

YORUBA:

JOURNAL OF THE YORUBA STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA



VOL. 6 NO. 3

JUNE 2009

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Yorùbá: Journal of Yorùbá Studies Association of Nigeria 6 (3)

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First published June 2009

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Printed in Nigeria by Agoro Publicity Company, Ibadan

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SYMBOLISM AS A VECTOR OF YORUBA CULTURE: A STUDY OF SAWOROIDE, YORUBA HOME VIDEO FILM

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Introduction:

This paper is written based on two major premises which have been proven over time. The first is that there is a gradual but definite erosion of many indigenous African languages. The second is that the media and in this particular instance the film is a powerful tool of cultivation of concepts or ideas; in essence, the media affect consumers. The interest in Saworoide as a vector of Yorùbá culture is a purposive one. No doubt Nigeria boasts of a virile home video industry, with a record of at least 1000 films released annually (Haynes, 2006). Thus, in search for an outlet for the preservation of one's cultural heritage, one may as well look towards the home video industry. This paper seeks to answer a few questions:

- To what extent is symbolism employed in Saworoide?
- What aspects of the sign systems are employed?
- Are home videos capable of promoting indigenous culture?
- To what extent can the media be employed to promote our culture?

Justification for the choice of Saworoide:

The decision to use Saworoide was not based on the whims of the researcher. This film has been widely reviewed at home and abroad and it has been described as "arguably the best video movie ever made", or as opined Qloruntoṣa-Oju (2007:28), "a film replete with assemblage of traditional culture elements. "This film was shown at the 11th New York African Film Festival at Lincoln Centre and it was celebrated for its home grown plots and locally relevant themes." In a survey on the Nigerian movie blog on May 23 2006, Saworoide was voted "the best Yorùbá film ever" in a poll of 3,369 respondents. Many writers have acknowledged the commitment of Tunde Kelani and his Mainframe Productions to the unalloyed presentation and preservation of the Yorùbá culture. As pointed out by Fakoya (2008:14),

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One should mention the determined efforts of one or two Yorùbá film organizations that wish to preserve the linguistic and cultural heritage of Yorùbá. In films produced by Mainframe (for instance Saworoide, Agogo Eèwò and Ọ le kú) the vintage stock of the beauty of the Yorùbá language is fully displayed.

Furthermore, this production company is known for keeping strictly to Yorùbá in their films or to borrow the words of Olorunṭoba-Oju (2007) "not a word of English is spoken in the film". This becomes important when one looks at the regular feature of many Yorùbá home videos and TV plays where English appears to be supplanting Yorùbá or like Fakoya (2008: 15) noted "usually, the number of English words and expressions in such situations outweighs those of Yorùbá". In agreement, Olorunṭoba-Oju (2007) pointed out that in Mainframe productions, "from montage to closing credits, you find a total commitment to the sustenance of indigenous African culture." Perhaps one reason this is made possible is the person of Tunde Kelani himself. He is one of Nigeria's most highly regarded cinematographers and Yorùbá filmmaker.

In two separate interviews, one with Jonathan Haynes and the other with Tunde Adegboḷa, the picture one gets of Tunde Kelani is that of a thorough bred student of the Yorùbá culture. Not only did he soak himself in the literature of celebrated Yorùbá writers like D.O. Fagunwa, Adebayo Faleti, Akinwumi Iṣola and Afolabi Oḷabintan. Kelani also had a ready source of knowledge materials in his environment; he lived with his Grandfather in Abeokuta. Moreover, the communal structure of his immediate enclave exposed him to the way of live of neighbors and relations who were egúngún worshippers, Şangó worshippers, farmers, hunters, and a rich compendium of cultural realities to choose from. Like Adegboḷa (2005) observed,

TK had a deeply theatrical culture of his Yorùbá pedigree. He is said to have a passion for employing modern information technologies to document

traditional Yorùbá culture. He digs into the deepest recesses of his mind and draw gems from his past, thereby playing the role of a bridge of sorts between the present and the recent past.

This underscores the need to identify cultural icons and repositories of the Yorùbá culture so that the home video industry can draw from their rich cultural archive. One way Mainframe production achieves this is by making home videos out of popular Yorùbá novels. Qloruntoba-Oju (2007) explains that “the video provides the opportunity for cultural dispersal through the adaptation of works earlier written or produced in Yorùbá in video form”. He further enthuses that such works constitute the canons that continually buoy the concept of irreducible Africanness in contemporary aesthetics and culture.

Hence, while we may lament the gradual death of the reading culture against the growing popularity of popular culture tools like the internet, mobile phone mp3 and the ipod, we can still transfer the materials that are gathering dust in print into videos that will provide viewing pleasure for the teeming population of Yorùbá people, all the world over. While we may have grave challenges with the preservation of aspects of Yorùbá culture in its distinctive, pristine form, the Yorùbá home video provides an avenue for the transmission of the emblems and symbols of our cultural heritage.

Interestingly, the broadcast media is known for its advantage of combining sight, sound, motion and color. Without doubt, the home video is a unbeatable channel for disseminating vital cultural lessons. Moreover, future archeologists will find it an important deposit of the ways of life of the Yorùbá people. The importance of the Nigerian home video industry cannot be overemphasized. Critics agree that Nigerian video movies are one of the most visible developments of an emergent culture industry (Okome, 2000).

Symbolism as a cultural vector

Symbolism is a universal phenomenon that cuts across creeds, beliefs, professions, cultures and races. Many countries, religions, national and international organizations use it as a form of identity and expressions of ideas. Symbolism is studied in any chosen art form, be it poetry, prose or drama. Symbolism is a

special metaphor with a means of creating a stimulus which represents something, also by reason of relationship and association (Ọlabimtan, 1971). Like metaphor, it represents something by association or by possession of analogous qualities either in fact or in thought. The systematic connections among metaphors give sense to individual experience by relating it to more abstract and generalized concerns and linking it to other symbolic expressions from culture to culture. Due to the functional role symbolism performs in the creative efforts of writers and its positive impacts in society, this paper, therefore, examines the employment of symbolism as a vector of Yorùbá culture in Saworoide.

Conceptualizing symbolism and semiotics

The Medieval Word Book (1996) defines a symbol as a graphic representation of attribute or sign, an almost universally accepted pictorial or abstract embodiment of an idea or person. Symbols can also be defined as a signifier that is entirely arbitrary in its connection to the signified; that is, the connection is formed by social convention [usage] only (Ian and Robert, 1999). Symbols have the ability to link separate areas of conceptual experience 'whereby' meaning is generated from the combinations, relationships and transformations of different elements with a symbolic context. Symbols and meanings give human social action and social interaction distinctive characteristics.

Many researchers have delved into analyses on the use of symbolism in advertising, music and other general topics over the years. In the Yorùbá language and literature we have existing works on symbols, like Ọlabimtan (1971), Ajikobi (1986), Ọpadotun (1986) and Ogundeji (1997), among others. These are all, in no doubt, useful works in that they offer insight into the use of symbols in relevant parts of Yorùbá culture. For instance, Ọlabimtan (1971) dwells on symbolism in Yorùbá incantatory discourse. Semiotics is used to bring out this symbolic usage in this paper. Semiotics is usually defined as the science of signs. It studies culture as a process of communication made possible by basic system of signification (Eco, 1976:8). Ogundeji (1988) argues that semiotics produces meanings out of the structural relations that exist within any sign system to social relations. Without doubt, it is culture-bound, and therefore sub-cultural differences exist from one geographical location to another and from group to group. Ogundeji (1988:7) postulates that semiotics identifies and relates the

componential signification patterns of the texts to one another before studying the relationship of the textual structures of larger structures (that is society) in an attempt to grasp the total meaning.

Saworoide – A synopsis

The story of Saworoide centers on the town of Jogbo and the politics of kingship. The council of chiefs led by Balogun colludes with Lapite to sidetrack the rites of Obaship in Jogbo which lies in the oral tradition of the people of Jogbo, the brass crown and the brass drum. The opening reference in the movie says: "this is the story of the pact between the people and the kings that rule over them. It is the parable of the drum as the voice of the people." The palace folklorist, Baba Opalaba, is repository of the history and traditionalist of the Jogbo people. He warned that the king of Jogbo could not be a good ruler if he had materialistic tendencies. He said only kings who did not go through the rites of oath taking could aspire to be rich.

Lapite forces the king makers to silence by drawing a gun on them and calling the oath-taking a conservative rite could tie a king to an oath of poverty and he wanted none of that. Everyone seen as a threat to the king is silenced either through death or imprisonment. The ones who got early notices ran into hiding. Lapite turns out to be a greedy, self serving king, who showed no feelings or respect for the people he governed nor for the chiefs who served. He is a despotic leader; he is not only a terror to his subjects; he also uses his powers as king to plunder the natural resources. When the youths discover the age old pact among the king, the drum and the brass crown, they tried to save Jogbo from Lapite's hand. In a bid to suppress the uprising, Lapite plays into the hands of a dictator who is also interested in the hands of a dictator who is also interested in the crown. Lagata helps Lapite to retrieve the stolen Brass crown and Lapite in a typical show of pride coming before a fall, gives Lagata a blank check to draw on. Lagata kills Lapite and steals the crown. Lagata's reign is short lived as the agents of Jogbo's cultural heritage find a way to bring the covenant drummer, the drum and the brass crown together again. The film was written by Akinwumi Işola, directed by Tunde kelani, and it runs for 104 minutes. Saworoide is replete with symbols which portray the rich cultural heritage of the Yoruba's. The film is instructive in language, in artifacts, in dressing, in greetings, and in many non-verbal communications.

Symbolism as a vector for cultural dissemination in the movie

In this paper, we shall explore the use of symbolism as a vector for disseminating Yorùbá culture in the movie in steps, by classifying the usage under different sub-headings.

1) Symbolic naming of character in the movie:

We will first explore the use of symbolic naming of characters in the movie. This is used to disseminate more information about these characters without actually talking about them and to also give them unforgettable identification. Name is important among the Yorùbá. A child's name dictates his fortune in life because the Yorùbá believe that the name a man bears affects him in life. This is why great care is taken before a child is named, for names do not only reflect the circumstances of conception and birth; it also discloses the family history, fortunes, misfortunes, hopes and fears (Ọlatunji, 1984).

The script writer under consideration takes cognizance of this fact in the ways he names the characters in the movie. These symbolic naming of characters was to give the symbolic characters unforgettable identification the movie. Ọlatunji (1984) classifies Yorùbá names into eight. They are: Orúko Oríkí sókí, Orúko Àmútòrunwá, Orúko Àbísò, Royal or title names, Devotees names, Àbíkú names, Orúko Ìnagijẹ or Àlàjẹ and Orúko Àdàpẹ. In the movie, many of these names are found but for clarity only four will be discussed. They are; symbolic royal or titled names, oruko ìnagijẹ, devotees or deity names and role reflecting names.

a) Royal or Titled Names: The characters in the novels that bear these names belong to the royal families. There are many powerful kings who names signify the strength, power, and authority that are notable in the lives of Kings in Yorùbá land. This authority was ironically signified in the movie. For example, Ọba Lapite's name could be morphologically written as ola + pile + ite which could be translated as wealth or honor forms the foundation of the throne. Ironically, this is not the case in the character he plays. He specifically tells the chiefs from the beginning that he is on the throne to make money. He desires to acquire wealth both at home and abroad. This is clearly seen when he instructs Ọgá Agégedú to deposit money (bribe) in foreign bank accounts for him. He is a very selfish man with no love for the people he is ruling over. His ambition and greed rule him and lead to his destruction, he allows

nothing to stop him from getting what he wants. For instance, he orders Balogun to kill Arese (late Adebomi's son) and Arapa his supposed daughter so that he would continue to reign.

Adeḡla Aderemi (Arese)'s real name is a shortened form of Ade+ba+ḡla+nile and Ade+rḡ+mi+lḡkun, which means "the crown met wealth already in the house and the crown stopped my weeping." This is well signified in the movie to disseminate more about Yoruba beliefs in names. At the end of the movie, the bearer the son of Adebomi assassinated by Lapite lives up to his name and eventually inherits the wealth (throne) he meets in the family heritage, and his father's family was comforted at last. "Ade" which is the prefix of his two names signifies his affinity to the crown (kingship) and in Yoruba culture only those related to kings bear names that start with such prefixes.

Onijogbo, is the royal throne name given to whoever rules in Jogbo land. In the movie, the three kings are referred to as that with the previous rulers. "Oni" the prefix means "the owner", and this signifies the part of Yoruba customs that Daramola and Jeje (1975) talk about thus: "Oḡba Alade in Yoruba land is under nobody, and they own both the land and the citizens. Their word is final on any issues hence their names "Ka-bi-o-kò-si." Royalty is symbolized in the king in the movie, with their dressings and items holding for authority the array of coral beads on the necks and the wrists of the king, and the chiefs, the flowing agbada and danshiki in Aḡḡ ḡkḡ made from the dyes portray royalty in Yoruba culture.

Chiefs are important selected citizens who help the king in ruling his domain in Yoruba land. Every chief has his/her role to play in the successful administration of kings in Yoruba culture, because of their assumed closeness to the people. They give good pieces of advice to the king and help with the task of maintaining peace and order in the community. In Saworoide, the chiefs can be grouped into two; the good and the bad. The action of the bad chiefs points out that corruption could be found everywhere. Some of these symbolic title names conform to holders of such titles in Yoruba land for example Osi, Babaamawo, Baba Opalaba and Asipa. They represent viewers' expectations from such personalities in Yoruba land. Babaamawo, the palace oraclist, is honest till the end of the movie, and Baba Opalaba, the palace wise man and jester, plays his role well to conform to the Yoruba cultural character.

Balogun and Seriki who are supposed to be the citizens' defender and right-hand men to the king are symbolically given that part to play. At the end of the movie, after Lagata's death, they are mocked by the youths. This conveys how traitors are treated in Yorùbá land no matter the post they hold. Both of them lose the respect and dignity that came with the titles they are holding after they go to serve Lagata. They are used to represent bad traditional rulers in Yorùbá land who have lost their rightful places in the cultural setting.

b) **Orúkọ ìnagijẹ:** This according to Olatunji (1984) describes this as the name a child acquires over time as he grows into manhood. It may be a phrase that points to his physical or emotional make-up. A good example found in the movie as a vector of this aspect of Yorùbá culture is Asabi Abati Alapa (Asabi is king Lapite's first wife). She is a very dark, fat woman and according to Oba Lapite and Tinuola, she is too ugly and too obese to be seen in public with them or to be referred to as Olori. Abati Alapa is a name given to her in mockery because of her stature and look. Tinuola refers to her mate with this derogatory name to show the difference in their beauty, youth and stature. She plays her role well in the play with the way she acts the rejected wife because of her grotesque physique. These two women effectively portray the much talked about rivalry among co-wives in polygamous Yorùbá settings.

c) **Devotees/ Deity names:** these are names which reflect the devotees of particular deities and worshippers' faith and expectation (Olatunji, 1984). This could also mean devotee to a particular profession or gods. Ayanniyi and Ayangalu's names in the movie are used to portray this Yorùbá culture in the movie. The bearers' names signify their affinity to drums. They are not just professional drummers, but they are an important family of drummers consecrated for the rites required for the successful coronation of any Onijogbo in the movie. They are from the only family whose members could beat the Saworoidẹ drum in Jogbo town. The importance of these characters is not only signified in their symbolic names but also in the roles they play as the plot unfolds. The climax of the play is actually brought to limelight by Ayanniyi's dramatic return to Babaamawo's house. Truly, at the end of the movie when he beats Saworoidẹ and Lagata dies, we really

see the full meaning of his name that Ayan+ni+iyi (the drummer is honorable).

d) Role reflecting names: This name points out more about the role of the bearers in the movie. Araparegangan, the daughter of Tinuola the favorite queen of Lapite, is a very good dancer in the movie. Her name signifies her exceptional ability to dance to gángan drum. She used to be the town's best dancer before Arese comes to join in the competition. Her mastery of dancing is well revealed when even king Lapite confirms this fact during the anniversary ceremony. Her role brings to the fore the use of gángan drum and the relevance of dancing competition as part of the leisure activities found among youths in Yorùbá culture.

Aresejabata, literally means someone with good legs for bata dancing. This name given to Aderemi in the movie conveys his dexterity as a dancer. Even while he was in exile, he still had time to practice his dancing steps. This also signifies the importance of the bàtá drum in Yorùbá land. Arese's dancing bàtá ability almost gets him killed because Lapite could easily identify him for assassination after learning about the fact that he is late Adebomi's son.

2) Archetypal symbolic use in the movie:

Archetype symbolism is the use of traditional symbols to convey ideas. Examples include sacred materials, symbolic objects and cultural beliefs that have hidden meanings. The society that uses them as cultural beliefs and symbols knows that the ideas they signify may be animate or inanimate. Here, the archetypes are direct to all the symbolic events in the movie. The archetypes occur in two contexts in the movie, and using Ogundeji's (1988) classification, they would be discussed under the macro and micro context. Examples are those used in the context of Ìwúre in appeasing gods, in praying for certain blessings and during swearing- in ceremony in the palace chamber. Some items used as cultural vector will be discussed using the setting codes, décor and accessories. (Ogundeji, 1988).

A.) Ilu, which stands for the symbolic title of the movie "Saworoide" is a very important item in the plot. The characters in the movie used drums to convey all what Yorùbá use drums for in Yorùbá land. It is used to warn chiefs and people every time the king is coming. This is a sign to announce king's entrance to a

particular setting so that everyone will remove taboo objects that king must not see from the setting. The drum beat can also be used to alert everyone to pay attention when the king is speaking and to confirm his authority that his words are final on issues.

Ilu is also symbolically used in the movie as a vector to show how Yorùbá's express their joy, victory, happiness and other emotions. This is seen when Lagata brings back Adé idẹ with much drumming and funfair. This also shows as they celebrate 15 years of Lapite's reign in Jogbo town. Ilu is later used in the movie to iconize one of the sacred items found in the Yorùbá king's palace. In the movie, Saworoidẹ is the name given to the particular drum specially made for Jogbo town. It is designated in the film as one of the items required for the swearing-in of every new Onijogbo. Ironically, in the movie, the Saworoidẹ drum is later used to solve Lagata's military reign when Ayanniyi beats the drum. Lagata dies because he is not given the compulsory incision that comes with the rites of enthronement that entitles the Onijogbo to wear the brass crown.

B.) Ada (cutlass) is another item used for the swearing in ceremony by the Jogbo people. This is used in the movie to signify Yorùbá belief in Ogun the god of iron as a justice god. It stands for war, and the implication of swearing with cutlass in Yorùbá land is well conveyed when Lapite refuses to swear by it and other sacred swearing items because he knows he is not going to put the people first in his administration.

C.) Ibon (gun), orun (bow), ofa (arrow), and ota (bullet) portray Yorùbá's cultural war equipment of the olden days. Oga Agbegilodo gives these items to the youth leaders to help them fight the war against Lapite. All these signify the political tempo in Jogbo town, they are without peace at that moment. These also represent what comes after war like death, disease, loss and destruction.

D.) Yorùbá cultural beliefs about links between dead and living and ties between items are well disseminated in the movie through the use of okun (rope). Babaamawo uses the okun that is removed from Ade idẹ to tie the Saworoidẹ in the micro context and explained to Lapite that in the macro context it symbolically ties him (the new king) to previous late Onijogbos and that it also connects him to every citizen of Jogbo town. The reality of the gravity of this

connection makes Lapite bring out his gun. This act shows the initiation team that Lapite would be a selfish king and not a king for the people at all. Babaamawo also confirms this link later when he tells Lapite that if they do not see Saworoide, they cannot find Ade ide, because Saworoide is used in locating Ade ide.

E.) Yorùbá's belief about the evil associated with excessive consumption of alcoholic beverage, for instance dry gin (oti lile) is conveyed in the movie. The influence of over-indulgence in alcohol consumption is seen in the micro context when Arese breaks his promise to Babaamawo and Babaagba by confiding in Arapa that he is not just a prince but the son of the assassinated Adebomi. Yorùbás appreciate the importance of not drink for pouring libation but the culture frowns at excessive ingestion or alcohol consumption to the point that one will not know what one is doing. They believe that excessive drinking makes the tongue loose.

F) **Use of Aroko:** Among the Yorùbá, there is a rich collection of symbolic objects for non-verbal messages. These emerged from the study of the diplomatic system of communication. Under this, we have Àrokò (coded message), Ìtùfù (torch that is combustible), body movement, symbols and the likes (Opadotun, 1986).

Àrokó (coded message) is a conventional traditional Yorùbá system of communication. It uses symbolic sign-system to transmit information and feelings. It requires the sender, the vehicle, the symbol, the courier and the receiver (Ogundeji, 1997). Only those who understand the conventional meanings of the materials use it. Baba Ayangalu gives Arese Aroko to give Babaamawo. Without using words, Babaamawo decodes the message and takes Arese in but warns him never to tell anyone his real identity.

A feather is symbolically used in the movie to signify the Yorùbá power of connectivity, distance notwithstanding. Ayangalu, used a feather to remove some wax from his ear, speaks some words into it, inserted the feather in the drum and beats the drum.. The same words he speaks to the feather is what the drum beat echoes to Ayanniyi several miles away. The message is, "Ayanniyi, my child, come home quickly because death may come anytime." As if distance did not separate them, Ayanniyi hears the call and he could not wait to do anything again in the land where he is sojourning. He heeds his father's call as he is sitting down to a meal. He could not even wait to eat the food his wife place before

him, he tells his wife he has to leave because he is missing his father very much.

3) Language as a vector of Yorùbá culture:

Use of language is one of the yardsticks that can be used to distinguish a competent literary artist from an inept one. Işola (1998) opines that a writers' literary style is determined by the sum total of his linguistic competence, his artistic patience and his ability to achieve lucidity without boredom. It also involves his realization that a high degree of elegance and linguistic implications is essential in a work of art. The vintage stock of the beauty of the Yorùbá language is fully displayed in the movie (Fakoya, 2008).

a) **Proverb:** Proverbs are metaphorically presented expressions that serve as the social sayings that guide the activities of the people. The use of proverbs as a cultural vector in the movie is to disseminate various ways the Yorùbá use proverbs, like conveying ideas without actually saying it in offensive manner. An example of this is when Lagata tells the people of Jogbo while addressing the community on his coronation ceremony that:

*"Tipátipá lá fi ní fẹràn Sàngó,
tipátipá ni a fi ní fẹràn ẹni tí ó bá ju
nilo";*

*(We love Sango, the god of
thunder, by force, just as we love
whoever is older / stronger than
one by force too).*

This proverb uttered by Lagata conveys the message that whether they like him or not, they have to accept him because he is already above them. Yorùbá people use proverbs to serve this purpose in their everyday life. They also use proverbs to communicate their feelings about issues without saying it in layman's words especially with a view to conveying deeper meanings. For example, when Balogun was lamenting to Şeriki, he tries to paint a picture of the predicament of Jogbo people under Lagata's reign. In an attempt to show that things were becoming worse for them during Lagata's reign, he said:

“A ní ajá ní lósó a rẹ é ra òbó, a kó adiyẹ tà, a fi owó ra awó,”

(We complained that the dog stoops too much and we went ahead to buy a monkey. We sold the hen and went to buy guinea fowl)

This conveys his thought that even though they are complaining about Lapite's era, Lagata is a worse case to deal with. Proverbs are also symbolically used to link events in the story-line and to introduce action and counter-action in the movie. An example is when the youth are discussing how the Agégedús have defaulted in fulfilling their promise of weapon of warfare to the youth. Fadiya says:

“Ka tan ni sija ekun ki a fi orun sise si ni lapo”.

(Tricking one to go and face the tiger with a bow and arrow is unfair).

This conveys their fear of what next might happen to them now that they have already declared war with no weapon at hand. This proverb links the event of Lagata's (soldiers) administration into the storyline, because after Lagata and his troupe defeats the youth, he then desires to become the next Onijogbo.

b) **Personification** is also symbolically used in the movie as a vector for disseminating Yoruba culture. It is a device whereby non-human things are endowed with human feelings and attributes (Olatunji 1984:49). An example is when Oga Agégedú complains to the others at their meeting that they are spending too much money on bribing people, he says:

“Se gbogbo aja, ewure, ológbò àti òpòlò ni a ó máa pín owó fún ni?”

(Are we going to be sharing money to every dog, goat, cat and frog?).

He gives the human to dogs, goats, cats and frogs. Rather than name the leaders who were clamouring for bribe, he equates them with animals. This shows Yorùbá at times give human attribute to non-human to express their views about human beings without actually mentioning anybody's name. Also, during the coronation of Lagata, when Ayanniyi has already beaten the Saworoide drum, Baba Amawo, Adebola and youth leaders repeat this statement:

*"Aso funfun ni n sunkun aro
Ipile oro ni n sunkun ekeji tan tan tan"*

*(The white cloth cries for dye
The root word cries for the subordinate
one with much force).*

They give cloth and root words the human attribute of weeping and the repeated verb "ni" in the structure signifies the unfailing features of those situations. This also emphasizes their belief that the past Onijogbos' spirits that they are invoking by drumming Saworoide will come and deal with Lagata. In addition, money, power and charms are personified in the movie to convey the importance Yorùbá place on those three items in our daily transaction of the business of rulership living when Balogun and Seriki advise Lagata about his next action:

*"A nilò owó láti fi dí àwọn èniyàn lénu
A nilò agbára láti fi idi àse wa múlè
A nilò oògùn láti fi kọlu àwọn tó bá ní bínú wa"*

*(We need money to block people's mouth
We need power to enforce our authority
We need charms to fight those that despise us).*

4) Stylistic devices symbolically used as cultural vectors in the movie

Stylistic devices like repetition and word-play, are symbolically used in the movie to symbolize the effect of many things in the characters' expressions and to disseminate information about their use in the Yorùbá culture. Paramount in the movie is the use of **Word play**, which is the juxtaposition of lexical

items which are somehow similar in shape to produce an effect of verbal dexterity (Ọlátúnjí, 1984:37), and **Repetition** which is used at both structural and lexical level in the movie. They are both used for emphasis and to add aesthetics to the rich use of the Yorùbá language. An example is when Lagata's deputy discusses the situation of Jogbo town with him that:

*"A ní iyò, à ní jẹ àtẹ
A ní epo à ní jẹ ọfun
A ní eni à ní sùn ní éékán"*

*(We have salt but eat slatless food
We have palm oil but eat colorless food
We have a mat but we sleep on bare ground).*

He repeats the sentence structure to convey all the life's necessities like food, natural resources and housing facility or land, which they have in abundance in Jogbo town; yet, they are still suffering.

5) **Symbolic Use of songs as a cultural vector in the movie:** Baba Opalaba seems to say much more in songs than in words. Examples are:

"Èyẹ ọ dé é dé bà lé ọrùlé ọ, ọrọ lẹyẹ ní gbọ ọ"

(The bird does not stay on the roof top for no reason, its listening or eavesdropping.)

This underscores the need to listen and the gains of listening to get information. It also suggests that it is wrong to speak ill of people when we think they are not also paying attention:

"Alákiisà ní jó lóru, bọpẹ ilẹ à mọ lọla"

(The man in rags dances at night forgetting that day will soon break)

The song is a quick avenue for information dissemination. Rather than launch into long, unending stories or didactic tales, Baba

Opalaba merely summarizes the situation with a song. Many of the songs in the movie are war / riot songs which are sung repeatedly (full repetition) to disseminate how Yorùbá use songs to convey messages to leaders, example is when the youth hold tree branches and march angrily to the palace to signify their disappointment on Lapite for failing to fulfill his promises to the citizens singing thus:

*“Lapite kotó joyè, a mohun tó o wí 2x
Tówọ bá tẹ Lapite pipa ni ẹ pá 2x,”*

*(Lapite before you were enthroned, we know all your promises 2x
If the cantankerous fellow is caught, just kill him 2x)*

Some lexical items are repeated to draw attention of other characters to an important issue, an example is Baba Opalaba's words to Chief Balogun and Seriki thus:

*“Aṣa ní bá ẹyẹlé ẹrẹ
Ẹyẹlé ní yọ, ẹyẹlé ní fíkú ẹrẹ”*

*“The hawk is playing with the pigeon
The pigeon is glad; the pigeon is playing with death”*

He plays on the lexical items “ẹyẹlé and ẹrẹ” by repeating them for emphasis. This is to draw Balogun's attention to the fact that Lagata's closeness to the chiefs will eventually be to their detriment. The song presents Lagata as the destructive hawk playing with the people who are represented as the innocent pigeon.

6) **Use of non-word communication/para-verbals as a cultural vector in the movie:** there are instances in the movie where words would have been inadequate or inappropriate.

In such instances, communication is aided by gesture, eye contact, vocal inflections and body language. A good example is the scene in which Lapite calls Oloto, one of the sectional heads, a bastard. In defiance and to protect his honor, Oloto rejects the insult. Just with a twist of his head, Lapite instructs the palace guards to arrest Oloto. Immediately, the guards' spring into action, no words are necessary. Also, when Tinuola, wants to warn Arapa to leave the

dancing arena because her life is in danger, she conveys the message more through her vocal inflection and facial expression. She equally warns Arapa not to break into a run but to control her fear and attempt to walk away majestically. In some instance, people stand with their mouths open and their jaws dropping to show surprise. While at another instance clapping and standing ovation was given to other characters to show their support. An example is during the press conference during Lapite's anniversary, the reporter who asks Lapite what he has achieved since he ascended the throne was clapped for by other reporters to show their support. Some of these non-word communication are universal, they are not restricted to the Yorùbá alone. All over the world, people stand to appreciate and they clap to show their respect and support of another individual.

Conclusion

This paper examined the use of symbolism in Saworoide, a Yorùbá home video as a cultural vector of Yorùbá culture. The researchers submit that because the home video industry has become very significant as a form of entertainment among Nigerians, it has great manner of teaching the Yorùbá culture to the new children being giving birth to in Nigeria. The power of the symbols lies mainly in the use of such symbols as are meaningful to the performer who usually possesses an unquestioning attitude to traditional beliefs. Semiotic analysis used in this work can be very useful in comparing one culture with another for cultural meanings are symbolic, and it allows us to contrast the ways different cultures are structured.

The paper identified aspects of culture as portrayed in the movie and the examples are drawn from symbolic uses of these culture disseminations like the language use, the symbolic way of naming characters, archetypal symbols songs and stylistic devices. The writers concluded that Saworoide showcases the Yorùbá culture to a great extent and thus it's a veritable vector of disseminating cultural heritage of the Yorùbá people.

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