

Understanding Gender Roles and its Impacts in Africa through Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*

Arun Kumar V, I MA English, Dwaraka Doss Govardhan Doss Vaishnav College, Chennai

In: *Book of Abstract REVA University*. edited by DR. C Chamundeshwari Associate Professor, Dept of English, REVA University, Bengaluru, India. ISBN 978-93-341-7423-6.

Wole Soyinka, a Nigerian dramatist, who was awarded Nobel Prize in 1986, for his accomplishment in the field of literature, has been a prominent writer in Africa. African politics, society, culture, and customs serve as the foundation for his works. *The Lion and the Jewel* highlight Yoruba customs and traditions. This play is set in the village of Ilunjuinle in Yoruba West Africa. Bride-price and polygamy are two examples of customs that are heavily stressed in this play and questions the patriarchal culture of Yoruba society. In addition, the author clarifies some of the native traditions, such as weddings, dancing, mimes, songs, etc. The play's main elements include dance, songs, and mimes. These elements have been used by Soyinka to advance the plot of the play. Besides highlighting the role of women, Soyinka also highlights the native tradition, the people's way of life, and politics. This study intends to illustrate how Soyinka uses characters, themes, and plot to examine gender roles in Yoruba culture. Modernity and tradition are constantly at tension in Soyinka's portrayal of post-colonial Africa. As a result, he develops characters that confront themselves in a setting where individuals who are firmly anchored in tradition and conventions are on one side and supporters of modernity are on the other. This study also aims to show how Soyinka explores the tension between civilizations through characters, ideas, and narratives. This study also tries to highlight that Soyinka is presenting the world that the traditional culture is the one that is dominating over the modernity.

Keywords: Gender roles, Yoruba culture, Culture conflict, Modernity and Tradition.