



Curbing Societal Vices Through the use of Fables

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Abstract

Fables, one of the major forms of literature could be said to be as old as man. It serves as an informal educational sector and acts like a store-house for African traditions before the colonial contact. As literature it's borne out of man's existence and experience, so also is fable, which is attached to perform its major roles; correcting, satirizing, entertaining and to teach morals. This paper looks at the present dearth situation of fables, makes efforts to explicate the importance of fables. It delves to how fables could be used to contribute to searching for global peace and mutual relations in the present day generation as it was in the past. The paper also examines some problems militating against fables and equally put forward ways of surmounting these obstacles.

Keywords: Literature, Fable, Society, Vices.



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Asian Online Journal Publishing Group

Contents

1. Introduction.....	72
2. Significance of Fables.....	72
3. Language and Style of Narrating Fables.....	74
4. Some Problems Facing Fables and Probable Solutions	76
5. Conclusion.....	77
References.....	77
Bibliography	77

1. Introduction

Literature has been defined differently. It takes new and different connotations daily. It is seen as a field of study that delves into imaginative creativity. This imaginative creation specializes in the use of communicative devices and styles that ensure the intellect and the mind reveal ideas and experiences that have been gathered from around creative writers. This is to say that the art of literary creativity depicts the individual man and his environment in such colours that are best suited to the creative mode so employed by the writer. Literature according to Ogunba (1979), defines literature as the vehicle for societies to give sensitive expression to the innermost thought and feelings of individuals as well as the community. He goes further to cite Mbiti, that, *to know the literature of any people is to know them well..... it is the precipitation of their mentality, their customs, their habits, their hopes and ideas about life itself.* This shows that literature encloses the world view and perception of the people. To Akporobaro (2006), oral literature as the corpus of artistically significant verbal expressions evolved by a group of people and transmitted orally from one generation to another. He goes further to view it as the imaginative compositions distinguished by their beauty of forms of expressions and local ideas developed over the years by a people and handed down from one generation to another by a word of mouth. Literature is said not to be what is written only, but all verbal creations written or spoken which are artistically projected. Aduke (2010) refers to imaginative works dealing with human and other beings, in which the aesthetic function predominates. This is in line with other authors and anthropologists.

Literature is of two sides, the written and the oral. Oral literature comprises of fables, riddles, songs, myths, folktales, festival dramas, ritual songs, etc. The fable which is a form of oral literature, is viewed differently. Achebe (1987) opines on African oral tradition that,

... It is only the story that can continue beyond the war and the warrior. It is the story that outlives the sound of war-drums and the exploits of brave fighters. It is the story... that saves our progeny from blundering like blind beggars into the spikes of the cactus fence. The story is our escort; without it, we are blind. Does the blind man own his escort? No, neither do we the story; rather it is the story that owns us and directs us.

According to Cristina Ferreira Pinto in an article downloaded on 24th August 2011, *Our heritage is created upon myths and tales. This is the foundation for all cultures. Every human culture in the world seems to create stories as a way of making sense of the world.* From this definition of a form of literature, it is necessary to state that fables parables and allegories are forms of imaginative literature or spoken utterances constructed in a way that their readers (for the written forms) or listeners (oral form) are encouraged to seek for their meanings beyond the literal surface of the fiction. Fables and parables are similar, but while fables are concerned with the impossible and probable, parables deals with possible events. Hornby (2001) defines fable as a traditional short story that teaches moral lessons especially one with animals as characters. Moral is usually embodied in the plot of a fable.

Fables cuts across nations and dated long. Panchatantra is a well known fable collection by an Indian Vishnushaman between 3rd and 4th century in India. This collection influenced many similar texts across nations as it was reportedly translated into more than 50 languages with about 200 versions. In France in the 12th century Marie de France published a collection of animal fables entitled, *Roman de Renart*, the principal character was a wily fox named Renard. Jean de la Fontaine fables, *Fables de la Fontaine*, were published between 1668 – 1694, this collections influenced many fable writers across nations. Other important modern European fabulists include, Thomas de Iriarte y Oropesa, *Literary Fables* 1782, Ambrose Bierce, *Fantastic Fables* 1899, George Ade, *Fables in Slang* 1900, James Thurber, *Fables of Our Time* 1940, William Saroyan *Fables* 1941 and many several others.

Fables are of different types, the one which animal act as the principal character is called beast fable. This is the type so common in many societies. The main character of fables differ from one nation to another, in the Yoruba community of Nigeria, tortoise is usually the major character. In the Ghana, spider is the most common personality in fables. It isa hare in the Central Africa, a mouse in Congo, Fables are of different facade: dilemma, trickster and ogre. Apart from the characters and the themes, they perform almost the same function with different viewpoint and approach. It should be mentioned that the primary aim of any fable is teaching of morals.

A fable can also be explanatory tales or stories centered on animals and other beings not related to any historical events meant to teach specific lessons. It means a short story that teaches moral lessons. It usually ends with a warning. Fables teach general tales. All deal with animals, human beings, non natural figures such as monsters, ogres, fairies, spirits, gods behaving in familiarly human way.

According to Bascon as quoted by Akporobaro (2006)

...the mythological system of a people is often their educational system, and the children who sit listening to an evening's tale are imbibing traditional knowledge and attitudes no less than the row of sixth graders in our modern classrooms. Myths and legends may contain detailed descriptions of sacred rituals, the codified belief or dogma of the religious group accounts of tribal or clan origins, movements and conflicts. Proverbs have often been characterized as the distilled wisdom of past generations and are unmistakably so regarded by a projective system...

From this we can deduce that fables inform the younger generation of their historic reality in an artistic form and not like the historians. From fables many education as well as societal mores and norms were given to the children. Fable belongs to the society at large, it is handed down from generation to generation. The rationale of a fable among others, is to teach a particular lesson, value or to give sage advice. Roger (1983) on his own sees *fables as stories that are commonly told in the evening, in a public setting, and that are an important medium of entertainment and instruction.* Fables cut across linguistics boundaries. Every culture and language presents fables in their languages.

2. Significance of Fables

At a 1987 pan African conference, Chinua Achebe called on African authors and illustrators to create quality books for African youth. In his keynote address on Children's Literature in Africa, Achebe challenged serious

African writers to save African children from the 'beautifully packaged poisons'. He called on African authors to produce books that have African flavor to assist in retaining our cultural heritage and norms. This is the sole way to bring to an end the all vices by the youths in Africa. It also assist in inculcating in the youth the accepted model. The role of foreign literary texts is of more harm than the benefits. Our cultural heritage in our literatures cannot be overemphasized. It is the best for our education, arts and cultures. Our literary writings are solely or majorly for us, it serves as art for art sake for other tribe. The aesthetics and hidden meanings could not be properly comprehended by non natives. So also others literatures in Africa. The foreign writers write to suit his culture and society. For a stranger, it may not yield the expected results. This could be part of the amoral attitudes in our younger ones. Foreign literature may be misunderstood and misrepresented by a foreign audience. This is to emphasize the need to reawaken African towards losing their heredity to a foreign cultures that have no base in African. Akporobaro, states that the forms of African oral literature have not been borrowed from external cultural traditions, and by and large uncontaminated by western influences. They then remain the modes for the transmission of cultural traditions. This is to show that for Africans to operate within their literary sphere, they tend to project and protect their cultures and norms.

Fable, an aspect of literature is one way of communicating ideas and feelings. It assists to visit places and people we might otherwise never know. Adesanya quoted by Afolabi (1971) asserts that:

Mythological stories are a device to bridge the gap between thinkers and the rest of man... a device to teach the generality of men to understand pictorially what they could not comprehend conceptually

From this, we can see that fables help to travel far and inform of happenings outside our immediate area of jurisdiction, even though not physically. We can also say that, with fables we have the opportunity of laughing at our foolishness. We cry and comfort each other when faced with tragedy with the aid of fables.

Fable possesses the attributes of changing time to reflect the needs of any given generation. But literature also explores basic human feelings, such as greed, love, jealous and ambition. These feelings have changed very little over time. They have always inspired good stories that are told well. For this reason, we can still enjoy great literature of any age for its story and expressive language.

Fable can also play the role of cultural preservation. This is so because stories are passed on by words of mouth from parents to their children or from one generation to another. Through this, many traditions are preserved in story form. Before the discovery of printed materials, people used to entertain themselves as well as teach moral lessons through stories. Fables link us to our past. We know of happenings in our area before us through fables. Through this play away technique, moral is being imparted in the young ones while much abnormal behaviour are down played with a view to correcting them.

Another notable and important point about fables is that; it illuminates many aspects of a culture. This is so easy as animal will be personified. The author or story teller then enjoys the advantages of giving detailed information and achieves his or her aim at ease. Writers turn fables into inspiration. Let us look at some examples; George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, La Fontaine, *Les Fables* and several others.

These authors used animals to make their points and illustrations not only known but vivid. For Orwell, the lesson among others from the fable is that human beings claim to be equal but many factors differentiate them. Equality among men seems far from achievable in the societies. Those in the corridors of power make the outsider believe they are making sacrifices whereas in the true sense of it they are making money, not only for themselves, but for their generations yet unborn. Through literature, these set of leaders are exposed, and most often the unfortunate end of some of them serves as lessons for the upcoming generations. The example of *Animal Farm* testified to this. Pierre Fontaine used fables to criticize the dictatorial sovereign, Louis XIV, of the seventeenth century, the way and manners in which this monarch arrogated powers to himself was x-rayed with the use of animals. Despite the wickedness of Louis XIV, the narrator, makes use of animals to criticize and condemn this sovereign monarch. He was able to achieve this stunning criticism despite the laws on any literary materials of the century.

To curb indiscipline or many unethical acts in the present age, fables can be given to serve as a deterrent. As an example, using the tortoise, as a smart and greedy animal could serve as a major character to stir up troubles and teach the lesson against deceit. This type could serve as a warning to others. Thus, in another of such a story; the love of money is the beginning of evil the saying goes. The tortoise as said earlier may have served in various situations to be too conscious of himself and by so doing have caused his own downfall. All these could be given as examples to the present generation so as to curb their excesses.

In this other and important fable, the tortoise serves as the principal actor. This animal wanted to be seen as embodiment of knowledge he intended to gather all the wisdoms on earth and keep them for his personal usage. He claimed to have every wisdom in the calabash and ready to put it on a palm tree so that no other person will have access to any wisdom without his approval. He succeeded in doing this to his own thinking and conviction. To avoid others making use of these wisdoms, he selected a very tall palm tree to conceal the calabash. He put the calabash in his belly/stomach and making efforts to climb the palm tree with the calabash. After unproductive efforts, sweating profusely, unable to climb the said palm tree, snail, a small animal the tortoise considered to lack the smallest unit to be called a wisdom now meet the so called Mr. know-all,(tortoise) in this attempt. The snail advised him to put the calabash at the back, this will make it easy for the tortoise to climb successfully, and this tortoise did and was able to have a smooth climbing. The tortoise then realized that he has not been able to collect every wisdom, decided to start all over. To cut it short he was unable to achieve his intention. From this we can see that it is not possible for a person to know everything. Such a fable could be used to teach any greedy child that he should be contented with a part and not bother to have everything. This fable also shows that nobody knows everything; wisdom and knowledge belong to everybody.

Another animal/bird called "elulúú" in Yoruba, and several others in different languages is known to be lazy and not strong enough. From history it is known that this bird used to be strong and agile, but it acted against the

agreement with other birds, which resulted in her present predicament. History has it that in a time immemorial there was a draught all rivers were dried off. Water became a very scarce thing in the community. Many died because of lack of water. To solve this problem, all birds agree to dig a well to serve as source of water for all. All agree to a date which all and sundry should be present. **Èlùlùú, cleverly** move away from the town on the eve of the appointed day. All were present except this bird. The work was a success. A very reliable and safe water was reached within a very short period. They all share the joy and planned to sanction those absent from this work. It was unanimously agreed not to allow **èlùlùú** to drink from the water unless he has a reasonable excuse. **Èlùlùú** did not have any reason to any of the mates. The following morning, **èlùlùú** was the first to go to the well. He finished the whole water before any other person could come. While others get to the well they met nobody but just observed that no water in the well. They had a tête à tête on the way out of this problem. The following morning, **èlùlùú** woke very early and go to the well. As he set on the water, other birds appeared from their hidden places and continue to beat **èlùlùú** till point of death. He was then allowed to go with no power or strength. It was from this particular day that **èlùlùú** has lost his power and stamina. Till date **èlùlùú** is the weakest of all birds. This is caused from the pains suffered from the beating. Such a story depicts the popular proverb which says: that concentrated efforts bring success. The bird, “**èlùlùú**” that refused to lend a hand with others is now left alone to face the music. One should cooperate with others to bring positive changes to one's environment. This could serve as a lesson, to the younger ones.

3. Language and Style of Narrating Fables

Fables generally are narrated with the narrator and the audience face to face in a typical African society. The presence of the narrator and the audience makes the language of fables to be direct and simple. It is mandatory for the narrator to put the age, exposure, society and the psychological situation of the audience into consideration to have a meaningful outing. The mood of the audience is also very important as they form the recipients which their participation is as important as the presenter. Fables are usually narrated with local language of the narrator and the audience. Ashcroft (1995), quoted by Ajayi (2010), says *language carries culture, and culture carries language, especially through orature and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world. Language is thus inseparable from us as a community of human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relationship to the world.* They all share many things in common. The narrator is an elder in the society while the younger ones are the audience. Women constitute the larger percentage of the narrator in an African setting. The younger ones sit to be entertained, educated and informed by the older ones, usually women as said earlier. Men usually play dominant roles in this circumstance; they lie by the side listening non active, serve as the chief security for the narrator and the audience. Elders are the custodians of fables and all other forms of oral literature. The elders who are the repositories of a culture's wisdom pass these artistic forms from one generation to another. They serve as a link between the past and the future. They lived with the ancestors; those forms they retained were passed to the new ones who also retain them for generations.

A fable, which is an aspect of oral tradition is both more specific and less ambiguous form of communication, because the speaker reinforces his or her specificity of meaning with body gesture and expressions, intonation and various self-correcting mechanisms of which writing is incapable of. Many innovations are added this makes the story to differ as the narrator has to be diplomatic and allay their fear to the barest minimum in every presentation. There are several interruptions on part of the audience and at times the narrator. Clapping of hands, drumming, crying by the audience that are timid and fidgeting in some occasions adds to the aesthetics in the performance of oral literature.

In the oral tradition, as said earlier, the aged are the repositories of a culture's wisdom. The elderly ones can be discounted somewhat in modern technological society, not so much because of rapid changes in successive waves of the future but because wisdom is available in books. Plato according to Rosenburg (1987) was of the view that the wisdom of writing was superficial; no give and take of cross examination and responses was possible. There can be no immediate responses to a written literature so also of the defense. A book (literary book) can be put aside and never be opened at all. Oral rendition cannot be easily side-stepped in face to face situations.

The style of narrating fables is usually simple and direct. The narrator or the presenter makes all the audience to be attentive and get sited. Usually, in Africa, fables are narrated in the night after the day's work under the moonlight or they sit surround a camp fire to get relaxed. The narrator normally starts by captivating the attention of his /her audience put them in suspense. He announces the principal actor in the fable and gives a very short story on the character of such an actor. Okpewho (1990) 'since oral narrative-performance is, like a stage production, characterized by an immediate interaction of narrator and audience, the first contact between both parties initiates the first effort by the narrator to achieve aesthetic harmony with his audience'. Apart from such preliminary modus operandi as for example in the Yoruba narration, 'My story spins and spins and falls on the heads of two jealous co-wives'. This is to ignite the passion of the audience. In Yoruba society, the narrator usually plays on words. Ajiboye (2008) quotes Babalola (1973) and Amoo (1987);

Narrator: Àlò o

Audience: Àlò

Narrator : Alo mi da firigbagbo, o da lori Ijapa,

Ijapa Tiroko Oko Yannibo

Ese danin danin bi aran ope.

To kole kole, t'o fi iran ba a je.

Ti n lo laarin epa, ti 'pako re n han firifiri

Oni opelope pe oun ga.(2)

Also Roger (1983) informs readers of ways to start fables thus;

My story breaks sharply, pá

*Don't let it break its arms
It breaks, whirs, and thuds, wàrà gbì
Don't let it break its neck;
It didn't fall on my head!
It didn't fall on my neck!
Nor did it fall on the bit of Rat
That I'll eat before I sleep tonight!
Instead it fell on the head of... (Tortoise, elephant or...) (15)*

Another writer Babalola (1973) agrees with this system of preparing audience minds before entering into the mainstream of the story. He uses different manners to start his own fables.

Apàlò: Àlò o!
Elégbè : Àlò !
Apàlò : Àlò ò mi dá firìgbààgbó, ó dá lórí ijàpá àti ajá. (55)

Meaning:

Narrator: Alo o!
Audience: Alo o. !
Narrator: My fable centers on tortoise and dog.

Akporobaro (2006) also agrees that the narrators of fables in the African settings do not just launch into the story, but set the atmosphere for the story, create a state of suspense of eager anticipation, anxiety and interest in the audience. He goes further to state that the narrator holds the audience in rapt attentiveness to the story. All these serve as the introductory aspect of fables. The story on the fable always falls on the head of the main character. While the name of the character in the fable is given, a short description of such an animal is followed, this is to grasp and arouse the concentration of the listener/audience as said earlier. The ways and manners in which the narrator defines or describes the main character influences the success of the story. Olatunji (1987), cited Bamgbose that **Àlò** fable in the Yoruba language, that there is keying and framing devices which set the events of the **Àlò** apart from narratives of everyday experience. He writes about the mirror image structure of the opening and closing frames. That it usually opens with **ààlò o** by the narrator, meaning, (here is a story), the audience responds **ààlò** meaning let us have the story. This shows the demarcation and prepares the audience attentiveness to the story. Towards the end of the story, when the narrator has told the story, he concludes by saying, **ìdí àlò mi ree gbagbalako, idi alo mi ree gbangbalako**, meaning this is the end my story. At this point the audience is expected to give the lesson deduced from such story.

Another area is the narrative technique. The narrator captivates the attention of his audience with beautiful and simple language. The language will be simple and direct. Usually fables are narrated in the local language of the listeners. The narrator also introduces music to his narration, with the introduction of music the audience partakes as they serve as chorus. They sing the chorus line while the narrator led. Song adds to the aesthetic in fables. The listeners at times clap and dance to the song. This adds to the artistic assessment of the narration. To conclude fables, the narrator ascribes the success of such a fable to himself and the negative he attributes to another entity. Let us examine another fable from the Yoruba tradition of Nigeria. Tortoise and elephant. This is to strengthen and explain the more how it is been use and how it is narrated.

Olagoke (1973), in a fable which belongs to the Yoruba society recorded by him, *Erin ati Ijapa*, Elephant and Tortoise. He paints the picture of a society where there is calamity and things refused to go the normal way. The king in this society is the head of the town. He possesses the spiritual and political power over his subject. This is usually the case in any African society. He is to see to the well being of the citizens under his jurisdiction. In this fable, the citizens complained bitterly about the deplorable situation. The king is not pleased with this awful situation and so disturbed. To solve this unsuitable situation, solution must be provided. According to the tradition and customs of these people, Ifa oracle, a divine authority, needs to be consulted. This was done. According to the oracle, to appease the ancestors and the gods, an elephant should be killed in the palace. It is only this that can bring about positive change in the society. The problem then was how to get an elephant into the palace. The king, the supreme head of the citizenry and the chiefs become worried on the way out. Out of desperation, the king promises to share all his belongings to two equal parts for whosoever that can achieve this task and thus to save the entire town from calamity ahead. All the warriors and the hunters' efforts were in vain. The herbalists achieved nothing all as avenue seemed blocked. They tried all their capacities but failed to accomplish the goal of bringing the elephant into the town. The tortoise heard of this went to the palace to meet the king. He made promise to bring a life elephant for the sacrifice. The news of tortoise's plan to bring the elephant into the palace got to the town. Many people make jest of him as an hypocrite and lazy somebody that it is only interested in the wealth and that has no power to execute the laborious task which all the warriors could not perform. He was not bothered with these comments but continued with his doggedness and plan. He requested for certain period of time and made promise to bring the elephant to the palace. He said further that if this is not possible the king should kill him. Tortoise started the journey with *akara*, a Yoruba beans cake prepared with honey. He set on the trip to the forest where it was believed to harbour elephant. After the third day, he became very tired. He was contemplating on the way out. On this note he slept off under a tree in the forest. The following day as he woke up he saw an elephant. This is amusing and he feels a sign of relieve.

Ha! elephant the savior of the moment, the king of all beings. Tortoise, cry out, Elephant you are here while everybody have been looking for you since the demise of the king. You have been nominated the next king. You should be ready to follow me now as it is not too late. The Elephant felt amazed and furious with this news and warned the tortoise of deceit and asked him to stop such a joke. Tortoise present him with one beans cake. This is to show you that you are the king. This is your food, meant only for the king. Without wasting time tortoise starts drumming and singing after praising his prowess.

A o m Erin j'oba Ereku-ewe

A o m Erin j'oba Ereku-ewe

As he sings, he gives the Elephant some of the cake made of honey. What a delicious meal! exclaimed the Elephant. He starts dancing with the tortoise and straight to the town. On getting to the town tortoise lead elephant straight to the palace. To cut it short, the Elephant was brought to the palace by the tortoise. The prepared ditch covered with best attires was shown as a reserved space for the king which nobody should step on. This attracts elephant and walks gorgeously on the spot, without any notice elephant fell into the pitch and the warriors shot at him. Elephant was used for the sacrifice as **Ifa** oracle predicted. to and the sacrifice was done. The king divided his properties, the movables and immovables to two equal parts and give a portion to tortoise.

From this fable many lessons could be derived.

- 1) One should not underrate anybody. The tortoise was considered too petite to bring an elephant into town. A task that many great people have failed to achieve, was achieved by almost the smallest being in that society. This feat is to the glory of determination and preparation. One should remain doggedness and resolute whenever a task is to be accomplished.
- 2) Another notable factor is that one should be careful of what to take as food one needs not to be greedy as this account for part of the elephant's predicament and downfall.
- 3) From the cultural point of view, one is able to see function of a king in the Yoruba society, how the subject were under his care. The king concerns himself with the well-being of the citizen under his jurisdiction and can go extra kilometer to make life enjoyable.
- 4) The fable also reveals the norms and beliefs of these people, Yoruba. they hold their faith in the king and gods. Ifa is seen as the messenger of the ancestors and prescribes whatever is to be done to appease these ancestors. This must be done to have positive change in their daily activities.
- 5) The ability of the gods to protect is also revealed. The sacrifice to appease them could also be seen. These are seen in the fable. The aesthetics in this cultural transmission can only be treasured by those that share the same culture. The belief in Ifa as the sole agent that can proffer solution under such a condition is another notable factor that has to do with cultural trust, but to an alien it serves no purpose. All these and many other moral lessons formed the coherent reasons or intentions this particular fable performs.
- 6) As fable transfer cultural elements from a generation to another, from this fable, the young ones who double as the audience are trained to solve their problems through consulting Ifá. They will imbibe this culture in a play away manner and it becomes part of them when they grow up.

4. Some Problems Facing Fables and Probable Solutions

Fables as an integral part of literature, faces a lot of problem in this technological era. This period that supposed to be an added advantage turns otherwise. The advancement in technology should contribute positively, and judicious usage ought to be maximized. Many obscene films that lack all moral justifications constitute the order of the day, many home video tapes are not censored this results in dissipated acts in our society. Development in technology can assist fables across linguistic boundaries, with globalization which makes societies become a global village. The local areas where these fables reside with the elders are being deserted, everybody are running to urban areas. With the migration from local areas the elders could not see their offspring to listen to these fables. As they die they die with these fables.

The emphasis on science and technology being the order of the day has created and still creates problems for the literary aspects. Many parents and the society at large no longer to a large extent reckon with humanities studies, literature, history, government etc., and this could be inimical to development as human beings are but flesh and blood and not robots or machines. The role being played by literature cannot be underestimated as it enhances the development of oral/written comprehension and production.

The idea of putting all to writing is another factor that militates against oral literature. The ways and manner of passing this genre of literature constitutes aesthetics and distinguishes it from any other aspect of writing. While writing it the audience participation is removed. In the words of **Olatunji (1987)**, when the text is torn out of the natural setting of performance, the repetitions that engender audience participation and group solidarity, the poets' comments in response to a wink, a gesture, the coming in of a member of the audience or the message from his master drummer, all appear irrelevant or trivial. But these comments and repetitions are significant within the setting of performance, drum, dance and drama. From the foregoing it is evident that writing constitute

Another notable point is the dearth of functional literary text in many libraries which constitutes menace to fables. There is the shortage of novels, and when it exists it is rather wrongly selected or expensive to afford. Therefore, the present generations seldom have adequate access to well written literary texts. This lack of access does not allow them to be rich adequately in terms of pleasure reading or information seeking. This could also be termed to account for their lack of stick to their societal customs and traditions.

Priority on part of governments, there are many scholarship and bursary awards for science oriented courses. It looks rare and almost passes into oblivion for the literary students. This needs to be reconsidered so as to persuade the younger ones to imbibe the culture of reading. Department of languages and literature in our tertiary institutions of learning should give this a prominent role to play so as to reinforce this golden heritage. The curriculum planners also need to gear up and revitalize the contents by reconsidering our cultures, most especially the oral literary aspect in the recommendation of texts for the literary aspects.

In summary, the government, parents, Non-Governmental agencies, all and sundry should come together to raise literary writers from their slumbers and to those prolific ones to write to reflect their cultures more than the foreign ones in their writings so as to benefit from the treasures of literature. One can gain much knowledge via this fable if

its importance is well known to our government and they are well disposed to this. They should create avenues for the griot or raconteurs to give this aspect all attention it deserves.

Another ways of retaining this vital portion of humanities is that every community should strive to set a day apart for this all important aspect. Elders or those professionals should be engaged to perform on this special day and be remunerated by the local people or the non governmental agencies. By so doing others will be interested and enthusiastic response will be received.

4.1. Suggestions

Unobjectionable use of fables will among other advantages assist the children to examine and explain why they think as they do about certain issues being discussed. This process requires reasons for judgments and reflection upon criteria used in making judgments. An example is to determine what one's criteria for realism are after contending that realistic paintings are best. These children are also encouraged to listen carefully to comments of each group member and be willing to reconsider opinions. However, there is no attempt to come to a single "accurate" judgment for the group, as in the form of a vote. Taking hold of harmony does little to encourage philosophical accepted wisdom or dialogue and is a flawed attempt at closure in philosophical examination. Understanding the important influence of context upon one's judgments and opinions is crucial. Insofar as knowledge is a historical, linguistic, and social construct, it is dependent on context. Listeners' judgment perception and ability is developed and they live to cultivate such useful habit.

5. Conclusion

To meet the challenges posed by the 21st century, we cannot do away with our cultural heritage. The ultimate goal of any literary works is to promulgate customs and norms of societies and to contribute to peaceful co-existence of the members of such societies among others. This paper has given insight into fables which is an integral part of literature, the problems being encountered in this era and plausible solutions have been proffered to solve the problems enumerated. By so doing, our culture will be preserved. The norms and values of the society will also be given due recognition and the society will achieve its desired goals (development and nonviolent co-existence). Not only this, the society will be regarded as an embodiment of cultural entity. If properly and judiciously utilized, all the vices in the society will be things of the past. Human trafficking, child abuse, drug abuse and the likes would be adequately addressed. Peace and tranquility could return to our society.

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