

IBADAN

Journal of English Studies

Vol. 10, 2014

SPECIAL EDITION IN HONOUR OF PROFESSOR
EMERITUS AYO BANJO AT 80

IBADAN:
**JOURNAL
OF
ENGLISH
STUDIES**

• Vol. 10, 2014

**SPECIAL EDITION IN HONOUR OF PROFESSOR
EMERITUS AYO BANJO AT 80**

A publication of the Department of English, University of Ibadan, Ibadan,
Nigeria

© Department of English, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written consent of the copyright owner.

ISSN: 0189-6253

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

Content iv

Editor-in-Chief's Comments vi

1	Halals and Harams of Aesthetic Performance as Cultural Early Warning System: Field Notes Sola Olorunyomi	1
2	Deletion, Aspiration and Nasalisation Rules in Nigerian English Adesina B. Sunday	20
3	Aspiration in Nigerian English Demola Lewis	38
4	Regional Variation of Continuous Speech Processes in Nigerian English Rotimi O. Oladipupo	57
5	The Rules that Keep Tone in the Loci of Stress in Nigerian English: The Case of Some Specified Group of English Words Eunice Fajobi	85
6	Defensive Acts in A Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing Akin Odebummi and Foluke Unuabonah	105
7	Face and Identity Construction: The Self Disclosure Strategies of The HIV/AIDS Infectees Iyabode Omolara Akewo Daniel	129
8	Discourse Conditioning Acts in Alms Begging in Lagos State, Nigeria Okpeadua Sony Okpeadua	158
9	Proverbs and The Pragmatics of Communication in Nigerian English Literature Edmund Bamiro	190

10	English Language Uses and Misuses: Causes and Effects on Nigeria's National Development Wale Adegbite	211
11	Heroism of Suicide in Stoicism and Early Oyo Empire Traditional Political Setting Bosede Adefiola Adebowale	239
12	Eminist Discourses and The City: Buchi Emecheta's <i>The Joys Of Motherhood</i> and Sefi Atta's <i>Everything Good Will Come</i> Lola Akande	270
13	Demystifying "Mysteries" and "Miracles" of Exotic Technology: A Stylistic and Cultural Examination of Aspects of Wole Soyinka's Writings Samson Dare	299
14	Redressing Generational Otherness: Discursive Negotiations in Akeem Lasisi's <i>Night of My Flight</i> Yomi Olusegun - Joseph	314
15	Cultural Motifs and Rhetoric in Rex Lawson's "So Ala Temem" Benjamin Asodionye Ejiofor & Anthony Uchechukwu Okoro	331
16	Teachers' frequency of Assessment, Classroom Management and Instructional Delivery as Predictors of Students' academic Achievement in English Language and Mathematics at SSS 2 in Lagos State Ibrahim A. Abdullahi & Dr Felix O. Ibode	349

Heroism of Suicide in Stoicism and Early Oyo Empire Traditional Political Setting

Bosede Adefiola Adebowale

University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

Abstract

Suicide, as a concept, has been a subject of philosophical, psychological, sociological and religious inquiry in ancient, medieval and modern history of ideas. Through the course of history, suicide has evoked a wide range of reactions. It has been both condemned and condoned by various societies. Generally, suicide is regarded as an anti-social behaviour, condemned by Christianity, Islam and Traditional Religions. Despite the condemnation, suicide was still condoned under certain circumstances. For instance, in ancient Greece and in the early Oyo Yoruba political setting, suicide was an acceptable way of dealing with military defeat in order to preserve national and personal honour and dignity. Therefore, a number of questions such as 'what have constituted suicide?' 'To what extent can suicide be considered a rational choice?' 'And what is the moral permissibility of suicide?' have been raised. Philosophical arguments, regarding whether or not suicide can be morally acceptable, range from strong opposition to its perception as a sacrosanct right. The latter is a strong tenet of the Stoics who consider suicide as an honorific act. Although the Yoruba condemn suicide, they also condone and even consider it an honourable thing to do under certain circumstances. This paper examines the honourable aspects of Stoics' concepts of suicide and the politically motivated suicide in the early Oyo Empire traditional political organization such as the case where a host of title holders, known as

abobaku, had to commit suicide at the demise of the king so as to accompany him to the hereafter. Today, however, many commit suicide not out of traditional obligation but to escape what seems to be unbearable circumstances claiming that suicide is a personal choice. This paper argues that no matter how plausible the idea is suicide is inadmissible and abominable from every standpoint.

Key words: Suicide, Honour, Stoicism, Oyo traditional political setting

Introduction

Throughout history, suicide as philosophical, psychological, sociological and religious subject has generated problems in moral understanding. Many societies have perceived suicide as wrong, not only against oneself but also against the society. For years, the general understanding of the word 'suicide' has been commonly defined, simply as, "the taking of one's own life". In addition, in the western tradition, suicide has always held a negative connotation with most people believing that suicide as a solution to a problem is a cowardly act. It has even been viewed as the action of someone who is mentally unstable. In the English language, the word suicide was developed somewhere around 1651 as noted by Velasquez who adds that "prior to the seventeenth century, the English terms for suicide included self - homicide, self - destruction, and self - murder" (1987:48). The term 'suicide' is derived from the Latin word *suicidium*, a combination of two Latin words, *sui* - self, and *caedere* - to kill; hence, the term suicide literally means 'to kill oneself' which denotes a deliberate or intentional action causing one's own death.

The word 'suicide' has been assigned various definitions according to the philosophical psychological and sociological theories and cultural perspectives in which it is defined. Nevertheless, there is much to learn when considering the question of what exactly is meant by the word suicide or what constitutes what is referred to as suicide. Ordinarily, if an average man walking on the streets is asked to define suicide, he would probably say "suicide is when a person takes his own life". This definition does not put into consideration the factor or circumstances that prompt such reaction from an individual. Hence, a more comprehensive definition is needed to explain the term 'suicide'. For

instance, Fairbairn (1995: 58) defines suicide as “an attempt to inflict death upon oneself and is intentional rather than consequential in nature.” In this definition, Fairbairn emphasises that for a death to be referred to as suicide, the intention of the individual involved matters. In line with this definition, Emile Durkheim, a sociologist, defines suicide as a “death resulting directly or indirectly from a positive or negative act of the victim himself, which he knows will produce this result” (Durkheim, 1897:42). Beauchamp, another sociologist, with the mind that Durkheim’s definition is neither sufficient nor comprehensive enough, for it left some fundamental questions and issues on suicide unanswered, formulates what can be regarded as ‘a narrower and more solid’ definition of suicide. Beauchamp asserts:

An act or omission is a suicide if a person intentionally brings about his or her own death, unless the death (a) is coerced or (b) is caused by conditions that are not specifically arranged by the agent for the purpose of bringing about death (1996:114).

According to Beauchamp, the death of a person coerced into taking his or her own life should not be considered as suicide. The individual committing suicide must intentionally bring about his or her own death without external motivation or force.

There are various reasons why people exhibit suicidal behaviour. But the most widely accepted reason why some people kill themselves is desperation. However, it has been noted that some other people take their lives in an act of self-sacrifice. In explaining the rationale behind suicide, Baeschler (1979:60) considers suicide as the response of individuals to certain life problems. A psychologist, Karl Menninger, in his theory, pinpoints three distinct psychic elements in suicide: “the wish to kill, the wish to be killed and the wish to die” (1938:45). Shneidman Edwin, a mentalist, sees suicide as an act emphasising an “unbearable psychological pain” (1981:225).

The act of suicide, according to Kant (1963:148), has been viewed in various ways; many societies have held it to be reprehensible, or

permissible, or even heroic. From heroic perspective, Kupfer (1990: 73-74) asserts that suicide can be regarded as being honourable if it aims at protecting the lives or well-being of others. A good example that goes along with this notion is of a spy who takes his life in order to prevent being subjected to torture that will lead to his revealing vital information, especially about his country. Cosculluela (1995: 76-81) opines that the good consequences of suicide might outweigh its bad consequences in such a way that the suicide might be considered admirable 'or even morally obligatory'. Looking at suicide from another angle, Dworkin (1993: 238) expresses that no matter the rationale behind the action, suicide does not show "regard for the sanctity of life", while many others consider suicide as 'arrant cowardice'.

Kant asserts that there was a time in Greek and Roman history when suicide was regarded as honourable, that the Romans forbade their slaves to commit suicide because they did not belong to themselves but to their masters as they were regarded as 'things'. Considering Kupfer and Cosculluela's ideas on suicide as being honourable and admirable, certain instances of suicide among the ancient Greeks and Yoruba traditional political setting cannot be overlooked but be considered as acts of heroism. Jayawickreme and Stefano (2012:14) define heroism as "an individual's commitment to a noble purpose, usually aimed at furthering the welfare of others, and involving the willingness to accept the consequences of achieving that purpose." For instance, the suicide of Socrates and Seneca cannot be regarded as cowardly, neither is the suicide of the *Abòbakú* and some politically motivated suicides of high-placed chiefs among the Yoruba be described as 'arrant cowardice'.

The Stoics consider living an honourable and virtuous life when it lasts as a necessity. To the Stoic, only a virtuous man can ultimately release himself from troubles by committing suicide, which, according to the Stoics, is simple and acquiescence in Fate which crowns the good man's life. The Stoics suggest suicide as the only remedy for failure. Many Stoics philosophers acted according to their philosophical tenet. For instance, Zeno of Citium, the founder of Stoicism, committed

suicide as well as Cleanthes of Assos and Seneca, the tutor of Emperor Nero.

Historical Background of the Yoruba People

The Yoruba people inhabit the southwestern part of Nigeria, where they form one of the major ethnic groups. The Yoruba people occupy the whole of Ogun, Oşun, Oyo, Ondo, Ekiti and Lagos States and substantial parts of Kwara and Kogi States in the country. Apart from Nigeria, a substantial number of the Yoruba people can be found in the southeastern part of the Republic of Benin, Brazil and many other West African countries such as Togo and Ghana. According to Atanda (1980:1), how far back the Yoruba people have inhabited their homeland cannot be determined with precision. This is as a result of the fact that the people, though highly skilled in other aspects of human endeavours, did not develop the art of writing and therefore have no written records. They preserve their records in form of oral tradition which is passed from one generation to another due to the absence of written records, Yoruba oral tradition has presented multiple concepts of origin in contrast with the popular theories that linked the origin of the Yoruba people to Arabia, Egypt and Nubia without valid evidence, but fortunately, with strong linguistic evidence, it has been suggested that the Yoruba people or their immediate ancestors have moved to the place they occupy as their homeland from Niger-Benue confluence are

In the early Yoruba traditional political setting, politically motivated suicide was rampant. According to Adeboye (2006:189), "within a space of ten years, three principal chiefs had committed suicide...They did this as they perceived themselves on the brink of ignominy". The Yoruba consider suicide as a means of protecting and preserving their honour; this is in line with a Yoruba popular dictum: *iku ya jẹ sin lo* - death is preferable to ignominy.

Suicide in Ancient Greek and Roman Societies and Philosophy

In the classical period, suicide held a different connotation than it does today. The ancient Greeks perceived suicide in terms such as: "to grasping death," "to die voluntarily," and "to die by one's own hand"

(Velasquez, 1987:49). To the ancient Greeks and Romans, the word 'suicide' had both heroic and immoral associations. It became officially condemned by the Christians in AD 452. Prior to the Christian era and even shortly after, the aristocracy of many cultures considered suicide a viable option to public humiliation, especially, that of public trial. To the Greeks and Romans, it was much better to embrace death than to surrender or be punished. Suicide, in this case, granted the individual dignity in death that befitted their social standing.

During the fifth century B.C., compulsory suicide was used as a means of execution. This was the case of Socrates, an ancient Greek philosopher who flourished in the fifth century B.C., and was compelled to drink hemlock in 399 B.C. (Hume, 1998:60). Apart from this, suicide was permitted by Greek customs under certain situations such as illness and old age. Cavan asserts that the magistrates in Athens supplied poison for those who requested their own death, but in order for this request to be granted officially, the Senate must be convinced beyond any doubt. Cavan declares:

Whoever no longer wishes to live shall state his reasons to the Senate, and after having received permission shall abandon life. If your existence is hateful to you, die; if you are overwhelmed by fate, drink the hemlock. If you are bowed with grief, abandon life. Let the unhappy man recount his misfortune, let the magistrate supply him with the remedy, and his wretchedness will come to an end (1965:14).

Rome as the cultural heir of Greece inherited her attitudes toward suicide as a means of caring for personal problems. And due to the sophistication of the Roman society, the Romans' toleration of suicide increased. Alvarez (1972:61) declares, "the Romans looked on suicide with neither fear nor revulsion, but as a carefully considered and chosen validation of the way they had lived and the principles they had lived by." During this period, the Roman society was greatly affected by the Stoics' concept of suicide. According to Roman law, suicide was not a

crime against morality or religion. A person who committed suicide was greatly honoured. However, the reason for suicide must be for virtuous causes. Many who committed suicide became heroic figures. A good example is Lucretia, the wife of Collatinus, who was raped by Sextus, the third son of Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, the last king of Rome. Sextus did not only rape Lucretia; he also propositioned her to submit to his sexual advances and threatened that he would kill a slave and Lucretia together and implicate them in an affair. Lucretia, having informed her father of the situation, called for vengeance and killed herself. Lucretia committed suicide to preserve her honour as a Roman matron. The Roman tradition has it that this incident led to the dethronement of Tarquinius and the establishment of the Roman Republic.

Cato the Younger and Marcus Brutus serve as further examples of aristocrats in ancient Greek and Roman society who, like Lucretia, considered suicide as a means of avoiding disgrace and preserving their honour. The account of suicide of Cato the Younger was an ultimate act of defiance against Julius Caesar. Cato was a Roman politician, Stoic philosopher and great-grandson of Cato the Censor. Cato, possessing the family traits of moral integrity and general stubbornness, found himself standing in opposition against Julius Caesar. After his final defeat in the Battle of Thapsus by Julius Caesar's legions, Cato resolved to kill himself before he could be captured and become a pawn in the hands of Julius Caesar.

Marcus Brutus, a descendant of Junius Brutus in whose honour, according to Plutarch, the ancient Roman erected a statue of bronze and placed it in the midst of their kings, also committed suicide in defiance against tyranny. He was a Roman politician and philosopher persuaded to join in the conspiracy against Julius Caesar. After the death of Julius Caesar, Octavius Caesar, became a consul and declared the conspirators the enemies of the state. At exile, he and Cassius raised an army to fight against the armies of Octavius Caesar and Mark Antony but met with defeat at the Battle of Philippi. Brutus, having been defeated in battle, fled and begged his men, one after the other, to hold their sword and help him drive it home. With their refusal, he later killed himself with

his own sword. However permissible suicide might have been, it was not acceptable for all, soldiers and slaves, and those accused or guilty of capital crimes were not permitted the grace of suicide.

The word 'suicide' tended to get sporadic rather than systematic attention from philosophers prior to the Stoics and Epicureans. The first significant philosophical debate in line with the morality of suicide came from the famous Greek philosopher, Socrates. In Plato's *Phaedo*, Socrates enthusiastically supported the Pythagoreans thesis that suicide is always wrong because it means releasing oneself; that is, the soul, from the prison or guard post, which is the body, in which the gods have placed it in as a form of punishment. Socrates states:

...that we men are put in a sort of guard-post, from which one must not release one's self or run away... The gods are our keepers, and we men are one of their possessions (*Phaedo*, 61b).

With this, Socrates emphasises that man is the property of the gods. Thus, man does not have the right to take what does not belong to him, specifically, his life. It is really ironic that Socrates was coerced to take his own life by drinking hemlock, having been accused of impiety and corrupting the youths. Considering Beauchamp's definition of suicide, one may readily conclude that Socrates' act may not necessarily be considered suicide. However, considering his own situation, Socrates asserts that one may have to take one's own life if it is required. Hence, he asserts:

.... So if you look at it this way I suppose it is not unreasonable to say that we must not put an end to ourselves until God sends some compulsion like this, like the one we are facing now (*Phaedo*, 62c).

Socrates is of the opinion that man can take his life if he receives the directive from the gods whom he considers the owner of the soul or life. He considers his sentence to be the calling of the gods that it was time for him to depart. Plato, the most prominent of Socrates' disciples, leans upon two opinions concerning suicide. He claims that suicide is

disgraceful and abominable if committed out of lack of effort and unmanly cowardice. Such one, according to Plato, is "violently robbing his Fate - allotted share" (*Laws*, 837c). Here, Plato condemns suicide that is based on mere indolence or fear of facing the ordinary hardships of life. However, Plato recognises four exceptional circumstances that may necessitate the taking of one's own life. For instance, he asserts that when one's soul is morally corrupted and one's character cannot be salvaged or one has participated in grossly unjust action, suicide is a welcomed idea. Suicide can also be excused when it is a judicial decree or when compelled by some terribly painful and inescapable ill fortune. He states:

I mean the man whose violence frustrates the decree of destiny by self-slaughter though no sentence of the state has required this of him, no stress of cruel and inevitable calamity driven him to the act, and he has been involved in no desperate and intolerable disgrace, the man who thus give unrighteous sentence against himself from mere poltroonery and unmanly cowardice (*Laws*, 873c).

Plato assumes that a man's life must be governed by the concept of civic duty and regards the state as a natural phenomenon associated with gods. Hence, crimes against the state are crimes against the gods and vice-versa. With this, Plato is of the opinion that anyone who commits suicide unjustly is committing a crime against both the state and the gods and must be dealt with according to the direction of the state and the gods. According to him, such one "must be buried ignominiously in waste and nameless spots on the boundaries between the twelve districts, and the tomb shall be marked by neither headstone nor name" (*Laws*, 873d-e).

Aristotle shares Plato's opinion that self-slaughtering is not just a wrong against oneself but also against the state or the community. He considers it an act of cowardice for one to take one's own life in order to avoid poverty or pains; he explains that a man who killed himself in a fit of rage is guilty of a crime for which the state should properly exact the due penalty (Aristotle, *Nicomachean* 1138a 5-14). Like his

predecessors, he admits that there are certain circumstances which make suicide permissible, and that suicide can be committed by the order of the state. He also admits that self-killing does not treat oneself unjustly as long as it is done voluntarily, since the harm done to oneself is consensual. The Cynics prescribe suicide as the only remedy for any kind of failure in order to live a rational life. To the Cynics, if a man cannot live a rational life, then suicide is the best option for him.

With the decline of the power of Greece and changing values, as well as with the rise of individualism, the meaning of the word suicide changed. It became an official act that an individual had the right to decide whether he should continue living or not. It was during this period that Stoics and Epicureans approved suicide, though they had different reasons for their approval. The Epicureans, often referred as the 'pleasure seeking philosophers', believed that anytime the pleasure of life terminated, there was no reason to continue living. As asserted by Cavan (1965:15), Epicurus warned men that they should consider it carefully if they would prefer death coming to them or they themselves would go to death. The Stoics believed that when things get too intolerable, death is the best option. Since this paper aims at analysing the Stoics' tenets of suicide, the discussion that follows is based on Stoicism.

The Stoics and Ethics

To understand the position of the Stoics on the subject of suicide, the best place to begin is the examination of Stoics philosophical ethics as well as their view of death. To start with, here is a general background to Stoicism. Stoicism was a school of thought that flourished in Greek and Roman antiquity. It was established by Zeno of Citium in Athens about 300B.C. At its formation, the Stoics were first known as 'Zenonians' after the founder, Zeno, but eventually, they dubbed the name *Stoa* from *Stoa Poikilē* (painted porch) where they used to assemble (Diogenes Laertius, vii. 5). Stoicism has its roots in the philosophical activities of Socrates. Its historical journey, according to Inwood, began in the enrichment of that tradition with other influences by Zeno of Citium almost a century after the death of Socrates (Inwood, 2003:1). It was one of the loftiest and most sublime philosophies in the record of

Western civilisation. Adkins observes that Stoicism had its beginning in a changed world in which earlier codes of conduct and ways of understanding proved not to be suitable any longer, and "the greatness of the life and thought of the Greek city-state had ended with the death of Aristotle and that of Alexander the Great" (1970:213). At this time, Athens was no longer the centre of worldly attraction it used to be; the earlier distinction between the Greeks and Barbarians had been destroyed. Hence, the Hellenistic philosophy, especially Stoicism and Epicureanism, revolved round ethics with the objective of helping people gain tranquillity of mind, since at this period, situation seemed to be out of control.

The ethical teaching of the Stoics is based on two vital principles. The first is that the universe is governed by absolute law, which admits no exceptions. The second shows that the essential nature of man is reason. These are summed up in the famous Stoic maxim, 'Live according to nature'. There are two standpoints to this maxim. In the first instance, it means that man should adhere himself to the nature in the wider sense, that is to conform himself to the law of the universe. Secondly, he should comply his actions to the nature in the narrower sense, to his own essential nature which is reason.

The Stoics and Suicide

Stoics' ethics has its basis in their doctrine of *oikeiosis*. According to this theory, the basic desire in all animals, human being inclusive, is for self preservation. On the basis of this instinct for self-preservation, individual ascribes value. According to the Stoics, a non-rational animal chooses as object what will contribute to the preservation of its existence such things as food, water, and shelter, but for a rational animal, that is rational adult human being, on the other hand, these basic physical needs are supplemented with others that are equally important for survival. For a rational being to survive not merely as an animal, he must pursue those things that can preserve both his soul and body, free and independent of others. In order to do this, it becomes imperative for an individual to make choices that may appear not to further preserve the life of the person. John Sellars (2006: 108-109) gives an example of such

decision making. He explains that if a man is being threatened to be killed by a tyrant if he does not agree to do certain things that he finds objectionable or think to be wrong, if such one intends to preserve himself as a rational being, he should stand up to the tyrant, even if it means the loss of his life. The question that may arise from this logical explanation is: how could getting oneself killed contribute to one's self preservation? It is possible for such one to give in to the demands of the tyrant and continue living biologically, but there is something far more important that is lost – self esteem. Thus, the Stoic's theory of self preservation, in case of rational being, will sometimes lead to choices that may, in actual fact, threaten the physical existence of an individual. But then as Socrates puts it, it is not mere living that is important but living well (Plato, *Crito* 48b). This, then, is the rationale behind Socrates' decision to face his execution rather than taking the advantage of escaping when the opportunity presented itself. Considering the case of Socrates, living by a consistent set of principle was far more important than merely living at whatever price. Bearing in mind the life of Socrates, Epictetus, a later Stoic, agrees that a man is not to be saved by any shameful means; he is saved by dying and not by running away (*Disc. 4:1.165*).

Paradoxically, then, it is this theory of self-preservation of the Stoics that forms the basis for their outrageous defence of suicide. John Sellars (2006:109) observes that "suicide may well be the end for an individual qua animal, but it may be the most appropriate act of individual qua rational being". The Stoics' ethics has it that suicide may be the only rational option in some cases. The later Stoics, especially the Roman Stoics, became famous for adhering to this doctrine. The most prominent ones were Cato the Younger and Seneca who accepted the imposed suicide forced on him by Nero. Zeno and Cleanthes, the early Stoics, are also reported to have committed suicide (DL 7.28 & 176).

The Stoics' advocacy for suicide is in every way contrary to the suicidal view of the Western society where suicide bombing as a form of terrorism, particularly among Islamic extremists is a common event. Durkheim identifies three types of suicide, namely, egoistic, altruistic

Heroism of Suicide in Stoicism and Early Oyo Traditional Political Setting and anomic. According to the sociological theory of Durkheim, the incidents of suicide depend on the degree to which an individual feels connected to or integrated within a society. Going by this theory, suicide results where an individual lacks close relationship or social bonds (Durkheim, 1897:222-225). This theory, though applicable to some extent in modern society or civilisation, does not explicate the suicide ideology expressed by the Stoics.

The Stoic's theory of self-preservation goes a long way in explicating their paradoxical claim of preserving oneself as a rational being, even if it is to recourse to suicide. This theory, as expounded by the Stoics, relates to virtue and honour. According to Arius Didymus, as analysed by John Sellars (2003:110-134), Zeno divided things that exist into three categories, namely: things that are good, things that are bad and things that are indifferent. *Arête* - virtue and things that participate in virtue are regarded as 'good', while vice and things that participate in vice are classified as 'bad'. Everything else is indifferent; this includes: one's life, reputation, health, poverty or wealth and all other external objects. Accepting this threefold division means focusing attention on cultivating and preserving *arête*, which, according to the Stoics' tenets, is the only good, and paying less attention on preserving one's biological life.

Virtue, as conceived by the Stoics, is an excellent disposition of the soul, identified with perfect rationality, and the only good which contributes to one's survival as rational being. Zeno and Chrysippus define virtue as "a disposition and faculty of the governing principle of the soul brought into being by reason" (Plutarch, *Moralia*. 441b-c). Explaining why virtue is regarded as the only good, the Stoics juxtapose virtue with food and water for a good condition for the body to ensure the excellent condition of the soul. Man, to the Stoics, is by nature a rational being; thus, the only good for man is that which preserves him as rational being. The only good to them is virtue. The Stoics argue that externals such as health and wealth cannot be regarded as good because they can also be used for bad ends. They are morally indifferent, good or bad, in themselves. In addition, the Stoics claim that the possession of externals, such as wealth or health, cannot guarantee happiness, but

the possession of virtue can. This is not to suggest that the Stoics totally condemn everything under 'indifferent', especially good health and riches.

To the Stoics, virtue is the governing principle of the soul. Virtue is identified with happiness (eudemonia), which is considered as the *summum bonum* (the most good). Virtue and happiness go hand in hand and for one to attain the *summum bonum*, the Stoics propose an ethical ideal famously represented as 'living in accordance with nature.' To live according to nature is to live according to reason. Hence, the wise man consciously subordinates his life to the life of the whole universe, and recognises himself as merely a cog in the great machine. Since virtue alone is good and the only happiness, man must be virtuous, not for the sake of pleasure, but for the sake of duty. Thus, following Stoics' tenets of life according to nature, the man who cannot live according to nature should take the rational way out by committing suicide.

Stoicism had traditionally permitted suicide as a rational exit in extremis. Chrysippus, the third leading figure in the early Stoicism, is of the mind that a wise man may take his own life and thus evade unbearable human troubles. Here, Chrysippus did not mean that any illness would justify the wise man's self inflicted death; rather, he meant an illness which threatened his virtue. Epictetus acknowledges this doctrine that suicide could be justified under intolerable material circumstances and goes out of his way to give this doctrine a theological endorsement. He says:

If you (God) send me to where human beings cannot live in accordance with nature, I shall depart- not in disobedient to you, but as though you were signalling the retreat. I do not abandon you, heaven forbid! But I see that you have no need of me. But if a life according to nature is granted me, I shall seek no other place than where I am or other people than those I am with (Epictetus, *Discourses* 3.24. 101-2).

According to Diogenes Laertus, the Stoics permit a man to take his own life rationally for one of the following reasons: on behalf of his country, or his friend, or if he is afflicted by intolerable pain or an incurable disease (D.L. 7.130/SVF iii 757). Here, death may be self-inflicted either for the sake of oneself or of someone else, or under special circumstances. Hardwig (1996) tends to be in agreement with the Stoics. In his theory which he terms a 'family centered' approach to bioethics, he argues that sometimes the burdens that a person imposes on others, particularly family members or loved ones, by continuing to live are sufficiently great that one may have a duty to die in order to relieve them of these burdens. Hardwig stresses the unfairness of the burden that a person imposes on others by continuing living. The use of the term 'rationally', by the Stoics, seems to imply that only someone wise could be sure about when it is justifiable to commit suicide, since only him will invariably recognise what naturally provides the basis for a proper decision to die. However, there is nothing from the Stoics stating when a fool should commit suicide since he cannot be sure that his action is natural, let alone moral.

Graber agrees with the Stoics' point of view that suicide is rationally justified "if a reasonable appraisal of the situation reveals that one is better off dead" (1981:65). According to Graber, an appraisal is reasonable if it results from a clearheaded assessment of how suicide would further or impede one's overall interests including the present and future values and preferences. With this appraisal, therefore, one should know when to call it 'quit' as 'the door is open'. Hence, Epictetus declares:

To summarize: remember that the door is open. Do not be more cowardly than children, but just as they say, when the game no longer pleases them, 'I will play no more', you too, when things seem that way to you, should merely say, 'I will play no more', and so depart; but if you stay, stop moaning (Epictetus, *Discourses* 1.24.20).

Here, Epictetus tries to silence those who unjustifiably gripe about how miserable the game of life is for them by reminding them that if their life is truly miserable; they can simply exit life. He uses smoke to represent life's troubles when he says:

Has someone made smoke in the house? If it is moderate, I will stay; if too much I go outside. For you must always remember and hold fast to this that the door is open, if suffering is not worth your while the door is open; if it is worth your while, bear it. For the door must be open against all emergencies, and then we have no trouble (1.25.18, 2.1. 19-20).

Epictetus believes that, in extreme circumstances, when the smoke of life is too thick and crucial, and there is no good reason to feel that the emergency condition of one's circumstances will improve, he concedes that one would be better off dead.

From all indication, it is clear that Epictetus does not consider death as evil; rather, he finds solace in thinking of death as an ever-ready fire exits from the real life infernos that cannot be extinguished by virtuous means. At *Discourses* 3.22.33-34, Epictetus offers an argument aimed at dispelling Agamemnon's baseless worry about his endangered troops. He reasons as follows:

Agamemnon's troops are mortal

So, if the Trojans do not kill them all, then the Greek troops will die anyway.

If death is an evil, then whether the Greek troops die all at

once (now) or one at a time (later), death is equally an evil

But death is merely the separation of soul and body

Hence, death is not an evil.

If the troops die, the door is not close for Agamemnon; he too

is allowed to die (by suicide)

Therefore, Agamemnon has nothing to worry about.

In this passage, Epictetus is suggesting that Agamemnon could take comfort in the thought that he is free to kill himself instead of facing the disgrace of being the sole survivor and general of the entire Greek army. By so doing, he would be preserving his honour as a general. He also emphasises that man can take his own life whenever he considers it fit, he declares:

If I am so wretched, death is my haven. This is the haven of everyone, death, this is our refuge. This is why nothing that befalls us in life is difficult. Whenever you wish you can exit and no longer be troubled by smoke (*Discourses*, 4.10.27).

Here, Epictetus shows that the sure means to freedom is to die cheerfully. Seneca, another later Stoic, shares the same mind with Epictetus by glorifying suicide as the road to freedom. In one of his works entitled *Letters*, Seneca states:

The eternal law has done nothing better than its gift to us of one entry to life, and many ways out..., there is one thing in life of which we need not complain; it detains no one (70.14).

Seneca here implies that man has the freedom to choose any of the ways out, since life does not detain anyone who is eager to exit by committing suicide. In another work entitled *On Anger*, Seneca declares:

In any kind of slavery we shall show that there is a way to freedom. If through its own faults the mind is sick, and wretched, a man may end his miseries and himself... Wherever you look there is an end to your ills. Do you see that precipice? Down there is the way to freedom. Do you

Heroism of Suicide in Stoicism and Early Oyo Traditional Political Setting

On similar occasions, one man ought to kill himself while another not. Cato's situation after the triumph of Caesar was different from that of other people. His character was marked by extra-ordinary dignity (*incredibilim gravitatem*), and he had strengthened that dignity with unceasing consistency (*De Officiis*. 1. 112)

Cicero's description of Cato is so laudatory that it may be said that he is already building the legend of Cato the Sage. Cato's death is being justified by Cicero sorely on the ground that Cato was wise. According to Cicero, the decision of the wise man to take his own life is *ipso facto*, a reasonable decision.

In line with Cicero's idea, Seneca in his *Moral Epistles* which is virtually a paean to suicide opens the topic with the heroic statement that the wise man will live as long as he ought, not as long as he can. He added that the wise man will calculate the possibility of suicide long before he is under extreme constrain. With this, it is effeminate to say 'while there is life there is hope'. Seneca opposes those who condemn right to suicide, to him that would be to bar the path to freedom (*Epistles*.70.14-15).

Generally, the Stoics view suicide as the way to freedom to evade vices and tyranny. The Stoics believe that a man with vices should never hesitate to take his own life. On the issue of vices, Cicero asserts:

A man, in whom there predominates what accords with nature, has the duty of remaining in life, one in whom what is contrary to nature predominates or seems about to predominate has duty of departing from life (*De Finibus* 3.60).

The Stoics did not advocate a particular method of committing suicide. To them, many gates to liberty lie open everywhere; they are short and easy. Suicide, however, according to the Stoics, is for the wise man who alone is capable of making the calculation as to when to exit as the door to freedom is wide open. In contrast with this idea, the western

societies assume that people, who are found in contemplation of or in the act of attempting suicide, are in need of help or not in good frame of mind. The society then see it as the responsibility of every person to intercede and stop such ones from committing the act because it is believed that more often than not, individuals who attempt such an action are not taking their own wishes into true consideration. Rather, they are trying to relieve themselves of a problem that can be fixed.

The Yoruba and Suicide

Generally, the Yoruba, like every other people, condemn the act of killing oneself. It is a taboo for anyone to deliberately take his own life. Suicide is considered as a great offence against the gods, humanity and the community. When someone takes his own life, the body is handed over to the priest for burial, the family would not be allowed to perform any burial rite for the deceased (Afe, 2013:105).

Though the Yoruba consider suicide a taboo, politically motivated suicide was a common and acceptable phenomenon in Yoruba traditional political setting. Adeboye asserts that "within a space of ten years, three principal chiefs had committed suicide", between 1907 and 1917, *Baalé Dada Opadere*, *Baalé Iréfin* and *Balógun Oja* all committed suicide (2007:189). Earlier to this period, there had been other politically motivated suicides such as the ones narrated by Johnson. According to him, the head chief of Apòmu committed suicide when Oyo decided to attack his town (1966:189). Ellis also relates the story of Maku, who succeeded Adebo, the first chief of Lagos in 1807. Maku committed suicide having been defeated in a great battle, after reigning for about three months (Ellis, 1894:6). The question that arose from these suicides is: What motivated these public figures to commit suicide?

Psychologists and sociologists have identified various reasons for suicide; for instance, Jean Baeschler (1979:60) sees suicide as the response of individuals to certain problems. According to him, this response can be escapist, aggressive, oblativ or ludic. For the Yoruba, two important factors serve as motivating factors for these suicides. The first is honour, the desire to preserve both personal and family honour

Heroism of Suicide in Stoicism and Early Oyo Traditional Political Setting in the face of public humiliation. The second reason is their belief in immortality of the soul or afterlife.

Samuel Johnson (1755) defines honour in relationship to "reputation" and "fame", to privileges of rank or birth, and as respect of the kind which places an individual socially and determines his right to precedence. He also explains honour in terms of nobility of the soul, magnanimity, and a scorn of meanness. This sort of honour is derived from the perceived virtuous conduct and personal integrity of the person endowed with it. From Johnson's definition and many other dictionaries' definitions, the word 'honour' is often used to denote the concept of respectability, reputation, personal integrity, dignity, and esteem or self esteem. Pitt-Rivers defines honour as:

The value of a person in his own eyes but also in the eyes of the society. It is his estimation of his own worth, his claim to pride, but it is also the acknowledgement of that claim, his excellence recognised by society, his right to pride (1966:21).

A critical analysis of this definition of honour shows that personal evaluation of one's worth is not enough to bestow honour; the community and society at large must acknowledge the claim as reflected in the reputation of an individual. In other words, the society plays an important role in judging someone as worthy of honour. Thus, for honour to be acquired, the community and the society at large play a major role. Public opinion, as observed by Pitt-Rivers, is very important. The Yoruba fear of public opinion which amounts to public ridicule called *ṣ̣ṣ̣* (ignominy)- often drove them to commit suicide, especially, if the family name or lineage was involved. To the Yoruba people, an act of disrepute by a family member can mar the reputation of the family as a whole just as a family can bask in the honour brought about by a family member. John Iliffe (2005:4) is of the opinion that honour exists both subjectively and objectively. Honour is subjective when an individual believes that he is entitled to respect. But it exists objectively when others treat them with respect, and if the individual can if

necessary enforce respect. The Yoruba concept of honour is both ways; they believe that they are entitled to it and look forward to the society to acknowledge and treat them honourably.

The Yoruba were also motivated to commit suicide because of their belief in immortality of the soul. Though the Yoruba accept the inevitability of death, they believe that death is not the end of life; it is rather a means whereby the present life is exchanged for another and passes into a "life beyond" called *Èhin-Ìwá* (Afterlife). They view death as a mere separation of the body and soul. With this, they believe that the dead continue to live in the world beyond or by being reincarnated. The various rites and rituals performed during burial, the ones performed during the burial of kings and chiefs, especially, reflect the Yoruba's belief in immortality. Though there are variations in the rites and rituals performed from one locality to another, after all the necessary sacrifices have been performed with various rites and rituals, it is believed that the soul would continue its journey to the underworld, to the land of the ancestors. Human beings are known to have been buried with kings; this is known as "*Abóbakú*", this is done because it is believed that a king cannot go on a journey alone; he must be accompanied (Adeboye 2006:198-199; Idowu, 1996:205-206; Drewal, 1992:38-39). This is also done so that the king will have people to send on errands in the hereafter, just like in the normal life on earth.

The belief in afterlife and reincarnation gives the Yoruba the assurance of immortality; thus, the Yoruba believe that it is after the necessary rituals have been offered that the deceased is reinstated as an ancestor because he has living descendants of the right category. As Mayer-Fortes (1965:129) puts it, "his reinstatement in this status establishes his continued relevance for his society". Mbiti (1992:125) describes the ancestors as "the living dead" because, even though dead, people believe that they are living either in heaven or in the other world where they can perform their duties as ancestors. The idea that human beings can survive bodily death is a notion that gives meaning to the "why" of human existence at all. To the Yoruba, personal survival is a valid conclusion, because it validates the picture of the Ultimate Reality (*Olódùmarè*) who initially gave life to individual person.

There were two types of suicide the Yoruba considered to be honourable; the first was ritual suicide which was common in the old Oyo Empire. This form of suicide involved certain dignitaries and important title holders in the society. Adeboye asserts that these important individuals had to die on the accession of a new king or on his demise (2006:197). According to Samuel Johnson (1966:63), the biological mother of the king-elect was officially required to 'go to sleep'; that is, to commit suicide the moment her son was called to be king. This was mandatory to enable the king assert his supremacy without violating any filial obligation expected of a son. Apart from *Yéyé Oba* (Queen mother) that was asked to 'go to sleep'; there were hosts of other title holders that had to commit suicide at the demise of the king so as to accompany him to the hereafter. These were called *abóbakú*. In the list of the *abóbakú* provided by Samuel Johnson, the *àrẹ̀mọ́*- the Crowned Prince- tops the list followed by three princes with hereditary titles namely; *Máǵáǵí Íyáǵín*, *Agunpópó*, and *Olusámi*. Also included in the list were two titled men, who were not of royal blood, namely *Olókúnṣin* and *Òsì' wẹ̀lẹ̀* and eight other prominent female officials.

This practice, though culturally ritualistic in nature, also had a strong political connotation. Those customarily required to die with the king were those considered closest with freest access to him. Making the lives of the *Abóbakú* dependent on the king's was in a way to ensure his safety. With the knowledge that their own lives would end whenever the king died, they did everything humanly possible to protect him from premature death. Thus, during the king's life time, as asserted by Adeboye (2006:199), all the *abóbakú* enjoyed a lot of special privileges including getting away with serious misdeeds.

Among those required to die with the king was his first born, the Crown Prince known as *Àrẹ̀mọ́*. One may wonder why he was required to die with his father. According to Robin Law (1977:78), it was not until eighteenth century that *Àrẹ̀mọ́* was demanded to die along with his father, the king, because it was suspected that some *Àrẹ̀mọ́* before 1730 had been committing patricide in order to hasten their own succession. He adds that between 1730 and 1758, the primogeniture rule was abolished in Oyo Empire and the successive *àrẹ̀mọ́s* ruled with their

fathers and die with them, while any of his remaining male descendants approved by the council of chiefs succeeded him.

The other politically motivated suicide was the type imposed either directly or indirectly on public figures. This may be a direct demand in form of political rejection issued. This is in sharp contrast to the Stoic's reaction to a tyrannical rule where the individuals reacting to a tyranny committed suicide instead of being under the control of the tyrant. Instead of individuals committing suicide as approved by the Stoics, it was the tyrant himself that was rejected and required to commit suicide. When a king was rejected by his chiefs for tyranny, wickedness or under political power struggles, the rejected king was confronted by one of his chiefs. In most cases, it was *Başörün*, the Prime Minister, that was usually sent to present the king with a symbolic empty calabash or at times one containing parrot's eggs with this pronouncement: "the gods reject you; the earth rejects you; the people reject you" (Johnson, 1966:173). Having received this message, the king was expected to take a prompt action; he had been compelled to vacate the throne. According to Yoruba tradition, it is only death that can make a king vacate his throne; hence he was expected to commit suicide.

Apart from the cases of *abobaku* and rejected kings or chiefs, there had been other cases where individuals did not want to compromise their honour or face public ridicule. Suicide was considered an honourable thing to do in 'saving one's face' from impending doom of public shame. For instance, a leader who found himself in dire straits could find suicide a means of saving himself. Such was the case related by Johnson of the head chief of Apomu known as *Baale*, Apomu, who decided to commit suicide rather than face public ridicule of defeat when Oyo warriors decided to assault his town knowing well that his town was defenceless (1966:189).

The primary aim of all politically motivated suicide which was common among the Yoruba was for preservation of honour, avoiding being ridiculed or their family name dragged 'in the mud', not just for the moment but for future references. This notion goes along with Brandt's idea when he says:

The person who is contemplating suicide is obviously making a choice between future world-courses: the world course that includes his demise, an honour from now, and several possible ones that contain his demise at a later point (1975).

The titleholders who were traditionally required to die with the king considered it an official duty to their community, just as Socrates considered it a call from the gods and duty to his community to commit suicide. Considering it as honour, they were not sorrowful at the idea of dying with the king. The moment the news of the king's demise was passed across to those concerned and involved in his suicide, they began their preparation by arranging their affairs, delegating power and authority to family members, putting their homes in order and organising their own burial feast as well as supervising "the digging of their own graves and making coffins" (Adebayo, 2006:201). With all this done, they retired to their private bedrooms and 'acted like a man' by exiting from this world using whatever method desired, but the most common method was by taking poison.

Naturally, the relatives mourned the passing away of their family members, but they proudly gave a befitting burial to them according to their ranks in the society and walked about with beaming faces because of the honourable way in which the demised family members had acted. It was considered a dishonourable thing not only for the individual concerned but for the entire family and lineage as a whole if any of the *abóbakú* refused to die. Close relatives often came to the rescue of faint-hearted family members in assisting them to commit suicide. By so doing, the family name would be rescued from indelible disgrace. This shows that what was at stake was not just the integrity and honour of an individual but of the family and entire lineage. The individual *abóbakú* did not only regard it an honour to die with the king but also looked forward to a life of continued privileges and enjoyment serving in the afterlife as a royal consort.

Refusal to commit suicide as demanded by custom or the community was not without a price, and the price was for such one to

be murdered without a decent and befitting burial. Johnson (166:173) reveals that if an *abóbakú* refused to commit suicide on his own, and had to be executed, his carcass will be treated like that of a common felony and his house pulled down.

Conclusion

The morality of suicide, as approved by the Stoics, has been questioned over time with many schools of thought condemning suicide on ground that it violates all ethical reasonings. The word 'morality' has been defined and explained in different perspectives. The word 'morality' has its root in the Latin word "*moralitas*", denoting manner, character and proper behaviour. Morality has been used to refer to any code of conduct that a person or group takes as most important. According to John Deigh (1995), the word 'ethics' is frequently used "interchangeably with 'morality'... and sometimes it is used more narrowly to mean the moral principles of a particular tradition, group, or individual." Simon Blackburn (2008:240) argues that though

the morality of people and their ethics amount to the same thing, there is a usage that restricts morality to systems such as that of Kant, based on notions such as duty, obligation, and principles of conduct, reserving ethics for the more Aristotelian approach to practical reasoning, based on the notion of virtue, and generally avoiding the separation of 'moral' considerations from other practical considerations.

Generally, the term 'morality' can be used descriptively or normatively. When it is used descriptively, morality refers to personal or cultural values or codes of conduct or social mores. In this sense, morality does not denote object claims of right and wrong. On the other hand, when it is used normatively, morality refers to whatever is actually right or wrong, which may be independent of the values or mores held by any particular peoples or cultures. However, the modern concept of morality is quite different from the ancient Greek idea of the concept. The modern philosophers talk about morality, while the ancient philosophers use the words ethics and virtue. Annas (1992:119-120)

asserts that ancient scholars such as Plato and Aristotle as well as the Stoics and Epicureans rarely talked about morality because their main focus is limited to the agent's happiness, which has little or nothing to do with morality. To these ancient philosophers, especially the Stoics, happiness means to live a well satisfied life according to ethical virtue.

To the Stoics, virtue is life according to reason. Hence, morality, to them, is simply rational action which is the universal reason that governs lives, not the impulse and self-will of the individual. Therefore, the wise man always consciously subordinates his life to the life of the whole universe. Thus, Stoicism taught that suicide is the only naturally way of ending an intolerable life; it was even considered as an honourable and a brave act. Stoics' writings are full of admonition to commit suicide.

Today, attitude towards death and suicide has changed, and the way people view suicide varies greatly. Some view it as a crime, others as a coward's escape, and still others as an honourable way of apologizing for a blunder. Some even consider it a noble way to further a cause, such as suicide bombers. Also, death is regarded as something horrible, not as a natural event like in ancient Greece and Rome and Yoruba traditional society. Many no longer believe in an afterlife, while many even consider death as the end of life; yet some think that anyone committing suicide, whether for just cause or not, would be punished in the underworld. Western religions, especially Christianity, changed the attitude towards life and death, and death became an unnatural event belonging to supernatural powers. Both St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas opposed suicide vehemently on the ground that it violated the sixth commandment in the holy Bible as commanded by God: 'thou shalt not kill'. Some take it that suicide is acting against oneself and society. But with the rise of individualism and emphasis on freedom of choice, many argue that the issue of suicide as a personal choice.

Under certain circumstances, as this research found out, death can seem preferable to life when one feels that there is nothing one can do to improve one's situation. Although the reasons why people commit suicide today vary unlike in the ancient Greece and early Yoruba traditional societies where death is preferable to ignominy, certain

events in life commonly trigger suicide. Among youths, it is not uncommon for young ones who give in to despair and commit suicide to do so even over matters that may seem trivial to others. When they feel hurt and cannot do anything about it, youths may view their own death as a means of getting back at those who have hurt them. Others may try to take their life when they get into trouble at school or with the law, suffer the end of a romance, get a bad report card, experience stress over exams, or become weighed down by worries about the future. Among high-achieving adolescents who may tend to be perfectionists, a setback or a failure—be it actual or imaginary—may bring on a suicide attempt. While for adults, financial or work-related problems are common triggering events as well as problems stemming from debts, business failures, poverty and unemployment. Not to be ignored as triggering events that may lead to suicide is Family problems. Retirement and physical illness are also major triggering factors, especially among the elderly. Often suicide is chosen as a way out, not necessarily when an illness is terminal, but when the patient views the suffering as intolerable.

The argument that suicide is a personal choice sounds most plausible. But leaving aside religious consideration, it is true that one may treat one's body as pleases provided the motive for doing so is for self preservation. For instance, a person may have an arm or a leg amputated if it is a hindrance to life. The fact is, however, that nobody is **destined** to commit suicide. Millions of people have been able to cope with heartaches and stresses. It is the way the mind and the heart **react** to pressures that leads some to kill themselves, believing that nothing can improve their lots in life and forgetting that nothing is permanent or constant except change.

On the other hand, from religious point of view, I believe that suicide is inadmissible and abominable because God has forbidden it. God has forbidden it because it is abominable in that it degrades man's inner worth below that of the animal creation. It is true that God has endowed man with freedom of choice but the freedom may not be used against himself to his own destruction, on the contrary, he should synchronise his activities in conformity with it. Suicide opposes the

Heroism of Suicide in Stoicism and Early Oyo Traditional Political Setting
purpose of the Creator, the source of life, whose intention is preservation of life, therefore, the creator expects man to preserve life not to destroy it no matter the circumstances.

References

- Adeboye, Olufunke (2006). 'Death is Preferable to Ignominy'; Politically Motivated Suicide, Social Honor and Chieftancy Politics in Early Colonial Ibadan. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*. Volume 41 No.2. pp. 189-225.
- Adkins, A.W.H. (1970). *From the Many to the One*. London: Constable.
- Afe, A.E. (2013). Taboos and the Maintenance of Social Order in the Old Ondo Province, South-Western Nigeria. *African Research Review. An International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*. Vol. 7 (1), No. 28, pp 95-105.
- Alvarez, A. (1972). *The Savage of God, A Study of Suicide*. New York: Random House.
- Annas, J. (1992). "Ancient Ethics and Modern Morality." *Philosophical Perspectives* 6: 119-136.
- Aristotle, (2000). *Nicomachean Ethics*. Trans. Roger Crist. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Atanda, J.A. (1980). *An Introduction to Yoruba History*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Baeschler Jean , (1979) *Suicides*. Translated by Barry Cooper. New York ; Basic Books Inc. Publishers.
- Beauchamp, T. L. (1996) 'The Problem of Defining Suicide', *Ethical Issues in Death and Dying*. Prentice Hall Inc. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.
- Brandt R. (1975) 'The Morality and Rationality of Suicide' in a Handbook for the study of suicide, S. Perlin (ed) Oxford; Oxford University Press.
- Brad Inwood (2003). Introduction : Stoicism , An Intellectual Odyssey in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*. Brad Inwood (ed). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bosede Adefiola Adebowale

- Cavan, R. S. (1965). *Suicide*. New York: Russell & Russell.
- Cicero, M.T. (2001). *On Obligation*. Translated by P.G. Walsh. Oxford. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cooper, John. M (1989) 'Greek Philosophers on Suicide and Euthanasia', In *Suicide and Euthanasia. Historical and Contemporary Themes*, B. Brody (ed.), Dordrecht : Kluwer.
- Coseulluela, V. (1995). *The Ethics of Suicide*. New York: Garland.
- David Sedley (2003). *The School from Zeno to Arius Didymus*. The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Drewal, Margaret Thompson (1992). *Yoruba Ritual: Performer, Plays and Agency. African System of Thought*. Bloomington: Indiana UP.
- Durkheim, Emile.(1897). *Suicide : A Study in Sociology*. Translation: John A. Spaulding and George Simpson. New York; Free Press.
- Ellis A.B. (1894). *Yoruba Speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa* retrieved www.globalgrey.co.uk 10/9/2013. (Global Grey 2013 web edition published by Global Grey)
- Fairbairn, G. (1995). *Contemplating Suicide: The Language and Ethics of Self-Harm*. London: Routledge.
- Graber, G.C. (1981). "The Rationality of Suicide" in *Suicide and Euthanasia: The Right of Person-hood*, S. Wallace & A. Eser (eds), pp 51-65. Knoxville: U. Tennessee Press.
- Hardwig, J. (1996). "Dying at the Right Time: Reflection on Assisted and Unassisted Suicide in *Ethics in Practice*. H. LaFollette (ed), New York: Blackwell.
- Higginson, Thomas Wentworth. (1890). *The Works of Epictetus Consisting of His Discourses, in Four Books, The Enchiridion, and Fragments*. Boston: Little, Brown, & Company.
- Hume, David. (1998). *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. Ed. Richard H. Popkin. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company.

- Heroism of Suicide in Stoicism and Early Oyo Traditional Political Setting
- Idowu, Bolaji (1996). *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief*. Longman, Nigeria.
- Jayawickreme, E. and Stefano (2012). How can We Study the hero? Integrating persons, situations and communities. *Political Psychology* 33(1): 165-178.
- John, Deigh. (1995). In Robert Audi (ed), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- John Sellars (2006). *Stoicism*. California, University of California Press.
- Johnson, Samuel. (1966). *The History of the Yorubas*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.
- Julian, Pitt-Rivers. (1966). "Honour and Social Status" in *J.G. Peristiany (ed), Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Julian Pitt-Rivers. (1968). 'Honour' in *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*. 2nd ed. Vol.6 pp.505-11. New York: Macmillan.
- Karl, Menninger. (1938). *Man Against Himself*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc.
- Kant, Immanuel. (1963). *Lectures on Ethics*, translated by Louis Infield. New York: Harper & Row.
- Kupfer, Joseph. (1990). *The Ethics of Suicide*. New York: Garland.
- Livy (1912). *The History of Rome Book I*. English Translation by. Rev. Canon Roberts. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co. New York.
- Plato (1942). *Phaedo* in Complete Works of Plato. Ed. John M. Cooper. Trans. by Grube G.M.A. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.
- Plutarch (1939). *Moralia*. Trans. Frank Cole Babbitt. Loeb Classical Library.
- Plutarch (1975). *Makers of Rome: Nine Lives by Plutarch*. Penguin Classics.
- Rist, J.M. (1969). *Stoic Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Samuel, Johnson. (1775). "A Dictionary of the English Language. Retrieve from johnsondictionaryonline.com

Bosede Adefiola Adebowale

- Seneca, (1965). "On the Proper Time to Slip the Cable," L. Annaei Senecae *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*, L.D. Reynolds (ed), Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Shneidman, Edwin. (1981), 'A Psychological Theory of Suicide', *Suicide and Life Threatening Behavior*, 11 (4) 221-231. Retrieve from onlinelibrary.wiley.com
- Simon, Blackburn. (2008). *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*. (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Thoomas, L.P. (1980). *The Laws of Plato*. New York: Basic Book Inc. Publishers.
- Velasquez, M. (1987) 'Defining Suicide' *Issues in Law and Medicine* 3. Pg 37-51. Retrieve from heinonline.org

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY