the author gives laziness, envy as other reasons why people commit crime. Abeìgúndé for no genuine reason decides to deal with Dúródolá, the rich and benevolent man. He says:

> Mo fé kí a fi ayé hàn án, mo fé kí a pa aì lára díè. Hówù, òun nìkan ni Olórun dá ilé-ayé fún ni? Bí o dé ìhín "Dúródolá o!,

> bí o dé òhún, "Dúródolá o!" Èé ti jé? Gbogbo rè ò tiè dún mí bí èyí tó selè lánàá yìí. (o.i.8).
>
> I want us to show him what the world is; I want us to do him havoc. Is he the only one God create the world for? If you go anywhere, it is Dúródolá. Why? The most annoying of it all is the incident of yesterday. (p.8).

One wonders why the hatred? This is to establish the fact that in contemporary society, people develop hatred for their fellow man for no just reason other than jealousy. With the cooperation of Ìlòrí, his cohort, Abégundé succeeds in implicating Duìroìdolá who is wrongly alleged to be dealing in cocaine and heroin. Even when Ìlòrí decides to back out of such criminal acts (an indication that they had been in the dirty business for long, Abégúnde threatens him saying:

> *...Mo sì fé kí o mò pé gégé bí egbé ìmùlè ni egbé wa yìí rí o; eja tó kó sínú ìgèrè ni, àtijáde rè, ìyonu kékeré kó o..... O ti ki esè bo sòòlò ná o. Sé o tilè fé lo máa sòfófó wa fún àwon olópàá ni?* (o.i.9).
>
> I want you to know that our group is like a cult. It is like the fish that is trapped, it is a serious ordeal for it to escape.... You have stepped into trouble. Do you intend to start leaking our secret to the police? (p.9).

Abégúndé succeeds in implicating Dúródolá but as the Yorùbaì would say, *'Olóòótó kò níí kú sípò ìkà'* meaning 'the truthful person shall never die in place of the wicked. They also say that *'Bí iró bá lo lógún odún, ojó kan soso ni òtító yóó bá a'* literally meaning no matter how long the lie had started the race, the truth will catch up with him in just one day. It is not long before the cat is let loose out of the bag.

The author firmly supports the Yorùbá belief that: *'Àgbà tó gbin èbù ìkà, omo rè á je níbè'* meaning the elder who sowed the seed of wickedness, his child will eat from the yield. It is not a surprise that Òjútikú, Abégúnde's son, is denied employment instantly because according to Atóbatélè, a member of the interview panel, Abégúnde is a man who is morally bankrupt and without any good record in his name. Ojútikú is not even asked any further question the moment his identity with Abeìgúndé is confirmed. Atóbatélè says:

> *Ilé bàbá yen maÌ ni, bàbá alágídí t'ó nì "kóòtì" òfin níhìn-ín níjeèló. O ò mò pé Abégúndé ni orúko rè?* (o.i. 59).
>
> It is that man's house, that stubborn man who was quoting the law for us here a few days ago. Don't you know that his name is Abégúndé? (p.59)

Without further argument, Ojútikú is denied the appointment and the position is given to another person. It is worth of note that Abégúndé had earlier asked his friend, Ògúndèjì, a Senior Officer at the State water corporation not to employ Ajéwolé another friend's son who he blackmailed. Fortunately, Ògúndèjí acts contrary by employing the boy who performed well in the interview.

As the play progresses, the cat is let loose when Dúpe, Dúroìdolá's wife identifies Ìlòrí who brought the deadly substance to him claiming it is Durodolá who sent him. ÌloÌrí initially denies the allegation but later confess it is Abégúndé who gives him the assignment. Dúródolá and his wife are released, Abégúndé is arrested and after serious interrogation, he confesses. He is locked up awaiting court proceedings. Unfortunately, before that hour, he is found dead in the cell. This incident puts an end to the case.

Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

After careful examination of the four selected texts, our findings reveal that various reasons account for why people commit crime. The reasons range from laziness, envy and jealousy, hatred, covetousness and the likes.

These reasons however, are not enough to justify why people should commit crime. For instance, there is evidence that Adéagbo in *Afàgò kéyin Àparò* has a good and stable job in his hand but for covetous reason, he decides to be stealing the company products by inflating the number of items each time goods are supplied to customers.

Our findings also reveal that people commit crime because the society encourages them. A good example is Àrèmú in *Adákédájó*. It is evident that his membership of a secret cult which has notable and influential people such as police officers, judges as members encourage him to commit the crime he committed. As soon as he kills his in-law, he heads straight to his cult group asking for protection. The group sends an emissary to the Police Officer and the judge in charge of the case with pleas and gifts. This culminated in the judge's pronouncement that there is no clear evidence that Àrèmú is the killer, but that he is only a victim of circumstance, hence he is fined only one thousand naira. This is justice perverted.

Yorùbá as a people out rightly condemn any form of crime the reasons not withstanding. Crime to the Yorùbá is a vice. Yorùbá writers also describe crime as bad and in line with the Yorùbá philosophy, criminals don't go unpunished. All characters involved in crime in the selected texts are adequately and instantly punished.

The authors are of the opinion that crime is a bane to societal development. For instance, Àrèmú in *Adákédájó* kills his in-law for selfish reason (greed but at the end, many lives are lost including innocent people.

Conclusion

The paper concludes that Africans societies in general and the Yorùbá societies in particular do not encourage crime. They all see crime as a cog in the wheel of the society's development. Therefore, they all see crime as a bane to societal development.

Today, crime wave is on daily increase in almost all African societies. As earlier mentioned, we are not saying that the pre-colonial Yorùbá society was totally crime free but evidences abound that the introduction of foreign religion and its attendant civilization account for the rapid increase of criminal acts in our societies.

We are of the opinion that the need to make our societies crime free is paramount and this can be effectively done if all stakeholders rise up to their responsibilities. This should start from the individual homes. The child must be educated on the evils of crime. Governments should provide jobs for school leavers who turn job seekers. An adage says "the idle hand is the devil's instrument". It is likely that a jobless person may turn a criminal.

References

Adejumo, A. (2010). *Afàgò kéyin Àparò.* Ìbàdàn: Evergreen Publishers

Adebowale, O. (1975). *O sèyí Tán.* Àkúré:Mumtem paperbacks.

Adérìnkòmí, N.A. (1978). *Gbé wiri.* Lagos: Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Ltd.

Adéyemi, L. (2001). Isé òrò lámèyító lítírésò Yorùbá" In B. Àjàyí, (ed. *Èkó ìjìnlè) Yorùbá: Èdá èdè, lítírésò àti àsà.* pp145-166. Ìjèbú Òde: Shebiotimo publications.

Adeyemi, L. (2008). "The portrayal of moral philosophy in Yorùbá literature". In *ÈDÈ: journal of language, literature and culture.* Ilorin: Unilorin Press. p.117-136.

Aderinkomi, M. (1978). *Gbé wiri.* Ìbàdàn: Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Ltd.

Ajayi, A. (2014). *Ojú Àmúwáyé Oládèjo Òkèdìjí nínú àwon ìwé ìtàn àròso ajemó ìwà òdaràn.* Nínú *Èkó ìjìnlè Yorùbá: Èdá èdè, Lítírésò àti àsà.* Ìbàdàn: Oxford University Press.

Akinyele, A. (1982). *Èèbù ìkà.* Ìbàdàn: Abiprint Publishing Company Limited

Alawaye, T. (1996). *Administration of Crime in the Northern Nigeria Penal Code.* Kaduna: B&B Legal publication.

Awoniyi, T.A. (1975). "*Omolúàbí*: The fundamental basis of Yorùbá education. In W. Abimbólá, (ed. *Yorùbá oral tradition*). Ilé-Ifè. Department of African Languages and Literature, University of Ifè. (pp. 356-388.

Awoniyi, T.A. (1978). *Yorùbá language in education 1846-1974: A historical survey.* Ìbàdàn: University press.

Colliers Encyclopedia. (1979). New York: Macmillan Educational Corporation

Durkheim, E. (1990). "Crime and Deviance" in Haralambos; M. & M Holborn *Sociology: Themes and perspectives.* London: Unwin Hyman Ltd.

Encyclopedia Americana (1981). U.S.A. : Crolier International, Inc.

Ogunsina, B. (1995). Colonialism and the Yorùbá writer: A study of Ládélé's *Ìgbà ló dé.* In O. Owólabí, (ed *Language in Nigeria: Essays in honour of Ayò Bámgbósé.* (pp.297-310.

Sangotoye, Oladele (2007). *Adákédájó.* Akure: Lifesteps Publishers