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Full Length Research Paper

A Study of Wole Soyinka's play The Lion and the Jewel in the light of cultures in conflict

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The present study examines the conflict between cultures in Nigeria and western society as represented in Wole Soyinka's play *The Lion and the Jewel*. The study shows the relationships between the different cultures. Soyinka is the first African who won the Nobel Prize in 1986 for his accomplishment in the field of literature for his country Nigeria. He likes traditional cultures so; he came out from all difficulties with power to enlighten his people. His upbringing reflected both African and western influences, and the conflict and interaction between these two forces occupies most of his writing. He wrote about the African experience. As the most radical and powerful voice from Nigeria, Soyinka played a significant role in shaping the consciousness of the world. Since 1986, hundreds of Nigerians have proudly studied Nigerian literature. In addition, Departments of Literature in Nigerian universities are being established across the country. Within his writings, he reflects the colonial and postcolonial suffering in Nigerian society. Soyinka depicts the post-colonial Africa, where modernity and tradition are in constant conflict. Thus, he creates characters who challenge themselves in an atmosphere punctuated with the defenders of modernity in one camp and those who are deeply rooted in the traditions and customs on the other side. The focus of this study is to demonstrate how Soyinka uses characters, themes, and plot to investigate the conflict between cultures. Also, the study concludes that Soyinka manages to reflect to the world that the dominated culture is the traditional one besides reflecting the view of the world, beliefs, and condition of cultures. The play, *The Lion and the Jewel* is set in the village of Ilunjuinle in Yoruba West Africa. Oxford University Press published the play in 1963.

Key words: Culture, tradition, western, gap, old, new, domination, modernity, bride price, marriage.

INTRODUCTION

The intent of this study is to analyze Wole Soyinka's play *The Lion and the Jewel* from the light of cultures in conflict to encourage others to read the works of African literature. The play is characterized by the conflict between cultures. This conflict exists between Lakunle the schoolteacher who is influenced by Western culture

and Baroka who is uneducated and represents the traditional one. This study shows the concepts of culture that has focused on the conflicts between old and new, western and tradition. The researcher tries to highlight not only the plight of Nigerian people but the Africans continents as a whole.

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In the play, there is a confrontation between the tradition and modernity. The researcher relates the modernity to the influence of British culture on Nigerian way of life. Lakunle who stands for change in the play is facing a challenge with Baroka who stands for the tradition. The conflict in this study has different sides. So, it may be as a result of generation gap, or education or age (old and new) or mind and belief. The conflict may exist among the characters themselves.

Baroka, Lakunle, and Sidi exhibit internal and external conflict with tradition and modern culture. Throughout the entire play, there is a battle between Baroka and Lakunle for Sidi's hand in marriage. She sees value in both of them and it is hard to choose one of them over another. So, this reveals the conflict between modern and tradition. It represents many of Nigerians of this time who are caught between two worlds and wonder which one they prefer to live in. At the end, the play shows the winner of Sidi will be one of the two Baroka who represents static and traditional values or Lakunle who seeks modernity, social changes, and hopes. Within the end of the play, victory will be for the tradition represents in Baroka by winning the girl Sidi that represents the new generation. Soyinka is one of the foremost contemporary writers and advocators of his native culture. Soyinka has written in the forms of drama, poetry, autobiography, novel, literary and cultural and political criticism.

Conflict between cultures

The Lion and the Jewel tells a funny story involving four main characters. Lakunle is a schoolteacher of the village who is a young man of twenty-three years who is bent on bestowing Western culture onto the people of Ilujinle. Sidi is the jewel, the village's belle whose beauty has been captured by a photographer and published in a magazine. Bale Baroka is the Lion of Ilujinle, who is a chief and has several wives. Both of Lakunle and Baroka love Sidi. The final major character is Sadiko, the lion's head wife. The play shows the importance of every culture that should be allowed to be practiced in a way peculiar to the people. Cultural conflicts can be a clash between two opposing cultures. It can be faced by individuals, and also it can be a conflict within a society or more societies. Cultural conflicts start because of the differences in values and norms of behavior of people from different cultures. Actually, conflicts arise because of human relationships. Thus, at the time, that culture has great impacts on our daily life and there are conflicts between individuals, this will lead to conflict between cultures as well. In this regard, LeBaron (1993) says that "culture is always a factor in conflict, whether it plays a central role or influences it subtly and gently. For any conflict that touches us where it matters, where we make meaning and hold our identities, there is always a cultural component" (1). The researcher would fully agree that the conflict in the play is a result of:

The natural culture (Societal conflict)

Individuals may share attitudes, understanding, and perceptions of the environment through attraction and socialization which, in turn, reinforce the development of distinct conflict in cultures. Moreover, this may be called societal conflict. In this regard, Cole (1965) says, "the customs of a society reflect its culture" (136). Hence, individuals are influenced by their community that includes customs, traditions, habits and norms.

Therefore, society or community shapes man's life and culture. Consequently, this study emphasizes the need for cultural conflict through using the two cultural models. More centrally, the main problem that exists between cultures is the conflict created by its peoples which leads to different opinions and ideas. This difference may lead to discrimination especially between citizens and immigrants. Therefore, the problems with regard to integration are a vicious circle that cannot be solved without major changes from the governments.

The difference between cultures in a country does not disappear, so it is important to respect and accept other cultures to solve the conflicts. Conflict may have merits because it makes differences. In the play under study, society with its social institutions has a great role in this regard. Therefore, the conflict between them inside the society is social one. One may represent a new belief and the other stick to the traditional one. The conflict in cultures is clear in character clashes as well. The clash between characters is used in two types of cultures the first is traditional one and the second is the other different culture (western one). There is another conflict that may lead to clash as well:

Conflict between individuals' mind and beliefs

Actually, this means that there are opposing ideas between individuals due to their different opinions that may be called individual's conflict. Soyinka shows the various characters to dilate on their inner feelings based on the conflicts between the two cultures. Everyone has his own mind and his way of thinking that is completely different in his or her thoughts. As a result of this clash, a struggle between them ensue. Lastly, there is also another way of conflict that may lead to clash between cultures. This conflict exists between individuals because of:

Generation gap

In fact, this difference exists in different characters in the play under study. There are two poles: one who is old and the other who is young. Everyone of them has different ways of learning, traditions, norms, beliefs, and education. The gap between the old generation and the new generation is extremely wide. The old generation sticks to traditions, customs, and old-time aged in culture, on the

contrary, the new generation may find this useless and has no meaning because they believe in modern and upstart life. They stick to freedom and individuality and represent tradition as a cage that prisons themselves in. In addition, education standard creates a gap of conflict between generations. In the case of Lakunle in *The Lion and the Jewel*, he is a school teacher in his village and tries hard to change it to the modern ways of life. Unfortunately, he is faced by the gap between him and Baroka, the lion of the play, who kept traditional customs of the community. Therefore, the gap between generations leads to conflict between cultures especially in education, because the new generations respond to the new ways and changes of education. They try to assimilate with the new culture and transform the society into a modernized community. However, they were confronted by the old generations' restrictions and refuse.

Communication

Communication means a contact between different groups or individuals with different linguistic and cultural origins. Its aim is to observe another culture, recognize and react to it. It means, generally, to consider the "otherness". Hence, LeBaron (1993) says that "culture is inextricable from conflict, though it does not cause it. When differences surface in families, organizations, or communities, culture is always present, shaping perceptions, attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes" (1).

Identifying cultural conflicts

Additionally, clash is the main reason for cultural conflict. There is no doubt that conflict exists between the new culture and the dominant (old) culture. If one looks at this conflict, he/she assures that it leads to misunderstanding, and may lead to respect of other identities. Misunderstanding is a result of a mistake and a lack of good faith or it may deepen understanding in human communication. The researcher would like to confirm that, understanding is a miracle. In these societies, there is a dualism because of new culture and old culture. Social interactions form the main theme of society. However, in our life, humans spend most of their time interacting with other people. Through this interaction, cooperation and competition can be created. The researcher highlights that identity is an important issue in the play because it is a clue that a man is he, himself. People in a society keep their own identity and try to assimilate with other cultures as a kind of leading a respectable life.

Culture and its role

Ideally, culture is a powerful force in any society. It refers to shared values, beliefs, symbols, and behaviours among individuals. It guides their decisions and actions.

As for its role, it has been described as a glue that holds individuals together. It refers to a sense of unity and communication among individuals. Culture according to Madzingira (2001) is the totality of human endeavors in a given time and place. People are constructs of their culture. Culture gives people their identity and dignity. It is every day expression and future aspirations. Culture and development are intertwined because culture underpins development and reinforces it (5). Thus, culture is the way of life inside the society. It includes its language, religion, habits, and norms, etc. Culture is responsible for people's dignity and identity. The researcher tends to give a very accurate picture of culture within the play *the Lion and the Jewel* that depicts the tragic and comic nature of life.

The lion and the jewel

Obviously, the play is set in the Nigerian village of Ilujinle, it takes place within a day and is divided into morning, noon, and night. The main theme is the conflict between traditional Nigerian Yoruba values and the Western influence of Nigeria's colonizers. In this play, Soyinka seeks to satisfy his thirst for Afro-centricity by applying many methods, which are in African origin, in his play. The play draws on Nigerian traditional poetry, music, and dance. It is needless to say that this play enabled the Nigerian drama to become part of the world theater. He introduces two male characters and by them, he introduces two worldviews; the Afrocentric view and the Eurocentric view. Hence, the play turns to be a kind of ideological war between these two poles; and furthermore, Soyinka adds another important character who is a female to mediate the conflict.

Conflict between old and new

In fact, the play explores the value of traditional Yoruba ways against the European innovations. The first character is Lukunle, an eager but naive schoolteacher who believes in modernity and Western ideas and accepts them without understanding.

Baroka, the village leader, accepts traditions and sees modern ideas as a threat to his authority. In this regard, the two characters represent the two sides of the major social and political issue in Africa. The researcher highlights that the play has its setting in the village of Ilunjunle in Yoruba West Africa. The play is characterized by culture conflict. Thus, the lion is Baroka and the jewel is Sidi. She is the village belle. The lion seeks to have the jewel. More centrally, *The Lion and the Jewel* is about a beautiful young girl named Sidi who should choose either the young schoolmaster or the old village chief as her husband. At first, she makes fun of the chief for his impotency, but after some events, she marries him.

Actually, the play is a comedy with a message, which

puts the Westernized schoolmaster Lakunle against the leader Baroka, illustrating the division between the modern and the traditional. Thus, Wole Soyinka writes about Yoruba rituals and beliefs to reveal his roots. The play starts with Lakunle pouring out his heart to Sidi but she does not want to pay attention. If only Lakunle can pay dowry then she would marry him. However, to Lakunle, that is being barbaric, outdated and ignorant. *Lakunle is dressed in an old style English suit, threadbare but not ragged, clean but not ironed, obviously a size or two too small. His tie is done in a very small knot, disappearing beneath a shiny black waistcoat. He wears twenty-three-inch-bottom trousers and blanco-white tennis shoe* (Collected Plays 2, *The Lion and the Jewel*, 1). Erapu (1975) illustrates that:

The school teacher turns out to be a man with a missionary zeal to transform the village from 'primitivity' to 'modernity'. Lakunle is a romantic and a dreamer on the one hand and a jester with an imperfectly hidden zest for life on the other hand (3-4).

He proves to Sidi that he is a man of words not action. She says "These thoughts of future wonders- do you buy them or merely go mad and dream them?" (The Lion, 5). Therefore, she calls his speech nonsense. Moreover, he says
Nonsense? Nonsense? Do you hear? Does anybody listen? Can the stones
Bear to listen to this? Do you call it
Nonsense that I poured the waters of my soul
To wash your feet? (6).

Baroka is the leader of the village and sticks to his traditional beliefs. We learn that he is distributed by issues from the beginning of the play that represented in his secret to his wife and his apparent impotence. In addition, he manages to lure Sidi into coming to his palace. Baroka is cunning and has power than Lakunle who fails to persuade Sidi to marry him. Finally, Sidi is responsible for her decision. If she chooses Baroka as a husband, she will reflect the playwright's opinion that old tradition are better than the new and western one.

Youth and self-realization

In fact, Sidi's photograph covers three pages and Baroka's photograph seems to be in the corner of a page. This shows that Sidi is far important than Baroka. In addition, she has confusion in her decision to choose between Baroka the chief who represents the old value or Lakunle the schoolteacher who represents the new allurements of Western culture.

Bride-price and its importance

It is clear that, the price of the bride is money or property given by the bridegroom to the family of the bride. In the

primitive African societies, they follow the footsteps of tradition and culture. Thus, the good price is an honour to the bride. If a girl marries without the price, it is assumed that she is not a virgin. In Sidi's case, she insists on dowries, because she is untouched by the foreign ideas and culture. She tells Lakunle,

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 laughing-stock? Well, do as you please.
 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.
 (Collected Plays 2, *The Lion and the Jewel*, 8).

The brideprice is a traditional African custom of marriage. As for Lakunle, he calls the system of brideprice as "a savage custom, barbaric, out-dated...upalatable" (8). Lakunle opposes this custom because of his influence on the Western concept of gender equality or his empty pocket. In his concept, this custom is a disgrace and humiliation to women, he says, "To pay the price would be to buy a heifer off the market stall" (9). Also, he completes:

"To pay price would be to buy a heifer off the market stall. You would be my chattel, my mere property" (22).

In this regard, Sidi does not pay attention because he believes in modern marriage. To her, a girl for whom dowry is not paid will be hiding her shame for she will not be known as a virgin. Her beauty has captured many souls besides Lakunle. The researcher would fully argue that Sidi's traditional viewpoints have been shown in her rejection of Lakunle's many modern advances towards her. In the first scene, she denies Lakunle's request to carry the pail for her because she is aware of his motives for doing it. Thus, she will not allow him to put aside her values, she makes it clear to Lakunle that her declination of his marriage proposal is based on his refusal to pay the price, because she would not be a "cheap bowl for the village to spit" (8). He thinks that bride price is uncivilized and outrageous custom:

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. (8)

Finally, Sidi is uncomfortable by Lakunle's ideas and beliefs especially, his ideas about the role of women and the duty of wife. She hates his miserliness that she considers "a cheating way, mean and miserly" (10).

Tradition versus modernity in the play

More centrally, in this play, Soyinka manages to describe the existing environment that has been enriched with variegated realistic scenes. He depicts the life of Africans, for example, he shows the characters holding a mirror up to nature and presents life as it is. The main theme of the play is tradition versus modernity. He offers some of the customs of Yoruba such as brideprice, polygamy, and wife wooing girls for her husband. No doubt, the modern customs challenge the outdated customs and traditions. Soyinka has made use of elements such as songs, dance, and mimes to forward the action of the play. It is clear that he offers the native tradition, and confirmed the people's livelihood policy and role of women.

As the main theme in the play is the conflict between tradition and modernity, the play shows the intimacy of Soyinka with the various aspects of African traditions. On the one hand, the play also shows the influence of the modern world on the African mind. On the other hand, *The Lion and the Jewel*, focuses on the failure of an elementary school teacher to apprehend the sense of culture and advancement. Feld (1993) writes "the comedy clearly operates in terms of the characters adjusting ideology [tradition or modern], or selecting convenient aspects of it, in accordance with their situation and their psychological needs"(307).

Actually, the main characters of the play exhibit external and internal conflicts with modernity and tradition. There is a battle between Lakunle and Baroka for Sidi's hand in marriage and this is the main plot of the play. The conflict reveals a confrontation between their two different ways of life. Hence, Lakunle stands to represent "progress" and cultured romance who was captivated by Sidi's own charm. Unfortunately, he failed at the crucial hours to obtain her while encountering the old lion.

In this regard, Kumar (2011) says "Sidi presents a full spectrum of the panorama of the heart of an African village as against Lagos, which stands for advancement in accordance with definition of Lakunle" (3). Therefore, Ogunba (1975) remarks the major theme of the play is the "choice between the rival worlds of tradition and modernism" (32). The researcher would fully agree that Baroka is a strictly traditional and keeps his village the same way, but he later reveals his transition into modernity. In his first appearance in the play, he shows his displeasure with modern ways of life. His movements and actions when he enters the scene are without words and all in attendance, except Lakunle, give a traditional kneel and greeting of "Kabiyesi, Baba". This is a Yoruban greeting used to address a ruler. Thus, Baroka is upset when he gets a simple "good morning" from Lakunle. In his anger, Baroka asks why he is not getting the respect that he deserves.

Baroka's concept is to keep tradition in his village. He also stops Western Civilization from spreading to his village. The Public Works attempt to build a railway in Ilujinle, but Baroka is against progress. The Public Works

send in workers and surveyors to tear down jungles in order to run a railway through the village. When Baroka learns of this, he pays off the surveyor with money, a coop of hens, and a goat. Pleased, the surveyor and workers pack up their things and leave "convinced" that the tracks were intended to be laid further away. Baroka's aim is to keep his village in its traditional form with no progress at all. He prevented Ilujinle from attaining railway:

.....Trade

Progress, adventure, success, civilization, Fame, international conspicuousity... (*Collected Plays 2, The Lion and the Jewel, 24*)

Thus, Erapustates (1975) mentions the other modern things which he would like to see in the village: breakable plates, cocktail parties, a school for Ballroom dancing, a modern park for lovers, etc (7). In this part, the researcher assures Baroka's selfishness is clear in keeping the old version of everything. He prevents the railways from passing through the village because he wanted to protect his wives.

Moral war

More importantly, Lakunle treats himself to be the representative of the modern revolution against men like Bale, and confirms what he sees as a moral war. Thus, Lakunle develops an association with Sidi, the village beauty. He aims at civilizing the bush girl. Lakunle represents a semi-European and wants to make revolutionary changes in the village. He appeared in the English suit of the ancient kind. At first, he imposes his ideas on his love for Sidi. To her, he represents a reformer and all his ideas are new. When he proposes his love and talks to marry her, she demands the bride price to marry him. In fact, one of his modern ways of life is that when he goes to request Sidi's hand in marriage as a westerner, will not pay the bride price. Thus, Gibbs (2001) remarks, "Lakunle is madly in love with Sidi and "offers her a 'Western' monogamous marriage" (307). Thus, with Western civilization's influence, the school teacher of the village, Lakunle, has become fonder of the modern ways of life. He wants the village of Ilujinle to back away from tradition as well. This task is difficult because villagers refuse to set aside their Yoruba roots and traditions. On the other hand, the village belle, Sidi, and the village Bale, Baroka, stand for tradition. Nevertheless, they do not hesitate to use each to their own advantage.

In this play, the major themes are:

Clash and disagreement

The play presents a clash between an octogenarian chief of the village and a young teacher. It is an amusing play

where Soyinka has presented a young man who adheres to all the vulgarity and superficiality of the Western world and thus he appears as a caricature of a modern human being. Baroka represents Soyinka's mouthpiece so, he loved the traditional culture of his country. Soyinka's love was not the result of uncritical patriotism or romantic nostalgia; it was based on sound knowledge and deep understanding of the elements in Nigerian heritage, which have permanent values. He was full aware of the strongpoints in the Nigerian tradition. The conviction that there is a point at which all the basic values, truth, beauty, goodness, love, freedom, tranquility converge and come together one way or another.

Youth and the problem of self

In this play, Soyinka manages to expose societal mistakes focusing on youth and the problem of self-definition. He concentrates on the theme of perception of society and the exercise of power over young people like Lakunle as the madman of Ilujinle, Sidi as the jewel of Ilujinle and Baroka the representative of power. The play is a challenge to show and criticize the figuration of Africa through European conventions of dramatic representation. Soyinka tries to reprise Western Drama in African dress. Also, the play is usually presented as a conflict between the traditional values of an African village.

Women's role in the society: Polygamy and wife wooing girls to the husband

Hence, Soyinka portrays the customs and traditions in his Yoruba country. It is new to the reader. The Polygamous society gives importance to the Bale, for example: It allows him to marry as many girls as he wants. He just uses them for his pleasure and after the arrival of the new favourite, he sends the last favourite to an outhouse. In our society, we represent this as the society that never gives respect to woman as Lakunle says "they are used to pounds the yam or bends all the day to plant the millet ...to fetch and carry, to cook and scrub, to bring forth children by the gross" (*The Lion and the Jewel*, 7,9). The researcher would fully stress that the characters can be classified in two groups: Baroka, Sadiku, and Sidi represent the traditional African values, whereas Lakunle stands for modern European especially British-values of life. So, Lakunle is infatuated with Sidi. When Sidi is passing through the corridor near the school, Lakunle has the opportunity to see her and begins to express his appreciation of her beauty. As he sees her carrying a pot of water on her head, he feels anxious for her and advises her:

I have told you not to carry loads- on your head. But you are as stubborn as an illiterate goat. It is bad for your

spine. and it shortens your neck, so that very soon you will have no neck at all. Do you wish to look squashed like my pupil's drawings. (*Collected Plays 2, The Lion and the Jewel*, 4)

He taunts her by saying that "only spiders/ carry loads the way you do" (4). He advises her to cover up her chest and thus discourage the unemployed of the village. Thus, Lakunle offers his desire to marry Sidi by his initial infatuation. That is the reason why when she asks for her pail that he has snatched from her, he puts the condition:

"not till you swear to marry me" (7).

He explains to Sidi why he wants to marry her. In his own view, he thinks her to be a smart girl who can understand and support him in his struggle for life: [*takes her hand, instantly soulful*] "Sidi, a man must prepare to fight alone. But it helps if he has a woman. To stand by him a woman who can understand...like you" (7). Lakunle believes in the modern concept of love, so he tries to court the village belle.

Finally, result will be in marriage. Unfortunately, the crux of the problem still exists. Although Lakunle is an African by birth, he has Europeanised himself by his modern education and contact with the alien culture. In his new concept, there is no polygamy and monogamy is a modern phenomenon. Hence, Sidi believes in the traditional African values of life including the conventions of marriage. She also does not believe in the European concept of "love marriage". She expects him to buy her by giving her brideprice:

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 will you must first be paid
Aha, now you turn away.
But I tell you Lakunle, I must have
The full bridge-price will you make me
A laughing stock? Well, do as you please
But Sidi will not make herself
A cheap bowel for the village spit. (8)

Lakunle does not subscribe to the traditional African customs of marriage. Therefore, he does not want to pay the bride price that resembles buying a piece of property.

Ignorant girl, can you not understand?
To pay the price would be
to buy a heifer off the market stall.
You'd my chattel, me
My property
No, Sidi! (Very tenderly). (9)

Again, for Sidi, she sticks to the tradition in marriage. The traditional society will cast aspersion on her sexual purity

They will say I was no virgin.

That I was forced to sell my shame
And marry you without a price. (8)

Hence, Lakunle and Sidi are different in the purpose of marriage and lifestyle. He wishes to marry her for moral companionship than for the traditional purpose of procreation. He looks down upon the African customs

An ignoble custom, infamous, ignominious.
Shaming our heritage before the world
Sidi, I do not seek a wife.
To fetch and carry
To cook and scrub
To bring forth children by the gross... (8-9)

On the contrary, he wants to marry her to be "a life companion", "a friend in need, and an equal partner in my race of life". But Sidi doesn't agree with him. She believes in the traditional values of life. She considers child-bearing as a second part of matrimony. She therefore asks him

Heaven forgive you;
Do you now scorn
Child-bearing in a wife? (9)

Even in kissing, they differ in their views of kissing. Lakunle considers kissing "as a way of civilized romance and requests her to give him a kiss" (10). He tells her:

be a modern wife, look me in the eye and give me a little kiss like this (kisses her) (10).

Nevertheless, Sidi considers it as abnormal performance. She looks at it from the African points of view "No, don't I. I tell you I dislike.

This strange unhealthy mouthing you perform" (10).

Sidi, thus, does not explore any appreciation for Lakunle's modern European ways of love or marriage. For Soyinka, Yoruba is a perfect way for him because it reconnects him with his native culture and at the same time provides an alternative construct to the Western concept of tragedy. Soyinka's goal is to bring the tragic hero to a high level of self-awareness.

Actually, his culture gives him a great source of inspiration. He expresses his belief in a moral order of the Yoruba. These elements are derived from the Yoruba cosmology. The Yoruba cosmology is the structure of the world that comprises from three worlds of the unborn, of the living, and of the ancestors that can co-exist and communicate through a principle of transformation. The Yoruba worldview considers that good and evil coexist naturally in a dual unity that makes the balance and

harmony possible. The play deals with the theme of love from the conflicting perspectives of "tradition and progress". In this regard, this paper looks at the idea of conflict between cultures through highlighting the idea of homelessness in the eyes of Nigerian playwright. It is a theatrical inquiry into what it means to the nation and to a local place. This part shows, what is a human, what does it mean to be a person, or a citizen? The answer will be clear if the social justice and ethics are the core elements of any study of conflict between cultures. Thus, this study requests and responds to the urgent question how can one ethically resolve the conflict between the different cultures?

In *the Lion and the Jewel*, there is a challenge from Lakunle for rapid change and ambition but the other one Baroka with his danger manage to dominate. Lakunle suffers from the traditional society and at the same time has inner conflict because at the end of the play, he embraces the thought that since Sidi is not a virgin, therefore, he cannot be asked to pay bride price for her. Therefore, he revolves around a vicious circle.

But I obey my books
"man takes the fallen woman by hand"
And ever after they live happily.
Moreover, I will admit
It solves the problem of her brideprice too. (*Collected Plays 2, The Lion and the Jewel*, 61).

One main issue that can be shown in the play "*The Lion and the Jewel*" is that this society is a polygamous one. In Nigeria, marrying multiple wives is legal and it is a prominent feature of traditional life. Soyinka, in his play, portrays the African Polygamous society. Falola (2001) indicates, regarding Polygamy, that "...the function of the family as an economic unit of production, especially for those in agrarian production, a large family provides the labour necessary for the maintenance and growth of the business" (56) and he adds more, that the tradition allows widow inheritance, in which a man marries the widow of a deceased brother. This practice ensures that "the woman and her children remain under the economic and social care of the family" (58).

The successor of dead Bale or chief of the area, sometimes; marries the last and favourite wife of the dead Bale, as his first wife. According to the custom, the first wife of the Bale becomes the senior and receives all honours in the family. Also, according to tradition, a Bale can have as much as wives he can, but he has to follow some conditions like, treating all equally, distributing resources equally to all wives and children, avoid discrimination among wives and children (59).

Thus, in the case of Baroka, he is the Bale of the village and has many wives. His Harem is full with his number of wives from Sadiku to his favourite wife Ailatu. At the age of sixty-two, his desire for more girls has not left him. Maclean (1964) calls the play a "Nigerian

bedroom Farce" for its convention of polygamy". (51) (After seeing Sidi's pictures in a glossary magazine, he desires to have her and expresses his wish to his first wife, Sadiku to woo that young girl for him. According to the customs of the village, the first wife has to persuade the girls to marry her husband as a kind of her duty to ensure her husband's happiness. In this regard, Kumar (2011), "by this act, the society emphasizes that wives have to obey and do furnish all sorts of his desire. It is settled in the minds of the women in the society" (5).

Clearly, if one looks on the side of the first wife, Sadiku, one finds that she is proud of her role as the chief wife of a family in a polygamous society. She is the veteran representative of the tradition. While she is wooing Sidi for Baroka, states another tradition in the society that the last wife of the Bale becomes chief tempts Sidi by narrating the tradition

Baroka swears to take no other wife after you. Do you know what it is to be the Bale's last wife? I'll tell you when he dies... it means that you will have the honour of being the senior wife of the New Bale. And just think, until Baroka dies, you shall be his favourite. No living in the outhouse for you, my girl. Your place will always be in the palace; first as the latest bride, and afterwards, as the head of the new harem... It is a rich life; Sidi (*Collected Plays 2, The Lion and The Jewel*, 20).

According to customs, it is not a serious issue in the society that a woman becomes the wife of a father and son. In principle, the surprising fact is the successor most probably the Dead Bale's son, becoming husband to his step-mother. In Sadiku case, for instance, she reveals that she is the bare witness of Okiki's father of Baroka, impotency. "I was there when it happened to your father, the great Okiki I did for him, I, the youngest and freshest of the wives"(30). In this quote, she indicates that she was the youngest wife of Okiki and according to customs, she now has become the senior wife to Baroka. She married father and after his death, she became wife to her step-son. According to T. Ajani (2005), in Yoruba, "it is the responsibility of the king to take care of the youngest wife and children of the previous sovereign. This custom is called "isupo" among the Yoruba" (1-5).

Victory for tradition: (winning qualities)

Actually, the study of the characters and their activities highlight the unexpected ending of the play delineating tradition's triumph over modernity. In the case of Lakunle's character, who believes in the Western values, leaps at the chance to bypass the bride price because Sidi is no longer virgin. As for Sidi, "she is the needle of the pendulum, she wavers from end to end, confused before finally setting on the traditional side" (30). "Lakunle is provided with a number of opportunities to display his talent but he fails recurrently" (30). The researcher wants to show that culture is a kind of authenticity to its people.

More centrally, the question here: Have the

protagonists' identities been established as original citizens in their country or has the colonial side achieved goals over them? In both case, they have affected by both old and new concepts. Sidi was seduced by Baroka so, she has no other choice than to marry him. He was cunning enough to seduce her. He pretends that he has no idea about the offer of marriage and Sadiku is always trying to make matches for him. He flatters her with his talk of having her portrait on the stamps and all the time he talks to Sidi in a soothing tone with the most flattering seriousness as well as stressing the responsibilities of the village head. Sidi cannot get reliability in him and she brags a lot about her beauty. She is not afraid to speak of it in public. Baroka has many wives though he wants Sidi to be his wife. On seeing her in a magazine seated alone, he laments

"Yes yes..... it is five full months since I last took a wife.....five full months" (18).

Hence, it is common in many cultures for men to use older woman as a mediator for the new bride. As custom suggests, Sadiku is Baroka's head wife, the last wife of the former bale/chief becomes the head wife of the new chief once succeeded. Her duty as a head wife is to attract any woman whom Baroka wants to obtain. In this regard, Lakunle begs Sidi not to agree but she has to assert herself to put an end to his clowning. "My name is Sidi. And now, let me be. My name is Sidi, and I am beautiful" (20). In short, Sidi turns off Baroka's proposal in the most certain way, through his head wife. For this reason, she scorns him *Compare my image and that of your lord... an age of a difference....*

See how water glistens my face.... But he-his is like a leather piece torn rudely from the saddle of his horse. (22)

She rejected Baroka's proposal because there is a gap between them. They belong to different generations. He is too old to marry her. She says "I am the twinkle of a jewel. But he is the hind-quarters of a lion!" (23). Baroka blames it on himself when he gets the news of his rejected proposal. He says

"My man hood ended a week ago" (26).

In this part, Sadiku rather happy about Baroka's confession says the news to Sidi. She invites Sidi to join her in the celebration and even tells her the secret of Baroka's loss of manhood. She reveals to Sidi that Baroka's loss of manhood because he had just been admiring Baroka's timeless virility. Like a repentant child, Sidi goes to see Baroka on the grounds that she did not intend to reject his invitation and proposal well knowing that he would not be capable of doing anything. In an unexpected turn of events, Baroka manages to seduce her and beat Lakunle. Lakunle turns to Sadiku with empty threats:

Fancy a thing like you actually wanting a girl like that, all to your little self. (Walks around him and looks him up and down) Ah!

Oba Ala is an accommodating god. What a poor figure you cut! (36).

The play is about contrasts; old versus young and culture versus change. Additionally, it is the story of Sidi, the village belle, and her dramatic 'relationship' with Lakunle, the school teacher. Lakunle is courting Sidi, but refuses to pay the bride price because he views this cultural norm, tradition practice of the village, and barbaric. This young suitor is contrasted with Baroka, the Lion who too courts Sidi, but he maintains the traditions of the village and views progress as something that enhances similarity, or a lack of difference. While Sidi views Lakunle as a bit of a nuisance, she sees Baroka as a challenge. When Sadiku, Baroka's head wife, reveals that Sidi's refusal of Baroka's marriage proposal has broken him, Sidi decides to taunt Baroka, and revel in his defeat, with her knowledge. In fact, she returns from this venture defeated because the lion had beaten the jewel. Lakunle offers to marry Sidi, despite her lack of virginity, but Sidi refuses and joyfully goes off to marry Baroka, the lion. Lakunle accused Baroka that

"You tried to steal our village maidenhead" (38).

Sethuraman (1985) comments on Sidi's decision to marry Baroka at the end,

"Sidi is fleetingly metamorphosed into the glittering girl of the magazine by the Western photographer, although common sense prevails on her in the end" (224).

Bride-price is essential for any girl before marriage because it will prove her value in the eyes of the village. Tradition has the upper hand represented in Baroka. Thus, the victory was for the tradition represented in Baroka.

CONCLUSION

The Lion and the Jewel presents a clash between an octogenarian chief of the village and a young teacher. It is an amusing play where Soyinka has presented a young man who adheres to all the vulgarity and superficiality of the Western world and thus appears as a caricature of a modern human being. Soyinka loved the traditional culture of his country. His love was based on sound knowledge and deep understanding of the elements in Nigerian heritage that have perennial worth. He was fully aware of the strong points in the Nigerian tradition. For Soyinka, he points out that the man who is genuinely modern is not the one who turns his back upon tradition but rather the one who reinterprets it creatively and rationally. He also accepted the fact that tradition can

help people go into the future without being uprooted or alienated from the past. The play *The Lion and the Jewel* illuminates the vision of Soyinka, which is explicit in these words of the Bale, who is Soyinka's mouthpiece:

"The old must flow into the new, Sidi. Not blind itself or stand foolishly" (*Collected Plays 2, The Lion and the Jewel*, 54).

In fact, blind imitation of the glamour of modern world and forgetting all the traditional values can make the society hollow like husk. At the same time, sticking superstitiously to tradition can also reduce a human being to the status of an early man. Soyinka argued that British colonization found its justification in the ideology of the nation as the British came to Nigeria only to plunder and so prosper his nation. He was never interested in developing the occupied country because colonization had hidden aims. Actually, different people of Africa have neglected some of their cultural heritage and adopted the white man's culture (western culture). So, this leads to a clash between those who kept their heritage and the other of Western culture. In this research, the researcher tried to implore how the author uses the theme of disparity between the two points of view and the final resolution such as immaturity and maturity, sincerity and insincerity and traditional victory over modernism. In the last section of Sara Zagar's (2012) article ("Traces of Afrocentricity in *The Lion and the Jewel* and *The Road* by Wole Soyinka") entitled 'Suggestion for Further Research' one can read the following sentences:

Wole Soyinka's works can also be criticized from a feminist view; in *The Lion and the Jewel*, women are really considered the second sex, essentially created for serving men, and in *The Road* there is not female character at all. On the other hand, Euba claims that when women appear in Soyinka's works they appear in a dramatized womanhood, because they are manifestations of the Yoruba goddesses Oya, Yemoja, and Oshun, which represent beauty, love, sensual power, etc (450).

Conflicts of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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