



In the Name of Him



Allameh Tabataba'i University  
Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages  
Department of English Language and Literature

**Baroka as Dionysus:**  
**A Nietzschean Analysis of *The Lion and the Jewel***

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts (M.A.) in English Literature**

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We hereby recommend that this thesis by

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## چکیده

**(الف) موضوع و طرح مساله (اهمیت موضوع و هدف):** نمایشنامه شیر و جواهر از وله شوبینکا، نمایشنامه نویسی و فعال سرکاری رنجریایی، را می توان تاریخچه ای از مولفه های فرهنگ ساز عکس های یک مجله از بدو ورود خود به یک دهکده تا استرداد خود به شخصیت آغازگر چنین جنبش تصویر گرایی دانست. رساله حاضر در پی تجزیه و تحلیل نیروهای تشکیل دهنده این مولفه ها در مناسبات نیروهای آپولونی و دیونیسوسی است که فردریش نیچه در کتاب *زایش تراژدی* خود به تفصیل به تشریح آن ها پرداخته است.

**(ب) میانی نظری شامل مرور مختصری از منابع، چارچوب نظری و پرسش ها و فرضیه ها:** روابط شهودی آپولونی که در نمایشنامه شیر و جواهر نمود یافته اند در واقعیت دربردارنده روابط خواست قدرت به عنوان ابژه ای برای به رسمیت شناسی و خواست نهیلیسم می باشند که در رویکردهای فمینیستی شخصیت هایی همچون سیدی تیلور می یابند. این رساله همچنین بر آن است تا موجودیت موهومی دیالتیک هگلی خدایگان و بنده را از طریق تحلیل شخصیت های متفاوت این نمایشنامه از جمله لاکانل و باروکا به تصویر کشد و اثبات کند که مولفه های تضاد و تنافر هیچگاه جوهره هیچ نیرویی جز نیروهای واکنشی را تشکیل نمی دهند و چنین مولفه هایی نیز اگر در خدایگان ظهور یابند تنها وجهی فرعی و ثانوی از شخصیت او را تشکیل می دهند. این برده است که همچون لاکانل، تفکر مجرد تناقض را بر تفکر مثبت تفاوت، واکنش را بر کنش، و کینه توزی و حس انتقام را بر تهاجم سازنده غالب می نماید. آنچه لاکانل به عنوان یک برده از باروکا به عنوان ارباب ساخته است در واقع تصویر خود او است در زمانی که خود را در جایگاه اربابی می بیند و در زمانی که پیروز می شود. این رساله همچنین در مقام آن برمی آید تا هنر موسیقی و دیونیسوسی باروکا را در بستر مفهوم ترجیع بند از ژیل دولوز بازتفسیر کند و آن را به کشتی گرفتن باروکا و همچنین مراسم سنتی پس از آن تعمیم بخشد. سرانجام، این رساله می کوشد تا پدیده مدرنیته را در سیاق انگاره های اسطوره ای آن در نمایشنامه جای دهد و روشن سازد که دولت هنری باروکا به چه میزان از خواست قدرت دیونیسوسی فاصله می گیرد.

بنابراین می توان گفت که محقق در صدد است تا به چندین پرسش پاسخ دهد:

- نیروهای دخیل در عکس های سیدی چه می باشند و چگونه بر دیدگاه های فمینیستی او تاثیر می گذارند؟
- خاستگاه دو مفهوم نیچه ای "کینه توزی" و "وجدان ناراحت" در شخصیت لاکانل به چه صورت می باشند؟
- چگونه می توان موسیقی دیونیسوسی شخصیت باروکا را از منظر مفهوم دولوزی "ترجیع بند" تفسیر و تعبیر کرد؟

- راه حل باروکا برای معضل ذو حدین مدرنیته از منظرگاه دیونیسوسی چه می باشد؟

**(پ) روش تحقیق شامل تعریف مفاهیم، روش تحقیق، جامعه مورد تحقیق، نمونه گیری و روش های نمونه گیری، ابزار اندازه گیری، نحوه اجرای آن، شیوه گردآوری و تجزیه تحلیل داده ها:**

داده ها: در بررسی نمایشنامه شیر و جواهر از مولفه های دیونیسوسی، آپولونی و تبارشناختی موجود در کتاب های فردریش نیچه به ویژه زایش تراژدی و تبارشناسی اخلاق و همچنین کتاب های ژیل دولوز از جمله نیچه و فلسفه مورد استفاده قرار گرفت. روش تحقیق بصورت اسنادی (کتابخانه ای) بود. متن نمایشنامه با استفاده از اطلاعات برگرفته شده از کتب و مقالات مورد تحلیل قرار گرفت. به دلیل ماهیت کتابخانه ای تحقیق، جامعه مورد تحقیق، نمونه گیری، کشور های نمونه گیری و ابزارهای نمونه گیری برای آن تعریف نشده اند.

**(ت) یافته های تحقیق:** شوبینکا سعی دارد تا خوانندگان خود را از مولفه فرهنگ سازی تصاویر، ماهیت موهومی دیالتیک خدایگان و بنده، معضل ذو حدین مدرنیته آگاه کند و از طریق شخصیت های مختلف نمایشنامه شیر و جواهر این مولفه ها را تا حد امکان ملموس و دراماتیک نماید.

**(ث) نتیجه گیری و پیشنهادات:** شوبینکا از طریق نمایشنامه شیر و جواهر نشان می دهد که توهم تصویری نیروی آپولونی در عکس های سیدی صرفا بازتابی از واقعیت نیستند بلکه همزمان با انعکاس واقعیت آن را می سازند. این نمایشنامه همچنین از قابلیت نقد شدن از منظرگاه پسافمینیستی با در نظرگیری فرهنگ نیچه ای آر یادنه و دیونیسوس برخوردار می باشد.

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## Abstract

*The Lion and the Jewel* (1959), a play by Wole Soyinka, can be considered as a history of a magazine of pictures, and the history of forces that successively take hold and appropriate it. The present thesis attempts to explain the nuances of these forces in terms of the Apollonian and Dionysian forces introduced by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872). The Apollonian relations of visibility in the play also encodes relations between Will to Power as an object of recognition and will to nihilism manifested in the nouveau-feminism of some characters such as Sidi, the village belle. The Apollonian illusion is the cosmic Maya that not only manifests itself in Sidi's image, but constructs the reality at the same time that it reflects it. The present thesis also attempts to illustrate the illusory nature of the dialectics of the slave and master through detailed analyses of different characters such as Lakunle, the schoolteacher, and Baroka, the village's chieftain. It shows that how the essential relation of one force to another is never conceived of as a negative element in the essence, and the negative in the master is always a secondary and derivative product of his existence. It is the slave that like Lakunle makes the thought of abstract contradiction prevail over the concrete feeling of positive difference, reaction over action, revenge and resentment take place of aggression. What the slave presents to himself as the master is the idea of him formed by the slave, the idea formed by the slave when he imagines himself in the master's place: it is the slave as he is when he actually triumphs. The present thesis also resituates Baroka's Dionysian art of music in the Deleuzian concept of Refrain, and applies it to Baroka's wrestling and the ritual dance that follows it. Finally, this thesis attempts to contextualize the dilemma of modernity in Baroka's aesthetic government, and shed some light on the nihilistic departure of such government from the Dionysian creative Will to Power.



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# **Chapter I. Introduction**

## ***General Overview***

*The Lion and the Jewel* (1959), as one of the earliest plays of Wole Soyinka, is unique not in the sense of clash of cultures but in the sense that it resituates the matrix of forces involved in the simple act of “seeing” into different mythological coordinates. According to Jeyifo, the plot of the play involves “a deliberate inversion” of one of the most constant motifs of romantic comedy: “a love triangle” involving the romance of a pair of young lovers and an old wealthy suitor, who is a constant nuisance, and who is finally, frustrated when the younger one prevails. In this play, it is the older suitor, Baroka, whose suit prevails over the younger. (Jeyifo 107) But what is at stake in the play is not at all a love contest or worse a dramatization of conflict between tradition and modernity. As Soyinka himself rightly points out about the play: “Not just the teachers, the western critics too; they follow the line of resistance and see the clash of cultures. There is no clash of cultures in that play.” (Ramachandran 65) It is not that the advent of modernity into the village is not at all a theme to be discussed; it is rather the mythical structure of the play that overshadows the superficiality of such an ethnic theme, and finally overruns it for a universal one. According to Kronenfeld, the categories of “approved traditionalism” and “disapproved modernism” may derive from the literature that celebrates or seeks unique ethical values in African social institutions, “but they are not categories that structure this play”. (Kronenfeld 305) As a comedy, *The Lion and the Jewel* shows how people use the traditional for modern purposes, and the modern for traditional purposes, in accordance with universal human motivations of pride, power, and sex rather than out of loyalty to an abstraction such as tradition. Andrew Walser too considers any political reading of *The Lion and the Jewel* as a banal reductionism “in which Baroka represents African tradition, Lakunle stands

for the temptation to mimic west, and Sidi represents beauty and art. However, such a crossword puzzle loses its interest the moment the blanks have been filled in.” (Walser 284)

What then would, in the proper sense of the word, be the proper approach that would act, as Nietzsche might have put it, in an anti-Theseus mode of criticism? A criticism in which we would reject any deliverance from the mythological labyrinth embedded in the play, and would not follow the misleading string that leads us out only to a naïve truth, to a simple-minded dichotomy of tradition and modernity? As Nietzsche worded such an Empedoclean method of criticism:

We are particularly curious to explore the labyrinth, we strive to make the acquaintance of Mr. Minotaur of whom such terrible things are told; what do they matter to us, your path which *ascends*, your thread which leads *out*, which leads to happiness and virtue, which leads toward you, I am afraid of it... can you save us with the help of this thread? And we, we beg you straight away, hang yourself with this thread! (Deleuze 205)

### ***Statement of the Problem***

The best way then to explore the labyrinth of the play is, just as Ramachandran and Worthen do, to cast the string of “tradition versus modernity” back into the abyss of its mythology. According to Rashid Mousa, Soyinka's early contact with Western and Christian education as well as communal rites, rituals and festivals are associated to tragic motifs, while Ògún, the Yoruba’s god of iron, and individual disposition to life are the stuff that comical motifs are made of. (Mousa 219-220) This can be of utmost important to *The Lion and the Jewel*, not only because it’s a comedy, but also because Baroka, the chieftain of the village, is considered an avatar of the god Ogun, “the living god among men”. (Soyinka, “The Lion” 11) Mousa asserts that Ògún, the Yoruba god of iron, is not only Soyinka’s idol god in theatre, but according to

Soyinka himself, he has uncanny resemblance to *Dionysus*, the Hellenistic god of intoxication, as well as to *Apollo*, the god of dreams: “Ògún has a dual character in oral tradition, that of the builder and the destroyer. Soyinka compares the tragic vision of Ògún with ‘Dionysian, Apollonian and Promethean Virtues’ in *The Fourth Stage*.” (Mousa 222)

But this dual image of Ogun as the destructor and builder corresponds to that of Dionysus in terms of *modernity*. As Harvey put it, the advent of modernity brings along with itself a maelstrom of destructive creation and creative destruction even if the outcome was bound to be tragic. According to him, this double aspect can be found its proper representation in the mythical figure of Dionysus: “to be at one and the same time *destructively creative* (i.e. to form the temporal world of individualization and becoming, a process destructive of unity) and *creatively destructive* (i.e. to devour the illusory universe of individualization, a process involving the reaction of unity).” (Harvey 16) This happens to be of utmost importance to *The Lion and the Jewel*, because Lakunle, the schoolteacher of the play, not at all aware of such a problem, is the harbinger of *Boulevard Modernity* to Ilujinle. But Baroka's dystopian narrative of modernity shows much awareness of modernity's mass-producing machine spreading its sameness vibration across its variations: "I do not hate progress, only its nature which makes all roofs and faces look the same. But the skin of progress masks, unknown, the spotted wolf of sameness. Does sameness not revolt your being?" (Soyinka, “The Lion” 52)

This dual aspect, however, loses its origin (that is *modernity*) if we realize that “Lakunle, the rival of Baroka represents neither progress nor western culture but only the outward gloss image.” (Ramachandran 65) This outward glossy image crystallizes through three dimensions. One is that whenever Lakunle speaks of progress his measure stick is not, as Ramachandran has noticed too, so much of a change in fundamentals as it is in appearances. He claims that "the world

will judge our progress by the girls that win beauty contests!", and to him progress only means to "print newspapers every day with pictures of seductive girls". (Soyinka, "The Lion" 37) The second dimension is his mode of speaking in Christian parables and metaphors with picturesque effects from the Bible or native stories, and in phrasing verse dialogues with rhythms and cadences which make the whole play a poetic one. "And the whole thing about plays, especially poetic plays" Soyinka points out "is that there are constant *dimensions* which are not even so much in the action, as by the metaphor, the metaphoric language." (Ramachandran 63, emphasis added) And, the third is the pantomime *dance* which Sidi stages to re-enact the arrival of *the photographer* from Lagos who had fallen in love with her, taken photographs of the village and given her image a front-page printing in a popular magazine. And who is chosen despite reluctance to act out the photographer? Lakunle. Just as Sidi puts it: "You are dressed like him, You look like him, You speak his tongue, You think like him, You're just as clumsy in your Lagos ways --You'll do for him!"(Soyinka, "The Lion" 14) These dimensions echo Friedrich Nietzsche's psychohistorical view of "Apollo" in ancient Greece who, as the destructively creative side of Ogun, is the divine incarnation of the principle of individuation and constructs the appearance of appearance, the plastic image. The apollonian man does not like the illusions he cannot see. According Nietzsche, the apollonian poetic composition is Doric Architecture in sound, and draws its source of inspiration from the plane of images. It is not Dionysian like Schiller who "confesses that, in the state of mind preparatory to the act of writing poetry, what he had before and within him was not, say, a series of images, with his thoughts ordered in causal sequence, but rather a musical mood." (Nietzsche, "The Birth" 29)

If we take a closer glance, we see that the same drive in images goes with Baroka as well, but, as Sidi notices too, it flies on a totally different plane. (Soyinka, "The Lion" 53) Ramachandran

proposes that the first broad structure on which others are superimposed in *The Lion and the Jewel* is that of the archetypal *Trickster Figure*. He elaborates how according to Jung, the “Trickster” is “a forerunner of the savior, and like him, God, man, and animal at once. He is both subhuman and superhuman, a bestial and divine being.” (Ramachandran 64) Assuming the role of a major trickster upon hearing Sidi’s rejection of his offer, Baroka, as the village’s Fox, pretends to be impotent and baits Sidi who is finally seduced by him. But what is of important to the present thesis is rather how Baroka as a trickster plays with appearances: He dissimulates an appearance of impotence or an appearance of not having ever proposed to Sidi. He plays with different images that can appear on a *stamp* in Sidi’s imagination. This playful spirit with appearances even manifests in changing the images embedded in Biblical parables: “Yesterday’s wine alone is strong and blooded, child. And though the Christians’ holy book denies the truth of this, old wine thrives best within a new bottle. The coarseness is mellowed down, and the rugged wine acquires a full and rounded body ...” (Soyinka, “The Lion” 54) Andrew Walser discusses how although the English language is the play’s dominant tongue, it does not equal itself; how Baroka works syncretically to bend that English into a vehicle of his own experience; and finally, how if it impresses Sidi, Baroka “will use the tactics of Soyinka’s *Dionysus*, a windbag and trickster who wrestles with words.” (Walser 228, emphasis added) According to Walser, the image of the old wine and the new bottle can be played with in the sense that one can say: “the old wine of African tradition thrives best in the new bottle of English, and the old wine of English which matured in the time of Shakespeare and King James thrives best in the new bottle of African literature.” (290) Even when saying *Good morning* to Lakunle, Baroka mocks the book-nourished English of the school teacher: “Guru morin guru morin, ngh-hn!” (Soyinka, “The Lion” 16) It is no accident that a crowd of dancers consisting of “a group of female dancers

pursuing a masked male" appear immediately on the stage just after "Sidi's head falls slowly on the Bale's shoulder" (61). Nietzsche tells us that there are two kinds of virgins: the apollonian ones that keep their identities and the Dionysian ones who let their identities be absorbed. Nietzsche's description of this distinction is interesting: "The virgins, who... move solemnly toward the temple of Apollo, retain their identities and their civic names. The dithyrambic chorus on the other hand is a chorus of the transformed, who have forgotten their civic past and social ranks, who have become timeless servants of their god and live outside all social spheres" (Nietzsche, "Birth & Genealogy" 56) The masked man and the pursuing manner of the females just after Sidi's succumbing to Baroka, reveal the final non-identity that a woman must acquire when encountering the Dionysian man: Sidi bears no more even her maiden first name "Sidi"; she is now the "Jewel" belonging to the "Lion" and rejuvenating his paths of glory.

Sidi too is affected in what can be properly called the dynamics of seeing her own image: "Ah, Sadiku, The school-man here has taught me certain things and my images have taught me all the rest." (Soyinka, "The Lion" 21) According to Nietzsche as well as Deleuze, seeing is always appropriation, domination, and exploitation of a quantity of reality. Even "perception" in its diverse aspects is the expression of forces which appropriate nature. (Deleuze 3) Marcel Proust believed that the act of seeing is an intellectual act and never a passive one; we pack the physical outlines of someone's face so much with all the ideas we have, that in the end they come to fill out so completely his face's curves and lines "that these seem to be no more than a transparent envelope, so that each time we see the face or hear the voice it is our own ideas of him which we recognize and to which we listen". (Proust 15)

This thesis then is a study in the history of forces that successively appropriate a series of images. And that means not only the Apollonian and Dionysian forces, but *the will to power*



involved in the act of seeing these images as well. Especially, the reactive will to power in Sidi, which through feminism makes power only an object of recognition; that is an object of image. Therefore, in the light of the Nietzschean philosophy and Deleuzian typology the following questions are raised to be answered:

- 1- What are the aesthetic forces appropriating Sidi's picture, and how the dynamics involved in Sidi's perception of her own picture affect her nouveau-feminism?
- 2- What is the source of Lakunle's "resentment" against Baroka, and how does he propagate what Nietzsche would have called "bad conscience"?
- 3- How can Baroka's Dionysian music be explained in terms of the concept of "Refrain", and how does a cinematic painting pop up from such music?
- 4- What is Baroka's solution to the dilemma of modernity in terms of Dionysus?

### ***Significance of the Problem***

One can follow William Worthen in finding the significance of *The Lion and the Jewel* in how it relates "the rhetoric of theatrical production to the most pervasive visual means of reproducing our social order, the technologies (photography, film, video, print) of the image." (Worthen 194) Warden claims that Sidi's image doesn't only reflect the reality, but constructs it at the same time that it reveals it. (202) But one can go further than that, and probe the mechanisms by which Sidi constructs the illusion in reality; the illusion which if taken away from reality, makes us lose reality itself. Such illusion can be analyzed in terms of the Dionysian-Apollonian artistic dichotomy par excellence, which hitherto has presented itself as a Nietzschean gap in the existing criticisms on *The Lion and the Jewel*.

But apart from such obvious Nietzschean gap to be bridged, the present thesis is also significant in being a twofold social struggle: “against those who remove values from criticism, contending themselves with producing inventory values in the name of established values”, and also “against those who criticize values by deriving them from facts, from the so-called objective facts”. (Deleuze 2) Unfortunately, any mindset out of the framework of these two ubiquitous groups is condemned to its own self-propelled doom. The first ignoring the origin of values always go for the absolute values, the valuable in itself, and are called by Nietzsche as “the philosophical laborers”; the second are, according to Deleuze, “the scholars” and “the utilitarians” who derive their values from the valuable for all, and always demand “a simple derivation or smooth beginning which suggest an indifferent origin for values.” (ibid) Any brave new world backfires at every juncture when it comes face to face with these two types of evaluation, so much as it appears to be a totally stupid new world fortunate or unfortunate enough to be too weak to be born. Lakunle, the schoolteacher of the play, is an avatar of absolute Christian values as well as Utilitarian progressive ones, and this is a symptom that due to its epidemic trends in all societies is in want of a pressing interpretation. The present thesis is not at all a full realization of but a petty attempt to such interpretation.

### ***Methodology***

The mythological genealogy of a play such as *The Lion and the Jewel* can be best excavated if it builds up on the playwright’s own chthonic spirit in the same realm. Perhaps, the most related play of Soyinka in this respect is *The Bacchae of Euripides*, which he has adapted from Euripides’s original play about the Greek god Dionysus. According to Mark Pizzato, Soyinka describes his gods of theatre as parallel to Nietzsche's, and “even calls Ogun the ‘elder brother to

Dionysus,' in a note at the beginning of his version of *The Bacchae*." (Pizzato 8) Thus, Pizzato himself adopts a Nietzscheo-Lacanian approach to this play, and puts forward this question: "Who appears in Soyinka's play, is it Dionysus or Ogun, Euripides' characters or Soyinka's? Are they Greek or African?" (ibid) Pizzato then claims that Soyinka's work not only relates ancient Greek theater to older African gods but expresses the hollow nostalgia of postmodern subject for his lost autonomous individuality. In his lecture "In Search of Ogun: Soyinka, Nietzsche and the Edo Century", Odi Ofeimun goes on to length to establish this relationship, and asserts:

In his foundational essay, *The fourth Stage in Myth Literature and the African World* (1976), Soyinka situates himself in that cultural industry, entrenched by Friedrich Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy*, which traces Western literary traditions to the mythopoesis of ancient Greece. By making his recourse to African gods a parallel of Nietzsche's return to the Greeks and their gods, Soyinka has drawn together two traditions in whose confrontations and dialogue we are obliged to have to fish in search of what is authentically African as distinct from what is borrowed or re-symbolized. (ofeimun)

The question then which rises is that what can be the proper method of digging out such mythopoesis? In his foreword to *The Puppet and the Dwarf*, Slavoj Žižek puts forward a proposition that later on takes on the name of *the Parallax View*. Parallax can be defined as a kind of "displacement" of an object, such as a text, through changing one's observational position. Žižek asserts that a short circuit can link two texts that apparently no direct connection can be made between them. From this consideration of parallax, "a short circuit occurs when there is a faulty connection in the network— faulty, of course, from the standpoint of the network's smooth functioning. Is not the shock of short-circuiting, therefore, one of the best metaphors for a critical reading?" (Žižek vii) Žižek asks if such act of crossing wires that do not usually touch, this taking a major classic text, and reading it in a short-circuiting way, through

the lens of a “minor” one the most effective critical procedures? He then asserts that this is what Nietzsche and Freud did with morality. According to Žižek this method brings into light the text’s “unthought, its disavowed presupposition and consequences.” (ix)

Therefore, *The Lion and the Jewel* can probably be best read in a short-circuiting way through one of Nietzsche’s works that would, at the same time, be totally devoted to Dionysus-Apollo synthesis manifested in Ogun. The best alternative obviously can only be *The Birth of Tragedy*, however, with some considerations. In his retrospective overview of his works in *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche calls the idea of the Dionysian/Apollonian an “antithesis”, and asserts peevishly that *The Birth of tragedy* “smells offensively Hegelian... one idea -the proposition between Dionysian and Apollonian- translated into metaphysics; history itself as the development of this ‘idea’; the opposition sublated into a unity in tragedy; view through this optic, things never before confronted with each other are suddenly juxtaposed, used to clarify each other, and understood.” (Nietzsche, “The Antichrist et al” 108) One must however remember that in his 1886 preface to the book which is actually a critical backward glance, Nietzsche subtly suggests that his dialectical method was a disguise, and that even those hostile to the book have to admit that there was “an unfamiliar voice, the disciple of an unrecognized god, hiding his identity, for the time being, under the skullcap of the scholar, the ponderousness and broad dialectics of the German, the bad manners of Wagnerite.” (Nietzsche “Birth & Genealogy” 7); Besides, Nietzsche’s philosophy is against the dialectics in the first place, and even in *the Birth of Tragedy*, he censures the dialectic spirit of Socrates and the Scientific man.

This reading shall be highly invested in Deleuze’s *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, and therefore can be considered: A *symptomatology*, since it treats phenomena, treating them as symptoms whose sense must be sought in the forces that produce them (Deleuze 3-10); A *typology*, since it