



GOMBE SAVANNAH

**JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND
COMMUNICATION STUDIES (GOSAJOLLCOS)**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
GOMBE STATE UNIVERSITY
NIGERIA**

Volume 3 No. 1
October, 2022

LITERATURE

Oral Literature as Repository for National Security Intelligence Gathering

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Abstract

Oral literature is a repository of folk wisdom, knowledge, philosophy, worldview, culture, norms and values. It is a verbal art that is not only found in traditional societies but also in modern societies. In traditional society, folktale, myths, legends, dirges, proverbs, riddles, jokes, ethnic slur among other sub-genres of folklore constitute oral literature. In modern society, especially in the urban centres, contemporary legends; that is, stories formed around individuals or current social happenings thought to be factual by those circulating them, are increasingly gaining traction. Nevertheless, this subgenre, to a large extent, is understudied vis-à-vis its import on issues of national security. This study therefore, examined contemporary legend narratives on the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria with a view to highlighting the possibility of the narratives serving as a repository for national security intelligence. The data (narratives) were obtained during unscheduled conversation with some internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Maiduguri, the epicentre of the Boko Haram insurgency. The study used Fine and Freudian theorizations of contemporary legend and psychoanalysis as a conceptual premise to contend that contemporary legends have functional propensity for useful reservoir as well as open source of security intelligence that could solve the problem of crime and criminality in the society. The study adapted Heuer (1999) model of analytical judgement in intelligence gathering to examine the useful security information embedded in contemporary legends on Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. In the end, the study discovered that contemporary legends on Boko Haram are an open source of security intelligence available to security intelligence experts.

Keywords: Oral literature, Contemporary legends, Security intelligence, Repository, Boko Haram

Introduction

African oral literature as a repository of folk wisdom, philosophy and culture manifests in different forms and genres with varying degrees of prominence. While some forms and genres are prominent and their existence noticeable by members of the performing societies as well as observers, others

are surprisingly not paid attention due to the inability to relate such lore to address social problems. One of such forms of oral literature is contemporary legend. Contemporary legends according to Brooks (2008) are a form of modern folklore consisting of stories thought to be factual by those forming and circulating them. The term is also used to mean something akin to apocryphal story and like all folklores, contemporary legends are not necessarily false, but they are often distorted, exaggerated, or sensationalized over time. This form of folklore, according to Brednich, (2001) belongs to new strata of oral tradition with a worldwide distribution and besides jokes and ethnic slur, the most powerful genre of modern folklore. The themes of these stories, according to Clarke (2008), usually reflect themes of modern life in the cities and suburbs and revolve around topics such as crimes and criminality, technology, sex, professions, conspiracies, controversies and celebrities. Today, Contemporary legends are found everywhere; we have all heard them during conversations with family and friends as bedtime stories or anecdotes during our hangout discussions. For example, the life and death of Abubakar Shekau, the foundational leader of the armed wing of Boko Haram insurgents is testament of the evidence of contemporary legends and the rise of insecurity. Within the terrorised spaces of Maiduguri, there is the legend thus:

For long, Shekau is dead. Soldiers have killed him since the beginning of the insurgency. Boko Haram insurgents are only using his name for war propaganda to keep hope alive amongst their fighters and to encourage them to keep fighting. He was wounded by military airstrike on his hideout in Sambisa forest. Don't you notice that, in recent times, he has not been featuring in their propaganda video as he usually does? I am telling you, Shekau is dead. Since! Believe it. These people are only using his name as a figure head and pretending that he is still alive in order not to kill the morale of their fighters. Believe it! Hmm, really!

This narrative was active sometime in 2011 to 2012 in Maiduguri in the heat of the Boko Haram insurgency when stories and counter stories kept filtering in on the death of Shekau in military airstrikes. Like Wole Soyinka's Abiku, Shekau kept dying and resurrecting in different versions of the narrative by people who were making attempts to explain the phenomenon occasioned by a major military onslaught on the insurgents. This study posits that because stories like this are formed around real events, like the military

operations that gave room for this legend, the possibility of having some kernel of truth in them is high. On that note, this paper argues that contemporary legends on Boko Haram are a repository - open source - of security intelligence on the crisis. To demonstrate this claim, the study examines two active contemporary legends on the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria with a view to explaining how this conversational genre of folklore could serve as a source of useful intelligence on crime and criminality. To proceed, it is important to consider some conceptual explanations.

Conceptual Explanations

Oral literature is generally defined in relation to its written counterpart – literature. In its broad sense, literature is seen as anything written. It could be any written material on chemistry, mathematics, geography, physics, history, philosophy and the rest. In this sense, the emphasis is on the form rather than the creativity and imagination with which the content of the form is written. Where creativity and imagination are emphasised, literature is considered to be written texts ‘marked by careful use of language’, including features such as creative metaphors, well-turned phrases, elegant syntax and open to different interpretations (Meyer, 2018, p. 5). From the two perspectives, the notion of ‘writing’ is the unifying factor between the two points of view and also the subject of debate between oral literature and the written literature. That is to say, the phrase ‘oral literature’ sounds contradictory since literature is generally associated with ‘writing’ going by this limited paradigm. To understand the limitation of this paradigm, there is need to examine the definition of the concept ‘oral literature.’

The definition of oral literature, itself, is not free from academic debate. To begin with, scholars have expressed reservation on the collocation of ‘oral’ and ‘literature.’ The term ‘oral’ and ‘literature’ as a phrase sound contradictory really. Therefore, as a substitute to moderate the alleged contradiction apparent in the phrase ‘oral literature,’ Pio Zirimu coined the term ‘orature’ in the 1970s and defines it as ‘the use of utterance as an aesthetic means of expression.’ See (Kabore, 2007, p. 27) and (Njogu and Maupeu, 2007, p. 204). However, the use of ‘oral literature,’ instead of ‘orature,’ still persists among literary scholars and critics due to the rediscovery of oral literature as the antecedent of written literature (Njogu and Maupeu, 2007, p. 28). Be that as it may, oral literature has been defined by Nandwa and Bukenya

(1983, p. 1) as ‘those utterances, whether spoken, recited, or sung, whose composition and performance exhibit to an appreciable degree the artistic character of accurate observation, vivid imagination and ingenious expression.’ This form of literature, according to Godard, (2008, p. 1) ‘shares with written literature the use of heightened language in various genres but it is set apart by being actualized only in performance and by the fact that oral text constitutes an event.’ Discernible from the key features of oral literature – vivid imagination and ingenious expression - highlighted in the definition of the term by Nandwa and Bukenya (1983) and the features of written literature according to Meyer (2018), – text ‘marked by careful use of language,’ written and oral literature have one unifying factor – they are ‘expressed’ in the most excellent language. In other words, literature, whether written or oral, is a form of human expression in the most heightened language. The only area of divergence is the form; the written literature is realised after putting it in written form, while ‘oral literature is realised during its performance’ (Godard, 2006, p. 1).

In spite of the availability of books and the electronic media, oral literature is still relevant today and principally studied by folklorists as the voice of tradition (Godard, 2006, p. 1).

According to Gill (2017, p. 528), ‘oral literature is the repository of artistic expression in society and is a channel to find balance, harmony and beauty in the world.’ Gill further observes that ‘this literature, through various genres, emphasise the need to understand pain, suffering and evil.’ In other words, through folk literature, happenings in the society like suffering, pain, crime, and other vices could be understood. Oral literature also ‘makes us aware of ourselves, other human beings, our environment and our history’ (Gill, 2017, p. 523). This implies that we can gather useful information, including security intelligence about crime and criminality committed by other human beings within our environment by collecting and studying our oral literature.

Oral literature exists in different genres and forms. According to Kachele (2019), oral literature, sometimes referred to as folklore exists in the forms of folktales, tall tales, sayings, parables, riddles, myths, legends, anecdotes, fairy tales and so many others including contemporary legends or urban legends which Brooks (2008) defines as a form of modern folklore

consisting of stories thought to be factual by those forming and circulating them.

Scholarly attention on contemporary legends dates back to the 1960s. Ellis (2007) traced the roots of the concept to the 1960 34th conference of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute for Social Research, held in Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia). The conference brought together European scholars to discuss the theme 'Myth in Modern Africa'. Ellis observes with dismay that:

... the proceedings of this conference were published by the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, though in mimeographed format, and while copies are widely held in academic libraries, they tend to be shelved with African studies resources and are rarely consulted today. This is a shame: the papers included should be better known to legend and rumour scholars, as the material discussed focuses on types of emergent narratives, particularly those with political implications that have since become recognised in western societies as urban or contemporary legends. (Gadaka, 2022, p. 84).

From another angle, Brooks (2008) posits that the first study of the concept now described as urban legend seems to be the study of Edgar Morin's *La Rumeur d'Orléans* (in French) in 1969. He further points out that the term urban legend used interchangeably with contemporary legend was used in print by Jan Harold Brunvand, a professor of English at the University of Utah, US, as early as 1979 in a book review appearing in the *Journal of American Folklore* (Brooks, 2008).

Ngaire (2010) traces the origin of the concept further and posits that this form of folklore has been around since Socrates and in modern times they fill the role that fairy tales, parables and grapevines have had in the past. Similarly, Robert (2001) observes that Contemporary Legends are 'today's equivalent of the myths, fairy stories and folktales collected by people like Andrew Lang and Grimm brothers in the 19th century Europe.'

Scholarly investigation of contemporary legends in the modern epoch according to Brednich (2001) started with the first Sheffield conference in the early 1980s and currently "lies in the hands of a group of specialists centred on the International Society for Contemporary Legend Research."

Today, different groups are interested in the study of contemporary legends but no attention is given to its tendency to serve as an open source of security intelligence. According to Stumpf (2006, p. 18), some of these

groups interested in the contemporary legends include ‘sociologists, psychologists, journalists, anthropologists, scholars of literature, folklorists, political scientists, critical theorists and performance artists.’ By implication, the definition of ‘contemporary legend’ is as diverse as these groups. For this study therefore, the working definition is from folklorists’ perspective. Accordingly, Stumpf (2006, p. 49) defines contemporary legend as ‘a short narrative form that circulates in multiple versions and forms, in folklore and popular culture.’ In the same vein, Brooks (2008, p. 1) defines the sub-genre as ‘a form of modern folklore consisting of stories thought to be factual by those circulating them’. And that the term is used to mean ‘something akin to apocryphal story’.

On the scope of contemporary legend, Ellis (2007, p. 38) posits that this genre of folklore, when viewed from its ‘broadest sense,’ includes popular rumour, sayings and beliefs as well as narratives that are in active circulation in a given community. Having seen the concept of contemporary legends, it is important to examine the idea of intelligence vis-à-vis contemporary legends.

In all human endeavours, including academic, social, military, economic, police, and even in the political realm, intelligence is vital to the realization of goals and targets (Oghi & Unumen 2014, p. 8). It is also common knowledge that in this epoch of asymmetric warfare and increasing sophistication of criminality, the success or otherwise of state actors in tackling the challenge depends to a large extent on their ability to gather timely and robust intelligence around the phenomenon. Intelligence, in the context of security, according to Afolabi (2018, p. 2) is ‘the product resulting from the collection, evaluation, analysis, integration and interpretation of all available information’ on any matter under investigation. This intelligence, Afolabi further observes, is ‘immediately or potentially significant to security planning and operation.’ Looking at this definition closely, intelligence is derivable from ‘all available information’ around any situation of interest. This is where contemporary legends come in. Contemporary legend, by its nature and themes, is a repository for unverified and raw information about individuals or real events, hence, a useful source of raw information. This useful information may come in the form of general knowledge about the context of crime or intelligence derivable from clues from different versions of the narratives.

Contemporary legends, by their nature, are narratives formed around real and current events believed to be true by those circulating them. This form of narrative is also known as ‘a friend of friend’ story. This is because its original authorship is usually vague and unknown. And usually, the storyline of contemporary legend sounds plausible because it is formed around something familiar to the tellers and listeners. These features make contemporary legends a store house for security intelligence information since according to Heuer (1999, p. 32), intelligence information involve considerable uncertainty as the analyst is commonly working with ‘incomplete, ambiguous, and often contradictory data.’ The often ambiguous and contradictory information contemporary legend narratives present in their various versions could be examined by intelligence experts for the pieces of information it carries. This is in line with Heuer’s further observation that the function of the analyst transcends ‘the limits of incomplete information through the exercise of analytical judgment to arrive at actionable intelligence.

For this reason, contemporary legends are a repository for security intelligence, especially when placed in the realm of raw information about an event, which is available to intelligence experts in the open source of data about subject of investigation. Reinforcing this position, Gadaka (2022) notes that the information lurking in contemporary legends ‘could be harnessed and reduced to useful information that would aid security decision making.’ This can be achieved by identifying, collecting, analysing, and making sense out of relevant information from active legends formed around a particular matter of interest.

Theoretical Premise

As noted earlier, contemporary legends are stories entwined with incomplete and sometimes contradictory information about mutually familiar event to the teller and listener(s). To make useful information out of ‘open source’ of intelligence information, like contemporary legends, certain analytical strategies need to be deployed by intelligence analyst to transform the raw data lurking in the narratives to useful intelligence. One intelligence analytical model that fits into the analysis of contemporary legends for their hidden intelligence is the Heur’s approach. Heuer (1999, pp. 32-39) outlines three approaches, which security analysts can take in their efforts to make out meaningful intelligence from raw information on current events. These

approaches, which could be adapted to analyse contemporary legends to reveal the useful intelligence they carry are (1) situational logic, (2) comparison with historical precedents and (3) applying theory.

The situation logic approach ‘commonly focuses on tracing the cause-effect relationship’ of the situation at hand in isolation with other similar events. In other words, the situation is examined on its own merit not minding other similar events. For instance, contemporary legend narratives are characteristically mono episodic, that is, they are always formed around a particular event, hence, the analyst is expected to collect and examine the narrative based on the particular event that prompted the formation and circulation of the story (Heuer, 1999, p. 32).

Another approach is comparison. Here, the intelligence analyst ‘seeks understanding of current events by comparing them with historical precedents in the same country, or with similar events in other countries’ (Heuer, 1999: 38). For instance, intelligence experts may decide to collect contemporary legend narratives on a particular social phenomenon, in its various versions, and compare the information, obtainable from the narratives, with information obtained from similar phenomenon within or outside the country with a view to understanding the phenomenon by the comparison.

The other approach is applying theory. To the academics, a theory, according to Heuer (1999, p. 32) is a ‘generalization based on the study of many examples of some phenomenon.’ In other words, a theory is ‘a more explicit version of what intelligence analysts think of as their basic understanding of how individuals, institutions, and political systems normally behave.’ For instance, the Boko Haram insurgents are known for using the Islamic catch phrase ‘Allahu akhbar,’ which translates as ‘God is great,’ as their battle cry. Using this approach to examine the contemporary legend on Boko Haram crisis that bears this hallmark, the analyst would draw conclusion that the attack is done by Boko Haram, considering the use of this battle cry associated with the insurgents.

Intelligence analysts could also draw from the Freudian psychoanalytical approach. This approach involves seeking to identify, in the narrative and context, symbolic references to the subconscious needs and desires of the people who invent, tell and listen to the stories. For examples, frequent references to gun may indicate obsession to fear by the teller of the narrative. Before deploying these approaches to examine the legends in this

study, let us examine the development of Boko Haram insurgency to gain insight into the crisis and how the phenomenon breeds contemporary legend narratives.

Development of Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

Boko Haram insurgency in north eastern Nigeria is a bitter experience that the researcher has lived through and seen some of the events up close and personal as a resident of Maiduguri, the epicentre of the crisis. Guided by this personal experience, the researcher carefully examined several written accounts of the insurgency and found the account recounted by Walker (2012) more accurate and appropriate to be presented here. According to this account, Boko Haram's origins lie in a group of radical Islamist youth who worshipped at the Alhaji Muhammadu Ndimi mosque in Maiduguri a decade ago. In 2002, an offshoot of the group (not yet known as Boko Haram) declared the city and the Islamic establishment to be intolerably corrupt and irredeemable and for this reason, embarked on hijira to kanamma, in Yobe state near the border with Niger Republic, to set up a separatist community based on hard-line Islamic principles. In December, 2003, following a dispute regarding fishing rights in a local pond, the group got into physical confrontation with the local police culminating into military crackdown on the group. In the crackdown, hundreds of the 'Nigerian Taliban' members were killed including Mohammed Ali, their leader. See (Walker, 2012, p. 3).

The few survivors returned to Maiduguri where they settled back with others from the youth group that had originated at the Ndimi mosque under the leadership of Mohammed Yusuf who then embarked on the process of establishing the group's own mosque in Maiduguri. This new masjid, named Ibn Taimiyya Masjid, was built near the railway station. The group's neighbours in Maiduguri dubbed the group 'Boko Haram,' loosely translated as 'western education is forbidden' (Walker, 2012, pp. 3 -4).

According to Wilson (2018:1), 'Boko haram launched an insurgency against the Nigerian government in 2009 with the aim of establishing an Islamic caliphate in West Africa.' But before this time, Adibe (2014) noted that 'the group conducted its operations more or less peacefully and that its radicalization followed a government in 2009, in which some 800 of its members were killed,' including its leader, Mohammed Yusuf, in police custody. Since then, the group, now known as boko Haram, has been engaging

the Nigerian government in a violent conflict, mostly focused in the north-eastern Nigeria. As at June, 2022, the conflict has reportedly left around 35,000 dead and over 2.2 million persons displaced in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe since 2009. See report on Nigeria in (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, 2022).

Since the beginning of the crisis, residence of Maiduguri and its environs have lived in fear and anxiety following the series of terrible events they have witnessed directly or indirectly. Out of this situation, contemporary legends are created and circulated to give expression to some of these events. Two of these legends are presented and analysed below to reveal their potency serving as repository for national security intelligence.

The Oral Narrative on ‘Bulama Yaga of Dikwa’

This narrative is about one purported gang leader of the Boko Haram terrorist group who was simply identified by the tellers of the story as Bulama Yaga of Dikwa. The narrative goes thus:

Did you hear about this one? That Bulama Yaga and his gang stormed Dikwa town chanting ‘Allahu akbar!’ ‘Allahu akbar!’ People started running up and down in confusion. They (Boko Haram) started shooting and bombing from all directions killing anything on sight. Most of the people scampered to Maiduguri for safety. The assailants took control of the town and established their own version of Islamic government and ruled over the captured locals with iron fist for some time before Chadian soldiers recaptured the town from Yaga. Yaga was captured alive and killed and the town was liberated ...

This narrative follows the observation of Cantrell (2010) that contemporary legends are often intriguing tales of woe and sometimes speak to the anxieties of the people. A cursory look at this narrative shows that the setting is Dikwa town in the heat of the Boko Haram violent insurgency, probably in 2011 when the insurgents were seen to be overrunning villages around Maiduguri. Hence, the story seems plausible. And typical of most contemporary legends, the source of the story is vague, it was performed in the form of conversation and the plot is too good to be true. All these features fit the description of contemporary legend narratives as outlined by Emery (2017, p. 1). Considering these, the narrative can be tagged as Contemporary legend.

The context of this narrative can be discerned from its central theme – the fear of Boko haram (Abbott, 2013, pp. 22-23). This theme of fear can be seen in symbolic references to fear as in ‘shootings and bombings.’ Ordinarily, the phrase, ‘Allahu akbar’ means ‘God is great’ and it does not have any violent connotation but because the insurgents have adopted it as their battle cry, the villagers now associate it with Boko Haram attack. References to violence in the narrative like, bombing, shooting, killing, attack and counter attack point to the obsession with fear and anxiety with which the tellers of the narrative are living with. This corroborates the position of Tangerlini, (1994, p. 18) who posits that ‘legend is a symbolic reflection of universals moulded by collective experience.’ In line with the Freudian psychoanalytic method, the tellers of this legend used the medium of this legend narrative to vent their obsession with fear and anxiety. Hence, the context of the narrative is fear of Boko haram.

During the narration of this legend, the teller presented the story during conversation as a true account of the situation in Dikwa town during the heat of the insurgency. This is in line with Abbott’s observation that ‘contemporary legends sometimes appear in conversation with family and friends (2013, p. 1). The storyline of the narrative appears so strong and vivid as if the teller is an eyewitness (Brunvand, 1983, p. 21).

From the context of performance, the function of the narrative can be clearly seen. It serves as a means of expressing fear and anxiety by the people affected by the crisis (Tangerlini, 1994:18). In doing that, truth in the narrative seems to be over embellished by the tellers to make it sound plausible to the ears, thereby taking the form of contemporary legend. This corroborates Oring’s position that ‘orally performed contemporary legends are presented as true story by their tellers’ (2008, p. 5).

The raw information or possible security intelligence-clue derivable from this narrative is that: there was a terrible attack on Dikwa town by terrorists. The attack bears the hallmark of Boko Haram. This is discernible from the chant of ‘Allahu akhbar,’ which the inhabitants of the area now see as Boko Haram battle cry. Out of the horrible incidence, this narrative was formed and circulated, with the characteristic features of contemporary legends, to give the incidence expression. The assailants were led by one Bulama Yaga, who might be known to the locals. After some moments of reign of terror, the insurgents were dislodged by what appeared to be strange state

actors. As a result, the affected locals scampered for safety into Maiduguri city. Probably, these victims are now living in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps spread across the city. All these, are raw information lurking in this narrative, which intelligence experts could explore further to arrive at useful and actionable information that would enhance national security.

Having isolated these pieces of information embedded in the narrative, the next task before the analyst is to carefully identify what Heuer referred to as ‘the signals’ from ‘the noise.’ In other words, the analyst is expected to analyse the narrative to separate the necessary information from the unnecessary ones and make informed judgment based on that. To this end, the analyst can apply one of the approaches of Heuer to make out useful intelligence from the raw information. For example, using the comparison approach, the analyst may decide to compare the pattern of this attack on Dikwa with previous attacks on other communities in order to draw conclusion on the identity of the attackers. For instance, Boko Haram terrorists are known for using ‘Allahu akhbar’ as their war cry. The analyst may decide to compare the use of this war cry in this particular attack with its usage in similar other attacks in the past. From the similarities or otherwise, the analyst may draw his conclusion on who the attackers were.

The analyst may also use the situational logic approach to make thoughtful and analytical judgment from the raw information embedded in the legend. This approach entails going beyond the available information (embedded in the legend) into the unavailable information (the intelligence), by making analytical ‘leap, from the known into the uncertain.’ According to Heuer (1999, p. 33) this approach requires the analyst to start with the known facts of the current situation and an understanding of the unique forces at work at that particular time and place to understand the reason behind certain things. In other words, the analyst seeks to identify the logical antecedents or consequences of the current situation. The situational logic approach entails focusing on the cause – effect relationship between the situation at hand in isolation with other similar events. In other words, the situation is examined in its own merit, not by comparing it with another similar situation. To put this in context, the analyst may isolate this particular attack on Dikwa, examine its characteristics in isolation with other similar attacks elsewhere, and predict the behaviour of the attackers or rationale behind the attack. This approach doesn’t

require the analyst to compare the attack with any other attack to understand the situation. The situation is studied on its own merit.

The Oral Narrative on ‘Prefect Modu of Bama’

This narrative is about one Modu Bukarye, also known as Abor by the tellers of the legend. The narrative goes thus:

The insurgents entered Bama town in the night and started shooting. People started running for safety. After a fierce battle with government forces, the town fell to the insurgents. The insurgents however, did not stay long in the town thereby creating security vacuum in the town. Modu Bukarye (Abor), one of the trapped few residents saw that as an opportunity to establish himself as leader over the trapped residents. He selected guards and assigned tasks to everybody in the town. He introduced strict command and control measures on the people and a slight violation of these measures was greeted with severe punitive measure. Abor once flogged an elderly guard sixty horse whips for failing to turnout for night guard on time and another elderly man was also flogged to death for daring to divorce his wife. The fear of Abor became the beginning of wisdom in Bama town. The atmosphere remained gloomy until one day, the Boko Haram terrorists struck again. This time, Abor was the first to flee the town.

This narrative is common amongst Bama Internally Displaced Persons living in Maiduguri. The story seems plausible but exaggerated. By killing an elderly man for simply divorcing his wife, the wickedness of Abor is exaggerated and typical of most contemporary legend; the source of the narrative is vague. This story has gone beyond rumour with its persistent and spread to assume the form of Contemporary Legend. With these features, it is safe to designate this narrative as Contemporary Legend.

The narrative context of this legend can be deciphered from its central theme. The theme is revealed in the horrible symbol of a tortured old man. And when examined from the angle of the fundamental belief of Freudian psychoanalytic theorists that literature or legend narrative is entwined with the psyche, one could see from the lines of the narrative the obsession and anxiety with which the tellers of this legend are living with. They are living in fear and anxiety. The story sounds like a day dream by someone who narrowly escaped from the monstrous jaw of a ravenous lion. The references to torture,

attacks and counter attacks, and the tormenting experiences of the victims point to the fact that this narrative is formed against the context of fear and anxiety. This obsession is revealed in the symbol of an elderly man been tortured to death.

The narrative is akin to spontaneous emission of the dreadful content of the mind of a person brooding on a horrible scene he once witnessed. And just like dream, the narrative repressed its latent content (fear and anxiety) behind manifest content (torture of elderly man) - this points to the inner mind-set of the narrator. Towards the end of the narrative, the narrator finds catharsis in the cowardly disappearance of Abor during the second attack.

From the content and form (conversational) of this legend, the narrative serves as a means of discussing the gloomy situation in Bama under the tutelage of the insurgents. In doing that, the elements of truth in the narrative are over embellished thereby making it a Contemporary Legend. The pieces of raw information discernible from this narrative are: i. there was attack on Bama town by the insurgents (the real invent); ii. The insurgents overrun the town; iii. The insurgents and government forces abandoned the town after the encounter; iv. One Modu Bukarye (Abor) imposed himself as leader of the helpless locals and ruled them with iron fist; v. the insurgents returned again to recapture the town and vi. Abor lost control and fled the town.

This raw information can be examined by security intelligence experts, using Heuer's theory approach, to determine the cause of Abor's wickedness to his fellow victims of insurgency. According to Heuer (1999, p.34) 'theory is a generalization based on the study of many examples of some phenomenon.' Accordingly, the theory approach 'specifies that when a given set of conditions arises, certain other conditions will follow either with certainty or with some degree of probability.' For example, the lawlessness that followed the attack on Bama town and the withdrawal of government forces will certainly lead to emergence of characters like Abor in this narrative. This assumption is based on the theory that absence of civil authority will lead to breakdown of law and order.

Conclusion

So far, this study has examined the possibility of contemporary legend narratives on Boko Haram serving as a repository for national security intelligence available to intelligence experts. The study suggests the application of the Heuer's strategic approaches for going beyond the limits of incomplete information in raw data to make sense out of the incomplete and contradictory information contemporary legends avail. In the end, the study concludes that, oral literature, particularly contemporary legends on Boko Haram, is a repository for national security intelligence, in the form of open source of raw information that could be harnessed by intelligence experts to enhance Nigeria's national security. On this note, the study recommends that intelligence operative should consider collecting and analysing active legends on a particular social phenomenon they are concerned with as raw information from open source just like they do to information that are readily available in other sources, in the public domain, like newspapers, social media, internet and the rest.

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