

Traditional Religious State Apparatus in selected Yorùbá Films

Ibikunle, Tolulope

Abstract

Yorùbá video films are representations of the Yorùbá religious, social, cultural and political life. Several studies have examined Yorùbá films from diverse perspectives, with little attention paid to the representation of the religious apparatuses of the traditional state. The traditional state is ancient, primeval and also different from the colonial practice. Through Şaworoide, and Agogo Èèwò, this paper discusses the impact and importance of the religious apparatus to the traditional state. Using a semiotic reading of the selected films, the paper explores how the religious state apparatus controls and influences the democratic value of the traditional state represented in selected films. This paper interrogates how the religious apparatus represented impinges on checks and balances in the political structure of the traditional state through the filmic state actors and state insignias. The representation of the religious apparatus of the traditional state in Şaworoide, and Agogo Èèwò demonstrate that there is a significant awareness of the roles that religious apparatuses played in moulding Yoruba societies as a nation state.

Keywords: representation, state apparatus, state insignia, traditional state, Yorùbá video films

Introduction

As an advocate and part of a particular culture, community and society, artists endeavour to use their artistry to improve on their society. To achieve this, they employ different styles, starting from the medium of communication to tapping information from the religion, tradition, culture, history, economy and philosophy of their immediate society. Therefore, the idea of arts for art's sake becomes inappropriate and not applicable to Yoruba artists and their works. This makes the works of the Yoruba artists overtly and stridently moralistic. Hence, the information they intend to pass to their society becomes so crucial to them that the method of conveying it also becomes highly significant.

The state and its apparatuses is another important and presiding grist that overtly or covertly inspires artist. The relevance of the concept of state to diverse disciplines is evident in McAuley (2003) submission that recently, it has been impractical to have a passing look at major books on politics without noticing the increased scholarly attention on the concept, theories, structure and

notion of the state. Artists are not left out, as they are very responsive to the situation of the state, its apparatuses and actors. This is evident in the different forms of art that discuss diverse challenges and ills plaguing the state. It is in this respect that Yorùbá artists, especially the filmmakers, employ the notion of the traditional and modern state in their narratives.

This paper will therefore explore different activities of the state apparatus and actors represented in *Şaworoide*, and *Agogo È̀ewò* to discuss the importance of the filmmakers to exposing different negative activities of the state and at the same time applaud the positive. Through these two films purposively selected for this paper, attention will be on the traditional state, which is an organization within the society that co-exists and interacts through different apparatuses. The analysis will therefore be narrowed down to the spiritual apparatus in particular in order for the paper to be precise and detailed.

The Concept of State : Traditional and Modern

An impressive body of scholarly works exist on the structure and theories of the state; an inexhaustible list would include Hutchins (1942), Awólàlú (1987), Dunleavy and O'Leary, (1987), Mitchell (1999), Hay, (1996) and many others. These intellectuals write from diverse stance, peculiar to their field of study. From various perspectives, they addressed the definitions, types, roles, theories and functions of the state. This paper dwells on the perspectives of three major scholars on the concept of state; (Charrad, 2001), (Gupta, 1995) and Sharma and Gupta, (2006). Hence the state is discussed as;

- a. As a solid geographical entity, with recognizable boundaries and borders-Nigeria. Sometimes, this is referred to as “the nation-state; a nation-state with administrative control over fixed territorial boundaries” (Charrad, 2001).
- b. As a bureaucratic structure or apparatus - as government and institutions set up to administer the geographical expression that is sometimes alternatively called the ‘nation’ or the state.
- c. As an imagined socio-cultural entity - the peoples of Yorùbá descent and extraction in Nigeria, Cuba, America, and Brazil, all of which belong to a single Yorùbá nation.

From the above perspectives of the concept of state, it is evident that the state is a representative of the society as a whole. Therefore, the state possesses the legitimate supremacy to oversee all activities of the society. In agreement with these perspectives, the state is divided into traditional and modern for the purpose of this paper.

Almost every Yorùbá traditional community is under a sovereign jurisdic-

tion. Consequently, by traditional state, this paper is particularly referring to a distinguished style of governance, which is different from colonial style, form and manifestation. Therefore, a traditional state includes different traditional and indigenous institutions; political, social, religious and economic. In other words, when a state is referred to as traditional, it absorbs the culture, tradition, religion, philosophy, ideology, custom, economy and totality of a particular set of people principally in the pre-colonial period. This orthodox and primordial structure is ritualistic, ceremonial, ancestral and conservative. In this traditional state, monarchy is the representation of government, with king performing political and divine functions even while there are other subordinate clan-heads and chiefs that oversee other state apparatuses, largely taking directives from the king.

The modern state on the other hand is a form and structure that has institutions and a legitimate authority. Hence, the modern state is “a compulsory political organization with a centralized government that maintains a monopoly of the legitimate use of force within a certain territory” (Weber1989:36). The apparatus of modern state comprises different institutions with administrative bureaucracies, legal structure, military and religious organizations. Also, the political apparatus of the modern state is distinct and discrete from every other organization in the modern society. The executive, judiciary, legislative and also civil service, are some of the institutional sections of the modern state. This is as a result of the fact that they all are legally and formally synchronized. Consequently, in the modern state, citizens have different rights as well as responsibilities and duties they perform, which makes them important and significant to the state formation. All citizens of the state recognize the advantages and disadvantages of the state. Equally, they believe in the capability, supremacy and legitimate functions and influence of the state on their daily activities (Abrams, 1988; McAuley, 2003).

The State Apparatus : Repressive and Ideological

State apparatuses are the various sectors, organizations and structures of the state that are controlled by different state actors. The state apparatuses include political, religious and social units. Althusser (1970) identifies two broad categories of state apparatuses, based on their mode of operation: these are ideological and repressive state apparatuses. The ideological state apparatus is a number of realities, which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions that operates through principles, ideas and philosophy (Althusser 1970). In this regard, the religious, family, political, economy and cultural systems of the state are under the ideological apparatus of the state. Since the traditional state operates mainly from the

ideological perspective, it therefore falls under the ideological apparatus. Thus, the kings, chiefs and every other actor of the traditional state perform their duties using traditional ideas, customs, philosophy and principle that are largely ideological. Dwelling largely on the ideological apparatus is not eradicating the fact that some traditional state apparatus also operates as repressive. Therefore, the traditional state portrayed in both *Şaworoide*, and *Agogo Èèwò* prominently foregrounds the ideological apparatus while it reflects the repressive state apparatus in the background.

Repressive state apparatus is largely applicable to the sectors of the state that maintains law and order. While discussing the notion of repressive apparatus of the state, Althusser (1970) opines that the repressive apparatus belongs completely to the public zone and that it operates largely by repression, which sometimes involves suppression, subjugation and dictatorship. This sector of the state with other similarly organized divisions that are responsible for the enforcement of law and order also carry out external relations. The repressive state apparatus therefore includes Military (Army and police) and Paramilitary, which are mainly for safety and security of the state. It is apposite to include that the repressive apparatus function by violence. Both ideological and repressive apparatus have their separate and distinct duties, responsibilities and roles that are peculiar to them. These responsibilities determine their services and functionalities. As a consequence, there is a subtle interaction between how both the repressive and ideological state apparatuses function in the state. However, the focus here being on the religious apparatus of the traditional state, the analysis will foreground the ideological apparatus without ignoring the slight interface of the repressive form.

Semiotics of Culture

Chandler (2007) is of the opinion that the theory of semiotics exposes us to different cultural attributes that helps in making sense of our world. These attributes are the web of customs, traditions, norms, practices and different cultural values handed over by members of a particular culture from one generation to another. Hence, by the nature of the talking drum, the Yoruba people attach so much importance to its melody and rhythm. This is because “*enikan ò m'èdè àyàn bí eni tó mú kòngó ẹ́ dání*” – he who controls the drumstick, determines the language of the drum. Since the drum speaks with codes, which the drummer controls with the drumstick, it takes someone with the understanding of the drum's ‘language’ to interpret or unravel the message. This message according to (Odebunmi 2014) can only be figured out within a cultural context. This is because the drum and its code are culture specific and every particular rhythm has a cultural code. Consequently, the discourse here employs the cultural as-

pect of semiotics theory since it is a discipline that connects smoothly to film representation, especially with the cultural/traditional attributes. This submission is in accord with Ogundeji (1988) suggestion that the perfect domain of iconization is theatre.

Cultural semiotics, according to Cassirer (1923), is the study of sign system in a culture with regard to what individuals contribute to the culture, and the study of culture as sign system with respect to the advantages and disadvantages which an individual experiences in belonging to specific culture. To Posner (2004), if one classifies the entirety of the sign systems in the world as the “semiosphere”, one can conclude that cultural semiotics studies cultures as parts of the semiosphere. From Posner’s point of view, cultural semiotics demonstrates a scientific framework for comparative description of all cultures in the world. Hence, the semiotic approach to culture contends with the traditional procedures of the humanities, the social sciences, and the normative disciplines, since humans express their various feelings or ideas using semiotic. Consequently, this discourse adopts the cultural semiotics to explore the portrayal of specific practices of the Yorùbá culture and community in the filmic world.

Traditional State Apparatus in Yoruba Films

The state portrayed in both *Şaworoide* and *Agogo Èèwò* is built on the ideological apparatus, which operates through the Yorùbá ideological system. The ideological state apparatus is predominant to the governing system of traditional state of Jogbo depicted in *Şaworoide* and *Agogo Èèwò*. It is important to note also that as the ideological state apparatus is in the fore of the filmic worlds, the repressive state apparatus is in the background. This suggests that when handling issues ideologically the traditional state applies the repressive form, in order to achieve certain goal. The traditional state apparatus depicted in both films incorporate different state institutions; political, economic, religious, educational, to social, and security.

Discussion on the apparatus of the traditional state depicted in these films cannot be complete without emphasis on the state actors and the institutions. Attention also needs to be placed on the insignia of office, as this is the link between state actors and the state institutions in which they function in the filmic world. In *Şaworoide* and *Agogo Èèwò*, state actors are representatives that stand for or symbolize a body or a person. They are spokespersons and officers of the body they represent. They are selected, commissioned, delegated, and appointed by the state. They act as ambassador of the state by taking actions on behalf of the state, but their activities are regulated by the same state. These filmic state actors take charge of the political, social, religious and economic

activities of the state. They are also referred to as the elite group and the beau monde. The governance and leadership of the traditional state is therefore on their shoulders, which gives them the privilege and opportunity to control the resources. These state actors are; the kings, chiefs, religious leaders, and other active state ambassadors and emissaries.

Both films present different characters as fictional state actors to portray real state actors in the filmmakers' attempt to expose the ills plaguing their society. Since filmic characters portray people directly or indirectly, filmmakers create their filmic/fictional characters to give a clear picture of their narration. This is in agreement with Abraham (1992) that 'characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader, as being endowed with particular moral, intellectual and emotion qualities by inference from what the person say and their distinctive ways of saying it'. Therefore, the kings - Lápité and Adébòsípò - oversee the political apparatus with the aid and support of their chiefs. These political leaders as iconic signification, explains the responsibilities and roles of the kings and chiefs in the traditional Yorùbá society. Other important state actors include the chief priest, Amawo, who controls the religious apparatus of the traditional state, the Ìyálóde/Ìyálájé who is in charge of women, trade and the economy of the state and several other actors.

Filmmakers use different styles, modes and signs to depict their characters in their filmic worlds. Since the state actors control the state institutions, the traditional state designs insignias of office, which symbolise power and authority. These insignias are as important as the state actors and the institutions, for they depict the functionality and supremacy of the state and its actors. Also, the insignias connect the state actors to specific state institutions. Thus, the three attributes become important to this work, to be able to analyse the features of the traditional state.

Traditional Religious Apparatus in *Şaworoide* and *Agogo Èèwò*

Religion is the way of life in the traditional African society. Aside giving the Africans a sense of security and identity, the religion demonstrates to them how to act in different situations and how to solve their problems (Mbiti 1978). The Yoruba indigenous religion is described as traditional or indigenous because it is a belief system passed down from one generation to the other. (Crowther et al 1995). The foundation of Yoruba religious belief is Olódùmarè, the Supreme Being. According to Ogungbemi (2017), Olódùmarè has not only given the Yorùbá the pattern of political structure and governance but also provided avenues by which human problems can be solved without necessarily calling on him for small matters. Aderibigbe (2017) describes the impact of traditional religion by

explaining that it is concerned with supporting overall prosperity and sustenance of the community. Adeleye (1988) maintains that religion has psychological functions, which may not be readily translatable into social functions. It is essential to note also that religion has accounted in large part for the fact that values in almost all human societies are not mere hodgepodge but constitute a hierarchy. For this reason, Adeleye (1988:63) asserts that it is vital to know that “religion defines the ultimate values in the said hierarchy”.

The very nature of the Yoruba traditional religion as evident in both *Şaworoide* and *Agogo Èèwò* leads to concrete actions in the form of taboo, ritual and sacrifices. These actions are strongly connected to the traditional Yorùbá state as state insignias for balancing the hegemony of the state. These insignias are several symbols of authority and power that are connected to the religious apparatus of the state. They have different spiritual implications specific to the different state apparatuses and actors they interface with. These insignias explain the deep connection of different institutions of the traditional state to the religious apparatus. *Şaworoide*, and *Agogo Èèwò* explain the interactions between the political and spiritual apparatus of the state by depicting the democratic structure of the traditional state form.

The two films explore the prescribed pact between a filmic traditional state of Jogbo and the people, including the chiefs and the kings that rule the land, as well as the instruments of the pact itself, which are insignias of office peculiar to the state. *Şaworoide*; *Agogo Èèwò* and *adéide*, are the three major insignia of office that stand as cultural symbols of authority and power. The means of fulfilling this pact include *gbéré sínsín* and *ìbúra*. Using cultural semiotics, the insignias are cultural significations, which depict the constitutional process with which the traditional state form of Jogbo is governed. As evident in *Şaworoide*, the founders of Jogbo kingdom have attending taboos and totems - state insignias that guide the political apparatus - that serve as check and balance on the people from generation to generation. Hence, Oníjogbo àkókó gives instructions and afterwards asks for Ifá’s opinion on his prescriptions thus:

...kí ẹ rọ adé ide kan şaworo eti ilù àti àdó ide kan, kí ẹ fi òmò gbé igi ilù dundún-kan kí ẹ fi şe ilù...kí ni Ifá ní kí a şe si o... (*Şaworoide* 1999)

[...Fashion out a brass crown, drum, and jingle bells and a small container. Carve a drum frame and make a drum...what are the instructions of Ifá?]

The Ifá priest afterwards consults Ifá to know the next appropriate action to be taken by the religious apparatus. After the consultation, the priest reveals the

instruction of Ifa through Èṣẹ Ifá, which gives detailed explanation, clarification, and at the same decodes Ifá's instructions, directive and commandment:

Aṣọ funfun ní sunkún aró
Ipilẹ̀ ọ̀rọ̀ ní sunkún èkejì tantantan...
Adífún adéròmókùn
Omọ ọ̀ni Àlànàkàn èṣùrún,
Níjọ́ tí mékún ṣèràhùn ire gbogbo.
Bókán bá yọ́ nínú igbó, a bọ̀nà wá,
Ire, ire gbogboò mò tètè wá jogbo wá o
Ire gbogbo
Bá a báda mi sórí,
A bésẹ̀ wá
Ire, ire gbogboò mò tètè wá jogbo wá o
Ire gbogboò
(Ṣaworoidẹ 1999)

The white clothes is yearning for indigo dye
First part of the statement calls for the second part
An oracle was consulted for Aderomokun
Son of Ooni Alanakan Esuru
When he was crying for all blessings
If Okan appears in the grove
It comes towards path
May all blessing come to Jogbo
All blessing
When water is showered on the head
It will run down to feet
May all blessing come to Jogbo
All blessing

From the above Èṣẹ Ifa, one can deduce emphasis on reality, prayers, appeal, well wishes, warning and repercussion. After this divination, the priest further gives instructions on what to do, how and when to do it;

A ó wàá kó ewé ifá yí jọ, a ó wá ṣe é bí ó ti yẹ, a ó wá mú awẹ̀ àgbáàárín Kan, à ó

fi sínú ihò tó n bẹ ninú Adéide, à á mú awẹ àgbáàárín kejì, à ó jù ú sí inú igi ilù Şaworoide. Gbogbo ewé ifá tí ó kù, à ó jó o ní èjǐjǐ, à ó wá rọ ọ sínú àdó idẹ. Èjǐ-jǐ yì là ó fi sín gbéré fún Àyàngalú, Èjǐjǐ yì kan náà là ó máa fi sín gbéré fún gbogbo àwọn Oníjogbi tí ó bá n jẹ. À ó wá mú orù tí a lò, à ó wá fọ mólẹ yángá

(Şaworoide 1999)

We would now gather all these Ifá leaves, we will then employ them as appropriate, we will burn into powder and then pour it into the brass container. The powder is to be rubbed into the incision made on Àyàngalú. The same powder will also be used for all enthroned Jogbo kings. We will take the used pot and break it into fragments.

This instruction remains one of the most important parts of the narrative, as it gives a detailed and comprehensive foundation, which the narration is built on. It also explains the connection between the sacred drum, the ceremonial crown, the drummer, the kings, the people and the spiritual head. The narration gives an insight to how the apparatuses of the traditional state is knitted together and placed carefully under the watch and guidance of the spiritual head. Consequently, the Eşẹ Ifá as the initiating incidence of the narrative keeps appearing through both films. It is this Eşẹ Ifa and the instructions that follow it that explicate the strong position of the spiritual apparatus in the narrative. The spiritual apparatus is so strong that the political apparatus and other apparatuses of the state of Jogbo are built on it. This makes Amawo, the state actor overseeing the spiritual apparatus, very important and significant personnel in and to the state.

This activity of the spiritual apparatus is in accordance with Fatokun (2005) submission that the chief priest confronts any force that challenges the well-being of the society by giving spiritual fortification and advises on strategies in consultation with the gods. The directives by the spiritual head therefore indicate that the traditional state form is organized and has its own protocols to control the apparatuses of the state. The pact, rituals and rules of conduct designed for the political apparatus of the traditional state are built solely on the spiritual apparatus. The insignias are deliberately invented and methodically connected with the state actors through distinct spiritual means and procedures as Amawo explains to Lápitẹ that:

Amawo: Okùn tó yi tí n bẹ nínú àdó idẹ yì, òhun ló so adé-idẹ pòmọ şaworoide. Òhun náà lo sì so Àyàngalú pọ mọ gbogbo wọn. Okùn kan yì náà ni yóò so iwọ ọba tuntun pọ mọ gbogbo wọn. Tọ ọ bá ti búra tí mo sì sín ọ ní

gbéré. Èmi gégé bí ẹlẹrì láàárín gbogbo yín. (Şaworoide 1999)

Amawo: *The strong link inside the ado ide, binds the Ade ide with the Şaworoide and with Àyàngalú. The link will bind you as the new king with them all as you take the oath and incisions. They are all connected to the origin of Jogbo. I stand as a witness between all of you...*

The above explanation by the spiritual head is evidence that every ingredient prescribed by Ifá to generate the pact – insignia are symbolic and connotative. The steps to achieve the pact are also significant and peculiar to political safety and security of the state of Jogbo. It portrays the filmic traditional state as a monarchical state where power is shared within the state actors – kings, chiefs, priest and the people – and Àyàngalú. The monarchical structure of government as depicted in these films enables checks and balances through the spiritual apparatus, using the pact. As a consequence, the spiritual apparatus and the people control the excesses of the corrupt state actors.

As evident in *Şaworoide*, Lápitẹ, who stands as an iconic signification and representative of the corrupt state actors, attempts breaching the traditional constitution of passage rite to the throne of Jogbo. As the spiritual apparatus commences the ritual, Lápitẹ attacks them with a gun saying

Lápitẹ: Bàbá Amawo, Ẹ mọ yọ ra yí lẹnu rárá, Èmi ò ní búra kankan, n ò sì ní sín gbéré

Baba Amawo, do not bother yourself, no oath-taking and no incision for me

Amawo/Àyàngalú: Èèwò! a à gbórú ẹ rí, Èèwò ni, Ó lẹwu! Orò tí í sọni dọba gan ni

Impossible! It is unheard- of and dangerous

It is the rite to the throne

Lápitẹ: ...E wá o, ẹ ní sùúrù fúnra yín, èmi l'ọba ni àbẹyin?

Bí ò ó tí sẹ tẹmi ni mo wí un

A tí parí orò a tí sẹ tán

Excuse me! I am the king!

I am surely having my way!

We are done with the ritual

Amawo/Àyàngalú: A à tí ì sẹ tán

Not yet.

Lápitẹ: A à tí ì ẹ̀ ẹ̀ kìnì! Mo lá a ti ẹ̀ tán

A ti parí orò a ti ẹ̀ tán! kini mo wí

We have not done what! I said we are done!

We are done with the rituals! What did I say?

Amawo/Àyangalú: Ẹ̀ lá a ti ẹ̀ tán

You said we are done.

Lápitẹ dismisses the passage rite without concluding the rituals. The spiritual head and Ayangalu exclaim out of shock and disappointment that:

Amawo/Àyangalú: Ọba Ílú Jogbo!

Ọba ara rẹ̀ ma lelé yì!

The king of Jogbo!

Surely this one is his own personal king

The submission gives an insight to the challenges the state will face, as the political head is illegal and illegitimate without having obtained spiritual certification through the prescribed rite of passage. The palace sage explains the consequences of this action:

...Ẹ̀lòmùrà̀n yòd ba ọ̀ba pín adé rẹ̀ dé nù ẹ̀ ẹ̀ ọ̀ba tí ò bá sìn gbéré. Ewu keji ni pé, bí ọ̀ba kan ò bá fi sìn gbéré tó sù dé adé idẹ̀ sórí, ti Àyàngalú bá fi lu ẹ̀ saworoidẹ̀ létí rẹ̀, orí ní o fọ̀ ọ̀ba náà pa. (Ẹ̀ saworoidẹ̀ 1999)

...Another person will share the crown with that king who refuses to take the incision. The second risk is that if the king wears the crown without having the incision, and Àyàngalú beats the saworoidẹ̀, the king will die of a terrible headache.

When the corrupt king starts tormenting the people of Jogbo, the youths consult the spiritual apparatus through Amawo- the priest, to find a solution to the corrupt and oppressive political leadership/structure:

Àgékù: *Baba! Ẹ̀ kò rí gbogbo nìkan tó n ẹ̀ ẹ̀ lẹ̀ láàárín ilú!... Ipá a wa fẹ̀ pín...Ẹ̀ fún wa nùmòrà̀n. Kí la tún lẹ̀ ẹ̀?*
(Ẹ̀ saworoidẹ̀ 1999)

Àgékù: *Father! Do you see everything going on in the town...*

We are overwhelmed ...Advice us. What can we do?

Amawo proposes that the youth abscond with the crown for fourteen days, after which the king will be eliminated since he is illegitimate. Immediately the youths successfully escape with the crown, Lapité summons the same spiritual head in order to enquire for the way out of the problem:

Lápitẹ: *Bàbá Amawo! Şẹ ẹ ti gbọ ohun tó şẹlẹ? Ki là á wá şẹ?Ètùtù wo làá şẹ?*

(Şaworoide 1999)

Lápitẹ: *Amawo! You have heard what happened? What do we do? What spiritual processes do we employ to address this?*

The king and youth seeking Amawo's assistance indicate the importance and significance of the spiritual apparatus to the traditional state. Also, the demand portrays the spiritual apparatus as the foundation on which the political apparatus of the traditional state is built, and only through which any problem and challenges peculiar to the throne can be solved.

Agogo Èèwọ is not left out as Adébòsípò also consults Amawo to curb the excesses of his corrupt chiefs:

Adébòsípò: *Şé kò sí orò ilú u.Jogbo tí ó de ijòyè bí şaworoide şe de Oba ni?*

(Agogo Èèwọ2002)

Adébòsípò: *Is there no check for the chiefs as şaworoide is for the kings?*

Amawo: *Nígbàtí Oníjogbo àkókó, tó fi ipilẹ̀sẹ̀ şaworoide àti adé ide lílẹ̀ fún àwọn oba, ó sọ tàwọn ijòyè náà, òhun ni orò ago- go èèwọ. Şùgbón àwọn ijòyè àtíjọ, wón bèrẹ̀ sí ẹ ẹ ti títi ó fi wa di ohun igbàgbé tẹnikan ò yà síi mó. Şùgbón kábíèsí, a lẹ̀ jí i dide*

(Agogo Èèwọ2002)

When the first king of Jogbo invents the Şaworoide pact for the kings, he also invents Agogo èèwọ pact for the chiefs. But it was phased out the ancient chiefs and eventually it was discarded. But your highness, we can revive it.

Amawo explains further and backs up his claim of the Agogo Èèwọ with the exact Eşẹ ifa that was used by the first babalawo who invented the Agogo èèwọ:

Amawo: *Bí babaláwo àkókó ti gbọ lẹnu ifá rẹ é:*

According to the first Ifa priest, here is the narration:

(Agogo Èèwò2002)

Babaláwo: *Ògúndá Mèjì*

Afipá lówó wọn ù kádún

A fi wàràwàrà là, tí s'ológun, wọn ù dọla

Bó pé títi n ó lówó,

wọn ní bẹ lábà tí jèsun isu

Ojọ ẹsan ò lọ títi kò jórò ó dun ni,

Adiáfún Adigunlà tí ó digun sèse.

Kèèpé o kèèjìnà

Ẹ wá wofá awó o kì bí ti í sẹ,

Ifá dé aláṣe, ọpẹ, abisẹ wàrà.

...Bọmọdẹ kan bá ní jèwò, bẹnikan ò bí

Bó pé títi, ohun tíi bi ni a máa bi ni

Èèwò a sì béèrè wò

Mọ sẹ é èwò, èèwò ni ẹ jòpọ rẹ

...Ifá ni à á rọ agogo kan, à á mọ ọ pè ní Agogo èèwò

(Agogo Èèwò2002)

Those who get rich by force do not last a year

Those who acquire instant wealth do not last a day

The patience ones are alive enjoying a life of bliss

The day of retribution is at hand

The oracle is consulted for Adigunla

That would wage war to hurt him.

Not too long and not too far,

Just take note of how the words of If

Through the priest become reality. Ifá has spoken;

One with authority palm tree is the one with quick command

If a youngster violates a taboo

If nobody checks him, sooner or later,

He will face the consequences, as the taboo will ask

Do not do a taboo; it is a taboo so ignores it.

Ifa instructs that we fashion a gong to be called Gong of taboo.

Eventually, with the help of Chief Priest - Amawo, Adébòsípò, retrieves the oath ritual for the chiefs, which enables him to completely eradicate corruption from the state. Following several instances and intervention of the religious apparatus and the actor that oversees the institution, it is evident that the spiritual head of the traditional state ranks next to the king in terms of power and authority (Munoz, 2003). There is a belief that Ifá, represented by the spiritual head, is filled with wisdom. It is in this light that people consult the spiritual head for advice and he resolves virtually all the problems, following the rules and regulations of the state institution he controls. This is an indexical signification that points to the nature and relevance of the traditional religious institution and actors to the state.

Conclusion

This paper has aspired to explore the depiction of the Yoruba traditional state form with particular attention to the religious apparatus in two Yorùbá films. Through the application of the theory and tenets of cultural semiotics to the discussion on the traditional Yoruba state form depicted in *Şaworoide* and *Ago-go Èèwò*, it is evident that the traditional state is solely built on the spiritual apparatus of the state. The paper submits that the king is the earthly representation of political power that takes his authority, source and inspiration from the religious order that is represented by Amawo, the head of religious apparatus. This suggests that the office of the Olúáwo is so central to the socio-political, religious and cultural life of the state; hence, the Olúáwo consults on socio-political, religious or cultural issues. It is in this regard that the paper dwells more on several activities and involvement of the spiritual apparatus of the traditional state of Jogbo. Following the discussion therefore, the paper submits that despite the king being the head of the traditional state and a vicegerent who represents the ancestors, the spiritual apparatus still controls his activities and that of the political apparatus as a whole. Hence, the relationship between the traditional state and the spiritual apparatus is symbiotic.

REFERENCES

Abrams, P. 1988. *Notes on the difficulty of studying the state. Journal of Historical Sociology.* 1:58-89.

- Abrahams, C. 1992. *A social development practice model for community development*. *Journal of the Community Development*. 23.2: 103-115.
- Adeleye, R.A. 1988. *Power and diplomacy in northern Nigeria 1804-1906: The Sokoto caliphate and its enemies*. Harlow: Longman.
- Althusser, L. 1970. *Ideology and ideological state apparatuses*. *Idem, Lenin and philosophy and other essays*. London: New Left Books.
- Awolalu, J. O. 1987. *The concept of death and hereafter in Yoruba traditional religion*. *Bulletin of West African Religion*. (WAR), 17. 2. Ibadan: Oni Press Ltd.
- Cassirer, E. A. 1923. *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*. 3 vols. Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, English translation: *The Philosophy*
- Charrad, M. 2001. *States and women's right*. London: University of California Press.
- Dunleavy, P. and O'Leary B. 1987. *Theories of the State: the politics of liberal democracy*. Patrick. Macmillan.
- Elam K. 1980. *The semiotic study of Duro Ladipo's mythico-historical plays*. Thesis. *Linguistics and African Languages*. Arts, University of Ibadan.
- Fatokun, A. 2005. *African traditional religion and belief system*. *African culture and civilization*. Ed. A. Ajayi. Ibadan: Screenshot Nig. Ltd. 1-11
- Gupta, A. 1995. *Blurred boundaries: The discourse of corruption, the culture of politics, and the imagined state*. *American Ethnologist*. 22. 2: 375-402.
- Hay, C. 1996. *Re-stating social and political change*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Hutchins, R. M. 1942. *Education for freedom*. Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press.
- Jassop, B. 1982. *The capitalist state: Marxist theories and methods*. Oxford: Martin Robertson.
- McAuley, W. 2003. *An introduction to politics, state and society*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Munoz, L. 2003. *A living tradition: studies on Yoruba civilisation*. Ibadan: Bookcraft.
- Mitchell, W. 1999. *Sociology, economy, and the state*. *Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn*. G. Steipments. Ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Nuijten, M. 2003. *Power, community and the state: the political anthropology of organization in Mexico*. London: Pluto Press.
- Ọdẹbùnmì, A. 2014. *Investigations into meta-communicative lexicon: a contribution to historical pragmatics*. *Discourse Studies*. 16. 6: 853- 854.
- Ogundeji, P.A. 1988. *A semiotic study of Duro Ladipo's mythico-historical Plays*. Thesis. *Linguistics and African Languages*, Arts. University of Ibadan.
- Poggi, G. 1990. *The state, its nature, development and prospects*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Posner, R. 2004. *Basic Task of Cultural Semiotics*. In Gloria Withalm and Josef Wallmannsberger (eds.), *Signs of Power-Power of Signs. Essay in Honor of Jeff Bernard*. Vienna: INST, p.56-89

Schwarzmantel, J. 1994. *The state in contemporary society: an introduction*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Sharma A. and Gupta, A. 2006. *The anthropology of the state*. Australia: Blackwell Publishing.

Weber, M. 1989. *Political power, normativity, political sociology, monopoly, political violence, political authority, separation of powers, government regulation, sovereign states, sovereignty*. Karl Dusza *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*. 3.1: 71-105.

Videography

Kelani, T. 1999. *Şaworoide*. Mainframe Film and Television Productions

Kelani, T. 2002. *Agogo Èèwò*. Mainframe Film and Television Productions