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Examination of three postcolonial African writers' perspectives on third world feminism

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Abstract

A variation of feminism known as postcolonial feminism emerged in opposition to feminism that exclusively addressed women's experiences in Western societies. In order to demonstrate how racism and the lasting political, economic, and cultural repercussions of colonialism affect non-white and non-Western women in the postcolonial globe, postcolonial feminism examines these issues. African feminism is a subset of feminism developed by African women that is focused on the issues and concerns of women in continental Africa (African women residing on the African continent). These feminism movements do not all represent the realities of African women because Africa is not a homogeneous continent. Some feminists are particularly focused on particular subgroups of African women, including movements with a national foundation, such as feminism in Sweden, feminism in India, feminism in Mexico, feminism in Japan, feminism in Germany, feminism in South Africa, etc. The concept of feminism for many African

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writers in the post-colonial era in the Third World has been the subject of widespread controversy, as it is seen as a feminist movement in line with and for African women in the diaspora instead of African women in the African continent. In this study, we present the perspectives of three African writers interested in the feminist movement about their vision of the concepts and role of the feminist movement in the post-colonial era in the Third World by shedding light on African feminist movements and the challenges they face. The study presents the vision of three African writers for the women's movement in the Third World in general and the African continent in particular in the post-colonial period through the emergence and development of the African feminist movement, and the three writers selected in this study are activists of the feminist movement inside Africa through their literary activity. Delusion:

Molara Ogundipe-Leslie, Assia Djébar and Robert C.J.Young.

Keywords: African, perspective, postcolonial, feminism, and racism

دراسة في مفاهيم مابعد الاحتلال واثرها علي الحركة النسوية في العالم الثالث في

اعمال ثلاث روائيين افارقة

م.د. انتصار محمد وكاع

جامعة تكريت

المستخلص

نوع مختلف من النسوية يُعرف باسم نسوية ما بعد الاستعمار مقابل للحركة النسوية التي تناولت تجارب المرأة في المجتمعات الغربية حصريًا. لإظهار كيف تؤثر العنصرية والتداعيات السياسية والاقتصادية والثقافية الدائمة للاستعمار على النساء غير البيض وغير الغربيات في عالم ما بعد الاستعمار، تدرس الحركة النسوية ما بعد الاستعمارية هذه القضايا. النسوية الأفريقية هي مجموعة فرعية من الحركة النسوية التي طورته النساء الأفريقيات والتي تركز على قضايا واهتمامات المرأة في القارة الأفريقية (النساء الأفريقيات المقيمات في القارة الأفريقية). هذه الحركات النسوية لا تمثل كلها واقع المرأة الأفريقية لأن أفريقيا ليست قارة متجانسة. تركز بعض الحركات النسوية بشكل خاص على مجموعات فرعية معينة من النساء الأفريقيات، بما في ذلك الحركات ذات الأساس الوطني، مثل الحركة النسوية في السويد، والنسوية في الهند، والنسوية في المكسيك، والنسوية في اليابان، والنسوية في ألمانيا، والنسوية في جنوب أفريقيا، وما إلى ذلك. كانت الحركة النسوية بالنسبة للعديد من الكتاب الأفارقة في حقبة ما بعد الاستعمار في العالم الثالث موضع جدل واسع النطاق، حيث يُنظر إليها على أنها حركة نسوية تتماشى مع المرأة الأفريقية في الشتات بدلاً من المرأة

الأفريقية في القارة الأفريقية. تعرض الدراسة وجهات نظر ثلاث كاتبات أفارقة مهتمات بالحركة النسوية حول رؤيتهن لمفاهيم ودور الحركة النسوية في حقبة ما بعد الاستعمار في العالم الثالث من خلال تسليط الضوء على الحركات النسوية الأفريقية والتحديات التي تواجهها وجه. تعرض الدراسة رؤية ثلاث كاتبات أفارقة للحركة النسوية في العالم الثالث عامة والقارة الأفريقية خاصة في فترة ما بعد الاستعمار من خلال نشوء وتطور الحركة النسوية الأفريقية، والكاتبات الثلاثة المختارات في هذه الدراسة ناشطات في الحركة النسوية داخل أفريقيا من خلال نشاطهن الأدبي. مولارا أوغونديبي-ليزلي وآسيا جبار وروبرت سي جيه يونغ .

Introduction

Postcolonial feminism emerged in the 1980s as a critique of feminist theories in developed nations, a nod to the worldwide trends of mainstream feminist ideas and a protest against the misrepresentation of women in non-Western nations. According to postcolonial feminism, a woman is only defined by her gender and not by the social class, race, ethnicity, or sexual preference to which she belongs when the term "woman" refers to a universal category (**Hrastnik, 2003**). Postcolonial feminism is characterized by the emphasis on patriarchy as a source of oppression and social inequalities that are enmeshed in a historical, political, social and cultural context. It has become an increasingly significant dimension of a wide range of disciplines, including literary studies, cultural studies, history development studies, anthropology, and social science disciplines concerned with questions of globalization (**Loomba, 2005**). Finally, all postcolonial feminist critics and writers, no matter where they are from, can help to highlight the existing social ties that result in hierarchical difference. Postcolonial feminists also aim to incorporate the perspectives of indigenous and other third world feminisms into Western mainstream feminism (**Mullany, 2010**). The feminist movement in the third world is based on the premise that third world feminism is not a product of

first world ideals but rather develops from local beliefs as well as social and cultural circumstances, Mainstream feminism has occasionally criticized postcolonial feminism, claiming that it divides the larger feminist movement and ultimately weakens it. Postcolonial and feminist theorists contend that even when a colonial power has left a country, women continue to be subjected to oppression as a result of both patriarchy and colonial authority. Imperialism and male supremacy thus colonizes women in two different ways (**Lazreg, 2000**).

There is currently a heated discussion surrounding the subject of African women and feminism because feminism is a crucial tool in women's struggles everywhere, especially for women who deserve the best health care, adequate housing, adequate nutrition, accessibility to suitable career opportunities, freedom, and an end to all forms of marginalization so they can effect change for their land, its wealth, and the burden of colonialism's reconstruction. **Kelly (2005)** affirms that African feminism rejects gender stereotypes that undercut a woman's positive identity and instead aims to instill in a woman a feeling of her own value as an effective, valuable, and contributing human being. Diverse groups of women have various responses to feminism. Notably, African women like Bessie Head, Ama Ata Aidoo and Zaynab Alkaliu and others denied any affiliation with the feminist movement, claiming it to be a wholly western concept. Later on, though, they changed their minds because, as Chandra Mohanty noted, they realized that the feminist movement was unquestionably crucial to their fight against the murky waters of patriarchal dominance: "Third world women have always supported feminism, even though the name has been disapproved of in a lot of cases (**Philippe, 2002 & Raquel, 2010**). The first African feminists emerged in October 1988 in Hamburg when a

group of writers from the continent convened for a workshop called "Days of African literature." At this workshop, the African women writers asserted that, strange as it may seem, both European and African men are equally capable of speaking for themselves and forming their own opinions.

Feminists from Africa focus on cultural concerns that they believe are connected to the complicated experiences that women from various cultures on the continent of Africa have. A large portion of the writers of feminist ideologies come from West Africa, particularly Nigeria (**Harding, 2008**).

Feminism can be found in liberal, Marxist, or radical forms. For example, radical feminism tends to interpret historically and socially specific practices as effects of global patriarchal structures. Marxist feminism prioritizes the importance of social class analysis and the capitalist mode of production. While feminist political activism in patriarchy dominance was considered as the main key issue in postcolonial literature, women as a group were seen to share inherent oppressions (**Ruiz, 2012; Greenwald, 2015**).

As a result, postcolonial feminist writing in Africa both criticized European imperialism and argued for the importance of third country feminist viewpoints to global feminism, particularly in the context of the relationship between colonialism and patriarchy (**Archer, 2012**). The continuous marginalization of African women under the three striped flag of culture, tradition and religion that portrays males and elevates them is what causes the African feminists to be concerned. In the postcolonial context, the issue of identity for African women is crucial and they textualize it through their fictional narratives, poetry and dramas. They also conceptualize and analyze their roles, images and identities, particularly in the regions of the continent where they were frequently

portrayed in works of literature by men as weak and insignificant. Additionally, the fight over feminine language, which is at the heart of the identity problem, has a long history (Ruiz, 2012; Gaffar, 2015).

Many African women researchers, authors, activists and educators, including Molaria Ogundipe-Leslie, Shereen Essof, Mariama Bâ, Frances Baard, Suad Ibrahim Ahmed and countless others, have made significant contributions to our understanding of African politics and the examination of African feminist political thought and behavior.

1 – Molaria Ogundipe-Leslie

A Nigerian poet and writer who was an early writer on African feminism, gender studies, and literary theory, she was a social critic who has been recognized as a applicable authority on African women among black feminists and feminists in general.

In contrast to mainstream feminist discourse, Molaria Ogundipe-Leslie views African feminism as a feminist epistemology, a mode of speech that asserts acceptance of African women's experiences and a starting point that is African. It is egalitarian in that it intends to draw a distinction between people who have been perceived as colonized and those who have actually been colonized, as well as a social evolution that suggests a growing global consciousness that is sympathetic to the past, present and future aspirations of African women. Because many of the authors who contributed to the literature frequently resided outside of Africa, the emancipation of African women is not just about the privileges of women from Africa; on the other hand, it includes those in the diaspora. In a same vein, let the characters who ask for it not is constrained by a geological area as the name suggests. On the African mainland, however, civic discourse, usage and argumentation are typically avidly pursued. It was a legitimate error to regard the

liberation of African women as a component of third wave feminism. However, contradictions between race and society start to surface when third-wave feminism is understood. Even the notion of establishing third-wave feminism as the standard for African women has been rejected as a result of the friction.

Due to the fact that this wave has been interpreted as a philosophy based on Western feminism, or to be more precise, really late European and American social developments of the struggle for women's justice were created and on this basis they are carried forward in a brilliant march around the world. There is, by all accounts, knowledge of what feminism is within Africa, in social and the majority of academic contexts, and that its origins originate with European and American (henceforth referred to as Western) concepts. This is based on the idea that the systems connected to this development have been provided by the West generally and geologically (**Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994; Allan, 1995**).

African feminist realization is a sensitive process for setting up some talks that can have unintended consequences, as is common knowledge. In a few instances, the emancipation of African women consciously tries to distance itself from notions of provinces, race, class, etc. in order to illustrate the current position of women in Africa. The main aim of her support, however, is at the expense of African women who have made an effort to reframe and emphasize the significance of these issues. When debates verifiably assert (during pre-colonial times) that African women were in positions of authority, had equal access to resources as men, and along with that authentic African society and tradition He did not mistreat women, it serves as an example of the necessity to be constrained from borders (**Olaopa, 2016**). Feminist activity can be inferred from the existence of pre-

colonial black South African women's events and activities, for instance. Black women have held influential and leadership roles. There have been many female pioneers in Africa; however opinions on how many of them are true. The royal Zulu women of South Africa demonstrated such administration recently, during and after King Shaka's authority and it required a number of structures, most frequently financial and religious, measuring the rains, and organizing Dissolution of tradition and guardianship of the enshrined object. Similarly, colonialism contributed to the enthusiasm in the struggle of independence caused by the heroic woman image. The struggle for independence in South Africa is a crystal clear example of how black women who were successfully resisting legally recognized apartheid can be branded as feminists by demonstrating the remaining tools both Western and African feminist literature in influencing men's degrees and ensuring a particular mindset about men in Africa (**Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994**).

1 – 1 – Literary Analysis of the Novel " Re-Creating Ourselves: African Women & Critical Transformations" by Molar Ogundipe-Leslie

This novel was published in 1994 and the literary analysis of it is consistent with the intellectual style of the writer Ogundebe as one of the first writers on African women and feminism, Ogundebe argued for an African-centric form of feminism she called "Stiwanism" (social transformation in Africa including women). She also suggested that a true feminist writer should be able to understand or effectively describe a woman's point of view and know how to tell the woman's story. as well as her steadfast conviction that the greatest approach to strengthen Nigeria's social and political institutions and overcome men's opposition to gender equality is by rediscovering women's role in those institutions, African feminists are equipped to contribute to bringing about significant

improvements in gender, family, and society-related concerns that can propel national and continental development through their broad literary experiences and countless writings on the topic (**Wilentz, 1994; Tuzyline, 1995**).

2 – Assia Djébar Assia Djébar is one of these female authors who take a more radical stance on the subject of women's rights in Africa. Her writings reveal an overt rebellion against male dominance and manipulation and she promotes the assertion of one's individual identity in order to denounce the oppressive social structure and advance the liberation of Algerian women.

Women of African descent who write in the postcolonial feminist genre have been able to provide the African people the strength they need to combat racism and misogyny. By focusing on the postcolonial era and feminism expressing the sexual closeness of all the characters, Assia Djébar seeks to develop the personal identity of Algerian women who are both proud of their past and look forward their future. Assia Djébar was well-known throughout the world for her feminist and anti-colonial perspectives on Algerian society, which served as the foundation for all of her books. In the years leading up to the peak of the Algerian War of Independence against the French colonialists, Assia Djébar, who was born in 1936, experienced her teenage years. As with her other four novels, which she wrote between 1957 and 1967, she spent the war years speaking with refugees in Morocco and Tunisia in order to demonstrate to the world the detrimental repercussions of colonialism. With its opposition to patriarchy and colonialism. Assia Djébar was well-known for her works that were based on her opposition to colonialism and patriarchy. Her name is very intimately related to the literary feminist movement. Her debut book, "Thirst," which was released in 1957, features a heroine who stresses her identity and her

sexual wants via her experience. It is one of her most significant works. She is emotional and as a result, she disagrees with traditional Muslim beliefs on women. This novel is significant because Djébar published it under the pseudonym Assia Djébar in order to avoid her father's wrath, yet her bravery in doing so shows the strength of her feminist spirit (**Translation and Imperialism in Assia Djébar's Les Nuit de Strasbourg, 2002; O'Riley, 2003**).

2 – 1 – Literary Analysis of the Novel "Away from the City" by Asia Jabbar

This novel was published in 1995. The question of whether there could have been another version of history is the main theme of the novel. So, focusing on the most significant topics brought up in the novel's text, I will discuss the monitoring of the manifestations of the presence in this post. Women have significant roles in a number of the axes that this book divides into. Based on this crucial role, we will discuss women and political activity (uncovering the active role of women in politics that history books tried to hide), women and guardianship (liberation from all types of guardianship – patriarchal, social, etc.), and women and the issue of polygamy (monitoring the effects of this tradition on women's psyche).

Throughout order to understand why women's roles were marginalized throughout Islamic history, the novel tries to expose the structures that governed its recording. Additionally, it tries to demonstrate the novel's female presence in all of its forms, as well as how effective it was and whether it could be replicated, the use of imagination in writing about women's history (**Chikhi, 2007**).

3 – Robert C.J.Young

The following summarizes the main goals of post-colonial feminism according to Kenyan writer Robert C.J. Young in his book *Post colonialism*:

"Postcolonial feminism, at its broadest, refers to any challenge to dominant patriarchal ideology by women of the so-called "third world." This type of political engagement could involve opposing regional power systems, or it might involve opposing racist or Eurocentric notions of men and women (even feminists) in the first world. The foundation of postcolonial feminism in the postcolonial state is the belief that colonialism's ongoing legacies—the institutional infrastructures that were either given to elite groups by the colonial powers or acquired by later elites—frame its politics. All women who are fighting for equality in the post-colony must deal with the many hurdles that are built into such a framework.

Whether in the social oppression of the post-colony or the metropolis, postcolonial feminism is undoubtedly interested in analyzing the anxious conditions of being a woman in a postcolonial setting. Both specific issues and those that have an impact on entire communities are of importance to it. Due to this, it emphasizes social and political campaigns for equal treatment under the law, in education, and the workplace, as well as environmental issues. It also highlights the social challenge of everyday patriarchy, which is typically supported by its institutional and legal discrimination: domestic violence, sexual abuse, rape, honor killings, dowry deaths, female foeticide and child abuse.

In a postcolonial context, feminism starts with the circumstances of the average woman in a specific location while simultaneously considering how those circumstances relate to larger issues to provide her a more potent platform for collectivity. It will draw attention

to the extent to which women are still fighting against a colonial legacy that was incredibly patriarchal on all levels—institutional, economic, political and ideological. It goes without saying that women's literature in all post-colonial cultures has, from the very start of the post-independence era (and occasionally before), become one of the most effective vehicles for disseminating feminism within the corresponding audiences and beyond. Anthonia C. Kalu noted that women's writing is prevalent in Africa and noted that "the lack of African literary genres that support the African woman's participation in the (re)creation and maintenance of societal vision provides evidence of her silencing and apparent invisibility in Africa's encounter with the West." In the postcolonial context, her involvement is more obvious. The fact that certain expressions have been reintroduced into modern discourse while still referencing women or things related to women is a big cause for concern. The ability of society to maintain harmony and balance is the main concern (**Adichie, 2014**).

In his article "West African Feminists and Their Challenges", Robert C.J. Young discusses different forms of African women's movements:

- 1 - Discusses feminism, which it claims is not a component of African feminism because it only applies to African women outside of Africa and not to African women living on the continent.
- 2 - Looks at Stewanese, which, on the other hand, places African women at the center of the conversation because Stewanans are strongly entrenched in the experiences and realities experienced by African women.
- 3 - It examines maternal feminism, a type of matrilineal feminism in which rural women performs the necessary duties of caring for society.

4 - Looks at feminism that places the female body at the center of feminist conversations.

5 - He looks at sentient and passive feminism, both of which call for males to be involved in feminist talks and campaigning and claim that this is essential for women to have their independence.

These types of feminists share many commonalities:

1 - Because they highlight the experiences of African women, they all put the term "feminism" with its Western connotations and traditions, to the test.

2 -They use the histories and customs of African peoples to produce the instruments to support women and educate men because they are inspired by indigenous blueprints.

3 - They incorporate "gender inclusiveness, cooperation, and accommodation" to make sure that both men and women make an effort to enhance the material conditions of women, even if their contributions are not equal (**Loomba, 2012; Mikhail, 2016**).

- Conclusion

The Third World feminists seek intercultural solidarity and a framework that emphasizes concerns of bridging the local and the universal, on the responsibilities played by women in redefining their identities, and on differences as a means of fostering solidarity. They question mandatory motherhood and the customary favoritism of sons rather than just accepting the Western concept of mother. As they demonstrate compassion for children and for sharing household responsibilities, they see value in the advantages of polygamy and the extended family. The idea of western critical centralism, which has dominated the global financial landscape for centuries, is seriously undercut by post-feminism in the (post-colonial) age. This Western centrism or "sisterhood" narrative coming from Anglo-Saxon and Francophone critics has been attacked by post feminism. Asian, African, and

Latina critics of "colored races," who are considered to be from the "third world," entered the debate and overturned "white feminism," establishing the foundations for multiculturalism and the acceptance of the other and the different other. And the emancipation of peoples from Western hegemony was "the removal of masculine centralism," as well as "the elimination of Western centralism," colonialism and racist imperialism. In order to "expose and resist all structures of domination and forms of injustice, oppression and oppression, to dismantle tyrannical models and practices, to restore consideration for the marginalized and oppressed other, to work on formulating identity and the essence of difference and to search for a process of harmonious development and upgrading that overturns what is familiar and leads to a more balanced and just one," feminists work.

African writers of women's literature developed feminism to enlarge the context of the goals of feminist inquiry in order to communicate their oppression from a female point of view away from the male literature domination. As a result, the process of postcolonial research is heavily influenced by gender and symbolizes meaning, values, and identities in connection to race, ethnicity and religion. As a result, post colonialism and feminism may represent a new time for gendered identities to be expressed and used as a cognitive strategy to combat oppression. Therefore, Postcolonial Feminist literature is a new genre developed by African female writers who battle sexism, racism, and marginalization in an effort to forge a strong and authentic African identity.

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