

**DISSIDENTS AND CONFORMISTS OF CAMPUS LAWS IN EGHOSA IMASUEN'S
*FINE BOYS***

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Abstract

The campus as a youthful space is ideationally tied to learning and social harmony. Most of the existing studies on campus narratives in African milieu have so far amplified morality, activism, social accord, and academic excellence as auspicious and utilitarian agents of socio-political growth. This study examines the less focused lawlessness on most African campuses often made manifest in the forms of cultism, verbal violations, and sexual predation. Jean Francois Lyotard's approach to Postmodernism and Charles Sanders Peirce's Triadic Semiotics were adopted as frameworks. While Lyotard's Postmodernism is used in this study to justify characters' scepticism towards the metanarratives of traditional order, Peirce's Triadic Semiotics accounts for their representamina which violate the law. Most of the characters create their own order that reeks of subversion. While Ewaen, Osaze, Odegua, Brenda, Eniye, and Ejiro are symbolic of the often silenced acquiescent microcosms of most campuses, Wilhelm, Tambo, TJ, Tommy, and Dr. Spirit are disingenuously precocious. The former group is determined to oppose every expression of victimhood and contravention. On the contrary, the latter get easily disillusioned and lost in the swing of their existential pendulum. As tension heightens as a result of inordinate delinquencies, Ewaen and his cohort opt for academic translocation. Imasuen foregrounds the complexities of the campus as a learning space and satirises defiant actions of characters so as to enthrone the rule of law.

Keywords: campus narratives, verbal violations, rule of law, contravention, delinquencies

Introduction

Most campus narratives, with Afrocentric topicalities and focus, privilege youthful exuberance, social identity, euphoria, and adventurousness. The imperatives of law from the perspective of wilful contravention are mainly embryonic in existing critiques. Studies such as Hunsu (2008), Kehinde (2008), Taiwo (2008), Oriaku (2010), Ejiofor and Kamalu (2011), Jegede (2011), Mikailu (2011), and Eruaga (2018) have discussed either reflections or refractions of morality, crime, espionage, and punishment with little attention given to representamina and attitudinal dispositions which bring about contravention of the law.

Ejiofor and Kamalu (2011) study how the egocentric microcosm of the centre in Wole Soyinka's *The Strong Breed* neglect the principles of human rights, and use religion as a tool of political coercion. This study which borders on postcolonial disillusionment exonerates the culpability of the vulnerable macrocosm. Oriaku (2010) studies the interaction between literature and human history but only connotes the values of historical jurisprudence responsible for crime. Jegede (2011) and Hunsu (2008) examine the dangers of patriarchal hegemony. They use literature to interrogate gender-based and human rights-based discourses that unfortunately do not reflect the roles women play in projecting criminality and abusive patriarchy. Taiwo (2008) interrogates human vindictiveness and criminal behaviour towards the environment from the sociological and moral perspectives undermining the legal underpinnings implied in his investigations – the relationship between environmental laws and the exploration of natural resources. Kehinde (2008) examines the effects of migration and exile on the psychological domains of migrants in Segun Afolabi's collection of short stories: *A Life Elsewhere* but fails to depict their culpability in the bastardisation of the legal order that hitherto protects their dignity. Mikailu (2011) interrogates the destruction of personal goals on the altar of societal laws and foregrounds New Subjectivity as an ideological voice in characterisation. In downplaying the significance of law in the lives of characters, he makes them culpable dissidents. Eruaga (2018) observes that characters' predisposition to crime comes mainly from the tyranny of political leadership. In blaming the preponderance of culpability on unhealthy leadership behaviour, Eruaga exculpates character-culprits and transfers their culpability to leadership irresponsibility. In exonerating character-culprits of culpability and responsibility for individual misdemeanour, she makes them appear as victims of existential viciousness and inequalities in societies governed by bad

leaders. In all these and just like in most studies, critical attention focuses on morality, criminal behaviour, culpability and punishment.

Hence, foregrounding the law in African literary experience presupposes a repositioning and restructuring that is designed to make way for a better global visibility, effective local utility and topical reach. Corroborating this, Kehinde (2008:334) opines that, “it is assumed that literary texts are a valuable locus for studying the interplay of arts and politics.” Using Nigeria as a reference from the African macrocosm, he goes further to say that “Nigerian writers have always found the informing vision of their creativity bound by the socio-political experiences of the nation, which their works both reflect and refract” (Kehinde, 2008:334). Hence, literature becomes a utilitarian affordance for the writer who craves to be a positive change agent.

Law and Literature is a critical focus on the nexus of two behavioural fields (literature and law) having a common character – social change and honour. When this end is compromised, the law is said to be contravened and that contravention is cautioned in literature in the form of satire. The contravention of law is one key existential vortex that is sweeping the developmental potentials of the African continent. Most of the leaders in Africa lack democratic culture and ideology; hence, the impunity with which they govern and manage the affairs of their people. Laws, albeit with some flaws, are there to regulate the moral temperature of the society, checkmate leaders and policy makers. Sadly, this microcosm, leaders and policy makers, hardly obey the laws they make for themselves and on behalf of the people. This attitude of impunity, political and economic subjugation has therefore resulted in postcolonial disillusionment for most Africans, campus students inclusive. In order to get political and economic meanings in this dilemma, many campus students turn out to be victims of vulnerability of all kinds, both within and outside the university environment.

Unblurring law in African literature will then mean a pragmatic repositioning and refocusing of the ideological foundations of the political, economic, religious, social and educational systems in Africa through the instrumentality of literature. To achieve this task, writers have a major role to play in talking about the destructive effects of corruption and impunity which are both simply summed up as the contravention of law in their creative writings – a more accessible and cost-effective medium of communication for the average African.

Of Law and the Campus: Delinquent Words and Deviant Actions

Basking in the euphoria of the success recorded by his debut novel, *To St. Patrick*, Imasuen writes yet another intriguing and spectacular novel, *Fine Boys*. It is a story premised on a familiar experience: the adventurousness and exuberance of the juveniles in the Nigeria of the 1990s. It tells the story of a society that has nurtured all forms of decadence, ranging from armed robbery to cultism, molestation, bullying, thuggery, poor government policies, unfriendly educational systems, domestic violence, poor-parenting and the like. Most of the criminal motifs listed above can only be imagined as representamina and justified as special acts of social terrorism. Sharing this thought, Elegido (2010) observes that:

Granted that force is often necessary for it to be possible to inflict punishment, the question we will address in this note is whether that punishment is rationally justified rather than a mere exercise of brute force. In other words, we must try to discover whether there is any difference between the State which jails or kills a criminal, and the bully who terrorizes those who are weaker than him (212).

The State inflicts pain either in the form of incarceration or death after an empirical process of reason and rationality but same assertion cannot be made of the cultic and sometimes occult organizations mostly found in Nigerian universities who engage in acts of terrorism and bullying in order to lure new members, secure obedience from them and punish perceived offenders. They often kill needlessly, provocatively and viciously. As a quintessence of legal experiment, the novel presents the reader with legal cases which go beyond imaginings to portray pertinent aspects of the criminal law. Beyond its growth and maturity concerns as an exemplar of the Bildungsroman and literary autobiography, *Fine*

Boys explores those criminal acts which are often carried out by students of most Nigerian universities. Such criminal acts and activities usually result in the psychological disorientation of victims and sometimes their demise. In being so audacious and rash in their attitude, these cruel elements terrorise defenceless students who fall into their traps. They have no respect and regard for the criminal provisions of the law, hence, their predilection for violent acts – criminal interpretants in the parlance of criminal law.

Ewaen, the protagonist, having completed his secondary education, relishes the prospects of gaining admission into the university. He says, “I was awaiting my matriculation exam results, hoping to make it into the University of Benin to study Medicine” (6). The University of Benin which shall consequently be called Uniben in this essay becomes the veritable setting for most of the conflicts that are apparent in the novel. The narrator also introduces the reader to Wilhelm in a rather paradoxical manner. He calls him: “One-half of my crew of best friends” (9).

The narrator introduces the reader to Brenda, a very good friend of Ewaen who has come to enjoy the moniker, “girl-best friend” (31). Talking about their closeness, Ewaen informs the reader that she is, “the daughter of one of my father’s competitors, we had become friends when we escorted our fathers to the Warri Chamber of Commerce Meeting that each hosted” (30). Being in the know about the cult activities in Uniben, she advises her male-friends, Ewaen, Willy and Harry not to join any of the cult groups. She asks Harry: “I hope you haven’t joined confra?” (32). And swiftly, he answers: “of course not” (32). She goes further to admonish Ewaen and Wilhelm: “Ewaen. Willy. Make una no join confra o” (32). As though her initial admonition fails, she reiterates: “Ewaen, won’t you answer? Make una no join confra o” (33). And to her persistence and astute concern, Ewaen replies: “I hear, Brenda.” Repetition is used to underscore the seriousness and importance of her advice. Ewaen is worried about the audacious move made by the confra boys to get him initiated

because he is a Warri boy. The iconoclastic elements want him to contravene the law by doing that which the law abhors.

Having visited Brenda on one occasion, as he makes for his hostel, Hall 3, Ewaen finds something eerie displayed on the noticeboard: “It listed five students rusticated and three others expelled for cultism, that is, for belonging to the banned confraternities” (38). The affected students know the implications of belonging to such a banned organisation but they will rather choose to disobey the school’s law and that of the country by adamantly joining the confraternities. For them, obeying the law is no objective truth. On getting to his room, Ewaen discovers that his “roommates stood around the door with some students from the neighbouring rooms” (38). He notices that their things are in disarray. His lantern is cooling outside and in an accumulated fury, he asks: “Who threw my lantern outside?” (38). Sensing the paranoia and indignation that is engulfing him, Ejiro quickly intervenes with his persuasion: “Ewaen, cool down. We were robbed” (39). With that information, he is alarmed. The narrator explains what Ejiro tells him:

When I left them at the car park he, Tambo, Odegua and KO strolled back to the room. KO and Tambo left for Dreams to try and con someone into buying them drinks. Ejiro, Odegua and some of the guys in the room settled down to a small card game of Whot when they heard a voice from the door saying, “last card, check up!” thinking it was one of the joker from the next door, they were shocked when the chap came into the dim light of the lantern wearing an *adire* cloth mask that covered his nose and mouth and flashing a gun (39).

It is appalling to know that some university students will have the guts to possess and use a gun. It is against the law for a Nigerian citizen that is not a security agent to possess any lethal instrument like a gun – a criminal representamen. Theirs is the case of illegal possession of arms because they are not authorised by law to possess a gun. They go further in their criminal acts to use the illegal and lethal instrument to kill their victims. They commit “criminal damage,” an illegal act which the *Oxford Dictionary of Law* defines as:

The offence of intentionally or recklessly destroying or damaging any property belonging to another without a lawful excuse. It is punishable by up to ten years' imprisonment. There is also an aggravated offence, punishable by a maximum sentence of life imprisonment, of damaging property (even one's own) in such a way as to endanger someone's life, either intentionally or recklessly. Related offences are those of threatening to destroy or damage property and of possessing anything with the intention of destroying or damaging property with it (140-141).

In negligence to the law of criminal damage and in pursuance of their criminal intent, the delinquent boys bully, injure and dispossess their victims of their belongings:

Two of these similarly clad goons followed the first one into the room, over the next ten minutes or so, they were told to empty their pockets, their bags and their closets. Stupid Odegua had his head broken after he struggled with one of the robbers over a small parcel found in his bag. When the polythene-wrapped parcel tore in their hands, everyone was shocked to see that it contained cash (40).

They steal violently and inflict grievous bodily injury on Odegua, one of their victims, over a valuable that is rightly and legally his. It is paradoxical for Odegua to have his head broken by armed robbers because of some material possessions. By delighting in criminality, these perverse students make themselves enemies of the law. Ewaen laments that "My radio, my iron, Tambo's cassette tape collection, our shoes and mugs, everything of value was either with the thieves or lay in pieces on the floor" (40). This shows the magnitude of damage that is done to the boys by their heartless colleagues. Ironically, the callous boys belong to a cult and Tambo who comes back to behold the atmosphere of gloom advises the boys to take their case to TJ, as renowned cultist from a rival faction. The advice does not go down well with Ejiro who exclaims sarcastically: "you dey crase? You want us to mix up with confra boys because our things are stolen" (41). And Ewaen corroborates Ejiro's fears: "That's like jumping from the frying pan into the fire" (41). Imasuen teaches that forces of evil often clash viciously as a result of certain interests. In the end, Ewaen and his friends are in doubts:

There were still doubts: did he really not know about the theft? Did the Cosa Nostra steal our things? Oliver Tambo said no, that it was really Black Axe boys who robbed us. It seemed it was a scam they played. Take the things, put the words out that you had them and then wait for any protectors the victims had to intervene and buy them

back. The Cosa Nostra did not rob us. They just knew who did. It seemed as though he was speaking the truth. I believed him (58).

The boys' quandary is seen in the rhetorical questions posed by the narrator. Apart from their use of coercion, the cult boys also employ other gimmicks to get innocent students to join them. Willy who is gradually becoming a victim of the deadly group invites Ewaen to a party which oblivious to him is designed for the purpose of recruitment into the cult. On their way to the party, they meet Tambo who breaks the secret: "Ewaen, na injun's groove be that" (119). He clarifies firmly: "Confra party. Ewaen, that was a mafia recruitment party" (119). The group of bad boys know that their actions and associations are illegal; hence, their stealthy operations. They are tenacious about gratifying the selfish desires of their id to the detriment of the law – their superego. They know their actions are criminal but are willing to keep rebelling.

Keeping true to their defiant and illegal behaviour, the '*injun*' confra – a criminal representamen – has seized Willy and some other boys. They force them into the initiation process. Willy "had tried to leave, one tall, black guy blocked him. When he had tried to push his way through, they had started fighting" (127). They are not just after the subversion of the law alone but also the disorientation of her subjects. They want to establish their own postmodernist order different in style and function from the conventional law. Ewaen laments and regrets his friend's surrender to the illegal forces: "How could you do this? After everything we talked about, after all we promised ourselves?" (160). To Ewaen's shock, Willy replies: "What did you expect, Ewaen?" (16). Willy's weakness is visible. He continues: "I did what I had to do. In the Black Axe, I have a relative. And they are not pretentious sissies who prance about in movie clothes and speak funny. Ewaen, these are real guys, real and hard bastards, who would die for a friend" (160). It is hyperbolic for Willy to call the bad boys real guys "...who would die for a friend." Willy talks like this because he

has been initiated in the cult. This time, Ewaen pities his friend's obvious fate. He laments, 'I looked at my Oyibo friend speak good English. My Oyibo friend who always said I was the first to spoil him. I watched him defend confra. God forbid bad thing' (161).

Imasuen states through his characters that in most societies, anti-law agents do not merely end at being iconoclastic; they go as far as recruiting law abiding citizens into their camp. However, the law has a way of getting perverse citizens into its dragnet. Once again, another list of students who have been expelled from *Uniben* comes out and this time around, TJ, the chameleon, gets affected. As the narrator informs Ejiro about the unfortunate news, he confirms TJ's fondness for illegality by indicting one of his right hand guys, Tommy. He says: "my problem is with that Tommy guy. The guy threatened me last semester. Shebi, I told you about his pulling my shirt at the Blackky show?" (188). Dismissing Ejiro's supremacist assumption that he, Ewaen, cannot be harassed to join confra, Ewean asserts: "who tell you? And no be everything I tell you. Towards the end of exams, he saw me and asked if I was aware that TJ would not be in school for ever. Ejiro, I no like the boy at all" (188).

The motif of criminality which often revolves around the philosophy of criminal damage continues to create that consciousness in the reader of the rot that has pervaded the Nigerian youths and the university system. The writer wants not just the popular readers alone but also the peculiar readers, the government and her sister agencies saddled with the responsibility of maintaining law and order, to wake up to the clarion call.

Imasuen equally points accusing fingers at the police whose responsibility it is to maintain law and order but have jettisoned that noble duty for lawlessness. In being lawless, they violate the law. He casts aspersion on the overzealousness of the police which often results in extra-judicial killings, battery and assaults. The students have been ordered out of the hostels

following the shutdown of the school but when the deadline given for their vacation elapses, the unprofessional police go into the students' hostels especially the zone carved out for the medical students who are often given special concession in such situations because of the sensitive and peculiar nature of their study and beat them mercilessly. They savagely rape some of the female students in their block. The narrator describes the horrific incident as he is told by one of the medical students:

All of them. They came in around eight. There was no warning. **They just rush in, beating and screaming. See my back.** He turned and pulled up his shirt. **There were purple lines crisscrossing his back.** One of them had split open and leaked clear fluid, which was drying, caked and moist. **His voice shoot with anger, "Ewaen. They raped many girls.** They entered the girls' half of the hostel, and we heard the screams. I'm just coming from UBTH. We took some of the more serious victims there (255).

It is metaphorical for the narrator to describe the medical student talking with so much anger about the ugly fate that befalls them that day with the representamen, "shoot". His anger as seen in his verbal expression can only be compared to the shooting of a gun. It shows sadness. Imasuen uses this scenario to condemn the unprofessional attitude and approach of the Nigerian police to civil unrest. The primary responsibility of the police is to protect lives and property. It is then an anathema to see the Nigerian police brutalising the masses/citizens especially when other professional approaches to the control of civil unrest or demeanour have not been completely exhausted. Expressing an extended interpretant, the writer indirectly indicts them of paranoia, a clinical and psychological condition which justifies their often rash behaviour and attitude to civil matters. This picture is particularly worrisome when one considers the fact that the victims involved here are students, university students for that matter.

In another scene, the writer foregrounds yet another worrisome legal matter. Eniye, Ewaen's sister, has made an awful attempt to take her own life. She beholds yet another fight between

her parents, a ritual that happens every now and then. Ewaen's dad tries to break the sour silence between him and his wife after catching his daughter in the act: "Omasan, please open the door. Eniye just tried to kill herself" (279). In the typical poise of a mother; she breaks the silence and hurries out for her daughter. The narrator describes:

Mom ran into the room, guilt and worry on her face. She pulled Eniye up: they were now the same height. Eniye's chest was beginning to rival mom's. They looked like negatives of each other; the same height, the same build, bow legs and all, but mom light – complexioned and Eniye dark like our father. She hugged her. "I'm sorry," mom said over and over again (280).

The use of simile in the phrase, "Eniye dark like our father." shows physiognomic contrast. Imasuen argues that our actions and inactions are capable of leading others into temptation; the temptation of doing unlawful and illegal things. The poor Eniye is bugged psychologically and she seems to have come to the cross-road; that point where a dramatic decision is needed. The shock Eniye's action brings to the family is palpable. For the narrator:

This was all a big misunderstanding, I suspected, suicide. Eniye? How? I looked from Osaze to Eniye, who was trying hard to breathe because of mom's tight embrace. Dad stood at the door. He walked to his wife and daughter and patted their shoulders. He told them to sit down, that he wanted to say something (280).

It is ironical that Eniye's parents need such an ugly experience to behave maturely as seen by the sudden truce that follows the suicidal attempt. As the tensed atmosphere calms, daddy scolds Eniye for contemplating suicide but she denies it. Whatever be the case, Eniye's action must have been unusual and weird for it to be mistaken for suicide. The suicide theory is possible considering her firm acceptance of her mother's expression of guilt. She has not also given any of her family members a prior notice or hint of illness as she claims hence, her culpability. However, the bigger blame goes to the presumptuous parents who forget that their domestic fights and quarrels have a lot of negative psychological impacts on their

children. As parents, they are culpable because the Oxford Dictionary of Law defines suicide as “The act of killing oneself intentionally. Since 1961 suicide itself is not a crime, but there is special statutory crime (punishable by up to 14 years’ imprisonment) of aiding, abetting, counselling, or procuring a suicide” (520).

Since the wrath of the law tilts more towards the factors responsible for an attempted or successful suicide, those factors need to be cautioned. In this instance, Eniye’s parents’ constant quarrels are responsible for her unsuccessful weird action. This, then, makes them not just culpable and liable alone but also enemies of the law. The writer teaches, therefore, that our actions and inactions should be sane and gracious in such a way that it is capable of fostering peace, unity, law and order in the society.

Wilhelm’s girlfriend, Weyinmi, loses her uncle to the wrath of some assassins. The narrator describes how Weyinmi’s uncle is killed:

The note said that Weyinmi was okay. The chief’s family had been bundled into a luggage room downstairs while the assassins, led by a man who, according to Weyinmi, spoke perfect Itsekiri, had gone upstairs and shot the chief twice, once in the head and once in the chest (298).

The provisions of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended guarantees the right of every citizen of Nigeria to life. Section 33, sub-section (1) states that:

Every person has a right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life, save in execution of the sentence of a court in respect of the criminal offence of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria (34).

The assassins fault the provisions of the constitution on citizens’ right to life. Going forward, they equally subject their victims to physical and psychological torture by forcing them into a phobic condition. The narrator describes the psychological state of Weyinmi and others at that material time:

She said they had remained locked in the room for more than two hours before another visitor had come and heard their cries. They had been taken to the police station some days later to look at the line-up of suspects whom the police said had confessed. She

said her cousin, the chief's first son, had to shout before the family had been allowed to leave the station (298).

This experience is awful as the constitution also guarantees the "right to dignity of human person." Section 34, sub-section (1) states that:

- a. no person shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment;
- b. no person shall be held in slavery or servitude;
and
- c. no person shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour (34).

The criminal action of the assassins brings about a temporary quandary for their victims; a horrific and traumatic experience. The killers are simply located in the id where selfishness and irrationality reside.

Tommy who is a known member of the confra cult lures Osaze to join their caucus but he refuses. Tommy's disrespect and disregard for the law is so audacious. He knows the group is illegal and criminal but he prefers to breach the law by recruiting and cajoling law abiding students to join his perverse camp. Ewaen is happy with the response his brother gives to Tommy when he tries to cajole him into the confra:

I spoke to Osaze about fraternizing with Tommy and was not disappointed with my brother's reply. He was smart. He knew that Tommy was full of shit. Tommy has been toasting him to join confra, but he has refused outright, citing the excuse that Ejiro and I used in year one: our father would kill him if he did (309).

Ewaen's brother represents the insignificant number of good Nigerians who will do everything within their power to remain honourable and law abiding in the face of corruption. Hence, Imasuen suggests that hope is not totally lost because as unlawful factors try hard to push people into rebellion, a few others are ready to stick out tenaciously for the honourable path.

The writer depicts human beings as capricious, fraudulent and criminal-minded. People often appear as friends to us but more often than not, we end up discovering the vicious beasts in

them. Mesiri loses an amount of money and his friends are not taking the matter lightly. Mesiri knows it is a theft. He affirms strongly: “I sure say na here I keep the money. Look, see the water proof now. They tore it” (309). As the search for the stolen money begins, the would-be culprit pretends ignorance and innocence:

Tambo was very energetic about it. He led the investigation, remembering who had last entered Mesiri’s room-me, and I almost fought with him when he said it- and remembering who, suspiciously, was not drunk enough after last night’s binge: that was Wilhelm, who was now the best at holding his liquor, although Tambo was not brave enough to suggest that Wilhelm might have stolen the money (310).

Tambo’s pretended innocence is deceitful and ironical. He takes the boys to a juju man as they have decided to find the thief by all means. The first name, “Dr. Spirit” (314) did not resonate well to the friends, hence the need for another juju man. They have sensed fraud in Dr. Spirit’s operations. Tuoyo gives the first alert: “No, Tambo, this guy dey talk nonsense”(p.317). And Wilhelm candidly concurs: “I was afraid you guys were believing the fraud.” (317) Tuoyo’s suspicion re-echoes the vigilance which the writer believes should be a psychological disposition in moments like this. Tuoyo affirms his alertness: “I don’t trust this Dr. Spirit’s system. That other man’s own was out in the open. He drew the leaves in front of everyone and had a list of names. He did not bamboozle us with all this shouting and throwing about the dog food” (317).

When fraud is identified anywhere, vigilance and intelligence are the watch words. They go to Okoronkwo, a supposed stronger juju man, who does a more credible job. After all the oracle consultations and protocols involving each of the candidates before him, the thief is known. He tells the boys: “Well, my son, you know who the thief is. It is this Tambo. This Clement. You can wait outside now. I want to speak to him” (321). Tambo is indeed awful. It is ironical that he, Tambo who is the real culprit behaves more innocently and concernedly during the search. Ordinarily, no one will ever believe that he is the guilty person. He quickly suggests Dr Spirit as if he were ignorant of the theft. He violates the provisions of the

criminal law and still pretends innocence by forcing his colleagues through the traumatic process of extreme action. He exemplifies a hardened criminal.

The writer paints yet another picture of criminal damage. Having a premonition of its possible outcome; Ewaen and Tuoyo turn down an invitation by Brenda which is designed for doom. She hopes they will be present at Harry's sister, Phoebe's party holding at Ekosodin. Expectedly, Tambo attends the party and narrowly escapes death bringing back news of horror to the friends. It is obvious to all that the chips are down as the two main rival cults; Black Axe and Cosa Nostra are at war. Wilhelm becomes the victim of criminal damage as he gets stabbed to death. With the demise of Wilhelm, things will never be the same again. The ineptitude of the Nigerian police is once again portrayed with their search and investigation which ends in futility. The friends who are invited for interrogation are released after initial criminal harassment. Osaze and Ewaen will leave the country to complete their studies in the United Kingdom as their father now considers Uniben a danger zone. Lorenchi is not spared in the cult war, he equally falls a victim of death.

Every time people decide to abandon laws made to protect their shared interests, the result is always disastrous. A number of criminal damage incidents are evident in the novel as a result of the postmodernist desire of the characters to satisfy their selfish interests. This iconoclastic belief is corroborated by a firm conviction by some characters that the law does not constitute a system of objective truth. In their postmodernist poise, they see the law as a hegemonic factor emanating from the legacies of the colonial masters. This perception influences their rebellious desire to rewrite the legal script positively or negatively. This rebellious desire is positive when there is a shared system of understanding aimed at addressing an instance of injustice and negative when there is a deliberate effort by the law to deconstruct their new views and ideologies.

Conclusion

This study has established that contravention of the law on university campuses in most African countries draws its energy directly from the systemic rot that is entrenched within the elitist oligarchy. From that depraved zenith, subversive behaviour trickles down to the many existential layers of the society including the university campus. Imasuen uses his novel to create awareness about the endemic value-breakdown that has been emboldened on university campuses. Students who should see the university as a place for learning and positive social relations have become objects of viciousness and unlawful behaviour. Consequently, *Fine Boys* can be seen as a social satire designed to further the need for societal harmony and behavioural change set on the path of the rule of law.

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