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THE QUEST FOR ANTHROPOLOGICAL CRIMINOLOGY AND THE UTILITY OF  
TRADITIONAL CRIMES PREVENTION METHODS: THE CASE OF AELE SYMBOLISM

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ABSTRACT

Aale is a symbolic way of preventing theft and trespass in the indigenous Yoruba culture in Nigeria. Aale is widely believed to possess energies and the potent 'superstitious' powers to inflict curses and evil repercussions into the lives of 'criminal' or trespasser. This explores the nature, utility and validity of the Aale among the rural dwellers of Ado-Odo/Ota in Ogun State, Nigeria. The study utilized the survey and structured interviews designed to evaluate the perception of the rural natives with regards to Aale; focus group sessions were also organised. The ethno-methodology theories were used as a theoretical framework to support the study. It was discovered that Aale is still effective in protecting property from theft and trespass among these rural dwellers. The study recommends the extension of the uses of Aale into urban areas, the revitalization of Aale, the call for further research on the uses of indigenous methods of protecting and securing property and advocates for a new academic discipline as a sub-field in criminology that should be regarded as anthropological criminology.

Keywords: Aale, Gods, Property, Symbols, Yoruba.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In traditional African Society, the sacred and the secular are inseparable. There is no compartmentalization of life. What religion forbids or condemns society also forbids and condemns, and similarly society approves those things which religion approves or sanctions. (Adewale, 1994) According to Adewale (1994), the traditional African Society has no written legal documents showing what is legal or illegal, but traditional Africans have a code of conduct which they all know. This code constrains individuals to live in conformity with the well being of society. The components of the code have been transmitted conventionally from generation to generation. This transmission of code is quite relevant and common among the Yoruba of Western Nigeria.

Among these people, theft and trespass are criminal acts. It is a shameful act to steal anything in the community. A thief is a disgrace to his relations. Stealing tarnishes the reputation and integrity of the family of the thief, and traditional Yoruba strives very much to

protect the good name and image of the family (Adewale, 1994) Very similar to stealing is trespass on landed property of another person. Encroachment on another fellow's landed property is a grievous offence and a crime against men and the gods of the land. Trespass among Yoruba can also mean an unauthorized passage or movement on a landed property like farmlands even without the intention of stealing or causing damage to such property. Hence, Yoruba had gone a long way in preventing the acts of theft and trespass through the cultural use of Aale: Aale is a symbolic object placed on a property to prevent it from being stolen or forbid any form of trespass on such property. It is a seal or mark of ownership of such a property. It is a symbol which the owner used to entrust his property in the care of the gods of the land and pronounced eventual judgment on the offenders. Aale is a homonym word in Yoruba language. It has two different meanings. Firstly, it may be attributed to a type of leprosy and secondly, it is a protective symbolic object placed on a property to forbid theft and trespass on such a property (Abraham, 1981).

This research deals with the study of the second meaning of Aale as a protective symbol placed on a property to forbid theft and trespass. It is very imperative here to know the meaning of the symbol. A symbol is anything that represents more than itself (Johnson, 1996) It is something that stands for something (Hughes and Kroehler, 2008) Symbol is a socially defined, learned representation of meaning (Bradshaw et al, 2001). Symbols are created, which means that there is nothing inherent in any symbol that gives it power over us; its power lies in what it signifies to those who share its meaning. We respond to them just as we respond to what they represent and symbol systems tell us how to mark and interpret perceptions, depending on the social situation (Johnson, 1996) Hence, symbols have a shared social meaning that is understood by all members of a society (Schaefer, 2008) Symbols can be used to communicate because they have socially determined meanings. That is, the culture comes to associate a particular symbol with some particular aspect of reality (Bradshaw et al, 2001).

Aale is a symbol which meaningfully represents something else. Aale which is placed on property represents a sign of ownership and entrustment of such property at the care and protection of the gods and giving verdict of calamity on any offender. This research work examines the cultural uses of Aale as a protective symbol against theft and trespass on property among selected rural dwellers in Ado-Odo, Ogun State, Nigeria.

### 1.1 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The contact which Yoruba people had with Western Culture had eroded the Values of their indigenous culture (Sofola, 1994). Many of the cultural values which made life peaceful and meaningful to their human existence are either no longer cherished or such values are almost dying out. One of these cultural values is the act of communication through symbols such as Aale. The use of Aale as a symbolic way of preventing theft and trespass is almost dying out among the Yoruba peoples. The Western culture and foreign religions have gradually eroded the use of this symbol of protection. The use of Aale is now being attributed to evil and therefore, being considered as primitive idea, especially among educated and Westernized Yoruba.

### 1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study was to examine Aale as a Symbolic way of preventing theft and trespass among the Yoruba (with particular reference to villagers under Ado – Odo/Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. However, the followings were the sub-objectives of the study:

- To investigate material objects that are being used as Aale among these people

- To investigate the efficacy of Aale in preventing theft and trespass among the villagers
- To investigate the consequences of stealing or trespassing on property protected by Aale
- To discover how the use of Aale can be revitalized among the Yoruba

### 1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The followings are the research questions that this study sets out to answer:

- What is the material objects that are being used as Aale?
- Is Aale still effective in preventing theft and trespass among the villagers?
- What are the consequences of stealing or trespassing on property protected by Aale?
- What are the ways through which the use of Aale can be revitalized among the Yoruba?

### 1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Yoruba natives are predominantly found in the Western part of Nigeria where they occupy the following states: Oyo, Osun, Ekiti, Kwara, Kogi, Ondo, Ogun and Lagos. However, because of time and resources, the study was limited to Ogun State only and villages under Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area of the state were purposefully selected for the study. Five villages were selected namely: Orile-Igboko, Ketu-Adie Owe, Eguntedo, Ikuoye and Irebale.

Ado-Odo/Ota is located in the Western Senatorial District in Ogun State, Nigeria. The Local Government consists of Yewa and Awori Yoruba ethnic groups. Farming and trading are the predominant occupations of the people, although there are sizeable numbers of people involved in white collar jobs.

The Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area occupies 878km<sup>2</sup> with 526,565 people according to 2006 National Population Census. Ado-Odo, Igbesa, Agbara, Ota and Itele are the most popular towns within this local Government area (Wikipedia, 2009).

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study subscribes to symbolic Interactionism and Ethno-methodology theories as its theoretical framework. The theories are quite relevant to the study because Aale involves the using of symbols and it is a method shared among the Yoruba in preventing theft and trespass in the Community.

### 2.1 SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Symbolic Interactionism may be viewed as a bottom-up approach. By this we mean that symbolic interactionists start with the assumption that culture, organization, and social structures are created through daily communication and interactions among people. As people interact with one another over time, patterns of interaction emerge, and rules governing interaction develop. These ritualised interactions become so much a part of people's lives that they do them almost automatically, like actors playing a well-rehearsed part (Curran and Renzetti, 1998).

According to Kendall (1996), for symbolic interactionists, people create and change their social worlds through the use of mutually understood symbols. Hence, symbolic interaction occurs when people communicate through the use of symbols. Symbolic interaction theory analyses society by addressing the subjective meaning that people impose on objects, events, and behaviour based on what they believe, not just on what is objectively true. Thus society is considered to be socially constructed through human interpretation (Andersen and

Taylor 2003). Hence, the interactionists perspective focuses on people's actual experience and behaviour in everyday life and the reaction of these to how they perceive, interpret, and feel about themselves and others (Johnson, 1996).

Haralambos and Holborn (2008) argue that symbolic interactionism begins from the assumption that action is meaningful to those involved. It therefore follows that an understanding of action requires an interpretation of the meanings that the actors give to their activities. Hence, the way in which actors defining situations has important consequences. It represents their reality in terms of which they structure their actions. Therefore, the central assumption of the theory is that the reality of society lies essentially in the perceptions of its participants rather than its objective existence in time and space. To understand society, we must understand how people assign meaning to their own and others' behaviour and develop shared images of society that enable them to interact effectively (Storer, 1980).

Curran and Renzetti (1998) opinion that symbolic interactionists are concerned with the micro level aspects of culture. Their focus is on how culture is generated, sustained, and changed into a society, not by social institutions, but by people interacting during the course of their daily lives. Symbolic interactionists, therefore, study the basic elements of culture – symbols, values, norms, ideas, and object because these are the raw materials that humans use to create and reinforce social reality.

## 2.2 SYMBOLS

The key element in symbolic interactionism is the symbol, something that stands for something else (Curran and Renzetti 1998; Giddens and Duneier 2000; Hughes and Kroehler 2008) Through symbols people communicate their values and beliefs to those around them (Schaefer, 2008). According to Charon (1998) the symbolic interactionist perspective takes the use of symbols and relates it to all that is human. The symbol is, in a way the central concept of the whole perspective. It is the nature of the symbol that makes the individual depends on society for symbols. Johnson (1996) presents the four kinds of symbols: Symbolic objects (flags representing nations, money representing labour and goods); symbolic characteristics of objects (purple for royalty, yellow for cowardice); gestures, actions (a wink, a raised right hand) that have meaning in particular cultural contexts and the vast range of spoken and written words that make up language which is the most important set of symbols in any culture.

## 2.3 OBJECTS

According to Charon (1998), objects may exist in physical form, but for the human being they are pointed out, isolated, catalogued, interpreted, and give meaning through social interaction. In the symbolic interactionist perspective, we say objects for the human being are really social object (symbols). A social object, then, is any object in a situation that an actor uses in that situation. That use has arisen socially. That use is understood and can be applied to a variety of situations (Charon, 1998) Social objects (symbols) are used to represent and objects that are not used to represent something else are therefore, no symbols. In summary, Sharrock et al (2003:159) opine that “whatever the definition, the object may be said to represent share and commonly understandable, patterns of activity, although they appear in our experience only in the process of being indicated implicitly or explicitly - to ourselves and others.”

## 2.4 CONSTRUCTING REALITY

Some interactions focus on people's behaviour, while others focus on the ways in which people impose their share meaning on others (Kendall, 1996). The symbolic interaction perspective identifies such details of social life that we encounter as we move through the world in a continuing process of using, interpreting, and responding to symbols. From an interactionist perspective, we cannot understand social life without paying attention to how we attach meaning to our experience and behaviour. We identify the definition of the situation by interpreting its various aspects, from people's behaviour and appearance to the physical characteristics of a particular setting (Johnson, 1996).

Curran and Renzetti (1998) argue that people's actions are derived from their interpretation of what goes on around them, and much of this interpretation is learned through interacting with others. As we live in a society, we learn the meaning that has been assigned to particular symbols. Definitions and meanings are therefore constructed in interaction situations.

In construction of meaning or reality, there are three core assumptions. First, we respond to things in our environment on the basis of their meanings. Second, meaning is not inherent in things, but emerges from social interaction. Third, because we are continually interacting shared cultural meanings, meanings are continually emerging and changing. Symbolic Interactionism is quite relevant to this research work because "Aale" which is the central issue in this study is a symbol, a social object which the Yoruba share its meaning in the society.

## 2.5 ETHNOMETHODOLOGY

Ethno-methodology is another theory that is used to support this research work theoretically. Ethno-methodology is literally "the study of the methods of the people" (Storer, 1980:499) It refers literally, to the study of the methods, which people ('ethno') use in everyday life (Johnson, 1996). It is the "methods" that people use on a daily basis to accomplish their everyday lives. However, Ritzer (2008:254) defines ethno-methodology in a broader way as 'the study of the body of common – sense knowledge and the range of procedures and consideration by which the ordinary members of society make sense of, find their way about in, and act on the circumstances in which they find themselves'.

More specifically than interactionists, ethno-methodologists seek to discover the hidden rules that govern communication among people and ways in which they account for their actions and for unexpected events. The ways in which people signal their intentions to one another is a primary concern of the ethno-methodologists (Storer, 1980). We use various methods to help us sustain a shared sense that the social relationships in which we participate are real. It is people's reactions that are the "methods" the ethno-methodologists study, for it is these that help to sustain an ongoing sense of social reality (Johnson, 1996).

Ethno-methodology is very relevant to the study of Aale among the selected rural settlements because it is a method understood by the rural communities, a shared sense that truly reflects that social relationships are real and that meaningful social reality does exist among the community people. It is a method through which people pass the meaning of ownership and forbid the act of theft and trespass.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

Science is a method of approach to the empirical world (Goode and Hatt, 1981). This study was purely empirical work and relied on scientific approaches in studying Aale which is a rural philosophical way of protecting property an forbidding trespass among Yoruba rural dwellers. The study utilized survey design and the purpose of the study is descriptive in nature.

In a descriptive study, a researcher describes groups, activities, situations, or events, with a focus on structure, attitude or behaviour (Adler and Clark, 1999). The study describes attitudes and behaviours of the selected rural areas to Aale. The research study was purely qualitative.

Sampling was necessary because studying every single instance was beyond our means. Sampling serves to improve the quality of the data (Adler and Clarks, 1999) the procedure began with the purposive sampling of Ado-Odo /Ota local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. Purposive Sampling involves selecting elements based on the researchers' judgment about which elements will facilitate their investigation (Adler and Clark, 1999).

Convenience Sampling was used in selecting five villages that were investigated (Orile-Igboko, Ketu-Adie Owe, Eguntedo, Kuoye and Irebale) Convenience sample (Sometimes called an available subjects sample) is a group of elements that are readily accessible to and therefore, convenient for the researcher (Adler and Clark, 1999).

Finally, the purposive or judgmental sampling was used to select the respondents that participated in the research. The judgmental sampling was used because the adults who participated presented a unique case that were especially informative (Age and life experience made them custodians of culture and traditions) and because the study involved in –depth investigation (Neuman, 2003). Five elderly people were interviewed, ( 2 were elderly women), one informant participated and about ten different elderly people were involved in focus group discussions at a time in each of the villages.

The study was a qualitative one. It presented authentic interpretations that are sensitive to social-historical context (Neuman, 2003). Soft data were collected through structured and unstructured interviews, focus group discussion, through information from an informant and through impressions, photos and symbols. The collection of the data started on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2011 and ended 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2011.

The qualitative data emerged from structure and unstructured interviews, focus group discussion, informant's information and photos and symbols were analyzed through content analysis. The in-depth –interviews, discussions from the focus group and information from the informant were translated and transcribed before they were contently analyzed. Photos and symbols were equally subjected to content analyses.

Ethics refer to the abstract set of standards and principles that are used to determine appropriate and acceptable social conduct (Adler and Clark, 1999) This study respected ethical issues. The consents of the respondents were sought before the commencement of the interviews and questions that may cause the emotion of the respondents to rise were avoided. The publication of the research presented aggregate data not in personalized and recognizable form. Hence the anonymity of the respondents was guaranteed, except, the informant who allowed his name and information about him to be published.

#### 4. FINDINGS

During the course of the investigation, it was discovered that there are two types of Aale in terms of efficacy. The first one is “Charmed Aale” with instantaneous supernatural power that punishes the offender immediately the act of theft or trespass is committed. The second type is “Non-charmed Aale” which carries the symbols associated with gods or symbols which are associated with evil consequences in the society. The effects of non-charmed Aale’ are not immediate but very insidious. The effects may take a longer period of time to emanate and in some cases, the effects may not even be on the offender himself or herself but on the children or grandchildren. The gods may not fight the offender but transfer the effects on the children or grand children, as punishment for the crime committed as it is found in other African Societies (Oraegbunam, 2010).

The non-charmed Aale itself is categorized into three, depending on the actual number of the symbols involved. Hence, we have: uni-variable one (where only one symbol was used in making it) see figure 1-5, bi-variable one (where two symbols were involved) see figure 6-9, and multi-variable one (where three or more symbols were involved.) See figures 10-14).

It was discovered that the following social objects (symbols) are still being used to make Aale among the rural dwellers that we studied. They are: palm fronts (especially young and tender ones), snail shell, pieces of red cloth, pieces of black cloth, cowries shell broom, cutlass, animal bone, worn-out shoe, pieces of broken calabash, bottle containing sand inside, bark of banana tree, broken calabash, paluko- apara (a Yoruba indigenous type of leguminous plant) and knotted rope. The combination of two or more of these symbols was very common among the villagers under our study.

Each social object (symbol) was considered to be extraordinary. Each symbol has a connection to one god or the other or has a social meaning that is attributed to one evil consequence or the other. For instance, palm front and cutlass are connected to Ogun (the Yoruba god of iron), the piece of red cloth is connected to Sango (the Yoruba god of thunder), snail shell to Orisa -Nla or Obatala (the Yoruba god of creatures -the snail was his favourite meal), broom is connected to Soponna (the Yoruba god of small pox) and cowries shell to Olokun (the god of oceans and giver of money/wealth). The belief system among these rural dwellers was that any property which carries each symbol or combination of the symbols has been entrusted to the care of the connected god/gods and such god/gods have the absolute right to punish any offender or his/her children or grand children as pleasing to the offended god/gods. However, some social symbols do not have any link with any god but are considered to be objects which have evils or bad effects connected to them. For instance, sand is a symbolic representation of mortal earth and anybody who commits any offence against it can never go scotch-free. Worn out shoe is another symbol. Shoes mean more than dressing among the Yoruba. It is a symbol of suffering, sorrow and difficulty. The shoe is a symbol of swearing among these people to prove one's innocence if accused of any wrongdoing. When used as Aale, it is a significant meaning of suffering, sorrow or life difficulty to the offender. Knotted rope among Yoruba has a symbolic meaning more than its ordinary form. A Yoruba man or woman knows that knotted rope has a deeper meaning which is connected to suicide through hanging. Hence, knotted rope is a symbol that can be used in placing Aale on material property.

The investigations carried out revealed that Aale is purposely used to prevent theft and trespass on property or possession among these rural dwellers. It is a way of protecting and giving security to the property / belonging and possession especially, those that are not under the surveillance of the owners. Such properties / belongings may include: fire wood (see fig 2 with palm front as Aale on top of gathered fire wood, also figs 4, 5, 7), farm crops (see fig 12, where Aale - broom, red cloth, black cloth and cowries was used to protect cocoyam farm, and fig 13 where palm front, red cloth and bottle filled with sand protected maize farm), fruit bearing tree (see fig 11, where Aale was used to protect guava tree), goods or wares in local market (see figs 6,8,10, and 14) where different Aales were used to protect goods and wares at Lusada market in Igboke village. And finally, Aale can be used to prevent trespass in the rural community e.g. unauthorized passage on a road (see fig 1) or unauthorized use of a space in a market place (see fig 9).

All the villagers interviewed and those who participated in the focus group discussion testified that they had never lost any property/belonging or possession protected with Aale to any act of theft and never experienced any act of trespass on landed property (e.g. road or space etc) protected with it. In addition, the interviewees and focus group participants had not, in the past, touched/stolen or trespassed on any property protected by Aale in the community (for they know the evil implications). Moreover, they still hold a strong belief system on the evil

consequences or calamities that will befall any offender. These findings indicated that Aale, as a symbolic way of preventing property/belonging from theft and trespass is stiff efficient and a respectable cultural belief system among these rural dwellers.

Oraegbunam (2010) was of the opinion that African gods are still punishing the offenders in the African societies. Adewale (1994) argues that stealing or trespass is not only immoral or a societal crime; it is also a religious offence punishable by gods and the supreme God. The Odu-Ogbe-Ale oracle in Ifa religion worship among Yoruba has warned against stealing:

“If the earthly king does not see you, the heavenly king is looking at you. Thus declares the oracle to the one who steals under the cover of darkness, who says that the earthly king does not see him God sees the thief and will surely punish him”.

Seeing here does not mean mere looking, but seeing for punishment (Adewale, 1994). Hence, among the Yoruba, gods and the supreme God are believed to be agents of punishment. When asking the respondents, the repercussions or the effects of breaking the sacrilegious rule of Aale, the following effects were mentioned and they are presented in Appendix 1 with correspondent symbols and the gods that are connected with them or the spiritual meanings of them.

The grievous punishments that are the consequences of breaking the sacrilegious rule of Aale are the main reasons why the rural dwellers treated Aale with reverence and fear. We discovered in the course of the research that there are some rules and regulations guiding the use of Aale among these rural dwellers. First, Aale should not be placed on any property or possession within the household. It is like exposing the members of the household to the dangers inherent in breaking its rule. Secondly, Aale is usually placed on top of the property or very close to it. There must be a physical contact between the two (Aale and the property) Aale must be visible on the property it protects. It must not be placed in a hidden place. People must be able to see it to refrain from it. Thirdly, young mothers are not permitted to use Aale on their property or possessions less their children fall the victims of its rule breaking. Finally, pregnant women are not allowed to use Aale. Such spiritual exercise was considered a great spiritual danger to child delivery.

When asking them if Aale can be effective in preventing theft and trespass in urban areas, the respondents affirmed positively that it can be effective in urban areas too, especially the Aale that is charmed. They argued that gods operate everywhere and the spiritual power cannot be hindered by high population, modernization or civilization. They believed that the effects of breaking Aale are applicable to the offenders either in the rural areas or urban areas.

The respondents counseled that the Yoruba parents have a duty of teaching their children the culture, norms values, customs and traditions of the Yoruba land that on-coming generation would be capable of upholding and passing the same to the generations after them. The participants argue that the way to revitalize the uses of Aale is to teach the young people all what it is, as a customary way of life. The respondents did not support the idea that Aale is a primitive way of life in the light of modernization and practice of foreign religion.

One of the ways to revitalize this customary way of life is to encourage the local mass media to schedule programmes that deal with such cultural issue and the other ones that are dying out in our society. Such programmes will go in a long way of revitalizing many cultural issues in our midst.

Finally, the respondents recommended the continuous use of Aale in preventing theft of material property. The respondents argued that it is a cultural way of providing protection and security to one's property and therefore, should not be discouraged by any foreign culture or religion.



## 5. CONCLUSION

It is obvious that before the introduction of other religions and western cultures there were criminals and criminal acts. In dealing with them, force was abundantly made use of. Although, there is no evidence that crime were totally eliminated. The use of physical force was effective to some extent, but other more effective means were used. One of these means is Aale. Anybody who breaks the sanctity of Aale will never be spared by the gods and the evil repercussions that followed. Aale is a curse, any man or woman that defies its customary rules must be punished accordingly or such punishment be transferred to the children or grand children as the offended gods willed. Such punishments include: insanity, impotency, bareness, elephantiasis, palsy, sclerosis, sudden death in a mysterious way, deformity, ill luck, suicide, poverty, small pox, terrible accident, leprosy, open sores, suffering, bitterness etc. Hence, the use of Aale instilled fear in criminals because the law of retribution is a strong emphasis among the Yoruba of the Western part of Nigeria. If the retribution does not come today, definitely it will come tomorrow.

Aale should not be seen or considered as primitive idea that should be discarded. It is a cultural way of protecting property/possession. People should recognize it this way and treat it in the same manner. The government and individuals should try to encourage programmes on local mass media that treats cultural issues among the Yoruba populace, especially, the ones that are speedily fading out from our society. This will give the younger generation opportunity to know more about their cultures (the dos and Don'ts of them) of this, they would be able to sustain our cultural heritage and customary ways of life.

It is recommended, that more social researches should be conducted to investigate the cultural ways of life of people. By doing this, they would be able to find out how these people live their lives. Rural sociologists are encouraged to investigate; through what other ways the rural people protect and give security of their belongings and their entire rural communities. Further researches on Aale and other cultural belief systems are encouraged too. The efficacy of Aale in protecting property or belonging, in the urban areas is encouraged to be investigated. Such investigations would properly give some alternatives to the uses of modern ways of providing protection and security to property or belongings in the urban settings. Finally, it is recommended that Criminologists should start to treat the concept of crime from the cultural and traditional points of view (anthropological criminology).

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**Appendix 1: The Corresponding Effects of Aale Symbols**

	THE SYMBOL OF AALE	CORRESPONDENT GOD OR SPIRITUAL MEANING	THE PUNISHMENT ON THE OFFENDER OR THE CHILDREN
1	Piece of Red Clothe	Sango (god of thunder)	The offenders/children are expected to die by lighting and thunder or suffering or sorrow
2	Snail Shell	Obatala or Orisa-Nla (god of creatures)	Deformity of the body or offenders or their children especially, the unborn ones.
3	Palm Front	Ogun (god of Iron)	Death from Motor accidents or gunshot or cutlass wound
4	Cutlass	Ogun (god of Iron)	Death from cutlass wound or motor accident or gun shot
5	Broom	Soponna (god of small pox)	Death as a result of epidemic of small pox)
6	Cowries shells	Olokun (god of ocean and wealth)	Poverty
7	Bottle filled with sand	It is a connection to the mortal earth	Ill luck will continue to trail the offenders or children as long as they are still living on earth
8	Old /worn out shoe	It is a symbol of suffering, sorrow and difficulty	Continuous suffering, sorrow and life difficulty.
9	Broken Calabash (especially with inserted wool)	It is a symbol of infections of skin disease	Incurable skin disease or open sores.
10	Knotted rope	It is a symbol of hanging	Suicide through hanging.
11	Paluko Apará (an indigenous type of leguminous plant)	Symbolized palsy and sclerosis	Palsy and sclerosis
12	Bark of banana tree or banana skin	A symbol of misdeeds	Misdeeds in every life undertaking
13	Bone	Symbol of poverty and suffering	Suffering and bitterness at last stage of offender's life.

**FIGURE 1**



Aale (Palm Front) placed across the road near a farm to prevent trespassal movement at Kuoye Village Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 04/12/2011. 5.30 pm Nigeria time).

FIGURE 2



Aale (Palm Front) placed on a bundle of fire wood to prevent theft at Kuoye Village Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011( Photo taken on 04/12/2011. 5.38 pm Nigeria time).

FIGURE 3



Aale (Palm Front) placed on a fell fire wood tree to prevent theft at ketu Adie-Owe village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 04/12/2011,6.19 pm Nigeria time).

FIGURE 4



Aale (Palm Front) placed on a fell fire wood tree to prevent theft at Kuoye village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 10/12/2011., 5.38pm Nigeria time).

FIGURE 5



Aale (Palm Front) placed on planks of wood to prevent theft at ketu Adie-Owe village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.  
Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 13/12/2011, 5.27 pm Nigeria time).

FIGURE 6



Aale (piece of Red Cloth and Snail shells) placed on a covered wares to prevent theft at Lusada Market, Igboko village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.  
Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 15/07/2011, 5.48 pm Nigeria time).

FIGURE 7



Aale (Palm Front and a pair of worn out shoe) placed on a bundle of fire wood to prevent theft at Kuoye village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.  
Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 10/12/2011, 5.43 pm Nigeria time).

FIGURE 8



Aale (Piece of red clothe and a bottle contains sand ) placed on wares to prevent theft at Lusada Market, Igboko village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.  
Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 17/12/2011, 9.23 a.m Nigeria time).

FIGURE 9



Aale (Piece of red clothe and pieces of broken calabash) placed on covered wares to prevent theft at Lusada Market, Igboko Village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.  
Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 17/12/2011, 9.25 a.m Nigeria time).

FIGURE10



(Piece of red clothe, animal bone abd broom) placed on covered wares to prevent theft at Lusada Market, Igboko Village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.  
Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 17/12/2011, 9.23 a.m Nigeria time).

FIGURE 11



Aale (old cutlass, piece of red clothe and Paluko-apara-a type of leguminous plant in Yoruba) placed on guava tree to prevent theft at Ketu Adie-owe, Village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 04/12/2011, 6.30 pm Nigeria time).

FIGURE 12



Aale (piece of red clothe, broom and cowrie shells with striped black clothe) placed on a cocoyam farm to prevent theft at Ketu Adie-owe, Village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 04/12/2011, 6.21 pm Nigeria time).

FIGURE 13



Aale (Piece of red clothe , palm front and bottle contains sand) placed on a maize farm to prevent theft at Eguntedo, village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 04/12/2011, 5.03 pm Nigeria time).

FIGURE 14



Aale (Snail shell, piece of red clothe and paluko apar-a type of Yoruba leguminous plant ) placed on covered wares to prevent theft at Lusada Market, Igboko village, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area, ogun State, Nigeria.

Source: The Researchers' Survey, 2011 (Photo taken on 17/12/2011,8.33 a.m Nigeria time).

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