



**STAGING FRACTURED IDENTITY IN SELECTED  
PLAYS FOR WOLE SOYINKA AND DEBBIE  
TUCKER GREEN: A POST-COLONIAL  
ANALYSIS**

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MASTER THESIS  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	1
THESIS APPROVAL PAGE.....	3
DECLARATION .....	4
FOREWORD .....	5
DEDICATION .....	6
ABSTRACTi.....	7
ÖZ (ABSTRACT IN TURKISH) .....	8
ARCHIVE RECORD INFORMATION .....	9
ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ .....	10
SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH .....	11
PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY.....	11
HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH PROBLEM.....	11
METHOD OF THE RESEARCH.....	11
SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES .....	12
1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	13
1.1. Postcolonial Literature .....	13
1.2. Postcolonial Identity .....	16
1.2.1.Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask.....	16
1.2.2. Edward Said's Orientalism.....	18
1.2.3. Homi Bhabha's Theory of Postcolonial Identity.....	20
1.2.4. Stuart Hall's Theory of Cultural Identity .....	22
1.3. Black Drama in English: Basic theory and Techniques.....	25
2. CHAPTER TWO .....	30
2.1. Wole Soyinka.....	30
2.2. A Dance of the Forests.....	32
3.CHAPTER THREE.....	45
3.1. Body Politics and Black Drama.....	45

<b>3.2. Debbie Tucker Green .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>3.3. Dirty Butterfly.....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE .....</b>	<b>67</b>

## THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion the thesis submitted by Alaa Abdulkadhim AL-RIKABI titled “Staging Fractured Identity In Selected plays for Wole Soyinka and Debbie Tucker Green: Post-Colonial Analysis” is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

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This thesis is accepted by the examining committee with a unanimous vote in the Department of English Language and Literature as a Master's Degree thesis. 2022 /10/28

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The degree of Master of Arts by the thesis submitted is approved by the Administrative Board of the Institute of Graduate Programs, Karabuk University.

Doç. Dr. Müslüm KUZU .....

Director of the Institute of Graduate Programs

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

**Name Surname:** Alaa Abdulkadhim AL-RIKABI

**Signature** :

## **FOREWORD**

First, I am sincerely indebted to my supervisor, Professor Dr. Tavgah Ghulam Saeed for her penetrating remarks, close guidance, and spiritual support throughout the writing of my thesis. To me, she is an ideal to follow and I will remain indebted to her for all my life. I am also grateful to my other teachers at the English Dept. Karabuk University: Prof Dr. Ozcan Kirmizi, Prof. Dr. Harith Ismaiel Turki, Prof. Dr. MUYED Jajo, and Prof. Dr. Nazeela Haider. .

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## **DEDICATION**

To my parents and to my husband with love and appreciation.



## **ABSTRACT**

The present thesis is concerned with the issue of identity in black drama in English with a special reference to two playwrights: the Nigerian Wole Soyinka and the British Debbie Tucker Green. These two writers represent two different cultural and literary contexts and in their work gave different visions of the relationship between white mainstream culture and black culture and the fluctuations of black identity within these contexts.

For this purpose, the thesis is divided into three chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter which is a general introduction presents background material about the subject and context of the study such as the issue of postcolonialism and postcolonial literature.

Section two of this introduction is devoted to the theory of postcolonial identity focusing on a number of outstanding thinkers and critics namely as Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Stuart Hall, and Homi Bhabha who have different understandings and perceptions of postcolonialism.

The second chapter is devoted to Wole Soyinka's play *A Dance of the Forest* as one representative text of this process of the fracturing of black identity caused by the sense of shock or trauma that black culture suffered while coming in contact with European superior culture.

The third chapter as well deals with Debbie Tucker Greene's *Dirty Butterfly* as another representative text of this disintegration of identity caused by the processes of globalization which has changed the nature of social relations and human people's communication with each other. Finally, the conclusion sums up the findings of the thesis.

**Keywords:** Identity; Postcolonialism; Diaspora; Soyinka; Greene

## ÖZ (ABSTRACT IN TURKISH)

Bu tez, iki oyun yazarına özel bir gönderme yaparak, İngilizce kara dramada kimlik konusuyla ilgilidir: Nijeryalı Wole Soyinka ve İngiliz Debbie Tucker Green. Bu iki yazar iki farklı kültürel ve edebi bağlamı temsil ediyor ve çalışmalarında beyaz ana akım kültür ile siyah kültür arasındaki ilişkiye ve bu bağlamlar içindeki siyah kimliğin dalgalanmalarına dair farklı vizyonlar verdiler.

Bu amaçla tez üç bölüm ve bir sonuca ayrılmıştır. Genel bir giriş olan birinci bölüm, postkolonyalizm ve postkolonyal literatür gibi çalışmanın konusu ve bağlamı hakkında arka plan materyali sunar.

Bu girişin ikinci bölümü, postkolonyalizm hakkında farklı anlayış ve algılara sahip olan Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Stuart Hall ve Homi Bhabha gibi bir dizi önde gelen düşünür ve eleştirmene odaklanan postkolonyal kimlik teorisine ayrılmıştır.

İkinci bölüm, siyah kültürün Avrupa üstün kültürüyle temasa geçerken maruz kaldığı şok veya travma hissinin neden olduğu siyah kimliğin kırılma sürecini temsil eden bir metin olarak Wole Soyinka'nın Ormanın Dansı oyununa ayrılmıştır.

Üçüncü bölümde, küreselleşme süreçlerinin toplumsal ilişkilerin ve insanların birbirleriyle iletişiminin doğasını değiştiren bu kimlik parçalanmasının bir başka temsili metni olarak Debbie Tucker Greene'in Kirli Kelebek adlı eseri de ele alınmaktadır. Son olarak, sonuç bölümü tezin bulgularını özetlemektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kimlik; Postkolonyalizm; diaspora; Soyinka; Greene.

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## ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ

<b>Tezin Adı</b>	Wole Soyinka ve Debbie Tucker Green'in Seçilmiş Oyunlarında Parçalanmış Kimliği Sahnelemek: Sömürge Sonrası Bir Analiz
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## **SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH**

The fracturing of identity is a central theme in all postcolonial and diasporic literature. Due to the hybrid and fluid nature of this literature which reflects their creators personality, postcolonial texts are always characterized by fracturing or fragmentation as basic feature of both form and content.

## **PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

- 1-To see the effect of colonization on identity of black people.
- 2-To investigate the different concepts of identity.
- 3-What are the strategies followed by the indigenous people to handle this cultural crisis.
- 4-How is this crisis of identity especially of women staged in black theatre, major techniques and devices.
- 5-What is the major contribution of black ethnic writers to the English stage.
- 6-How the problem of violence and crime affect the English society.

## **HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH PROBLEM**

How is black identity affected in postcolonial contexts (Soyinka) and diaspora (Greene). Both suffer a disintegration or fracturing of identity because they live a hybrid experience of belonging to both but none of the two cultures ( In-betweenness) What happens when the hegemonic culture comes into clash with a peripheral culture is a state of dynamic negotiation where both cultures lose something.

## **METHOD OF THE RESEARCH**

I depended on the modern postcolonial theory to analyze the subject of identity in these two black playwrights and the texts chosen: Soyinka's *Dance of the Forest* and tucker Greene's *The Dirty Butterfly*. The different concepts, models and views

presented by the major proponents of this theory, Fanon, Said, Hall, and Bhabha are used to analyze the characters' crisis of identity in the plays. 2

### **SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES**

Fanon and Said believed in polar thinking since they see facts in dual opposites. So identity for them is understood in terms of these opposites: east-west, black-white, colonizer-colonized, us-them, self-other. So in their views identity is well distinguished and determined. For Bhabha and Hall, identity is never fixed or polar, but kinetic, fluid, and susceptible to change, so it affects and is affected at the same time and what happens when a hegemonic culture and an inferior one meet is a mutual process in which culture and power are negotiated.

# 1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Postcolonial Literature

Postcolonialism is a highly problematic term that has been a subject of various definitions and interpretations in an attempt to elucidate it and specify what it actually means, though there is no consensus on that among critics. Gaury Viswanatan generally defines postcolonialism as indicating the cultural relationship between the dominating colonizing forces and the colonized subjects and the way this would affect the latter's cultural life especially (Deepika Bahri, 1995, p.52). This happens at the "contact zone" where two different cultures clash, interact, and grapple with each other usually in the context of colonization, slavery, transculturation, and migration which causes the dominion of one culture over the other. Ashcroft, et. al. also associate the term with " the effect of colonization on cultures and societies," but they emphasize the chronological significance of the term by linking the term "post-colonial" with the "post-independence" period, especially after the First World War ( Ashcroft, et. al, key concepts). However, the term, later on, was used to describe all the cultures that passed through the colonialist experience from the beginning of actual colonization to the present, due to the progression of the cultural transforming process initially caused by occupation (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, 2002). It became possible therefore to speak of three stages for this cultural interaction between the hegemonic culture and the indigenous one, historically speaking: pre- colonial, colonialist, and decolonial. These phases chronicle the different stages of interaction and cultural negotiation with the colonizing force, under actual colonization and after, "in which the colonized subjects struggle to regain their identity and culture which is supposed to reach its apex in the decolonial stage where the effects of colonization start to be removed (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes back*, 2002, p.1950).

Ashcroft et al. argue that "studying the forces monopolizing the power of representation which started in the late 1970s in colonized societies was very crucial to the advent and rise of colonialist discourse theory in the work of a number of prominent thinkers and critics such as Edward Said, Giattri Spivak, and Homi Bhabha (Ashcroft et al. key concepts). These writers gave a meticulous analysis of the power struggle for power and the negotiation of identity and culture between the colonizer

and the colonized, hence they contributed a great deal to the development of the postcolonial study.

Generally, postcolonial literature covers literature created by colonized or previously colonized countries such as Africa, the Caribbean, Australia, India, Canada, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Sri Lanka. In the twentieth Century, these countries witnessed the emergence of activist anti-imperial movements which fought toward the achievement of complete real independence. According to Ania Loomba, It is this resistance to the colonizing centers that constitutes the core of postcolonialism; therefore she widens the scope of postcolonial literature to include some diasporic groups who were displaced because of the occupation of their countries such as African-Americans, People from India, Asia or the Caribbean living and writing in the American or British metropolitan centers (Ania Loomba, 2005, 17-180). The term "Commonwealth" literature also got prominence from the 1960s onward. It is defined by Ashcroft et al. as referring to "the literatures (written in English) of colonies, former colonies (including India) and dependencies of Britain, excluding the literature of England" (Ashcroft, key concepts). M. H. Abrams also uses the term postcolonial literature to cover the literature produced by indigenous people of the "former colonies of England, Spain, France, and other European imperial powers" focusing particularly on Third World countries in Africa and Asia (Abrams, *Literary terms*, p.236). However, the term Commonwealth literature is confined to literature produced in the English language by people who are not white British and who belong to former colonies of Britain only. However, there is no one unified English to be used by all these writers, but each uses his/her own variety in which indigenous words are incorporated without translation hence producing a new kind of world English.

Commonwealth Literature was criticized a great deal because works produced under this label, especially in the earliest years of domination were largely dominated by European colonialist perspective rather than that of the native people. Other terms, like "Third World Literature" and "New Literatures in English" emerged to provide a more accurate description of the achievement of non-European authors in which they started to subvert their colonizers (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back*, 2002,p.23).

The term "post-colonial literature" finally came to provide an accurate



designation to postcolonial authors writing in English such as the African Chinua Achebe, and Wole Soyinka, the Caribbean A. S. Naipaul and Derek Walcott, and the Indian G. V. Devani and Salman Rushdi as well as many others living in the Western diaspora whose work presented a kind of "counter colonial discourse" to subvert the European colonialist discourse (M. H. Abrams, p.237). The Western literary canon which used to include only works written by European literary masters has been extended to include work produced by such postcolonial writers and this reflects a change in the standard of academic curricula in favour of ethnic authors ( M. H.Abrams,p.237). So, as Ania Loomba states, a cornerstone in "post-colonial literature" is this opposition or subversion of hegemonic cultures in previously colonized countries (Ania Loomba, 2005,p.18). What makes this act of opposition to the imperial culture an ever- continuing and developing process is that the dominion of hegemonic culture never ends or stops with the independence of colonized countries, but moves to another form of "soft" dominion. With the end of the process of overt, direct colonization, a new process of "neocolonialism" start by keeping metropolitan control on the cultural, political, and economic systems of the newly independent countries (Nag Sourav Kumar,2013, p.6). The Western colonization forces continue to use the poor Third World countries as colonies producing foodstuff and raw materials for the industries of metropolitan centers (Ashcroft, *Key concepts*, 48).

Colonies are often divided into two different kinds: Settler colonies and occupational colonies. In occupational colonies such as India and Nigeria, The European colonizers represent only a small percentage of the population and they come only to manage and exploit the colony with no intention of settling. On the contrary, in settler colonies like Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, the colonizers come to live permanently in the colony and their numbers become larger than the indigenous people whose numbers are reduced because of disease, and genocide. Sometimes, what remains from these indigenous people is limited to living within small restricted areas called "internal colonies" as in the case of Indian reservations and South African Bantustans (Robert Dale Parker, p.358).

The scope of postcolonial studies was further widened by the fact that millions of people from the poor, colonized countries have moved to European metropolitan countries under the effect of war, displacement, or for economic and educational reasons (ibid.,p.356). As Homi Bhabha says such people suffer a kind of dislocation of

culture and they live in a state of "in-betweenness" since they belong "to both, but none of the two cultures" as Bhabha said. This makes literature written by migrant, diasporic, or exiled writers an important part of postcolonial literature.

## **1.2. Postcolonial Identity**

As a method of critical analysis, postcoloniality was further developed by a number of thinkers or critics like Edward Said, Francis Fanon, Homi Bhabha, and Stuart Hall who, in a number of their seminal books and articles, explained and analyzed the nature of postcolonial discourse and, the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized and what happens when the hegemonic and the peripheral cultures clash with each other. A special concern is given by these writers to the issue of postcolonial identity and the negotiation of power in the colonial context. This issue will be the major focus of the present section of this thesis.

Chris Baldick writes that postcolonial theory is mainly concerned with issues of "questions of national and ethnic identity, otherness, race, imperialism, and language"(Baldick,2001). So, "identity" constitutes a key concept in postcolonial studies, and this section will show what each of the major postcolonial critics and thinkers said about it and the major theories of identity they evolved.

### **1.2.1. Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask**

Frantz Fanon (1925-1961) was a black French West Indian Psychiatrist who contributed much to postcolonial studies. Besides, he was a political radical, pan-Africanist, humanist, and Marxist philosopher. He was first known for his theory that certain kinds of neurosis are caused by social factors and also for his fierce struggle and writing calling for the liberation of colonized people. He served in the French army during the First World War and participated in treating Algerian and French soldiers. He saw that Algeria's problems are all because of the French colonization, and he saw very closely the destructive effect of war and violence on the human psyche. Being a psychiatrist, he also thought that violence which is a consistent symptom of colonization also has a cathartic effect against the persecution of colonization. Fanon criticized the postcolonial governments in African countries which failed to achieve

authentic political systems and were dependent on the metropolitan centers. He also believed that these governments failed to awaken national awareness in their people. Fanon holds the African elite governing class responsible for all the corruption in the state ([britannica.com/biography/Frantz Fanon](http://britannica.com/biography/Frantz_Fanon)). His seminal book *Black Skin, White Mask* (1952,p.119) is concerned with the analysis of colonization on identity formation. In this book, he argues that when a negro involves in confrontation or relationship with the white world, he gets culturally shocked or dazzled and this leads to the collapse of his ego if he has a weak personality. In all his actions and behavior, the negro tries to impress and please the Other (white man) since he is alone can give him worth and value (*ibid.*).

This psychological shock causes the black man to lose his sense of identity which gets completely fractured. Therefore, the black man becomes obsessed with this feeling of "inferiority complex" which directs his behavior and determines his image of his own identity. Fanon argues that the black man becomes dazzled or infatuated with "whiteness" which represents in his mind whatever is refined, pure, civilized, and ideal, whereas he starts to look at blackness as representing "the diametrical opposite [which in his] collective unconscious, . . . stands for ugliness, sin, darkness, immortality" (Ziauddin Sardar, 2008, p.XIII).

According to Fanon, the black man this way will become no more than a surrogate for the white because he starts imitating the white man in everything even the way he dresses himself trying to remove this historical association of blackness with evil. Therefore, the black man loses his identity completely, as Fanon says the negro "is not. Any more than the white man". The negro becomes white only to his black friends, but he remains black among the white people. So, the black man suffers a split of the ego and a disintegration of identity because belongs to two but not one specific culture. Fanon is one of the pioneer thinkers who asserted the role of language as a means of dominating black people by creating a sense of dominance and superiority in the white hegemonic culture (Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask*, 2008,p.80). This seems to be the major project of colonialism and racism which is to make the native people forget their traditions to maintain their subjugation to white culture.

In his second book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon emphasized the necessity of violent revolution, and action to initiate real decolonization, destroy the colonizer's

dominance, and deconstruct the stereotyping binary opposites he created between the whites and blacks. This militant, violence is a positive force because "it emancipates the indigenous man from feeling inferior and frees him from his passivity and fear which makes him finally able to re-build his self (The Wretched of the Earth, p.94). So , Fanon saw violence as necessary to defeat imperialism and restore independence and he has remained an inspiring force for many postcolonial thinkers who came after him, especially his two previously mentioned books. In 1930, a number of French black poets launched a cultural and literary movement that they labeled negritude. This movement was inspired by the Harlem Renaissance and was led by Senegalese Leopold Senghor and Martinican Amie Cesaire.

### **1.2.2. Edward Said's *Orientalism***

Postcolonial identity and the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is also the central concern of Edward Said (1935-2003), the Palestinian American thinker who in his book *Orientalism* (1978) analyzed literature in terms of social and cultural politics. He was an ardent supporter of the rights of the Palestinian people and their struggle to establish their independent state. He attended Princeton University where he got his B.A. in 1957 and Harvard University where he got his M.A. in 1960 and Ph.D. in 1964 specializing in English literature and comparative literature. In his celebrated book *Orientalism* (1978), he analyzed the attitude of Western scholarship toward the orient, particularly the Arab Islamic world arguing that early Western scholars who visited the east were biased because they created a false stereotyped patronizing image of the orient, hence facilitating the Western imperial project in the region. So, the process of "othering " the orient according to Said was first articulated in the work of these scholars such as literature, travelogue, etc. So, the process of re-reading European classic works is very important for Said because they contain negative stereotyped images of the east that casual readers are not likely to perceive. Said made deep scrutiny of these texts to reveal hidden messages and views about the East, and this cannot be done unless we overcome the sense of holiness and sacredness that have been given to them across history ( [britannica/biography/Edward Said](#)).

Said adapted Michel Foucault's "historicist critique of discourse" to scrutinize "cultural imperialism." According to Said, this kind of imperialism imposes its

dominion and power not by military force, but by instilling in the colonized subjects a Eurocentric discourse that assumes the normality and superiority of everything "occidental" as opposed to the orient which is always shown as inferior and exotic (Abrams, p.236). Gail Ching Low and Julian Wolfreys argue that Said investigated the ways the west has objectified the orient in a stereotyped way through the various kinds of discourse artistic, social, political, etc. sciences." So, "orientalism" indicates this "Western approach to the Orient . . . as a topic of learning, discovery and practice." It is used in Said's study to indicate the total of dreams, images, vocabulary, and texts whether literary or not literary that the Occident produced about the East, and it is this total that represents the discourse of orientalism as Said sees it (Liang Low & Julian wolfreys, p. 2001)

Said's definition of orientalism as a "discourse" was extremely effective in developing postcolonial theory and analyzing the issue of indigenous identity and how it gets affected by the cultural and psychological shock of colonization. Moreover, Low and Wolfreys go on to say that defining orientalism as a form of hegemonic discourse "contribute to the formation structures of power," since Said sees "an intimate connection between systems of Knowledge and strategies of domination and control" ( Low and Wolfrey, p.2001).

Literature is the most effective kind of discourse of orientalism and it played a very important part in establishing stereotyped, negative images of the eastern people as inferior, uncivilized, irrational, different, and childish. So, the process of patronizing and marginalizing the East actually started in literature long before the initiation of actual colonization. Said especially emphasized the roles of European canonical narrative and dramatic texts in articulating this process of "Othering" indigenous people not just in the East but even Africa, and India. Literary texts produced by Shakespeare, Defoe, Flaubert, Austin, Conrad, and Kipling were so influential in establishing negative stereotyping of indigenous people. Said presented new readings of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, and *Othello* in which he revealed racist overtones towards the other ( Said's *Orientalism*, p.2).

Across history, the west has established itself as "Self," educated, religious, and refined, as opposed to the orient which was established as the inferior, uncivilized, and heathen "Other." This was achieved by creating a dominant, imperial discourse

composed of all that the west said about the east in literary and cultural texts.

### **1.2.3. Homi Bhabha's Theory of Postcolonial Identity**

Homi Bhabha's ( 1909- 1966) work was inspired by Said's *Orientalism*, but he challenged Said's "representation of colonial hegemony as omnipotent and uniform." He especially rejected Said's binary thinking because the world can no longer be easily divided between the colonizer and the colonized, due to the fact that the two cultures have been mixed through migration or diaspora, forced displacement, or for educational and economic reasons. So, both the metropolitan centers and the colonized countries have been greatly changed, and this gave rise to a new kind of identity which Bhabha calls "hybrid" caused by an experience of "ambivalence" lived mainly by the colonized subject. He developed postcolonial scholarship by applying post-structuralist strategies and methods to colonial texts. (Low and Wolfreys,p.202). "Ambivalence" is an important term in Postcolonial theory that refers to "a continual fluctuation between wanting one thing and wanting its opposites . . . a simultaneous attraction toward and repulsion from an object, person or action" (*Key concepts*, p.10). Bhabha adopted this term in his colonial discourse theory to analyze the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. The relationship between the two is always ambivalent since the colonized does not quite hate or averts the colonizer, but rather feels ambivalent in the sense that he is fascinated by the colonizer's technology and culture which makes them both admire and detest the colonizer (Ashcroft, et al., *postcolonial studies*, p.13). So, through the concept of ambivalence, Bhabha subverts traditional colonial discourse and its failure in creating a fixed, homogenous concept of colonial identity.

Bhabha believes that within the polemical economy of discourse, the demand for identity, changes, and difference becomes an essential compromise. He goes on to say that discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence . . . the ambivalence of mimicry (that which itself as) almost the same but not quite does not merely rupture the discourse, but becomes transformed into an uncertainty which fixes the colonial subject as a partial process ( Cited by Low and Wolfreys, p. 202).

This feeling of duality inside the colonized subject makes him imitate his colonizer whether consciously or unconsciously. Unlike Fanon who has a negative view of mimicry, Bhabha sees it as a driving force since it makes the colonized rise up

and this represents a threat to the hegemony of the imperial colonizer. So, according to Bhabha, mimicry becomes a strategy of resistance through which the colonized opposes and subverts the imperial discourse. In his book *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha argues that these tactics of subversion or resistance [are] not necessarily an oppositional act of political intention, nor is it the simple negation or the exclusion of the content of another culture, as difference once perceived . . . but the effect of an ambivalence produced within the rules of recognition of dominating discourses as they articulate the signs of cultural difference (*The Location of Culture*, London, Routledge, 1994, p. 110).

Bhabha disagrees with Said who always insists that the positions of the center and the periphery, the metropolis and the colony, or east and west are always well distinguished and polarized. Instead, Bhabha believes that cultural negotiation always occurs within what he calls "The space of enunciation" or "liminality." In psychology, liminality is a middle stage of development where the person feels "in-between" being a child and being an adult (Chakraborty, p.146). Bhabha adapted this term to refer to the hybrid state of cultural exchange between the colonizer and colonized in which the individual is in a third space of belonging to both but neither.

Philip Nel argues that the subverting power of hybridity exposes the imperial oppressive strategies and brings the colonizer and colonized together because their cultures are blended in a way that blurs the distinction between center and periphery (Nel, p.2). Bhabha's concept of postcolonial identity has its basis in the psychoanalytic theory of identity formation and the use of the mirror as a symbol of how "vision and difference contribute to self-image." Low and Wolfreys write that "the colonial situation provides the opportunity for narcissistic identification in the image of the colonized as a reformed, recognizable Other." This reformed image of the other is directed by the "colonial gaze" which seeks to maintain the essential difference of the other as "not quite/not white, not English but anglicized" in order to justify colonial dominion (Low and Wolfrey, p.207). This colonial gaze or act of surveillance practiced by the colonizer suggests "a viewer with an elevated vantage point or from a superior position, so it is this gaze of the colonizer which fixes the identity of the colonized. In another word, it is through this act of colonial surveillance that the identity of the colonized is crystalized since the subaltern is no longer able to transfigure his identity independently from his persecutor. That is to say, it is in the eyes of his master that the

subaltern or the colonized perceives his self-image to borrow Lacan's mirror stage in which he emphasized the role of the mother's gaze in the formulation of the child's identity (Ashcroft, et al, *key concepts*, p.130). So, it is this imperial gaze that defines the identity of the colonized, fixes his position within the power relation system, and confirms his "subalternity" once and for all.

However, in any interaction of two cultures within a colonial context, none of the two cultures is quite pure, but as Bhabha said identity becomes "dialogic" in the sense that it is a "hybrid." In his essay, "The Commitment to Theory," Bhabha defines hybridity as "new, neither the one nor the other." So, this cultural interaction happens in what Bhabha calls the "Third Space of enunciation" or "liminality" which he defines as an "in-between space in which cultural change may occur" and postcolonial identity evolves ( Ashcroft, *key concepts*, p.130).

In his book *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha argues that to exist is to be in direct contact with some sort of otherness. The exchange between the colonized and the colonizer is always "defensive" on both sides due to the cultural cleavage and the lack of trust between them. That is to say, it is "only in relation to the place of the other that the colonial desire is articulated," and there is always the dream of the inversion of roles, or the annihilation of the other especially in the mind of the native or black individual. So, the process of identification becomes a process of splitting because of the native's "fantasy of seizing [his] master's place." Identification is not the affirmation of an already existing, fixed identity but the assumption of a new image of identity by the colonial subject (*The Location of Culture*, p.97).

#### **1.2.4. Stuart Hall's Theory of Cultural Identity**

Cultural studies is an interdisciplinary field concerned with how different social institutions presuppose and define culture. Cultural studies were associated with the Birmingham University's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies established by Stuart Hall in 1964 which was responsible for propagating a new cultural studies movement in the following decades. The major pioneer figures in this movement were Stuart Hall himself, Richard Hoggart, and Raymond Williams. Cultural studies are particularly concerned with the role of "race, or ethnicity, class and gender in the production of cultural knowledge. Mass media in the modern age started to play a



decisive role in people's lives with respect to the production of different cultural patterns. Media dependence theory is concerned with "the effect of mass media on audiences, and of the interaction between media, audiences and social systems." some sociologists presented "conflict sociology," which argues that powerful or dominant groups suppress weaker groups making conflict or competition a dominant feature of society such as economy, the family, education system, and politics (britannica/ cultural studies).

This movement of cultural studies started by re-speculating the economic and political ingredients of the English working-class identity, arguing that "conceptions of individuality have become fragmented in the postwar world and no longer [restricted] to notions of shared cultural interests and value systems" (Low and Wolfreys book, p. 244-245). In his seminal essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," Hall emphasizes the role of culture, identity, and representation systems for any people fighting to reclaim their national identity. Moreover, he presents two concepts of "cultural identity". The first is what he calls "essentialist identity," which indicates the similarities that a certain group of people commonly share with each other ,i.e., what composes their sense of "oneness" or "essence." This concept presupposes that there is "an authentic, a true self which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common" (Hall,p.111,cited by IannHussey,p.201). Hall believes that this essentialist concept of identity has itself inspired such movements as "feminist, anti- colonial, and anti-racist art," but it does not help us understand " the trauma of colonialism" (Ian Hussey, "Note on Stuart Hall's Cultural identity and diaspora,p.200). Hall further believes that it is this essentialist myth of cultural identity which the different forms of literary representation such as black cinema and black drama intend to explore, idealize and romanticize. Some anti-colonial movements such as Negritude, Pan-Africanism, and many anti-colonial revolutions were actually motivated by the essentialist understanding of cultural identity ( Ian Hussey,P.202).

Pan-Africanism advocates that people of African descent have unique interests and features that distinguish them from the other races, so African people all over the world must be unified. Pan-Africanism took a political stand when it called for the unification of all people of the African diaspora. It cherishes a dream African nation in which all diasporic Africans can gather under one state. Black people who have been dispersed in various parts of the world must search for their common aspects and they

should be proud of their blackness. Pan- Africanism first started in America with men like Martin Delany, Alexander Grummel, African Americans, and Edward Blyden, a West Indian (Britannica.com/topic/ Pan-Africanism).

However, the essentialist concept of identity, according to Hall "imposes an imaginary coherence on the experience of dispersal and fragmentation, which is the history of all enforced diasporas." Black cinema and drama for instance impose this imaginary coherence on people of the black Triangle by conceptualizing Africa as the center that gives unity, meaning, and coherence to a wide range of actually diverse, black cultural identities (Ian Hussey,p.202). However, such an imaginary pattern of coherence and unity is unreal because it ignores the actual aspects of diasporic cultural identity as a practical experience such as separation, disintegration, discontinuities, and loss of identity which are usually caused by colonialism, displacement, or slavery. Still, such modes of representation, in black drama and cinema, for example, are very important to resist and subvert the biased Western colonial discourse which always shows the black in a stereotyped inferior position.

According to Stuart Hall, the second concept of "cultural identity" is that which includes both "similarities and differences among an imagined cultural group- such as The Black Triangle of Africa, the United States, the Caribbean, and the united kingdom who share common ancestry and race but also reveal important differences related to their historical and colonial contexts. It is this second concept of identity which helps us understand the trauma of colonialism because it covers the social and historical contingencies (Ian Hussey, p.). By using this second definition of identity, we become more able to analyze historical and contemporary colonial relations in order to formulate a counter-colonial discourse against hegemonic powers. Stuart Hall spent his youth in Jamaica, then he lived all his life in diaspora in Britain where he knew that "cultural identity and diaspora are at once political, scholarly, and personal issues for the individual (ibid, p. 2001).

Ian Hussey commenting on Stuart Hall 's concept of cultural identity, writes that Identity is a continuously changing process, a continuous process 'of becoming as well as being," so identity partakes of both the past and the present since it does not transcend time or culture, but rather cultural identity gets transformed in such different contexts: culture, history, time and place (Ian Hussey, p. 101).

An important contribution of cultural academics like Stuart Hall, Raymond Williams, and Richard Hoggart is that they extended the scope of literary analysis to include "culture" in general, and rejected the approaches that confine literary criticism to a selection of canonical literary texts which are considered as privileged, high texts. On the other hand, popular forms of literature and entertainment were relegated by such approaches to an inferior position as vulgar, and tasteless. Stuart attributed such distinction between the literary and the popular to a working-class agenda where the working classes are represented as uncultured, and tasteless, while the upper classes are seen as associated with morals, culture, and reading high literature (Julian Wulfreys, p.186, essay). John Brannigan states that "popular expressions could mean as much, and function in similar ways as a literary text. We cannot separate literature and art from other forms of literary practice . . . . Cultures told stories about themselves through all forms of media and artistic representation" (Julian Wulfrey, p.186).

Robert Con Davis and Ronald Schleifer argue that "culture is the outgrowth of experience" in the sense that experience is the space where the various rites, practices, and manifestations of culture meet, intersect, and negotiate (Criticism and Culture, p.229). So to sum up, cultural identity is not fixed or given, but an ever growing and developing identity that is defined by experience as much as it is defined by racial and ethnic birth. The demands on identity increase in colonial and diasporic contexts.

### **1.3. Black Drama in English: Basic theory and Techniques**

The Minstrel shows which were popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century are thought by the majority of historians to be the germ of black theatre, but they were written by white authors, performed by white men wearing black masks, and directed mainly for the white audience. Black theatre prospered during the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s and 1930s. Black theatrical groups and companies began to perform in America (black theatre/ britannica).

Black drama all over the world is often typically post-colonial both in its agenda and structure. Drama is an important tool at the hand of black dramatists to resist hegemonic powers and subvert colonial discourse. Priyanka Sharma writes that Postcolonial drama covers so varied and diversified dramatists like the Nigerian Wole Soyinka, the Indian Girish Karnad, the South African Athol Fugard, the Caribbean

Derek Wallcot, and Vincint O; Sullivan from New Zealand. Though these writers share the process of colonial trauma and subjugation, they belong to different historical and cultural backgrounds and represent different versions of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized and show different articulations of the crisis of identity (Sharma,p.1-2).

Sharma goes on to say that "among the many challenges facing postcolonial writers is the attempt to both revitalize their traditions and also to contest the preoccupations about their culture" (ibid). Deirdre Osborne argues that among the most effective and masterly plays written in our age actually come not from the mainstream culture stage but rather from" the edges or corners of society"( p.459). These black dramatists established their viewpoint toward their own culture and the issue of blacks, to break the European Imperial viewpoint which has always marginalized and oppressed them. Osborne believes that the representation of the very idea of blackness since the Renaissance was mainly associated with inferior divergent cultures which were created and maintained by the European imperial power such as Portugal, Spain, France, and England to feed on their sense of power and superiority (p.460).

"Blackness" was associated with evil since medieval morality plays where devils were made to wear black masks and stockings in performances. Such racial attitudes persisted in Western culture as late as the late Twentieth century. So, any portrayal of black people in the early British stage was actually created by white writers who produced the stereotyped image of the black as evil, inferior and uncivilized (Osborne, p.460).

Black drama has become a vital mode of expression at the hands of black authors. Black theatre developed a great deal by adapting itself to popular theatrical forms and rewriting classical European plays such as Shakespeare from a black point of view (Muharrem, p.10230). Adaptation of European canonical works is a major technique in Black theatre whether in Africa, the Caribbean, or in writers in diaspora.

Robert Young argues that history is "the west's greatest myth" and what postcolonial authors are trying to do is to re-write history from a different perspective (Robert Yong, p.23). By re-writing Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, for example, a postcolonial author exposes the stereotyped image of indigenous people such as Galiban and reveals the hidden imperial messages in this canonical text. The great

artistic effect of such a masterpiece and the audience's identification with it makes it very difficult for them to judge it objectively. So, the process of othering black people was actually performed by European canonical text even before the beginning of the actual military occupation. In postcolonial drama, therefore, characters who are central heroes in the original European play are made peripheral or minor characters; i.e., they are othered and marginalized, while black types who are shown as evil and inferior or mad in the original classical play are brought to the front. This is done to deconstruct the colonial hegemonic text and create their own identity this makes drama an important weapon at the hand of black authors to resist and fight back. Sharma writes:

In the 19 century, the European canonical text were used to support the point of view of Imperialism, however, with the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century these same texts were adapted by black dramatists to to reclaim their lost tradition and subvert or resist the hegemonic discourse(Sharma essay,p.3).

So, re-writing classical texts is one of the important techniques used by black dramatists to subvert colonial imperialistic strategies and offer new ways of reading these classics.

Another important technique in postcolonial black drama is the use of action and violence to give an actual picture of a society that is full of hatred, war, oppression, and abuse of all sorts. This drama refuses to ignore reality and they refuse to flatter the audience. They tell nothing but the truth no matter how ugly it is as in tucker green's "in yer ear" theater and Sara Cain's "In yer face theatre). Through this, these authors show the lack of identity and individuality due to the powers of persecution and oppression represented by hegemonic mainstream culture. Black dramatists reject to flatter the audience's belated tastes and they try instead to give their audience a slap on the face to awaken them to the facts of their life.

Transculturation caused by the subduing of one peripheral culture by another dominating one creates a highly demanding challenge to the structure, unity, and consistency of the marginalized culture and identity. Colonialism is the process that sets into work this condition of cultural competition and exchange which consequently presses hard on national identity. What actually happens is not a total extinction of the indigenous dominated culture in front of the superior European colonial culture, but a process of negotiation of culture. It is the identity of the colonized which is mainly

transformed by this hybrid experience where the native individual loses the consistency and unity of his identity Dazzled by the remarkable culture of the European colonizers, representatives of indigenous

culture struggled hard to assert their own native identity and subvert their colonizers. They established a counter postcolonial discourse to confront the European colonialist discourse and deconstruct the false dehumanizing stereotypes attached to them by hegemonic culture. They are either author working from their own home countries or writers living in diaspora.

So, post-colonialism generally studies the cultural relationship between the colonizer and the colonized and the way this affects the culture and identity of the subaltern group. Postcolonial literature covers writings produced by authors from currently or previously occupied countries., describing the influence of colonization during the historical stages of this process: precolonial, colonial, and decolonial periods. The last one refers to the period after the end of actual occupation when the indigenous people start working to remove the damages of occupation and rebuild their state and reclaim.

As has been said before, Some postcolonial authors like Tucker Green, the concern of this study, wrote about displacement i.e., they immigrated to or were born in the metropolitan centers of the European countries that previously occupied their own countries. Most of these African diasporic authors used the English language as a tool to create a counter-discourse to subvert the Eurocentric discourse. Using English is an inevitable choice at the hand of those authors to make themselves heard and gain world recognition. A cornerstone in all postcolonial literature is the sense of resistance to the colonizer and activist work to confront these dehumanizing strategies.

The process of colonization does not actually end with the end of the military campaign gaining formal independence as Wole Soyinka believes. Rather, that initiates a process of “new colonization” in which the metropolitan centers keep controlling the political, economic, and cultural life and policy of the previously occupied countries.

This issue of identity has a special concern in all postcolonial studies. Thus, colonized people particularly diasporic individuals suffer a kind of “dislocation of culture” since they exist in a stage of in- betweenness or third space where they feel they belong “to both but none of the two cultures,” They have a mixed feeling of

admiration and aversion toward the colonizer due to his possession of technology, education, and prestigious condition. When two cultures clash or meet, there happens a negotiation of identity, power, and culture which affects both sides but mainly the peripheral group.

The black man's attitude to western culture is highly ambivalent because he becomes impressed by the idea of whiteness which he associates with whatever is good, ideal, civilized, and pure. while he starts to feel ashamed of his blackness which causes the fracturing of his identity and disintegration of his ego since he is torn by the contradiction inside him. The idea of "mimicry" is a very important concept in postcolonial studies since it develops into a strategy of resistance to subvert the hegemony of the mainstream culture. Imitating the white man makes the negro rise up to cope with him, hence threatening the absolute superiority of the colonizer, because education and learning no longer remain a monopoly of the white man.

In his *Dance of the Forest*, Soyinka dramatized his vision of the nature of the relationship between his Nigerian people and their colonizers seeing the recent independence as false and the country entering a new phase of neo-colonialism. He brings the people side by side with the ancestors since he blames both for the cultural and political crisis currently suffered by the country. The difficulty of the play's structure lies in this establishment of a hierarchy of characters, levels, times, historical, mythical and demonic. He shows the loss of individuality and fracturing of identity that the Nigerian people suffer because of the trauma of colonization.

On the other hand, Debbie Tucker Green offers her audience to peep into the life of the British poor marginalized families especially ethnic ones calling for more attention to be paid to them. She stages this human crisis in the world of globalization, and the contradiction of people living together but neither being aware nor considerate of each other problems. Living in these apartments with only nothing but thin walls to separate each other, they hear each other's suffering but have no motive to intervene. She launches a cry of protest against the British people's neglect of this class whose lives abound in abuse, crime, and poverty and who have their identity fractured under this diasporic experience. They long for a safe and a sense of secure home and remain all their lives a site of memory and nostalgia.

## 2. CHAPTER TWO

### 2.1. Wole Soyinka

Wole Soyinka was born in 1934. He belongs to parents descending from Ijebba tribe in Abeokuta town. He attended St Peter's school and Abeokuta Grammar School for the period 1938-1945 ( Mpalive- Hangson Msiska, p.xv). He fully assimilated his people's native Yuroba tradition in addition to the modern Christian tradition ( Rajkumar G., p.22). He took his doctorate in 1973 from the University of Leeds where his infatuation with drama and ardent concern with theatricality as an important aspect of any performance was nurtured and developed. Dramatist, critic, and director G. Wilson Knight introduced him to Shakespeare, Greek and American drama. Knight also guided him to Nietzsche's *theory of tragedy* in his book *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) which furnished Soyinka with strategies and tools to reconstruct the Yuroba tradition (Msiska, p.xviii). In England, where he spent six years, he worked as a dramaturgist at London's Royal Court Theatre for the period (1958-1959). In 1960, he returned to Nigeria for the purpose of studying African drama. He also started to teach drama and literature in Ibadan, Lagos, and Ife. He remained a professor of comparative literature since 1975 (<https://www.britanica.com>).

The Yoruba tradition was transported to the West by diasporic men like Soyinka himself and it showed its ability to survive and get assimilated within different Western languages and traditions. It also was able to match and function very well within the different modern dramatic and artistic genres and forms. One thing that distinguishes the Yuroba tradition is its dependence on vegetation festivals which are organically related to rural people and their agricultural style of life (Rajkumar, p.22). The celebration of Nigerian independence needs the presence of Nigerian ancestors because Soyinka believes in the simultaneity of the different levels of existence. So, he employs gods and deities, primitive native rituals, mime, song, and dance to support the sense of feasting. He had the concept of the theatre as a ritual because this medium is more effective in awakening people's consciousness. The play is clearly modeled on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in its forest setting, disguise, prologue, play within a play, magic elements, gods, spirits, and demonology, all these reflect a clear affinity with Jacobian and Elizabethan drama (Vishnupriya, p.297). Dramatists



like Soyinka were educated in Western-oriented schools and used English especially as a medium of writing hence creating a match of Western language and African belief forms. This refers to the fractured nature of these writers and their work ( Anyokwe, p.34).

In his childhood, Soyinka was exposed to a variety of hybrid influences and traditions, native and Western. His parents' house contained a rich and varied library which provided him with the reading material he needs at that particular stage of his life. The political scene in Nigeria was hectic with disputes, conflicts, and views about the future of Nigeria, and this constituted the germ of his lifelong preoccupation with "the relationship between ethnic and national identity (Mpalive-hangson Msiska, p.xvi). Nigeria got its independence on October 1, 1960, after a long time of slave trade and exploitation of the country's natural resources. The event was hailed as a great moment in Nigerian history, but it also ushered in a new phase of the postcolonial relationship between Nigeria and Britain. Soyinka saw independence Day as a highly ambivalent moment, and he performed the first run of his play *Dance of the Forest* to warn people against the follies and abuses of the new ruling system. This led the Independence Committee to reject the play for its censure of the new system (David Thomas Suell,p.2). Soyinka in his first play tried to warn people and especially the new leaders against ignoring the "legacies of the past" particularly the colonial legacy itself which defined its borders, institutions, and the state's head, since the Queen of England seized this title until 1963. Nigerian political leaders had to choose between past colonial governing systems and indigenous or tribal ruling systems and belief systems by weighing their potential and pitfalls. Nigeria's postcolonial history was full of violence and blood, so there is an urgent need for a wise re-evaluation of that past to drive lessons from it (Suell,p.2-3).

From 1994, Soyinka lived in exile because he had to flee because of the persecution and threats of General Sami Abacha. The contribution of Bhabha, Said, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, and others to postcolonial theory is that they focused their attention to heal and introduce the "Other" into the "dominant global culture" thanks to their highly individual and vital analysis and articulation of the colonizer/colonized hierarchies, perspectives, attitudes and visions ( Anyokwu, P.3). The very structure of the postcolonial theory is situated in the concept of "othering; of the West versus the rest; of 'they versus 'us' .... and 'the centre ' versus 'the margin or '

the periphery" (ibid, p.36).

Soyinka in his work tried to embody the ebbs and flows of fractured identity trying to define the relationship between 'Self' and 'Other' in order to know where he stands in this conflict between indigenous and Western cultures. Soyinka's intended "fragmentation of the self" in his plays and autobiographies to transcend the notion of autobiography as a coherent presentation of a consistent self, but rather a self that is disintegrated into various "factual and fictional bits" (Msiska, p.xix). He published his autobiography, *Ake: The Years of Childhood* in 1981. Anyokkwe emphasizes the "centrality of fracturing" in Soyinka's work as in all postcolonial and diasporic work. Due to the fluid nature of the modern age and the hybrid nature of postcolonial literature, postcolonial texts are always characterized by "fracturing" or "fragmentation" as a basic feature of both their form and content (Anyokwu, p.47).

Soyinka's unsurpassed contribution to African culture and theater and his active role in the Nigerian hectic political scene made him a prominent national hero. However, Soyinka did not present himself only as a spokesman for the black race, but as a world humanitarian voice with a deep concern for human suffering and oppression all over the world (Gururj S.,p.41). In view of this, in 1986, Soyinka was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature which gave him world recognition. according to the Prize Committee, Soyinka was selected for the award because of his advocacy for justice and human rights, his international reputation, his ability to transcend his native culture, and his popularization of the African experience to a wide range of audiences (Msiska, p. xxi).

## **2.2. *A Dance of the Forests***

*A Dance of the Forest* was written by Soyinka in celebration of the 1960 Nigerian Independence. He wrote the play as a warning to Nigeria and other African countries against the mistakes of the past and the effects of European Imperialism on the country. He enlivens Nigerian ancestors back to life to comment on both the past and present of the country. When it was performed, it aroused much protest and anger from the government and the elite in Nigeria, because he presented Nigerian postcolonial politics as corrupt and sterile. The play is often seen as a symbolic comment on the sociopolitical condition in Nigeria juxtaposing the bleak dim past with the sterile

present to anticipate a tragic and dark future (Rajkumar J.,p. 22).

James Gibbs argues that Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests* was inspired by "The Dance of the African Forest," an indignant, bitter, antiapartheid play. Like its predecessor, Soyinka's play revolves around the satirical perspective of the socio-political condition of Africa. With the formal Nigerian Independence in 196, there was a rash of African individuals from America and Europe back to Nigeria. These people were not motivated by a real, conscientious desire to rebuild their country, but they were in fact panting after the posts that the colonizers left behind in the different institutions of the state. It is this gap between what those statesmen claimed to be and their actual ugly practice that caused the moral crisis of Nigeria (Adimakinwa,p.82). Soyinka believes that oppression, fear, and war are the dominant motif of human history. One of the characters in the play, called Historian, says "Nations live by strength; nothing else has meaning. War is the only consistency that past ages afford us. It is the legacy we knew nations seek to perpetuate" ( qtd in Adimakinwa, p.82).

According to Chinua Achebe, the South African novelist, Nigeria is one of the most chaotic nations due to the dominance of corruption, filthiness, superstition, and bohemianism. It was even doubted whether Nigeria could ever survive as a state. Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forest* was presented as a dramatic representation of this condition of the country focusing on the three stages of the native precolonial past, the colonial legacy, and its present system (Haseeb Ahmed, p.1). Newly independent colonized countries were at a loss for what style of government should they adopt. Soyinka was among the committed writers who felt responsible to guide their people in this respect (ibid).

It was not until the end of the Twentieth Century that started to be a subject of worldwide interest and appreciation thanks to the academic studies of this literature by established scholars working at the most prestigious universities. The greatest amount of African literary writing was motivated by the search for an independent cultural and ethnic identity away from European hegemony. The major focus of these writings was to document slavery and colonization as well as documenting the political upheaval in Africa. Slave narratives was the most common genre of African literature which documented the stories of runaway slaves and the deplorable conditions slaves were living under and the inhuman treatment they received at the hand of their masters.

However, most of these narratives were written from the perspective of white settlers who presented an inferior stereotyped image of black people. Africa was shown in the work of these settlers as the center of desire, and an imperial frontier where Britain exercised its power, dominion, and superiority whereas the black was shown as "objects of fear and revulsion" (Pinky Isha, p.6).

The imposition of Apartheid created an urgent need for the project of native literature to counterbalance that policy. It could be said that early African literature was born and developed within the British Christian educational establishment such as schools and universities. So, what this literature presented was African themes from a western perspective. However, step by step, authentic indigenous African literature started to evolve outside colonialist institutions. The native oral tradition of the African people like the *Europa* tradition furnished a rich source of authentic African art that came to its heyday during the period of decolonization during the 1950s and 1960s when many African countries started to gain their independence. Paradoxically, the European domination of Africa continued through political and economic means which led to what Pinky Isha calls " the crisis of decolonization or the crisis of post-colonialism in the 1980s and 1990s ( Ibid ).

Soyinka's major critical book is *Myth, Literature and the African World* (1976), a group of critical essays in which he discussed the role of the artist in times of crisis in the context of Yoruba mythology and symbolism. He also presented a series of books in which he discussed the deplorable condition of Africa, its struggle to evolve a coherent identity, and the responsibility of the west to African countries such as *The Open Sore of Continent* (1996) and *The Burden of Memory, The Muse of Forgiveness*(1990) (Britanica.com/topic/A-Dance-of-the-Forest). Soyinka tries to transcend the common concept of postcolonial identity as a dichotomy of Self and Other to a more kinetic concept which coincides with Bhabhi's and Hall's idea of identity (Msiska, p. xxxvi).

The plot of *A Dance of the Forest* is largely complex. The difficulty of the play is caused by its containing grotesque stylized characters, diversity of subjects, intricate system of symbolism, and variety of theatrical devices. The characters belong to four different levels. Demoke, Adenbi, and Rola are living human beings. The Dead man and the Dead woman belong to the past world of the Nigerian ancestors and they are

invited to witness the celebration. Mata Kharibu is the poet of the court who represents Madam Tortoise in the world of ancient Nigeria. The supernatural world in the play is embodied by the head of the forest, the spirit of the tree, and the spirit of the river. Some of the characters in the play assume dual roles which cause some confusion on the part of the reader or the audience. In part one, for example, Adenbi, Agboreku, Demoke, and Rola perform the role of "contemporary citizens in Nigeria." Those same characters assume different roles in the play within the play in part three. Demoke becomes the court poet while Rola assumes the role of Madam Tortoise (Haseeb Ahmed,p.2).

Rola is presented in a double role as a fashionable prostitute and the Queen of Mata Kharibu's court. She is an ironic picture of Helen of Troy because, like her, she is also the cause behind the death of many people within and outside Kharibu's court. In her present form, she appears as Madame Tortoise and she takes many people in her snares bringing their destruction. Demoke plays the role of the artist in his two levels of existence, past, and present. He has the post of the court poet and, like Rola, he also is endowed with a double role, creative and destructive. Soyinka presents a vivid picture of the moral decay and degeneration of humanity exemplified in the situation of Africa. The Nigerian past and present are seen by Soyinka as pitifully cheap and false because there is nothing to be proud of in it. In the play, Soyinka says "In this shrine of historic significance, in this reign to which living Africans look back with pride, we find a whore as a queen, and a king unrivalled in barbaric ferocity" ( Ademakinwa, p. 83).

The Half-child beseeches for help, but nobody of those surrounding him responds. Eshuro dresses himself as the Questioner, then as the Figure involves the Half-Child in a strange game about the child's future, the Half-child performs a dance putting on a vague mask that reflects the obscurity of his future. Forest Head final appeal is full of frustration and despair. Though he is possessed of wisdom and knowledge, he is desperate because of the absurdity of mankind. His knowledge becomes a heavy responsibility (Vishnupriya,p.301). Forest Head expresses this meaning in the following speech from the play:

my secret is my eternal burden to pierce the encrustations of soul deadening habit,

...( CP, 82)

Ogun is the god of Iron in Yoruba mythology and it has a special significance in Soyinka's mythopoesis since he is the only god who has the courage to throw himself in "the night of the abyss," the level of existence separating the world of the living from that of the supernatural to achieve a reunion between the two from which a new history may begin. For Soyinka, Ogun symbolizes the god of different spaces of transformation, or the so-called in-between spaces which are often confronted by those transmitting from one kind of existence to another. Soyinka's intricate system of metaphysics is characterized by ambivalence since Ogun is also a manifestation of destructive energy such as the excess of the desire for power and dominion. In this respect, Soyinka acknowledges the duality of African identity in relation to the west. He tries to exploit both the Yoruba and Greek mythology to create a new system of mythopoesis, and the interaction between the two cultures results in What Homi Bhabha calls "the in-between" space when the individual feels he belongs to both but neither of the two cultures (Msiska, p.xxxi). Soyinka does not agree with the idea of Negritude that each cultural group has distinctive features which are peculiar to it. Instead, he argues that there are universal human attributes and needs common to all cultural groups (Msiska,p.xxxi). Soyinka's opinion here coincides with Stuart Hall's rejection of "essentialist identity" which emphasizes the commonly shared racial and ethnic attributes that distinguish a cultural group from other groups and he argues instead that there is no such fixed or essentialist identity. In a colonial context especially, identity becomes fragmented, fractured, and hybrid since the indigenous individual begins to live in a liminal space in which identity is always kinetic and changing.

Demoke is asked "to carve a totem out of a tree" as part of the celebration. This act of carving is symbolically significant for the whole society. Demoke kills his apprentice carver, Oemole during the process of carving the totem. This shows the dominance of chaos and violence which is seen in the conflict between Ogun and Eshuoru, two deities. Oremole asks for vengeance and ogun intervenes to protect Demoke who finally confesses that he killed him out of envy (Kingsly Ehiema, 194). Adenbe, Demoke, Obaneji, and Rola feel dubious about the Dead Man and the Dead Woman. The latter also feel reserved about the world of the present and they shrink from illuminating people of the modern world with their wisdom. As the Dead woman returns to the world of the living, she says "No one to meet me. I know this is the

place." This is said when the Dead Woman and Dead Man first rise from the ground and they call to the living who pass by. This reveals that there is no harmony between the past and present which leads to chaos (ibid.). Arony, the lame character, sheds important light on the play through the following prologue:

I know who the Dead ones are. They are the guests Of the human Community who are neighbors to Us of the Forest(CP, p.16).

Such festivals or feasts constitute an integral part of the life of Nigerian rural cultures since it "punctuates the Yoruba agricultural year." However, there is no cultural unity in the Yoruba practices or rites, instead, Yoruba tradition comprises a wide range of beliefs, rituals, and cults organized by the Ifa oracle. In *A Dance of the Forests*, Soyinka wanted to warn Nigerian people that the formal end of colonial rule does not put an end to their problems and suffering. So he calls for the evolvement of a new vision of Africa, and the formation of a new cultural identity away from imperial hegemony (Rajkumar J.,p.23).

In the interlude (play within play), there is a shift of time eight centuries back, when Nigeria was ruled by a despotic king, Mata Kharibu. The play within play, as in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, functions as comic relief from the bleak nightmarish atmosphere of the forest that is haunted by a lot of spirits and demons. The court scene is also significant since it shows the injustice and arbitrariness of king Mata Kharibu who always fabricates justifications for his evil actions (Vishnupriya, p.298 ). He praises war as the "boon of patriots" as is seen in the following dialogue between warrior and historian:

Warrior: I am not a traitor!

Historian : Be quiet soldier! I have here the whole History of Troy. (FP, p. 55-56).

So, this African past which they see as glorious and always seek to unify with it shows a whore as queen and a brutish man as a king who does not mind selling his most devoted subjects as slaves.

Tortoise, who appears as Rola in the first part of the play is now Mata's queen. It seems that he abducted her from her previous husband. Mata orders the leader of his army to fight Tortoise's previous husband but he does not obey this order. Mata threatens his army's leader and other rebellious soldiers by selling them as slaves.

Soyinka seems to suggest that because of corrupt arbitrary kings like Mata, the Nigerian future seems bleak, hazy, uncertain, and chaotic. Such arbitrary, lusty rulers cause the suffering and persecution of good people like the army's leader and this leads to a community where there is no justice and no spiritual or moral values. Soyinka believes that the biggest problem is the passive people who would tolerate any evil and compromise with any condition, no matter how ugly, corrupt, and abnormal it is, like the historian of Mata's court who tries to convince the army's leader to wage war against the legal husband of Tortoise just to please the corrupt king (Haseeb Ahmed,p.3). Rajkumar G. writes that *Dance of the Forest* is a clash between the Dead and the Living, history and present actual reality (Rajkumar, p. 24).

The living is eager to summon from the world of the dead examples of splendid heroic types to observe the gathering of the tribes. However, the past also looks bleak and pitiable. The Dead Man has a tragic history of grief, frustrated dreams, and treason. The Dead Woman, his wife was pregnant for a hundred generations but she is also miserable. She is waiting for a half-child, who could be standing for the future. In the resurrection of the past, and the court of Mata Khaetbu, a mythological twelfth Century monarch who represents "the glorious history to which the living look back with nostalgia" (Ibid).

According to Anyokwu, the play dramatizes "the conflict between history and nature." Nature has an integrity and life of its own in its various elemental forces (earth, sea, wind, mountains, trees). Soyinka juxtaposes the natural, mythological, ritual, and spiritual aspects of tribal Africa against its collective historical experience. He believes that "even history is not a tidy affair; it is not simply a one-to-one correspondence between the human face and the mirror. "Soyinka shows this in the play through the character of Adenebi, the court historian who takes a bribe from a slave dealer to change the truth about the criminal, cruel and unjust nature of the "Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade" and the massacres of the "Middle Passage." The play suggests that "history or its retelling is the official version of the ruling class." The men in power do not tell the real history but re-writes history from their perspective distorting and changing much to serve their interests and presenting "falsehood-as-truth"(Anyokwu,p.38). So history and its telling is the monopoly of the ruling men of power. The common endeavor of humanity to exclude and forget about its cheap past and select the brightest and most positive elements of that past indicates a society



suffering from "amnesia." Therefore, Soyinka employs the Freudian motif of the return of the repressed in the images of the Dead Man and Dead Woman (Christopher Anyoku, p. 38).

Society always winks at the past's injuries, sins, crimes, and injustices and celebrates only the bright or heroic aspects. Soyinka sees that people have selective memory .i.e. they remember only the things they want to remember. He uses the metaphor of Freudian "return of the suppressed" through the return of the Dead Man and Dead Woman to present life to offer another perspective on the condition of Nigeria and convey to people the truth about the past so that the past's mistakes will not be repeated (Anyokwu,p.38). There is a scene in the play where Mata Kharibu and all his ancestors ride and they seem very content and proud to ride it. Soyinka here reminds the nation of the long history of slavery which the African people either forgot or they blindly tolerate and accept.

Rajkumar J. argues that " Soyinka sees the whole of African history in the crushingly powerful image of a great slavery galley sailing down the straits of time, from the dim past to the present and on to towards the horizon of the future" (p.25).

The Dead Man says that "The pattern is unchanged ... I was one of those who journeyed in the market ships of blood", and now he is returning to the modern world of the living":

Your wise men, casting bones of oracle  
Promised peace and profit

The name of the Dead Man is Mulieru, in the Yoruba language meaning "He-who-is-enslaved." He returns from the dead put forth in front of the gathering his castration and enslavement, trying to remedy his persecution. Soyinka says though Muliero cannot be one of the progenitors of black people, he helped other African slaves like him to establish the foundation of the black diasporic experience (Anyokwu, p.39).

Soyinka exposes the most appalling crime against the African people which is the slave trade, the most traumatic experience in the life of the African people, and he warns Nigerian people not to excuse themselves from responsibility towards their present and they must shoulder the task of building their future ( Haseeb Ahmed, p.2). People usually do not have the desire to re-evaluate their past life and actions critically

so that they can understand their present condition ( Anyokwu,p.39).

Soyinka "anthropomorphizes" the identity of the ancestors. This is done by assigning the Dead unruly or unattractive bodies and making them re-embody human social relationships. This is illustrated through the relationship between the Dead Man and Dead Woman and the mother-child bond. Postcolonial authors often present the maternal female body with an unborn, stillborn, or deformed child. In the play the half-child "abiku" alternates between the world of the living and that of the unborn. This symbolizes the present process of spiritual and material transition as well as the political and social transformation of Nigeria brought by colonization ( Sharma, p.2). The Half-Child asks for help from those around him but nobody is ready to help and at last it joins the spirits:

Half-Child: I who yet await a mother Feel this dread ( CP, 56).

Priyanka Sharma argues that *A Dance of the Forest* moves "across the past, present, and future, with the three stages of Yorubian existence- the world of ancestors, the world of the living, and the world of the unborn." The play was set in the time of the transatlantic slave trade and the reign of Mata Karibu as the epitome of corrupt arbitrary monarchs ( Sharma, p. 2).

The traditional, common concept of history is subverted which shows the need for political and social systems as well as new myths, and metaphors for the rehabilitation of society ( Kingsley I. Ehiema, p.190). Soyinka's concern in *A Dance of the Forest* is "the dramatization of myth and history and modernity in their specific and mutual articulation with postcolonial African modernity. He changed the foundation of knowledge from European mythology to African mythology and by this, he succeeded in re-evaluating postcolonial ideology. He presents the deity, Ogun, the Yoruba god of iron, which occupies a special place in his system of mythopoesis because Ogun is the only god who "dared to lose himself in the night of the abyss," so that a union can be achieved between deities and humanity ushering in the birth of African history (Msiska, p. xxxi).

Soyinka makes a match between Yoruba culture and modern postcoloniality. In adapting mythology, whether Yoruba, Christian or Greek, Soyinka points out the vein of fatalism in human history. It is from this sense of fatalism that myth was born and the static view of history evolved (Msiska, p.xxxvi). We should not forget also that

his sense of fatalism is one of the basic foundations of all tragedy, Greek, Medieval, Shakespearian, and African. Forest Head introduces the activities of the festival saying: I take no part but listen if shadows, Future shadows form in rain water ( Cp.,p.73-8 ).

Part two of the play presents the welcoming ritual in which all the inhabitants of the forest are supposed to participate. This ritual is preceded by a Pantomime in one of the ancient African empires. Soyinka supports the theme by getting the three human characters, Rola, Demoke, and Adenebi wear masks and foresee the future. The title emphasizes the theme of dance which is one aspect of ritual connected with touch, body language, ecstasy, and the erotic sense. It also gives the sense of art and its potential in exploiting all the acting resources of the body. The form of the play itself is made to evoke the archetypal dance of both procreation and extinction. Soyinka says that his play embodies the pattern of "a snake devouring its own tail," which means that the retreat of one era necessarily means the rise of another (Vishnupriya, p. 300). The circular or spiral structure of the play implies the "cycle of sin" which started with the rein of king Mata Kharibu to the present time and is only broken by Demoke 's noble expiation acting as a scapegoat for all humanity ("critical commentary," <https://www.lkouniv.ac.in>). Soyinka adopted the idea of the theatre as a ritual since it is more linked to people's life and the best way to awaken their collective unconscious. A multitude of ants rises from their graves to perform their interlude which ends with a dialogue between the ants leader and the Forest Head. M. Vishnupriya argues that "the living tableau of ants symbolizes the [great] waste of human resources" because four hundred million people have been killed during man's one million years of life on the earth to satisfy the whimsical needs and lusty appetites of men on the top (Vihnpriya,p. 300). The following dialogue between Forest Head and ant leader shows the significance of this ants interlude:

Forest Head; Have you a course or shall I preserve you Like a like a riddle?

Ant leader; We are the ones remembered when nations Build... (CP , p.78).

The leaders are the most appalling criminals since they are responsible for the extermination of millions of ants in the name of a beautiful future. Their crimes are justified on the pretext of the so-called Greater Cause.

Vishnupriya argues that Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forest* is "in fact a thesis play

(if not a theses play) designed to elaborate several of Soyinka's ideas rather than explore psychological motives." The play has a similarity to English medieval Morality plays with their characteristic technique of personifying abstract values in terms of concrete characters on the stage as in the classical example, *Everyman*. Most of the spirits, deities, the ants, the Half-Child, and the Triplets as well as the characters in Soyinka's play are in fact personifications of abstract ideas and values through which he conveys his political, philosophical, and moral system. However, Soyinka's purpose in the play is not a moral teaching, but conveying a message about the African political and social systems and the many cases of abuse and corruption in it. Soyinka believes that power is a virus invading the system of the whole state infecting it with corruption and intoxicating political leaders with lust for dominion and making them lose sight of their responsibility. We can say that the major concern of *A Dance of the Forest* is the effect of the "power game" and hectic lust for dominion on the life of man a (p.301).

*A Dance of the Forest* dramatizes how leaders manipulate the people they are supposed to lead and how the long history of corruption and exploitation affects the crystallization of self and the building of the state. It presents a psychological study of leadership or kingship and the peculiarities of human nature in its panting after power and material gain (Pinky Isha, p.8). It could be read as an allegorical comment on the "sociopolitical" status quo in Nigeria in particular and Africa in general, the demands and problems of post-independence Africa. The reason for the victimization and suffering of native people is not just the colonialist dominion, but their African despotic leaders who toppled their "great expectations" of an indigenous rule and prosperous state ( Solomon Omatsola Azumurana, p.72-73).

Azumurana argues that Soyinka's *Dance of the Forest* belongs to the well-established genre of utopian literature, but his vision in the play is neither utopian nor dystopian but both. Usually, the past in traditional utopias is idealized and exotic while here both the past and present are seen as dystopian, so a utopian future can never be expected. Soyinka does not focus on the problems and pitfalls of the present but also the future. The seeds of corruption are deeply rooted in the African past and Soyinka's characters are as many victims of their national past as of the colonial present. Soyinka calls upon his people to confront their past and future without any illusions. The ancestors who are summoned in the play are supposed to be reminders of glorious history, but instead of the past legendary heroes, we have the summoning of two spirits

of the dead who are the Dead Man and Dead Woman ( Azumurana, p. 71-75,passim).

Dystopian past and dystopian present are supposed to lead to a utopian future, but in Soyinka's play, the future itself is also seen as dystopian. Soyinka here opposes negritude and the pointless glorification of the African past by negritude writers. These writers, according to Soyinka, wink at the negative aspects of the past and only focus on the positive aspects. So the future will be another copy of that defective past. Soyinka sees nothing glorious in the African past, unlike the other nations that each has a glorious past such as the Chinese, the Jews, or the English. According to Soyinka, the empires of Mali, Songhai, Lisabi, and Zimbabwe which have so long been hailed as glorious states are nothing but an illusion. Adenebi in his prior level of existence eight hundred years served as a "court historian" to the despotic ruler Mata Kharibu says that war is the only consistent theme in history which is the death of a great number of soldiers in pointless conflicts (Azumurana,p.74).

The play is based on the "Yoruba New Year Festival" which coincides with March which is a purgatorial ritual where the African people confess their sins and mistakes in an attempt to make a new fresh start. One major problem that every African and every human, in general, has to confront first is to identify "the enemy within" before he can confront the outer enemy, in this, case colonialism. Soyinka believes that every individual should know and admit their defects and mistakes instead of blaming others and holding them responsible for their failure. Within the context of Nigerian independence, Soyinka could be arguing that Nigerians should not blame it all on colonialism, and independence will not guarantee them a successful free state. Independence is not the magical cure for all Nigerian people's problems and atrocities ("Critical Commentary on Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests*," <https://www.lkouniv.ac.in> ). He seems to argue that there are no great ideal models in the past to adopt or follow. In the play, the council decides to carve a totem, a sculpture of an emblem of the tribe or African nation as a whole and the supposed unification with the dead ancestors. However, instead of creating harmony and unity between people, the totem instigated hatred, malice, and spite. Demoke who was chosen to carve the sculpture carved araba, a sacred tree in the Yoruba tradition where Eshuoro dwells. In the Yoruba tradition, Eshuoro stands for the Devil, while araba is the tallest tree in the forest. This is considered a violation of the sacredness of the tree and an insult against Eshu who lives in it (Azumurana, p.76).

The Swedish Academy of considers Soyinka "a writer who in a wide cultural perspective and with peptic overtones fashions the drama of existence." More than any other writer he focuses again and again on the issue of the responsibility of man to himself and to his society and his role in that society. He also focuses on the role of Christianity and the European literary canon in the modern world ( Pinky Isha, p.11). Soyinka here "de-romanticizes" the image of Africa and the Africans in a daring way that is unrivaled by any writer before him since J. M. Synge and Sean O'Casey. He tries to make the Nigerian and African people, in general, make a new reading of their history, one that is objective and free of the delusions and deceptions of the new empire (Vishnupriya, p.298). Frantz Fanon in his *The Wretched of the Earth* spoke of the inability of post-independence national states to rise to the ideals they preach due to the continuing dominion of colonialist policies. Soyinka with some other dramatists shouldered the responsibility of de-romanticizing this nationalism by exposing all its fallacies, contradictions and delusions, and fracturing this national experience proving new more objective readings of it (Pnky Isha , p.7).

To sum up, from an ideological perspective, Wole Soyinka adopted the same attitudes of Stuart Hal, and Homi Bhabha in particular. These two theorists represented a great influence on his views of the cultural identity of the colonized people and the ways they follow subverting the imperial discourse. His major purpose behind writing the play is to expose the corruption and the abuse in the new Nigerian political system and warn people that the end of actual colonization does not mean the end of hegemonic dominion on the state. He also wants them to benefit from the lessons of the past to reform the present.

On the technical level, Soyinka owes much debt to medieval Morality Plays as well as Elizabethan drama especially to Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* especially in his inclusion of spirits, fairies, dance, play-within-play, elements of disguise, poetry... etc. He revolted against the traditional concept of the "well-made" play with its discursive development of the plot, consisting of five or three acts, and consistent, well-motivated characters. Instead, he wrote a peculiar kind of drama that is mainly dependent on ritual and music.

### 3. CHAPTER THREE

#### 3.1. Body Politics and Black Drama

The concept of “body politics” generally refers to the strategies and practices both hidden and frank followed by social and political powers or institutions to control, manipulate or further designate the female body in particular. Among the powers which affect body politics are social, economic, judicial, media, and even personal intimate relationship. Across history, there are many ethnic groups whose bodies are marked as inferior or who are denied the right to have full claim over their bodies. Body politics first came into its own in the 1970s as part of feminism especially with respect to disputes on abortion and aimed at defending women against abuse and violation of their rights. Women sought to express full control and authority over their bodies. Many feminists in search of freedom and equality with men, rejected to acknowledge any distinctions between males and females. Some examples of debates in body politics are the right to abortion and transsexual surgeries. Racial body politics is seen in the measures taken against Afro-Americans and aboriginal Indians to deny them their rights over their lives and bodies ( encyclopedia. Come / socials sciences/encyclopedias almanacs-transcripts and maps /body politics.) The major contribution to body politics was thanks to black Latin, Native Americans, and Asians particularly black female authors who rejected the traditional patriarchal and colonial construction of gender by white feminists. They emphasized instead the relevance of class, race and sexuality to the role of women in society. Some ethnic groups were unjustly subject to pejorative designations or associations of their bodies such as Mexican bodies were seen as suitable only for farm labor, black women with excessive sexuality, and Asian small women were seen as suitable only for computer work and this was used to justify the othering persecution of these groups (Ibid). As said before, it was Faculty who attracted attention to the role of institutions such as schools, prisons, and hygiene centers in and others because these institutions create the discourse teaching individuals how to interpret wh0 they are and their role in society (Ibid.). Nadia Brown argues that “subjecting the body to systemic regimes such as government regulations is a method of ensuring that bodies will behave in socially and politically acceptable manner.” Moreover, feminists argued that the human body

especially the female one is “both socially shaped and colonized.” The body was located within European System initiated by Marx and popularized by Foucault. Marks argued that the body is conditioned by an individual's economic class which qualifies his experience while Foucault related the body to the different shapes of power at work. So, the body is looked at as a “site” for negotiating power and dominion and the only choice for marginalized groups is to challenge the dominant discourses that have marked the body with politicized meanings. It is said that bodies perform important mainly hidden roles in shaping political powers, attitudes, rights, and actions (Nadia Brown and Sara Allen Gerson, <https://doi.org/10.10/80>). In critical theory, bodies are denied their natural innocent construction and are instead considered key domains of politics and power. Grundula Ludwig argues that in spite of the claims of democracy and equality the western states claims, they constitute bodies hierarchically on various grounds and the ideal citizen of society is still seen as a white male individual (Grundula Ludwig, <https://do,org/10>).

One of the issues which has a central bearing on Dubbie Tucker Green's *Dirty Butterfly* is the subject of body politics which started to get attention in the most recent times in social mass media and scholarly institutions. This concept is often linked to another related concept which is "affective politics". These concepts refer to the way in which bodies "affect and are affected" by other individuals' bodies as well as the different ways they respond to government policies that press hard on their identities (Kaisu Hynna, Maria Letho and Susanna Paasonen, “Affective Body Politics of Social Media”, [sagepub.com/journals\\_permissions](http://sagepub.com/journals_permissions) DOI:10.1177/2056305119880173, [com/home/sms](http://com/home/sms)). The concept of body politics indicates the way that bodies especially female ones are controlled and politicized. Those working on this concept are driven mainly by Foucault (1978) who explores this issue focusing mainly on how “power” relates to and manipulates bodies. He further explored how power is embodied in discourses made by and kept by the state and its different governmental establishments. The gist of body politics is how power becomes intimately in and through the body” (ibid).

There are many heated recent discussions on the way religion and politics impinge on the body, as in the diverse views on the public expression of religion through the body as in Islam and the burkinin-ban in France. This shows that bodies in today’s culture are manipulated, controlled, and represented politically and religiously.



The body occupies a central position in contemporary culture especially with respect to a number of issues such as gender roles, traditional representations of masculinity and femininity, medical role in prolonging or what is called merciful killing, and the role of technological advancements in the image of the human body especially the female one (Marciecke van den Berg, Vol.7, no. 2(2017), 180-183 Do: 10.18352/rg.10233 ). To be more accurate, the body that is often focused upon in contemporary cultures is that of religious or ethnic minorities, women, migrants, or some colonial other. This act of othering creates opposites of superior we to inferior other, West-East, male-female, religious-secular along with their power relations The “gendered body” has become” a highly contested and constitutive site of dynamic secular and religious (identity) politics, ideologies and practices (Ibid. p.181).

Scholarly debates on body politics were first associated with American second-wave feminism in a number of seminal feminist books such as *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, and *Women and their Bodies*. Walen, Celis, Kantola & Weldon consider rape, hair, cloth style, contraception, pregnancy, and sexual abuse as central investigations for body politics. Moreover, they understand feminist studies as peculiarly concerned with investigating how different kinds of power, political, social, religious, and domestic affect female bodies (Kaisu Hynna).

Hynna (et. al.) argue that changing affective body politics in the context of social media, also changes the focus on how technology controls the very constitution, maintenance, and contestation of affective body politics. She defines “affective body politics” as relating to “the capacities of all kinds of bodies to affect and be affected, sometimes in patterned and premeditated ways, sometimes spontaneously and unpredictably” (Hynna). Mariecke van den Berg argues that the centrality of the body in contemporary culture led to several social ambiguities and contradictions, such as confusion about gender roles, and the different expressions of masculinity and femininity. One interesting concern, as well as a challenge for the contemporary scholarship, is why and how the “gendered body has become an important arena of identity politics both religious and secular (Mariecke, p.181).

The last decades of the twentieth century have witnessed a Latino emergence of Latin artists producing “a monologue-driven” drama which derives its power from the patterns these female artists express and dramatize politicized identities trying to

convey who they are (Patricia Herrera, p.207). The female body started to be differently staged in feminist groups trying to make themselves heard and demolish the traditionalist essentialist views of the feminine body. A number of American and British playwrights tried to change or modify traditional women's anatomies and challenge hegemonic notions of femininity. Feminist drama has always aimed to challenge the way patriarchal theatre tried to disembodiment women on the stage and substitute it with male fantasy. The female body is already a subject of signification once it enters the stage and a very valid question is how can it be represented without being objectified or mystified. There is a long history of violence and abuse against women on the traditional stage in which females have seen only the subject of male desires and fantasies. (Carolina Sanchez- Palencia,p.142). Sharon Willis argues that “to seize the apparatus [female body] of spectacle, to expose and display the feminine body on stage demands that this practice maintains a critical relation to its own discourse, a consciousness of the risk of resisting these structures (qtd. by Carolina Sanchez, p.143). According to the majority of feminists, the identification of “femaleness” with sexuality created pretexts to justify females' patronization within the patriarchal, misogynist canon. The female body is seen as a thing to be possessed and controlled, and it is always portrayed on the stage as “fractured, and fragile” (Ibid.). Beatrice Allegranti argues that bodies are never considered “neutral,” gender, i.e, being a man or woman is socially, politically, and biologically constructed pattern of identity (“The politics of becoming bodies; Sex, Gender and intersubjectivity in motion,” *The Arts in Psychotherapy* 44 (2013) 394-403. The traditional patriarchal tradition glorified the masculine body as a bringer of glory and exceptional feats of action on the battlefield. The injuries, scars, and wounds are the stamp of war on that body where annals of war are registered. This relegates the female body to an inferior position since their role is confined to domestic or nursing activities. For the image of the female body and body politics to be effectively shown on the stage, it is necessary first to get rid of “biological essentialism” and “patriarchal gaze” (Carolina Sanchez, p.152).

### **3.2. Debbie Tucker Green**

Debbie Tucker Green is one of the most technically inventive writers working

in Britain today who is known for a politically oriented drama. In view of this and her widely prolific output, she with Kwame Kwei-Armah and Roy Williams are considered the leading female playwrights active today. Her violation of traditional plot structures and her adoption of aural rather than spectacular experience and her use of sound, silence, and highly stylized dialogue made critics associate her work as more suitable for radio drama. She did not follow a naturalistic approach to her theme, the modern family disintegrated by violence, abuse, and fractured identity, but rather used a highly innovative form that depends on the proliferation of chaotic speech which says much but at the same time leaves much unsaid (Nicola Abrams, p.1). In view of this, Tucker Green has recently started to be given rising recognition and interest in academic institutions, media, and the press.

Stuart Hall presented the “concept of cultural hybridity” according to which, the race is subordinated to culture in the creation of the diasporic experience as in Debbie Tucker Green the subject of this thesis. Hall sees all cultural identities as “hybrid” and open to continuous change and transformation. Hybridization which leads to the mixing of different cultural identities to evolve black British identity appears in the work of Indian, African, and Caribbean dramatists. This process of hybridization is also reflected in other forms of art like music and it is considered by some critics like Joseph Harker as a threat because according to him “rap culture has hijacked our [black] identity “and he calls for” reclaiming from the street thugs what it means to be black (qtd in Keith Peacock, p.49). There is a clear shift in the black drama of the second generation from the end of the twentieth century onward toward exploring identity politics in the context of contemporary London rather than that of the African or West Indian cities. Black dramatists also started to include white characters in their performances which goes with Stuart Hall that all cultural identities are hybrid and in a state of continuous transformation. Debbie Tucker Green's work presents cultural hybridity from a female perspective almost in all of her plays (Ibid. P.63).

Michael Pearce attracted attention to the significance of anger or rage in black drama in general and Tucker Green's work in particular as an important positive driving mode with an active role to fulfill in society to subvert racism and oppression (qtd in Paola Prieto Lopez). However, a distinction should be made between rage as a negative destructive, pathological emotion, and rage as a positive empowering drive. So, if rage is handled and controlled properly it can become an effective tool for

resisting oppression and victimization. It is this positive healing kind of rage especially black female rage that is adopted by tucker green and other black dramatists in their work. The hip-hop artist and poet Lauryn Hill argue that rage is a means of confronting fear caused by racial violence, and this idea inspired the appearance of the movement called Black Lives Matters (BLM) after the acquittal of George Zimmerman, a white American from the killing of Travon Martin, a 17 year African American in 2013. The BLM movement soon spread into Britain and it exposed the relationship between racism and the judicial systems both in the USA and Britain. The sense of black rage and protest got more violent with the shooting of Azelle Rodney and Mark Duggan, black men by the British police in 2005 and 2011 without judicial authorization. This created a sense of resentment among blacks in the USA and UK as well as a feeling of “un-belonging.” Tucker Green’s drama is centered on this concept of black rage as a vital activist practice against racial injustice and as an important aesthetic principle in her work (Michael Pearce, “Black Rage: Diasporic Empathy and Ritual in Dubbie Tucker Green’s hang,”p.27-28).

Other emotions such as pain and stubbornness are also seen by tucker green as having an important social function so she always qualifies her characters, especially females with such emotions. Sometimes pain and anger are inseparable within the layout of the characters and the texture of the play. Tucker Green's work abounds in female characters “testifying about pain.” In *Random* (2008) a whole family's life is destroyed by a random knife assault, and this tragedy here is testified by a single black female actress who plays all the members of the family. In *Hang*, a woman describes the tragedy of her children, while in *Dirty Butterfly*, a white woman is abused by her violent brutish husband and her black neighbors do not move to help her or stop her suffering (Trish Reid, p.53).

Even on the personal level Tucker Green shows this “willfulness” which is a sign of resistance and nonconformism. This attribute is seen also in her characters most of whom are directed by a sense of anger and resentment which are seen as responses to suffering and the power structure that caused this suffering. Black women have been subject to a long history of silencing even within their own culture. They are victims of racism and sexism and Tucker Green focuses on such females in her work (Trish Reid, p.49). This made some reviewers associate tucker green with the movement of the “Angry Young Man” theater led by John Osborne and others. Lucy Tyler argues that

the most convenient perspective within which to approach tucker green's drama is to study it in terms of Homi Bhabhi's ideas of hybridity and in-betweenness or third space which Tyler sees as applicable both on the level of characters and artistic structure of the plays since green mixes canonical European forms and native African forms in her work (Pearce, *black Rage*,p.28.).

Tucker Green's preoccupation with transforming demanding topics such as “dislocation, alienation, and nihilism,” in addition to her meticulous concern with theatrical form and language links her to a number of major dramatists such as Samuel Becket, Henrik Ibsen, Caryl Churchill, David Mamet, and Harold Pinter. Her distinction lies in her perfection of rhythm and poetry to create a new theatrical form away from social realism. Another apparent way through which she defies the authority of the English language is by refusing to use upper-case letters in writing her name and the titles of her plays (Dan Rebellato, p.). Black dramatists like tucker green adopted the concept of the theatre as embodying the form of ritual and also fulfilling its function in questioning society's values and practices. So, many black dramatists whether in America or Britain employed aspects and techniques of ritual in their work. Ritual black drama, according to M. Pearce became “a way in which to attack the status quo, raise consciousness and strengthen the bond of solidarity.” Therefore, “ritualization” is a central aesthetic cornerstone in Green's dramatic practice which she adopts as a method of satirizing social abuses and investigating identity ( Pearce, p.28).

One thing that distinguishes Tucker Green's work is her combination of black cultural and Western traditions in theatre. She is often associated with the so-called “cruel Britannia” trend in British drama represented by Sarah Kane, Mark Ravenhall, and others who did not flatter the audience but downrightly exposed social abuses and irresponsibility toward them. Through her theatre, tucker green attacks “island mentalities” in the British community as Aleks Siers calls them, in an attempt to awaken the audience to their responsibility toward the global and local suffering of the “Other.” The title of the play suggests “the beautiful but brutal poetics depicting human frailty as it flutters to survive in a soiled, abject contemporary world that Tucker Green's theatre has come to present” (Aleks Siers, p194). She aspires to transform the audience into “witnesses” of the tragic lives of others which is why she often immerses the spectators within the performing arena to strike a greater affinity with the violence being staged (Clara Escoda,p.188).

Tucker Green's theater can be approached as part of the rising interest in political drama as a response to the spread of terror in this millennium. So her work is an authentic response to a traumatic experience but also focuses on feminist peculiarities and discourses. Her theatre differs from the common trend in London companies which focused on the black British masculine experience, for she focused on exploring "identity politics" and stories of abuse and violence reported in modern mass media. Moreover, black British dramatists "work was directed toward a black audience, while tucker green's and other female black dramatists presented their plays in mainstream London theaters. In her dramatization of abuse and violence, Tucker Green does not deal with her themes in terms of "victim/abuser" binarism but rather takes both into consideration exploring their psychologies in an ambivalent way (Marissa Fragkou and Lynette Goddard,p.145-146).

Goddard believes that it is a prerequisite to approach tucker green's work within the context of black cultural traditions which rely on black music, poetry, and ritual. According to Michael Pearce, "Green's work both stylistically and thematically , draws on the creative influences and political legacy of the African diaspora." Besides, her indebtedness to Caribbean and African female writers necessitates approaching her work from such particular perspectives (Michael Pearce, p.192).

Tucker Green's drama is not concerned with subjects of "sisterhood" and "spirituality," rather, she moves away from the positive portrayal of black women that characterized 1980 and 1990 theatre. Instead, she presents characters "that happen to be black or white, but could be from any culture" (Sian Adisehiah and Jacqueline Bolton, p.3).

Tucker Green's theatre's favorite themes are families plagued by violence, murder, AIDS, and destitution. In her major plays, *Dirty Butterfly*, *Born Bad*, and *Stoning Mary* she launches a cry of protest against a horrific world destroyed by war, the HIV/AIDS threat, child militia, and terrorism, stoning guilty or supposedly guilty women till death. She did not limit her perspective to Britain or Black Britain only but sought to expose these abuses all over the world. Nicola Abram writes that "By transposing recognizably indeed stereotypically–African issues across continents into a British setting, tucker green makes the trauma of such atrocities more tangible for her imagined white audience" (Nicola Abram, p.3). The modern world of globalization is

associated with the quick movement of individuals, data, and goods. Modern media has made it possible to know about other remote cultures, wars, and traumatic events in every corner of the world, yet these instances of human suffering have not served to motivate people to be more sympathetic toward them. Tucker Green's plays foreground this human suffering of others bringing it "from the periphery to the center of attention" which qualifies her plays to realize the level of "cosmopolitan" work (Martin Riedelshheimer and Korbinion Stockl, 113).

In the time of globalization where the world has become like a small village, It has become possible for people to know about the abuses and horrors suffered by others immediately, but far from revealing any sense of sympathy toward this suffering, they remain silent and indifferent and take no action to appease that suffering. Tucker Green's theatre focuses on the themes of "domestic violence and street crime" which have started to plague British society especially among ethnic silenced groups whose nobody is taking heed of the problems they suffer because of poverty, violence, and disease. Tucker Green raises her voice in her drama to defend those silenced groups and speak on their behalf of them. Her theatre is associated with the "in-your-face" trend of black drama which depends on stylized dialogue, and sound which are presented in the form of a rapid flood (Sarah Montes,p.3).

In 2002, The Royal College Psychiatrists Council Report on domestic violence indicated that "a recent British crime survey reported that about one in four women ( 23%) and one in seven men (15%) had been physically assaulted by their partners at some point in their lives." However, women were found the most susceptible to abuse and violence from their partners with no chances of survival or improvement. The victim becomes completely desperate and unable to oppose their persecutors because they are no longer left with any pride or integrity( Mezey et al. 2002,p.7, quoted in Treball de Recerca).

In the absence of the role of mass media, Tucker Green's theater performs an important function to awaken people to their responsibility toward human suffering in order to show a greater sense of solidarity and understanding. In this kind of theater, the audience is in the " process of giving testimony" to this suffering "because he/ she becomes the blank screen on which the events come to be inscribed...[ so] the listener has to be at the same time a witness to the trauma witness and a witness to himself [or

herself] and must listen to and hear the silence" (Sarah Montes, p. 4). So, Tucker Green succeeds in turning the audience into witnesses of domestic and street crime and hence they become part of the theatrical experience and its aesthetic foundation which mixes the technical and the ethical. The word "witnessing" acquires a special significance in Tucker Green. Kelly Oliver defines the word to mean "both eye-witnessing and hearing witness to something that cannot be seen ( qtd by Marissia Fragkou,p.). In Tucker Green, witnessing happens behind closed doors. She plays on the two meanings of the word in response to bloody violence and analyzes the "function and positionality of bearing witness" to the many atrocities of the modern global world (Ibid).

Black British dramatists have not been able to establish themselves in the British theatrical scene, while black female playwrights are suffering as one of the most ignored minorities within the British theatre. However, some inventive black women writers like Tucker Green who have been struggling against racial and sexual bias, succeeded in their work to establish a "counter-discourse" by subverting power and hegemony that have so long been articulated in traditional European canonical texts. They enacted the disintegration and diversity of black identities characterizing the black experience though they at the same time support a unified black identity (Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins cited in Sarah Montes,p.42).

The first black female company in Britain was established in 1942 by Bernardine Evaristoband and others. The Talawa Theatre was founded by a group of black women in London to give more chances to ethnic actors, directors, and writers and end the process of marginalization practiced against them (Goddard cited in Sarah Montes ,p.4300).

### **3.3. *Dirty Butterfly***

*Dirty Butterfly* was first performed at the Soho Theatre in 2003. It falls into two acts: a long scene and an epilogue. The play contains three characters only as it is stated in the play:

**Characters** AMELIA, black Jason, black

Jo, white (Tucker Green, 2003:2)

The play starts with a description of the color of the complexions of the characters,



something which refutes the common stereotyped biased view that black people are more inclined to violence and abuse. We see here that Jo and her husband are white and they are also capable of much violence and ugly abuse as other ethnicities. All the actors are kept on the stage though they have different positions in reality, while the audience surrounds the actors hence breaking the fourth wall tradition to make the audience more closely immersed in the action so that they may be awakened to their responsibility to it. Treball Recerca argues that " while being watched, [the characters] are also able to watch the audience. This way both actors and audience become aware of the fact they are being watched, thus, become witnesses of the other and witnesses to their act of witnessing" (Treball Recerca, p.51)

The introductory stage direction is given by Tucker Green:

Denotes where the dialogues starts to overlap. Throughout this section options can be taken Regarding who is talking to who and when With varying implications for the characters. The form of the piece has been open for these Choices to be made. Names appearing without dialogue indicate active silences between characters listed ( Tucker Green, 2003,p.2).

Jo is a white woman abused and persecuted by her husband who never appears in the play and remains in the shadow. Amelia and Jason are her black neighbors who hear from their apartment the sounds of abuse and violence Jo suffers but never intervene or take action to solve the problems (Sara Montes, p.50). The walls of their flats are so thin that every whisper can be heard, and they can talk to each other as though they were in the same flat. The emphasis on the racial background of the characters in the play indicates an ethnic context in which power and identity are negotiated. It also shows t kind of relationship between ethnic minorities in Britain and white hegemony and the indifference of the latter to the suffering of the former.

However, Peacock (2008:61) Sara Montes States that Tucker Green's use of proper names in the play indicates that the play is also concerned with personal relations and not only the relation between cultural groups.

*Dirty Butterfly* fulfills the function of the "in your ear" theater in a perfect way since it says things in a distinguished shocking way which maybe would not appeal to everybody. Len Garder believes that *Dirty Butterfly* is a story of "urban fragmentation" that excels in employing dramatic art to give voice to the most intimate inner

psychological experience. The play has a domestic setting in which " lives interlock but never connect." Jo and her husband live "sandwiched" between Jason and Amelia in a modern apartment with paper-thin walls. The sounds of abuse, violence, and sex coming from Jo's house give Amelia no piece and she cannot sleep at night. Jason becomes addicted to listening to these voices. He remains awake all night pressing his ears to the walls. Jason and Amelia know what is happening behind the walls, but they do nothing to change it. Garder writes that " dialogue is like a secret whisper and, like the characters' lives, it is fragmented and unfinished" (Lyn Garder, The Gardian, Mon 3, March, 2003). Tucker green seems to be arguing here that eavesdropping is an innate, perennial instinct inside man and we are all eavesdroppers. When a person cannot resist this drive inside him, it becomes a kind of addiction as in the case is with Jason (John Wilkins, reviews<<https://freeaudience.org> ).

Jo keeps crying out to her husband and tormentor "Sorry... I'm sorry...sorry...I'm sorry... ( Tucker Green,2003,p.3), and her neighbors hear her entreating but keep idle. Most of the play is inferred from or guessed from what is understood, and the thin illusory border between the two sets of characters becomes a symbol of the merging of their consciousness, therefore; they talk to each other and" comments on each other's reactions and thoughts as if the physical wall does not exist (Trell de Recerca, p.52):

Amelia. See, so- how bout, Jo, you tryin t'mek the effort- Jo. I did.

..... Jo. He does that for me.

Amelia. Hodja tongue

Jo. He does that for me an all. [...]

Jo. Heard you the other side still , still trying not to be heard. Jason. I won't go nowhere.

Amelia. You shoulda come, Jase. Jo. But you 've gone, Amelia.

You've got up, you've got out and you have left ( Tucker Green,2003, p.12).

Jo's fragile body becomes the center of focus in the play as she struggles to bring her neighbors and the audience into her own experience by showing sympathy for her. Going to the toilet becomes an obsession with her because whenever she wants to go to the toilet she fears waking her brutish, abusive husband who is sleeping beside

her (Marrisia Fragkou, p.).

AMELIA starts to sing, increasing her volume to try down the repetitive sound of Jo.

JASON. Ssh.

They both stop.

Beat.

JO. Hmmm, you ever? JASON (toAMElia) . you ever-

Amelia ( to JASON ). You ever got that feeling – JO. You ever-

AMELIA. Got that reckless kinda feeling? JASON. You ever.

Amelia . Got that can't find something to match your mood kinda feeling-you ever got that JASe?

JO. You ever-

JASON. Found yourself doing something you can't help. AMELIA. You ever-

JASON. Gotcha self doin something you cannot stop. Beat.

Melia?

AMELIA. No. ( Tucker Green, 2003, p.3).

Jo bleeds through Jason and Amelia's thin walls. In fact, there are no well-defined walls to separate the two apartments. Beau McGlasson states that "characters are constrained not by not by walls but by their relationships and helplessness. Trapped, full of unrealized desires and impulses and compelled to action but held in place by the forces that contain them." We do not know whether the characters are listening to each other or themselves, lost in a labyrinth of fears, doubts, and longings ( millennial notes ). *Dirty Butterfly* presents the modern global themes of "voyeurism, power, and guilt" through the lives of these two couples who are very close and intimate but at the time disconnected (Terry Eastham).

Amelia is too cruel and inconsiderate to her suffering neighbor, Jo and she even despises her \_ "I can't stand you. I can't stand you and your him next door to me. You and your bad both a year next door to me...." (Tucker Green,2003,p.8). Amelia is also angry with Jason who has become addicted to hearing the noses of his neighbors and neglects his wife. Amelia feels that her position between the two has put her on the

verge of a nervous breakdown. However, neither Amelia nor Jason try to help Jo or even help themselves (Treball de Recerca, p.54). Jason says "Maybe I coulda phoned like I should, but I forgot I didn't have your number. And maybe I regret I never called around like I could but I forgot I didn't even know you. And I'm still next door "

Amelia refuses to listen to Jo's story though she hears her screams at night, on the contrary, she considers Jo responsible for spoiling her life with Jason. Amelia believes that her leaving her comfortable bed upstairs to sleep in the living room in order not to hear Jo's shrieks as well as her inability to sleep is more appalling than Jo's tragic.

Suffering, in act two of the play, the vulnerability of Jo's body is vividly theatricalized as she comes into the Café Amelia is working on cleaning the floor. Jo is bleeding and she spoils Amelia's bright and beautifully cleaned floor with blood and vomit. Amelia is angry about her spoiled floor and she reproaches Jo "You need to stay away and I am gonna keep the door locked back from tomorrow" (Tucker Green, 203 ,p.49). Instead of calling the ambulance which is badly needed, Amelia goes on discussing things about her floor (Marissia Fragkou,p.):

Jo: Look at me. Amelia : No.

Jo : Look at me. Amelia : What for?

Jo : Look what he he/done-

Amelia : I don't want to see. I don't need to see. I don't have to see- you. So, no.  
(Tucker Green 2003,p.40-41).

Jo accuses Amelia and Jason of being accomplices in her suffering and reproaches Jason for spying on her abuse in a sadistic way. Paradoxically, though Jo is victimized by her partner, she becomes the initiator and source of Jason's psychotic obsession because he becomes fully paralyzed by Jo's sounds of Jo's abuse. To him the sound of abuse of Jo is sexually arousing so he never acts to put an end to it as though he wants it to continue to get more sadistic pleasure. He is therefore accomplice in the crime. Amelia escapes from the noises of the abuse by sleeping downstairs so that she will not hear it. Every morning, Jo "awakens with a feeling of butterflies in her stomach, thinking that it will be the last day of her life. The butterflies are 'gone ballistic,' 'gone wrong,' having been made dirty by her sexual and physical abuse"

(Peacock, p. 62). On the other hand, Amelia accuses Jo of manipulating Jason and of being aware and content about his psychotic voyeurism. All the characters are not even able to show any sympathy to each other though are all suffering nor do they take any action to help each other (Treball de Reccerca,p.). Here in this final scene, Jo "confronts with ... the face of the Other, asking Amelia to take responsibility for her wounded body "but Amelia remains closed and reserved (Clara Escoda, p.190).

However, though Amelia is not willing to see Jo's face, she finally steps over Jo's blood, an effective symbolic theatrical moment that indicates that the two women's separate worlds and spaces start to meet and "becomes part of [Amelia's] problem." The stage directions indicate that "Amelia doesn't notice that she has Jo's blood on her own feet so every step makes a bloody footprint" (48). Clara Escoda writes that "Jo's injured body metaphorically comes to stand for the damage inflicted by the new liberal understanding of the self as vertical and shut from the Other" (Clara Escoda, p.190).

Keith Peacock believes that though power, identity, guilt, and voyeurism are central themes in the play, but what is more important in the play is the meticulous exploration of inner psychology and their responses to each other. The characters are not given into binary opposites but their lives are emotionally and poetically interwoven (Keith peacock,p.61). In the first act of the play, the characters' movement is very little and they are bound in a tableau like manner in the Epilogue, a fact showing the lack of sympathy and connectedness between them and also to get the spectator's focus on dialogue and peculiarities of language. However, in the Epilogue, the scene becomes more realistic and the characters appear more connected. The bloody footprints connect Jo and Amelia suggesting the mutual vulnerability of their bodies and that they are both open to abuse and violation. The female body here, especially that of Jo becomes a means of communication and protest against the lack of sympathy and solidarity (Clara Escoda, p.191).

Amelia, watching blood between Jo's legs, gives her sanitary towels to help her stop the bleeding and in a fit of empathy, she offers her a glass of water and sits with her. The play is furnished with such an open end to raise the big question of whether society will take any action to stop this violence and abuse or if it will go on not bothering (Treball de Reccerca,p.).

Tucker Green's *Dirty butterfly* presents a very powerful indictment of domestic

violence in contemporary Britain questioning the attitude of British people and media in general to such violence. The play aroused different responses inside the audience at the end of the performance. Some of them were very affected and upset about the whole affair. The performance was intended to awaken the spectators to the importance of solidarity and empathy with the Other and the necessity of taking serious measures to stop domestic violence and street violence which threatens the security and peace of British society and the whole world.

At the hand of Tucker Green and her other contemporaries, the theatre acquires further significance as revolutionary means of bringing change in society. Their drama focused in particular on traumas and abuse suffered by women. Leslie Jewell Gary quotes the heroine of Heather Raffo's in *9 Parts of Desire*, saying "It's the worst feeling this occupation/ to inhabit your body but not to be able to live in it (p.1). This perfectly describes what happens to the females in Tucker Green's *Dirty Butterfly* where the characters cannot inhabit their bodies which are harassed by different sorts of traumas and burdens. Characters live in ambiguous, hazardous places, in addition to being estranged from the bodies they inhabit. They believe that these bodies were not made by them but by others to abuse, violate and inhabit. The traumatic identity of black women is further complicated by diasporic experiences where home is only seen as temporary and uncertain. Such plays awaken the white audience both American and British to see into such uninhabited homes of working-class black families ( Leslie Jewell Gary, p.1-2). These homes and bodies of ethnic minorities are presented in this theatre sites of memory and trauma which they struggle to process and handle.

## CONCLUSION

Wole Soyinka and Tucker Green represent two different contexts of black identity yet both indicate a major concern for a postcolonial studies and both were distinct in their field. Soyinka wrote most of his plays in postcolonial context for he witnessed the actual occupation of Nigeria by Britain, and he dramatized the way Nigerian culture was affected by the process of colonization which pressed hard on the image of individual and national identity something which bears witness to Soyinka's devotion to classical tradition is that he considered theater as a kind of ritual which he saw as the most suitable form withstand colonizers and to awaken Nigerian people ' consciousness into the awareness of their political condition and need for actual liberation from the European colonizers through this form he also criticized Nigerian bloody past as well as the fallacy of the newly gained independence and created inside them a new realization of national identity. On the other hand, Soyinka also emphasized the importance of ancient Europa tradition in building the new state by making use of the mistakes and lessons of the past. His technique derives from a wide range of theatrical traditions mainly medieval morality drama, Shakespeare, expressionistic drama, and Bertold Brecht's epic theatre.

Tucker Green on the other hand was writing in diaspora. She represents the African diaspora which produced an important corpus of literature in English and which consisted of a large number of distinguished remarkable black authors who lived in diaspora and used English as a medium of the fight to regain their lost identity. She lived in London and had a first-hand experience and knowledge of the demands that British mainstream culture made on her own native identity.

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