

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Man, as a mortal being earns his reminiscence through various attempts he makes to instill his beliefs and other ritualistic activities to his kith and kin; and this is mostly done in an outstanding style of *oríkì*, which is a praise poem but literarily it is an epistemology of a race as found in an individual. An *oríkì* can reveal the history, psychology and the philosophy surrounding our individual clan, family or one generation from the other. The system of *oríkì* has transcended time since the primordial times as it serves as a way of reflecting the nature of a character as well as recounting his/her ancestral qualities and achievements, which has become the oeuvre of that individual.

The sensitivity and inquisitiveness to the world around us gives the wherewithal to existence and purposes within and around. Hence, the formulation of stories (myths), which arise from given occurrences in an environment and praises given to them is known as *Oríkì*. These stories help philosophically, psychologically and sociologically to develop the humanistic repertoire which frame the socio-structure of the people's religion and ways of life. It provides the bases for caution and rewards about the practices whether to be rejected or accepted in the society. For instance, in the Yorùbá parlance, there are several proverbs employed when talking to establish the realities in certain concepts. For instance, a child deviating from the acceptable norms of the society, it could be said that *ohun tí àgbà rí lórí joko, ọmọdé ò lè ri láíláí bí ó bá gun igi ọ̀pẹ*, that is, what an elder sees while sitting down, a young person may not see it if he climbs to the top of a tree. In other words, age is of essence to life interpretation. Also, another Yorùbá adage says *ọmọdé ò lè ní àkísà bí àgbà*, a child cannot have as much rags as an elder. In other words, experience counts no matter how it may look.

Thus, we can say that myths and folklores also help in the nurturing and education of the mind and soul, which may first exist as a myth but eventually becomes the backdrop of realism not only to the Yorùbá people but to anyone who cares to share from such traditional corpus.

Furthermore, every culture has its own peculiarity that distinguishes it from other cultures. An in-depth understanding of these differences make life unique as people and at such being able to relate appropriately with one another and know what the value of existence and how to go about

it.

These differences and uniqueness is apparent in the behavioral patterns of humans in their daily relationship. To explicate more on this, Abimbola (2018) sees myths and realism from the angle of communal culture and hence, he states that “communal culture is at the level of group psychology which I hereby define as the set of beliefs, doings, and practices that makes up the communal bank of a group’s achievement.” (129) This establishes the fact that the communal psychology can be related to the mental characteristics of a group of people about certain conceptual framework in their existence, whether through assimilation, imbibing or absolving which can be seen in the peoples’ socio- biographical studies. In this is myth and realism found and projected as media of conveying the communal conception of space, time, and thought.

Having said the above, this research seeks to study myths and realism among Yorùbá as a nation and as a race from their oríkí’s perspectives. Hence, who are the Yorùbá? And what geographical entity can be relatively referred to as the Yoruba nation?

Firstly, let us consider Adegbola’s position about the Yorùbá homestead:

The Yorùbá are one of the major and most prominent races in West Africa. The Yorùbá nation lies [sic] 20 30, and 6 30” East. Its area is about 181,300 sq kilometers. This area spread from the present Edo and Delta State of Nigeria, across the Republic of Benin and Togo. Large concentrations of the Yoruba are found in such places as Sierra Leone, Gambia and across the Atlantic, as far as Caribbean, West Indies and the Americas especially Orixa people in Brazil and Cuba. Worldwide, they are estimated to be about 184 million in population. (61)

Also, Olatunbosun (2016):

Yorùbá are collection of diverse people with a common history, language and culture. Geographically, the bulk of them inhabit the Southwestern part of Nigeria with some of their kinsmen and kinswomen spread across the globe. The reason for their wide spread is because their former native land was a Slave Coast from where Slaves were taken to the new world while some remained in other parts of Africa till date. The entire Yoruba race is united under the pantheon primordial divinity called Odùduwà who is believed to have been the ancestor of the Yoruba

crowns. For this reason, all Yoruba are regarded as the children of Odùduwà. (61)

Furthermore, Fadipe (1970):

The most prominent are the Yorùbá political structure, the social fabric, the sociology of the race, especially in areas relating to love, marriage, food, music, dressing, language, inheritance, in-laws, respect for elders, and the unmatched love for neighbors are various cultural tenets that define the Yorùbá. (24)

The Yoruba are said to have occupied the Southwestern Nigeria and are organized into networks of related villages, towns and kingdoms; with most of them headed by an Oba (king) or Baale (a noble man or mayor). The chief Yorùbá cities/towns are Iléṣà, Ìbàdàn, Èkó, Ọ̀tò-Àwóri, Èjìgbò, Ìjẹ̀bú Ọ̀de, Abẹ̀òkúta, Àkúrẹ̀, Ìlọ̀rín, Ìjẹ̀bú-Igbó, Ọ̀ndó, Ọ̀tá, Ọ̀ṣogbo, Ọ̀ffà, Ìwó, Ọ̀yó, Ilé-Ifẹ̀, Ọ̀wò, Èdẹ̀, Badagry, etc. as described by Johnson (1921) and Fadipe (1970). Apart from this description, Babatunde (1983) and Akintoye (2010), also infer that there are other towns and cities with historical affiliation with the Yorùbá people because they share one or more similarities. The cities include Benin-city, Warri, Auchi and Okene. They are said to have developed a variety of different artistic forms including pottery, weaving, bead work, metal work, mask making, which are made to honor the gods and ancestors, as there abounds about 401 gods known to the Yorùbá people.

1.1 Background to the Study

It is a normal phenomenon that every society transcends the tenets that have been the straw that binds them together as well as helping them to survive. Over the years, values and expected behavioral patterns are being shaped into the minds of the young ones, following their nurturing by their parents and guardians in oral form. Most common is the folklore in the African Diaspora that has been an intrinsic part of the Yorùbá society. In essence, the emergence of myths can be attributed to folklore which gives rise to stories and illustrations used to buttress the points used by the older generation to the younger generations in various ways.

It is expedient to say that different cultures have various myths attached to their existence. Thus we can have Greek myths, Roman myths, English myths, and African myths. However, in this research we are concerned with the Yoruba myth, as enshrined in oríkì.

For instance, Edith Hamilton (1942) in her *Mythology* asserts that the origin of myths can be traced to the Greeks who have their roots in primeval period. Though they once lived a savage life, their myth reveals that they have risen above their previous condition. She explains that the first documented myth of the Greece is in *Iliad*. It begins with Homer, with the advent of Greece, human explications and the universe are closely related to myth. The Greeks are said to have fashioned their gods after the image of men, but enshrined in various myths such as the Olympian gods and goddesses. This way, the Greeks felt they were to know what the divine inhabitants do, what they eat, drink and how they entertain themselves. (14)

Edith explains further that the world of Greek mythology was not a place of terror for the humans, though the gods were largely unpredictable, but one could still tell whenever a god was angry such as where the thunderbolt of Zeus could strike. Nevertheless, other gods were friendly with the humans, thus, the Greek mythologist transformed a world of fear into a bright and colorful world for the Greeks. (18). She adds that “Greek mythology is largely made up of stories about gods and goddesses, but it must not be read as a kind of Greek Bible, an account of the Greek religion.” (18)

More so, a most modern idea suggests that a real myth has nothing to do with religion. Rather, it is an explanation of something in nature; how any and everything came into existence including men, animals, the sun, moon and stars, storms, earthquakes, all in the universe. She continues that the myths are “early science, the result of men’s first trying to explain what they saw around them. But there are also many so-called myths which explain nothing at all.” (19)

Notable in this myth is the representation of the Greeks gods whom the Romans also acknowledge in their own myth as well. Edith in her *Mythology* says these gods are regarded as the great Olympians because Olympus is their home. They are twelve in number and they make up the divine family. Zeus known as Jupiter to the Romans is the supreme ruler and lord of the sky, the rain-god and the cloud- gatherer and who also wields the thunderbolt. He is the most

powerful god, yet he is not omnipotent or omniscient and is susceptible. He is prone to falling in love with several women and conceiving various tricks to hide his infidelity from his wife Hera. Edith notes that his breastplate is the aegis, which is terrifying to behold; his bird is the eagle, the king of birds, he chose the oak tree because his oracle is in the land of the oak trees. Whenever the gods want to communicate with him, the priests interpret the message through the rustlings of the trees.

Hera known as Juno to the Romans is the wife and sister of Zeus. She is known to protect marriages and women look up to her. An account shows that she punishes most of the women Zeus fall in love with, whether he forces or tricks them. Her animals are the cow and the peacock, and Argos is her favorite city. Poseidon known as Neptune to the Romans is the ruler of the sea and Zeus' brother. He is known for being first to give man horse and he had a connection with bulls. Hades known as Pluto (god of wealth) is the third brother among the Olympians and he rules the underworld and the dead. Pallas Athena known as Minerva to the Romans is the only daughter of Zeus who sprang from his head in full growth and armor. She is his favorite child and he trusts her to carry his aegis, buckler, as well as his weapon, the thunderbolt. She loves the olive tree she creates, Athens is her special city and her bird is the owl.

Phoebus Apollo is the son of Zeus and Leto. He is the master musician, lord of the silver bow, the archer-god and the first to teach man the healing art. He is also regarded as the god of light with no darkness around him and the god of truth who never utters any false word. The laurel is his tree. The dolphin and the cow among many creatures are sacred to him. Artemis known as Diana to the Romans is Apollo's twin sister, the daughter of Zeus and Leto. She is attributed to wild things and a huntsman-in-chief to the gods, but is careful to protect and preserve the youth. The cypress and the deer amongst all wild animals are sacred to her. Aphrodite known as Venus to the Romans is the goddess of love and beauty. The myrtle tree is her tree and the dove her bird.

Hermes known as Mercury to the Romans is son of Zeus and Maia. He is the most cunning and the master thief which he exhibits before he is a day old. Ares known as Mars to the Romans is the god of war. The vulture is his bird and he chooses the dog as his animal. Hephaestus also known as Vulcan and Mulciber is the god of fire. He is ugly, lame and is sometimes said to be

the son of Zeus and Hera. Hestia known as Vesta to the Romans, is the sister of Zeus. He is a virgin goddess and the goddess of the Hearth, a symbol of the home where every newborn is first placed before being carried to their family. (27-35)

It is possible to say that myths have moral lessons embedded in them. A notable instance is the myths of Icarus the son of Daedalus. The story tells of how both were imprisoned by king Minos of Crete in a tower that was above his palace in order to keep an important secret from the world. Thereafter, Daedalus thought of a way to escape and he made wings of wax and feathers for his son. The plan was for Icarus to fly from the prison and free his father and himself. Daedalus warned Icarus sternly that he should avoid flying towards the sun but, alas, as soon as Icarus wore the wings, he discarded his father's warning and made straight way for the sun. The heat of the sun melted his wings made of wax and feathers, and he fell into the sea and died. The lesson that can be explicated from this story is synonymous to the way children pay dearly even with their lives when they abandon the advice and wise counsels given to them by their elders. Often, children, especially the youths are prone to exuberance whenever they attain a certain age, which makes them think they are independent and capable of making life-changing decisions on their own. But in most cases, they end up in devastating conditions, and the 'Had I Known' thought sets in. Children ignorant of some of the conventions and tenets that are binding in their environment or their tradition often overlook or ignore such whom they regard as being outdated and they yield to their passions and ambitions which sometimes causes their fall.

To further enhance our understanding of myths, a distinction is made between myths and fable. The latter is described by Charles Mills (44) as "a story in which the characters and plot, neither pretending to reality nor demanding credence, are fabricated confessedly as the vehicle of moral or didactic instruction." (44) The former is described to be "stories of anonymous origin, prevalent among primitive peoples and by them accepted as true, concerning supernatural beings and events, or natural beings and events influenced by supernatural agencies." (44) He also adds that "fables are vessels made to order into which a lesson may be poured. And that, myths are born, not made."(45)

A careful look at the world today, shows that the tenets and principles, which are the binding factor for the fore-fathers, are now being tossed aside by the younger generation. To them, some

of the tenets are old fashioned and are no longer obtainable. But, like the Yorùbá adage that says “a river that forgets its source will dry up”, may be used to describe the young generation who are fast abandoning their cultural practices and embracing the lifestyle of the Western world, especially as it moves towards post modernism. It is very essential to uphold the values, norms, and traditions of individual cultures as it goes a long way to determine the sustenance of such culture. The ability of the younger generation to abide by the given culture originates from helps to be acceptable in the society as a whole.

It is also necessary to include the fact that myths have a purpose they fulfil. Akporobaro (2012) suggests that “myths were originally created as entertaining stories with a serious purpose”. He adds that

the wide appeal of myths has enabled them to survive for hundreds and sometimes thousands of years. This could be associated with the fact that, man being a social being seeks to give answers to questions that he ponders on and also provide simile plausible solutions to certain occurrences within and beyond his environment (190).

Akporobaro opines that “a myth’s serious purpose is either to explain the nature of the universe (creation and fertility myths) or to instruct members of the community in the attitudes and behavior necessary to function successfully in that particular culture (hero myths and epics).” (190)

The layman understanding of myths is that it an untrue story and thus false. This is because man tries to give justifiable reason for some natural occurrences in his physical environment, as well as proffering solutions to spiritual laws that influences his belief. Myths invariably lead to ritual, which is a set of events and acts man undergoes on a daily basis. The ritual that man undergoes is a style that is usually informed by ideological perspective, religious perspective, sociological perspective, and anthropological perspective. In essence, the way we behave is sometimes based on our belief system. It is therefore through myths that we are able to examine and interpret oríkì in order to know how culturally relevant it is.

1.2 Research Problem

This study explicates the relationship between the Yorùbá worldview of oríkì and the contemporary realities of culture. This is succinctly x-rayed within our selected oríkì and the various ways they have influenced contemporary sociology and psychology thoughts. By furtherance, explicating an in-depth understanding of Yoruba history and the exigencies

attached to the oríkì. Thus, a considerable effort is geared towards examining the relevance of oríkì to the global space.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research is to investigate the place of myth in contemporary realities with the aid of Yorùbá selected oríkì. Therefore, we have four objectives to expound from our aim as follows:

- i. To examine the place of myth as contemporary cultural issues in our selected oríkì;
- ii. To investigate the place of Yorùbá worldview, in relation to contemporary realities in our selected oríkì;
- iii. To investigate the relevance of fluidity between the past and the present in the selected oríkì; and
- iv. To analyze the cultural values in our selected oríkì and their reflections on Yoruba socio - religious realities as related to global world view.

1.4 Research Questions

In order to fulfill this study, the following questions have been formulated:

- i. How is myth examined as contemporary cultural issues in the selected oríkì?
- ii. What is the place of Yoruba worldview in relation to contemporary realities as evidence in the selected oríkì?
- iii. What is the relevance of fluidity between the past and the present in the selected oríkì?
- iv. What are the cultural values in our selected oríkì and their reflections on Yoruba socio conditioning as related to global world view?

1.5 Significance of Study

This study is significant in the area of cultural studies. The oríkì value systems from the Yorùbá tribe of Nigeria in Africa can be used at the global space as philosophical and sociological tools for humanitarian development and cultural improvement. Hence, this study reveals the cultural endowment of the Yorùbá people, their worldview, to the global space. More so, it aids the generation of values, principles, laws that govern human relations in Nigerian as well as global audience. Thus, this study would explore the consciousness in various categories of oríkì that abound in Yorùbá worldview which would help in socialisation process of as well as cultural appreciation.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

The following concepts are the dominating elements of this study and they are:

Myth: this is a story about certain phenomenon that are sometimes false. Some of these stories are such that man deciphers to answer some events that unfold in his environment. No doubt every society and culture has one or two stories that lends credence to its existence. In this study, we are concerned with the various myths that abound in the Yorùbà corpus.

Realism: is anything that can be substantiated in the physical. It also deals with anything that can be handled and such that can be seen.

Yorùbà: this refers to the western people of Nigeria, their culture, traditions, norms, etc. They are group of people with a rich and robust culture, which is employed in this investigation.

Oríkì: is a praise song given to a particular person, god or goddess, plant, animal, etc. Sometimes, when the panegyric is chanted for an individual, it invokes a lively spirit in the person that if it were to be a king or a person with authority, whatever the praise singer desires at that moment is immediately granted and fulfilled. Thus, the importance and value of Oríkì in the world especially in the Yorùbà diaspora cannot be overemphasized.

1.7 Scope and Delimitation of Study

This study centers on the various kinds of realities embedded in the selected oríkì which include humans such as oríkì for persons from families in Kogi, Òsun, Kwara States, etc, the oríkì for chiefs and royalties are also included. Also included are various oríkì for gods and goddesses such as Ọbàtálá, Ogun, Sàngó, Èṣù, etc. It does not include the oríkì for plants, animals, states and town even though they were collected as well.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Literature Review

A good number of attempts on the subject of myth, realism and who are the Yorùbà people have taken place. However, there are sparing attempt on the part on research on oriki by many scholars. The reasons are numerous starting from inaccessibility to disappearance of materials as a result of the younger African scholars' lack of interest in this area of oral literature. Hence, we shall review previous arguments on the subject of myth.

2.1 Myths

Felicia Ohwovoriola and Joy Omoru (2014) opine that “myth is basically a story (muthos), of which the meaning centers on the kind of story it tells and as well as the function attached to it.” “It is also a traditional story which contains legendary and or supernatural characters.” (540). They agree that literarily,

The story is mythic rather than being mythical. That is, it is a story that relates the collective attitude and understanding of the thoughts and characters of a group of people. Embedded in this thought are the deep issues of life and death, fears, human and divine communication. (540)

The above description presents myth as a form of story and what can be call the myth is the kind of story being told. Thus making it clear that story stands at the centre of mythic interpretations. In furtherance the story also functions in a specific way to establish it uniqueness. Isidore Okpewho quoting Soyinka attests to this and describes myths as “the product of man’s attempt to externalize and communicate his inner intuitions.” (Okpewho, 1982). That intuition is the story and the reaction expected is the function.

Thus, myth is described as an idea, an understanding of a phenomenon, which is creatively externalized and communicated in a story. This invariably refers to the traditional way of story-telling commonly known as tales by the moonlight, where young ones gather round an elderly man or woman as he/she recounts various stories ranging from the animal stories to reasons certain events unfold in their environment. Most important in these stories are the moral lessons

embedded in them that helps to nurture the young minds as to the acceptable practice that are expected of them in the society. On this Akporobaro submits:

Myth is a traditional story or rudimentary narrative sequence, normally traditional and anonymous, through which a given culture ratifies its social customs or accounts for the origins of human and natural phenomena, usually in supernatural or boldly imaginative terms. The term has a wide range of meanings, which can be divided roughly into 'rationalist' and 'romantic' versions. In the first, a myth is a false or unreliable story or belief (adjective: mythical), while in the second, 'myth' is a superior intuitive mode of cosmic understanding (adjective mythic). In most literary contents, the second kind of usage prevails, and myths are regarded as fictional stories containing deeper truths, expressing collective attitudes to fundamental matters of life, death, divinity and existence (sometimes deemed to be 'universal'). Myths are usually distinguished from legends in that they have less of an historical basis, although they seem to have a similar mode of existence in oral transmission, retelling, literary adaptation, and allusion. A mythology is a body of related myths shared by members of a given people or religion, or sometimes a system of myths evolved by an individual writer or group of writers. Why stories about tortoise abound in Africa, why the tortoise has shells, why women have no beards, why there is day and night are examples of aetiological myths. (54/55)

The above explanation by Akporobaro exudes that what is called myth is an attempt in illustrating as well as portray why certain things exist in and around us. The explanations for things seen and unseen are what we refer to as myth. In other words, the conceptualization of objects, ideas and principles.

Furthermore, according to the *Dictionary of English Folklore*, myth is said to originate from a Greek term, "mythos", which means a word, story, speech or thought of an unknown origin." (244). It further describes myths as "... stories about divine beings... they are revered as true and sacred ..." this position is similar to what Akporobaro postulates as myth.

Ali Alhaidari (2012) describes myths as "traditional tales which are shared by a group of people". Every culture has its own myths which transfer the belief of primitive people about the creation of the universe and its content. To him, knowledge, like a river flowing down a mountain, every

myth has a source. Thus, myths are regarded as the first source of knowledge for the primitive people to acquaint themselves with the world around. (Ali 1)

From the above, one would expect that just like a river, myths would spread continue to flow from one generation to another but due to the fact that humans are now becoming learned, they are fast putting away mythic claims and adequately prove their beliefs. This is further corroborated by Ali as:

Colonization, the growth of democracy and the introduction of writing and money have an important role in the change of character in a society comically or tragically. Furthermore, the arrival of literacy puts myths under attack. Due to this attack, poets, slowly, lose their status and power is lost to historians and philosophers. Poets stop writing myths but historians begin to write myth in prose and do not claim to be divinely inspired.
(3)

Patridge Eric (2006), contributes by saying that “like the French myth, the English myth is derived via Latin mythus, from Greek muthos, speech, a narrative, a fable or myth”. (Patridge, 2006)

Caldwell Richard also attempts to define myth but first illustrates it with an object, table, which he explains that it must be in connection with its form and function. He says that “a table is something that looks like a table and is used like a table. The same goes for myth; it is something that both looks (and sounds) like a myth and is used like a myth.” He infers that: “Greek myth, we all know, is a traditional story (that is, handed down over generations) about gods or heroes (and their families) of either the remote or more recent past.” (Caldwell, 12)

Myths are said to be foundational stories that play fundamental role in the society, which revolves around gods, demigods or extraordinary beings. These myths are mostly upheld by priests and they are inclined to religion and spirituality. Some myths expound on creation while some explain the processes that led to the beliefs and norms held by a society, institutions, including taboos. Sometimes, myths could be regarded as stories, a popular misconception or an imaginary entity.

Simpson Jacqueline and Roud Steve, express their view on myth and describe it as

Stories about divine beings, generally arranged in a coherent system; they are revered as true and sacred; they are endorsed by rulers and priest; and closely linked to religion. However, once this link is broken, and the actors in the story are not regarded as gods but as human heroes, giants or fairies, it is no longer a myth but a folktale. Where the actor is divine but the story is trivial, the result is religious legend, not myth. (254)

In the above myth is related to the fashioning of the gods and goddesses in the making of religion. Hence, all religious believes are shrouded in myths.

Bascom (2012) posits that myth are “prose narratives which, in the society in which they are told, are considered to be truthful accounts of what happened in the remote past... they may recount the activities of deities, their love of affairs, their family relationship, their friendships and enmities, their victories and defeats.” (2012)

Humans normally have a natural inclination to question the order of things around them and give explanations for various happenings around them. Hence, it was the curiosity of the primitives and their quest to know everything around them that led to the creation of diverse myths such as the creation of the universe and possibly provide answers to questions on the purpose of creation. Ali (5) adds by saying:

Myths provide reasons for the happenings of small things as well as the changing of seasons and also how fire came to man. This is because whereas, the modern man depends on technological advancement to know about the world around, the primitive man depends on myths to know everything, not only the universe. (5)

As an observable function of myth, Bolton et.al (2002) in Ali’s *Meaning, Origin and Function of myth: a brief survey*, opine that:

Myth serve various purposes for the old people, of which one of the most important purposes is religion. They explain further by the ancient Greek and Roman are the religious people. The people believe that the gods and goddesses have great powers.

Hence, the myths give definition to many gods and goddesses and they show the function each possesses. These makes the people to pray and channel their needs and request to the appropriate god or goddess in question. More so, each religion has its rituals to be performed by the worshippers. They add that myth also offer the rituals of religion of ancient people along with an explanation and justification to these rituals. An instance is when people offer up a sacrifice to gods, they slaughter an animal, burn its bone and save the meat for themselves. They do not save the bones themselves but in the first sacrifice, Prometheus offer bones and fat for Zeus and save the meat for humans. (5)

In expatiating more on the function of myth, Bolton (2002) says that myths “give a good image of the natural and social order.” He adds that after the creation of the universe, the myth shows that the creation of human beings and its society comes after the creation of the large universe. The natural order is explained in the character and role of Zeus (who Romans call Jupiter). Myths depict Zeus as responsible for everything in the universe. He is believed to be the creator of such order in the universe. Although, some gods have some role in the universe and power, Zeus is illustrated to be over all. He orders everything in the universe in its respective place. (5)

Still stating the function of myth, Bolton (2002) adds further: “myths is a product of a collective people. However, myths do not only reflect the cultural views and ideas of the society, but also of individual people. They reflect the features of ideal human being and the right human behavior.” Ali supports this view by saying that “such explanation shows what behaviors people consider as an ideal and what features people admire. He says further that myths present an ideal archetype of human behavior and suggest ideal features for a hero. Hence, myths show the admirable qualities for men and women.” (Ali, 5)

Jaja Jones (1) in his review on *Myths in African concept of Reality* describes myths as “accounts of the origin of societies and institutions not subject to rationalization but often used by historians and philosophers in their quest to study African history; for it is only thus that we can comprehend the various aspects of the continents’ history and culture.” (Jaja, 1)

Frazer George (94), described myths as “misinterpretation of magical rituals, which were themselves based on a mistaken idea of a natural law: this idea was central to the ‘myth and ritual’ school of thought.” (Frazer, 94). He further adds that:

Humans begin with an unfounded belief in impersonal magical laws. When they realize applications of these laws do not work, they give up their belief in natural law in favor of a belief in personal gods controlling nature, thus giving rise to religious myths. Meanwhile, humans continue practicing formerly magical rituals through force of habit, reinterpreting them as reenactments of mythical events. Finally, humans come to realize nature follows natural laws, and they discover their true nature through science. Here again, science makes myth obsolete as humans progress from magic through religion to science. (80)

However, Segal Robert (95) posits that “putting mythical thought against modern scientific thought would lead to theories that imply modern humans must abandon myth.” (Segal, 95)

Schrempp Gregory (2002) describes myths as “colorful stories that is told about the origins of humans and the cosmos. This is in light of the fact that perspectives about myth vary”. While some view it as a source of spiritual growth, others see it as falsehood. While some see the distinct character of particular culture, others view it as universal patterns. Some view myth as ‘contemporary’ and ‘alive’, others view it as ‘ancient’ or ‘dead’.

Iwuchukwu Onyeka (2009) refers to myths as “ancient story or body of stories that attempt to explicate the history or origin of a people.” (20) No tribe or culture can be said to have originated out of a void and because man is a reasoning being, he seeks explanations for occurrences around him. Knowing the history of a group of people helps to be better informed on their ancestry. He also adds that:

Myths are set in primordial times. It is presented as incidents or events that happened ‘in those days’, so, it is difficult to situate myths in a particular period hence, there is no date for the origin of myths. It is assumed that they exist in each community. Myths also help to explain the process, the whys and wherefores of certain natural events, which are usually viewed or sound mysterious. Myths essentially fuse the physical with the metaphysical and the natural with the supernatural.

Hence, they cannot be subjected to the rules of logic, rationalism and empiricism. (20)

Some myths are also known to be based on the creation of the world. Falola Toyin recounts that in the myths of the Yorùbá, God (Olódùmarè) decides to create a planet. Thus, He gives the assignment to a multi-legged hen who carries a sachet of sand and seeds. As the chicken broke the sachet, it uses its legs to spread the sand which becomes the earth. Thereafter, the seeds that were planted became plants. Humans then appears from a void, and survive on the land with their children. Later, they found other crops and animals (8).

The creation myth explains that in the beginning, the universe is only in two parts, the sky above and the water/wild marshland below. Ọlórún, the powerful God has the greatest knowledge which rules the sky, while the goddess Olókun rules the waters and the wild marshes which had no vegetation or human life in it.

After a while, one of the gods, Ọbàtálá, is not satisfy because there is no life below the sky. So, he thinks within himself to make something of interest. He proceeds to speak with Ọlórún on how the situation would be improve. Ọbàtálá tells Ọlórún,

“Poor Olókun rules nothing but marshland and water, she needs mountains, valleys, forests and fields. All kind of creation and plants that would live on the solid land. Ọlórún then told him it was a good suggestion but who would create such. Ọbàtálá replied earnestly, “with your permission, I would create solid land”. (244)

So Ọbàtálá goes to Òrúnmilà, the oldest son of Ọlórún, gifted with prophecy and he understands the secrets of existence, including fate and the future. He explained his intent and Ọrúnmilà advise him first to get a chain of gold long enough to reach the waters below from the sky. He should fill a snail’s shell with sand and finally, he must place the shell, a black cat and a palm nut in a bag he would carry with him as he descends from the sky.

Ọbàtálá appreciates Òrúnmilà and proceeds to meet the goldsmith that would make the length of chain needed to descend from the sky. Ọbàtálá asked every god in the sky to assist him with as how much gold they had after he explained his intent they are glad to assist him and each god give him their gold necklaces, bracelets, rings and even gold dust. Although the gold Ọbàtálá

gathered is not sufficient, the goldsmith is still able to fashion the chain from it with a hook at the end.

When the chain is ready, Òrúnmìlà accompany Ọbàtálá while he hooks one end of the chain to the edge of the sky and lowers the rest towards the waters. Ọbàtálá then begins to descend from the sky with his bag containing the snails “shell filled with sand, the white hen, the black cat and the palm nut”. When Ọbàtálá reached the end of the chain, he could feel the mist rising and hear the splashing of the waves. But he saw that he was still far from the sea.

Then, from the sky, Òrúnmìlà calls out to him, Ọbàtálá! He tells him to use the sand in the snail’s shell. Ọbàtálá then reaches into it and pours the sand on the waters below him. Again, Òrúnmìlà calls out, free the white hen. Ọbàtálá drops the hen where he pours the sand and it flutters down and immediately begins to scatter the sand by scratching at it. Wherever the sand falls, it formed dry land, the larger piles of sand became hills, while the smaller ones became valleys.

Ọbàtálá let go of the golden chain and jumped to the earth which he named Ife. He was happy as he walked with pleasure upon the solid land, though there was no life. Ọbàtálá digs a hole in the dry land and buries his palm nut in the soil, which immediately grows into a tree of full length. Some nuts fall upon the land which also grow into full trees. Ọbàtálá builds a house of bark and thatched the roof with palm leaves. He then settles down in Ife with his black cat for company.

From the story above, we could see that Ife was created by Ọbàtálá which is being handed down from one generation to another. (Akporobaro, 234-252)

2.2 Realism

Ali (2014) opines that “realism is often multi-faceted”. The concept of realism is mostly related to the rise of the novel in imitating what is real and from which the name realism emerges.

Carol (Loyola University Chicago) suggests that realism “was an artistic movement that began in the 19th century in France. At this period, artists and writers sought earnestly for detailed realistic and factual illustration. This way, events, social conditions and occurrences were being represented as they are.” (1)

Carol reveals that realism is “characterized by the emphasis on psychological, optimistic, pragmatic, practical and slow-moving plot, rounded, dynamic characters who serve purpose in plot, and that humans are in control of their own destiny and are superior to their circumstances.”

(1) This invariably means any work of art portrays vividly the features that mirrors life and humans in their truth form.

On Reality, we could ascribe every physical entity that can be handled as being real. Roger says that reality ‘consist of those things- tables, chairs, trees, houses, animals, people, etc, which actual things are made of matter. Reality is the state of being true as against myth which is a state of being nominal. Myth is more of what we believe, while reality is more of what we know. While individuals try to construe some events as being real, there is a clear demarcation between reality and fantasy.

2.3 Yorùbá

Yoruba people are of a rich cultural heritage and ancestry. There are divers’ versions that suggests her origin. Biobaku Saburi in *Pattern of the Yorùbá History* describes Yorùbá as “one of the leading peoples of west Africa.” (63) Olugwu et.al, opines that “Ife is regarded as the ancestral home of all Yoruba people and is accordingly regarded as sacred.” The origin of the Yoruba has been of interest to some scholars and a discovery made by Muhammed Bello, the son of Uthman Dan Fodio reveals that he committed to writing the traditions recounted to him by his Muslim brothers, saying that the Yoruba are descendants of the anaanites, belonging to the family of Nimrod. Later, the clergyman, Samuel Johnson in his view recounts that Odùduwà is the pagan heir to the crown of the king of Mecca, Lamurudu (Nimrod). After he was killed by the Muslims, Odùduwà is supposed to have escaped with his people to West Africa. So, Johnson assumes that the Yoruba had adopted certain practices of the Hebrews which is a primitive form of baptism, oriental clothing, which also serves as a distorted version of the biblical story of the prophets of Baal that were killed by Prophet Elisha in 1kings 18. He says further that the Hebrew or Phoenician letter 8 figured on a stone memorial in Ife, is synonymous with the famous staff of Oranmiyan. (Biobaku, 10)

Biobaku recounts from his literal interpretations of oral tradition that the two great Yoruba migration are different from each other; an early migration in the 7th century AD, and the second in the 10th century SD. He assumes that the Druba took part in the Kisra migration with the Persian ruler Khusrau Praviz, whose troops occupied Egypt from 61-628 AD. The second group migration from Upper Egypt led by Oduduwa reached the Yorubaland and then founded Ife in the 10th century AD. Biobaku concludes that all the characteristic features of the Yoruba culture were introduced to west Africa by migrant groups from upper Egypt and the near east having advanced craft, urban culture and political institutions. (Biobaku,10).

However, Adediran Biodun opines that:

since independence, the regional paradigm has replaced the transcontinental theories of the origin of African peoples. The new point of view is determined by the conviction that African peoples, like the European nation states, are best defined by their languages. More so, Yoruba belongs to the Kwa language group and is, despite considerable cultural divergences, closely related to its neighboring languages. (14)

Babátúndé in *Yorùbá Culture of Nigeria: Creating Space for an Engendered Specie* by Adépejú and Oyèbòlá, contributes to this argument by saying:

Oral history of the Yorùbá recounts Odùduwà to be the progenitor of the Yorùbá and the reigning ancestor of their crowned kings. After the disappearance of Odùduwà, there was a dispersal of his children from Ife to found other kingdoms each making their mark in the subsequent urbanization and consolidation of Yorùbá confederacy of kingdoms, with each kingdom tracing its origin to Ile- Ife. (Babátúndé, 1992)

Furthermore, he adds that:

after the dispersal, the aborigines became difficult, and constituted a serious threat to the survival of Ife. Being the survivors of the old occupant of the land before the arrival of Odùduwà, the people then turned into marauders, who would come to town in costumes made of raffia with awful and fearsome appearances to burn down houses and loot the markets. Afterwards, Mómí appeared on the scene; she is said to have played a significant role rescuing the situation.

(Babátúndé, 1993).

Fádípè (1970) contributes that the rescue was at a great price, which includes giving up her only son Olurogbo. The reward for her patriotism and selflessness is not to be reaped in one lifetime she was immortalized after she passed on. Upon which, the Edi festival celebrates this achievement till date. (Fádípè, 1970)

The name Yorùbá is applied to all linguistically and culturally related individuals. The *CIA World Fact Book*, 2012, records that they are more than thirty-five million, who occupy the southwestern corner of Nigeria along the Dahomey border and extends into Dahomey itself. Fádípè suggest that “there are salient structures that constitute the Yoruba plethora of culture and traditions. The most prominent are the Yorùbá political structure, the social fabric, the sociology of the race, especially in areas relating to love, marriage, food, music, dressing, language, inheritance, in-laws, respect for elders and unmatched love for neighbors, banking system are some of the tenets that define the Yorùbás.” (1970)

2.4 Oríkì

Literally, oríkì refers to the praise poem that is used to honor an individual. Akporobaro (2012), says like panegyric, praise poetry is “a public speech or written composition that is devoted to the prolonged, effusive praise of some person, group of people, or public body.” Also, he adds that “oríkì, praise poetry is a form of poetry that is specifically designed for the eulogistic portrayal of the virtues of a given subject. The subject of the praise may be a king, a chief, a war leader, an animal or plant.” (56). Mostly, this is done through a succinct use of metaphors, symbols, and allusion.

Oríkì is so powerful that praise singers use it as an opportunity to gain the favor of the fellow being praised. Olátúnjí Olátúndé (1984) says oríkì is “the most powerful of Yorùbá poetic forms. Every Yoruba poet therefore strives to know the oríkì of important people in his locality as well as lineage oríkì because every person, common or noble has his own body of utterances, by which he can be addressed.” (Olatunji, 97). Barber Karin (1991) regards “*oríkì* and its variants as essential oral forms which cuts across most African cultures.” (Barber, 1991). Oluwole Coker (2015) opines that “as an aspect of Yoruba poetry, oríkì relies heavily on the knowledge and

mastery of its subject by the performer.” (Coker, 2) Ulli Beier, a distinguished and pioneer Yoruba researcher adds that “oríkì is a poetic phrase that is used to describe or praise a god or a person. Every Yoruba has his own oríkì, which he accumulates in the course of his life.”

Sometimes, the oríkì may be sung by professional bards or played by drummers. For instance, a set of drummers could be placed at the entrance of the gate, who announces the presence of a visitor to the king by chanting their oríkì. This means that the drummers must know the praise names of every family in the town. Beier adds that ‘on certain days, they go about the streets, addressing each passer-by with his oríkì.’ Then man being praised then gives the drummers an amount of money. This act of singing the praise names of individuals by these singers also serves as a means of livelihood to them and as entertainment for the listeners. Examples of musicians that benefitted from this acts are Shina Peters, Ebenezer Obey, Sunny Ade, amongst others.

Oríkì in Yoruba land is performed by different categories of people for various occasion. Okpewho (1990) observes in his comprehensive study of the audience, “Performance relationship in oral performance affirms this constitutive value of oríkì in diverse performances”. Furthermore, instances abound in the rendition made by ijálá or Ìrèmòjé (Hunters chant/dirge) as the exclusive preserve of the lineage of the hunters. We also have the Ìyèrè Ifá rendered by the worshippers of the Ifá oracle. There is also the Èkún Ìyàwó sung by brides and is handed down from generation.

Coker (2015) notes that the “Yorùbá, like any other human society, believe not only in celebrating humanistic achievements or landmarks, they also attach great importance to human innate tendencies for praise-singing”. Here, oríkì then becomes a means of personally appreciating a person for the good deeds that is been done. Most times, the person being praised utters that his head is swelling (orí mi wú) as a result of the delights he gets form the oríkì.

Another dimension of oríkì is such seen in religious situations. Akinyemi (1997) notes that “besides major Yorùbá deities like Ògún, Šàngó, Ifá, oríkì serves as the basis of the religious chant used in the worship of the òrìṣà in Yorùbá communities.”

Oríkì is also used as a way of describing a character. Olatúnjí (1984) suggests that “naming is a significant factor in oríkì. This is because a name assigned to an individual transcends identity

but extends to other pedants as the situation warrants.” (68) Coker (2015) also observes that in contemporary times, a name often becomes the easiest way to describe and celebrate a person. Oríkì is used as well to describe the personal traits or physical appearance of a person. Babalolá (1961) opines that

There are various oríkì of people of diverse classes therefore for every individual, there is likely to be an oríkì that describes him in totality, taking into account physical, structural and even the natural construct or mien of the person. In contemporary times, names labels which are part of personal oríkì’s usually reveal individual traits. (125)

Amongst the descriptions used in identifying a person includes agùntásoólò used to call a person that is very tall. Ìbàdíàrán for a beautiful lady. Abólóunjẹkú used to call an individual that is a glutton. Abiwátútù for a calm and cool-headed person. Abifèrèsélénu for an individual with a gap-tooth. Ọkùnrin méjì for a valarious person. Coker (2015) adds that “these descriptions are essentially direct assessment of the individuals concerned as oríkì employs descriptive metaphors in doing this.” He also attests to the fact that “oríkì is also used as a worthy tool of satire and social reformation. Contemporary social and political developments have been subjects of folk musicians’ approach to praising individuals involved in identifiable scenarios.”

Barber (1990) describes oríkì as “attributions or appellations: epithets, elaborated or concise, which is addressed as subject and which are equivalent to, or alternatives to, names. She also adds that

All entities in existence are said to have their own oríkì. Oríkì are felt to capture and evoke the essential characteristics of the subject: to have the most profound and intimate access to its inner nature. In utterance, therefore, they evoke the subject’s power, arouse it to action, and enhance its aura. They are always in the vocative case, and in utterance the performer always establishes an intense, one-to-one bond with the addressee as long as the utterance lasts. (315)

Thus, the value of oríkì in the Yorùbá diaspora is part of the cultural values that is upheld by most families and regions.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Research Methodology

The method in this research is that of the fieldwork where selected oríkì are collected from various part of the Yorùbá States, with a division into five (5) categories. They were orally documented first before being transcribed, while secondary materials are sourced from the library and the internet to verify previous arguments, in order to know the gap that we are to fill. No questionnaire was used but a direct recording of accepted oríkì from the givers were later transcribed. The questions rased in the interview are in line with the research objectives for possible selections in the course of our investigation.

3.0.1 Primary Data

Here, this is the main and basic raw materials gotten from the field work. An interview was conducted with some people based on a random selection and their availability and the questions were unstructured.

3.0.2 Secondary Data

This refers to materials gotten from books published by several authors and also journals, publications, and online materials. Both the primary and secondary data are merged and their application are seen in the analysis.

3.1 Method of Data analysis

The analyses of this study is based on the given objectives above and are divided into four. The first and second objectives are captured first while the third and fourth objectives are expatiated in subsequent headings.

The analyses of the first objective are focused on the place of myths as a contemporary issue, which include marriage, feminism, wealth, fashion and religion.

The analyses of the second objective explicate the Yorùbá worldview in relation to contemporary realities. As part of the beliefs and cosmology of the Yorùbá, the world of the unborn, the world of the dead and the world of the born was explicated.

In the third objective, the study focuses on the circle of time in the Yorùbá diaspora, which include the past, the present and the future.

The fourth objective delves on cultural values and their reflections on Yorùbá socio-religious realities. The focus here is on the various eulogies for the gods and goddesses in the Yorùbá parlance and the symbols of worship attributed to them.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

The theory for this study is the archetypal. Tim (2010) explains that the purpose of this theory is to give any work of literature the deeper resonance embedded in the work. Archetypal criticism is said to have taken depth in the rich soil of other academic disciplines notably cultural anthropology and psychoanalysis.

Culturally, the work of Scotland's Sir James Frazer (1854-941) is set at the foundation. Frazer is said to have researched on a massive cross-cultural study of the origins of religion in primitive myth and rituals at Cambridge University. In his book titled *The Golden Bough*, regarded as the first great work of a comparative mythology, Frazer revealed the extensive observations of remarkable likenesses in stories and rites of culture that had never had contact. He concludes that most societies have stories about death and rebirth of an important god, and though the stories differ in detail from time to place, the substance is still the same. Relatively, some literary critics such as T.S Eliot, James Joyce and William Butler Yeast began to incorporate mythic elements in their poems and stories.

Tim (2010) explains further that psychologically, Carl Jung (1857-1961) proffered a structure for thinking about literature in mythic terms. Jung was a disciple of Freud but his thinking soon began to sway from that of Freud. A notable difference is the conception of the unconscious which Jung saw as being limited. While Freud concentrated on the negative and neurotic behavior, Jung was more interested in what he called the health-giving potential of the unconscious. Also, while Freud saw the unconscious as the place for each individual's desires and emotions that is being repressed, Jung viewed the unconscious as having two levels. Jung agrees with Freud that the shallow level is individual and is based on one's unique collection of personal experience. But Jung reasoned a deeper, more universal and ancient layer, which he calls 'a memory' from our past ancestor, a psychic inheritance common to the whole human race. Jung

called this the *collective consciousness*. The layer is said to have contents that are more or less the same in all individuals everywhere throughout history. Jung used a Greek word to describe this content which is called Archetypal.

Archetypal is pronounced ar-ki-type and has a joined Greek prefix –arche which means an original pattern on which other representations are made.

The Webster’s New Explorer Encyclopedia Dictionary describes Archetype “as an inherited idea or made of thought in the psychology of C. G. Jung, that is derived from the experience of the race and is present in the unconscious of the individual. Jung also believed that wisdom and good mental health are the result when humans are in harmony with the archetypes and universal symbols in the collective consciousness”.

Tim (2010) notes that culturally, the study of archetypes reinforces our understanding of mythology, and scholars such as Joseph Campbell believe that it is the foundational knowledge for any literate, and makes us to think of the important experiences and desires we share with other people in different places and at different times.

Furthermore, he suggests that psychologically, the study of archetypes gives perspectives and reasoning to our lives as individual learn from the trials, struggles, triumphs that befalls any heroic character in his journey. It takes us deeper into an understanding of our own individual psyches.

Archetypal theory is also concerned with the mythic elements such as themes, characters, symbols, plots, imagery, genres or versions of the hero’s adventure. It also examines the form and content of the work, as Tim (2010) opines that “it searches for the connection to mythic archetypes that have been collected in our tribal psyche, seeking the inner spirit that gives the work its vitality and enduring appeal.” (7)

M.H. Abrams adds that:

Archetypal criticism was given impetus by Maud Bodkin’s *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (1934) and flourished especially during the 1950s and 1960s. Some archetypal critics have dropped Jung’s theory of the collective unconscious as the deep source of these patterns; in the words of Northrop Frye, this

theory is ‘an unnecessary hypothesis,’ and the recurrent archetypes are simply there, ‘however they got there. (13)

Akporobaro (2012) cites Carl Jung *Archetypes and the Collectives Unconscious* in his *African Oral Literature* and says that Jung and his followers Carl Kerenyi, Erich Neuman and also Joseph Campbell view myths

as the expression of a universal, collective unconscious’. Akporobaro adds that ‘in their theory innate psychological characteristics, common to all human beings, determine how people throughout the world and throughout history experience and respond to the process of living. The contents of the collective unconscious are divided into archetypes – such as the mother, the child, the hero, the trickster, and the giant – but these are simply image frameworks. A particular individual’s life experiences determine in what particular shape and form the archetypal image will be expressed. Thus, the fact that myths from around the world contain many similar themes reflects the existence of a common treatment of these themes reflects the influence of each culture’s particular physical, social, economic, and political environment on the archetypes. (195)

Thus, we can say that Archetypal theory or criticism can be used to explicate the myths embedded in the selected Oríkí for better understanding of the importance and effects of such Oríkí.

Dobie (2001) in her *Theory of Practice* asserts that

Archetypes appear in our dreams and religious rituals, as well as in our art and literature. They are media for the telling of our myths, which, according to Jung, are the “natural and indispensable intermediate stage between unconscious and conscious cognition.” By becoming conscious of what is generally unconscious, we integrate our lives and formulate answers for things that are unknowable, such as why we exist, why we suffer, and how we are to live. By uniting the conscious and unconscious, they make us whole and complete. (57)

Dobie quoting Jung says that “living fully as Jung believed means living harmoniously with the fundamental elements of human nature.” He also adds that there are three most important archetypes that needs to be dwelt with that makes up the self. The archetypes include the

shadow, the anima, and the persona. Which he says are reflected in literature.

The shadow is described as the dark part of us that we do not desire to challenge. It is the part of us that we hate. It is portrayed in movies as the wicked one. The anima is described by Jung as the “soul image”, the force of life that spurs one into action. Jung asserts that:

The anima is given a feminine designation in men (like Brown’s faith), and a masculine one (animus) in women, indicating that the psyche has both male and female characteristics, though we may be made aware of them only in our dreams or when we recognize them in someone else (a process Jung refers to as projection (57)

The persona is described as the character or our outward appearance that we display to others. It is likened to the veil we put on to others around us. Dobie (2001) opines that the “persona and anima can be thought of as two contrasting parts of the ego, our conscious personality. The former mediates between the ego and the outside world, the latter between the ego and the inner one.” (57)

Jung (1875-1961) is said to have described Archetypes as “a figure... that figure repeats itself in the course of history wherever creative fantasy is fully manifested.” Dobie (2001) adds that “it is recognizable by the appearance of nearly identical images and patterns (found in rituals, characters, or entire narratives) that predispose individuals from wholly different cultures and backgrounds to respond in a particular way, regardless of when or where they live.” (56). In essence, there are behavioral patterns of individuals that are similar to that of another person in a different culture altogether. What is acceptable in one culture may be acceptable in another culture unknown to them. Hence, we can say that what is at play is the archetype of the individuals. Dobie (2001) suggests that:

Archetypes may have originated in the unchanging situations of human beings, such as the rotating seasons or the mysteries of death, but they are not intentionally created or culturally acquired. Instead, they come to us instinctually as impulses and knowledge hidden somewhere in our biological, psychological, and social natures. (56/57)

Dobie (2001) highlights some characters and colors that are attributed to various archetypes. They include the following:

The Hero is the archetype associated with the unusual birth of a character which is surrounded by a mystery, and such that is mostly unexplainable. Other events such facing a lot of trial, escaping narrowing from death, returning to the home where he originated from, marrying the daughter of a king, dying mysteriously, are examples of what the hero faces in the course of his journey. Vivid examples include Oedipus, and Jesus Christ. The scapegoat is a situation where the hero is made to be as a sacrificial lamb who is killed by the community in order to purge the people of their offences and sin. This act thereafter brings life, peace and bountiful harvest to the people.

The Outcast is a character that is ejected from the society as a way of punishing the fellow for an offence committed. Dobie (2001) adds that “the character is usually fated to wander throughout eternity.” Most times, he cannot associate with his family or participate with their social activities. The Devil is a character described as an embodiment of evil. He infiltrates the thoughts of his victims and gives negative suggestions to them to tempt them, through material substances and such that is crucial to man’s sustenance. This is done often to exchange their soul with what he has to offer which is detrimental to them in the long run.

Female Figures are the female characters in this context are portrayed in two forms. One is the good side where they show their love and affection to others. On the other hand, they are the orchestrators of the downfall of men. The Trickster is a character who is absolutely a con fellow who conceives mischievous acts. This fellow upsets the normal course of action of any events.

Also associated with archetypes are various images such as the following:

Colors have different dimensions because of the interpretations attached with them. The color red is often associated with violence, bloodshed or blood and passion. The color green depicts freshness and reproduction. The color blue is associated with pureness. Numbers are several numbers with different interpretations. While the number three (3) stands for the trinity, the number four (4) stands for the seasons of the year. (Cold, Sunny, Dry and Rainy). When these two numbers are combined together, it results in a figure that stands for completeness and

perfection, which is the number seven (7).

Water is another image that is associated with baptism in the Christian faith. Dobie (1942) adds that “flowing water can refer to the passage of time. In contrast, the desert or lack of water suggests a spiritually barren state, as it does in T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*.” (59). Gardens symbolizes fruitfulness and plenty. It also depicts a place of tranquility and beauty. A notable example is the Garden of Eden. Circles, Dobie (1942) suggests that this “can be presented simply or in complex relationships with other geometric figures. By their lack of beginnings and endings, they commonly suggest a state of wholeness and union.” (59) The sun is used to depict the various positions it assumes. While it rises in the morning, one can say it marks the beginning of one’s journey, its setting depicts to the end. When in its full bloom, it could depict an increase of understanding and knowledge.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis and Presentation

4.0 Introduction

In our preceding chapters, a careful overview has been taken on myths and it is summed as the possible explanation given to certain occurrences and happenings in man's environment. This has also formed a part of his daily lifestyle as some of the observed phenomena become a ritual he undergoes. The issue of myth cuts across all facets of life and also transcends culture and traditions from the primordial period up till this present moment. Some of the recurrent issues are explicated below as part of the objectives of this study.

The robust culture of the Yorùbá people is a laudable honour amongst other tribes of Africa. As a way of ensuring this praise and honour, and to abreast the teaching and inculcating of moral values into the young generation, the form of songs, stories (myths), proverbs, etc, is mostly employed. In essence, the succinct use of such methods enrich the people in coloration and global distinctiveness. To crystalize this uniqueness, the Yorùbá circle of time is divided into the past, the present and the future. Events that have happened are grouped into the past, the events that are on-going are grouped under the present, and the event that are yet to happen are grouped under the future. This division is known as the circle of time which is not the same as the popular time zone of global GMT.

4.1 Myth as a Contemporary Issue

To a layman, myth mean false stories that are recounted from generation to generation. Their survival despite their proposition as to being false makes them thrive more and deeper in contemporary times, because of their values and those who hold their tradition in high esteem. Myths remain a part of our daily lives as it forms part of our consciousness. Some of the myths are stories about beings that existed long ago and since the youths strive to achieve some extraordinary feat, the lives of these beings could be dignified and emulated. We cannot push aside or rule out myths from our contemporary times because they are old or archaic, it will only mean an attempt to shy away from the foundation/fundamental of the aged because of

modernism that has befallen our space and time.

In primordial times, some cultural practices that were regarded as important and necessary are now being put aside by the youths in this contemporary times. One of the areas identified is in marriage which has continue to survive despite various odds attached to it. In contemporary times as opposed to the belief of a woman wholly and duly committed to her husband despite ill treatment, the contemporary woman belief she can be a single parent or even adopt a child without being necessarily joined to a man in holy matrimony. On this, Idang (2015) opines that

A look at the African reveals that marital rites and practices are usually carried out in line with the custom of the society concerned. The polygamous marriage was more preferred; not because the African is naturally polygamous as some would say, but because it was associated with wealth, power, influence, social status and the strong African desire to be surrounded by many children and relations. (108)

In view of the above, it was expected that the woman should give birth to as many as she could. Some of the children would assist the father on the farmland as farming was the means of survival and sustenance. Hence, polygamy was encouraged as more children connote wealth, power, authority and strength. However, over the years, with the present economic condition, polygamy has been put under check as some youths have embraced monogamy. Ologundudu (2008) adds that although Yoruba men were mostly polygamous, the teaching of the Ifá stresses that it is suitable to keep one wife. (97)

Marriage is seen as an integral institution of the society because it is from there we have individuals who would change other institutions such as financial, career, health, etc. There are series of activities that are carried out before, during and after the marriage ceremony. For instance, in the Yoruba parlance, the bride-to-be has her own *oríkì* chanted by her to separate her from singlehood. Saliu (2016) suggests that “nuptial weep (*Èkún Ìyàwó*) is an epitomic and nostalgic repertoire of joy and sorrow. The bride, in her euphoria, feels highly elated as she attains the crucial stage of marital recognition.” (38)

The chant goes thus:

Now I'm at the crossroad, I am troubled
My heart pounds as in a fight, I'm afraid of darkness
I mistake three for nine pence, I mistake six pence for a shilling
Do not insult me, his incisions are like a hat, child of Ajílówó.
Please give me my Àsùnmo, my head is that of goodness,
goodness only. (See appendix 27)

In the oríkì above, the bride expresses her feelings of being relocated to another place entirely different from her parents' home. This chant has a serious poetic ritual which signifies a rite of passage in a woman's life. In essence, the bride has little or no knowledge of the family they are about to be joined to. But in contemporary times, the couple to be are privy to the affairs they share and they interact freely. In fact, the 21st century lady does not need to sing the Èkún Ìyàwó before she moves in with her husband. She is self – dependent and never sees any significance in marital cultural values.

Another integral aspect of the society that also distinguishes man from animals is that of bodily garment, which appear in various forms. In primordial times, the garment for the Yorùbá was that of Òfì, Kampala, iró and búbá, and the apparel of the king as well as the warriors was different amongst others. But now in contemporary times, garment have been diversified.

Clothing has been an important part of our daily lives and apart from it being a way of avoiding nudity, it also portrays the spirit of togetherness and depicts cultural essentialities among a set of people. Ajani (2012) suggests that “one of the cultural traditions that have endured despite modernization among the Yorùbá in Nigeria is the *aşo ẹbí* practice”. (108). Precisely the *aşo ẹbí* was the local and traditional *aşo- òkè* sowed in various style but it has given way now to several imported materials which includes lace and other fabric from the western world. He adds that “at the onset of the practice, *aşo ẹbí* was originally meant to be a family uniform, among the Yorùbá, to enable the guest to identify members of the family during an occasion. However, in recent times, it has become a medium of economic transaction and diffused into other groups in Nigeria”. (116). There is hardly any social ceremony such as wedding, naming, birthday, burial and more recently political campaigns, etc, that does not warrant the *aşo ẹbí* practice. This practice has also spread to other cultures of Nigeria such as the Igbo who call it Ashebi, and Hausa where it is known as Yaye (vogue), Anko or *Aşo ẹbí*; and more notable to other African

cultures such as Ghana, Gambia, and Liberia amongst others. This actually is an extraction from the Yoruba mythical philosophy of togetherness and semblance.

In the Oríkì of Àníké, we are told that sometimes the clothes men put on, though used to cover up their nakedness becomes a snare and discomfort to them. The contemporary line of clothes has gone to the extreme that all forms of crazy designs are formed to the extent that it bears similar resemblance to a naked person.

Clothes we humans wear tend to conceal transparency and become a form of bondage. Yet without these clothes, without the expensive double strings of waist and hip beads. The buttocks will be exposed. Unlike you, others derobe and they resemble the fast and playful red colobus monkey
Some others derobe and behold resemble a plain monkey. (See appendix 23)

The above oríkì is the oríkì of Àníké-àgbó, the attempt humans make in clothing themselves is likened to that of dressing like a monkey, even though humans use beads around their hips and waist so as not to expose the buttocks.

Also, it is necessary to state that the act of avoiding nudity may be the reason garment is worn, but there are several garments that connotes a particular symbol. It could be in form of rags as seen in the oríkì of Şàngó, where he is clothed in rag like that of a widow;

Oríkì Şàngó:

If you do not share your maize gruel with him. He will slip under your finger nail and take share. Şàngó takes by force! If you do not offer him a seat he will sit on top of your nose! He takes his neighbor's roof and covers his own head. He lends money and does not ask for it in return. His cloth is ragged like that of a widow. Şàngó does as it pleases. If he likes, he can make maize gruel from bananas. If he likes, he can wear his torn garment. (See appendix 42)

The above oríkì depicts Şàngó as a person with authority and a philanthropist and does as he pleases, yet he is clothed in rags like that of a widow.

Also in the oríkì of Èrinlè:

He owns something that cannot be found in the king's house:
His cloth is full of lies! He refuses to pay for the beer, he
refuses to pay for the kola, but we do not ask him for the
money. (See appendix 39)

This oríkì shows that Èrinlé is dignified to be cloth with lies, possibly because he has some things in his possession that even the king does not have, and so he lies to cover up.

Thus we can say that, the act of covering entails the concealment of truth or even falsehood as the case may be.

Another contemporary issue that cuts across the society is the treatment of women. In primitive times, the woman was laden with the burden of child birth and care of the family. Most importantly is the restriction on them to voice out their inadequacies. But it took the effort of women who fought relentless to prove their worth. A notable example is Olókun, the goddess of the sea.

Oríkì Olókun:

Come!...Come!!...Come unto me, All you that need wealth;
And I will give you the best.” I am the goddess of the seas and
oceans; Olókun! The very first woman to wear a crown;
Olókun! Three quarters of the earth, is mine; Olókun!
Infinitesimally small is earth's treasures, when compared to
mine; Olókun! Millions of yet undiscovered chest, precious, I
preserve for mankind Olókun! You know the Atlantis; I was
their “Olókun” sprawling the beds of the Atlantic, I am still
Olókun Millennia ago, I was senior to “Olókun” but, I was
created by your “Ọlọrun”. Organism living, organisms non-
living, all in my bosom. Precious stones, gold and corals,
cowries, black gold and emeralds,
All in my bosom. Come to me! Come to me-e!! (See appendix
41)

This oríkì depicts the fact that women cannot be excused from the affairs of the society if at all they want wealth as she has it in abundance. She describes her territory, the sea, as having a vast amount of resources such as beads, precious stones, cowries, black gold, emerald and corals in her possession. And so, she speaks authoritatively, that anyone who needs wealth should come to

her.

Furthermore, as part of the Yorùbà existence, the reverence and worship of gods and goddesses is held in high esteem and that is why despite the advent of Christianity and Islam in the 15th century, the worship of gods and goddesses is still much viable.

Acquah (2011) observes that

For many Africans and Ghanaians, in particular, it is religion more than anything else that shapes their worldview and participation in social life. The African traditional religious belief is that human beings do not live in this world alone; there is a sense of human beings' close relationship with nature. Humanity, animals, and plants have their own existence and place in the universe as independent parts of a whole. There are also spiritual beings that are more powerful than humankind and this opens up the African to the divine and to seeking affinity with these spiritual powers. Religious belief is thus diffused in all spheres of life filling them with meaning and significance.
(10)

In the process of rendering the oríkì for a particular god, the worshipper is prone to making several promises and affirming their dedication to them. The worshipper profusely begs Sango as he makes his request known.

Oríkì Sàngo:

I will not regard anybody but you in my life. Sàngo I beg you,
let my life be good.
I want what is in your hand. I want a good thing for you. Give
me my own present today,
I will not regard you alone. I beg, I beg, I have nobody except
you. Do not fight me. Give me my own child. (See appendix
42)

Profit is seen as a source for wealth. In other words, anyone can be wealthy such as the madman referred to in the oríkì below. If a madman could be made wealthy, it means anyone could attain riches and wealth as long as life is concerned. This is synonymous to contemporary time where wealthy people are often children from poor homes, destitute, etc, who wrestle their ways to wealth. This philosophy of life is like the lazer fair economy where anyone is capable of being

wealthy to become anything in any society. This oríkì, myth, shows that the contemporary position of democratic nature of wealth is possible and there is no exclusion to success as long as the person involved is ready for the visitation of “Àjé”.

Àjé gave light to the war of the city. Àjé gave the light to the
boa.

Àjé you gave the light to Onipàsán òwèrè. He went to the
madman’s house and made him rich. He went to the crazy man’s
house and made him a character. Àjé, I greet you, the last one
who arrived among the Òrìṣàs. Àjé, eat banana fruit in Ifá so
that you can come with me. Àjé please, come to me, stay with me
and do not leave me. (See appendix 51)

In the contemporary world, profit usually comes to those who strive and work hard and not to idle men who prefer to sit and do nothing all day. Even the scriptures say in all labour there is profit, so it is always profitable to be hardworking as there is a reward attached to it.

4.2 Yorùbá Worldview in Relation to Contemporary Realities

The Yorùbá cosmology and beliefs can be described as a rich and bustling culture that has been active since the primordial times. The Yorùbá cosmology and beliefs explain some of the tenets that are used to distinguish them and such as are germane to their sustenance as a unique race. Soyinka (1976) captures this essence in the following lines:

For the Yorùbá, the gods are the final measure of eternity, as humans are of earthly transience. To think, because of this, that the Yorùbá mind reaches intuitively towards absorption in godlike essence is to misunderstand the principle of religious rites, and to misread as many have done, the significance of religious possession. Past, present and future being so pertinently conceived and woven into the Yoruba world view, the element of eternity which is the gods’ prerogative does not have the same equality of remoteness or exclusiveness which it has in Christian or Buddhist culture. The belief of the Yorùbá in the contemporaneous existence within his daily experience of these aspects of time has long been recognized but again misinterpreted. It is no abstraction. (144)

As part of the cosmology of the Yorùbá, there are three worlds known to them that distinguishes them amongst other cultures. They are the world of the unborn, the world of the dead and the world of the living. Soyinka (1976) opines that “the past is the ancestors, the present belongs to the living, and the future to the unborn.” (148)

The world of the unborn refers to the world of the future where the existence of life springs from. This world is likened to the world of the innumerable germ cells that abound in the loins of a man. At the time of copulation, the cells are released and the race for the egg begins, upon which, despite their innumerable amount, only the lucky cell is enclosed and life begins. This is the world of the unborn. In Soyinka’s Fourth Stage, he explains that “it is necessary to recall that the past is not a mystery and that although the future (the unborn) is yet unknown, it is not a mystery to the Yorùbá but co-existent in our present consciousness.” (149)

In the Oríkì of Àwèró, we see the offspring proudly alluding to the fact that drinking was in their lineage and any child born to the family would also be a drunkard.

Àwèró the child of Balógun. We drink a lot (drunkards) (sic).
We originated from Àsálú. Balógun are warriors. The queen
warrior must not be defeated in war.
We eat dead chickens. (See appendix 18)

The Oríkì also emphasizes the fact that this lineage is that of warriors and they are also feared by many. They are confident and bold to go to war. Hence, any child born to this family is expected to be confident, bold and also drink as well.

The second world is the world of the dead which in the Yorùbá worldview refers to the departed ancestors who are still ever present to provide assistance to the living. The Yorùbá believe the departed do not die but only ascend to the world of the ancestors to rest. Traditionally, whenever a king dies, he is accompanied by a man known as abóbakú who is to help the king carry some of the items that would be needed on the journey. Also, whenever a noble person achieves a feat, the royal bards chant the Oríkì of a warrior like this:

He fought against the Alake family, he killed the son of Alake. He fought against the Ìgbèin army, Ìbíkúnlé became a terror in captivity. He beat Sómúyì, he beat Apáti. He took a short cudgel and drove Alólá about. He killed the Ìjèbú, he planted the Ìjèbú. He planted Ìjèbú as he would plant a post. He planted Ìjèbú and made him face outwards. Where people were selling corn. (See appendix 24)

The Oríkì above refers to the feats achieved by Balógún Ìbíkúnlé of Ìbàdàn. His exploits are revealed and it is to challenge him to conquer more territories since that of Ìjèbú had been conquered. The children of this warrior can always refer to the mighty deeds of their father by reminding anyone challenging them to a fight on what happened to the son of Aláké, Ìgbèin, Sómúyì, Apáti and others.

During the course of the chanting, the bards may also make mention of the great deeds and feats achieved by past kings and rulers and also to encourage the new king not to disappoint the people.

Láyiwoḷá, Láyòyé, king is the child of Adéyemi. He that does not fail in war, the child of Àtìbà. He that does not shiver in war, the child of Şàngó.
Tanda, offspring of Alówólódù that bears Adéyemi. (See appendix 25)

The above oríkì refers to Aláàfin of Ọ̀yó, the first child of Adéyemí. He is likened to Àtìbà that does not fail in war and Şàngó that does not shiver in war. He is expected to act valiantly and supersede the act of past kings. In contemporary times, a leader ought to encourage his followers to act more than him/her so as to keep the terrain of success.

The last world refers to the world of the living where we have various individuals existing on earth. These are people hailing from different walks of life and some of them have their oríkì chanted by their mothers or their loved ones. Notable in this world are the Ìbejì (twins), Ìgè, Ìdòwú, etc. For some women who desire to have twins, they sing this song to proclaim their ability. *Epo n mbe, ewa n mbe o, epo mbe ewa mbe o, aya mi o ja o ye, aya mi o ja lati bi beji, epo mbe ewa mbe o.* This means there is palm oil and beans in abundance, I am not afraid of giving birth to twins. There is palm oil and beans in abundance.

In the Oríkì of Òjò, we see an exceptional character in him that is different from other children.

Òjò is not at home, chicks were able to grow. If Òjò was to be around, he would have killed his mother. Where the owner of the chicken is crying.

Òjò will be grinding pepper, Òjò stopped by a market. He got home and ate pounded yam. Members of the house did not know that Òjò went home to consume pounded yam. Òjò was filled up, Òjò had a bath in the river. All the single ladies stretched out their hands at him. They were saying hold mine, take mine. Òjò hold mine, take mine. (See appendix 21)

In the above Oriki, Ojo is described as a stubborn child and possibly because his birth was a difficult one. Even though they are generally friendly they are also very sensitive. Òjò is a child born with his umbilical cord coiled around his neck at birth. Sometimes he could do things that his parents do not approve but he is still admired by many ladies, because of his charisma and humour.

In this section, a careful consideration has been made to explicate some cultural issues with their contemporary equivalent. Hence, establishing that the Yoruba worldview is germane to global philosophical features as well as essence.

4.3 Circle of Time

The issue of time in the Yorùbá parlance is described as controversial as various scholars have tried to explicate the conceptual analysis on time measurement. Kazeem (2016) suggests that “the understanding of time in Yorùbá indigenous belief system can help correct the inconsistencies associated with the early writings on time in African thought.” (27). He explains further that time in the Yorùbá diaspora is multifaceted as their various words and expressions, exemplify how they relate to time. The Yorùbá words *àkókò*, *ìgbà*, *àsìkò* are used invariably to mean a time around, a period and season respectively. *Àkókò* could refer to an on-going event, *ìgbà* refers to a situational occurrence while *Àsìkò* could mean an activity in progress. Hence, the words are used interchangeably. Also “the Yorùbá idea of time is strongly rooted in their communal world view usually transmitted through proverbs, folklores, amongst others.” (28).

Kazeem citing Olúwolé (1997) says that “the Yorùbá conception of time is labyrinth, complex and multidimensional, though not seen as something aloof or irrelevant to man’s day to day experiences in the world”. (28). Oluwole (1997) describes the following proverbs on the concept of time: “*Ti wọn bá pa òní, kí òlā tẹ̀le wọn kí ó lọ wo bí wọn o ti sin.* This is interpreted as when today is being dispatched, tomorrow should be in attendance to see where the corpse is laid.” (28). Kazeem (2016) explains that the focus here is that “the future will continue to repeat the present and that the knowledge of the present is necessary for the knowledge of the future”.

(29) In essence, it denotes that whatever lesson is learnt today is still valuable tomorrow. Hence, tomorrow and yesterday are yoked for possible interpretations. If we don’t know yesterday, we may not know tomorrow.

“*Ọgbón ọdun ni, wèrè ẹ̀mì.* This means wisdom this year is folly next time.” Kazeem (2016) also explains that this proverb explains “the fluidity of time and the reality of changes as a constant feature of existence.” (29) It emphasizes the notion of time from the present to the future and how the past may utter the future, since what the past holds as good may not be what is good for the future. Change is sacrosanct.

“*Ìgbà ò lo bí òréré, ayé ò lọ bí òpá ìbọn.* This means that life span does not extend ad infinitum; a life time is not as straight as the barrel of guns.” (29). Thus x-ray the zig zag nature of life and time and for anyone to expect constant things may not be realistic.

In the oríkì of Ọlósúnta, Ilẹ̀ Olukẹ̀rẹ̀ ni Ilu Ìkẹ̀rẹ̀-Èkìtì, we see emphasis on the time of war.

A hill that is worshipped in Ìkẹ̀rẹ̀. A hill that fathers other hills and protects the town during the time of war. A child of two hills. The hill where people fetch fire. A large hilled stone. Two adjacent hills that are alike. A child whose father and mother rescues. A child of a trumpet blower. (See appendix 33)

The oríkì above signifies that there was a time of war and the warriors run there for shelter, especially because the hill protects the people at this time of war. The emphasis here is that the people of Ìkẹ̀rẹ̀ recognize a particular time of the year where war takes place. Kazeem (2016) citing Ayoade’s article “Time in Yorùbá Thoughts”, explains that:

Time is constituted by events whether they have occurred, occurring or yet to take place. Time is real only when experienced. Time devoid of events makes little sense. Thus, time is seen as a property of things or events. Time makes meaning to the traditional Yorùbá when it is related to whether, seasons, natural phenomena around them. In this sense, time is relative to a person's reckoning of it. (29)

Another way to classify time in Yoruba worldview is such described by Kazeem (2016) as part of the biological growth experienced during a particular period, (*àsìkò*). They include *ìkòkò* used for a new born, *ìrúkòró* used at the crawling stage, *òmọ ìrìnsẹ̀* to describe a toddler, *òmọdé* for a child, *òdó* as a youth, *àgbà* as an elder and *arúgbó* for the aged.

Time in the Yoruba parlance is of crucial necessity as events and expectations are tied to time. In primordial times, when there was the absence of mechanical wristwatches and clock, so, it was not possible to know the exact time but the moon was observed, and time was related to the happenings around the people. Likewise, projections are made with what has already happened.

4.4 Cultural Values and Reflections on Yoruba-Socio Religious Realities

In this aspect, we are concerned with the various symbols attached to the gods/goddesses that exist in the Yorùbá pantheon. They believe that the Supreme Being was too big hence, other intermediaries were better suited. They also believe in *Odùduwà* regarded as the progenitor of Ife and ascribe creation of the world to *Ọbàtálá*. The Yorùbá hold their tradition in high esteem and despite the influx of the western culture, the worship of the ancestral deities are still in existence.

In the *oríkì* of *Ọbàtálá*, the worshipper eulogizes the god as being silent but also able to give a reasonable judgment to the people who come to him.

He is patient, he is not angry. He sits in silence to pass judgment. He sees you even when he is not looking. He stays in a far place – but his eyes are on the town. The granary of heaven can never be full. The old man full of life force. (See appendix 36)

Ọbàtálá is known to be a very easy going god and seen as the god of whiteness because he prefers wearing white robes anywhere he goes. His symbol is the white beads worn by all his worshippers. Since the creation of man was attributed to him, all deformed and handicapped children are said to be his special children. This was caused by the drunkenness of Ọbàtálá and so all his worshippers abstain from alcohol or palm wine. The above oríkì describe him as a person full of understanding and knowledge.

Chief Yagbe (2016) adds that Ọbàtálá is known as “the ancient energy, he embodies the patience, clarity of mind and wisdom that can only be attained through thoughtfulness and careful and sober consideration. He is also associated with the concept of Justice.” (1)

Also in another verse we see his benevolent nature.

Those who are rich owe their poverty to him. Those who are poor owe their poverty to him. He takes from the rich and gives to the poor.

Whenever you take from the rich – come and give it to me! Ọbàtálá – who turns blood into children. I have only one cloth to dye with blue indigo. I have only one head tie to dye with red camwood. But I know that you keep twenty or thirty children for me. Whom shall I bear. (See appendix 36)

Here, we see that Ọbàtálá also has the ability to give children and make the poor rich irrespective of who they are.

Another notable god is Èṣù whom the Christians refer to as Lucifer or the devil but in Yoruba is an emissary of Olódùmarè. Although he is a trickster, he has the ability to do good even though it may not last long, before he is angered to turn it to evil. His symbols of worship include the use of red and black beads.

Èṣù, confuser of men. The owner of twenty slaves is sacrificing, so that Èṣù may not confuse him. The owner of thirty “ìwòfà” is sacrificing, so that Èṣù may not confuse him. Èṣù confused the newly married wife, when she stole the cowries from the sacred shrine of Oya. (See appendix 37)

From the above, Èṣù is described as the fellow who confuses man. In the Garden of Eden, he was able to deceive the woman and the man into eating the fruit and ever since, he is known as the trickster.

Èṣù, lover of dogs. If a goat gets lost in Ogbè – don't ask me.

Do you think I am a thief of goats? If a huge sheep is missing from Ogbè – don't ask me. Do you think I am a thief of sheep? If any fowl gets lost in Ogbè – don't ask me. Do you think I am a thief of birds? But if a black dog is missing from Ogbè – ask me! You will find me eating Esu's sacrifice in a wooden bowl.

(See appendix 37)

From the above, we see that Èṣù loves eating dog and if animals like goats, sheep or birds is missing from the town of Ogbè, no one should be bothered until a dog gets missing. In the Yoruba story of creation, Èṣù served as a messenger whom the people sought to take their grievances to Ọbàtálá who had returned to heaven.

Another deity that is reckoned with in the Yorùbá pantheon of gods is Ṣàngó. Ṣàngó was a very powerful god that all other gods respected him and acted according to his bidding. He is symbolized with the spirit of thunder and lightning, and whenever he speaks, fire and smoke proceed from his mouth. His symbols of worship are white and red beads and he gets angry, he is bathed in red oil to cool him down.

Ṣàngó is the death who kills money with a big stick. The man who lies will die in his home. Ṣàngó strikes the one who is stupid. He wrinkles his nose and the liar runs off. Even when he does not fight, we fear him. But when war shines in his eye. His enemies and worshippers run all the same. Fire in the eye, fire in the mouth, fire on the roof. He walks alone, but he enters the town like a swarm of locust. (See appendix 42)

In this verse, Ṣàngó is portrayed as someone who loves war and hates liars as well as one who is stupid. His worshippers are afraid of him because of his fearful look whenever he goes to war and spits fire. Another verse also gives an in-depth view into the nature of Ṣàngó:

If you do not share your maize gruel with him. He will slip under your finger nail and take share. Ṣàngó takes by force! If you do not offer him a seat he will sit on top of your nose! He takes his neighbor's roof and covers his own head. He lends

money and does not ask for it in return. His cloth is ragged like that of a widow. Şàngó does as he pleases. If he likes, he can make maize gruel from bananas. If he likes, he can wear his torn garment. (see appendix 42)

From the above, Şàngó is seen as someone who takes things by force and sometimes clothes himself in rags like a widow. He does as he pleases because of the authority he has.

I will not regard anybody but you in my life. Şàngó I beg you, let my life be good. I want what is in your hand, I want a good thing for you. Give me my own present today, I will regard you alone. I beg, I beg, I have nobody except you. Do not fight me, give me my own child. (See appendix 42)

Şàngó is also known to be in possession of goodly things like strength, and his worshippers humbly plead that he should make their life good and as they proclaim him to be the only one they have as their god.

Ọsun is known as the goddess of the river with the ability to give barren women children. The water is rich and fertile and her symbols of worship are yellow and gold beads. She is regarded as a female figure and with the energy of passion and beauty.

We call her and she replies with wisdom. She can cure those whom the doctor has failed. She cures the sick with cold water, when she cures the child, she does not charge the father. We can remain in the world without fear. Ìyálóde who cures children – help me to have my own child. Her medicines are free – she feeds honey to the children. She is rich and her words are sweet. Large forest with plenty of food, let a child embrace my body. The touch of a child's hand is sweet. (See appendix 38)

From the above, her worshippers are mostly women and they know she can cure even with cold water (because of its fertility) any child with any ailment. She gives her medicines freely to anyone who needs them and she is a lover of children. She is tender, rich in words and compassionate.

Ògún is regarded as a male figure who loves war and all people skilled with metal or iron work are to worship him to prosper in their profession. His symbols of worship are green and black beads.

Ògún kills on the right and destroys on the right. Ògún kills on the left and destroys on the left. Ògún kills suddenly in the house and suddenly in the field. Ògún kills the child with the iron with which it plays. Ògún kills in silence. (See appendix 40)

Also in another verse, we see how Ògún is very active and energetic in war:

Ogun scatters his enemies. When the butterflies arrive at the place where the cheetah excretes. They scatter in all directions. The light shining on Ògún's face is not easy to behold. Ògún, let me not see the red of your eye. (See appendix 40)

From the above, we can see that during the time of war, he scatters his enemies and his eyes becomes red like blood.

The Yoruba see their gods as an intermediary between them and the supreme being, Olódùmarè, who they believe is too high and dangerous to speak with, so they feel comfortable interacting with. They pray to them for guidance, protection and prosperity.

This section concentrates on some of the Yorùbá gods and goddesses in the Yorùbá pantheon and how they are acknowledged in the pre-colonial and contemporary times. The reality of these gods lie in the fact that there still exist some of the devout worshippers spread all over the world.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Conclusion

This study has shown that there is a close relationship between myths and realism in the selected Yoruba oríkì. In chapter one, we introduced our subject as a premise to the study; the background to the study also gives us an in-depth view and sheds more light on the term “Myth”, it reveals that myths have since been in existence since the origin of man and it was only through the effort of some scholars that some of them were documented like the Greek and Roman myths, hence, extending such search to Yoruba oríkì.

The research problem developed is centered on explicating the relationship that exists between the selected oríkì and the various myths attached to them, as well comparing the realism embedded in them with the contemporary times. Consequently, the objectives guide us to this study and the research questions were inclined to them. The significance of this study hinges on the fact that the study could be used at the national and international sphere as it seeks to promote cultural values, and a means of reflecting the natural endowment of the Yorùbá people. Also, the method for this study was the interview of some people chosen at random and the questions were unstructured. Some of the oríkì were also gotten from books and a careful selection was made on them. The theory employ to x-ray this study is the archetypal theory, which explains what humans share as a collective patrimony that is unknown to them, this makes them behave in certain ways and this is also why we have various archetypes and characters.

The key concepts in the title, also explicated as used in the study, the study is delimited from the oríkì for towns and state but includes oríkì for gods, goddesses, animals and humans. This study was limited by the lack of accessibility to old people and the villages and variance in the oríkì.

In chapter two we have four parts and the concepts of the title which include Myth, Realism, Yorùbá and Oríkì. Each concept was reviewed as well as journals and other publications.

The chapter three is divided into two (2) parts and the first and second research objectives were carefully analyzed using the selected Oríkì that are in tandem with the sub-topics. Chapter four is also divided into two (2) parts and the third and fourth objectives were explicated and analyzed using the oríkì that suits them.

Thus, we can say that myths and folklores also help in the nurturing and education of the mind and soul of individuals, which may first exist as a myth but eventually becomes the backdrop of realism not only to the Yorùbá people but to anyone who cares to share from their philosophical corpus.

5.1 Limitation of Studying

The following serve as the limitation to this study:

Lack of accessibility to the villages to collect oríkì from indigenous persons and elderly people who reside in states such as Ògún, Òyó, Òsun, Èkìtì, but due to financial constraints, residents of Lagos who are from these states gave their versions of the oríkì.

Variance in the oríkì as some of the names gotten are also shared by different tribes, this leads to variance in the oríkì collected from them. A particular family could have a style of their oríkì even though they bare the same name, hence, the version that best suites them is the one they would use when any occasion calls for it.

Inability to access secondary materials as there is little or no work that has been done in the field of myths and realism in selected oríkì. It makes it difficult to access some of the relevant materials that could be used to buttress the points raised in this research.

5.2 Recommendation

It is no doubt that contemporary times seem to be delineated from the activities of the primordial times. This in part may be due to the influx of industrial revolutions and the bids and agitations to make the world a global space. Hence, some of the ancient and traditional methods of communications and socializations are being pushed aside by the youths who seek to follow the new trend. However, this study recommends the following:

1. That the study of oríkì be encouraged among the youth in relation to its relevance in contemporary times as it has a lot to offer them in terms of cultural heritage and promotion of best human practices.
2. That the nation Nigeria appreciate and value the Yorùbá culture alongside other cultures such as Igbo, Hausa and other minority groups. There could be a cultural day in each year to celebrate the tradition and cultural heritage of each tribe of the country.

3. That the oríkì of each individual especially young people be occasionally chanted to boost their moral and to stimulate their interest in sustaining their cultural heritage wherever they go.
4. That the publications of scholarly article be made available to the global audience for them to see appreciate the African diaspora.

5.3 Contribution to Knowledge

This research has contributed to the element of ritual which features prominently in praise-poetry. This is a proof of the relevance of oríkì as a panegyric poem in the Yorùbà poetic genre. This study has also helped to expand the horizon on the myths and realism embedded in the selected oríkì. Hence, revealing that some of the oríkì are also proverbial in nature and they sometimes fit into the personality of the person being praised. This study would immensely add to the corpus of knowledge in the literary as well as linguistic areas.

These contributions are in three spheres and they include the field of literature, humanity and the society at large. The area of literature, basically oral literature, made available the cultural relevance, events and realities in the distant past of the Yorùbà history and their various interpretations in relation to contemporary realities, to the humanity, this research improved on the understanding of cultural values embedded in the Yorùbà historical corpus which in turn advanced the philosophically, psychologically and sociologically repertoire of man in relation to existence. To the society, this research through the elucidation of oríkì as a cultural material enhanced interpersonal relationship and cooperation among people for development and peaceful co-existence.

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APPENDIXES

1. Ogi Family (Jege Yaba East L.G.A Kogi State)

An important personality
on seat The child of an
eagle
There is a big plantation beside a big river
When there is starvation, it stops at the end of
the river A man of a human being, others are
children of animals.

2. Ògínní Family (Iléshà Òsun State)

The king laid down his
elegant money Our money
speaks in ten voices
There is beautiful money in our generation
Money speaks about you that you are the key to
the future The front of your house lies in the
body of the water
The back of the house lies in the body of the water
You are the king of the snakes that crawls around the legs at the bank of
the river You are the one that knows the king
Woman, fall down to sleep.

3. Oládèyí Family (Ìkirè, Òsun State)

The child that receives the crown with his hands
In our father's town, we wear the crown on
our heads In my father's town, we wear the
crown
The crown's horsetail, the chieftaincy horsetail, the
king's horsetail We wear the crown's horsetail
We wear the chieftaincy crown
We wear the chieftaincy shoe; I carry the chieftaincy shoe in
my hands The chieftaincy shoe is our honour
I wear the chieftaincy shoe
on my legs My father's town
They said the town is the town of fire and water
The town of all things is what we do in my
father's town We carry people to the place
And when we get to Olómù town
I am the child of the head of the house
of Olómù I am the child of Olómù
The one and only child of Olómù
When you get to my father's house, it is the chieftaincy necklace that
we wear In favour of my father, Alápòmù of Apòmù
The king of wealth on the throne, the third king of the
Ìkirè town I am the child of Olúkírin, Ìkirun, in the
house of kolanut
I am the child of Ìkirè, a part of Ìkirè in
Ìkirè Land In my parents' house
I am the child of eulogy
I always eulogise and when I do, my head swells
I am the child of Ìkirè, a body of Ìkirè in the old Ìkirè town

My father is a relative of Fálábí Olátúndé, the third
 I am the child of Apòmù and the child of the mother of
 Apòmù town I am the child of Alálúmúgbùà, the child of
 Mogigi
 The child that goes out with an expensive necklace and the king's horsetail in
 his hands He puts the crown of the king on his head
 I have so many wives like the king
 In the family of the king, in my
 family The king of Apòmù, the
 beauty of Apòmù
 The town that has a king in my family and in my farm.

4. Ìgànjú Family (Òmú-Àrán, Kwara State)

We are the young twenty-six year-
 old children Of Owokannu
 Spoilt children in
 the making You
 can watch us play.

5. Iyero Family (Òwu, Ògún State)

I resemble the child of an
 archer The unwanted
 child also has a name
 The war we started caused another war
 The fight we had at the house of Olalomi was witnessed by the group that squints
 their eyes Anyone Iyero touches gets pregnant
 Even the person who is barren.

6. Òkéki Family (Òmu-Àrán, Kwara State)

I am the bonafide child of a butcher
 I am the child of the leader of bell-ringers
 If a goat is missing in the afternoon, don't
 inform me If a sheep is missing in the
 afternoon, don't inform me
 But if a matured female child is missing in the mid-day, I am the one
 responsible I am the child of a true worshipper with songs.

7. Oloyede family (Àágba, Òsun State)

The child of an elephant does
 not run Anger will turn to joy
 and laughter
 I rest at home
 I am the aggressive child of the owner of one river that sleeps
 at home The rain we asked for encountered the forest
 The owner of rain goes to the forest too
 I am the child of the rain that is
 not wicked I use a thick tree to
 cover my face.

8. Ile asamo

The child that gets palm fronds and uses the palm kernel to make oil
That breaks the palm nut to get the kernel so as to make for oil for
consumption The child that visits a local farm in absence of financial
help

That buys maize during its season and can only lost the money if there is a
low harvest A person that is begged for friendship, that a woman would beg
before getting married A person that would package 200 yams as gift for
people

A farmer that brings forth yam when everyone thinks harvest is over.

9. Asao lude Agba

The farmers of vegetable,

Vegetable that are used for medicinal purpose

Vegetables that grows to occupy everywhere

The soil of Ìjòkà gives bountiful harvest that warrants the mothers to show appreciation at
ceremonies The erosion at Ìjòkà creates a gulge separating Ìjòkà from Ologotun

A guldge big enough to
swallow a human A child of the
snail

That places one leg on the tortoise and the other on a snail, to do the impossible.

10. Ile Ijao

The child of Ògún, of plain iron and designed iron

That uses charm to make wealth, that would stool to transact business worth
thousands That makes a drum from metal

If in absence of anyone that can design iron for me at odoja I would search for a
blacksmith A child that stools to transact business worth thousands

That uses the kolanut tree for
a shed That hits the iron with
a hammer heavily

The child that heads to the destination without distraction excluding his
fathers' house The child that plants cocoyam

That gathers iron to worship the deity Ògún,

The fertile soil in which 20 heaps are made to get 200 tubers.

11. House of Asae

The child of royalty, strength and brevity

That eats the whole cricket for dinner and wins the
moonlight game The child plays under a bird filled tree

Not the hawk or raven but peacock

Your father would bath at the stream and the maidens bring out their soap to entice him, competing
furiously for him to accept them.

The child of the big mansion with an assembly hall

The wood breaker that would break the wood with
his head The child that goes through the back door
to receive blessings The child that is never tired of
climbing a hill

The child that cannot cross the flood that occupies the boundary of
iro and oja The child that baths to prosper

I would continue to adore you forever.

12. Family of Ijao

The child of the soil, a fertile soil
In which twenty heaps and two tubers would be
harvested The child that uses the kolanut tree for
shed
The blacksmith that forges the iron heavily
The child that uses charm to be prosperous and squats to transact business.

13. Ìjòkà Ile Èlémòsọ

A valiant person of Ijòkà
The child that is in the farm but still in control at home
The child that you would praise on the bad side to be on his
happy side The child that uses charm to prosper that would
stool to transact business The blacksmith hand tool is not used
to take meat from fire by mistake That would not eat a tied
meat by mistake
The elephant that does not give birth to twins but a
single child The child that is bigger than the door that
passes through the roof The child that does the festival
during the bad weather
That does festivals when a vegetable is
flowering That child that stools to
transact business
That lays a red mat on the floor before killing a dog
The red mat would be of help and the deity of iron would also bless my
family The child that kills a dog and eats it with the bile
Not because of selfishness or laziness but absolute
tradition That makes them give out a whole chicken
The child that depends solely on charm.

14. Emila Household

The family that dances on their toes,
Dances and summersault, the native child of oba
A visitor must never dance such dance with them or in
their house The child that dances with their back
That would always walk holding a
metal rod That never seizes to hold an
iron
That sleeps on their village soil gently when a stranger
walk rapidly The child of the soil that makes 20 heaps to
harvest 200 tubers
The child that dances when clothed in suede.

15. Èbun Ọ̀gúnrindé (Àsàò Ọmọ'wa Ọgugà)

The child of the mighty one, of royalty, strength and
authority The child in which their house abode by
birds
Haven been drenched in the rain the eggs of the birds would be taken
and boiled The gulge that separates villagers
That creates a lacuna big enough to swallow
humans The child that transact at the market
That transact two different market; at noon and at dawn.

16. House of Sao

The wealthy man that knows the value of
the white The child that is lively and full of
fun
That eats calmly
The child that leaves in a
mansion The child that is
as big as a rainbow
The child creates fear in others with a mere look
The child that sends charm on errands and expects an immediate
feedback The father with enviable wealth
The native that follows the king
as a king The child that prefers
death to poverty
The child that when you speak would arrest you and if you fail to talk you would
be beaten The child that is evident as a scar
That fights like cat and rat
That gives two tubers of yam to enrich the poor
They don't have a knife to peel the yam and they search earnestly for
a knife That has someone to inherit his wealth
That child that seeks for parental help and when the issue is over, it is
forgotten The child makes impart as a visitor wherever he goes
That if is not allowed to marry his choice, would make the person a
concubine With my personality I can die without getting married
The child of atiba that goes to the market
majestically The child with the shed that is not
protected from the rain The child that prefers
death to poverty
The child that is evident as a scar
The child without enough yet
satisfied The downpour from
the roof
The child of the Lord with respect
The child that would commit atrocity and wouldn't be
challenged The child that carries the festive drum to the
mountain to beat And comes back with in the morning
The child of the masquerade if not seen won't be at peace
The child of the wealthy while he lacks no source of help for the poor
That when the festive drum is not carried they won't be able to taste the new yam
The child of the one that rears goat, that can give birth to twins in the morning and evening and nurse
them in seven days
The child of goat owner who plan wealth with the owner.

17. House hold of Olówó-Meye

The child of the great and mighty like a
mighty root The child whose presence
intimidates others
The child that attends to the issues
of the night The child that
introduces itself like an elephant The
wealthy child that recognizes honour
The child behind authority
The child that sends charm on an errand and wait for
immediate response The child that uses charm perfectly

It's your father that gives out charm and hides the
antidote The child that uses charm perfectly
The child that lives long like someone with an
extra life The child of the great strong and
mighty
The child whose presence intimidates others
The child that walks carefree as if is in charge of
all things In charge of both great and small
Live strongly
and bravely Oh
great son of a
tiger.

18. Oríkì Àwẹ̀ró

Àwẹ̀ró the child of
Balógun We drink
a lot (drunkards)
We originated from
Asalu Balógun are
warriors
The queen warrior must not be
defeated in war We eat dead chickens.

19. Oríkì Ìlájẹ-Ọlátùnjì

He who puts goods inside a canoe like the
white men The late comer who became the
ruler
The son of Oluwopiti who fought to capture canoes
He who has wealth to become the companion of
the white The son of Ọlájuni
The father of the son of
motoro land The son who
wraps the child in velvet The
strong who thrills amidst
women
The son of he who pampers combines as though he has
no woman Greeting to you.

20. Oríkì Ige

Ìgẹ̀ Àdùbí
One who has the
echoe of a bell One
with 200 stars
If mother will die, she
should die If father
will go, he should go
Pumpkin is on the
farmland Wide is the
place of refuse
What Ìgẹ̀ Àdùbí will eat won't be
expensive Ìgẹ̀ Àdùbí did not see
the face of his mother He is
thinking of his father's face
Ìgẹ̀ would have seen his mother's face but he stretched

forth his legs Anyone who sends Ìgè Àdùbí on an errand
Sends him/herself
Creator keep them for us.

21. Oríkì Òjọ́

Òjọ́ is not at
home Chicks
were able to
grow If Òjọ́
was to be
around
He would have killed his mother
Where the owner of the chicken
is crying Òjọ́ will be grinding
pepper
Òjọ́ stopped by a market
He got home and ate pounded yam
Members of the house did not know that Òjọ́ went to consume
pounded yam Òjọ́ was filled up
Òjọ́ had a bath in the river
All the single ladies stretched out their
hands at him They were saying hold
mine, take mine
Òjọ́ hold mine, take mine.

22. Oríkì Èjìré (twins)

All twins hail from Ìsokùn
A relative of monkeys you are
Hoping and jumping a tree branch to the other
Jumping helter-skelter, you landed in a wretched
man's place Turning around his misfortunes
A rare set of children that commands undue honour and respect from their
parents To your step-mother you are an unwelcome sight
But to your mother, you are both emperors of two
empires Wouldn't you love to be parents to twins?

23. Oríkì Àníké-Àgbò

Àníké with the
personality of a ram
Àníké of the arena
The ram that forges ahead resiliently despite existing structures or obstructions such as pillar or
tortem poles The pillar, mother of fish
The sturdy pillar of strength, mother of fish
The pillar that ties a wrapper, adds an extra cloth like a baby carrier to further support the weight or load
of others The single pillar like the sound of the weaver's spindle
Clothes we human beings wear, tend to conceal, obstruct transparency, be deceitful and become a form of
bondage Yet, without these clothes, without the expensive double strings of waist and hip-beads
Unlike you, others de-robe and behold they will resemble the fast and
colobus monkey Some others de-robe and behold resemble a plain monkey.

24. Oríkì Balógun Ìbíkúnlé of Ìbàdàn

He fought against the
Alake family, He killed
the son of Alake
He fought against the Ìgbèin
army, Ìbíkúnlé became a
terror in captivity He beat
Sómúyì, he beat Apati
He took a short cudgel and drove
Alola about He killed the Ìjèbù, he
planted the Ìjèbù
He planted Ìjèbù as he would plant a post
He planted Ìjèbù and made him face outwards where people were selling corn.

25. Oríkì Láyíwolá Láyíoyè

Láyíwolá, Láyíoyè,
King is the child of
Adeyemi He that
does not fail in war,
The child of Àtibà
He that does not
shiver in war, The
child of Şàngó
Tanda, offspring of Alówólódú that bears Adéyemí.

26. Oríkì Balógun Ìbíkúnlé

The child of Balógun
Ìbíkúnlé The warrior
of Ibadan origin
Ìbíkúnlé, the truth bearer at war
front Ìbíkúnlé, the owner of
magnificent hills
Ìbíkúnlé compound is equally so magnificent that is incomparable with that of many rich men of
our time The son of Akin, who never gets jittery at the sight of war
Who never retreats but instead snatches guns from most dreaded warriors.

27. The Bridal chant

Now I'm at the
crossroad, I am
troubled
My heart pounds as
in a fight I'm afraid
of darkness
I mistake three for nine pence,
I mistake six pence for a
shilling Do not insult me
His incisions are like a hat, child of
Ajilówó. Please give me my Àsùnmo,
My head is that of goodness, goodness only.

28. Orìkì Ọ̀détúndé (Ọ̀ṣun-Ayeda'de Local government)

Brave child
Child of an herbalist
Child of a
mid-wife
Child of a
peacemaker
A child that takes care of old people.

29. Orìkì Ọ̀ba Adó ni ilé Adésanmi ni ilu adó-èkìtì

Adé we hail
Adó the town with stingy citizens
I have a special one in the bean cake shared
in ado Bean cakes sliced with knife
Bean cakes that are like fruits
The market that is always patronized first
The palace market is always patronized before the
general market Everyone walks freely in the general
market
The street is straight for a perfect view
Adó citizen visit a house and steals a domestic knife
If the domestic knife (a woman) is missing, what of the tobacco container she
licks from? A prince that associates with Out
Anytime the king visits out, the chief of out
becomes rich Everywhere will be full of
different kinds of beads.

30. Orìkì Àgbéyemí Ajíbóyè ni iléAjíbóyè ni ilu Ìkéré-Èkìtì

Ajíbóyè, a fruitful farmer whose yam can only be cut with
a cutlass When the yam is cut, the face is very large
A big farmland that yields plenty harvest and honors
a farmer A child of harvest that harvests nonstop due
to plentiful harvest Monkeys and donkeys fetch the
harvest along with humans.

31. Orìkì Akin ni ilé Elekoja Alajogun ni ilu Adó-Èkìtì

A brave child
A child that is three
in one The leaders
of warriors
A man that chases warriors
A warrior that captures and kills with
his sword He kills with his sword
without pity
But laments over his sword becoming unblunt.

32. Orìkì Ogbogoboni Oran Ọ̀mọ̀kùnrin Udolofi ni ilu Adó-Èkìtì

An abnormal child
He hails from udolofin Adó-Èkìtì
He who was cut with a machete but claimed to be bitten by a
tsetse fly He who visits hi sin-law
He uproots a tree and
gifts to them His morsels

are big like a coconut He
yawns like the sound of
the rain

He doesn't die but enters the ground and
becomes a deity An overcoming warrior of
udolofin.

33. Oríkì Olukẹrẹ̀ ni ilú Ìkẹrẹ̀-Èkìtì.

A hill that is worshipped in Ìkéré
A hill that fathers other hills
and protects The town during
the time of war
A child of two hills
The hill where
people fetch fire A
large hilled stone
Two adjacent hills that are alike
A child whose father and
mother rescues A child of a
trumpet blower.

34. Oríkì of Ilopo

A child of the person that owns big
white cows A child of the person that
controls a notable river They use gourd
to fetch water with loud sound
That water they use to feed children especially newly born
children A child that owns big forest and uses it for
assistance.

35. Oríkì of Aláàfin of Ọ̀yọ̀

Ọ̀yọ̀, descendant of
the Aláàfin Rain must
not beat the sekere
Child of Àtìbà
You urge the creditor to demand his pay
Yet you also urge the hireling debtor to
repudiate his debt So that conflict may ensue
For the benefit of the
prince/princess Oyo plants
the 'corn of trouble'
In another man's
backyard That one must
not harvest it Neither
must he weed it off Child
of death who cannot die
Child of pestilence who cannot be tied down by
sickness Child of calamity who calamity cannot
afflict
May God bless
Oyo town May
God bless Oyo
State
May God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Oríkì for Gods/goddesses

36. Oríkì Ọbàtálá

He is patient, he is not angry
He sits in silence to pass judgement
He sees you even when he is not looking
He stays in a far place – but his eyes are
on the town The granary of heaven can
never be full
The old man full of life force

He kills the novice
And wakens him to let him hear his
words We leave the world to the
owner of the world
Death acts playfully till he carries
away the child He rides on the
hunchback
He stretches out his
right hand He
stretches out his left
hand
He stands by his children and lets
them succeed He causes them to
laugh – and they laugh Ohoho – the
father of laughter
His eye is full of joy
He rests in the sky like a swarm of bees.

We dance to our sixteen drums that sound
jingin jingin To eight of the drums we dance
bending down
To eight of the drums we dance erect
We shake our shoulders, we shake our
hips Munusi, Munusi, Munusi
We dance to your sixteen drums

Those who are rich owe their
poverty to him Those who are poor
owe their poverty to him He takes
from the rich and gives to the poor
Whenever you take from the rich – come and give it to me!

The god of creation Who turns blood
into children I have only one cloth to
dye with blue indigo!
I have only one head tie to dye with red camwood
But I know that you keep twenty or thirty
children for me Whom shall I bear.

37. Oríkì Èṣù

When he is angry he hits a stone until
it bleeds When he is angry he sits on
the skin of an ant When he is angry
he weeps tears of blood

Èṣù, confuser of men.

The owner of twenty slaves is
sacrificing So that Èṣù may not
confuse him

The owner of thirty 'iwòfà' is
sacrificing So that Èṣù may not
confuse him

Èṣù confused the newly married wife
When she stole the cowries from the sacred shrine of Oya

She said she had not realized
That taking two hundred cowries was
stealing Èṣù conducted the head of the
queen

And she started to go naked
Then Èṣù beat her to
make her cry Èṣù, do
not confuse me!
Èṣù do not confuse the load on my head.

Èṣù, lover of dogs.

If a goat is lost in Ogbè, - don't
ask me Do you think I am a
thief of goates?
If a huge sheep is missing from Ogbè –
don't ask me Do you think I am a thief of
sheep?

If any fowl gets lost in Ogbè – don't
ask me Do you think I am a thief of
birds?

But if a black dog is missing from Ogbè – ask me!
You will find me eating Èṣù's sacrifice in a wooden bowl.

Èṣù slept in the house
But the house was too
small for him Èṣù slept on
the verandah

But the verandah was too small
for him Èṣù slept in a hut
At last he could stretch himself.

Èṣù walked through the
groundnut farm The tuft of
his hair was just visible
If it had not been for his
huge size He would not
have been visible at all

Having thrown a stone yesterday – he kills a
bird today Lying down, his head hits the roof
Standing up, he cannot look into the
cooking pot Èṣù turns right into wrong,
wrong into right.

38. Oríkì Ọṣun

We call her and she replies with wisdom
She can cure those whom the doctor
has failed She cures the sick with
cold water
When she cures the child, she does not charge
the father. We can remain in the world without
fear.

Ìyálódé who cures children – help me to have my
own child Her medicines are free – she feeds
honey to the children She is rich and her words
are sweet
Large forest with
plenty of food Let a
child embrace my
body
The touch of a child's hand is sweet

Owner of brass.
Owner of
parrot's feathers
Owner of
money.

My mother, you are beautiful, very
beautiful, Your eyes sparkle like
brass
Your skin is soft
and smooth You
are black like
velvet.

Everybody greets you when you descend on
the world Everybody sings your praises.

39. Oríkì Erinlẹ̀

He is firm and strong like an ancient rock
He is clear like the eye of god that does not grow
any grass Like the earth he will never change
He puts out the lamp and lets his eyes sparkle
like fire He will turn the barren woman into
one who carries child He is the father of our
king
He is the one who looks after my child.

From the depth of the river he calls us to war
In the bush and in the thick forest he finds his food
He treads on dangerous paths, but his foot does not
hesitate He can destroy like worms in the stomach
The confuse head he will cure
He mixes the heads of vultures with the heads of
other birds The antelope cannot move
The bush cow is spellbound
He will not be friendly with the leopard except for his spotted ear.

He knows the dry
places on earth He
knows where the river
flows
He knows where the grass is
abundant Where the large
trees shade the river And the
air is cool like the
Harmattan.

He owns something that cannot be found in the
king's house. His cloth is full of lice!
He refuses to pay for the beer,
He refuses to pay for the kola,
But we do not ask him for the money.

Erinle repairs the pot, as he repairs
the head. Please come and rebuild my
own head.

40. **Orìkì Ògún**

Ògún kills on the right and destroys on
the right Ògún kills on the left and
destroys on the left
Ògún mills suddenly in the house and suddenly
in the field Ògún kills the child with the iron
with which it plays Ogun kills in silence

Ògún kills the thief and the owner of the stolen goods
Ògún kills the owner of the slave - and the slaves runs away
Ògún kills the owner of thirty 'iwòfà' – and his money, wealth and children
disappear. Ogun kills the owner of the house and paints the hearth with his
blood
Ògún is the death who pursues a child until it runs into
the bush Ògún is the needle that pricks at both ends
Ògún has water but he washes in blood.

Ògún do not fight me. I belong only
to you The wife of Ògún is like a
tim tim
She does not like two people to rest on her
Ògún has many gowns. He gives them all to the beggars

He gives one to the woodcock – the woodcock dyes
it in indigo He gives one to the coucal – the coucal
dyes it in camwood
He gives one to the cattle egret – the cattle egret leaves it white.

Ògún is not like pounded yam
Do you think you can knead him in
your hand? And eat of him until you
are satisfied?
Ògún is not maize gruel:
Do you think you can knead him in
your hand? And eat of him until you
eat satisfied?
Ògún is not like something you can throw into your cap:
Do you think you can put on your cap and walk away with him?

Ògún scatters his enemies. When the butterflies arrive at the place the cheetah
excretes, They scatter in all directions.
The light shining on Ògún's face is not easy
to behold. Ògún, let me not see the red of
your eye.

Ògún sacrifices an elephant to
his head. Master of iron, head
of warriors
Ogun, great chief of robbers.

Ògún wears a bloody cap
Ògún has four hundred wives and one thousand four hundred
children Ogun, the fire that sweeps the forest
Ògún's laughter is no joke.
Ògún eats two hundred earthworms and does not vomit.
Ògún is a crazy òrìshà who still asks questions after 780
years. Whether I can reply, or whether I cannot reply,
Ògún please don't ask me anything.
The lion never allows anybody to play with
his cub. Ògún will never allow his child to be
punished.
Ògún do not reject me!
Does the woman who spins ever reject a
spindle? Does the woman who dyes ever
reject a cloth?
Does the eye that sees ever reject a
sight? Ògún, do not reject me!

41. Oríkì of Olókun

Come! Come!!...Come
unto me, All you that
need wealth;
And I will give you the best.”
I am the goddess of the seas and
oceans; Olókun! The very first woman
to wear a crown; Olókun! Three
quarters of the earth, is mine; Olókun!
Infinitesimally small is earth's
treasures, When compared to mine;

Olókun!
 Millions of yet undiscovered chest,
 precious, I preserve for mankind
 Olókun!
 You know the Atlantis; I was their
 “Olókun” Sprawling the beds of the
 Atlantic,
 I am still “Olókun”
 Millennia ago, I was
 senior to “Olókun”
 But, I was created by your
 “Olórun”. Organism living,
 Organisms non-living, All in
 my bosom. Precious stones,
 gold and corals, Cowries,
 black gold and emeralds,
 All in my bosom.
 Come to me! Come
 to me-e!!

42. Oríkì Şàngó

When the elephant wakes up in the
 morning He must pay his respects to
 his new wife
 When the guinea fowl wakes up in
 the morning It must prostrate to the
 lord of the forest
 If it fails to greet him thus
 It will be killed by the hunter
 He will carry it home
 on his back He will sell
 it home on his back He
 will sell it in the
 market
 And use the money to make charms.
 If the antelope wakes up in the
 morning And does not bow to
 the lord of the forest
 The hunter will come and eat its head with
 pounded yam Şàngó, I prostrate to you every
 morning
 Before I set out to do anything.

The dog stays in the house of
 its master But it does not
 know his intentions
 The sheep does not know the
 intentions of the man who
 feeds it.
 We ourselves follow Şàngó
 Although we do not know his
 intentions It is not easy to live
 in Şàngó’s company Crab’s
 feet are confusion.
 The parrot’s feet are

crooked When the
crab leaves its hole
We do not know which direction it is
taking. Şàngó went to Ibadan and
arrived at Ilorin.

Rain beats the Egúngún mask, because he cannot
find shelter. He cries: "Help me, dead people in
heaven, help me!"
But the rain cannot
beat Şàngó. They say
that fire kills water.
He rides fire like a
horse
Lighting – with what kind of cloth do you cover your
body? With the cloth of death.
Şàngó is the death that
drips to, to, to Like indigo
dye dripping from a cloth

Şàngó is the death who kills money with
a big stick. The man who lies will die in
his home.
Şàngó strikes the one who is stupid.
He wrinkles his nose and the
liar runs off. Even when he
does not fight, we fear him. But
when war shines in his eye
His enemies and worshippers run all the same.

Fire in the eye, fire in the mouth, fire on the roof.
He walks alone, but he enters the town like a swarm
of locusts. The leopard who killed the sheep and
bathed in its blood
When you have stomach pains – you eat seven pots of roasted
corn. When your liver aches – you eat six pots of yam gruel
with bean soup Your body is not strong; your body is not soft
– yet you eat 12 kola nuts His belly is round with hot maize
gruel
Like the belly of a pregnant woman.

If you do not share your maize gruel with him
He will slip under your fingernail and take
his share Sango takes by force!
If you do not offer him a seat he will sit on top of your nose!
He takes his neighbour's roof and covers his
own head He lends money and does not ask
for it in return
His cloth is ragged like that
of a widow Şàngó does as he
pleases
If he likes, he can make maize gruel
from bananas If he likes, he can wear his

torn garment.

The king who knows today and tomorrow.
The one who knows what the white man speaks
in secret. The one who turns a bad head into a
good one.

He who gives child to the white
haired woman I beg of you, give me
my own daughter too.

The man who married without
paying a dowry. I paid my own
dowry before marrying him.

The man who bought the
vagina on credit And asked the
chief to pay

I alone am his
favourite wife.

When he sleeps
with a woman He
imparts his beauty
to her.

Şàngó is animal like
the gorilla. A rare
animal in the forest.

As rare as the monkey who is a
medicine man. Şàngó, do not give me a
little of your medicine,
Give me all! So that I can spread it over my face and
mouth Anybody who waits for the elephant, waits for
death.

Anybody who waits for the buffalo, waits for
death. Anybody who waits for the railway,
waits for trouble. He says we must avoid the
thing that will kill us.

He says we must avoid trouble.

He is the one who waits for the things we are running away from.

He kneels down, like a collector of
vegetables. Şàngó does not collect
vegetables,

He is only looking for the head of the
farmer. The farmer was deceived.

He went to the farm, only to be killed.

My lord, do not sacrifice me to your inner being.

I will not regard anybody but you in
my life. Şàngó I beg you, let my life
be good.

I want what is in your hand.

I want a good thing
from you. Give me

my own present
today, I will regard
you alone.

I beg, I beg, I have nobody
except you. Do not fight me.
Give me my own child.

Oríkì for Animals

43. Oríkì for Antelope

The one who has legs painted red with
camwood The one who has thighs with
which to touch the dew The animal that
puts on eyelashes
The animal that wears gonbo tribal marks

44. Bush Fowl

The one that we do not marry his
daughter And he is receiving
dowry from us
The one with thighs that are invite inviting the
owner of twenty slaves
The one with pieces of meat that are inviting the owner of thirty servants.

45. Tiger

Tiger, Ògíní offsprings
of Iyayo Tiger who
fights fiercely
The animal that eats flesh from
the head The one who has
knife in its palm.

46. Buffalo

Buffalo Ògbó
The offspring of the one who bleats as if it
wants to rain Everybody following Buffalo
Belongs to Òyà
The spirit that pushes the child until he climbs the tree.

47. Gazelle

Gazelle that uses grassland as its
habitation It uses velvet skin as its
bed sheet
Pretty in the forest
The animal that has a
smooth body Gazelle is
so beautiful
That nobody can despise it in the bush.

48. Monkey

The monkey that teaches the dog
how to hunt The one who schemes
evil while on tendrils The one who
schemes lies while on tendril
The brave Akiti who sieves the gun from the hunter
The animal who lures the hunter into the thick forest.

49. Hunter's dog

My dog
The hunter's dog
The one that tears a child
into pieces The hunter's
dog
The one that picks it and swallows
The one who sweeps the floor
with leaves The hunter's dog.

50. Rabbit

Rabbit is a bastard
in the bush Rabbit
is a bastard in the
bush Whenever it
sees the hunter
It will quickly take
to its heels Rabbit is
a bastard in the
bush

Others:

51. Oriki Àjé

Àjé gave light to the war
of the city Àjé gave the
light to the boa
Àjé you gave the light to Onípásán òwéré
He went to the madman's house and made him rich
He went to the crazy man's house and made him a
character Àjé, I greet you, the last one who
arrived among the Orisas Àjé, eat banana fruit in
Ifá so that you can come with me Àjé please,
come to me, stay with me and do not leave me.