

AKINSANYA Tolulope Opeyemi

Matriculation No. 020104011

Department of History and Strategic Studies (DAY)

COURSE: HSS 401

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## ASSIGNMENT

1. Give examples of oral traditions from your community.
2. Give five (5) names of Arab explorers or scholars, the places they visited, dates and a brief summary of their reports.

1.

### A SAMPLE OF AN EKITI VARIANT OF THE FOLK TALE

#### “LADÉJOMORE”

<sup>1</sup> *Ladéjomore Ladéjomore*

*Èsun*

*Oyà\* Ajà gbusi*

*Èsun*

<sup>5</sup> *Oyà 'lé fon 'ná lo*

*Èsun*

*Iy'uná k ó ti l'éin*

*Èsun*

*I y'eran an k'ó ti l'újà*

<sup>10</sup> *Èsun*

*Ogbé godo s'erun so*

*O m'ásikù bo 'so lo*

*O to kìsì s'àède*

*Me I gbo yùngba yùngba yún yún ún*

*Èsun*

LITERAL TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE;

Ladejomore Ladejomore

(Refrain)

The wife of Ajagbusi

(Refrain)

The wife came looking for fire

(Refrain)

Look how bright this fireplace

(Refrain)

And how sweet smelling is this fatty meat

(Refrain)

She ate some of the meat

Hid the rest under her vests

Ran swiftly outside

I heard the salivating sound of her chewing

(Refrain)

The folk tale as I heard, is an attempt at explaining why babies do not have the power of legible speech.

A new wife goes around looking for fire, and she finds one in a neighbour's fireplace. In the same room are a baby laid to sleep and some roasted meat. The lady drawn strongly to the strong smell of fresh roasted meat at first ate some of the meat and then took the whole away, all with the baby watching on.

When the owner of the meat came back, the baby told of all that Ladejomore had done and that she had taking away all the meat. This brought great shame on Ladejomore and all of her family. The weight of the pressure brought on Ladejomore and her family eventually caused the god's to withdraw the power of speech from all babies.

The story is common across Yoruba land with small variations in dialect; an example is the word "oya" (line 3) for wife as against "iyawo" in Yoruba of Oyo. It has been confirmed for me that this story has been passed down from at least four generations away in my paternal lineage. My father says it was a story (inter alia) told to him by his mother, who had been told the story by her grandmother. This sort of oral tradition is very useful to Historians in order to construct the past. It can be safely assumed that the above tale goes as far back as the 19<sup>th</sup> century. While archaeological evidence (another useful primary source) cannot give any ideas about people's beliefs and culture, oral traditions obviously can.

It can be inferred from the folktale above that the people were probably hunters or kept livestock of some sort. It can also be inferred from the story that life back then was very communal. These among other things are great reflections of the beliefs of a people.

## REFERENCES

1. Oral interview with Mr Akinsanya (age 65, indigene of Ekere Ekiti) on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2007 at his residence.
2. Isola Olomola, "IFE, Annals of the Institute of Cultural Studies", Biodun Adeniran (ed.), Institute of cultural studies, Obafemi Awolowo University, Vol. 6, 1995.

Answer 2.

I.

Abu Abdullah al-Bakri (1014-1094). Spanish born Arab geographer and Historian. As a Historian his major works were "Kitab al-Masalik wa' I-Mamalik" (literally translated as Book of Highways and of Kingdoms) and Mu'jam. He wrote about Europe, North Africa, the Arabian peninsular and interestingly the ancient Western Sudan. His works played an important role in the rediscovery of the ancient Ghana Empire and its capital, Koumbi Saleh.

II.

Mohammed Abdulkazeem ibn Haukal. He travelled between *circa* 943 and 969 A.D. Many know him as a 10<sup>th</sup> century Arab writer, Geographer and

chronicler. He also visited the ancient empire of Ghana and helped in the description of the capital city.

III.

Muhammad Ibn Abdullah Batuta (c.1304-1396). Tangier born Arab traveller and author, whose book *Rihlah* (Travels) is an important source for the history and geography of the medieval Muslim world. He also visited the ancient Western Sudan and wrote of capital cities such as Timbuktu and Gao.

IV.

Abu Zayd Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406). His major works where the monumental *Muqaddamah*, (an introductory volume) and his *Kitab al-Ibar* (Universal History). Serving in official positions in what are today Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, and in Granada in Spain. He wrote of Kingdoms in various parts of Africa, including the Western Sudan.

V.

Taqi al-Din Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Abd al-Qadir ibn Muhammad al-Maqrizi (1364-1442)

More popularly known simply as al-Maqrizi, he was a student of Ibn-Khaldun and was for his time a scholar of his contemporary Egyptian History. He left behind treatises on the workings of the Egyptian Fatimid dynasty and its role in Egyptian History among other things.

## REFERENCES

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3. [Http://www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)
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