

**Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*:  
The Metaphysics of Sacrifice as a Trope of  
Postcolonial Resistance**

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**Abstract:**

*The published criticisms, regarding Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*, is in most cases predominated by the idea of the metaphysics of sacrifice. The play, as most commentators agree, is best understood in terms of the metaphysical values rather than the sociological or historical ones. Indeed, the values and rituals, represented in this play, is uniquely African, albeit primitive in nature. Although colonialism is a mere historical occurrence in the play's context, it lays bare the impotency into which the heroic cultures of Yoruba or Oyo communities of Africa degenerated. Soyinka, in his Author Note, refers to the colonial context as a catalectic incident merely, but probed deeply, it reveals Soyinka's anti-colonial feelings, paradoxically providing an alternative humanistic worldview and a ritualistic recusancy by restoring the metaphysics of sacrifice.*

**Keywords:** *Soyinka, Metaphysics of Sacrifice, Yoruba, Oyo, postcolonial resistance*

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