

# **MORALITY VERSUS PROFESSIONAL ETHICS: THE CASE OF PAADI MINKAILU.**

(Ìtakora Èkó-ìwà àti ìwà ọmọlúàbí ajẹmọşẹ nínú ètò ìşẹlú.)

**A Paper Presented at**

**The Year 2000 Annual National Conference**

**Of**

**Ègbẹ Onímò Èdè Yorùbá  
( Yorùbá Studies Association of Nigeria)**

**At**

**CONFERENCE PAPER**  
**University of Ilorin**

**7<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2000.**

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# MORALITY VERSUS PROFESSIONAL ETHICS: THE CASE OF PAADI MINKAILU

## 1. Introduction:

In this paper, we want to discuss the role of Páádì Mínkáílù (as portrayed in *Ìdààmù Páádí Mínkáílù*) vis-à-vis his personality, in relation to other characters in the play, and his community at large. Since the society is run under certain principles of law, there will be cause to recall such laws and their functions in the society. For a clearer picture, we would like to take cover under Omoregbe (1987) for our definition of terms: Morality, Ethics, Religion and Law as these are the kernels of this discourse.

To Omoregbe (1987:3-6), morality, ethics, religion and law can be seen in the unity that exists amongst those concepts. Thus he maintains that:

The relationship between ethics and morality is similar to the relationship between logic and thinking or the relationship between theology and religion. In each of these cases the latter is the basis of the former.... Hence morality is the basis of ethics, the latter is the explicit reflection on, and the systematic study of, the former... Like ethics, law too deals with the norms of human behaviour. Both ethics and law are normative and prescriptive, and both presuppose human freedom. They are both concerned with how men ought to behave in society; they both prescribe certain kinds of actions and prohibit others. Ethics and law therefore have some basic similarities, but they also have some basic differences. In the first place ethics is wider in scope than

law, for law itself is a subject-matter of ethics. Whether a law deserves to be obeyed or ought not to be obeyed is an ethical question; ...Ethics is the judge of law, for morality takes precedence over law and is itself the standard for law. Law is at the service of morality and dares not contradict morality without ipso facto ceasing to be law and losing its right to be obeyed... Like ethics, religion is also concerned about the morality of human conduct, and both presuppose human freedom and responsibility. But religion is not primarily concerned with morality; the direct object of religion is not morality but worship, adoration through rites, prayers etc. Religion deals with morality only indirectly as a necessary condition for true worship; but not as its primary concern.

## **2. Synopsis of the play:**

This play titled *Ìdààmù Páádí Mínkáílù* was written by Faleti, a prolific Yoruba writer. The play though published in 1972, is relevant and will always be relevant to the civil society. Its timelessness, is one of the factors that necessitates this write-up.

*Páádí Mínkáílù*, a Catholic priest is appointed into the Ejigbo town council as a member by the State governor. This is done in order to forestall embezzlement and uphold accountability. No sooner than he is appointed, his problem started. Jubirilu, the Elejigbo is the chairman of the council, Şetilu is

the treasurer, Ibrahimu is a member, Yunusa is the financial secretary, while Salu, the Elejigbo's son works as an office assistant in the council.

The council is to receive N40,000 from the headquarters in Ibadan. The money is brought to Ejigbo all in hard currency! Yunusa connives with Ibrahimu and Salu to rob the treasury. Setilu moves the money to the safe custody of Minkailu through his wife Saratu before the thieves could strike, but he gets shot and assumed dead by his assailants. The timely arrival of Saratu and Minkailu saves the situation and Setilu is taken to the hospital at Ibadan. The money is returned to Ibadan.

Minkailu presents Setilu as 'dead'. Salu goes to Minkailu to confess his sins before him and to pray for forgiveness. Police detectives move in to unravel those behind the mask of the crime. Minkailu wants Salu to confess and hand himself over to the police, but he refuses and implores the Reverend Father to do that on his behalf. Minkailu holds tenaciously to the tenets of his religion – Catholicism where confession of sin is top secret – as the Rev. Fr. is only 'God's representative on earth'! The gangsters implicate Jubirilu and he is arrested and detained for interrogation. Rafilu who eavesdrops on the discussions of the marauders is killed. Multiple deaths follow this before the situation is arrested and only one of the culprits is brought before the law as the others are already dead.

### **3. The big question:**

Why did Minkailu allow the situation to degenerate to this level?

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The silence of Minkailu is symbolic. This can be seen in the light that he is a Reverend Father. His Catholic doctrine sees confession of sin(s) as sacred. Even though confession is done before the father, he is only an agent of the Almighty God, he is an intermediary – a means to an end and not the end itself.

Minkailu is bound under the oath of secrecy of confession of sin not to reveal such confession(s) even at the point of death. However, we may ask, what is the justification for keeping an oath while he is an accomplice in or an accessory to a murder?

The tragic series started when Salu approaches Paadi Minkailu to confess his sins (pp. 40-42) in the secrecy of the Rev. Father's courtyard. Having been granted his request, Salu kneels before Minkailu. Minkailu adorns his stole and they both make the sign of the cross before the confession proper:

**Salu:** Mo pa'nia, Paàdi! . . . . .

**Minkailu:** Ó tó. F'ara rẹ balẹ. Enia melo l'ò pa?

**Salu:** A pò, emi nikan kọ, a pò.....

**Minkailu:** À ni enia melo l'ẹ pa?

**Salu:** Hẹn-hẹn - ẹn , Paàdi, ẹyọ ẹnikan náà ni.

**Minkailu:** Awọn iyókù nkọ?

**Salu:** Nwọn pò, Páàdi, ng'ò le dáà'ko wọn.

Ng'o gbọdọ daa'kọ wọn.

**Minkailu:** Nitori kini?

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**Salu:** A mulẹ. A ti mulẹ, Paàdi.

**Minkailu:** Ẹṣẹ tun l'eyiini náà

**Salu:** Mo jẹwọ mejeji papọ: Mo pa'nia, mo si tun ẹ ẹgbẹ okunkun.  
Oluwa dari ẹṣẹ mi ji mi.

**Minkailu:** Salu, kini ẹ t'o o fi pa'nia?

**Salu:** Mo fẹ jale ni, nigbati oluwarẹ 'o si f'owo náà silẹ, mo ba yinbọn  
pa a.

**Minkailu:** Nibo ni?

**Salu:** N'ilu Ejigbo nihin naa ni. Ẹtilu Akapo Igbimo ilu wa, emi ni  
mo pa a.  
Mo pa'nia.....

**Minkailu:** Ẹtilu!

**Salu:** Mo pa'nia, Paàdi!

**Minkailu:** Ki Oluwa dari ẹṣẹ rẹ ji ọ.

**Salu:** À-à-à-min.

**Minkailu:** Salu, maa lọ kí o ma si d'ẹṣẹ mó. Ki o ka tẹsùbàà rẹ l'odidi, ni  
igbà ọgọrun, ki o si tun ka adura Oluwa lóṭò ni igba ọgọrun .  
Lẹhinna, ki o lọ f'ara rẹ le awọn ọlọpa tabi awọn alaṣẹ ilu  
lọwọ.

**Salu:** Ng'ò le ẹ e, Paàdi. Ẹ kuku fà mi l'awọn ọlọpa lọwọ fun'ra nyin.

**Minkailu:** Emi 'ò gbọdọ ẹ e.

**Salu:** Emi naa 'ò si le ẹ o.

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**Minkailu:** O le pupọ lootọ, şugbọn gbiyanju lati şe bẹẹ, ki a le mú ẹẹẹ rẹ kuro patapata. Ki Oluwa ki o fi ori ẹẹẹ rẹ ji ọ , l'orukọ ti Baba, ati ni ti ọmọ ati ni ti Ẽmi-Mimọ.

**Awọn Mejeji:** Ààmin! (pp. 41-42)

**[Salu:** I've killed someone, Rev. Fr. !  
.....

**Minkailu:** It's all right. Take it easy. How many people have you killed?

**Salu:** We are many, I'm not alone, we are many .....

**Minkailu:** I ask, how many people have you killed?

**Salu:** All...right, Fr., it's just one person.

**Minkailu:** What about the others?

**Salu:** They're many, Fr., I can't name them. I must not mention them.

**Minkailu:** Why?

**Salu:** We are under an oath. We have sworn an oath, Fr.

**Minkailu:** That also is a sin

**Salu:** I confess both together: I have killed and I have also been engaged in a secret cult. Lord, forgive me my sins.

**Minkailu:** Salu, why did you kill somebody?

**Salu:** I wanted to steal but when the person refused to let go the money, I shot and killed him with a gun.

**Minkailu:** Where?

**Salu:** It's here in Ejigbo town. Setilu the Council Treasurer, I am the one who killed him. I've killed someone.....

**Minkailu:** Setilu !

**Salu:** I've killed someone, Fr. !

**Minkailu:** May the Lord forgive you your sins

**Salu:** A-a-a-men.

**Minkailu:** Salu, go away but sin no more. Count the whole of your rosary, one hundred times. Also say the Lord's prayer separately, one hundred times. Thereafter, go and give yourself up to either the police or the law agents.

**Salu:** I can't do that, Fr. Just give me up to the police yourself.

**Minkailu:** I mustn't do that.

**Salu:** I can't do it too.

**Minkailu:** Truly, it's hard, but try to do it, so that your sins can be totally effaced. May the Lord forgive you your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy spirit.

**Both of them:** A-amen.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Salu has confessed his sins. He named his victim, Setilu but would not mention the names of his partners in murder, despite the fact that he confesses he is not alone in the crime. As the Rev. Fr. is hesitant and urges Salu to give himself up, Salu is equally hesitant since he is under an oath. Both Salu and Minkailu are under the oath of secrecy and allegiance to their different courses. One is prompted to ask, why wouldn't Salu give himself up and name the others? He would have broken an oath by so doing. That is why he insists that the Rev. Fr. should do it on his



behalf (even though he is sure that the Rev. Fr. is bound by oath not to do so). Why wouldn't the Rev. Fr. give Salu up as requested to save the situation of searching elsewhere for the criminals? He is bound by oath. What would have happened here if the police get to know the perpetrators of the crime from either Salu himself or Minkailu? The play would have ended here as all the culprits would have been arrested and convicted for attempted murder. Faleti did not want the play to end yet, as ending the play here would drag it away from being a tragedy. Thus he made Salu and Minkailu to hold tenaciously to their firm beliefs and their pledges.

This leads us on to the interrogation of suspects by police detectives Inspector Adegboye and Corporal Yesufu. The interrogation is held in Minkailu's courtyard as he is regarded as a man of God. Salu connives with the other suspects in his gang to implicate his father, Jubirilu! Let's examine the following scene:

**Yesufu:** Tal'o fura si pe o pa Şetilu?

**Salu:** Qrọ ilu wa yi şoro o

**Yesufu:** Ani ta n'iwọ fura sí gan-an?

**Salu:** Hùn-ùn, baba t'o bi mi náà le şe e, bi 'ò si şe e, àwọn t'ó n'ifẹ rẹ le şe e.

**Yesufu:** Iru awọn wo?

**Salu:** O' wuwo l'ẹnu mi lati sọ. (p. 60)

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**[Yesufu:** Whom do you suspect killed Şetilu?

**Salu:** This our town is a difficult one.

**Yesufu:** Who exactly do you suspect?

**Salu:** Oho, the father who gave birth to me could also do it, if not, his admirers could do it.

**Yesufu:** What type of admirers?

**Salu:** It's too heavy for me to utter.

.....]

This is self-explanatory. Salu has implicated his own father. This wouldn't have happened if either he, or Minkailu had informed the police on time.

When Salu was staying too long with the interrogators, Minkailu took permission to have a tete-a-tete with him. This granted, the following dialogue ensued:

**Minkailu:** .....

Salu kil'o şe t'ó o pẹ bẹẹ lọdọ wọn?

**Salu:** Páàdi, ọrọ ti nwọn mbi mi l'ó pọ.

**Minkailu:** Kini şe t'ó ' ò jẹwọ fun wọn?

**Salu:** Ng'ò le şe e Páàdi ! A ti mulẹ.

**Minkailu:** Mimulẹ ko le şe nkankan fun ọ, bi o ba ti jẹwọ ẹşẹ rẹ t'o' ò si d'ẹşẹ mọ.

**Salu:** Mo ti jẹwọ ẹşẹ mi fun nyin.

**Minkailu:** Kíí şe fun mi, biko şe fun Èlẹ̀da rẹ, ní ikọ̀kọ̀. Şugbọ̀n eyiini kò to, o ni lati jẹwọ ẹşẹ rẹ ni gbangba pẹlu, paapaa, iru ẹşẹ eleyi. Anfani nla l’o ní niisiin, maşẹ sọ ọ nu. Jẹwọ ẹşẹ rẹ fawọ̀n ọlọpa.

**Salu:** Pààdi Minkailu, mo jẹwọ ẹşẹ mi fun ọ gẹgẹbi ẹni ti ó laşẹ lori ẹmí mi.Şugbọ̀n ohun t’o ba kọja eleyiini ng’o le şe e, ng’ o gbọdọ şe e, ng’o gbọdọ şe e ..... ng’o le şe e .....

[ **Minkailu:** .....

Salu, why have you stayed so long with them?

**Salu:** Father, they were asking me so many questions.

**Minkailu:** Why don’t you confess to them?

**Salu:** I can’t do it, Father! We are under an oath.

**Minkailu:** Being bound by an oath cannot do to you any harm, if you confess your sins and sin no more.

**Salu:** I’ve confessed my sins before you. **CONFERENCE**

**Minkailu:** It’s not before me, its before your creator secretly. But that is not enough. You have to confess your sins publicly also, especially this type of sin. This is a great opportunity you have now, don’t miss it. Confess your sins to the police.

**Salu:** Father Minkailu, I confessed my sins before you as you have authority over my soul. But anything outside this I can’t do, I must not do it, I mustn’t do it..... I can’t do it.....]

Here, Minkailu tries to prompt and cajole Salu into giving himself up to the police as the opportunity has presented itself. But Salu is wise enough as he

cajoles Minkailu to help him do the confession. Salu is caught between two worlds-the law of the land and the wrath of his companions in crime. He cannot give himself up in order not to offend his colleagues in crime. He holds on firmly to his oath of allegiance even though he believed he had killed Setilu. Minkailu on the other hand seem to be controllably tempered, since he is aware that the supposedly dead Setilu is still alive, thus he engaged persuasion, yet Salu is adamant and Minkailu will not break his own oath!

The attempt to interrogate the other suspects would not yield any further information, as the gangsters, Salu, Yunusa and Ibrahim colluded and implicated Jubirilu. Jubirilu, the Elejigbo is detained in Minkailu's courtyard for further interogation after this. One would have thought that Minkailu would wade in at this point to save the head of the Oba, by handing over Salu to the police, but this seems difficult. It is a dilemma. Salu regrets his actions for implicating his own father, however, he is reassured by Yunusa (pp. 68-69).

Meanwhile, Salu's younger sibling, Rafilu is suspicious of him owing to his nocturnal outings, coupled with the former's lackadaisical attitude towards their father's ordeal. Salu's mother invites Minkailu to help persuade him to clear himself from the rigmarole going round town about his dubious conduct. This dialogue ensued between them:

Minkailu: O gbọ nkan t'iya rẹ sọ? Ranti ofin Èlẹda rẹ t'ọ sọ pe "Iwọ kò gbọdọ purọ". Má purọ o. Iya rẹ ni'i, oun ni obi rẹ nipa ti ara, emi si ni'i, emi ni obi rẹ nipa ti ẹmí. Nitorinaa, jẹwọ fun wa, b'ọ o ba mọ nipa ọrọ yi. Jẹwọ, kí o le wẹ baba rẹ mọ kuro ninu



isokuso awon ara ilu ati kuro ninu wahala. Jẹwọ ẹsẹ rẹ ni gbangba.

.....

**Salu:** Páàdi Minkailu ! Šebi ẹni Qlọrun ni nyin, olóye ni nyin, onímímọ si ni nyin. Boya ẹnyin náà ri i pe mo ẹ nkankan l'ẹ ẹ tẹle ohun t'iya mi nwi. B'ó ba ẹ bẹẹ ni, ẹ sọ 'hun tí mo ba ẹ fun baba mi ati fun iya mi.

**Minkailu** (pẹlu idaamu): Han-in.....han-in.....Salu !

Emi 'ò le sọ pe mo ri i pe o ẹ nkankan, şugbọn bi mo ri nkan, bi ng'o ri nkan, ẹtọ rẹ ni lati sọ ododo ohun t'ọju rẹ ba tó nipa iru orọ bayi fun iya rẹ ní gbangba.

**Salu:** Ẹ jẹ ki n'maa lọ; ng'ò mọ nkankan nipa rẹ.

.....

**Iya:** Hà ! hée ! Páàdi, ẹ gba mi. Bi Salu ti nşẹ 'ò ye mi.

**Minkailu:** Iya wa, ẹ fi i silẹ. Ẹ jẹk'a gba nkan t'ó t'ọkàn rẹ wa. Emi nlọ s'ile. O dàárọ.

**Iya:** Ẹ dakun Páàdi, ẹ ba mi ş'eto ki nwọn ó tu baba wa silẹ. Ẹ gba mi.

[ **Minkailu:** You've heard what your mother said? Remember the commandment of your creator which says "Thou shall not tell lies". Don't lie at all. Here is your mother, she is your parent physically, and here I am, I'm your parent spiritually. Therefore, confess before us, if you know anything about this issue.

Confess, in order to save your father from the nonsense people are saying about him and from this trouble. Confess your sins in the open.

.....

**Salu:** Rev. Fr. Minkailu ! You're a man of God, you're knowledgeable, you're also holy. May be you are aware that I have done something and you take to my mother's plea. If it is so, tell both my father and mother what I have done.

**Minkailu** (in a dilemmatic situation): Yes.....yes.....Salu !

I can't say that I've seen you done something, but whether I see something or not, it is your duty to tell the truth about what you know in this type of issue before your mother in the open.

**Salu:** Let me leave; I know nothing about it.

.....

**Salu's mother:** Ha ! hey ! Father, save me. I don't understand Salu's attitude.

**Minkailu:** Our mother, leave him alone. Let's abide by his mind's dictates. I'm going home. Goodnight.

**Salu's mother:** Please, Father, help me arrange for my husband's release. Save me].

In this discussion, there are promptings between Salu and Minkailu both claiming ignorance before Salu's mother. They both conceal the secret, thereby lying. One may ask, is it morally right for any of them to lie at this juncture? Why would Salu not confess before his mother to save his father's

head? Why would Minkailu not divulge Salu's secrets before his mother to save Elejigbo's head? If Salu confesses now, this may lead to his arrest and after a thorough interrogation, he may name the others thereby breaking an oath, or refuse to name them and suffer the consequences alone. It may even go further than that – if he is arrested, the others might try to get at him and silence him before he mentions their names. Salu at this juncture wanted to use Minkailu as a bait before his colleagues in crime. Minkailu on the other hand is prompting Salu to voice it out himself before his mother, so that the mother would report the news first hand to the police, whereby Minkailu will only stand as a witness and not as a direct link to the leaking of the secret.

When this hide-and-seek game failed, Salu walked away and the Reverend Father, Minkailu departed on the note that everything would soon be all right.

The probing continues with Rafilu always setting posers before Salu. A meeting is taking place at Salu's residence, in Elejigbo's palace. This shows the extent of the gangsters' callousness. Their meeting had hardly commenced when Rafilu, who was assumed to have been fast asleep burst in on them from where he had been eavesdropping. Rafilu was shocked at his findings and threatened to expose the bandits. By this, he bit off more than he could chew. He did not live to tell a tale of what he saw as he was stabbed and murdered in cold blood that horrible night, by one of the gangsters, Yunusa.

This was the first real death recorded, but which to the gangsters was assumed to be the second, the first being Setilu. This death could have been

prevented if Salu or Minkailu had brazen up to inform the law enforcement agents. In this regard, (by concealing this secret cum fact) they are both accomplices to murder, this is against the law. It is also morally wrong, but it is ethically justified by their profession though in diverse degrees; Minkailu is on the benevolent side, while Salu is malevolent.

Jubirilu is saddened by the death of his son, Rafilu even though he is still held in detention. He bore this in his lamentations before Minkailu (pp. 78-79), but all Minkailu could offer him was that everything should be left to God, the discernor of man's destiny.

Setilu is secretly brought from Ibadan to Ejigbo as he was recuperating. The wife, Saratu was over-excited to see her husband again. Jubirilu and Minkailu registered their joy with Setilu also. A little while after this reunion, Jubirilu resumes his lamentation. He is gripped with a mixed feeling and wishing his dead son, Rafilu could come back to life like Setilu (p. 82).

Police detectives Adegboye and Yesufu set to work by experimenting with a finger print detector powder on the items at the scene of crime. Having got wind of this device, the companions in crime, Yunusa, Ibrahimu and Salu rushed ahead of the detectives to wipe away the powder spread on the items. In the process, Salu is caught while the others escapes (p. 83). Salu refuses to mention the others since they could not be recognised in the dark. The two detectives are taken aback and the following dialogue ensued:

**Adegboye:** Hànín? Salu, iwọ wa ninu iru eyi? O ò si şàánu baba rẹ? Ó' pari !

**Yesufu:** Ẹnyin tal'ẹ jọ wà n'bẹ?

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**Salu:** Hää ! Hää ! Há ! E ɣa pa mi, ko ɣe i sɔ. (p. 84).

[**Adegboye:** Aha, Salu ! You're involved in this? You have no pity for your father? It is finished !

**Yesufu:** Who are the other bandits?

**Salu:** Ha! Ha! Ha! Just kill me, they can't be mentioned!]

Having shocked the detectives by his utterances, Salu was arrested and his father is intimated about the development. Jubirilu's condition is worsened by this sad news. However, it is good news to Minkailu who had been battling with his conscience since the day Salu made his confession before him. He is happy that Salu is caught in the act at last. Yet, Salu holds on to his stand not to mention the others. Minkalu's sigh of relieve could be seen in his utterances:

**Minkailu:** .....

Mo dupe, Eɣeda mo dupe.

Idamu aiye dopin, Ija tan

Mo dupe! Mo dupe! Mo dupe! ..... (p. 85).

[**Minkailu:** .....

I give thanks, to the creator I give thanks

The worries of the world is ended, fight is ended

I give thanks! I give thanks! I give thankssss.....

One may ask at this juncture, will Salu hold on to the end without mentioning the others? Shortly after this, the other culprits are arrested (p. 86). Yunusa and Ibrahim hold on to their innocence about the crime. This prompted

Yesufu to reveal to them that one of their gangsters (Salu) arrested is still living. The two rekindled their stand by requesting Salu be brought before them to testify in the case (p. 87). However, it was Salu's corpse that greeted them when he was invited from his confinement! To Yunusa and Ibrahim, there is no case to answer since the purported witness is no more.

One is taken aback by this development. Was Salu tortured to the point of confession before the detectives? Was Salu poisoned by his colleagues in crime in order to seal his lips against mentioning them? Did Salu die as a result of mentioning them and is hooked by the potency of the oath? The logical possibility seems to be that Salu must have been tortured to a state of coma. This must have jolted him into naming the nameless, (p. 87) while the potency of the oath binding them together must have paid him with death for his betrayal. Salu may have held on to the end if he had not been caught. But then, if Minkailu had given Salu up, would he not have confessed? Salu would have ended up the way he did if Minkailu had reported his confession to the police. This is so because of the potency of the oath (pp. 12-13). The only antidote to Salu's death is the concealment of the others. And if Minkailu had given Salu up earlier, he would have violated his professional ethics. Salu cringed at a point and died, while Minkailu held tenaciously on to his oath of office.

Meanwhile, Yunusa and Ibrahimu were happy and confident that the only witness that could nail them is no more. Infuriated by Salu's sudden and mysterious death, inspector Adegboye called in the last of the witnesses, Setilu

the supposedly dead Council Secretary! The two criminals, Yunusa and Ibrahimu did not expect this as Yunusa remarks:

**Yunusa:** Ha! Ibrahimu! nkan de o ! p. 89

[**Yunusa:** Ha! Ibrahim! There's trouble!]

The sight of Setilu confused the whole situation as only a few of them knew that he was not dead. Knowing full well that the end has come, Yunusa would not leave without an accompaniment. Thus, he jumped at Setilu and stabbed him in the chest before stabbing himself in the abdomen! After this, he shouted at Ibrahimu to do likewise before he passed on (p. 90).

Police inspector Adegboye was fast enough to grip Ibrahimu's hands thereby preventing him from stabbing himself to death. Already four preventable deaths have occurred. They are Rafilu, Salu, Yunusa and Setilu! One could attribute Yunusa and Setilu's deaths at this stage to negligence on the part of the police detectives. The suspects should have been frisked to rid them of any dangerous weapons.

The situation became pathetic as Saratu fainted at the instance of her husband's death. Salu's mother and father were in agonising pains, having lost two sons.

Physically, at this stage, only four deaths have been recorded. But the obvious is that many more deaths would follow. Ibrahimu is liable to be sentenced to death after conviction; Jubirilu and his wife are likely to die very soon owing to old age and the pains of the deaths of their sons and their state of childlessness; Saratu is likely to become insane; she could die shortly after

because of excessive worries. Thus, there are four other potential deaths to be recorded after the original four !

Who is to blame for all these woes? Minkailu could have been arrested and prosecuted if he had established that Salu confided in him, aside this, he would have betrayed Salu, and would have slackened his professional ethics and code of conduct as a Catholic priest who is God's agent, an arbiter between man and God. Will Minkailu's conscience be free henceforth, or will he continue to wallow in his own delemma? Will the police detectives take the blame for Yunusa and Setilu's deaths which were caused by their negligence?

## **CONCLUSION**

On the surface level or secularly, one is tempted to hold Rev. Fr. Minkailu as an accomplice to murder. He would be regarded as morally wrong to have harboured Salu's secret and this action would have been termed conspiracy in law. The law of the land has no protection for a criminal nor his accomplice. On this ground, Fr. Minkailu was morally wrong and is guilty of being an accomplice and accessory before the fact, and even after the fact as he never mentioned his knowledge of Salu's acts even after Salu was arrested; he even feigned ignorance when Salu's mother invited him to prevail on Salu to confess. If Minkailu had handed over Salu to the police, no death would have been recorded at all, only jail sentence would have been passed on the criminals.



On the religious sphere, it is difficult to apportion blame to Rev. Fr. Minkailu. He was God's representative before Salu, and thus, he couldn't have revealed Salu's secrets which were revealed between him and God to other mortal beings. That was why he procrastinated and even employed the prompting gimmicks on Salu to confess his sins publicly. The fear of breaking his oath of allegiance to God, drove Minkailu to the frenzy of holding on for so long for Salu to own up to his crime himself. Minkailu believed that he would shoulder the responsibility solely and suffer the repercussions alone if he gave up Salu. He would have failed his doctrine and creed of secrecy of confessions, and would have suffered the wrath of the Almighty! Therefore, Minkailu is blameless in this regard. Nobody, except Salu knew that Minkailu had the knowledge about the crime. Even at that, the knowledge came to light when Salu voluntarily confessed before him. If it were a situation whereby Salu was caught by Minkailu, it would have been easy for him to hand him over to the law-enforcement agents.

The individual criminal from Salu, Yunusa to Ibrahimu is to blame for the murders, while the police detectives are to blame specifically for Yunusa and Setilu's deaths, for their negligence and lapses in handling the criminals. These sequence of deaths qualify the text as a classical tragedy.

We may ask, is this good for our society? Does this permit growth or progress? Does it breed injustice and retardation in the society? Our responses depend on an individual's angle of perception of what morality, religion, law

and professional ethics are, in their different compartments, and what they are collectively.

## EPILOGUE:

Morality supersedes professional ethics in the traditional African society (devoid of foreign influence on our culture). There is no basis for being an accomplice to a series of murders where no death would have been recorded. Concrete instances abound where priests in the traditional African religion would even give up their wards in such situation to sanitise the society. In this guise professional ethics would give way for morality and would be forgiven when it clashes with morality, especially when it involves lives. In this wise, morality is relegated to the background by the recurrent actions of *Páádí Mínkáílù*.

Oath taking in profession, for an African, must not go against societal norms, as it is not personal. The actions of *Páádí Mínkáílù* here is a representation of foreign influence trying to recolonize us in an abridged imperialism. The foreigners take away our goods and tell us to look up to our rewards not here on earth but heavenwards. To them, this earth can be desecrated, since it is not our home, only heaven must be vigorously pursued for salvation. The human is alienated from his environment, only to gasp towards the celestial. Western religion cannot suggest growth and development. It thrives on double standard.

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