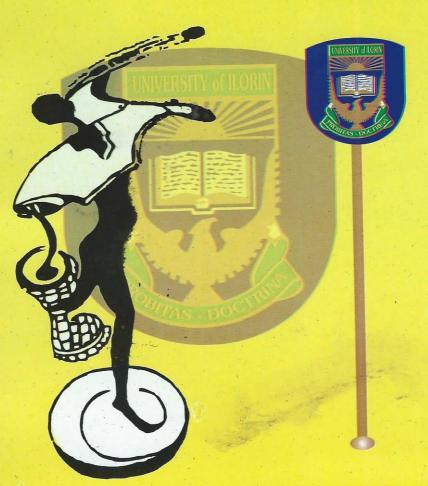


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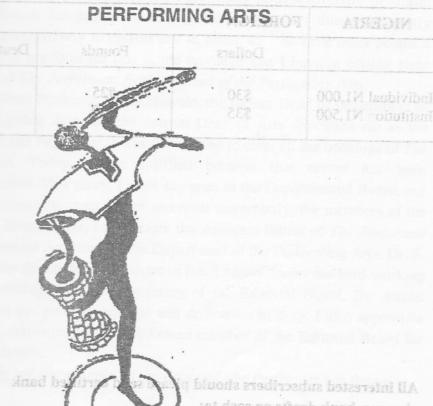
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Archetypal Representation of Factors against the Spirit of "Omolúàbí" in Selected Contemporary Yorùbá Written Plays

By

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Abstract

The spirit of good character (Omolúàbí), despite being a panacea for societal development, is fast eluding the Nigerian society in general and the Yorùbá society in particular. The major objective of this paper is to analyse the major factors responsible for the society's moral decadence level as portrayed by selected Yorùbá playwrights. Three Yorùbá written plays were examined. They are: Omotáyò and Ògúnníran's Abínúeni (1997), Sàngótóyè's Adákédájó (2007) and Ajíbóyè's Ééfín Nìwà (2008). The methodology is descriptive and the principle of archetypal theory which links human behaviours with society's myths was adopted. The theory believes that whatever behaviour one puts up, it is an archetype of somebody or something. Our findings reveal that demonic archetypes, the lion archetypes and the 'id' and ego personality are among the factors against the spirit of 'omolúàbí' in contemporary Yorùbá society. The paper is significant in the sense that it further exposes the weaknesses of our society especially in the area of their attitude to moral degeneration and moral decadence. The paper concludes that the selected authors have demonstrated that the society sets and controls the peoples' moral and unless this is strictly observed, the society cannot move forward. Keywords:

Introduction

Among the Yorùbá people, good character, (ìwà omolúàbí) is highly cherished and is never compromised for anything. The spirit of omolúàbí is imbibed from youth through the people's literature such as folktales, stories, myths, taboos, proverbs, poetry, drama, theatre, etc. The

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training of good character (îwà rere) is the joint responsibility of the entire society. The Yorùbá believe that a man's "îwà" is used to characterise him. Therefore, the Yorùbá people will do everything possible within their capacity to ensure and monitor good moral qualities among their young ones.

Today however, things have changed. Bánjo (2009, p. 139) observes that:

For many, fraud has become the way of life, manifesting itself, for example, in fake drugs and piracy. Some of the perpetrators have even infiltrated foreign countries and are giving the country, a bad name.

The Yorùbá society is aware of this situation and is trying to arrest it. However, it does not appear as if there is any recorded success. The objective of this paper is to identify and analyse those forces militating against the spirit of "omolúàbí" as portrayed in the three selected Yorùbá written plays which includes: Omotáyò and Ògúnníran's Abínúeni (1997), Sàngótóyè's Adákédájó (2007) and Ajíbóyè's Èéfin Nìwà (2008) as our reference point, using the archetypal theory as postulated by Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud which state that society's myths have very important roles to play in the people's moral life.

Archetypal theory especially the myth-oriented model states that human beings are the archetypes of all characters found in the myths of a given environment. The terrorising lion we found in the folktale, the crafty and cunning tortoise that is famous in the myths are representations of the character and human beings. Thus, a critical search into the myths of the people could reveal different characters, values, ideas, personality, beliefs and mental state of the people.

The research methodology is descriptive. First we have the archetypal theories as postulated by Carl Jung (1967) and Sigmund Freud (1977). The archetypal theory is adopted to allow for a clear understanding of why people behave the way they do.

Many scholarly works have existed on morality, written plays and even archetypal theory. Aróhunmólàse (1997) works on class struggle in Yorùbá historical and protest plays. He observes that for revolution to be effective, the masses need to be educated and carried along. Olárewájú (1999) examines oracle consultation and the theme of conspiracy in selected Yorùbá written plays. He argues that the practice of consulting the oracle before embarking on any new project by the Yorubá is being ignored and this is doing the society no good.

While Ògúndèjì (2009) examines Yorùbá language as pilot for good character training, Fálétí (2009) examines good character (omolúàbí) as the golden attribute of a Yorùbá man. Also, Adéyemí (2008) discusses the portrayal of moral philosophy in Yorùbá literature. He states that the infiltrations of foreign ideals have tremendous negative effects on the Yorùbá cultural values. All the works cited above agree that Yorùbá morality has been negatively affected by foreign ideals and they all proffer solutions. Again, Afoláyan (2010) uses the archetypal theory to examine aesthetics, myths and social conflict in selected poetry of Wolé Sóyínká. The application of the archetypal theory to examine Yorùbá literary works has not been attempted by any scholar. This makes the difference between this work and the existing ones.

The Archetypal Theory

Adéyemí (2006, p. 4) says: "òtè tí lítírésò bá dì, ogbón lámèyító níí tú u" jade sí gbangba" meaning "the secret in a literary work is exposed by a literary critic (a theorist). This implies that the thoughts of a literary artist are best understood through the application of a literary theory. A theory is used to guide the interpretation and analysis of a literary work in order to give the work an associated meaning. It exposes and publicizes the artist and his work.

By archetype we mean the original model of something. Archetypal theory can be seen as a psychological equivalent to the philosophical idea of forms and particulars. The theory believes that human beings have a preconscious psychic disposition that enables man to react in a human manner, while animals also react in an animal manner. The theory believes that when these potentials are actualized, they enter consciousness as images. This may be in myriads of variations.

Archetypal theorists such as Freud and Jung believe that nothing exists in a vacuum but rather, in a continuum of something that had existed somewhere. These theorists believe that the whole essence of life itself is a source of ideology, a source of knowledge and of course, a source of whatever could be imagined.

The proponents of archetypal theory include: Northrop Frye (1937), Carl Jung (1967) and Sigmund Feud (1977), among others, each of them with his own model and approach. For the purpose of this study, we employ the Cognitive and Psychological approaches of Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud respectively.

Sigmund Freud saw personality as comprised of three masses systems namely the 'id', the ego and the super ego. Each of this system has its own function, but the three interact to govern behaviour.

The 'id' seeks pleasure and endeavours to avoid pains regardless of any external consideration. It seeks immediate gratification of primitive pleasure-seeking impulse. Once the 'id' dominates a person, he behaves contrary to the values of the society.

The ego operates by secondary process of thinking which realistic and logical. The ego obeys the reality principle which requires to test reality and delay discharge of tension until the appropriate environmental conditions are found. The 'id' seeks immediate tension reduction by such primary processes or direct gratification of impulses wish-fulfilling imagery but the ego takes reward into consideration. It delays gratifications until the conditions are appropriate.

The super-ego is the third party of the personality. The super-ego judges whether an action is right or wrong according to the standard of the society. It is composed of the conscience. The conscience punishes making the person feel guilty. The super-ego strives for more affection. The Cognitive Approach is Carl Jung's (1967) approach to Archetype theory. Jung, a disciple of Freud was the first to use the word "archetype Jung sees the archetype as "the innate universal psychic disposition that forms the substrate from which the basic symbols or representations of the unconscious emerge".

In summary therefore, the major features of archetypal theory include the followings:

- (a). that human behaviour originates from existing societal myths.
- (b). that nothing exists that has not existed before.
- (c). that society dictates how its people should behave. Each society has its laid down principles guiding the behaviour of its people.
- (d). that everybody is aware of what the society approves, however, the 'id' and ego personality in the individual will make a person allow his/her personal unconscious to prevail over the universal/collective unconscious.
- (e). that anybody with an 'id' personality seeks pleasure, avoids pand obtains pleasure without any external consideration.
- (f). that the ego decides what actions are appropriate. It mediates between the demands of the 'id', the realities of life and the demands of the super-ego.

the super-ego is concerned with moral perfection. It deals with individual conscience that makes a person feel guilty while the ego makes a person feel proud of himself.

Our choice of the Archetypal theory is not only because it points to the fact that myths have functional hidden codes, which could be explored, because Freud's and Jungean theories rest on the fulcrum of the marcharacteristic functioning of the human mind. Those characteristics to docile features of the mind because according to Radcliffe, in (1975, p. 16) they regulate and determine social function in a community. Righter observes that:

A society depends for its existence on the presence in the mind of its members of a certain (myth) system of sentiments by which the conduct of the individual is regulated in conformity with the need of the society.

The theory will also help us to establish the fact that society's meand controls the people's moral behaviour. However, some factors no militate against strict adherence to this view. These factors are meand to as individual or personal unconscious in man. The next section man such factors or forces that militate against strict adherence to mean moral values through the literary lens of the selected playwrights.

Archetypal Representation of Factors against the Spirit of 'Omolúàbí' Abinúeni, Adákédájó and Èéfin Nìwà.

The Demonic Archetype in the Selected Plays

Demons in Yorùbá myths are evil spirits that torment man. They are invisible, they cannot be easily caught physically. They are mobile and move fast. We are made to believe that because such people possess mythical powers and due to the support they get from the group, they are behave contrary to the spirit of 'omolúàbí'. The irony of it as portrayed in the texts is the fact that some highly placed people in the society are members of these acultic groups.

For instance, in Adákédájó, it is evident that Àrèmú's action is ased on the support he believes he would get (which he actually gets) from the cult he joins. He kills Kànmí instead of returning he is given to the to new currency notes. Immediately he accomplishes this brutal he runs to his group for cover. When the cat is let out of the bag, an assary is sent to the Police Officer and the Judge in charge of the case to happens to be members of the cult group, exonerates Arèmú from the

The Police officer would have rejected the request but for the can that exists among the cultists, he could not. The same goes with the Judge who has no option, but to pervert justice. Delivering his judgement, the Judge says:

Màá wò e se. Ìdájó mi ni pé kí o - My judgement is that you go for two

lọ èwòn odún méjì tàbí kí o san - years imprisonment or pay the sum of

owóitanràn, egbèrún kan nair. - one thousand naira as an alternative (p. 84).

The Judge's judgement is against the spirit of omolúàbí as it reiteratesa demonic archetype.

Also in Abínúeni, Adéjísólá takes Okánlàwón's case to her cult The accusations she levies against her husband, Akíntáyò, and Òkánlàwón's mother are not genuine enough to destroy or punish any of them. While on one hand, Okánlàwón's achievements are the handiwork of God, on the other hand, there is no evidence that Adéjisólá and her siblings are bewitched. However, because she is a member of the cult, her request is granted without listening to the other parties. It is evident that Adéjísólá is confident that her cult will support her without hesitating which is why she seeks their support. The leader of the cult confirms the fact that the cult will always ascent to member's request without listening to the accused. The action of the cult is an archetype of the story of 'edun' and 'àáyá' as reflected by Abímbólá (1977, p. 99) in one of the Yorùbá In myth stories. 'edun' and 'àáyá' are different species of monkey, both of them were arrested for plucking corn in another man's farm. Edun was brought before the 'ògbóni' who were the judges of their time, the 'ògbóní' refused to kill 'edun' because he was Òsun's son and Òsun was also a member of the association of divinities. The 'Aaya' on the other hand, was ordered to be punished because he ran away from the owner of the farmland. This action is likely to encourage 'edun' repeat his antisocial behaviour.

In the present political dispensation in Nigeria, the inclusion of the immunity clause contained in section 308, decree number 24 of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, protecting some class of politicians from being probed or investigated for anti-social behaviours such as embezzlement, money laundering while in office, is not different from what we have analysed earlier. For the fact that they cannot be probed while in office, some governors, legislatures, honorables and other

highly placed public officers or political appointees commit acts that are contrary to "omolúàbí" teachings which are inimical to the development of our society. This accounts for why anti-graft bodies such as the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agent (NDLEA) or even the National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) have not made any noticeable headway in curbing crime in Nigeria.

(b) The Lion Archetype in the Selected Plays

The lion archetype is characterized by selfishness, greed, misuse of power, jealousy and the like. In Yorùbá mythology, the lion is the brute, wicked and merciless king. In Èéfín nìwà, Ajíbóyè makes the readers see the need for cleansing the society of selfish elements. Adékólá, the main character in the play, is selfish and corrupt. As the treasurer of Tèyìnlójù Development Association, he embezzles a large sum of money. Despite his immorality, Adékólá contests and wins the Tèyìnlójù Local Council Chairmanship seat. During his tenure, he embezzles another large sum of money from the council's purse. His action is the archetype of most public officers today who see their position as an opportunity to loot the public treasury most especially when the constitution provides immunity for them.

Ironically, a society where one is being investigated for a crime wins the Local Government Chairmanship seat, shows high level of immorality and corruption. Definitely, there is no iota of credibility in the election that brings him to power as he (Dékólá) himself confesses to his father when the latter expresses the fear that he may fail in his bid to become the next Akogun of Tèyìnlójù, Adékólá confesses that the election that brought him in as Tèyìnlójù Local Council chairman was rigged. He assures his father of victory.

Just like our politicians of today, Adékólá is not bothered by his actions and the magnitude of the effect of such behaviour on other people notwithstanding, in so far as such actions favour him. Yorùbá people believe that whatever a man sows, so he shall reap and that no sinner will go unpunished. Hence they say "àsegbé kan ò si, àsepamó ló wà". When Oláróngbé, the chairman of Tèyìnlójù Development Association threatens to expose Adékólá at the next council meeting, Adékólásees it as an empty threat and shuns Oláróngbé. In like manner, Dúrótoyè, his friend asks him about the said money, he tells Dúrótoyè to forget the issue as he has a joker to play. He says:

Tèyìnlójù. (p. 40).

Ohun tó bá wu aláisàn ó lè fò. Bó sì
The sick can whatever he likes. The mad

wasínwín, ó lè jèwé ilé. Wón jo bí wa - can decide to chew building plan. We are

ní Tèyìnlójù ni..

-all born here in

Instead of being ashamed when his nefarious actions were exposed, Aderon resulted into confrontational language use and autocracy.

In Abínúeni, Akíntayò uses his position as a rich, prosperous and influencial figure in his community not only to take Abídákun's fiance by force, but he also brutalizes Abídákun before handing him over to the police. Akintáyò's action is an archetype of the Obá's position in Yorubá tradition which gives the Oba, right to everything in his domain. Such things like, women, lands, properties amongst many other things. Olájubů (1978, p. 90) says:

Ní ìlú gbogbo, oba ni ó ni ilè. Òun - (In every town, the king owns the land. ni ó ni gbogbo àse àti agbára lórí ibi - He owns all authority and power on eve ti ìlú àti ilè rè bá dé. Ó lè pa, ó sì lè gbàlà.- Every area within his domain. He can kill

Oun ni yóó máa se asíwájú ìlú nínú ohun - and he can save life. He leads his people

gbogbo, èsìn tàbí ayeye. Bí ó sì kan ogun, -in everything, religion and ceremonies

òun ni yóó fi àse sí i. kò sí bí ipò, olá àti - No wars can be fought without his appr-

owó enìkan ti lèpò tó ní ìlú kan kí ó ju ti - oval. Nobody's position or wealth is oba ibè o.Àti olówó ìlú, àti olólá ìlú, àti - higher than the

king. The rich, the well-

olóògùn ibè, ti oba ni wón se. - to-do and the diviners

are all for the king

O'motáyò and Ògúnníranare of the view that such traditionhas to be descarded as it aids the practice of anti-social behaviours especially by the rich, the influential and the well-to-do in our society today. Hence, the sold of the actions of the aforementioned characters are not favourable.

In Èésin nìwà, Adékólá, the lion archetype and Àrèmú in Adékóló use raw power to make life miserable for others which at the put them to shame and lead them to untimely death. Thus, lack of a station and contentment are among the factors militating against the comolúàbí". It is evidenced that the characters mentioned here are that the society does not approve their behavioural patterns. The tracters in the text allow their personal unconscious to overshadow the arresal unconscious, hence they fail to follow the ideal path.

Jealousy and blind imitation of foreign values are other factors that mitate against the spirit of 'omolúàbí' in the Yorùbá society. Jealousy lead a person to commit murder. In Abínúe+ni, Omotáyò and oganiran expose those vices believed to be common in polygamous leas. Soon after Akíntáyò proclaims Okánlàwón as his heir, Adéjísólá ecomes jealous. In her private discussion, Adéjísólá is jealous of her

- sife and plans to kill Okánlawón, the son of the co-wife.

Adéjísólá requests that Òkánlàwón should be killed so as to have ber own son as the sole heir. She is a lion archetype. The lion is the king of the forest and leaders of all animals. The lion hates any surrogate and make sure that no one compete with it or else, that animal would The impulse to kill is always in the lion either for prey or for pleasure which the playwrights explore in Adéjísólá, as she has the impulse to kill anybody that stands on her way other son's. Adéjísólá's action is also an etype of the senior wife in the Yorùbá folk story titled "ìgbáko orogún meaning "my co-wife's calabash". In the story, the senior co-wife is ealous of her co-wife. She went to the stream to wash clothes including the wooden spoon (ìgbáko). God is not for only one person. The calabash not go with the stream like in her junior wife's case; she threw the alabash into the water herself and followed it. Contrary to her expectation, her co-wife's fortune turned to misfortune. Instead of becoming rich, she was bitten to death by snakes. In like manner, solá fails in her bid to kill Òkánlàwón and in the words of

Akínkúnmi, all Adéjísólá's children also turn to be 'good-for-nothing children'.

(c) The 'id' and Ego Personalities in the Selected Plays

The trait of 'id' and personality development is always seeking pleasures, wealth and gains. Any character with 'id' personality trait definitely be interested in accumulating wealth. The authors how make the readers to understand that the end result of such acts is devastating. In Adákédájó, the author presents Àrèmú as a lover of who is not ready to work, instead, he indulges in criminal activities coveting the new currency he is asked to change, as he also kills brother in-law.

In like manner, Adékólá in Èéfín nìwà, loves money, wealth position more than his people. Due to the 'id' and ego personality in the tries to obtain pleasure regardless of the consequence of his action others. Adékólá loves to satisfy his needs by irrational means, hence embezzles public fund. The egoistic nature of the chiefs makes them of not being truthful. Thus, they are all corrupt archetypes as found in Yorùbá mythical lion who wanted all animals in the jungle to give the lives as bribe for safety. Their actions have increased the level of decadence in Tèyìnlójù and Ìpo community in general.

Incest and fornication are related. These are vices which Yorke people seriously frown at. Incest on the one hand, is a situation where a father has canal knowledge of his daughter or his daughter informication on the other hand, is a situation where a man flirts another man's wife. This situation gives rise to the use of a potent mappower (mágùn) that punishes fornicators in Yorùbá land, on any who is suspected to engage in extra-marital affairs with another outside her matrimonial. In the Yorùbá society, incest is considered serious crime and anyone who involves himself/herself in it is punished matter his or her position in the society.

In Abínúeni, Akintáyò is married to four women included Adéjísólá his wife's sister who stays with them. Earlier on, Akintán forcefully takes Abídákun's fiancé. As earlier noted, his action is archetype of the Obá's position in Yorùbá tradition which gave the the right over everything in his domain.

In Èéfin Nìwà, Adékólá is presented as a womanizer. Adékólá has one wife and three women friends; the most prominent among them kòfowórolá who will always advise his man friend (Adékólá) against

good things. Instead of helping his people, Adékólá prefers to give stowórolá anything she requests for.

For instance, on the suggestion that Adékólá should build a house is village and also develop his virgin plots of land, Kòfowórolá advises that:

Èrò tèmi ni pé kí e ní sùúrù fún bí odún - (I think you should be patient for a while.

Mélòókan sí i. Ìdí ni pé tísu eni bá ta, se - This is because it is dangerous to wash

làá dowó bò ó je. Ìlú yín yen ti kéré ju èyí - your linen in public. Your village is

té e máá kó ilé olówóoyebíye; irú èyí té e - small for such expensive building you

ní lókàn lásìkò tí gbogbo ayé ń ké pé òde - are proposing.

People do not want you

le yìí o. Omo aráyé ò féni fórò, àforí eni.-To succeed except for - your destiny. (p. 27).

Following this advice, Adékólá uses the money he would have used to complete his abandoned building project in the village and to be building project in the

Adékólá's action is an archetype of Àfòn in Odù Ogbèwónrín of the Ifá Corpus as summarized by Elébúibon (2004, p. 20). E'lé'búibo'n marates that Àfòn married Odíderé despite the several warnings against it. Thenever there is any slight misunderstanding in his home, Àfòn will and the erring wife packing. Odíderé began to pose problems until Àfòn and all his belongings. He was completely wrecked. Odíderé's attitude as made Àfòn's relations to desert him. Odíderé suggested that Àfòn and sell his fabric of honour to survive. Being the only property left for the which he cherished so much, Àfòn became annoyed, neither did Odíderé took his refusal kindly. Odíderé eventually deserted Àfòn and the she saw Àfòn in his sober mood, she made jest of him. From the became a popular saying that women could remove fabric of the pour from man and indeed everything a man has.

In Abínúeni, Akíntáyò exhibitsthe 'id' and ego personality of pride. The Yorùbá say: "bísu eni bá ta, a máa fi owó bò ó je ni" meaning "you should not expose your achievements in life to the public". This warning is created from the Yorùbá belief that the entire human race is in a world where evil co-exists with the good. Awólàlú (1979, p. 69) sees that such evils could be natural, mysterious or supernatural whereby all bad happenings are attributed to the handwork of these evils. It is believed that they can change man's destiny.

In the play, the 'id' and ego personality in Akíntáyò does not allow him to see reason why he should yield the several advise he is given over the future of Òkánlàwón. Akíntáyo's action is an evidence of his pride. The writer portrays Akíntáyò as someone who lacks knowledge. His actions lead to the distortion of Òkánlàwón's destiny by the wicked one. Akíntáyò's action is an archetype of Àkèré in the folk story of the tortoise (ijàpá) and the frog (àkèré). The frog (àkèré) told the tortoise (ijàpá) everything about himself boasting that he is more hardworking. When they were sent to go and harvest yam in the farm, the frog (àkèré) proved his strength. The tortoise (ijàpá) was aware of the punishment awaiting him, he tricked the frog and carried the frog's yam which he presented as his own to the king. Àkèré was heavily punished and banished from the town just as Àkíntáyò is made to suffer for his lack of knowledge and obedience.

Conclusion

The three selected texts are didactic in nature and in content. All the selected authors trace the factors against the spirit of 'omolúàbí' to selfishness, misuse of power, jealousy and even the 'id' and ego personality traits in the individual which heed pride, pleasure and lack of self-control.

They all agree that contrary to the belief in some quarters, the society is not closing its eyes to any form of immoral behaviours of their people and that no such behaviour would go unpunished. While they used to discourage such behaviours in the society, they applaud behaviours approved by the society. There is no doubt therefore that their works contribute to the moral upliftment of the Yorùbá society in particular and the Nigerian society in general.

From the foregoing, it is evident that Yorùbá playwrights are aware and conscious of the happenings around them and they address them in their works. The authors make their readers to understand that a

number of factors are responsible for moral perversion. These factors are analyzed and discussed. This paper engages in some unspeakable things and immoral behaviours because they belong to a cult or group of influential people who are said to be immuned against punishment no matter the magnitude of their offence (demonic archetype). Politicians are not ready to play the game according to the rules for selfish reasons. They believe they must get whatever they need at any cost even if it involves terminating another man's life.

People now lobby for political appointments and their success depends on how much money they are able to splash. The choice of a king or baálè is no more based on the voice of the oracle but on the extent of his influence in the society. These account for why the position of the king (oba) is no more relevant. People nowadays result to distorting history, hence, the simultaneous emergence of two or three kings (obas) in a village or town. This development certainly cannot bring peace. However, this situation according to the authors, account for why it has been very difficult to revive the society from its present situation of moral degeneration and moral deterioration.

Literary artists need to be more engaged in the overlapping use of African oral forms to generate new aesthetics. They can be used to correct the moral decadence and attack the factors against the spirit of "omolúàbí" not only in Yorùbá society but also in Nigeria and other African countries. African artists in general and the Yorùbá artists in particular who wish to use them in their works should seek universal relevance for them. Parents and families in general have very important roles to play in the process of bringing the moral posture of the society back on track.

In conclusion, the representation of the factors against the spirit of "omolúàbí" in the selected texts is realistic enough. The authors probe into the psychology of man's morality. Through the archetypal theory of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, the reader is made to know that the level of morality or behaviour of man is determined by the trait(s) of personality that is dominant in the person. If a person is dominated by 'id' and ego personality traits, he or she will love pleasure, money, sex, accumulation of wealth and be boastful, but if the super-ego dominates, he or she will live by conscience and always respect the societal moral values. Also, human actions are determined by the pre-existing moral archetypes in the society or culture of the person.

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