

PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AS A *LEITMOTIF* IN SELECTED ARABIC WRITINGS OF YORUBA 'ULAMĀ'

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Abstract

Didacticism is one of the three major classifications of the themes of the Arabic literary productions of Yoruba 'Ulamā' (Arabic/Islamic scholars). A good number of motifs including religious teachings, historical exposition, morality and language studies feature under this classification. Yoruba 'Ulamā' have used their literary productions to project the teachings of Islam. Of importance to us in this paper are their writings on morality, especially the ones dealing with peaceful co-existence which is one of the hotly debated issues among the Nigerians currently. The need to build a united country has been a desirable issue and this is achievable where citizens from different linguistic, political, religious and cultural backgrounds co-exist and live peacefully. The paper employed purposive random sampling method in selecting relevant Arabic writings for this study. The content analysis method was employed in examining the motifs of the writings. The paper revealed that the Nigerian 'Ulamā' and particularly the Arabic scholars of Yoruba extraction have used their literary productions, especially the ones having peaceful coexistence as motif to project the ideals of Islam. The study provided information about the creativity of Yoruba 'Ulamā' as well as the significance of their literary productions.

Keywords: Yorubaland, 'Ulamā', Arabic writings, Didacticism, Leitmotif

1. Introduction

Abdul-Rahmon (1989:13) states that the main Yorubaland is situated in the South-western part of Nigeria. The name Yoruba is applied to a linguistic group numbering millions, which occupies a large area extending through the Kwara, Kogi, Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, Osun, Ekiti and Ogun States of the Federation of Nigeria and Republics of Benin and Togo. The need for peaceful co-existence amongst the citizenry of different cultural, religious, ethnic and political backgrounds dominates discussions currently in Nigeria. The Arabic writers in Yorubaland make significant contributions to the issue through their literary productions. Of the scholars who have used their literary productions to advance the cause of peaceful co-existence is Shaykh Adam Abdullah 'Al-'Ilūrī, the author of *'Al – Islām 'al – Yawm wa ghadan fī Nayjiriya*. Folorunsho (2017:2) observes that 'Al-'Ilūrī's attempt to unite the 'Ummah was not restricted to his viewpoints expressed in this book but also in his other numerous activities. He was instrumental to the formation of *Rābitah 'Al-'a'immah wal-'Ulamā' fī Bilād Yurubā* (League of Imams and Alfas in Yorubaland) that has the unity among the Imams and Alfas as its main objective. The issue of unity among the 'Ummah also found favour in his *Jumu'ah* sermons, *Tafsīr* and other preaching sessions.

Another notable scholar is the composer of *'An-natā'ī j 'al-'ijtihādiyyah*, Shaykh 'Ismā'īl Muhammad Muhibbud-Dīn. He joined the Arabic literary activities in Ikirun, a great centre of Arabic literary activities in Nigeria, during the era tagged as *Asr 'al-'izdihār*: (Era of Efflorescence,

1991-2006). This era witnessed, according to Folorunsho (2011:84), an upsurge in Arabic literary compositions by Ikirun 'Ulamā'. The era also witnessed the participation of students of Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azīz, popularly known as Alfa Faya, of Makondoro extraction, in literary production in Ikirun. Their contributions cover a wide range of genres including *Rithā'*, *Ta' līm*, *Tarhīb*, *Tahni'ah* and *Madh*. According to the *Khalīfah* of Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azīz Faya, Shaykh Ahmad 'Abdul-'Azīz the writings are intended to correct the erroneous impression that only the graduates of modernized Arabic schools could write flawless Arabic.

Relevant extracts from the writings of these great scholars will be cited in this paper. The extracts will be translated to English while thematic observations will be made for the English audience to appreciate the worth of the contributions of Yoruba 'Ulamā' to the betterment of our society through the instrumentality of their writings. Kilani (2008:186) describes 'Ulamā' as torch bearers of guidance whose activities engender godliness, resulting in peaceful co-existence. This can be inferred from the following quotation:

The 'Ulamā' represent the basic opinions and sentiments of the ordinary people since daily interaction exists between the scholars and the ordinary members of the society in mosques and study circles. The mission of Islam from inception has recognized the central place of knowledge and those who possess knowledge are no doubt the torch bearers of Islamic works and mission and this explains why knowledgeable people are described as 'heirs to the Prophets of God' (Kilani, 2008:186)

2. 'Al – Islām 'al – Yawm wa ghadan fī Nayjiriya of Shaykh Adam Abdullah 'Al – 'Ilūrī

Adebayo (2012:141), Atotileto (2009:235) and Folorunsho (2018:121-123) have analysed the contents of 'Al – Islām 'al – Yawm wa ghadan fī Nayjiriya of Shaykh Adam Abdullah 'Al-'Ilūrī at varying degrees. This will prevent us from a detailed review of the work as readers have the opportunity of getting details elsewhere. Concisely however, we shall make adequate reference to appropriate portions that are relevant to this study in the work. Significant sections of this work are devoted to unification of the 'Ummah. Contentious issues like tribal discrimination in Nigeria, selection of Imam, Muslim women, Friday prayers and Sufism all of which could lead to the absence of peace in the society are adequately addressed in the work. The viewpoints of the Shaykh on these issues could serve as panacea and stimulant that will engender unity between the 'Ummah and facilitate peaceful co-existence in the nation at large.

One of the issues militating against peaceful co-existence, according to this Shaykh, is tribalism. The Shaykh identifies the prevalence of inter-tribal hostilities and the desire of one tribe to dominate the other politically and economically as the norms among Africans in the olden days ('Al-'Ilūrī, 1985:96). He discusses the hostilities that pervade the atmosphere amongst the various ethnic groups in Nigeria with specific reference to the Hausas and the Yorubas in spite of the strong commercial and religious links between the two tribes ('Al-'Ilūrī, 1985:98). He vehemently denounces this attitude and as a matter of priority, he discusses tribalism as the first evil to be removed to unify the 'Ummah, secure brighter future for Islam and provide suitable room for peaceful co-existence.

Religious discrimination is one of the issues militating against peaceful co-existence amongst Nigerians. The Shaykh particularly identifies and denounces the attitude of a particular tribe in

Nigeria, which categorizes the other tribe(s) as infidels ('Al-'Ilūrī, 1985:100). He opines that peace and unity can be achieved not only within the religious circle but also in the nation as a whole if the negative attitude of self-purification and condemnation of others as infidels plaguing the 'Ummah is replaced with mutual respect (Al-'Ilūrī, 1985:103).

Furthermore, aristocracy in the political space is also considered as a catalyst for violence. Monopolization of political powers by the certain groups or individuals in the country and ascending positions of authority by heredity are classified under the issues that must be rectified to facilitate unity and peaceful co-existence amongst Nigerians. According to the Shaykh, Islam frowns at aristocracy in whatever form it takes ('Al-'Ilūrī, 1985:105).

Of the contentions issues amongst the Muslims in Nigeria also is the bickering over the classification of sufism as innovation and accusing its practitioners of disbelief. As a just arbitrator, Shaykh 'Al-'Ilūrī calls for mutual understanding between the two groups of Sufis and Salafis stressing that the doctrines of the two groups still remain within the ambit of Islam ('Al-'Ilūrī, 1985:119)

3. 'An-natā`i j ' al-'ijtihādiyyah of 'Ismā'īl Muhammad Muhibbu d—Dīn

'An-natā`i j ' al-'ijtihādiyyah is a didactic *Qasīdah* composed to provide instructions on moral, ethical and religious matters. The copy used for this study was not published. It contains twenty-nine *Qit`ah* (fragment) on various themes with five lines in each *Qit`ah*. According to 'Al-Hāshimī (n.d., 19), a poem having between three and six lines is described as *Qit`ah*, while the term *Qasīdah* is applicable to a poem of seven lines and more. Whereas a *Qasīdah* deals with one or more themes, Arberry (1964:4) describes *Qit`ah* as an independent poem composed on a specific theme and in a particular context. Each of the Arabic letters is made the last letter which remains the same throughout the entire poem, and, as it were, binds the verses together so as to form one whole (Wright, 1971:352) of each of the five lines forming a *Qit`ah*. This is technically known as *Rawīyy*. 'An-natā`i j ' al-'ijtihādiyyah is one of the works which reveal the creativity of the Arabic scholars in Yorubaland. Each of the *Qit`ah* is distinct from the other not only in the themes but also for the application of various poetic metres .

| قافية الثاء على عمل الخير في بحر الطويل | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| قرأت كتاب الله يا ذا وتحنث | # تركت الصلاة ثم تلعب وتعبث |
| عميت ولم تعبد إلهها مرازقا | # وعقلك مسلوب على الكذب تبث |
| توعظت للناس ولست بعامل | # عننت عن العصيان ثم وتمكث |
| وإن أنت لم تصدق يعاقبك ذلّ | # وقولك فحش لست بالخير ترقث |
| وقربك لله تنال به المنى | # تفوز من الدنيا إلى يوم تبعث |

Thā`-rhyme on good deed (composed) on Tawīl metre.

You read the book of Allah yet you break your obedience (to Allah), you set aside the observance of 'As-salāt (prayer) indulging in amusement.

You remain blindfolded; ignoring the service of Allah the Sustainer, your intellect remains plundered as you remain in pursuit of falsehood.

You preach to the people but you do not behave in accordance with your preaching, you remain hopeless living in disobedience.

If you remain untruthful you will end up wretched (also) if you are fond of obscene language, uttering nothing decent.

Your nearness to Allah will facilitate the achievement of your aim; you will be successful from this world up till the hereafter.

قافية الخاء على ترك الظلم في بحر الطويل

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| لا تظلمنّ كن إلى الله مصرخا | # | وان تجتنبه كنت بالخير مشمخا |
| وابعاد ظلم كي تكون مكروما | # | تكن خاسرا إن كنت في الظلم مرسخا |
| وظلمك في الدنيا يراجعك للتلف | # | وبعدا بظلم كن وبالعدل مؤرخا |
| حرام على من جار جنّة عدنية | # | وعدلا ليوم كلّ مظلوم ييدخا |
| ينال رضا باري الورى متعادلا | # | وإن لم تعادل تغد في النار مفضخا |

***Khā'*-rhyme on the avoidance of injustice (composed) on *Tawīl* metre.**

Do not be unjust but cry unto Allah (if you are wronged), if you leave oppression you will be elevated with goodness.

Keep away from injustice so that you can be honoured, you will remain a loser if you remain unjust.

Your injustice in the world leads you to destruction, keep away from injustice, be just, so that justice can be seen (as your attribute).

Unlawful is paradise for the unjust one, be just, even once, for all the oppressed is splendor in the hereafter.

A just one will achieve the pleasure of the Creator, if you are unjust, you will remain perished in hell

قافية الدال على ترك الطمع في بحر الطويل

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| ولا تطمعن كي تكون مسعدا | # | توكل إلى العرش هو ممجدا |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| # وعند الاله الحظوظ المخلدا | وليست لذي طمع مواصلة العلا |
| # وإن ترضها تريح تكن متزيدا | ولكن فاقنع لو أتاك بقلّة |
| # يهونك والمرجو ربّ مصمدا | وإن أنت ترج الجود عند البرية |
| # لباب غني ملّ عن المترددا | ورأس الغني عند الاله قناعة |

Dāl-rhyme on the avoidance of covetousness (composed) on Tawīl metre

Do not be covetous so that you can be successful; rely on the Owner of the Seat for He dignifies (man).

A covetous one will not achieve greatness with the Lord is permanent allotment (for all categories of beings).

Be contented even if He provides you very little, if you are pleased you will gain an increase (of His gifts).

If you seek a favour from a mankind, he may humiliate you, the One from Whom you can anticipate favour is the Everlasting Lord.

Contentment with Allah's provision is the peak of wealth, stop frequenting the door of a wealthy man.

قافية الذال على ترك الظلم في بحر الطويل

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| # وعرف بأنّ الشرّ سم موقدا | دم الخير تفلح متلذذا |
| # وكن بالقيوم ذي الجلال معوذا | وأنس بخير لا تكن قطّ سيئا |
| # وعن نار ربّي لم يجد من ينقدا | وإحسان من يؤذي إليك فإنه |
| # أخي فكن للشرّ عبدا منبدا | ووصلا بما يقطعك لا تك حاقددا |
| # بأنّ خصال السوء سيف مجددا | لما تفعلنّ الشرّ إذ كنت عالما |

Dhāl-rhyme on the avoidance of injustice(composed) on Tawīl metre.

Persist on goodness to achieve success and delight, know that injustice is a destructive poison.

Be accustomed to good deeds never be an evildoer, seek for the protection of the Everlasting and Magnificent (from evil doing).

Extend goodness to (even) the one who harms you as he (who harms others) will not get anyone to bail him out of hell.

Associate yourself with (even) the one keeping away from you, do not harbour feelings of hatred, my brother, be a servant free from wrongdoing.

Do you have to engage in wrongdoing knowing that evil disposition is (like) a sharpened sword?

قافية الرء على إزام الصبر في بحر الطويل

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| # فإن البلاء من عند ربي المقادرا | # إذا كنت مبلى كم به متصابرا |
| # وإنّ الصبور فائز والمذاكرا | # إذا أنت لم تصبر تكون محقرا |
| # وأعلم بأن الله هو مناصرا | # وإن اعتسرت كن صبورا لحكمه |
| # ليصبر على حكم الاله المباصرا | # ومن شاء أن يلقي الاله مفارحا |
| # بجزنك حتى لا تكون المحاقرا | # فصبرا على البلوى لألا يزايد |

Rā'-rhyme on persistence on steadfastness (composed) on Tawīl metre.

If you are afflicted remain steadfast as very affliction emanates from my Lord, the Omnipotent.

If you refuse to be steadfast you remain despicable, a steadfast man is successful and he is (always) remembered.

If you encounter difficulty, be steadfast on His judgement and know that Allah grants patronage.

Whoever wants to meet Allah joyous should be steadfast on the judgement of Allah, the All-Seeing.

Be steadfast when you are afflicted so that your sadness may not increase your affliction, rendering you humiliated.

قافية الزاي على وفاء العهد في بحر الطويل

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| # تكن بوفاء العهد عبدا مفائز | # وأوف العهود إنّ ذاك لجائز |
| # عن العهد والايفاء لا تك عاجز | # ولا تك كالعقوب في العهد يا أخي |
| # وليس لمن لم يوف دين يعازز | # كإرشاد خير الخلق للخلق كافة |
| # لسنة خير الخلق كن متهامز | # تحلّ بايفاء العهود لكي تفز |
| # الوفاء نجاة للفتى ومفاوز | # ستسأل عنه يوم عرض وحشرنا |

***Zāyin*-rhyme on fulfillment of promise (composed) on *Tawīl* metre.**

Fulfill promises as doing so is rightful, you will be a successful servant (of Allah) by keeping promise.

Do not be like ‘*Urqūb* while making promise my brothers, in making and keeping promise do not relent.

It is contained in the guidance of the best of mankind sent to the whole world; religiousity is not inherent in the one who fails promise.

Be constant with the keeping of promises to be successful, hasten to upholding the *Sunnah* (tradition) of the best of mankind.

You will be asked about it on the last day when we are assembled, fulfillment of promises will serve as (a step towards) salvation for mankind (then)

قافية الشين على ترك البخل في بحر الطويل

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| # وكل بخيل يستقرّ على الخدش | تجوّد ودم بالجود دومك بالعرش |
| # وآخر من يبخل يعود إلى البطش | دع البخل إن اغناك ربي مالك |
| # وتركا يبخل واجتنابا عن الفحش | ووصلا بجود كن إليه مسارعا |
| # لأنّ البخيل كالجليس بلا الفرش | ومن كان جوّادا يكن ممجدا |
| # والباخل مذموم إلى الشتر لا تمش | كذا من يجد في الناس يغد محبّبا |

***Shīn*-rhyme on the avoidance of miserliness (composed) on *Tawīl* metre.**

Be generous; remain constantly on generosity as you remain constantly on your place of rest, the miser remains blameworthy.

Abstain from miserliness if you are blessed by my Powerful Lord; the avaricious one will end up in punishment.

Be accustomed to generosity, hasten to it, set miserliness aside and keep away from immorality.

The generous one is always dignified as the miserly one is (undignified) like a seat without cushion.

The generous one is loved by all while the miserly one is ridiculed, never get closer to an evil

قافية الصاد على ترك الغضب في بحر الطويل

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| # أغصبان دع لا شكّ يدعوك للغمص | وكن كاظما تريح وتنح من النقص |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| # وخاوف إلهي ذا الجلال ولا تعص | وفارقه لا تغضب على كل من خطأ |
| # وكيف إذا تغضب أيا ذا على الشخص | وإنّ الاله كان يعفو لمن أثم |
| # فكظما أيا هذا ولا تك ذا الحرص | وغضبك شرّ فاجتنبه لكي تفر |
| # وتركا لغضب وعن الكظم لا تقص | وداومه تفلح من دنا ولدیننا |

***Sād*-rhyme on the avoidance of annoyance (composed) on *Tawīl* metre.**

Suppress anger and you will be successful and free from blindness;
leave annoyance as it undoubtedly leads to wretchedness.

Avoid it, do not be angry at whoever offends you, fear my magnificent
Lord and disobey Him not.

Allah overlooks (the misdeeds of) the one who commits sin, how can
you then get annoyed if you are wronged.

Your annoyance is an evil deed, keep away from it to be successful,
suppress it. O! my listener and be not covetous.

Insist on suppression of anger and be successful here and hereafter,
abstain from annoyance, remain on its suppression

قافية الضاد على الصدق في بحر الطويل

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| # وإن اقتضيت اصدق وبالكذب لا تقص | وصدقا لكن تمدح وتریح في البعرض |
| # معاقبة الكذاب عود إلى الخفض | وعاقبة الخير يردّ لمن صدق |
| # وراغب لصدق ثم بالكذب لا ترض | صدوق معان والكذوب معاتب |
| # وإن أنت تصدق فزت بالفوز المحض | وإن لم تصدق سوف تدخل في لظى |
| # لتنجو من ربّ السموات والأرض | وأنس بصدق لا تراغب لضده |

***Dād*-rhyme on truthfulness (composed) on *Tawīl* metre**

Be truthful so that you can be praiseworthy and successful in life, if you are
asked to adjudicate, be truthful.

A truthful one gets a commendable result whereas the result of a liar is
diminution.

Succour is provided for the truthful one while a liar is blamed, strive to be
truthful and never be pleased with lying.

If you are not truthful, you will end up in *Lazā* (hell) ,but if you are truthful,
you will get (an abundance of) benefits.

Be accustomed to truthfulness, never venture into its opposite (lying), to be free from (the punishment of) the Lord of heavens and the earth

قافية العين على التواضع في بحر الطويل

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|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| # تنال جميع الفوز إن كنت واضع | توضع إلى كلّ أناس أسامع |
| # المواضع مكروم لدى من يرفع | ومن كان ذا كبر يكون محقّرا |
| # ولو كنت عبدا كل الخيرات جامع | دع الكبر في الدنيا لتسمو يا فتى |
| # لنفسك كن يا ذا عن الكبر مانع | ولن تستحق المجد ما دمت بالكبر |
| # وخفض جناحك إنّ ذا لمرافع | وقال الاله للّتي المشفع |

'Ayn-rhyme on humility (composed) on Tawīl metre

Be humble to all, O! my audience, you will acquire all forms of gains if you are humble.

Whoever is arrogant is despised; the humble one is honoured by those who dignify (the humble ones)

Abstain from arrogance so that you can be elevated O! the young one, you will achieve all goodness, even if you are a servant.

You will not attain greatness as long as you are arrogant; reject the succumbing of your heart to arrogance.

Allah revealed to the Prophet, the intercessor lower your wings as in that (lowering) is greatness.

قافية الكاف على إكرام الضيف في بحر الطويل

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| # مهاون الضيف لأعوج النسك | وضيفك أكرم ولو لك ملك |
| # كذا إن حزن خبت لو كنت ملك | وإن سر عنك سعدت به |
| # ينقذك دعوته كلّ هلك | وأحسن قرأه ولو بالشراب |
| # لأن البشاشة خير المسك | وإلا فلا تلقه بالعبوس |
| # كإكرام نوح لأصحاب الفلك | دم الاحترام لوافد ياذا |

Kāf-rhyme on hospitality (composed) on Tawīl metre

Be hospitable to your guest even if you possess supreme authority, treating them with disrespect is the most crooked of paths.

If he is happy with you, you are successful, if he, however, is displeased with you; you are at loss even if you occupy the status of an angel

Offer him the best of receptions even with just a drink; his prayer protects you from all forms of destruction.

If you have nothing (to offer), avoid meeting him with a frowning face as cheerfulness is sweeter than (the fragrance of) musk.

Always be humane to a guest my listener, just as (Prophet) Nūh was humane to the congregation of the ship.

4. 'An-natā`i j ' al-'ijtihādiyyah: Thematic Observation

The poem is spectacular not only for its length but also for the creativity of the composer in adopting distinct metres for each of the fragments. It is intended to instruct on moral uprightness and the shunning of social vices, to facilitate peaceful co-existence. It is spiced with quotations from the Qur`ān and apostolic traditions to reinforce the instructions. Of the twenty nine fragments forming 'An-natā`i j ' al-'ijtihādiyyah , a total of eleven fragments that are relevant to this study are selected. The selected ones discuss issues that are germane to the actualization of peaceful co-existence amongst Nigerians.

Thā`-rhyme fragment is composed on good deeds which undoubtedly are ingredients for peaceful co-existence. It warns against such evil deeds as ignoring Qur`ānic teachings, abandoning the observance of prayers, hypocrisy, untruthfulness and utterance of obscene language. It admonishes man to seek closeness to Allah for him to achieve his heart desires and be successful here and hereafter.

Khā`-rhyme warns against injustice and oppression. It reveals the consequences of these vices as degradation, destruction and punishment in hell fire on the last day. The rewards obtainable by those who shun these vices include a place in paradise coupled with the pleasure of Allah. The focus of *Dhāl*-rhyme is the same as that of *Khā`*-rhyme. While *Khā`*-rhyme warns against injustice and oppression, this fragment encourages man to exhibit such virtuous deeds as goodness even to those who harm him, associating himself even with those who break away from him and avoid harbouring feelings of hatred against any fellow mankind. Avoidance of these virtuous deeds is considered as an act of injustice which breeds violence by this fragment.

Dāl-rhyme Its teaching focuses the avoidance of covetousness. It warns against being covetous of worldly materials to be successful, stating that a covetous person will not achieve greatness. It advises man to be contented even if he is given little by Allah as an increase is obtainable by contentment. It warns against seeking the favour from mankind so as to be free from humiliation. Contentment with whatever Allah provides man with is described as the peak of wealth. A covetous individual will be greedy and greediness is a catalyst for violence.

Rā`-rhyme teaches steadfastness. It states that the whoever is not steadfast remains despicable whereas the steadfast one remains successful. It emphasises the importance of steadfastness during the period of affliction as Allah, from Whom it emanates provides patronage. It warns that unsteadfastness increases one's affliction and humiliation. Fulfillment of promise is the main focus

of *Zāyin*-rhyme. It describes a successful servant of Allah as the one who keeps promise. It stresses that keeping promise is in consonance with the guidance of the Prophet. It describes the fulfillment of promise as a step towards salvation on the day of resurrection while warning against behaving like *'Urqūb* (*'Al-Munjid fi 'l-lughah*, 1975:1013).

Shīn-rhyme cautions against miserliness. It contrasts the generous and the miser, stating that whereas the generous person remains at peace with people always, the miser is blamed and ridiculed. Dignity is inherent in generosity while baseness is inherent in miserliness. It advises the ones blessed by Allah to display the blessing by generosity, as the avaricious will end up in Allah's punishment.

Avoidance of anger receives the attention of *Sād*-rhyme. It warns against annoyance. It cautions against annoyance as it leads to wretchedness. It states that if the Almighty Creator can be so Merciful to overlook the misdeeds of sinners, man has no moral justification to get unduly annoyed when offended. Anger is described as an evil deed. It must, therefore be suppressed for the achievement of success (from Allah). The fragment also warns against covetousness, categorizing it also as a misdeed.

Truthfulness is the focus of *Dād*-rhyme. It attaches praise and success to truthfulness advising that whoever is called upon to adjudicate on any matter should be truthful. Whereas a truthful one is commended and provided succour an untruthful one ends up in diminution and blameworthiness. Salvation from the punishment of the day of resurrection is obtainable through truthfulness while a liar is consumed by punishment in hell. *'Ayn*- rhyme teaches humility. It calls to humility as it leads to acquisition of all forms of gains. It states that while an arrogant is despised, the humble one is dignified. Abstinence from arrogance is described as a means toward elevation to greatness, so one should prevent his heart from succumbing to arrogance. It is rounded up with a quotation borrowing from the Qur'an: "*lower the wing of humility*" (Q17;24)

Kāf-rhyme focuses on hospitality. It recommends hospitality toward guests as treating them with despise is described as the most sinuous of the paths. If your guest is impressed about your hospitality, you achieve success just as you are at loss if he is displeased. It recommends the best of reception for a guest even if one cannot afford more than water to quench his thirst, for the prayer offered by a guest is a shield from all forms of destruction. Even, if one has nothing to offer, it recommends cheerfulness, which is sweeter to a guest than the fragrance of the musk. It also recommends being humane towards a guest, just as Prophet Nūh was humane to the congregation of the ship.

A perusal of the issues discussed in each of the fragments reveals the utilization of literary productions to prevent violence, poor neighbourliness, bigotry and selfishness which are agents of disharmony. The necessity of building a united country has been a desirable issue and this is achievable where citizens of different political, religious and cultural backgrounds coexist and live peacefully. Various stakeholders, including the scholars of Arabic and Islam have addressed the issue at various levels including the motifs of their literary productions.

5. Conclusion

Of the major themes cultivated by Yoruba 'Ulamā' in their literary productions, didacticism consumes the lion share. Didacticism in their works embraces religious teachings, historical exposition, morality and language studies. We discovered that Yoruba 'Ulamā' have actually used their literary productions to project the teachings of Islam. Using purposive sampling technique, some of their writings on morality, especially the ones dealing with peaceful co-existence which is one of the hotly debated issues among the Nigerians currently were selected for analysis. The need for national integration has been a desirable issue and this is achievable where citizens from different linguistic, political, religious and cultural backgrounds co-exist and live peacefully, as advocated in the selected literary productions. Furthermore, Tijani(2003:24) says while providing panacea to peaceful coexistence that teachers, preachers and religious leaders should demonstrate, by their own practical example, the spirit of universal brotherhood of man, and nobody should be discriminated against on account of his religion. Apart from being a compass to researchers in Yoruba literary scholarship, the study provided information about the sociological significance of the literary productions of Yoruba 'Ulamā'.

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