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THE INFERIOR SEX; A THIRD WORLD FEMINIST APPROACH TO WOLE SOYINKA'S *THE LION AND THE JEWEL*[*]

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ABSTRACT

Feminism, as a social and political phenomenon, has been controversial in all terms, for there are various types of it and each type is associated with a certain group of people, culture, or society. While the first wave and second wave feminism types are totally Eurocentric and are concerned with the emancipation of the white middle class women in Europe and in the USA, the third wave feminism has based its arguments on the emancipation of the women in the Third World countries since they are abused twice as much as those in the First World countries by the political and patriarchal system, which, apparently, is an unstraightforward definition of double colonization. It would not be right to underestimate the discrimination which women are exposed to in the First World countries, because they are also ill-treated by the system through double standards which are inclusive of womanhood, working conditions, body and sexuality, motherhood, wifehood, and so on. However, women in the Third World countries are overwhelmed both by these components and by the white way of the patriarchal system, which is established by the white colonizers and practiced by the black people in these countries. Third World countries have always been attractive for the Europeans and for the Americans since there are abundant resources to be exploited, which have contributed to the welfare of the First World countries. Colonization has resulted in assimilation of the people in the Third World countries; while the black patriarchal system has found a new definition through whitish way of life; women have suffered from both colonialism and the new patriarchal system, which is why they have been overwhelmed twice as much as the white middle class women in Europe and in the USA. In the light of these arguments, this article aims to analyse Wole Soyinka's play, *The Lion and the Jewel*, with reference to Third World feminism, which is a harsh protest against the colonial political design on the underdeveloped countries. As a matter of fact, Soyinka has been critical of both the colonizers and the colonized people in the Third World countries since he believes that while the colonizers are liable to benefit from the virgin and wealthy sources of the colonized territories, the colonized are entrapped in their dreams of the manipulations of welfare, modernization and the Westernization processes, which are believed to have been brought by the colonizers who

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pretend to be well-intentioned. The play is considerably significant for the analysis of the Third World feminist theory, for it is a life-like and concrete exemplification of cultural differences between the Western countries and Nigeria. Besides, the vicious circle which encompasses the Third World women within gender roles and the patriarchal system is clearly emphasized by Soyinka in a very straightforward and realistic way.

STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Beginning centuries ago, feminism has been a school which has been defined, redefined, structured, and restructured in parallel with the necessities of the societies and cultures. Besides, it has gone through many processes especially in accordance with those who possess and exert power over these societies and cultures. There are, therefore, various types of feminism rather than a unique one, which can be applied to all women or all societies globally. This is why, hence, there are also many controversies all around the world about the theories and practices of these types of feminism. In general terms, there were – and also are – some movements and waves of feminism, which started around 1960s and which are also still in progress at present. Because the first and second waves of feminism were concerned with the overpowering and abuse of the white women in Europe and in the United States by the inherent patriarchal societies, though especially the second wave feminists insisted that they were highly interested in establishing a global sisterhood and solidarity, a movement, which would be counted as the third in the history of literary criticism, was considered as essential for the emancipation of the women living in the Third World countries. Since the first and second waves of feminism, as well as their theories such as radical feminism, Marxist feminism, and so on, were mainly focused on the whitish problems such as possessions of female bodies by men, equal distribution of labour and wages, reproductivity of women, and so forth, the Third World feminists argue against the irrelevance and inapplicability of these issues into their own lives, cultures, and societies due to the colonization processes of their nations and countries as well as their cultures. They do not mean to underestimate or trivialize the white women's problems, stemming from patriarchs, or their attempts for liberation from these obstacles; however, what they emphasize is the notion that they suffer both from these problems, which white women are also forced to undergo, and the ones, which are created and imposed upon the patriarchy, living within their own cultures and societies. These, on the whole, bring about many handcuffing troubles before the women of colour, which create both colonization and abuse of the women in the Third World countries, which, to term it, can be defined as double colonization of the female body. During this double colonization process, women are forced to lose their very identities as females and as components of their own nations via assimilation and alienation as well as suffering from the patriarchal norms and attributed roles such as wifehood, motherhood, spinsterhood, daughterhood, and so on, since they are valued or devalued in accordance with these terms, besides their manner and success of fulfilling the requirements, which are forced upon them by both the colonizers and the colonized male individuals. Furthermore, women are made believe that it is their destiny to be

fulfilled and there is no way out of the hell, if, of course, they are given a chance to find out that the way they live is a diabolic one. As a result, the system in the Third World countries is sustained with this idea of the inevitable fate, which, in the end, makes women of colour more and more bound to the patriarchy and the colonizers' ill-boding ambitions.

Wole Soyinka, critical of both the colonizers and the colonized, have been one of the most outstanding writers of his period, since he has been realistic in portraying the conditions and maltreatment of the people in Third World countries. He criticizes the colonized for being excessively self-absorbed in their intentions of abusing the rich sources of these countries as well as benefitting from the low-price labour opportunities, while, on the other hand, he criticizes the colonized people for believing that the colonizers are in their countries in order to provide modernization and welfare for their nation without any bad intentions or any designs on them. Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*, thus, turns out to be the embodiment of the approaches and the principles, partaken in Third World feminism. This article, hence, aims to analyse the theories of Third World feminism as well as applying them into Wole Soyinka's play simultaneously. In addition to providing Soyinka's significance as a scholar and his ideas over Africa, the article also focuses on his understanding of the Westerner as an activist, who has been educated in the West. In the end, the article concludes that the women in the Third World countries are made the guardians of the inherent colonization process. Besides, women are also negated in many ways through the attributed gender roles as well as the normative references, which are provided by the patriarchal system, which, as a chain of cause and effect, is prescribed by the colonizers themselves. It is also argued that the women in the Third World countries are paralyzed mentally by the system in order not to think critically. This, on the whole, makes them imprisoners rather than the questers for their emancipation both bodily and sexually, which, therefore, underlines the double colonization process of the women in the Third World countries.

Keywords: Third World Feminism, Gender Discrimination, Patriarchal Society, Gender Roles, Wole Soyinka, *The Lion and the Jewel*.

MADUM CİNSİYET; ÜÇÜNCÜ DÜNYA FEMİNİZMİ YAKLAŞIMIYLA WOLE SOYINKA'NIN *THE LION AND THE JEWEL* ADLI ESERİ

ÖZET

Her birisi belirli bir toplum ve kültürle ilişkilendirilmiş olan çeşitli sayıda türleri bulunması sebebiyle feminizm, sosyal ve politik bir olgu olarak her açıdan tartışmaya açık bir akımdır. Birinci ve ikinci dalga feminizm akımları tamamen Avrosantrik olmakla birlikte yalnızca Avrupa ve Amerika'da bulunan orta sınıf beyaz kadınların özgürleştirilmesini kendisine amaç edinmişken, üçüncü dalga feminizm savlarını üçüncü dünya ülkelerinde yaşayan kadınların özgürleştirilmesi üzerine temellendirmiştir, zira bu kadınlar birinci dünya ülkelerinde yaşayan

orta sınıf beyaz kadınlara kıyasla politik ve ataerkil sistem tarafından iki kat ezilmektedir ve bu da çifte sömürgenin bir nevi tanımını oluşturmaktadır. Birinci dünya ülkelerinde yaşamakta olan kadınların maruz bırakıldıkları ayrımcılığı önemsememek doğru olmayacaktır çünkü bu kadınlar da kadınlık, çalışma koşulları, beden ve cinsellik, annelik ve zevcelik gibi meselelerde yer alan çifte standartların bulunduğu sistemden nasiplerini almaktadırlar. Fakat üçüncü dünya ülkelerinde yaşamakta olan kadınlar hem bu meseleler tarafından hem de esasen beyaz ırklarca kurulan ve siyahi toplumlardaki erkekler tarafından uygulanmakta olan ataerkil sistem tarafından bastırılmaktadırlar. Üçüncü dünya ülkeleri hem Avrupalılar hem de Amerikalılar için her daim cezbedici bir özelliğe sahip olmuşlardır zira sömürülecek kaynaklar oldukça fazladır ve sömürgeciler bu kaynaklar sayesinde daha da zengin olmuşlardır. Bu nedenle birinci dünya ülkeleri kendi değerlerini savunmasız durumda bulunan üçüncü dünya ülkelerine getirmekle kalmayıp bir taraftan da bu ülkeleri kendi çıkarları doğrultusunda sömürmüşlerdir. Bu süreç doğal olarak üçüncü dünya ülkelerinde yaşamakta olan insanların asimile olmasına ve siyahi ataerkil toplumun kendini beyaz toplumun yaşam tarzına göre yeniden tanımlamasına neden olmuştur. Buna bağlı olarak kadınlar hem sömürgecilikten hem de yeniden tanımlanmış olan ataerkil sistemden mağdur olmuşlardır ki bu da Avrupa ve Amerika'da yaşayan orta sınıf beyaz kadınlara oranla iki kat ezilmelerinin temel sebebini oluşturmaktadır. Bunlara bağlı olarak bu makale Wole Soyinka'nın geri kalmış ülkelerin üzerine oynanan politik ve sömürgeci oyunlara sert bir protesto niteliği taşıyan *The Lion and the Jewel* adlı tiyatro oyununu bu tartışmalar ışığında Üçüncü Dünya Feminizmine atıflarda bulunarak analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Gerçek şu ki, Soyinka hem Üçüncü Dünya ülkelerindeki sömürgecilere hem de aynı bölgedeki sömürülen halka oldukça eleştirel yaklaşmaktadır, zira sömürgecilerin sömürgelerdeki bakir ve zengin topraklarından faydalanma konusundaki eğilimlerinin farkında olmakla birlikte sömürülen halkın da iyi niyetliymiş gibi görünen sömürgeciler tarafından getirildiğine inanılan refah, modernizasyon ve Batılılaşma süreçleri gibi birtakım manipülasyonlarla dolu hayallerinde tutsak olduklarını değerlendirmektedir. Bahsi geçen oyun Batı ülkeleri ile Nijerya arasındaki kültürel farklılıkların gerçekçi ve somut bir örneklemesi olması hasebiyle Üçüncü Dünya feminizm yaklaşımı teorilerinin analiz edilmesi açısından oldukça önemli bir pozisyondadır. Bunun dışında, Üçüncü Dünya ülkelerindeki kadınların cinsiyet rolleri ve ataerkil sistemden oluşturulan kısır bir döngü içerisinde nasıl hapsedildikleri Soyinka tarafından oldukça açık ve gerçekçi bir şekilde vurgulanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Üçüncü Dünya Feminizmi, Cinsiyet Ayrımcılığı, Ataerkil Toplum, Cinsiyet Rolleri, Wole Soyinka, *The Lion and the Jewel*.

Third World Feminism

Before dwelling on the principles of Third World feminism, the term, 'Third World' should be clarified so as to understand what the Third World people's conditions are. In general terms, Third World has three correspondences, one of which is the geographical positions of the countries,

specified and accepted globally. This geographical discrimination identifies people as Europeans & non-Europeans, developed & underdeveloped, and so on. For instance, while a citizen of a European country is counted as a cultivated and civilized man or woman, a citizen of an African country or of a Middle East country is evaluated as a person from an underdeveloped or primitive society, which is considerably a common fact since the beholder of power gives meanings to these definitions. Because the so-called underdeveloped societies are not considered in the universal arenas or since whatever they claim are not evaluated as productions of sane minds, these people are apparently doomed to belong to the Third World geographically. The second correspondence of the term, Third World, is the economical connotation, which highlights the truth that the countries, which embody power globally, are considered as rich while the others are labelled as poor and ineffective. Therefore, the African countries and societies are described and defined as poor, which requires complete subordination according to the countries which are economically superior to the former. Taking this connotation into consideration, it is not difficult to infer that this segregation, too, defines the countries to speak and the countries to listen and obey. The third correspondence, furthermore, is that the Third World countries are named by the colonizers or by the conquerors without any intention of marginalization or discrimination; however, this last definition of the Third World is rather unacceptable since the conquerors or the colonizers cannot be considered as well-intentioned. Their intention, after all, is to colonize and exploit these countries to the last drop of the sources in the most suitable way. Therefore, naming these countries as the Third World countries by their colonizers or by their conquerors cannot be regarded as having no intention of marginalization or of discrimination. Besides, Ama Ata Aidoo, too,

> regards the terms 'third world' and 'postcolonial' as part of dominant societies' deliberate 'misnaming' of reality. 'Third' to Aidoo indicates a step close to failure, and she believes that acquiescing in these terms does not make them 'legitimate'. Aidoo finds 'many grotesqueries and absurdities in the term Third World' (Katrak, 2006, p. xii).

Aidoo's remarks are of great importance, for her analysis of the term is what the current systems are accustomed of practicing. The very existence of these people are mislabelled and misnamed by the powerful in the best way to remind them of their failure as individuals, correspondingly, as nations. Being rather absurd, as Aidoo calls it, Third World is another world where the circumstances make people closer to failure and their being as useless as a quintessence of dust. Therefore, it is impossible to evaluate the women in the Third World countries and the women in the First and Second World Countries at equal terms, for their conditions, facilities, resources, potentials and rights are not equal at any level. Correspondingly, white middle class European women cannot be normative referents for feminist discourses for the women from the Third World countries or for the women living in one of these countries. Essentially, all women have commonalities and differences which are shaped from one country to another or from one culture to another. However, Third World feminism emphasizes the idea that Western types of feminism have fallen short of analysing and understanding the unique patriarchs among cultures and societies, thereby having focused on the commonality that all women belong to the same biological sex. Furthermore, differences among cultures and patriarchal societies have never been considered by these types of feminism, which, in the end, has resulted in the omission of the other women in the other parts of the world. Mohanty (1984), on this, considers that:

> [t]he supposition of women as an already constituted, coherent group with identical interests and desires, regardless of class, ethnic or racial location or contradictions, implies a notion of gender or sexual difference or even patriarchy which can be applied universally and cross-culturally (p. 336 – 337).

Invalidating the theories of a global sisterhood, thus, Mohanty is rather concise in his ideas over a fixed system of patriarchy; if there were only one type of woman, there would be only one kind of patriarchy, too. In parallel with this notion, the solutions which were provided by the Western types of feminism could be applied to all the societies globally. However, Third World feminism is completely against this idea of commonality. As Beauvoir (1956) also argues it:

> [one] is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine (p. 273).

The core point of Third World feminism, therefore, is to acknowledge the differences between the women in the Third World countries and the women in different cultures and societies. Once both groups of women are considered within the same frames of conditions, the Third World women are labelled as ignorant, traditional, uncultivated, uncivilised, helpless, bound to their familial necessities and requirements, domestic, irrelevant, and irrational while, not surprisingly, the white middle class women are evaluated as cultivated, civilised, hypercritical, professional, interrogative, relevant and logical as well as being city women with full sexual control over their bodies. This, nevertheless, is not the case, shared commonly among all women in the world. Because most of the conditions and circumstances are different in every society and culture in this or that way, the type of feminism, too, is formulated and regulated accordingly.

Third World feminism, thus, came up as a very strict protest against the Western types of feminisms since the First Wave and Second Wave feminists have mainly focused on their own business and have established a self-absorbed and exclusionary system by dealing with such matters as liberation of women in terms of cultural, social, economic, and judicial arenas within a discourse, constituted by the white middle class women. This, for sure, has not been applicable to the women of colour in the Third World countries; therefore, the Westerners have apparently founded a so-called global sisterhood, for their concerns have nothing to do with the women of the Third World countries. Nonetheless, as Smith (1979), too, asserts it in her delicate article, *Racism and Women's Studies*, racism should absolutely be excluded from the feminist discourse since feminism is:

> [a] political theory and practice that struggles to free all women: women of color, working-class women, poor women, disabled women, lesbians, old women, as well as white, economically privileged heterosexual women. Anything less than this vision of total freedom is not feminism, but [is] merely female self-aggrandizement (p. 48).

It is, therefore, crystal clear that Westerners centralize their very own issues and problems while marginalizing women of colour and their problems. The global quasi-sisterhood, thus, is acknowledged as a big deception for those who are made to believe that it is their destiny to suffer from both colonial results and the patriarchal system, which has been shaped by the masculinity of these so-called sisters. This, on the whole, brings about another discrimination; the western woman is entitled by her existential struggle which is inclusive of her features of being decisive on her very own life, her body and sexuality, working conditions, career, and so on, whereas the woman of colour is entitled as ignorant, uncivilised, subordinated, and so forth. Nevertheless, it is neglected in international arenas that women in the Third World countries are left without any option due to colonization and the colonizers' own values. It is manipulated that the women in the Third World countries choose and adopt ignorance, indifference and subordination intentionally since the West considers these characteristics as inherent in these women's nature. Hence, Smith's argument is justifiable, for if there is racism or any other equivalence of segregation in theory and practice, it is

impossible to establish a feminist discourse which will liberate all women regardless of their racial, national, societal, and cultural characteristics.

The duplicity beneath this manipulation might be clearly revealed through a close observation of what Western types of feminism present to women in the global terms. For instance, Marxist feminism argues that there must be an equal distribution of labour and wage between a woman and a man since the former works both in the work places and in domestic areas while the latter is only responsible for earning enough money to meet the necessities of his family. However, because of the colonizers' success in taking control of the colonized regions, coloured men are made slaves and they are forced to work in different regions and far from their homes, which results in coloured women's colonization twice, for they are obliged to work both within and outside their homes in order to supply efficient sources for their families. Dankelman and Davidson (1988) argues this as follows:

> the developments, especially since the Second World War, have fostered the growth of industrial centres which draw men away from rural communities, removing their labour from subsistence farming. The increasing migration of men to the cities, to mines, to export agriculture, or to work abroad has caused the number of female-headed households to rise dramatically (p. 16).

Dankelman's and Davidson's factual report, therefore, manifests the very putrescence of Marxist feminist theory. Moreover, neither men nor women in these countries earn what they deserve. Therefore, it is palpable that while Marxist feminism works on behalf of the white middle class women, especially in Europe, it makes the women of colour in the Third World countries invisible in all terms. For sure, there are many other types of Western feminism. However, they are not suitable for the women of colour and the important thing is that it is impossible to apply their principles into Third World countries since their principles are constituted within Eurocentric perspectives. This is why Çağatay, Grown, and Santiago (1986) also put it in Nairobi Women's Conference in 1985 that feminism:

> constitutes the political expression of the concerns and interests of women from different regions, classes, nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. There is, and must be, a diversity of feminisms responsive to the different needs and concerns of different women, and defined by them for themselves. This diversity builds on a common opposition to gender oppression and hierarchy which, however, is the first step in articulating and acting upon a political agenda (p. 411).

By definition, Çağatay, Grown, and Santiago are highly agreeable about their insistence upon a diversity of feminisms since each type will be inadequate for certain groups in this or that way. Therefore, Third World feminists incorporate many assumptions related to their own cultures, politics, societies, traditions and so on. Their starting point is to use their very own autonomies in order to underline their own oppressions through implementing these principles into every piece of work they produce. Basically, what they try to do is to manifest how they are colonized nationally, racially, sexually, bodily, culturally, and politically. Their protest, thus, becomes the embodiment of their very own identities to have an insider voice since they have been omitted in global arenas for centuries. In other words, Third World feminism includes such matters as unmonopolizing feminist movements from the Westerners as well as reformulating them in order to identify the women of the Third World countries more easily. In order to reach this goal, Third World feminists base their arguments on the notions that colonization period overwhelms women of colour since the colonizer imposes its own patriarchal principles on the inherent patriarchal society, which, in turn, ends up with double colonization of women. Aghazadeh (2011) also asserts that "[g]ender and race - sexism

and racism - are components of … hierarchy by which the white settlers and interlopers attempt to establish their own rules and security in the alien land" (p. 111). In other words, women of colour suffer from the racist attitudes of the colonizer. Women, according to the colonizers, are of a lower status once compared to men; nonetheless, when the subject matter is a coloured woman, she is devaluated two times once compared to a man, which clearly manifests the hierarchy that the colonizer's system imposes upon the colonized. Eventually, this is also accepted and welcomed by the men of colour in the same society, too. This is why women of colour are colonized twice in comparison to the men of the Third World countries.

Another principle is that education and language are the components which expose women of the Third World countries to alienation more and more, for most of them lack one of the most natural rights, which is the right for education. Furthermore, even if they get education by chance, language of the curriculum, which is always in the colonizers' mother tongues, is rather difficult for them to learn and acquire, which, for sure, creates another barrier before the women of colour in the route to self-improvement and self-emancipation. Furthermore, "consenting to colonial education is fraught with dangers of colluding and co-operation into the master's values that may lead to alienation and exclusion from one's own community (Katrak, 2006, p. 98)". Therefore, due to education and the second language as well as being in compliance with the curriculum of the colonial education, Third World women are both assimilated and alienated to their very own being, culture, and society, thereby losing their original identities and resembling to those colonizers, which, correspondingly, makes women of colour colonize the other women of colour. This is why identity is another principle of Third World feminism; while the colonizer's system force people to live according to their own regulations, they lose their natural being through assimilation and alienation, which originate from such matters as language, education, social and official rights, conventions, cultures, and so on.

Besides the principles above, gender roles such as motherhood, wifehood, spinsterhood, and sisterhood are other obstructions which manacle women within the society, for all these roles include unwritten rules that women of colour have to obey. These rules are prescribed by both the inherent patriarchal system and by the colonizers' new practices. These gender roles, moreover, add other burdens on the women since each of the roles above objectify the women in certain ways. They ascribe attributions and missions to women, among which they have no chance to choose but to fulfil the necessities of each role. This is why objectification is one other principle, on which Third World feminism dwells. In the light of these principles, Third World feminism might be defined as a harsh protest against Western types of feminism, against misguided representations of women in the Third World as well as a new way of defining and identifying the Third World women and their real demands.

Wole Soyinka and "His Africa"

Akinwande Oluwole Soyinka, better known as Wole Soyinka, was born into a Yoruba[1] family in 1934. He is "a dramatist, poet, novelist, literary critic, theatre director, and sometime actor; a political activist par excellence; the first black Nobel Prize winner for literature; and arguably the most prolific and most distinguished African writer writing in the English language" (Euba, 1998, p. 438). Soyinka was highly aware of the colonial life due to his well-educated family and his personal traits. He was fond of both reading and writing. He created a lot of literary works when he was a student at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. Once those works are also considered, Soyinka's literary career is approximately sixty years up to date. After all, even before his adolescence, he was "an exceptionally gifted child with a versatile aptitude for voracious reading, making up words and

[1] An ethnic group residing in Nigeria and parts of Benin and Togo (*African Traditional Religions*, 2006, p. 7).

stories and writing dramatic sketches for school entertainments and fifteen-minute plays for radio in Nigeria" (Euba, 1998, p. 439). After he finished his education at the University of Ibadan, he went to London and finished his major at the University of Leeds. That period was surely very significant in Soyinka's life, for he was educated in the colonizer's land and he was loaded with all possible alienating effects of the colonial powers. The reason why these alienating effects are considerably important in his life is that he could possibly and easily be alienated to his own nation and community, which, in the end, could make it harder and harder to communicate and to agree on the same grounds with his own people at home. However, he directed the colonizers' gun against them; he used their language by combining it with his local langue and expressed all his protests to the whole world. In addition to these, Musa (2006) argues that:

> Wole Soyinka's drama/theatre vision is influenced by a combination of factors which directly or indirectly sharpened Soyinka's dramatic and theatrical vision. They are; the Yoruba god of iron (Ògún), early contact with Western and Christian education; communal rites, rituals and festivals; romance and fraternity with the Yoruba travelling theatre troupes; individual disposition to life; societal's socio-political, religious, moral and economic problems and Western theatrical modes (p. 219 – 220).

In order to improve the conditions of his own community, therefore, Soyinka endeavoured to "assess the political realities of change and to put his various ideas into dramatic practice" (Euba, 1998, p. 439) as soon as he came back from Europe to Nigeria in 1959. In order to be critical of the political turbulences and the military practices in Nigeria, he produced many literary works, among which are letters, poems, plays, and so on. Nevertheless, the effects of European culture and powers on Soyinka were so dominant that he was detained and imprisoned several times since he was struggling hard to liberate his country whereas the political conditions required his extinction because of the system's sustainability. As he proposes it in an interview with Shelby in 2011, his main concern is the loss of the cultural identity:

> Well, let's look at the origin of the modern African state, call it Nigeria, call it Uganda, call it Senegal, Cameroon—these were very artificial creations. To make those artificial spaces endure, there was a subtle to direct/overt bludgeoning process of indoctrination that sacrificed people's original nationalities; in which you were made to feel embarrassed to be called Yoruba, to be called Igbo, Efik, Hausa, or whatever. But these are the foundations of culture. These are what you were before these artificial boundaries were created, and then you became a Nigerian (p. 40).

Artificiality, hence, is dramatically significant since Soyinka manifests the truth that the colonizers create a discourse (or many others in different parts of the world) according to their own benefits, which, eventually, undermines the very identities and cultures of local communities. Being alike in their ways of life, each tribe has its own characteristic features, too. However, with the intervention of the colonizers, the tribes have been categorized under the same nationality, alienated to their former local identities and cultures due to the newly created uniform conventions. Thus, what Soyinka endeavours to emphasize with his activism and works is the fragility of the artificial boundaries. This does not mean that Soyinka has always been decisive in his actions and his pursuit of ideals; as Euba (1998) also argues it:

> In trying to assess and come to terms with Africa's and indeed the Third World's all-encompassing sociopolitical problem of postcolonial leadership, Soyinka's creativity has continued to vacillate between the pessimism of frustrated idealism and the optimism of assertive commitment to change; between the hopelessness of the merciless destructive

> potential of the individual will and the hopefulness of its more compassionate creative counterforce (p. 441 – 442).

Hence, it would be rather speculative to claim that he also aimed to eliminate all the colonial effects in Nigeria and in other countries, which were also colonized once, since it is impossible to erase the historical and cultural memory of a nation. Nevertheless, his attempts to point out the alienated and assimilated selves as well as the outcomes they have to endure because of their new identities within a specific colonized community are crystal clear in his works, especially in *The Lion and the Jewel* which was first performed in 1959. The themes Soyinka has employed during his literary and political career consist of such matters as "being, salvation, betrayal, cultural survival, waste, corruption of power, destruction of the human potential, and other topics" (Euba, 1998, p. 443).

The locality of the language he has implemented into his works has been very important in terms of authenticity since it is coded culturally and linguistically by his Yoruba roots. Hence, it is possible to claim that Soyinka has mounted his arguments by starting from the local and he has concluded them by arriving at the universal through his localized issues and language, which speak to the whole world and manifest the results of colonization and the conditions of the colonized nations; in other words, he was "now speaking of a 'global black'" (Soyinka and Shelby, 2011, p41). As a result, unsurprisingly, Soyinka has been renowned internationally and has won plenty of awards, among which are "the John Whiting Drama Prize that he shared with Tom Stoppard in 1967 and the Jock Campbell/*New Statesman* award in 1968" (Euba, 1998, p. 442). The most important award he received, furthermore, was Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986, for Soyinka was the first African to be honoured by a Nobel Prize for Literature. Most recently, Soyinka was awarded by the Academy of Achievement Golden Plate Award in 2009. Apart from the prizes he received, he was also rewarded with honorary degrees by many prestigious universities such as Harvard, Yale, Leeds, and Montpellier. Regarding all these struggles, imprisonments, exiles, activisms, turbulences and threats as well as his international recognition, awards and successes, therefore, Soyinka has been very effective in transcending "even more passionately towards the diaspora, saying that if there are Igbo outside, and Yoruba outside, descendants of slaves creating a new culture that, however, is linked to the African culture, then this "Africa" must extend beyond the African continent" (Soyinka and Shelby, 2011, p. 40).

The Lion and the Jewel

Considered as one of the most important plays by Soyinka, *The Lion and the Jewel*, "written entirely in a comic spirit uncomplicated by a dark, brooding humor or satire" (Jeyifo, 2004, p. 107), constitutes elements of both gender discrimination and colonialism in itself. In terms of colonialist criticism, rather than any glimpse of improvement in people's conditions, the play is a very realistic portrait of the characters' misconceptions and misunderstandings of modernity and Westernization processes, because of which, in fact, the whole nation suffers. He satirizes those who, as Jeyifo (2004) suggests, "propose a superficial, naive, and pretentious view of progress, modernity and Westernization as a counter to what they consider the unmodern backwardness of African village life" (p. 106). Moreover, Soyinka demonstrates Nigerian culture realistically along with its conflicts, roles of women, fluctuation of characters due to westernization process as well as the clash between modernization and tradition which are mentioned above. As Zargar (2012) also puts it:

> Soyinka can also be considered as an ethno-centrist, because his works concern a Yoruba centered value system and explain its worldview via the Yoruba culture, and moreover; he has brought up in a Yoruba community and thus traces his memories of ritual and tradition from the Yoruba, although he was also educated in the Western world which

> involved learning Western forms and literary structures, which he tried to use to introduce his African and Yoruba origin to the world (p. 89).

Despite the fact that the play is in the form of a love comedy (Jeyifo, 2004, p. 107), it is highly satirical in terms of politics and culture of Yoruba people in a pure realistic way since Soyinka believes that a writer should be the "eye and ear, the special knowledge and response" (Soyinka, 1968, p. 16) of its nation in order to supply a truthful portrait of its practices. Thus, Soyinka "functions as an interpreter; as an exegete of the intricacies of African and Yoruba life, temporal and spiritual" (Abu-Jamal, 2001, p. 31). Four characters, Sidi, a villager girl, Lakunle, the school teacher, Baroka, the Bale of Ilujinle, and Sadiku, Baroka's head wife, are very significant since each of them stands for the people who are crammed between traditional values and the westernization and modernization processes. Women, among these characters, are victims of both their sexual and national identities whereas men represent the male dominance and the sustainability of the patriarchal system. In parallel with the Third World feminist theory, these characters will be analysed in terms of gender roles, body and sexuality, patriarchal norms as well as tradition and culture.

The way Soyinka constitutes *The Lion and the Jewel* is highly interesting, for he asserts Gibbs (1981) that he was affected by a Western event in 1950s and that was how the play came up suddenly:

> I wrote the first draft of *The Lion and the Jewel* towards the end of my student days in England. It was actually inspired by an item which said: "Charlie Chaplin" – see how much this fellow keeps coming into African theatre! – "a man of nearly sixty has taken to wife Oona O'Neil," who was then about seventeen something like that. Now no one reading *The Lion and the Jewel* would ever have imagined that this is the authentic genesis of the play. From Charlie Chaplin, and again thinking of the old men I knew in my society who at 70 plus, 80, would still take some new young wives – and always seemed perfectly capable of coping with the onerous tasks which such activity demanded of them! I just sat down and that's how Baroka came into existence. I knew that some of these old men had actually won these new wives against the stiff competition of some younger men, some of them schoolteachers who came to the villages. Lakunle was based on those who thought: "This girl has got to be impressed by my canvas shoes." Mind you the younger men didn't speak the language that those girls understood and they were beaten by the old men. That's how *The Lion and the Jewel* came to be written (p. 82).

This is why the colonial powers also suffer from primitive and traditional practices, which are committed in their well-developed and modern societies even by such prominent people as Charlie Chaplin. In other words, the communities, who pretend that they modernize the traditional and primitive societies, too, suffer from the same uncivilised performances within their own societies. Therefore, what Soyinka underlines is the idea that there are heaps of Barokas and Lakunles everywhere in the world, regardless of the level of civilization of countries or of nations. Correspondingly, there are many Sidis and Sadikus, who are anguished due to the malpractices of Lakunles and Barokas. Moreover, in order to swap the roles that the colonizers and the colonized take throughout the play, Soyinka emphasizes the fact that "the 'illiterate' protagonist, [Baroka], proves more astute and enterprising than his bookish antagonist, [Lakunle]; the 'backward' villager proves more cultured, more enlightened than the citified, would-be sophisticate" (Jeyifo, 2004, p. 107).

The patriarchal system in Nigeria, the country where the play takes place, is established in the most suitable way to make the female body subservient to the male necessities. Sidi is a "true village belle" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 1), whose gender roles are prescribed by the patriarchal system she

lives in. The moment she is introduced to the spectators is when she is carrying a pail of water "with accustomed ease" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 1) which actually calls for attention since the reason why she can carry the pail easily is that she must be working for the household chores no matter how burdening or difficult they actually are. One of the gender roles for women, therefore, is a servant within and outside the house, for it is a woman's duty to fetch some water within the patriarchal norms. What makes it even more interesting is that there is not even a single clue about Sidi's parents or any other familial bonds in the play, which underlines the notion that she is any woman in Nigeria. She is simplified and generalized by Soyinka in order to highlight the idea of commonality as a type within a colonized patriarchal society. Furthermore, what Sidi does is in parallel with an animalistic labour since Lakunle, the school teacher, tells Sidi that "it is so unwomanly. Only spiders / Carry loads the way you do" (Soyinka, 1963, p.2). Although carrying a pile is a sort of labour attributed to women by the patriarchy itself and it should not be only a woman to take action for doing it, Lakunle humiliates her by unsexing Sidi with the word *unwomanly* (emphasis added). It is noteworthy to emphasize the word since Lakunle does not mean that a man should do it in favour of her; on the contrary, he means that by doing it, Sidi does not seem like a woman. Therefore, according to Lakunle, she is out of the frame of the gender role that the system has specified for her. What is more remarkable is that Lakunle is really representative of the whitish patriarchal system and he is crammed between his community and his westernized identity. Now that he is a black skinned man, wearing a white mask[2], his mentality is definitely wearing a white mask, too. Pourgharib (2013) discusses this as follows:

> Lakunle's way of behaving and treating his surrounding is absolutely colonial. His severe desire is to change the African custom into European, his way of clothing, greeting and speaking are all directed towards European criteria. He has already accepted universalization and become an active member in this process (p. 10).

This, on the whole, proves that the colonized male identity does not liberate the woman identity in terms of gender roles, either. Thus, the colonizers' political attempt, which is to pretend that the white way of life makes people live a more cultivated and individual life, is highly observable since it is easier for them to invade and control the countries more easily.

Sidi is a woman who is full of conflicts; she is both in a protesting mood against the patriarchy around her and within the frames that the patriarchy has drawn for her. Once she is harshly criticized by Lakunle with the accusation of being an unchaste woman, opening up opportunities for lustful men to look at her in a very impassionate way due to her clothes (Soyinka, 1963, p. 2 – 3), Sidi tears the patriarchal norms apart as a woman and defends herself. This seems pretty abnormal since she is a common ignorant woman within a male-dominated society, which incarcerates women in every possible way. This is what the white colonial logic cannot consider as harmless, for such women should be overwhelmed in the best way in order to sustain the established colonization system. This is why Lakunle, the spokes-model of the white colonizer, goes mad; he gets pretty self-confident and arrogant just like the white colonizer. He confesses to Sidi that what she feels is "[a] natural feeling, arising out of envy; / For, as a woman, you have a smaller brain / Than mine" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 4). What Lakunle aims is to demonstrate an explicit reason for the discrimination between men and women in a feminist discourse; however, if his words are considered within the colonial context, it is definitely visible to the eye that the colonizers' logic is embodied by his words. In other words, the colonized has a smaller brain and s/he lacks mental faculties in order to understand and manifest the designs on himself/herself by the colonizer. This is why the colonized is actually colonized! Therefore, women in these countries are confined twice since they are abused by their

[2] *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) is Frantz Fanon's sociological study about the impacts of colonization and the psychological effects of racism.

men, who are within the white patriarchal system with their black bodies. Back to Lakunle's ideas about women, he tries to prove that he is right since "[t]he scientists have proved it. It's in [his] books. / … / That's why [women] are called the weaker sex" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 4); correspondingly, that is also why the Nigerians are the weaker nation. Remarkably, it should be highlighted that the scientists Lakunle talks about are probably the Europeans; in other words, they are the ones who make it easier for the politicians to invade and control the weaker people and their countries.

Sidi is furious enough to confront Lakunle on the idea of the weaker sex by asking him "[i]s it a weaker breed who pounds the yam / or bends all day to plant the millet / With a child strapped to her back" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 4)? She is rather narrow in thought, for she defends herself and her sex by emphasizing her feature of being a labourer and a prospective mother; however, she is unaware of the fact that she is burdened with being a farmer in addition to her commitments within the house. She does not actually endeavour to get rid of these prescribed responsibilities; on the contrary, she is in a resigned mood. From this point of view, it is also clear that although there are various resources of wealth in these countries, the native people are forced to work in the fields in order to survive whereas the colonizers are in charge of the wealth. This, for sure, is one other reason for the double colonization process of the women in the Third World countries.

Wifehood is another gender role which is assigned to women by the patriarchal system. "The sexual dimensions of a female role such as that of a wife are mystified often into a purely social dimension because doing so suits a patriarchal authority that under the guise of protection controls and defines female sexuality" (Katrak, 2006, p. xvii). Although it is inclusive of meeting sexual necessities of their husbands and giving birth to countless babies, what is more important in this play is the bride-price since the plot is highly based on this phenomenon which seems like the fate of millions of women in the Third World countries, especially in Nigeria and India. Although women are degraded in comparison to men all over the world, the case is more dangerous and worthy of note in the Third World countries; women and men are considered as equal in terms of material only if the bridal money is supplied; "in spite of woman's productive and reproductive labor, she is considered less worthy than a man and hence a dowry[3] is needed 'to make up the difference'" (Katrak, 2006, p. 10). This, of course, is not the only reason why a dowry is needed. It is found out in the play that Sidi is asking for the bridal money in order to emphasize her virginity since the money is a traditional and cultural symbol for a woman's chastity, which, for sure, is another handcuff for women's emancipation both sexually and bodily. Sidi's entrapment in the traditional and cultural norms are clearly visible once she argues with Lakunle on this matter and says "I've told you, and I say it again / I shall marry you today, next week / or any day you name. / But my bride-price must first be paid. / … I must have / The full bride-price" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 7). Therefore, Sidi, as the guardian of her traditions and culture, cannot possess her own sexual autonomy over her body; on the contrary, she should and must be labelled as chaste conventionally within the patriarchal society she lives in. Otherwise, she will be "a laughing-stock" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 7) or "a cheap bowl for the village spit" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 7).

> '[T]raditions' most oppressive to women are located within the arena of female sexuality—not only the glaringly violent ones such as sati[4], but other more normative forms of objectification in customs like dowry, multiple childbearing, as well as in fulfilling traditionally expected roles as daughter, wife, mother (Katrak, 2006, p. 11).

Lakunle is excessively representative of the colonizer's mind and he comments on the bride price as expected from a white colonizer. He evaluates it as "[a] savage custom, barbaric, out-dated,

[3] Bride price.
[4] Sati is a cultural practice by which women are burnt on their husbands' funeral with their husbands.

/ Rejected, denounced, accursed, / Excommunicated, archaic, degrading, / Humiliating, unspeakable, redundant. / Retrogressive, remarkable, unpalatable" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 7). This, however, is just what the European kinds of feminism have done so far: speaking on behalf of the overwhelmed women without even a bit of what they have actually experienced for centuries as well as accusations of blind-mindedness and fatalisms without any idea of the women's cultural and traditional backgrounds. Sidi is already colonized within her own body by the patriarchal system. By criticizing her in a white manner, therefore, Lakunle does not bring about a change in her life; on the contrary, he adds another burden on her colonization and thus she is colonized twice. Because she insists on the bride price, she is accused of being an ignorant girl by Lakunle, which is a rather common reference by the First World countries, namely by the colonizers. The outcome of paying the bride price is actually portrayed by Lakunle himself in a very crystal clear way. It will only make Sidi a property to Lakunle and he will be able to use her body and sexuality according to his own wishes (Soyinka, 1963, p. 8). Therefore, renouncing the bride price will make Sidi a "modern wife" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 8) whereas her insistence on the execution of the practice will make her a "bush-girl … / uncivilized and primitive" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 8). At the end of the play, Sidi, raped by Baroka, marries him without the bride price, for she is now deflowered and labelled as an adult – *a woman at last* (emphasis added) – who does not need the bride price anymore. By doing so, she clearly proves that she is colonized both by the colonizer, which is symbolized by Lakunle, and by the indigenous patriarchal system, which is embodied by Baroka. As Sadiku, too, asserts it, "[i]t happens to the best of [them]" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 59).

One of the most humiliating and discriminating practices of the Third World countries is undoubtedly polygamy. What makes it worse is the fact that the colonizers' system of values and the impositions they force upon the colonized people support the polygamous society, which, in the end, is profitable for the colonizers again. After all, "[c]olonial interpretations of local traditions, often racist, necessitated a regressive embracing of native customs, often to the further detriment of women" (Katrak, 2006, p. 74) since deterioration in women's conditions will be beneficial for the colonizer himself. The polygamy tradition actually stems from the economy policies; since all possible sources are colonized by the white dominance, the natives are forced to work on the agricultural areas generally, as stated by Falola (2001):

> A large farm requires many hands to tend; so, too, does food processing. There are duties at home and in the village, and social expenses to meet. The most secure way for a man to obtain more labor is to have many children, produced and raised by many women. This is closely associated with the function of the family as an economic unit of production (p. 125).

Because they do not have the economic power to hire people to work in the fields, native men choose to have as many babies as they can. In order to provide this, men get married to a multiplicity of women. The colonizers' economy policy, therefore, makes polygamy a kind of vicious circle for the natives; the more it keeps the natives' conditions deteriorate, the more it renders women's position worse. "Although the statistics cannot be confirmed, almost one-third of the married population in Nigeria is polygamous" (Falola, 2001, p. 125).

Surely, this is not the only reason why there are polygamous societies in the Third World countries. One other reason is that men are entitled as potent and powerful in parallel with the number of their wives and children. The more wives and children they have, the more potent and strong they are. This second reason is in close relationship with that of Baroka's. His main aim is to prove that he is stronger than the youngsters in the village. He is so mournful once he asserts that "it is five full months since last / [he] took a wife … five full months" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 18). As an old man at the age of sixty-two, Baroka uses all his opportunities as the Bale of the village and tries to prove his

strength and potency by marrying and re-marrying as long as he can find new victims for himself. On his struggles for finding a new wife, however, he is not alone; his head wife, Sadiku, is like a lioness who goes hunting for the king of the jungle. This, on the whole, is a real exemplification of how women are the guardians of their inherent traditions without any realization of their self-exile by themselves. In order to persuade Sidi, Sadiku tells her that she will be honoured as the last wife of the Bale and she is also going to be the head of the Harem (Soyinka, 1963, p. 20 – 21). Though Sidi does not accept the proposal at first, she voluntarily consents to be one of Baroka's many wives since she thinks that he has given strength to Sidi and that Lakunle will probably be dead for ten years at the age of sixty- two (Soyinka, 1963, p. 63 – 64). "Her [initial] confusion in choosing between Baroka and Lakunle as her husband indicates the young generation's wavering to choose between the old values and the new allurements of Western culture" (Reddy, 2013, p. 408). Therefore, just like Sadiku, Sidi, too, chooses the role of the guardian of the inherent traditions in her culture in order to exist, though she is unaware of the fact that she will exist as a possession to a beast who "also change[s] [his] wives when [he has] learned to tire them" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 43). Considering this, it is acknowledged that while the colonizers occupy the natives with such barbaric traditions, they have the biggest portion of all the facilities of the country while the natives are left as poor creatures, endeavouring to stay alive with their miserable conditions.

In conclusion, Third World feminist components such as gender roles, cultural and traditional customs that help the sustainability of the inherent patriarchal system as well as the results of the white colonization process are highly observable in *The Lion and the Jewel*. While the colonization process makes it much harder for the natives to survive with the opportunities they have at hand, the female are colonized twice due to the colonization of their nation. The inherent patriarchal system, moreover, is encumbered with whitish interventions and nurturance in order to make it more concrete and long-lasting. By this way, women are made to believe that they do not have any other chance except for consenting to the inherent policies and systems so as to find a minimal space for themselves within the society they live in. The developed countries, on the other hand, are the pretentious comrades or sisters of all the women in the world; nevertheless, they are concerned with their own business and they do not regard the problems of the women in the Third World countries as important. These women, who are overwhelmed by gender roles, traditions, customs, and culture of their countries as well as the patriarchal system which is embroidered with the white way of life, are forced to find their own path to salvation and emancipation. Soyinka's play, however, is a real exemplification of how women are entrapped within the system and how these women are acting like the guardians of their traditions and customs. By this way, it is not right to assert that these women are in search of their emancipation; on the contrary, they are the real and life-like embodiments of women, who are colonized both bodily and sexually twice as much as the ones in the developed countries.

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