

Feminism in Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and The Jewel*

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Abstract

Wole Soyinka was a Nigerian writer the lion and the jewel has its setting in village of illunjunle in Yoruba West Africa. Wole Soyinka expressed the concepts of feminism. This book mainly talks about male domination women are being abused by men and used as a commodity. Sidi is an independent girl, who lived with brave and coverage. She had her own way of living expressly on her culture and dress code but she has lack of awareness towards the society. She has been abused by Baroka, the leader of the village through this concept, and through the time men are known of their superiority, women have no rights they are inferior and passive. Women in Europe and America made an incredible efforts to change their destiny and gain more respect mainly with the beginning of the industrial revolution. However in African women live in patriarchal society with superior men as head of the family. in this paper presents the deep analysis on the women discrimination it is particularized on the aspect of sexual harassment and inner pressure. The paper deals with the theory on feminism, which bring out the inner, feelings based on psycho analytical aspect which brings out the emotional influence and maturity of taking decision how it is applied to the present era.

Key words: Feminism, gender identity, identity crisis and domination.

Soyinka's *The Lion and The Jewel* is a comical play based on African society. Soyinka is the first African writer and he received Nobel Prize in 1986, his achievement in the field of literature. He is a creative writer and useful intellect of Africa, mostly he likes traditional cultures. His rearing reflected both African and western influences between these two forces occupies most of his writing, he wrote about the African experience. His works are based on society, culture, tradition and politics of Africa. The romantic environment that Soyinka makes has been developed with rainbow faithful acts showing African life very exactly and styles and characters field a mirror up to nature and giving life as it is. The traditions and customs of Yoruba are naturally presented in the play the lion and the jewel. In this play focus on the study is to demonstration how Soyinka uses characters and theme to investigate to conflict between cultures. The play the lion and the jewel is set in the village of illunjunle in Yoruba West Africa oxford university press published in 1963.

The lion and the jewel written by Wole Soyinka. In this play shows on four characters lakunle is a schoolteacher of the village. He is a young man of twenty three years and he is following western culture on the people of illunjunle. Sidi is the jewel and village belle. Sidi beauty has been captured by a photography and published in a magazine. Baroka is the lion of illunjunle and village head. Lakunle and Baroka both loves Sidi. The final major character is Sadiko, the lion's head wife. Wole Soyinka's play can also be criticized from a feminist view in the lion and the jewel, is a three act comedy morning, noon and night, punctuated with dance, song and mimes.

The first part called as a morning as the play opens lakunle is a school teacher while teaching he saw a girl called Sidi across the school and she carrying a pail of water on her head. Lakunle charmed by her beauty. He insists her to take away pail of water, but she refuses. He tries to convince her and explain he doesn't expect such a work from the women. He comes out and retorts and he says that told her not to carry loads on her head and neck may be reduced. She says that it was too opportune, during the conversation she activities to escape from the place. Lakunle expresses his love for Sidi but she rejected his love and showed her interest in marriage but only after paying bride price.

I have 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...
 But I tell you, lakunle, I must have
 The full bride price. Will you make me?
 A lagging stock well do as you please.

Sidi the traditional African girl, who is untouched by the foreign ideas and culture, insists on the bride price and its honor to lakunle, according to the custom of Africa, a girl marrying without the bride price is a disgrace to the bride. Sidi the beauty of the illunjunle village, expects lakunle to pay more bride price for her beauty and virginity.

But Sidi will not make herself
 A cheap bowl for the village spit...
 They will say I was no virgin
 That I was forced to sell my shame
 And marry you without a price.

Sidi tells him, people think about jeer at her, saying that she wasn't virgin. Lakunle further professor how he wants to marry her and treat her just like the logos couples have been she doesn't care, she tells him how she finds the western custom of kissing repulsive. She also tells him that not paying her bride price is mean and miserly. In this play, Soyinka describe about the African polygamous society. It is accepted that the old man marrying the young girl. Polygamy is the function of the family as an economic unit of production. Under the economic and social care of the family sometimes the successor of dead bale or chief of the area marries the last and favorite wife of the head bale as his first wife of bale. Baroka is a bale of the village. He has many wife's, he harem is already he having many wife's from sadiko is last favorite wife, more girls has not left him been at the age of sixty two. The play is a Nigerian bedroom farce, for it convention of polygamy. After Baroka seeing a Sidi is beautiful picture in magazine, he decide to have her on that night and he expresses her beauty only his first wife sadiko wants to young girl for him. It is the custom of the village the first wife has persuade and makes a girls to accept him as a husband, it is a part of her duty to ensure his happiness by in this play, it is settled in the minds of the women in the society. Sidi photo came into to the magazine after seeing this photo in the magazine the village head Baroka called her for the dinner. He inform to his head wife sadiko to call her. She went to that village she said to Sidi to come for the dinner, but at first he refuses her request. Sadiko once again said to her if you marries hers you will be head of the village. Finally she accepted to go for the dinner, at the end she committed with him. Although Sidi committed with Baroka, lakunle is ready to accept her but she refused lakunle. Finally she was not accepted by Baroka.

The main theme on this play the conflict between African tradition and modernity on the one hand the play shows the modern world on the African mind and the other hand the lion and the jewel focuses on the tradition. The modern customs challenges the outdated custom and tradition. Soyinka has made use of elements the song, dance and mimes of the play. In this play Soyinka manages to describe the existing environment of realistic scenes. He describes the life of Africans.

Reference

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