

## **Between Style and Sense: a Critical Appraisal of Soyinka's and Ajadi's English Translations of D.O Fagunwa's *Igbo Olodumare***

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### **Abstract**

*This paper is a critical evaluation of the two translations of Fagunwa's Igbo olodumare into English by Wole Soyinka and Gabriel Ajadi. The question on whether style takes precedence over sense and vice versa constitutes a central debate in translation. This is because the challenges that come with translating are relative to text typology. The dynamic equivalence theory of Nida, together with the subjective approach of translation by Gbadegesin, is employed in the analysis of the translation process by Soyinka and Ajadi. The study affirms the priority sense has over style through the analysis of practical examples drawn from Wole Soyinka's and Ajadi's English versions of Fagunwa's novel under study with emphasis on the interpretative departures of the translators from the intended meaning of the author. Then, the paper concludes that translation of a literary text with cultural lodes cannot but betray the style if the implicit meaning of the message is well deverbilised. This is the case of the translations of Fagunwa's Igbo Olodumare into English.*

**Keywords:** sense, style, Yoruba culture, literary translation, translator, re-expression.

### **Introduction**

The survival of any literary work depends mainly on the level of debate about it. The mode and means of talking about it keep its savor and fervor alive in the world of readers and critics. The pioneer creative writer in Yoruba, Daniel Olorunfemi Fagunwa was a man whose style of writing was and probably is second to none in the Yoruba nation. According to Ayo Bamgbose (1974:6), "Fagunwa is inimitable. The one thing that he has which his imitators lack is his gift of language". The author's style of writing impresses the sense of his message on the reader in such a way that the moral inherent in it lives on in his treatment of issues of life. This makes novels written by Fagunwa evergreen in the world of Yoruba readers and academics.

The second published novel of Fagunwa in 1949, *Igbo Olodumare* translated as *In the Forest of Olodumare* (2010) and *The forest of God* (1999) by Wole Soyinka and Gabriel Ajadi respectively centers on the adventurous journey of 'Olowoaiye', the father of Akaraogun to Igbo Olodumare. While passing through another forest, the hero encounters myriads of weird creatures and two witches. He marries one of the witches, and in her company, he conquers a terrible and fierce creature whose head emits smoke, Anjonnu Iberu, the gate-keeper of Igbo Olodumare. Olowoaiye, in his hunting expedition, finds himself in many curious situations: getting stranded on top of a mysterious tree during a thunderstorm, loss of his way in the forest for three years without necessities of life until the intervention of his dead mother, his encounter with Bábá-onírùngbòn yèùkè, his visit to the abode of death, etc. After being treated to four moral stories; the story of the palm wine tapper, the story of the two lovers, the story of the vanity of human wishes and the story of the enchanted fishes, a group of twenty-four hunters, who are mainly Olowoaiye's acquaintances arrive in the house of Bábá-onírùngbòn yèùkè (the sage). They too have been lost in the forest for years. After hazardous trips; adventure to the kingdom of snakes, territory of seven deadly women, meeting with a weird troll (a messenger from the sage), the hunters return home and re-unite with their families. Gbadegesin (2014:120) describes Fagunwa's style of writing as being oratory, Il (Fagunwa) maîtrise d'une manière inégalée, l'emploi de la langue yoruba..... l'intérêt des oeuvres de Fagunwa est essentiellement dans son langage; la manière de raconter ses histoires. Il tortille la langue à sa manière pour exprimer ses idées et les éléments de ses personnages.

Il crée des expressions qui vont de pair avec ses personnages, ses mots et expressions possèdent une qualité musicale et la plupart des passages ont la force d'une poésie orale. Our translation: He (Fagunwa) is apt in the use of Yoruba language in an unparalleled way. What makes Fagunwa's works outstanding is basically in his style, his way of narrating his stories. He manipulates the language in his characters. He creates expressions that go hand in hand with the character. His words and expressions sound musical and most of the passages are endowed with the oral poetry power play. In general terms, Fagunwa employs rhetoric. His love with words, extreme hyperbolic language, detailed description, short declarative statements, proverbs, and other stylistic features such as simile and metaphor, idiophones, repetition, humour, expressive imagery, personification, analogy, pun, etc keep his readers wondering of the kind of ingenuity with which the author wins and sustains their interest from the beginning to the close of each of his novels.

Fagunwa's style of writing in *Igbó Olódùmarè* is similar to that in *Ògbójú Ode Nínú Igbó Irúnmolè*, *Ìrèké-Oníbùdó* and *Ìrìnkèrindò Nínú Igbó Elégbèje*. This style betrays him in any works of arts. He thinks his works and draws his linguistic inspirations from the sociolinguistic milieu of Yoruba culture. *Igbo Olodunmare* is unique in the export of its message to the Anglophone world in that it is the only novel of Fagunwa that has enjoyed dual translation into English language by two scholars: Wole Soyinka and Gabriel Ajadi. While Wole Soyinka renders the title as *In the forest of Olodumare*, Gabriel Ajadi prefers *Forest of God*. The goals of the duo differ because their interests affect their style and their translation of the author's intention (the "vouloir-dire"). This constitutes the nucleus of this study. The playwright and poet, Soyinka writes prodigiously in all the literary forms and genres. According to Jeyifo (2004:5) "Soyinka occupies his distinct place within the "quarter" on account of his propensity for taking very daring artistic and political risks in furtherance of his deepest political and ethical convictions but at the same time complexly re-inscribed the determinate elitism of his generation of writers".

From the above quotation, Soyinka's conscious target audience is the elistic class of his generation. Though he possesses a skilful use of a modulated "pidgin English" which is a common man lingua franca in Anglophone West Africa, his style of writing is ambitious and experimental. In the words of Jeyifo (2004:16) "Soyinka's poems, plays and even essays often considerably exceed perceptible function and referent confoundingly or exhilaratingly, depending on the readers or critics predispositions and sensibilities". This poses a serious question on who he is writing for. Is the literary giant's audience the international literary erudite scholars of the Anglophone world, academic eggheads in Nigeria or the popular masses he claims to be fighting for? Going by the consistency of his style of writing, it seems Soyinka probably could not come to the level of the popular masses in most of his writings even when he made efforts to do so. This informs the controversies that often trail his "plume": His alleged obscurity, difficulty and complexity in the extensive deployment of excessive image and sign may be seen by his apologetics to serve referential functions in his writings. The formalized linguistic and artistic frames of Soyinka's style of writing, as employed in the translation of Fagunwa's *Igbó Olódùmarè* into English, is a departure from his style of simple periphrastic approach to translating *Ògbójú Ode Nínú Igbó Irúnmolè* (*The forest of a thousand daemons – A hunter' saga*) in 1968.

In the words of Nadine Gordimer (2001), cited by Jeyifo (2004:279), "Soyinka is a sophisticate whose making free use of the tricks and techniques of European literatures are by some a contradiction". Fagunwa draws the strength of his writing in his unique style. Soyinka's tremendous investment as a literary writer is equally in the power of language, the astute use of metaphor, symbol, myth, archetype, etc. Our comment on the writing style of Gabriel Ajadi is restricted to his language of translation of *Igbó Olódùmarè* into English. This is because of his submission on the translation thus "I had deliberately sacrificed my own stylistic idiosyncrasy in order for the reader to fully enjoy Fagunwa's seasoned and peculiar literary proverb and power in the translated edition (Ajadi/*The Forest of God* 2005:vii). Since the style Ajadi employed in the translation of Fagunwa's novel is "devoid" of his natural way of writing, we are left with the evaluation of "semantic communicative method" he claims to have been used in conveying Fagunwa's story "faithfully" to his readership. It is worthy of note that Ajadi's translation of *Igbó Olódùmarè* (*The Forest of God*) is his doctoral thesis at Ball State University, Maurice, Indiana, U.S.A.

To Gbadegesin, (2014:91) "La méthode qu'énonce Ajadi semble être un mélange de trois types de traduction- la traduction sémantique, la traduction communicative et la traduction littérale". Our translation: "The method Ajadi claims to have used is a combination of three forms of translation: Semantic translation, communicative translation and literal translation". How far this style of translation has succeeded in translating sense in a culture based literature such as *Igbó Olódùmarè* is the preoccupation of this paper. Every author is identified by his style.

But should the original author's sense in his style be redirected outside the meaning and meaningfulness in the translation of his work(s)? The next item addresses the issues of sense and style in translation.

### ***The Concept of "Sense" and "Style" in Translation Studies***

Sense is central in every translation. All studies in translation work on what makes sense and what does not in conveying the intended message from one language to another. Jean-Paul Satre in cited by Gbadegesin (2014:49) argues that; dès le départ, le sens n'est pas contenu dans les mots puisque c'est lui, au contraire, qui permet de comprendre la signification de chacun d'eux et l'objet littéraire, quoi qu'il se réalise à travers le langage, n'est jamais donné dans le langage.... Les cent milles mots alignés dans un livre peuvent être lus un à un sans que le sens de l'oeuvre en jaillisse, le sens n'est pas la somme des mots, il en est la totalité organique; cette sentence définitive constitue une base de la théorie du sens.

Our translation: From the onset meaning is not the constituent of words but in the contrary it is the one that allows the understanding of what each of them (the words) means. Whatever literary element achieved through the style is never in the style, the hundreds of thousands of words that make up a book could be read one after the other without making sense out of the work, the sense is not the sum of words, it is a whole organ: this is the main issue that forms basis of theory of meaning. It could be inferred, therefore, that words which are not taken beyond their surface level in expressions fraught with cultural lodes may become sensibly uncouth or out of intended sense in literary translation. In other words, words that run counter of the original sense, that display outright departure from it or that sacrifice the sense for the style are nothing but noise. Words carry information and express different emotions. Their association with the language and culture of the literary text plays a primordial role in communicating the author's message. The meaning of any word is in its usage. It is this usage that literary translators are preoccupied with.

Nida (1971:11), in defining translation, gives a distinction between sense and style and which takes precedence. To him, "translation is the reproduction of source language message in receptor's message by means of close natural equivalent first in sense and then in style" (Our translation). This implies sense takes precedence over style. In his search for close natural equivalent, a literary translator must understand the limit of linguistic rendering and the function ability of his choice of extra linguistic and met linguistic nuances. In a difficultly translatable literary text such as *Igbó Olódùmarè*, we ask not only what a word means but what its association with the entire message implies and that is what determines the terms of correspondence employable in reproducing the author's message. It is not an error that the passage of sense from the author to the target recipient of his message in another language is the swords which constitute the tools with which the translator works, but the assimilation of sense has priority over the form. Quine (1997:15) affirms that the indeterminacy of translation is grounded in the link between expression and conceptualization. As it would be seen in our appraisal of the two translations of D.O Fagunwa's *Igbó Olódùmarè* into English, the author's expression and the translators' re-expression vis-à-vis the language and cultural concepts of Yoruba reveal the gap between sense and style in the translation of the text. We use dynamic equivalence theory of Nida in the critique of the English translations of the text and employ the subjective approach of translation by Gbadegesin (2014) to measure the level of decision making of the Wole Soyinka and Gabriel Ajadi, the two different translators of *Igbó Olódùmarè*.

Dynamic equivalence theory destines translation to the reaction of the target reader; the ability of the translation to make the target reader of the version react the same way or almost the same way as the original reader of source text. The subjective approach measures the product of personal decision of the translator. It is the process by which selective attention and certain emotion determine the decision of a literary translator.

### ***Style and Sense in the English Translations of D.O Fagunwa's Igbó Olódùmarè***

Beier Ulli cited by Bamigbose (1971) avows that "the true Yoruba flavor of Fagunwa's work lies not in the material he used, but in the language, the manner and tone of his storytelling.... for Fagunwa has the humour, the rhetoric, the word play, the bizarre imagery that Yoruba like and appreciate in the language". Fagunwa's style of writing; his use of the literary devices as contained in the above quotation, and very many others such as the use of proverbs, hyperbolic expressions, short sentences, long sentences, adverbs, character-matching actions and sounds oratory expressions, etc all culturally rooted in Yoruba language make translating Fagunwa into other languages a difficult adventure. The efforts of Gabriel Ajadi and Wole Soyinka attest to the challenges of deverbaling the style in order to bring the author's message to the understanding and reactions of the English readers the way the readers of the original text do.

The translation of the title of the book gives a reflection on what appeals to the mind of the translators: is it the word or the content view of the entire book? Ajadi's version *The Forest of God* for Igbó Olódùmarè "God" (most especially in Christian circle) for "Olódùmarè" is sourced from the general interpretation of Yoruba name for God as Olodumare. The "stories" in the text never talk of the forest as the dwelling place of God or of those of his Angels. It is a forest full of many unimaginable vicissitudes and weird spirits. Soyinka's version *In the forest of Olodumare* leaves the English reader to either take "Olodumare" as the embodiment of all the elements in the novella or a special creature who acts as a silhouette in the forest. The fact is "Igbó Olódùmarè" is one of the existing forests in Oke-Igbo in Ondo State of Nigeria today. It remains a dreadful forest! It is obvious that the spatial setting of Fagunwa's story is the Earth. The didactic stories address all human persons of all races.

The translation of the words or expressions exclusively routed in Yoruba culture poses a problem of sense in the versions. Exemple II: Source Text "Losangangan Ijosi, nigbati mo jeun ekeji tan, mo kuro ni ile mi, mo bosì ehin odi, mo joko mo le gongo.... Mo te fila mi siwaju kongo, mo si fila kuro ni atari, ategun alafia si nfe si mi ni ipako.... (Igbó Olódùmarè p.1) *The Forest of God*: It was on a sweltering afternoon, after I had eaten the second meal of the day, that I left my house and strolled to the outside of the city wall..... I sat down.... hugging my legs to my chest....I.... tilted my cap pointedly..... I took my cap off the crown of my head, and peaceful air was blowing across my head. (p.41) *In the Forest of Olodumare*: One bright afternoon a long while past, after I had lunched, I left my home, strolled outside the fence of my compound..... I sat..... perched like the lord of all he surveyed..... I who had .... donned a cloth cap, cocked its pouch stylishly over the forehead, was forced to toss the covering from my skull. Now the breeze of well being caressed my occiput.

Jeun ekeji (ounje ekeji) goes beyond second meal as rendered by Ajadi. The Yoruba have three major meals per day dividing the day into three; morning, afternoon, and evening. The morning meal is the breakfast; the afternoon is the lunch while that of evening is super. The author does not talk of taking rounds of meal at a particular time of the day. The opening word Losangangan (sunny afternoon) clears the ambiguity that comes with Jeun ekeji. It is the "lunch". To a culture where four meals are taken per day, "the second meal of the day" would be interpreted outside the intended meaning of the author. The translation of ehin odi as 'outside the fence of my compound' by Soyinka hurts the spirit of the original. This isolates the historical culture of building tall walls round the town as means of guarding the dwellers against external aggressors during wars in yorubaland. Besides, the ancient Yoruba lived communally. "Ehin Odi" transcends ordinary fence of a compound. It is the "city wall". Effort to imitate the style of the original author in literary translation or superimpose the style of the translator on the version makes the product a contestable sense. This is the case of the sitting position of the narrator in the above quotation. "Jóko le góngó" is a proud sitting position. The position shows how important the man feels or regards himself. To Ajadi, it is "hugging legs to the chest" which may be taken as a mode of punishment or a barbaric way of sitting while Soyinka's version "perched like the lord of all the surveyed" is a colouration of the sense of the original. Again, "the breeze of well-being" for "ategun alafia" is a stylistic imitation of the author. Ajadi's rendering does not free itself from the same temptation as "peaceful air" is taken for gentle breeze.

The translation of the description of an angry man on page 3 of the novel shows sense variation in playing down on the interpretative meaning of the language of the source text. Example III: "...inu bi mi gidigidi, mo fa oju ro bi eniti ebi npa, mo npose bi eniti iya nje, mo di enu dudu bi omo odo ti o fo awo onje, ti ko le so fun mi, ti on rin kakiri egbe ogiri; ti inu omo na si daru bi igedegede idi emu inu sago" (Igbó Olódùmarè). *The Forest of God*: "I was angry at him, and I frowned like a hungry person: I was sighing like a man under stress. I frowned like a house boy who broke his master's dishes and dared not tell him, but continued to hang by the wall, while his stomach is disturbed and troubled like the foam of palm wine in a jar (p.43). *In the Forest of Olodumare*: "I was furious, my face was concerted by a frown like the face of a starving man, I sucked in breath as one in pain, tightened my lips like a house servant who has just dropped valuable crockery and dares not confess but drags himself along one wall after another, his stomach churning like the mottled froth at the mouth of a keg of palm wine (p.6). The two translations trivialize the importance of the adverb "gidigidi" in the original. The word (gidigidi) gives moral description of the degree of annoyance occasioned by an undesirable interruption. The interpretative sense would qualify the adjective "angry/furious" with very or exceedingly. "Sighing like a man under stress and suck in breath as one in pain" does not occupy the same level of deverbilization as "hissing like a man in distress" which the original message connotes. We wonder why dynamic equivalence approach is not adopted in re-expressing the last phrase of the message; "tí inú omo náà sì dàrú bí ìgèdèdèdè ìdí emu inú ságo". The degree of perplexity goes beyond "stomach".

It is the description of the state of melancholy the poor servant is trapped in. The translation of the simile bí ìgèdèdédè ìdí emu inú ságo demonstrates a kind of complete departure from the sense of what ìgèdèdédè ìdí emu really means. It is neither “the foam of palm wine” nor “the mottled froth at the mouth of the keg of palm wine”. The ìgèdèdédè ìdí emu is the sediment in palm wine that settles at the bottom of the big gourd or keg of palm wine. It looks undesirable after exhausting the palm wine, to an ordinary person, but it is the delight of the regular and experienced drinker of palm wine who savours it with pride. The point of view should have been varied to make the target reader have access to the intended meaning of the original author. Despite the varying styles, the translators seem not to encounter serious problem of sense for sense rendering in the translation of some similes, the change in levels of language notwithstanding as could be seen in the following example. Example IV:” Mo nmi helehele, bi eniti nsare ije, ti okan mi nlu kiki bi oko ofurufu”( Igbó Olódùmarè p.94) The Forest of God: I was panting like one who was running race and my heart was beating very loudly like an aero plane” (p.125) In the Forest of Olodumare:“ I was panting heavily as if I was on a sprint field, my heart pounding like the engine of an airplane” (p.129) From the translation by Ajadi is another “trope” (hyperbole); “my heart was beating very loudly”. One wonders how a heart could drum so loudly as an aero plane. Wole Soyinka’s version reveals what pounds in an airplane, that is, its engine. The versions appear to have used their artistic values to keep the movement of the message afloat at the same level as the source text message.

The translation of the following short sentences underlines how an overbearing translator’s style of writing can affect the sense of the author’s original message. Substituting a sentence structure for a sentence structure of the target language especially where the rendering does no harm to the meaning (contextual and cultural) is not only very acceptable but the best way of making the reader of the target text react the same way to the message of the original as does the reader of the source text. However, where this cannot be achieved it is not the duty of the translator to sacrifice the sense for his style. The following example alludes to this assertion. Example V: “ètè mi gbe, ito enu mi yi, ikùn mi ri pelebe, ojù mi rí kán-ndo, mo lé góngó lóri igi, .... Mo rántí ile, mo rántí ore, ãro iyawo so mi, iya egbèfà je mí, àbùkù egbèrin tó lé mi, mo pa òsé nlá, mó sokun àgbàlagbà, mo fa ojù ro. (Igbo Olodumare p.58). In the forest of Olodumare: “my lips parched, my mouth desiccated, my stomach flattened, my eyes bulging like eggs. I was suspended from the tree... My mind travelled home with thoughts of friends, while anxiety for my wife took hold of me, I suffered six hundred torments, underwent eight hundred humiliations, I sucked in the heavy air of self-pity, concocted my face in pain... (p.82) The forest of God: “...my lips dried, the saliva in my mouth became sticky, and my stomach was flat; my eyes saw a lot of trouble. I sat roundly on the tree;... I remembered friends; I missed my wife; I suffered in six hundred ways; I was disgraced in eight hundred ways. I made a great hiss, cried the cry of an adult, I put on a frowned face. (P.93).

Jeyifo’s remarks on the writing style of Wole Soyinka that the playwright’s observance of the demands of craft and technique in writing is so consistent that he probably could not write down to the popular masses even if he tried to do so could be attested to in his restitution of the simple, short and straight forward sentence of Fagunwa. It is not a misnomer for example, to use lexical correspondence for the first sentence by translating gbe as “dried”. Mouth desiccation is not the same as stickiness of saliva. Ojú kán-dó (hollowing eyes) is not synonymous with ojù kàndò (big/protruding, eyes) which is translated. The adjective kán-dó describes what the eyes result to after long hours of hunger and discomfort on the top of a tall tree. It is obvious that “le gongo” in this context is not an expression of easiness, neither it is synonymous with the victim unexpectedly holding a branch of the tree with his legs dangling in the air. Therefore “I was suspended from the tree” for “mo le gongo lori igi” is not only an over translation but a personal stylistic creation out of the sense of the original by the translator. The short sentences that follow are too simple for Soyinka to translate lexically in a subjective approach. His substitutions are distanced from positivist and internationalist usages by the author. “mo ranti ile”/I remembered my family/home. “mo ranti ore” I remembered friends “ãro iyawo so mi” I missed my wife; are too simple a style to translate as such by the translator. So he has to resort to his own personal literary style, which in turn, knocks down the sense as intended by the author. The complex sentence “my mind traveled home with thought of friends, while anxiety for my wife took hold of me” for the three simple sentences creates the impression that the victim probably is lost or buried in thought of his acquaintances while imprisoned on the tree top. This is a “contre sens”! (This is the opposite of the intended meaning). Again “mo pa ose nla”/ I hissed heavily taken for “I sucked in the heavy air of self-pity” hardly communicates the message of the original to the translator’s reader. “mo fa oju ro” (I frowned my face) translated as “concocted my face in pain” is the effort of rewriting Fagunwa here. We would like to submit here that translators generally work through the words and styles of the author to

draw sense out of his message and re-express the same in the linguistic and cultural acceptability of the target language.

Meanwhile, style adopted out of the heart of the intended contextual, cultural, interpretative, lexical, etc. meaning of the original message in literary translation often results to a non translation. Ajadi's translation of "aju mi ri n'kan-do" as "my eyes saw trouble" is a demonstration of message rendering devoid of astute interpreting before translating. Interpreting a message within the cultural and linguistic context of the source text is an important feature of literary translation. It stresses the essential of not asking what a word or units of word mean but what the whole message connotes. Therefore "aju mi ri n;kan do" (my eyes became bulging) should not be read as "aju mi ri n'kan" (I experienced troubles) as translated by Ajadi. Again "Mo sokun agbalagba", a sentence omitted in Soyinka's translation is rendered as "cried the cry of an adult". This literal translation wanes the meaning of the original. "I wept like an old man/elderly person" should be a decision that provokes similar expressive reactions in the readers of both the original and the translation. The use of proverb is an important stylistic feature characteristic of Fagunwa's writings. The culture in which he writes equally attaches great importance to it. Translating Yoruba proverbs into English poses difficulty when corresponding proverbs or idioms are not available in the target language. The following examples assert this notion.

### Example V1

(a): "Oro ti o ro bi ogede pupa ko fe esi ti ole bi okuta didan inu omi"(Igbo Olodumare p.57).

(b) "bi ebi ba ti kuro ninu ise, ise buse (Igbo Olodumare p.59)

(a) The Forest of God: "A matter that is as soft as a ripe banana does not demand an answer that is as hard as the sleek pebbles in the stream (p.92)"

In the Forest of Olodumare: "Words which are soft as the red banana, deserve better than a response as hard as shiny pebbles in the stream (p.81)

(b) The Forest of God: "If hunger is eliminated from poverty, there is not much poverty left to talk about (p.94)

In the Forest of Olodumare: "... once the hunger is eliminated from labour, it spells the end of hardship (p.84)

The translation of Yoruba proverbs into European languages such as English and French most especially, those proverbs that do not have established idiomatic correspondences create herculean task to the translator. However, Gbadegesin (2004:186) proposes what he calls approximation approach to translate such proverbs. To him, "l'approximation du proverbe en raison de ses valeurs culturelles et affectives, de ses fonctions symboliques et métaphoriques organisées en réseaux est inévitable en traduction". Our translation: "In view of the cultural and affective values, organized symbolic and metaphoric functions of proverbs, approximation approach in translating proverbs is inevitable. That the two versions resort to this approach unconsciously is in the fact that the English culture does not have fixed corresponding equivalents for the Yoruba proverbs. While The Forest of God, in preserving the symbols and metaphors of the original settles with lexical translation, In the Forest of Olodumare's version changes the point of view and with the translator's creative style, changes the sense of the last phrase of the proverb. "Ìsé" in the second proverb is the head word. The word "ìsé" goes beyond "òsì" (poverty). It is worse than poverty. The recreative form of the subjective approach adoptable for the translation here should take a qualifying word describing the degree of poverty. So, for Ajadi's rendering, "abject poverty" is suggested in place of the word "poverty" for "ìsé". The re-expression of what "ìsé" is in In the forest of Olodumare is a tonal conflict which ordinarily should not pose any semantic problem to an average Yoruba user. "ìsé" (abject poverty) is not the same as "ìsé" (work/labour). Therefore, the average reader of In the Forest of Olodumare most especially the one who has never read the original or is not conversant with Yoruba culture or the one who is not familiar with the items of the proverb risk being misinformed by the translator.

### Conclusion

Needless to say that that the difficulty in translating Fagunwa is more in his enriched style of writing. No translator of Fagunwa can re-express his message in another language successfully without having eyes for dynamic equivalence approach. Imitating Fagunwa's style of writing in certain expressions hardly produces equivalent effects on the reader of the version. This is the case of *The Forest of God*. For example "...I beg you, tell God...that he should look for another job for me" (p.141)" as the translation of "...emi be o, ba mi wi fun Olorun Oba pe, ki o wa ise miran fun mi" (*Igbo Olodumare*: p.110).

The interpretive meaning of "...wa ise miran fun mi" is not charging God with the responsibility of going in search of a job". It is a supplication. It implies begging God for provision of a better job which should read

“provide a better job for me”. The same shortcoming is observed in the translation of the clause: “Bi okunrin yi ti so ti enu re tan” (*Igbo Olodumare*. p.111).

For this, Ajadi renders “immediately this man finished speaking that which was in his mouth....p.141) instead of “As soon as the man ends/finishes making his request ...” Supplying in quick successions, the meaning of proper nouns such as Ijambaforiti, Ijamba, Enia-pele, Asaju, Olowoaiye, etc. as did Abioye in his French translations of Fagunwa’s works (see Gbadegesin (2014)) would have created similar impression on the readers of Ajadi’s and Soyinka’s English translations of *Igbo Olodumare* as the original readers. The drama view point and the overbearing style of Wole Soyinka on the writing style of Fagunwa make the reader of the version who has equally studied the original text read some messages distanced from the intention of Fagunwa. Some sentences possibly considered too simple to translate are completely omitted. The fact remains that Fagunwa did not write his works for translation. The universality of his message is possibly a major motivation for translating his novels. The cultural logjams in the translation of Fagunwa equally remain a task that demands an in-depth understanding of the culture of the Yoruba and Yoruba language if close and natural correspondents of the original message as advocated by Nida (1971) would be realized in the target language culture.

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