

Unraveling The Social Threads of Anowa

Simpi Mina Tudu

University of Allahabad, India

Abstract

‘Anowa,’ a seminal play by Ama Ata Aidoo, intricately weaves the socio-cultural fabric of Ghanaian society through the lens of the character Anowa. Set in the 19th century, the narrative explores the themes of gender roles, tradition, and autonomy within the patriarchal context. Anowa, a strong-willed woman defies societal expectations by rejecting arranged marriage and keep personal fulfilment through her own choices. This defiance highlights the tension between individual desires and cultural imperatives, showcasing the struggle for agency in a society steeped in tradition. The objective of the paper is to delve into the complexities of identity and belonging, illustrating how Anowa’s quest for self-expression challenges the conventions of her time. Aidoo’s nuanced portrayal of Anowa’s relationship with her husband, Kofi, further examines the dynamics of power and control that arises when personal ambition collides with communal values. Socio-cultural methodology is used to examine the extent and depth to which culture and society influenced the development of the titular character. Through rich symbolism and dialogue, Aidoo critiques the socio-cultural limitations imposed on women, inviting audiences to reflect on the broader implications of gender inequality. The paper aims to serve as a poignant commentary on the intersection of tradition and modernity, urging a re-evaluation of cultural narratives that shapes women’s lives. This paper aims to explore how Anowa stands as a powerful testament to the enduring struggle for self-determining identity in the face of societal constraints. It also suggests that while societal structures can be oppressive, individuals still have the capacity to challenge injustice and strive for a better world.

Keywords: Individual desire, Gender role, Power, Self-expression