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The Journal of Communicative English is the official Journal of The English Language Unit, Department of Educational Foundations and General Studies, University of Agriculture, Makurdi. The unit administers the departmental undergraduate and post-graduate degree programmes in English Language Education. The journal therefore seeks to promote the teaching and learning of English Language. It accepts contributions in all areas of English Language but shows preference for articles that seek to promote the teaching and learning of English language. Articles in linguistics and literature are also accepted. The journal is published in volumes every year in March, June, September and December. The deadline for the submission of articles for March is February, May for June, August for September issue and November for December edition.

Note to Contributors

Articles should be sent to the editor through this e-mail address: ochigboaadaje@gmail.com. Publishable articles, after preliminary editorial review, are sent to experts for assessment and comment. Assessed articles are returned to the contributors through their e-mails for correction of proofs. Referencing is MLA style. All articles should have abstracts appended with keywords. The editor can be accessed through this mobile phone number 08065901012.

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Abstract

Since ancient times, creative writers have been the agents of the advocacy and correction of many societal ills, insecurity inclusive. This is because literature, whether prose, poetry or play, are regarded as the representations of the realities in the society. It is an important means of understanding and interpreting aspects of human society such as culture, politics, and religions among others. In this paper, we present an overview of the roles of the Nigerian creative writers to National security and development. In view of the importance of translation in a multilingual society like Nigeria and for cross-border communication, excerpts from the English translation of one of the novels of Daniel Olorunfemi Fágúnwà, *IgbóOlódùmarè* serve as data for the study. This paper therefore discusses the relevance of the select work to the exigencies of the contemporary Nigeria security situation. It demonstrates that happenings in Fágúnwà's novels are representations of real situation, especially, *IgbóOlódùmarè* (1949) translated as *The Forest of God* by Gabriel Àjàdí in 1984 (published in 1995; and revised in 2005); and also translated as *In the Forest of Olódùmarè* by Wọlé Soyinka in 2010). The story line, as the representation of real life situation and the solutions proffered in the text are useful in the handling of the security situation in Nigeria. The study likened the criminality and insecurity in contemporary Nigeria with that portrayed in Fágúnwà's novel and offers the ways the traditional society stemmed the tide as examples to be used and even improved on to abate crime and insecurity in Ilorin metropolis in particular and Nigeria as a whole. The study concluded that if these literary works are made compulsory in schools, students and readers of the texts would imbibe the right thinking and world-view.

Key words: Development, Security, Translation, Creative Writing.

Introduction

In today's challenging times, 'conflict' and invariably, insecurity, has become a prominent issue in countries where people are from very different cultures. Lack of peace and security in any nation is closely connected with its socio-political and economic structure. According to Owolabi, (2003, p.23), "the history of Western civilization is war-ridden". To state the obvious, the changes we experience in our country today, is the price that we pay for over celebration of the Western civilization.

Every society across the globe has its peculiar problems. Nigeria is not an exception. As a developing country, she faces her own share of social, political, economic and cultural problems which has affected the well-being of the populace. One of such problems bedeviling the country is the rising wave of crime (Adebayo, 2013). There is, however, no society that is totally free of crime and criminality but the degree and dimension of its occurrence vary from one society to the other and this also depends on the mechanisms put in place to manage or control the trend and incidence.

In Nigeria for instance, all daily newspapers devote a significant proportion of columns to reports of murder and theft. The announcement concerning murder, rape, burglary and stolen vehicles among others are daily features on the news and national dailies. Such incidences pose a great threat to lives and property in the country. A situation such as this is not peculiar to a particular socio-economic or cultural group; both the rich and the poor suffer the same fate and the whole society appears helpless in the face of crime (Agboola 2004; Alemika and Chukwuma 2005; Sanni et al, 2010).

The question is why is it so? What are the causes and consequences of the present situation on the development of the nation? Which way forward? This paper seeks to provide answers to these questions from the perspectives of the literary heritage of the country as creatively presented by Fagunwa in particular. The study is descriptive in nature as it cites examples from the text under study.

This paper highlights how D. O. Fagunwa used language in his *IgbóOlódùmarè* to handle potentially difficult conflictive situations and relate the illusions in his literary text to reality. In the paper, creative writing or literature with literature hence both refer to the same concept. Creative writing or literature is described as, "imaginative writing, using a particular genre to express or convey an idea" (Ojaide, 2005, p.2; Usoro, 2009, p. 160). Poetry, fiction, non-fiction in the form of memoir/biography, and drama are typical examples of creative writing.

In view of the importance of translation in cross-border communication in multilingual and multicultural societies, excerpts for the analysis are collected from the English translations of the select work. Translation is an important medium of international communication and a means of rapprochement between and among nations of the world (Adédímèjì&Àyúbà, 2012, p.235). It serves as bridge between nations worldwide (Fraihat&TengkuMahadi, 2011, p.1) and across cultures in multilingual and multicultural societies like Nigeria (Oláoyè, 2005).

The structure of the paper is in four sections. Section 1 introduces the major issues and provides the conceptual clarifications of keywords in the paper. Section 2 is an overview of the roles of the Nigerian creative writers. Section 3 discusses the relevance of Daniel Olorufemi Fagunwa's *Igbó Olódùmarè* to the exigencies of the contemporary Nigeria security situation. The examples were drawn from the English translations of the work. Section 4 states the conclusion of the study and discusses effective pathways to impact the optimal channels for communicating findings to beneficiaries.

The Concept of Crime

Crime is like other concepts, which have no generally accepted definition. Generally, it seems easy to define crime as doing something wrong or relating crime to immorality. In a legal sense, crime is the breaking of rules or laws for which some governing authority can ultimately prescribe a conviction. Crime in the social and legal framework is the set of facts or assumptions that are part of a case in which there were committed acts punishable under criminal law, and the application of which depends on the agent of a sentence or security measure criminal.

In the Oxford Dictionary of Sociology (2009, p.139) "a crime is held to be an offense, which goes beyond the personal and into the public sphere, breaking prohibitory rules or laws, to which legitimate punishments or sanctions are attached, and which requires the intervention of a public authority. Crime can also be defined as a deviant behaviour that violates prevailing norms – cultural standards prescribing how human beings ought to behave normally.

Dambazau (1994) defines crime as "an act or omission against public interest, and which is prescribed by law enacted by the legislature in the overall interests of the society, and to which prescribed punishment is attached in the event of

violation and it involves four major principles which are public wrong, moral wrong, law and punishment for the criminal. Crime is also seen as a violation of the rules agreed to be respected by all members of the society, and upon which the rest members of the society mete sanction upon those guilty of the violation.

In essence, crime undermines the social fabric by eroding the sense of safety and security. It impacts on society in a variety of ways according to the nature and extent of crime committed. It constitutes a problem when its incidence is rampant in the society as to constitute a threat to the security of persons and property, as well as social order and solidarity (Onoge, 1988).

The Concept of Insecurity

Security, according to Combley et al, (2007, p.1342), is simply defined as "safety from attack, harm, or damage". It could be tight or lax. Thus, a country with tight security gives its citizens a feeling of confidence and safety. To state the obvious from the viewpoint of the foregoing definition, Nigeria is at present in a state of insecurity. Insecurity therefore connotes different meanings such as absence of safety; danger; hazard; uncertainty; and lack of protection. According to Beland (2005), insecurity is a state of fear of anxiety due to the absence or lack of protection and lack of safety. While Achumba et al (2013) define insecurity from two perspectives; firstly, insecurity as the state of being open or subject to danger or threat of danger where danger is the condition of being susceptible to harm or injury. Insecurity is also defined by Igbuzor (2011) as the presence of threat to peace and security, instability and lack of national cohesion and wanton killings of people and destruction of properties.

Insecurity is also regarded as the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is a vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some misfortune. These definitions of insecurity underscore a major point that those affected by insecurity are not only uncertain or unaware of what would happen the next hour because of attacks. This insecurity can be in form of armed robbery, religious riots, political upheavals and crises, ritual killings, abductions, kidnapping, militancy, and terrorism. And it has taken the dimension of the bombing, beheading, slaughtering, gun shootings, chemical attacks and setting houses on fire. All these are great threats to lives and properties.

The relevance of Fágúnwà's Igbo Olodumare to contemporary Nigerian security situation

Daniel Olorunfemi Fágúnwà, better known as D. O. Fágúnwà, is a Nigerian creative writer who is very well known in southwestern Nigeria. He is the pioneer of Yorùbá written literature. Fágúnwà was a schoolmaster nearly all his adult life and a devout Christian as well. The didacticism that informs both African oral tales and Christian allegories suits Fágúnwà's purpose perfectly, for he views storytelling as an opportunity to teach moral lessons to his readers, especially the young.

Fágúnwà's literary excellence has endeared many readers as well as scholars to his works and "in spite of modern criticisms of Fágúnwà's novels as 'mere fantasies', many people continue to read them with delight" (Ajadi, 2005, p.5). This is why Bamgbose (1973, p.1) describes Fágúnwà as:

... a pioneer in the field of creative writing in Yorùbá. Before him, no other writer has had the same impact on the Yoruba literary scene, nor the same influence on subsequent writers. The appearance of his novel, ÒgbójúỌdẹnínúIgbóIrúnmalẹ makes an important stage in the development of Yorùbá written language.

Bámgbósé brought out clearly what is traditional in terms of what is distinctively Yorùbá in Fágúnwà's works. For instance, the setting of Fágúnwà's novels, he maintains, 'is Yorùbá country and culture' and the culture is really not "static", but "dynamic". He also identified Fágúnwà's sources as: "(a) Yoruba folktales, (b) literary works in English including translations, which must have formed part of the background of educated Nigerians of Fágúnwà's time, and (c) Christian religious literature. All these make Fágúnwà's works to be relevant in the handling of the present situation in the society he re-presented in his works and gave him an edge. These qualities inform the choice of his work for the present study.

The relevance of D.O. Fágúnwà writings to contemporary issues in the society have been responsible for his popularity among many readers till date and many scholars have appreciated his works. The zeal to extend the readership of these works to non-Yorùbá readers for education and entertainment inform the translations.

Although his writings are fictional, D.O. Fágúnwà reflects the culture and beliefs of the Yorùbá people in several ways including values they cherish and vices they condemn. This extends to other ethnic groups in Nigeria. He was well-known for conscious efforts to impart morals and the works have addressed several themes including the need for security in the society. A look at the story-line in *IgbóOlódùmarè* will confirm our claims on the relevance of Fágúnwà's works to the exigencies of the security situation in Nigeria.

IgbóOlódùmarè (translated *The Forest of God* by Gabriel Àjàdí in 1984 but published in 1995 and revised 2005; and *In the Forest of Olódùmarè* by Wole Soyinka in 2010) is a novel about the story of Olówó-ayé's adventure in the Forest of God. Olówó-ayé sets out to *IgbóOlódùmarè* (*The Forest of God*) out of sheer love for adventure and the quest for an opportunity to prove himself as a brave and courageous hunter undaunted by the awe of the unknown - a characteristic of the traditional Yorùbá hunter.

Fágúnwà in his characteristic vividness of imagination, artistic prowess, dazzling language, and a compelling descriptive skill, projects events and episodes around Olówó-ayé as he moves along on his journey to, in, and from *IgbóOlódùmarè*. The events and the episodes are those of Olówó-ayé's struggle with the trolls, gnomes, weird creatures: and his visits to the sage, (Mr.) Death, and Miss Disease. After this experience-packed sojourn in the Forest of God, he finally returns home to join his family, and to rejoice at the sight of his son, Àkàrà-Ògùn, who is now grown.

The question is what relationship has the novel to the present situation in Nigeria, especially in terms of security. The answer is obvious. As pointed out earlier, writers create the illusion of realities in their works and this is just what we found in Fágúnwà's writings. Episodes in the novel that offers security models for the Nigerian situation abound. For example the strict security measures put in place at the entrance of *IgbóOlódùmarè* whereby Olówó-ayé has to be seriously scrutinized by Èṣù-kékeré-òde, Ànjònnú-ìbèrù and Oníbodé *IgbóOlódùmarè* is desirable if Nigeria truly must be secure. At present Nigerian borders are so porous. There is therefore a need to address this situation in order to reflect what obtains at the borders of *IgbóOlódùmarè* that set certain procedures for whoever enters it.

Similarly, in the Forest, all machineries are put in place to ensure that no harm is caused to the inhabitants-animals and spirits. An interesting example the narration below:

Şùgbonàwonolopàáwonnitigbaohunijawagbogbonighati a ti de
ibenwonsitiko won siinuileisuraOjola-ibinubeeniopolopoawonejoni n̄
sóileisuranaa (Fágúnwà, o.i. 149)

But those police have taken all our weapons since we had arrived
there, and they had put them in the treasury of *Ojola-ibinu* and there
were many snakes guarding the treasury (Àjàdí, p. 190)

Antidotes from Fágúnwà's novel, IgbóOlódùmarè

Since ancient times, creative writers have been the agents of the advocacy and correction of many societal ills, insecurity inclusive. This is because literature, in its oral or written forms has consistently been used in every society as one of the representations of reality. It is an important means of understanding and interpreting aspects of human society such as culture, politics, and religions among others. Effective communication of all these depends largely on language. And as such, in multilingual societies like Nigeria, translation serves as bridge across cultures for interaction and knowledge sharing. This informs the choice of the English translations of the select Yorùbá literary texts under study.

Nigeria has cultural heritage that has provided astonishing data for its literature. Cultural heritage is conceived as tangible and intangible aspects of people's ways of life. Culture as a phenomenon "embraces people's learned and shared ways of life, their activities, behavioural patterns and the environment they live in. It portrays knowledge of the past and as it is used to develop people's psyche, their society and general aspirations" (Akandé 2010, p.19)

The contributory roles of Fagunwa in his *Igbo Olodumare* in the promotion and transfer of the cultural heritage through his literary text cannot be underestimated. The role of the creative writers and in particular, Nigerian writers, therefore, is to educate. However, the education involves not mere moral or ethical lessons, but a widening of consciousness, an awakening of awareness, to broaden the human perspective and to understand life. The creative writer has been viewed as the voice of the society's conscience. Writers are therefore regarded as the custodian of customs and values. The creative writer is largely influenced by

his/her society as a member of the society and thus source materials for the creative endeavour from the society. He/she is also an influence on his society and as such the realities of the society are largely mirrored in his works.

From the foregoing discussion, it is obvious that the works of Fágúnwà have much to offer the society that forms the background of his writings. The added advantage of the translation is that it has extended the readership of his works thereby widening the scholarship on the works to non-Yorùbá scholars.

Since the focus of this paper is on the lessons that are to be learned from the story-lines in Fágúnwà's works to benefit Nigeria in particular and other nations in similar situation in general, a discussion of the relevance of the select text is in order at this juncture. The relationships between the above episodes and the Nigerian situation as well as the lessons to be learned are numerous. We highlight these lessons below to serve as antidotes to the problems:

- i. The Nigerian leaders should take the bold step of addressing the spate of insecurity in Nigeria just like *Olówó-ayé* ventured into the forest despite the dangers inherent there; they should be bold enough to call a spade a spade instead of deceiving the Nigerian populace that the 'Bokoharram' are 'Faceless'; and indeed one may then ask: who did the government want to dialogue with, if the Bokoharram people are 'Face-less'?
- ii. The citizens, like *Olówó-ayé*, should support the leaders like *Olówó-ayé's* accomplice did; and
- iii. In the same way that the characters in Fágúnwà's works struggled through many tactics and by cooperation and spirit of comradeship so also Nigerians should unite against all forms of criminalities and perpetrators. Military solution without the cooperation of the people or the citizenry cannot achieve total decimation of the criminal and terrorist elements in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In this paper, we have demonstrated that the solutions to the insurgence of insecurity particularly that if D. O. Fágúnwà through an established relationship between the story-line in the select text and the reality of the Nigerian society, we have highlighted some of the lessons that we can learn and imbibe to change the existing situation for better if not best.

The works of Fagunwa's, a Yorùbá writer in Nigeria have only been used as examples; many Nigerian writers from other ethnic groups are also implied in the

discourse. Hence, there is the need to tap these valuable resources in proffering solution to the security problem in order to achieve meaningful development.

Reading culture should be encouraged so that great works that are informative and educative like that of D. O. Fágúnwà's *ÌgbóOlódùmarè* can be extensively read. Translation of books written in indigenous languages should be encouraged through giving prizes and monetary awards in order to get a wider readership within and outside the culture environment where the book is written. The books should be put online so that accessing it will attract monetary gain for the writers and his children. One of the authors of this paper has commenced this project and it is almost ready.

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