

## From Deconstruction to Reconstruction: Indian and Nigerian Nationalism and Colonial Encounter in Comparative Perspective



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**Abstract:** *The article converses how the culture and history of the Indians and Nigerians were mutilated by the colonists by creating the adverse stereotypes of the indigenous people as uncivilized whose history and societal ideals were annulled as mock and vicious that required the instructive mediation of the Europeans and, correspondingly how the dramatists of the two said countries interrupt and oust overriding and tyrannical European data. I have explored in the article through which technique the biculturalism in Rabindranath Tagore and Wole Soyinka's temperament and background enabled them both to develop a style of syncretic dramaturgy for the cultural relations that imperialism created in their nations. Primarily expert in abilities that empowered them to accomplish noteworthy functions in the lives of their countries, together Tagore and Soyinka was particularly ingrained in their specific cultures. Though the authors did not discard the past, they did not urge a return to it.*

**Key Words:** Badal Sircar, Biculturalism, Culture, Dramaturgy, Imperialism, Rabindranath Tagore, Wole Soyinka

### Introduction

In a certain geographical state, culture becomes the construction of an arrangement of values and has worth for individuals. Culture is an accurate method of survival and manifests itself in a nation's institutions and the regular behaviour of its individuals. Though a people's cultural presentation includes their songs, dances, oral and written literatures, culture is beyond art. While art is a part of a culture, the latter, in addition, includes rituals, ceremonies, social customs, and more in its range.

Frantz Fanon defined a nation's culture as the 'expression of a nation – its preferences, taboos, and patterns... a sum total of its appraisal' (Fanon, 1963). Calling it the state that results after 'continuous renewal, he saw it as a fusion of various independent elements that originate from within and without' (Fanon, 1963). Henceforth, a national culture, though it could appear contradictory, is wide-reaching and bears the mark of countless cultures upon it. When the circumstances of the cultural potential towards the other are unbiased, cultures can resolve to what they will take from each other. As that is an occasional situation, a revolution occurs when one culture approaches, interacts or pushes itself on another. In the process, a culture lends its own elements and takes elements from other cultures.

Culture is essential and notable; it determines the uniqueness and behaviour of individuals. Cultural encounters, nevertheless, create upheavals and generate modifications that keep arising over time; these changes to behaviour are neither always apparent nor always conciliatory. As the autocratic forces of colonialism discharge one culture on another based on the notion that the first is outwardly grander as it is the colonizer's culture, it blemishes the colonized culture that is irretrievable. From the time when colonialism is mostly unequal, governmentally loaded, and economically fixated, a recollection of the state of righteousness or reappearance to the pre-colonial cultural state becomes difficult for the culture or cultures of the colonized. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the indigenous culture gets abolished. We have the examples of India and Nigeria, where the indispensable, inside powers of the civilizations of India and Nigeria made their sustenance possible through the fight they put up.

### Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The theory of Colonialism and Decolonisation stated by Frantz Fanon has been applied in constructing the opinions and portraying insightful evaluation. The theory hypothesizes that decolonization is inherently a

violent process because the relationship between the settler and the native is a binary of opposites; thus, their interface fashions dependency, thereby stimulating destructive opposition and increasing the clashes. This is investigative exploration; hence, the article has been developed by exploiting a qualitative research method. The primary and secondary information in the form of websites, texts, manuscripts and articles have been used by using descriptive research design to form sound and perceptive evaluation.

## Research Questions

The article provides answers to the following research questions;

1. What was Colonial policy towards India and Nigeria, and how did the two countries fight back to regain their identity?
2. What role do the artists, especially the dramatists, should play in adjusting towards developed colonial trends in order to avoid colonial supremacy and socio-economic dependence?

## Literature Review

Both India and Nigeria underwent a long dread of colonialism. Colonialism is definitely not just geopolitical occupation; it is a multifactorial deed with socio-cultural and eco-financial ramifications. From the merchantable approach, colonialism is the putting up of a 'political economy, which ensures a one-way flow of benefits, the subjects being the perpetual losers in a zero-sum game and the rulers, the beneficiaries' (Nandy, 1983). It is not a chance that the establishment of the East India Company in 1600 led to the formal rule by the British monarch from 1858 to 1947 in India. Similarly, the Royal Niger Company's rule from 1886 directed the crown rule from 1900 to 1960 in Nigeria. The methods of exploitation in both countries were akin; the colonizer principally made the two countries impoverish by devastating the colonized nation's monetary self-dependence and broke her industries before making these excuses for more equivalent inflictions. Fanon describes colonialism as the anxiety in the spectacular fashion of the cultural life of a conquered people. The cultural obliteration is made possible by the negation of native reality, by new legal rules by the occupying power, by the banishment of the natives and their customs... The

area of culture [is] marked by fences and signposts; every hegemonic effort is made to bring colonized persons to admit the inferiority of their culture. (Fanon, 1963)

The colonizer uses its privileged position as the director to create cultural anguish among its subjects, so it can control the culture and the thought processes of the colonized. Not only does this mutilate the minds of the colonized, but it also facilitates the economic robbery and economic stealth of the colonies. As Nandy, 1983 expresses it, 'a colonial system perpetuates itself by inducing the colonized through socio-economic rewards and punishments to accept new social norms and cognitive categories, [hence] they become overt indications of oppression and dominance' (Nandy, 1983). In other words, the colonizer not only practices power to expand its influence, but it also uses culture. Colonialism not merely distorts connection and destroys institutions, but it also makes it difficult for the colonized to rise beyond its colonized status. The colonizer fully alters the cultural priorities of the colonized, turning the 'modern West from a geographical and temporal entity to a psychological category. The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside, in structures and in minds' (Nandy, 1983).

The colonizer erects a body of lies and myths to psychologically overpower the colonized by rejecting their self-importance in their respective culture, past, and history. To break the spine of the African's self-confidence and to validate himself, the colonizer erects fables of an established Europe along with a seemingly new Africa. Europe is mythologized as continually humanitarian, sane, and judicious, whereas Africans are embodied as primal, lascivious, and careless. This is taken as a foreword to the thought of the white man's burden of civilizing the colonies. The colonizer now begins to consider that he is predestined to execute the function of an architect, custodian, and supporter. To certify the falsification to take root, the colonial ruler keeps himself detached, faceless, and especially white.

## Discussion

Though the British released equivalent myths on colonized India as well as Anglophone Africa, the effects on each were different. Nigeria, with its convincing emphasis on the folk, oral, and rustic traditions, was simpler to criticize as presumably crude. With India, the imperialists found it tough, as

they could not negate that it had a well-chronicled culture, even if distinct from theirs. Correspondingly, Britain could not wish away the existence of registered books, epics or the excess of monuments, and art in India, several of which were older than her own. Thus, she emphasized India's existing corruption and internal communal division as a mark of the colonized supposed cultural domination and supposed Indian subservience. The purpose was to turn Indians and Nigerians into feeble or shady figures by the internalization of these fictitious myths, so Britain would find it stress-free to rule the colonies. Such falsehoods held the colonizer and the colonized unconnected from each other. The fictions also proved their attitude into the two schools of thought that came into being in British India: the Orientalist and the Anglicist. Whereas Orientalists emphasized the dealing of Indian affairs in Indian languages, the Anglicists stimulated the exercise of English. As in Nigeria, there was no conflict on the assumed inevitability for Britain to control; the dispute concentrated over the system of authority.

### **Integration of English Language and English Educational System**

The incorporation of the English language and the English educational system proposed to support many purposes in India and Nigeria. If the school supportive of English education thrived in India, it was because the colonizer assumed it would boost the smooth administration of the regular business of the empire.

Through the exercise of English, the British educational procedure declared the hegemonic authority of British structures on the minds of the colonized. The proof that the increase in English education and the progress of the empire went hand in hand was evidence of the success of this plan. The cultural onslaught of the mind through British education did prevent cultural encounter from emerging for a long time. Even if English itself did not acquire the status of the first language, it proved itself as a second language. In truth, English became the language of the cultural encounter.

Like English education, the English language created a sense of insignificance in the minds of the colonized Africans about their belief in themselves in the world. Although English education crushed well the traditional communication patterns, it could not prove itself as support. Correspondingly, it made an English-educated limited class the apt class that

controlled as intermediaries, if not foils, for the empire. [Sartre \(1963\)](#) describes the process of making of the 'elite' class in the following words:

They picked out promising adolescents, they branded them, as with a red-hot iron, with the principles of Western culture; they stuffed their mouths full with high-sounding phrases. After a short stay in the mother country, they were sent home whitewashed. These walking lies had nothing left to say to their brothers; they only echoed. ([Sartre, 1963](#))

In his 1835 minutes, Lord Macaulay had asserted his goals for India, declaring that the British would create an English educated class in India through English education, who were 'Indians in blood and colour, and English in tastes and opinions, and who would be established to fight on behalf of Anglicism against the norms and forms of Eastern reality ([Sharp, 1920](#)).

English education confirmed that the colonized were perpetually hurt. The colonizers were not satisfied with only the material robbery and authority of the colonized nations. As [Fanon, 1963](#) so perfectly points out, the colonizer's resolve was to empty the native brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it takes the pastness of the oppressed people and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it. This work of devaluing pre-colonial history takes on a dialectical significance – cultural estrangement, [so as] to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness... If the settlers were to leave, they would at once fall back into barbarism, degradation, and bestiality ([Fanon, 1963](#)).

The incorporation of English education caused anxieties in the colonized, whereas such anxieties were unknown before. As [Gauri Viswanathan \(1989\)](#) suggestively puts it, English education assured that the position of the colonized was that of takers or children. Thus, the English literary writing resulted as a temporary Englishman in his extreme and flawless state, as well as a camouflage that actually concealed the economic manipulation of the colonized. The stratagem was specifically controlling as it was masked ([Viswanathan, 1989](#)).

English studies were not just a style of social contact and authority, but correspondingly a practice to circulate British literary and imaginative rules. As the colonized users of the English language swiftly absorbed, English education turned them into exiles in their own countries. The cementing of Western theories onto indigenous minds involved not just the

pressing of black skins to put on white masks, as Fanon characteristically expressed it, but was similarly the production of what [Homi K Bhabha \(2005\)](#) categorized as mimic personalities or split personalities and dualities onto common Indians and Nigerians. As the British depreciated these hybrid men as coldly as they did the indigenous, the flawed colonial mimesis emphasized one unshakeable attitude: being Anglicized is not analogous to being British ([Bhabha, 2005](#)).

English education uncovered British intentions and disillusioned the minds of the colonized on another level as well. The colonized became aware of British double standards – what the British delivered to the colonized and what the colonized realized that they were going through were two different things. Having realized an unusual world, they loathed that they could not have it. Deeply aware that the British repudiated them what they revered in their own literature, the colonized became profoundly aware of the subordination of their position and the hoax behind it all.

### Anti-Colonial Movements

Although it took time, anti-colonial movements advanced in both the Indian sub-continent and in Africa. The missions of the movements were to take energetic, indigenous, and commanding voices. As indigenous tradition was, in spite of the colonizer's overriding attempts, nevertheless functioning, the scheme of nationalism was to rouse subjects from a subservient reception of the ruler's culture to a dynamic assertion of their own.

Nationalism had to turn British education 'from an unmediated propagation of British cultural power to a tool of native assertion' ([Ashcroft, 1989](#)). As colonial struggle emerges from the culture of the colonized, the prospects and the psychological nature of people in society express the confines of its movements of struggle. Even though repressed by the psychological limits founded by the colonizing culture when it originated, the movements of struggle extended them.

As colonialism worked by annihilating self-importance and hope in indigenous account and the past, the anti-colonial movement took upon itself the onus of creating a revival and revitalization of traditional institutions. Reverence for the previous times was imperative for the colonized to come to terms with the present. Nationalism thus turned out

to be the revolution beyond the misery of today and beyond self-contempt, resignation, abjuration, [of] some very beautiful and splendid era whose existence rehabilitate[d] us both in regard to ourselves and in regard to others... [and it was] with the greatest delight that they discovered that there was nothing to be ashamed of in the past... The claim of national culture in the past rehabilitate[d] that nation and serve[d] as the justification of the hope of a future national culture. ([Fanon, 1963](#))

Not surprisingly, the Negritude movement in Nigeria and the Swadeshi movement in India set the indigenous culture in direct proportion to the colonizer's reverence for British culture. The turn inwards and backwards was a notable necessity and fundamental to the decolonization process. Having been hurt for a long time, the colonized experienced excessive pleasure and some delight in rejecting and upsetting the colonizer. Often the indigenous chosen group, who began to lead the movement, supported the remembrance of racist rejections and colonial insults. As the colonized nations would ultimately realize, the fetishization and support of well-preserved fragments of indigenous culture was neither a resolution nor a sincere service to their indigenous civilizations.

The assumptions of the Swadeshi and Negritude movements were both simple as well as groundbreaking, and they did cause joyful defiance in the natives. The great irony was that whereas the movements were refuting British myths, they could not get away being swayed by them. As the colonizer had secluded the colonized on the grounds of their colour and race, those very uniform attributes were instantly upraised and exalted into autonomous values. Although the Anglican values they desired to replace explained the movements, they presented the colonized an appreciation of uniqueness and belonging.

Freedom movements are always difficult as they stretch out to the future by selecting the country's possible cultural enthusiasm, re-energizing deep-rooted memories while, at the same time, occupied to take over the colonizer. The movements deglamorized and exposed foreign culture on the one hand, whereas ironically demanding foreign goods, expertise, and business – or making their dearth a basis for revolt – on the other. The liberationists even used their British education, once perceived as a means of imposing Anglicisation, as a stratagem for rebelliousness.

Indian nationalists promulgated former legends, old sagas, and old triumphs as strategies of repair. They fashioned an obsession of India as a Mother Goddess, who demanded selfless and thorough allegiance. The Swadeshi movement of 1905 spread like wildfire through the Indian state of Bengal, the focus of the Indian nationalist movement. The movement also had an economic disguise because Swadeshi agitators burnt and forbade complete British products. Although stirred by and challenging the division of Bengal along communal lines into a Hindu and a Muslim Bengal – a challenge that essentially represented the British divide and rule approach – the movement took the first steps towards the revitalization of local industries and products. The movement was abortive in 1908, and India had to go through added forty years of British rule. Although it was not possible to eliminate all things British, economically or culturally, as the Swadeshi movement invigorated, it triggered the national consciousness versus the economic robbery of colonialism while indicating the attitude to beat it. Culturally, the political movement guided religious revitalization and rejuvenation. However, Swadeshi simply proved the colonizer's notions of the colonies as the other. The image of India among Indians as the endless, great, and earliest representative of the East, admiring the seemingly mature West, turned out to be finally entrenched in Indian minds. Nevertheless, the crisis threatening India at that stage could not be set through a trend, even if it was a nationalistic one.

The test for India was to advance a classic of self-reliance while focusing on victimhood and a theory of nationhood that amalgamated strength and subsistence. India's capability to accept ambiguities was put to the test as it struggled to choose British culture and encourage an established and self-deprecatory consciousness out of its colonial experience.

African nationalism, too, revered the awaiting consciousness of a fresh African self after a period of blind imitation of Western culture. Born out of the inevitability to repair African domestic and cultural values and bypass the dangers of a de-cultured Africa, the Negritude movement was a pan-African struggle that Africans started against European modification policies whereas also striving to appropriate the brutal twist of black history. The Negritudists based their movement on the notion that 'if the colonizer bases his right of conquest on a civilizing mission, then he must

be fought on his own ground and shown that the Negro is in no way his intellectual inferior' ([Wauthier, 1978](#)). The African Negritudists, accordingly, asserted that their absence of scientific expertise did not show their subservience but their distinction. They struggled to establish that their faith was monotheistic, their pre-history self-sufficient, their myth ancient, and their culture marvellously communal, and they identified that their pre-dominant distinctive trait was emotion that is dissimilar to Western rationality. The resolution was to express that they were counterparts, if not superior to the West. The irony was that their every claim was a reprisal against Western hype and prejudices, and henceforward constrained by them. This was not what Africa looked for. As [Gates Jr \(1984\)](#) puts it as follows:

What we need to establish for Africa is not [an] aesthetic[s of] thoughts and feelings, [but the use of] all objective means possible [to] reconstruct the very paradigmatic base of such thoughts and feelings. To reconstruct effectively, one needs to deconstruct – especially old myths and metaphysics about, as well as in, Africa. ([Gates Jr. et al., 1984](#))

Nevertheless, the nationalist movement, instead of deconstructing myths, designed new ones. The nationalist movement stirred the minds of the colonized and regenerated their intellects. It imposed the cognoscenti to take a position and provide to the national reclaim. It arose the artist/writer to go past the opposites of nationalism and create a compliant concept of the West for their natives.

## **The Responsibility of a Writer**

As an orator and a caring agent of the society, the writer records the apprehension and agony as well as the ferocity of the individuals regarding the colonial occurrence. Even if they elect to record it in a foreign language, they invest the language with an indigenous undertone and use it for national purposes. They accept the colonizer's influence as an essential foul that has come to stay, and that could be used, if need be, after restructuring it allowing national requirements. In the colonial era, the writer opts to produce it as their logical obligation to develop a counter-discourse that is complete and contains important textual strategies that expose and weaken the central discourse to a secondary one.

Liberation approached India on 15 August 1947 and to Nigeria on 1 October 1960. However, the writer's job for cultural incorporation and

responsibilities did not end with independence. Although liberation had come, the scars of colonialism were nevertheless fresh. Perhaps the extreme injurious heritage of British colonial rule was inner disputes. Not startlingly, therefore, both India and Nigeria broke into civil war swiftly after their liberation. As a product of the colonial tactic of divide and rule, the free subcontinent was divided into India, West Pakistan, and East Pakistan (later Bangladesh). The division, disappointingly, did not infer that Hindus and Muslims were capable of living in peace with each other in recently freed India. Categorized by the United Nations as the extreme and enormous immigration of human population to date, the partition and the migrant crisis put severe stress on the resources and energies of freed India's new administration. Not merely did it have to handle the effect of the partition that left half a million people dead and twelve million homeless, but also with the ferocity of those displaced who regularly indulged in agitations. These riots made new divisions in the body state that did not fix fast.

The Biafran war in Nigeria from 1967-70, the attempted separation of Eastern Nigerian provinces as the self-proclaimed Republic of Biafra, was also the effect of the economic, racial, and religious tensions between distinct sects that the British had deepened during their rule. Approximately three million people died in the Biafran war, with as many from sickness and undernourishment in the distressed regions.

The colonizer had not simply made divisions beside tribal and religious lines in Indian and Nigerian societies but had also made class divides. Although a colonial deprogramming was required, the purpose did not lie in the fetching back of worn-out, departed, and outdated mysterious hegemonic systems. Modern supervision that could draw in new notion and encouragement in connecting the past and present was required.

Neocolonial moves were more than a little answerable for preventing the progress of new governance. Operating through indigenous agents, neocolonialism as a means of exercising power exclusive of any obligation; it was the act of controlling over a people without appearing to. Cold war power politics augmented an additional characteristic to the challenges before recently freed India and Nigeria. The encounter for power between NATO and the Eastern Bloc planned that both groups struggled to prevent the lives of the freshly growing nations to forestall them

from joining with the contrary side. As neocolonial power politics worked through the greediness and weakness of indigenous representations, it rooted manipulation and started intense defeat amidst the people. Neocolonial forces struggled to weaken both India and Nigeria but met with unpredictable levels of success in the two countries. Whereas India demonstrated to be resilient through the political approach of non-alignment, Nigeria dropped as a simpler target to their conspiracies. If neocolonialism revealed itself graver in the latter, it was for flimsier authority. Nevertheless, both nations passed through an intense awareness of disappointment activated by the anguish of crushed Utopian dreams of liberation.

The challenges before the post-Independence academic were many and multi-levelled. At the social level, there were the problems of dearth, anguish, and sickness. At the governmental level, there were the crises of neocolonialism, mistreatment, and civil war. At the emotional level, there was the struggle of cultural clashes. To resolve all these differences and problems was not easy. The onus for finding a resolution lay not simply on the political authority but similarly on the cognoscenti. The intellectuals in general, and the writer in particular, had to rise above the divisions and keep strengthening coordination, nationalism, and national spirit of the anti-colonial movement so that a resolution to the challenges could be formed.

A nation's skill to meet neocolonial threats and counter post-independence challenges was in direct ratio to the post-independence intellectual's understanding of national realities. The writer's responsibility in the post-freedom stage was to be a source of logical talent. They had to retain standards and morals, as well as expose the mistreatment and the social hoax within. They could not live too long on the sins of the colonizers, as that would release people of their burden for the prevailing chaos. They also had to make the country gauge itself as others saw it, for which they could resolve to use the English language. 'Writers will need to abrogate an available discourse when trying to reveal an experience that is outside the norm of the discourse. They will need to make "English" into "English" by rejecting the hierarchy within which the English language is privileged' ([Paranjape, 1990](#)).

The post-freedom writer had to be aware of their nation's cultural baggage before they could cross over to other shores in the new interconnected world that

the country now joined. Without becoming culturally drowned, the writer preferred to use the English language for specific purposes. In the backdrop of the eternal struggle of the distinct forces of tradition and modernity, the duty of the post-Independence writer was equal to as it was in the colonial era. Often educated in English, if not trained abroad, the writer had to look for and treasure tools through which they could stay true to the society that incorporates cultures and their atmosphere.

Countless caring Indian and Nigerian writers chose drama as the mode in which to express themselves. Operational on the principle of conflict and its resolution, the theatre has always been the popular art form of literary genres. Not startlingly, the dramatists of both colonial and post-freedom India and Nigeria refined, innovative forms of theatres to epitomize the state of flexibility, vagueness, and inconsistency in their societies.

### **Rabindranath Tagore**

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), of pre-Independence India, was one of the principal Indian dramatists to turn his theatre into a playground of forces to incorporate cultures. Tagore had the skill to imitate an idea at a time when British rule in India had created a clash of cultures. Tagore chose to present his thematic propositions through a depictive framework. He was open to transformation and had strong social sympathies.

Tagore undeniably thought that cultural incorporation and synthesis would back India's search for wholeness in the context of its disclosure to Western thought for over two centuries. Even when encouraging syncretic incorporation of cultures, Tagore operated with a consciousness of India's needs. Whereas his plays presented his disappointment with several aspects of European progress, such as its modernization, his nationalism was never partial or orthodox. He was apprehensive of India's progress, and his care for his state was not constrained to just considering her free. His mingling assertiveness was that of a man who desired to strengthen beyond the national without being imitative. Henceforward, he admired and attempted every form from a sensible position and knowledge. He could sense that if Indians renounced to admit the achievements of Europe, it was because she had sunk India to the status of helpless colony. Similarly, the circulated British theories of their exclusiveness owing to their prerequisite to

ascertain their own authority to rationalize their rule. Tagore's cultural incorporation and synthesis was a result of his meticulous inspection of the wrongness of such attitudes, as well as of his consciousness that no civilization was self-contained or could revive if isolated.

Tagore received a varied analytical response. Tagore's works formed an immense part of magazine and journal articles in his life, and after the freedom of India, most of Tagore's works were fused into books to mark his birth anniversaries. Excluding the articles committed to news about the production of his plays in India and abroad, Tagore's work as a dramatist did not get much notice as his contributions to other literary genres.

Tagore's scholarship went through various upheavals. Primarily acclaimed for his uniqueness and perhaps for his Nobel Prize, his plays were later overruled as repetitious. While twenty-first-century critics have exhibited more curiosity in his plays than those who came before nevertheless, he is primarily observed as a poet even when writing for the stage. The understanding seems to be that Tagore is an undisclosed dramatist. Regardless of the bulk of Tagorean scholarship, a reviewer is still to appear who has paid ample reflection to Tagore's cultural incorporation and synthesis or to the manner he integrated philosophic and dramatic conventions of the East and the West, even while articulating innovative departures within them. The supplementary analysis is important on how Tagore could deal with intense, challenging issues in his plots that were together life-like and innovative and that mingled wit and philosophy with song and dance.

### **Badal Sircar**

As discoursed already, India met new problems and new challenges with the advent of independence on 15 August 1947. Badal Sircar (1925-2011), whose scholarly work flourished in the post-Partition period, was intensely compassionate to and very alert to India's social crises and the excruciating tribulation of decolonization. Greatly conscious of neocolonial power struggles and agents, he decided to guide his audiences to make them attentive to their circumstances and to awaken them. Resolute on stimulating the content and production of his plays so that his notion would get home, he renounced to support any Movement of the time. Thus, Sircar decided not to discard any associated traditional

elements – such as the Indian folk forms of Jatra, Tamasha, or Terrakutu – or any correlated Western philosophies – whether absurdist, existentialist, or utilitarian – on the basis of their place of origin. Whereas his drama was born out of and voiced post-colonial concern and disappointment, it practised recommending relief from the political failure and governmental hypocrisies through its outspokenness. His theatre, thus, executed a radical approach as well as a rebellious bearing and was as biased to broadminded as with conformist establishments. In Sircar's opinion, the crisis of aesthetics in the theatre was what was preventing it from assisting the cause of the people. As Sircar had a syncretic attitude and was desirous of manipulating theatre as a device for the social uprising, he began an original and inventive theatre style that was neither traditional nor imported but the incorporation of cultures, and which, above all, was a rejoinder to post-Independence India's prevailing needs.

Limited critics, if any, grasped Sircar's motives or recognized their validity. Considered to be extremely imitative of Western styles or supposed to be enormously academic, critics either deplored his experiments satirically or concentrated on his lean manner of staging besides everything else.

## Wole Soyinka

Akinwande Oluwole Babatunde Soyinka (1934- ) of Nigeria is a playwright who aged with his country. He outlived both the colonial and the post-freedom travails and triumphs of his country. During his life, he exhibited great trust in himself, in the individual Nigerian, and in his country. Undeniably, he felt satisfied, as a litterateur, to express the problems and fears, the hopes and aspirations of his people. Soyinka's focus was on advancing skills that would enable him to explain the cultural encounter that his country had met in both its phases so that a changed, improved, forbearing society could be born. As long as they were fit, he employed techniques heedlessly of their source. It is, thus, not surprising that Soyinka started a special kind of theatre to incorporate cultures with the purpose to express the concern of colonialism and the disappointment that Nigeria met after independence.

As already mentioned, Nigeria got independence in 1960. On the one hand, it had to deal with the sub-cultural rivalries inside the Nigerian state while facing the encounter given by the operations of colonial and

neocolonial factions on the other—Soyinka, who always viewed himself as the nation's hope, developed with his country. Shockingly alert of the fact that Nigeria was ensnared in a tense, contentious, and difficult position (that ultimately disclosed itself as the Biafran civil war of 1967), Soyinka's inventive work went through a distinction of attitude and style. In indicating the difficult state of independent Nigeria on the stage, Soyinka intermarried Western existential philosophy and absurdism with African animism and Yoruba *egungwu* masked rituals. That the Indian writer either translated the play himself (as with Tagore) or had it translated (as with Sircar) shows his willingness to have the status of Indian-English drama applied to his play. Soyinka declared a comparable readiness to have his work studied both as an English and a Nigerian piece when he decided to write directly in English. Through incorporating and interlinking theatrical elements – whether of Western or Nigerian basis – as long as they supported him to persuasively explain the Nigerian experience, Soyinka both engaged and identified his trust in the incorporation and collaboration of cultures.

Parallel to Tagore and Sircar, Soyinka's ideas, ideals, and theatre were misread. Instead of focusing on the cultural incorporation and synthesis of his theatre, critics concentrated on his wit and his extra-literary personality. As with Tagore, Soyinka's Nobel Prize complicated things. Some viewers glorified him for it instead of evaluating his work ([Lindfors, 1988](#)).

At the other end, and as a reaction to Eurocentric theories, indigenous critical schools were formed. Nevertheless, these theorists are deliberating purism in the literature that deals with the incorporation of cultures which is not true since social realities have altered eternally after colonialism. Stereotypes result in both when critics work without a sense of the past in encouraging or imitating Western literature in the ex-colonies, as well as when going to the other extreme, they look for or assume a reappearance of the past in the present. What is important, subsequently, is a fresh platform and approach.

## Conclusion

As India and Nigeria went through equivalent experiences of colonialism and neocolonialism, the style in which their cultures sophisticated strategies of conflict were also alike. Nonetheless, the Nigerian consciousness was further distressed than the Indian by the colonizer's racist myths as Nigerians, in



comparison to Indians, had to deal with the upsetting memories of slavery; the Negritude movement in Nigeria exhibited more intolerant tendencies than the Swadeshi movement. I have researched in the article in what way the biculturalism in Tagore and Soyinka's disposition and upbringing empowered them both to advance a style of syncretic theatre for the cultural interactions that colonialism formed in their nations. Fundamentally adept in qualities that enabled them to perform notable roles in their countries' lives, both Tagore and Soyinka were patriots who were extremely rooted in their particular subcultures. Although the dramatists did not reject the past, they did not encourage a return to it. They were both strictly responsive to the Western culture and appreciated it, even when alert of its failings. This contact, as well as their alertness to their national tradition as distinct, gave them the strength that their countrymen were deprived of. Whereas neither banned abundantly nor carelessly represented British

culture, both writers annulled the confidence offered by the colonizer to flatter its interests. Choosing to develop a novel way in their dramaturgy towards legitimacy, the writers presented and involved with cultural incorporation and synthesis as a philosophy, as they considered it to be both valid and unpreventable in the context of colonial realities.

The form of Soyinka's and Tagore's theatre incorporated different cultures. The plays neither used the dialect of the anti-colonial movements nor did they mimic the dialogue patterns of the Westerner. In advancing their dramaturgy, both playwrights interweaved elements from Western theatre, as well as idioms from traditional drama, such as Jatra in India or Yoruban folk opera in Nigeria. However, as Tagore supported symbolism, Soyinka encouraged comedy and pantomime. Nevertheless, both dramatists disclosed a deep consciousness of their audience and visualized their plays as an assemblage of immersive experiences.

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