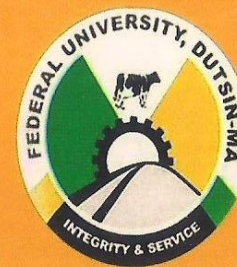


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RELIGION AND THE ECONOMIC ETHICS OF THE PRE-COLONIAL IGBOMINA, EASTERN YORUBALAND: A LESSON FOR THE PRESENT

Aboyeji, Oyeniyi Solomon and Aboyeji, Adeniyi Justus

Abstract

Economic activities and religious beliefs were, to a large extent intertwined. From ages, religion has been part of every society and the life of an average man revolves around his religion which dictates his code of conduct to cultural, socio-political and economic matters. Hence, since man inhabited the planet, it has been one long struggle for survival between him and nature. The reality of the basic needs of life-food, cloth and shelter indeed made him to inevitably see necessity as the mother of invention, as well as the need to set up some guiding principles in his day to day transactions in all his cultural institutions. This is the case of the Igbomina who had evolved from very primitive origins and has made a staggering leap to the present. This paper does not only examine the central place of religion or the influence of the Supreme Deity in determining success and failure of Man in all human endeavours but also surveys the correlation between religious doctrines and the practical ethics of the economic activities of the Igbomina. The paper adopts a historical and analytical approach with a combination of primary and secondary sources of data collection. The study concludes that in every aspect of an Igbomina, religion dominates and dictates his actions, reactions and inactions. Again, even though he/she is exposed to western education and culture vis-à-vis his economic and socio-political impetus, religion still often provides ethics, implying that traditional thought is still the source of his basic world view. On this note, the past lies like a nightmare upon the present (Karl Marx).

Introduction

On a general note, the peoples of Africa like other peoples of the world are inseparable from their history and culture, for their history is the record of what they did, thought and said and their culture is the

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totality of the ideas, concepts and values that characterize their societies.¹ These cultural elements were entrenched in their religious, social, economic and political institutions and manifested in their day-to-day multi-dimensional activities. Igbominaland is a land of long history. The term 'Igbomina' or 'Igboona' refers to a distinct dialectical unit of the Yoruba, the land they occupy and the language they speak. They are located within longitudes 8° and 9°N and latitudes 4° and 6°E. They are made up of many sub-units such as the Ila, Ipo, Oro, Aran, Iyanga, Isin, Irese, Esisa, Ile-Ire, Oke Id¹ and Share. Aside the Igbomina diaspora in different proportions across states and continents, the Igbomina are particularly found in the whole of Ife/Ibadan, Ibadan and Isin LGAs of Kwara State and Ila and Ife/Ibadan LGAs of Osun State. Igbominaland is bounded in the west by Ilorin; north-east by Yagba; south-east by Ekiti; north by the Nupe; south-west by the Ibolu; and south by the present day Oyo State. To the north of the Ijesa and the Ekiti, and east from Oyo, live the the Igbomina.²

In spite of the increasing literatures on the economic history of the Igbomina people in recent years,³ some aspects of their economy are yet to be studied. So integral therefore, is the economic life (agrarian and non-agrarian) and development which is controlled by certain ethics and doctrines such as the concept of *ori* (one's head), *ayanmi* (God's allocation of destiny), societal taboos, apprenticeship, principle of hard work and moral values (honesty, loyalty, co-operations, humility, kindness) factored in the factors of production. Economic institutions deal with production, distribution and consumption of goods and services available in the community. In general, there are two main types of economic activities: production and consumption. Aspects of production include farming, manufacturing, trade, finance and transportation. Consumption refers to the final stage of the economic chain. A vacuum will therefore be so created if some salient aspects of the economic institutions are ignored acknowledging Abogunrin's general observation that "*the relation of Yoruba economy to ethics has to do with the conviction that Yoruba religion is the source of Yoruba ethics.*"⁴ In the totality of the endeavours of the Igbomina, their moral and ethical perspectives which were mainly drawn from their religious beliefs practically manifested in their traditional economy. Although the scope of this study indicates that Igbominaland is the focus, there are of course generalizations and peculiarities in Yoruba context.

X-ray of Economic Activities of the Igbomina

The pre-colonial economy which started from as early as when the first man or group of people first settled in Igbominaland till about the end of the 19th century was far from being static but highly dynamic. Abogunrin, speaking on the economic activities of man said:

Man alters the surface of the earth primarily to satisfy his needs and desires, which are of great importance and in economic term, insatiable. In the process, there evolves two set of human activities, some simple, a few systematized and others technical, but all partly dependent on the products and conditions of the area in which he lives.⁵

In spite of the traumatic political and military upheavals and the consequent stages of subservience,⁶ the Igbomina went through lots of viable and worthwhile economic activities. The role of a sound economic base was not only accountable for the Igbomina's powerful status in precipitating and ossifying their efficacy but also became a magnetic force leading to chains of external or 'foreign' influence. Rather than duplicating the economic activities already detailed by quite a number of historians of Igbominaland, the concern here is on the religious-cum moral ethics and practices in their economic activities which cut across the factors of production. In view of this, only a general background of these factors is hereby provided as an explanation to the sound economic base.

The history of Igbominaland, as of any part of West Africa is closely connected with its geography. The habitation, economic and geographical conduciveness of Igbominaland coupled with other factors such as peace or warfare in the land; natural phenomena such as rainfall; interaction of natural and human resources essential in the productive activities and the maximum utilisation of the factors of production led to the development of the indigenous economy. These enhanced both agrarian and non-agrarian activities, which employed majority of its rural dwellers. Apart from manufacturing implements such as hoes, cutlasses and axes, varied or combinations of advanced techniques were used in most areas such as terracing, shifting cultivation, crop rotation, green manuring, mixed farming, poultry and regulated swamp farming. The pre-colonial economy of Igbominaland rested mainly on agrarianism that formed the mainstay of the indigenous economy. Farming economy was very important both as economic, social and religious sustenance as well as for the

socio-political status of the people. Farm products constituted the parts of the sacrificial ingredients, objects and festival foods. Hence, beyond Igbominaland, "African agricultural systems in the pre-colonial epoch were such that the different communities could be regarded as self-contained."⁷ Varieties of economic trees and agricultural products were produced in Igbominaland (i.e. citrus, cocoa, palm oil, *kolanut*, yam, maize, guinea corn, cassava, sweet potato, cowpeas, groundnut, millet, pawpaw, banana, beans, *alovera*, cashew, mango, guava, moringa, vegetables and fruits of various types). The forests were rich with economic and medicinal plants of tropical varieties as well as timbers of which Iroko, Opepe, Mahogany and Afara were the principal.⁷

Of the factors of production, only land was in abundance as it was plentiful enough not to create a constraint on development in pre-colonial Igbominaland. Shortage of labour led to constraint on the development due to high rate of infant mortality. As a solution to this, women kept longer in child bearing till it would be impossible for them to produce. Polygamy was considered another option in order to use both the labour of the wives and their children, especially in the busy periods of planting and harvesting. Labour was often provided via family labour, collectivism (mutually transacted labour), voluntary labour, and involuntary labour (punishment and redemption). Undeniably, the slave trading activities of the 17th and 18th centuries robbed the entire West African communities of the 19th century, of the bulk of their able bodied men and women of productive age. Of course, the gestation period before a newly born baby could participate in rigorous economic activities would take some 12-15 years. This gestation period had direct impact on labour supply and manpower development.

Capital was scarce but not nearly as critical a need like labour owing to the indigenous socio-economic processes and organisational forms found among the people. They were well guided by economic ethics such as *ma fi ika m¹w¹wa j¹un* (financial prudence and management); *aj¹s¹ku* (don't consume all proceeds) as evident in their small scales credit institutions or other contributory schemes. The most common was the rotating credit association (*aj¹*), which was a 'middle rung' institution that promoted capital formation for economic development. Geertz⁸ argues that rotating credit association bridges the gap between agrarian and commercial economic patterns and between peasant and traders attitudes towards money and its uses. Participation in rotating credit association trains persons to participate in national socio-

economic institutions and thus enhances the modernization of developing societies. Besides, members help themselves in other areas such as contribution of monetary gift where a member is sick, towards the cost of funeral of the dead member, etc. Thus, lacking the collateral security required for banking loans, serves as a mechanism for solidarity.⁹ Where necessary, the few rich members of the society could loan money to those in need with little interest. Again, capital was not a critical need owing to the fact that farmers preserved seeds for future planting instead of selling or consuming all. In the same manner, craftsmen and entrepreneurs had to set some wealth aside for the creation of further wealth. Interestingly, not all services and exchange were monetary reckoning. Substitute currencies such as iron rod, rolls of cloth, bottles of gin, cowries and manila were more definite and consequently more convenient for reckoning, though cumbersome. Payment could be alternatively made in slaves, services, dowry and so on. The 'trust system' (barter) and the courts of equity sustained the economic base in both the human services (later slave dealings) and commodity commerce. There were intra and inter-community commercial activities and exchange which confirmed Hopkin's submission that "... *production for use and production for exchange were both common in pre-colonial Africa.*"¹⁰

Religious cum Moral Ethics in Trade and Economic Activities in Pre-Colonial Igbominaland

On a general note, Yoruba ethic is more of religious ethic *per se* because it is what God forbids that the society forbids and vice versa.¹¹ Contrary to the erroneous views by western writers¹² that God to the Africans is a *deus incertus* and *deus remotus*,¹³ the God-factor has been central. The Igbomina put every plan in place to please and appease the Supreme Deity via their intermediaries as manifested in their regular reference to God, annual festivals of deities (veneration of natural objects such as rivers-*Isin*, *Aw¹r¹*, *Arega*, *Oyi* or hills-*Awoji*, *Alagus¹*, *Oke-Agunjin*), taboos, offerings and sacrifices of all forms. One of the primary beliefs guiding their agrarian practice was that the earth is of the Lord with many resources to be tapped and harnessed. Man started his life by being a gatherer, a hunter and later a farmer. The abundance of land allowed a system of cultivation such that did not encourage restrictive use of land for both indigenes and aliens. They were so pre-occupied and guided by numerous ethics such as dignity of labour and hard work. The slogan was *is¹ ni is¹ nj¹* or the popular anthem like

their other Yoruba counterparts: "Isé àgbè ní sè ilè wa, ¹ni kò sisé yó màà jalè, Ìwé kíkó láí sí isé, kò ì pée o, kò ì pée ò". The sayings: "bí ati ún kóse láún kó iyára warns against slothfulness; "Isé orí rán mi ní mò ún se /2x, ní bá jalè ló bímí jé or "ídí is¹ ¹ni láá ti ún mńi ní òl¹" to express the acceptance of one's career or destiny; and so on. The bumper harvest from the traditional tools had been credited to the Yoruba religious ethics¹⁴ and Igbomina farm managerial experts who had the knowledge of shifting cultivation, rotational bush fallow, mixed farming, permanent cultivation, flood-land and irrigated farming popularly called àkùrò among the people.

Hard work was regarded as the key to success and a step to riches in any endeavor. A popular saying was "owurí lǐjǐ, ma fi owurí se're (the morning shows the day, do not toy with it). The lazy was disrespected in society and usually the primary suspect in case of stealing. It was held that one who would not work, would eventually become a beggar, pauper, thief or an inconsequential person of low reputation in the community. Consequently, a convicted thief was publicly disgraced, imprisoned and in severe cases executed. Hence the saying: òkánjùwà baba olè, yán-mi-lójú baba gbéwiri, òkánjùwà toun tolè Ìgbílgba ní wón íse, èpè kò pómí olè dàgbà. (Greed is the father of thieves, the fearless thief, is the father of pick pockets, the greedy and the thieves are one and equal; curses do not allow for the child of the thief to grow).

Similar to the God-factor was the Orí (head) factor¹⁵ known as the Guardian-spirit or man's double. In agreement with Abimbola,¹⁶ both Gbadegesin¹⁷ and Makinde¹⁸ maintain a tripartite conception of human personality in the Yoruba traditional account. The ara (body) is the material stuff, the ¹mì (spirit) is the soul or the breath of life while (orí), the inner head is taken as being the bearer of the destiny of its owner. The three components are complementary. The orí is symbolized by the physical head and the universal household deity believed as the god of fate. In other words, the essence of man's personality becomes a sort of split entity which acts as man's spiritual counterpart or double. This double i.e. fortune/misfortune, good/bad, blessing/curse, etc is bound up with the issues of man's destiny on earth; that is destiny depends on how far this entity is in good state. The orí (Yoruba), or chi (Ibo) or ehi (Edo) guards one's steps and brings prosperity, or else puts obstacles in one's paths. Idowu testifies thus:

A husband's double may make or mar the wife's fortune; so a father's or a mother's the children's. Thus, there is a cult of the double, by whatever local name it is called, in most places in Africa. For example, among the Yoruba, orí-inú is the essence of being-the essential person, and also designates the double; the physical head is its symbol.¹⁹

Popular expressions supporting this claim till date include; *kí orí inú mí mába ti òde mí jé* (may my inner head/guardian spirit not negate my body/physical head); Or

Orí mí sègbè léhín mí o, (my head, stand strongly behind me)
Orí mí sègbè e, (my head stand strongly),
Orí l'eku fi n lagbó, (it is the head the rat uses to create tracks in the bush)
Orí l'ja fi n wè lódò, (it is the head that the fish uses to swim in the river)
Orí mí sègbè léhín mí o, (my head, stand strongly behind me).²⁰

Or

"*Ibí orí bá dání sí lààgbé, orí lonise èdá lol'áyànmó; Orí la ò bá bí, la ò bá fòrìsà sílè; Orí ¹ni l'áwúre ¹ni*" (meaning the head determines one's occupancy and acts as destiny, the Creator should have been considered for propitiation in place of deities, one's head is one's charm for good luck). Hence, orí was propitiated so that good luck might be the portion of its votary. Cognizant of this fate of ill or good luck (*orí burúkú/orí rere*), the Igbomina were ever conscious of giving names-choosing their models only from those with numerous successes, good and enviable characters; winners and achievers other than losers and those noted for notoriety.

The relationship between religion and economy could be seen at two levels: individual and corporate.²¹ At the individual level, it was strongly believed that a person could be successful in life and in economic activities if he was destined to or if the ancestors, the gods and the Supreme Deity looked upon him with favour. They sought the favour of the ancestors, gods and spirits through sacrifices and rituals. They often prayed, "*ki l'da maj¹ ka sis¹ onis¹*" (may God not let us be in the wrong job). Farmers before planting appeased and after harvesting made rituals to their gods of earth, divinities of crops, rain, sky and trees. For instance, a fat pig, two big snails and kolanut remain the ingredients used to propitiate *Esii* Deity in Oke Oyi; a tuber of

yam taken from each farmer to Ohoso (the spot where Olowu sank) for the ritual of Anlugua Festival in Owu-Isin; various food items, cocks, hens, goats and sheep to worship *Awoji* in Iwoland; kolanuts with fish to propitiate *r¹* (mud) Festival in Iba-Isin; she-goat, or cow to for the *Oju Odo* in Igbonla; fried corn, beans, libations of red palm oil, chicken, a hen, ram, kolanuts to propitiate *Esu Iba*; she goat, snail, kolanut, palm wine, solid pap, *ekuru*, to propitiate River Isin; etc.²²

Widely held was the belief that economic wealth lied in the hands of the gods and that each of these occupations had its code of ethics. The action of a person could be said to be good or bad depending on the dictates of the gods or how it corresponds to socially approved standards of behaviour. Hence, an individual tried to maintain a cordial relationship with his god, the ancestors and the Supreme Deity because economic prosperity and disaster are theirs to dispense as they wished. At the corporate level, members of society and people of the same occupation or trade association relied upon their favour for economic prosperity. For instance, blacksmiths, hunters and farmers would never cease to seek the good favour of *Ogun*, the god of iron (believed to be the first hunter). Fishermen or fetchers of water would not dare *Yemlaja* (water divinity). The traditional economy was therefore, *ritualistic* in order to ensure success and avert disasters. Their streams and rivers (i.e. *Ògun* at *Odo Iri*; *Alíri*, *Adú* and *Ayaba* at *Iwo*; *Aw¹r¹* at *Iji/Owu*; *Oyi* at *Oke Onigbin*; *Isin* cross cutting *Arandun/Esí¹/Ila Irangan*; *Òko* and *Òrísà* along *Oro Ago*, etc); were sometimes dreaded and worshipped in order to pacify the angry river goddesses.

Occupational taboos therefore, promoted professional co-operation, mutual respect and chastity. Hunters would say, *Íd¹ ei gba iyawo Íd¹* (tabooed for a hunter to fornicate with another's wife) or intercept the hunting path of a co-hunter lest he saw the wrath of *Ogun* and *Ìrunmila*; a cultist would say "*awo nii gbe awo ni igblwí, bi awo o bagbe awo ni igblwí, awo at¹ or adiy¹ kii j¹ ifun ara wí¹n* (cultists come to the aid of one another, lest they are ridiculed or mocked); makers of shear butter (*òrì*) would not afford to keep malice against their husbands or any other members of the society lest their product come out badly;²³ a menstruating woman was forbidden to enter the store/power-house of charms and medicine of a warrior or touch the bag of a medicine man lest she rendered the medicine impotent and inefficacious.

Similarly, there was division of labour and mutual relationships among the people of different occupations because more often than not, every occupation had a link with Yoruba religion, which

emphasized indispensability and unity of mankind. It was such that a hunter needed the services of the blacksmiths and carvers who produced the Dane guns used for the hunting expedition. He also needed the services of bricklayers who built his house as well as the services of mat and cloth weavers who produced the mat he slept on and the cloth he wore during the hunting expeditions.²⁴

Furthermore, self-accomplishment was stressed, rather than what was graciously inherited. A man would not rely on what he could inherit from his relations if he wished to avoid poverty. Such guiding ethics with both the spiritual and physical inputs include: *agboju logun alogun fira r¹ fun osi ta ni* (he who depends on a legacy exposes himself to poverty); *àtél¹wó¹ ni èi tan ni í j¹* (meaning one's personal handiwork assuredly brings fortune). Paradoxically, as hard work and the physical efforts were emphasized, so also was the spiritual dimension to getting rich in a positive way. It was widely held among them that "*kitàkità kò mílà, ká sisé bí¹ rú kòda ùnkan, orí ló m¹ isé àselà¹ ni* (Struggle in life does not guarantee wealth, to work like a slave does not achieve much. Only destiny knows one's appropriate job that can make one rich). The spiritual dimension of positively getting rich emphasized the fact that destiny can aid material success; it does not however, suggest that people should resign to fate without working hard for it. This ethic, guiding their code of conduct is the adopted (primary school) poetry which has influenced the attitude of many adults:

Isé lògùn isé, múra sí isé òré mi, isé lafiún d¹ni gíga, tí akò bá réni fèhìntì bii òl¹ láà rí. Bí akò bá réni gbékèlè at¹ra mósé¹ ni; ohun tí abá sisé fún ní n pé lówó¹ ni. Bàbá r¹ leè lówó lówó, iyá r¹ leè lésin lèèkàn. Tí o bá gbójú léwí¹n, otaá tán ni mo wí fún í. Iyà mb¹ fún ím¹ tí kò gbón, kun nb¹ fún ím¹ tí óún sá kiri. (meaning -hardwork is the antidote to poverty, be hardworking my friend. It is hardwork that makes us great, if we have no one to depend on, we look like a lazy person. If we have no one to rely on, we would work harder. What we do not suffer for does not last. What we work hard for lasts for in our hands. If you rely on them, you are finished, I warn you! Suffering awaits a child that is foolish, tears awaits a child that runs aimlessly about).²⁵

These and many more down-to-earth teachings call for hard work, self-sustenance rather than an idle lifestyle which depends on material legacy. Wealth derived from fraud, corrupt practices and inheritance are likely to be squandered through worldliness. Islam and Christianity do not also condone indolence, materialism and extravagance (Sura 6:141, 7:31, 17:26, Luke; 15:11-32, Matthew 25:14-30).

Also widely held was the belief in productiveness, collectivism, punishment and redemption. The bulk of labour supply in the prominent food and cash crop economies was from the household; slave labour, *pawning* (*l̀wòfà* system); socially organized labour i.e. *Òwò*, *Àáró* (labour exchange) and voluntary labour popularly called *àgbàse*. Until towards the end of the 19th century when productions of exports gained prominence in Yorubaland, farming in Igbominaland meant food production. Wastage was never the practice of the day despite the surplus production. The Igbomina generally accumulated surplus which they stored against the next planting season and changing conditions such as demand, natural disasters like famine, draught, etc. Owing to this, the concept of *pípínmi sílè de òùngb¹* (saving for the rainy day) was upheld. The people stored effectively in granaries (*àkà*) against those inevitable bad days.

With farming, being a seasonal job, non-agrarian activities on part time basis became inevitable. Having settled with an economic career (occupational differentiation) leading to guild system in crafts manufacture; the category of people in each profession believed that every person was created by God and hence, had right to live without fear or favour or undue intimidation.²⁶ All put together revealed their understanding of the philosophy of *ònà kan è wíjà* (*diversification*); conviction that "*oju Írun to ¹iy¹ fo lai fapa kanra wín* (the sky is spacious enough to accommodate birds without collision); *aje iya kodi ti baba l̀wí* (all traders can co-exist) or *ma ta bami ko de odo* (splashing of water on someone is unavoidable in the river). The guild system and compartmentalization of sellers where all of them co-exist side by side is a practical demonstration of the principle of tolerance and love which are essential to business practices.

Also notable was their high sense for utilitarian values. For instance, aside the socio-economic and political values of iron and blacksmithery (farming tools and instruments of war) were the religious relevance. Anyone who used any tool of iron identified with the god of iron sought the favour of *Ògún* who could use such instrument to make the person or cause such object to work against him. Therefore, people prayed, *a ò ní rí j̀jà Ògún or èèdi* (may we not experience the wrath of *Ògún* or lose saneness) otherwise, an hunter may use his own *Dane gun* to subconsciously shoot himself or any household. Till date, people still pray not to travel when the roads wait famished or when wrathful *Ògún* wants to suck and bathe with blood (*a ò ní rìn l̀jó tébi ún p̀ona tàbí l̀jó tí Ògún ófi èjè wè*). Similarly, hunting provided games meant to supplement animal protein or to get rid of them if they posed a danger

to human beings and food crops. Moreover, the early Igbomina became important as footpath makers (which resulted into roads) and security men. Some of these great hunters became renowned herbalists with remarkable foot-prints. Already immortalised hunters include: Ajagunla, Aworo Ose (Ila), Tii-Oye (Ijara), Baragbín (Esi¹), Siginni Wegbe (the progenitor of Agbeku), Aworefe (Agbele), Ologele (Agb́nda), etc. There were cases when specific animals were required for sacrifices within specified days. For example, no member of the Onikoyi family across Yorubaland must eat bush rat (*okete*) just like no one from Ile Alapa family in Igbominaland and the people of Agb́nda community must neither kill nor eat cobra snake (*ejola*) lest they supposedly eat their grandfathers.²⁷

Stock farming was also kept for family consumption, entertainment of visitors, payment of dowry requirements (i.e. *àwónsìn ¹ran*-separated goat kid) and owing to the philosophy of *l̀l̀run afi ofo r¹mi* (loss of property or death of stock or domestic animals in substitute for their owners' lives) which is still widely upheld. Domestic and material loss may occur when the targeted victim is spiritually immuned. The utilitarian values of their vocational arts and crafts cut across all aspects of production (i.e. carving, soap/making, pottery, etc).

Vis-à-vis trade and commerce, producers in Igbominaland did not only produce agricultural and craft goods for immediate consumption, surpluses were also targeted for sales. The distribution was done in two mutually related ways: locally and on long distances. This brought to fore the reason for seeking the faces of gods of merchants for good sales, fortunes, safety, or any form of spiritual help (*aájò*) in their daily and caravan trade. Most frequently sought after were *kánàkò* (magic that shortens distance), *egbé* (magic of flight in times of danger), *aférò* (magic used by traders to attract customers or by a person to attract clients), *itaja* (magic for securing good sales of wares), *orí ire* (magic that makes one to be lucky at all times), *if¹rín* (magic that makes all people to love one), etc. The market had economic and social-religious functions such as being a place for both entertainment and amusement with drummers, poets and singers often exhibiting their arts to the admiration of all; a place to disseminate information and rumours on the latest occurrences; hideouts for criminals, debtors and mentally deranged people; beggars' day; a place to exchange merchandise, ideas, socialize, contract new alliances, initiate sexual and/or marriages and where herbalists, diviners, palm wine sellers etc won new converts and sold their services and unions; and often times a place for rituals and sacrifices.

Mutual respect for the custom of each land sustained international and cross cultural relations encouraged by caravanism. Individuals were guided by moral and religious virtues of trust and honesty. For instance, it was the practice that each buyer of agricultural goods or other commodities displayed for sale as footpaths and roadsides, for prospective buyers had to drop the exact money as so indicated. Adewale testifies that:

The belief of traditional Yoruba people is that god, divinities, ancestors and even Aje (the spirit of money who acted as an inculcating economic ethics could inflict the dishonest buyer with disasters of various kinds and even death.²⁸

The sellers too were expected to tell the truth about the nature of goods sold to the public-the features of the goods displayed for sale. By such, sellers were identified for dealing in genuine goods (*oju lowo/Ija gidi*) and buyers needed not doubt the quality of goods offered for sale.²⁹

While it was believed that the profit motive of an individual was the most effective incentive for people to work and produce, it was socially and morally conditioned. The saying, *owo funni, ko to eniyan* (money making should not supersede good relations) remained vital and enduring because whenever there was conflict between moral and economic values, consideration of the initial always preceded and superseded the latter. Unchecked profit seeking could lead to personal greed and selfishness which was considered harmful to individual morality and consequently, national morality. In the same vein, the concept of *aje* was seen to be spiritually controlled. It is still widely held that the very first customer that a trader receives must be given consideration with the belief that he/she determines the flow of customers for the day. In pre-colonial Igbominaland therefore, as much as possible, such a customer with much persuasion would not be let go even if the negotiating/selling price seemed not too favourable. Hence, the Yoruba expressions, *s¹mi l¹w¹ aje or or¹ s¹ aje*, (be pleased to be my first customer), *se aje nw¹ gba?* (hope sales are profitable), *aje o wa o* (may profitable sales be made), etc.

On the whole, it must finally be appreciated that the economy of Igbominaland in the pre-colonial era, supported and geared up by the traditional religions i.e. *Àwòrò Òsé*, *Àgbààsin*, *Awóji*, *Orisà Oko*, etc.³² and Igbomina ethic was totally indigenous before the advent of the European merchants in the 15th century and colonialism in the 19th century.

Conclusion

With religion as the bedrock of every society, man has had to live and find his place in the universe. In the process of his struggle for survival (food, shelter, clothing...), man has left behind traces of his achievements at various levels of his developments and the cumulative knowledge of his various achievements constitutes what is referred to as culture. The study revealed that the Igbomina, propelled by their moral and economic ethics rooted in their religion had remarkably developed viable and enduring socio-cultural, economic and political institutions; many of which had not only survived the relentless onslaught of the twenty-first century but also the threat posed in some cases by the two most contentious and competing religions: Islam and Christianity. Hence, their agrarian and subsidiary economic activities served and enhanced both the secular and spiritual needs.

Developments at both the colonial and post-colonial periods brought about several changes and continuities. In other words, the influence of Islam and Christianity as well as colonialism brought about both new developments and challenges on the different aspects of the Igbomina economy which had either direct or indirect impact on their ethics. To mention a few of such aspects include: transportation/communication, farm mechanization, monetary institutions, monetization or mode of exchange, land policies, crop production, dietary laws, vocational choice and subsidiary jobs, etc. Even in the face of Islam and Christianity or government's economic policies, God-factor is dominant and pervasive not only in the economic activities of the Igbomina but equally in every other institution. Their ethics and (traditional) economic values guiding their code and conducts are till today primarily determined and influenced by the religious injunction they adhere to -be it the traditional religion, Islam or Christianity.

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A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF OKPANACHI'S DAY BREAK

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Abstract

Since the first major flourishing of stylistics in the 1960's, different linguistic paradigms and other academic trends of the time have made the field to branch off into a great variety of sub-fields; one of such sub-fields is linguistic stylistics of literary texts. This paper is a linguistic stylistic analysis of Okpanachi's short story, *Day Break*. Motivation for the study is predicated on the critical role style plays in conveying author's thematic preoccupations, and appreciation, by the readers, of literary text. Quantitative research method using Leech and Short's (2007) Checklist of Linguistic and Stylistic Categories using sentence types and sentence complexity was used to collect the data. The paper has found that the writer has conveyed his message through effective manipulation of sentence types and sentence complexity. The study recommends that a comparative linguistic stylistic analysis of *Day Break* and *Time Stops* should be carried out by other researchers. It is further recommended that other linguistic categories such as figures of speech, context and cohesion, phonology and graphology, not covered in this research, should be studied by other researchers.

Keywords: Linguistic stylistics, short story, sentence complexity, sentence types, linguistic categories.

Introduction

Unraveling the synthesis of thought in literary texts is very critical in the general appreciation of the texts; this is mainly achieved through evaluating the use of language in the texts. Inadequate or poor grasp of the author's style could mar the intended and expected good appreciation of literary texts. It is in this light that this paper provides a stylistic analysis of Okpanachi's short story *Day Break*. The conduct of this study is predicated on the fact that no similar work, as far as the researchers are concerned, has been conducted. The study is intended to be of great benefit to upcoming researchers in the fields of

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