SOCIETY OF YOUNG NIGERIAN WRITERS

ARTICLES, ESSAYS AND E-BOOKS ON DANIEL

OLORUNFEMI FAGUNWA

© Society of Young Nigerian Writers
Daniel O. Fagunwa

Born
Oke-Igbo, Nigeria

Died
December 9, 1963 (60 years)

Language
Yorùbá

Daniel Olorunfẹmi Fagunwa MBE (1903 — 9 December 1963), popularly known as D. O. Fagunwa, was a Nigerian author who pioneered the Yoruba-language novel. He was born in Oke-Igbo, Ondo State. An Oloye of the Yoruba people, Fagunwa studied at St. Luke's School, Oke-Igbo, and St. Andrew's College, Oyo, before becoming a teacher himself.


Fagunwa's novels draw heavily on folktale traditions and idioms, including many supernatural elements. His heroes are usually Yoruba hunters, who interact with kings, sages, and even gods in their quests. Thematically, his novels also explore the divide between the Christian beliefs of Africa's colonizers and the continent's traditional religions. Fagunwa remains the most widely-
read Yorùbá-language author, and a major influence on such contemporary writers as Amos Tutuola.

D. O. Fagunwa was the first Nigerian writer to employ folk philosophy in telling his stories.

Fagunwa was awarded the Margaret Wong Prize in 1955 and was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire in 1959. He died in a motor accident in 1963. Fagunwa Memorial High School and Fagunwa Grammar School in Oke-Igbo, Nigeria, are named for Fagunwa. His daughter Yejide Ogundipe serves as a council chairperson for Ile Oluji/Okeigbo.