

A Study of Wole Soyinka's play *The Lion and the Jewel* from the Feminist and the Postcolonial Point of View

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Abstract

The following study shows how Wole Soyinka emphasizes in *The Lion and the Jewel* the theme of corrupt African culture, more particularly the Nigerian culture; and the rapid colonization of their native land. It aims to throw a light on the play from feminist and post-colonial points of view. It shows how the females in Ilujinle are treated just like commodities to satisfy the need of the males in parallel with how rapidly the Nigerian village, here the Yoruba village of Ilujinley, goes under the colonial rule of the Western people. The study will further throw a light on how their traditional beliefs contradict with those of the Western people. Also, the evangelization of the inhabitants of Ilujinle is evident in the play. Underdeveloped nations have dependably been appealing for the Europeans and for the Americans, apparently because of their lack of the 'precious' touch of modern civilization; but in that process, ironically showing their bounteous assets to be misused, which have added to the welfare of the First World nations. Colonization has brought about osmosis of the general population in the Third World nations; while the dark male centric framework has discovered another definition through whitish lifestyle; ladies have experienced both expansionism and the new male centric framework, which is the reason they have been overpowered twice as much as the white working class ladies in Europe and in the USA. In the light of these contentions, this article intends to break down Wole Soyinka's play, *The Lion and the Jewel*, with reference to Third World woman's rights, which is a brutal challenge against the pilgrim political structure on the immature nations. Truly, Soyinka has been dubious about both the colonizers and the colonized individuals in the Third World nations since he trusts that while the colonizers are at risk to profit by the virgin and affluent wellsprings of the colonized regions, the colonized are entangled in their fantasies of the controls of welfare, modernization and the Westernization forms, which are accepted to have been brought by the colonizers who claim to be benevolent. At the surface level, the play, being a comedy, is merely about a fight between Baroka and Lakunle to win the titular Jewel, Sid. But underneath the surface, as the play progresses, these themes begin to unfold subtly and steadily, which will be explored further throughout this article.

Keywords

Bride-price, Ideology, Patriarchy, Marginalization, the Occident, the Other, Culture Hegemony

INTRODUCTION

Akinwande Oluwole Babatunde Soyinka was born to a well-educated family in Nigeria when it was still under British Colonialism at that time. Soyinka was a poet, an essayist, and more

importantly a playwright; for his certain role, he was awarded the 1986 Nobel Prize in Literature. Soyinka shows strong feelings and emotions regarding Yoruba culture which becomes evident in *The Lion and the Jewel*. Soyinka can very well be considered as a postcolonial writer as he witnessed Europeans trying to change his Yoruba culture in a way to fit their own. He was a victim of colonialism, and that's why the dangers and evils of colonialism become evident in his works. In Soyinka's works, we see that his own culture has to confront the European culture, and the choice of either of them is always dubious. It becomes a matter of great concern about which one should survive. 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.

GENDER ISSUES IN THE LION AND THE JEWEL: A FEMINIST VIEW

The Lion and the Jewel can be considered as a battle of the sexes. As the play progresses, it focuses on the competition between the so called modern Lakunle and the lion of the village, Baroka, as to who will finally win Sidi as a wife. The play upholds certain ideas about masculinity and raises a number of questions about gender issues: why men or women should be considered as more powerful; what makes them more powerful in the first place, and how they either maintain or lose their power.

Both Baroka and Lakunle consider Sidi as a beautiful prize which each of them want to own. To them, Sidi is just a jewel, a valuable object capable of titillating their desires, but nothing more than an object nevertheless. Lakunle wants Sidi because he believes Sidi may prove to be a modern wife wearing high heels and lipstick, thereby enabling him to better perform modernity. Baroka wants Sidi to perpetuate the traditional values of Yoruba, to continue building his image by taking as many wives as he wants and fathering children.

We must also note that Sidi is valuable for no more than her beauty and her virginity. Meanwhile, men in *The Lion and the Jewel* have the power to value themselves and to be valued by others. Furthermore, they are valued based on other factors—what they have already

done or can do in future. They are the creators of their traditional patriarchal ideology which measures and justifies the roles and values of women in their society. Lakunle, for example, values himself for his education and for the fact that he seeks to bring education, modernity, and Christianity to Ilujinle. Baroka, on the other hand, value himself for his role as the Bale of Ilujinle and his responsibilities to keep his people safe.

Marginalization of women as mere property is one of the major themes in *The Lion and the Jewel*. This theme begins to unfold from the conversation between modern Lakunle and Sidi as the play begins. Lukunley does not want Sidi to carry the pail of water on her head as he knows that “[it] is bad for the spine” (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 2). He fears that it may shorten her neck. Lakunle tries hard to convince Sidi that he does not “seek a wife to fetch and carry, to cook and scrub and to bring forth children by the gross” (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 7 & 8); rather he seeks “a life companion”, “a friend in need” and “an equal partner in [his] race of life” (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 8). Lakunle further says that he wants to marry and treat her “just like the Lagos couples I have seen” (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 9).

But the prevailing ideology in Ilujinley is such that it makes the women next to servants in their male dominated society, though they are hardly aware of it. Sidi, as the product of that ideology, does not even know that she is actually serving the male chauvinism in Ilujinley when she—after seeing a crowd of youths and drummers approaching—snatches the pail from Lakunle and says, “or they will jeer” (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 10). Lakunle’s modern ideology consisting of the equalizing effect of marriage is of no use to Sidi who considers Lakunle mad. Sidi will not marry Lakunle because the latter refuses to pay the “bride-price”, a mandatory requirement existing in their traditional ideology. The idea of “bride-price” makes it clear that women in Ilujinley are traditionally seen as mere property which can be bought or sold, accumulated or consumed. Even the modern Lakunle is not free from this constricting ideology when he thinks that it will be easier for him now to marry Sidi once she has lost her virginity, since no “bride-price” is required in such a situation. So it is, as if, a matter of buying a virgin girl. Furthermore, modern Lakunle cannot restrain himself from implying that the males are stronger sex and the females are weaker sex when he looks down on Sidi for having a “smaller brain”.

We should also note that the magazine brought by the stranger to Ilujinle also plays an important role as to inform us of the real position of women in Yoruba. Sidi was just a simple village girl long before the magazine arrived, but the arrival of the magazine featuring photographs of the village and its residents, including three full pages showing images of Sidi gives her a sense of power. It gradually becomes the source of her power over the course of the play, especially because of the way it depicts her beauty. It makes a sharp contrast between Sidi and Baroka insulting the latter by including only a small picture of him next to a latrine. Here we must note that Sidi is only more powerful than Baroka in terms of her beauty which will finally be enjoyed by Baroka himself. Thus, even though the magazine seems to suggest that Sidi is more powerful, it also lowers Sidi’s status to a mere object that can be consumed, accumulated, used, and even distributed by others. Thus the magazine becomes a symbol of women's existence and their real value in Ilujinle; even when they believe they are gaining power, they still become just objects which can be consumed and controlled by others.

Furthermore, from the stage directions, it becomes clear that the statue of Baroka is well-endowed. The statue is associated with Baroka's power and virility, even though the statue does not appear in the play until Sadiku finds out that Baroka's manhood is no more. Baroka literally turns into a joke and an object as Sadiku starts to use the statue to jeer at Baroka who has supposedly lost his ability to perform sexually. Thus the women of the play seem to experience a sense of power and autonomy by looking down on Baroka. But this is a trap, because Baroka is still able to perform sexually, which he discloses when he deflowers Sidi. The statue, then, shows how the women in Yoruba society can be manipulated by the men according to their own whims. Thus the women in the play become breathing objects—they are deceived even in their realization which is constantly formed and shaped by the men. The only time they experience power over men is when they are deceived.

Marginalization of women as mere property becomes even more transparent when, in the final scene of the play, Sadiku comes out from Baroka's palace on triumphant mood claiming, "I was there when it happened to your father, the great Okiki. / I did for him, I, the youngest and the freshest of the wives. I / killed him with my strength" (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 32). Ironically enough, she does not know that her speech does carry more than she has intended it to carry. It is, as if, she is a piece of property handed down from a generation to the next one—she is a thing of inheritance that Baroka inherits from his father. More ironically, she does not even know until later that she has been deceived even in her thought that Baroka has simply used her as a tool to gain his own end—Sidi, the titular jewel. Women are deceived, manipulated, and used as a tool by men whenever they feel like in their tradition.

We must consider the position of women in a society where Baroka tries to pacify his favorite wife, Ailatu, by telling her that will be "[the] sole out-puller of my sweat-bathed hairs" (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 27) when he reveals to her his plan to take another wife.

Furthermore, the title of the play—*The Lion and the Jewel*—is itself significant if one looks at it from a feminist point of view. The title throws a steady light on how male chauvinism works subtly in their psychology affecting their life-style and shaping their ideology—the way they think and behave. The lion, an animal reigning in the forest, here refers to Baroka creating an image in our mind of a figure who is powerful enough to control, to rule, and to decide what and how things should be done; on the other hand, a jewel, an inanimate thing, used in ornaments for decoration, here refers to Sidi whose picture, taken by the photographer, is used as a decorative element in the magazine. The females are nothing more than the decorative elements, for they can be possessed, manipulated, and used to satisfy the desires of the males. Here we must also consider how Sadiku is manipulated by Baroka to convince Sidi so that the latter yields to Baroka's lust.

We must also note that how Sidi is trapped and finally tamed by Baroka to marry him. The language that Baroka uses to address Sidi upholds the idea that a woman is just like a 'child' supposed to be docile in the patriarchal society. We should consider how Baroka phrases his annoyance towards Ailatu, his favorite wife, when asked by Sidi what has gone wrong between them. "Is that not enough? Why child? / what more could the woman do?" (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 39), Baroka asks Sidi making her aware of a woman's limitations.

After all, we are left with a tradition, a patriarchal society where modern Lakunle stands no chance to reform it. We are left with a patriarchy where marrying a woman is just a matter of

whim for a man. In the first scene of the play, Baroka contemplates looking at his copy of the magazine, "[It] is five full months since last I took a wife... five full months..." (*The Lion and The Jewel*, 18).

Considered as a standout amongst the most vital plays by Soyinka, *The Lion and the Jewel*, "composed totally in a comic soul uncomplicated by a dull, agonizing diversion or parody" (Jeyifo, 2004, p. 107), comprises components of both sexual orientation segregation and expansionism in itself. As far as colonialist analysis, instead of any look at progress in individuals' conditions, the play is an exceptionally reasonable picture of the characters' misguided judgments and false impressions of advancement and Westernization forms, as a result of which, actually, the entire country endures. He parodies the individuals who, as Jeyifo (2004) recommends, "propose a shallow, gullible, and pompous perspective on advancement, innovation and Westernization as a counter to what they consider the unmodern backwardness of African town life" (p. 106). Additionally, Soyinka shows Nigerian culture reasonably alongside its contentions, jobs of ladies, change of characters because of westernization process just as the conflict among modernization and convention which are referenced previously. As Zargar (2012) likewise puts it:

Soyinka can likewise be considered as an ethno-moderate, since his works concern a Yoruba focused esteem framework and clarify its perspective through the Yoruba culture, and in addition; he has raised in a Yoruba people group and subsequently follows his recollections of custom and convention from the Yoruba, in spite of the fact that he was additionally instructed in the Western world which included learning Western structures and abstract structures, which he endeavored to use to present his African and Yoruba root to the world (p. 89).

In spite of the way that the play is as an adoration parody (Jeyifo, 2004, p. 107), it is exceedingly ironical regarding legislative issues and culture of Yoruba individuals in an unadulterated reasonable manner since Soyinka trusts that an author ought to be the "eye and ear, the uncommon learning and reaction" (Soyinka, 1968, p. 16) of its country so as to supply an honest representation of its practices. Along these lines, Soyinka "works as a translator; as an exegete of the complexities of African and Yoruba life, transient and profound" (Abu-Jamal, 2001, p. 31). Four characters, Sidi, a resident young lady, Lakunle, the teacher, Baroka, the Bale of Ilujinle, and Sadiku, Baroka's head spouse, are exceptionally critical since every one of them represents the general population who are packed between conventional qualities and the westernization and modernization forms. Ladies, among these characters, are casualties of both their sexual and national personalities while men speak to the male strength and the maintainability of the male centric framework. In parallel with the Third World women's activist hypothesis, these characters will be investigated as far as sex jobs, body and sexuality, male centric standards just as convention and culture.

The way Soyinka comprises *The Lion and the Jewel* is very fascinating, for he declares Gibbs (1981) that he was influenced by a Western occasion in 1950s and that was the means by which the play came up all of a sudden:

I composed the principal draft of *The Lion and the Jewel* towards the finish of my understudy days in England. It was really propelled by a thing which stated: "Charlie

Chaplin" – perceive how much this individual continues coming into African theater! – "a man of almost sixty has taken to spouse Oona O'Neil," who was then around seventeen something to that effect. Presently nobody perusing *The Lion and the Jewel* could ever have envisioned this is the genuine beginning of the play. From Charlie Chaplin, and again thinking about the elderly people men I knew in my general public who at 70 in addition to, 80, would in any case take some new youthful spouses – and dependably appeared to be flawlessly equipped for adapting to the burdensome errands which such movement requested of them! I just sat down and that is the manner by which Baroka appeared. I realized that a portion of these elderly people men had really won these new spouses against the solid challenge of some more youthful men, some of them teachers who went to the towns. Lakunle depended on the individuals who thought: "This young lady must be awed by my canvas shoes." Mind you the more youthful men didn't talk the language that those young ladies comprehended and they were beaten by the elderly people men. That is the means by which *The Lion and the Jewel* came to be composed (p. 82).

This is the reason the pilgrim controls likewise experience the ill effects of crude and customary practices, which are submitted in their very much created and present day social orders even by such conspicuous individuals as Charlie Chaplin. As it were, the networks, who imagine that they modernize the conventional and crude social orders, as well, experience the ill effects of the equivalent unrefined exhibitions inside their own social orders. In this way, what Soyinka underlines is the possibility that there are stacks of Barokas and Lakunles wherever on the planet, paying little heed to the dimension of development of nations or of countries. Correspondingly, there are numerous Sidis and Sadikus, who are anguished because of the misbehaviors of Lakunles and Barokas. Also, so as to swap the jobs that the colonizers and the colonized take all through the play, Soyinka underscores the way that "the 'unskilled' hero, [Baroka], demonstrates more shrewd and ambitious than his academic foe, [Lakunle]; the 'regressive' resident demonstrates progressively refined, more edified than the citified, would-be sophisticate" (Jeyifo, 2004, p. 107). The male centric framework in Nigeria, the nation where the play happens, is built up in the most appropriate approach to make the female body subservient to the male necessities. Sidi is a "genuine town beauty" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 1), whose sexual orientation jobs are recommended by the man centric framework she lives in. The minute she is acquainted with the onlookers is the point at which she is conveying a bucket of water "without breaking a sweat" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 1) which really calls for consideration since the motivation behind why she can convey the bucket effectively is that she should work for the family errands regardless of how loading or troublesome they really are. One of the sexual orientation jobs for ladies, in this way, is a hireling inside and outside the house, for it is a lady's obligation to get some water inside the male centric standards. Makes it significantly all the more fascinating that there isn't even a solitary intimation about Sidi's folks or some other familial bonds in the play, which underlines the idea that she is any lady in Nigeria. She is disentangled and summed up by Soyinka so as to feature the possibility of shared characteristic as a sort inside a colonized male centric culture. Moreover, what Sidi does is in parallel with a carnal work since Lakunle, the teacher, reveals to Sidi that "it is so unwomanly. Just bugs/Carry stacks the manner in which you do" (Soyinka, 1963, p.2). Despite the fact that conveying a heap is a kind of work credited to ladies by the male centric society itself and it ought not to be just a lady to make a move for doing it, Lakunle mortifies her by unsexing Sidi with the word unwomanly (accentuation included). It is imperative to underscore the word

since Lakunle does not imply that a man ought to do it for her; despite what might be expected, he implies that by doing it, Sidi does not appear to be a lady. Along these lines, as indicated by Lakunle, she is out of the edge of the sexual orientation job that the framework has determined for her. What is increasingly noteworthy is that Lakunle is extremely illustrative of the whitish male centric framework and he is packed between his locale and his westernized personality. Since he is a dark cleaned man, wearing a white mask², his mindset is certainly wearing a white cover, as well. Pourgharib (2013) talks about this as pursues: Lakunle's method for carrying on and treating his encompassing is completely frontier. His extreme want is to change the African custom into European, his method for attire; welcome and talking are altogether coordinated towards European criteria. He has officially acknowledged universalization and turned into a functioning part in this procedure (p. 10).

This, all in all, demonstrates that the colonized male character does not free the lady personality regarding sexual orientation jobs, either. In this manner, the colonizers' political endeavor, which is to imagine that the white lifestyle makes individuals live an increasingly developed and singular life, is very detectable since it is simpler for them to attack and control the nations all the more effectively.

Sidi is a lady who is loaded with clashes; she is both in a challenging the man controlled society around her and inside the edges that the male centric society has drawn for her. When she is cruelly scrutinized by Lakunle with the allegation of being an unchaste lady, opening up open doors for indecent men to take a gander at her in a very impassionate path because of her garments (Soyinka, 1963, p. 2 – 3), Sidi destroys the man centric standards as a lady and safeguards herself. This appears to be entirely unusual since she is a typical unmindful lady inside a male-commanded society, which detains ladies every which way. This is the thing that the white pioneer rationale can't consider as innocuous, for such ladies ought to be overpowered in the most ideal path so as to support the built up colonization framework. This is the reason Lakunle, the spokes-model of the white colonizer, goes frantic; he gets really fearless and haughty simply like the white colonizer. He admits to Sidi that what she feels is "[a] common inclination, emerging out of jealousy;/For, as a lady, you have a littler cerebrum/Than mine" (Soyinka, 1963, p. 4). What Lakunle points is to show an express purpose behind the separation among people in a women's activist talk; in any case, if his words are considered inside the provincial setting, it is certainly unmistakable to the eye that the colonizers' rationale is epitomized by his words. At the end of the day, the colonized has a littler cerebrum and s/he needs intellectual capacities so as to comprehend and show the structures on himself/herself by the colonizer.

CONFLICT BETWEEN CULTURES: A POSTCOLONIAL VIEW

We must keep this in mind that *The Lion and the Jewel* was written and first performed in the year before Nigeria achieved its independence from Great Britain, and furthermore, the script was published two years after independence. It is very normal then that one of the primary conflicts of the play is the traditional Yoruba customs against a western conception of progress and modernity. This conflict subtly shows culture hegemony running through the play as Baroka and Lakunle fight for Sidi's hand in marriage.

Therefore, a post-colonial study on *The Lion and the Jewel* notices one of the most important themes of the modernization of Africa along with the evangelization of its population. This process has driven a wedge between the traditionalists, represented especially by Baroka, who seek to invalidate the changes done in the name of progress as a result of personal interests or simply disliking the effects of such progress; and the modernists, represented by Lakunle, who works in favor of culture hegemony and wants to see the last of the out-dated traditional beliefs die at all cost.

In this play, modern Lakunle plays the role of ‘the occidental force’. He tries to civilize the outdated life style, beliefs, creeds, etc. of the native Nigerian. Through the running conflict between him and the villagers, represented especially by Baroka and Sidi, the taste of ‘the Other’ emerges. ‘The Other’ is, as usual, considered to be of lower slandered and moral values—they still believe in “bride-price” and many gods.

Lakunle’s vehement attempt to modernize ‘the Other’ focuses on the beginning of the colonial process and on the “cultural hegemony”. Lakunle tries to convince that “bride-price” is an outdated idea by telling her of the equalizing effect of marriage—

Ignorant girl, can you not understand?
To pay the price would be
To buy a heifer off the market stall.
You’d be my chattel, my mere property.

[*The Lion and the Jewel*, First Scene: Morning, 8]

He tries hard to convince Sidi that he does not “seek a wife to fetch and carry, to cook and scrub and to bring forth children by the gross” (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 7 & 8). He seeks “a life companion”, “a friend in need” and an “equal partner in my race of life” (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 8). But these ‘Occidental’ ideas are hard for Sidi to understand. The conflict between ‘the Occident’ and the native, ‘the Other’, emerges through Sidi’s words when she says:

Away with you. The village says you’re mad
And I begin to understand.
I wonder that they let you run the school.
You and your talk. You’ll ruin your pupils too
And then they will utter madness like you.

[*The Lion and the Jewel*, First Scene: Morning, 10]

But “the Occident” does not bother, for it knows, “what is a jewel to pigs”. The pigs must be civilized, they must be schooled—“the Occident” must be the teacher of them. The village school in Ilujinle, therefore, must stand for this purpose.

The touch of science and technology has already come to the village Yoruba of Ilujinle. The villagers do not seem to accept it positively, so the motorbike of the white man, the stranger, is nothing more to them than “the devil’s own horse”; and his camera, “the one-eyed box”. But they unconsciously begin to ‘adopt’ “the Occidental” intrusion as they love the magazine with the villagers’ pictures on it.

Lakunle knows that the progress is not so far away, though it is a matter of time now. The changes in lifestyle that he talks about have already been implemented in the capital city of Lagos and “even in small towns less than twelve miles from here” (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 5), and he is not ashamed of talking about the changes as “shame belongs only to the ignorant” (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 5).

The conflict between Lakunle on one hand and Sidi and Baroka on the other hand is a conflict between the consciousness of the colonizers and the native, a clash between European and African cultures, a conflict between the white and the black. The nature of such conflicts finds an outlet through Baroka’s words when he says, “I do not hate progress, only its nature / which makes all the roofs and faces look the same” (*the Lion and the Jewel*, 52).

However, towards the end of the play, we find Sidi rejecting the modernism through act of handing over the magazine to Lakunle. Sidi also rejects the western way of life through her rejection of Lakunle. “The verbal elements of the scene identify the final dance by its traditional function, as a ritualization of community, so that the motive behind Sidi’s invocation of the gods of fertility is to ensure cultural continuity” (McDougall 116). Thus the play finally throws a ray to the readers’ mind which shows the victory of the African tradition over the European imperialism through the victory of traditional Baroka over modern Lakunle on the claim of Sidi as wife.

CONCLUSION

When we are drawing a conclusion, it becomes noteworthy to mention that although the play is very amusing to read at the surface level, underneath its surface, it has more to offer to readers who view it from certain perspectives and ideologies. We, therefore, should pay proper attention to the confrontation of different ideologies and the treatment of women in each ideology. We must see how post colonialism has its deep root of ethnocentrism, which in its turn, becomes Afrocentrism emphasizing the importance of African people in culture and philosophy of life—a total ideology. The inborn male centric framework, besides, is hampered with whitish mediations and yet, through this hindrance, it becomes even more concrete and more durable. By along these lines, ladies are made to trust that they do not have some any other alternative but to consent to the characteristic approaches and frameworks in order to locate a negligible space for themselves inside the patriarchal society they live in. Soyinka's play, be that as it may, is a genuine representation of how ladies are ensnared inside the framework and how these ladies are acting like the watchmen of their conventions and traditions. Therefore, it will not be justified at all to attest that these ladies are looking for their liberation; unexpectedly, they are the genuine and life-like exemplifications of ladies who are exploited explicitly twice as much as the ones in the created nations. Thus, although Anthony Graham White remarks that Wole Soyinka approves neither headman’s (Baroka) tradition nor the schoolteacher’s modernism (130), it becomes obvious that the playwright—through the portrayal of Lakunle as hollow modernist and Baroka as a strong traditionalist who finally wins Sidi—is dubious about ‘the Occident’—the European cultural hegemony, thereby tends to support the indigenous tradition. James Gibbs exactly comments on the purpose of the play “the play should be digested as an experience, not chewed over in search of an easily summarized message or a moral of general relevance” (“Notes on *The Lion and the Jewel*”, 55).

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