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Resistance and Adaptation- Cultural Hybridity in the Age of Globalisation in Wole Soyinka's The Lion and the Jewel

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Abstract

This paper examines the intricate dynamics of cultural hybridity in African dramatic literature, with a focus on Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* as a case study. Through detailed content analysis, it examines how Soyinka portrays the tensions between tradition and modernity, as well as the negotiation of indigenous identity in the face of Western influence. Set in the Yoruba village of Ilujinle, the play dramatises the cultural contest between Baroka, the traditional village chief known as "The Lion," and Lakunle, the Western-educated schoolteacher. Their ideological conflict, rooted in differing worldviews on marriage, progress, and cultural values, embodies the struggle of African societies navigating colonial legacies and globalisation. Lakunle's blind imitation of Western ideals, such as rejecting the bride price, reveals his detachment from local realities and leads to his alienation. Conversely, Baroka's willingness to adapt elements of modernity, like his plan for a printing press, reflects a pragmatic and balanced form of hybridity. The competition for Sidi's affection symbolises the broader clash between cultural continuity and imposed change. Ultimately, Soyinka's play illustrates that African modernity emerges not through total rejection or acceptance of the West, but through the creative synthesis of both worlds, revealing hybridity as both a challenge and a source of renewal in postcolonial identity.

Keywords: African Literature; Cultural Hybridity; Globalisation; Tradition Vs. Modernity; Identity Negotiation